



Mo Stewart Research

Fellow, Centre for Welfare Reform
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Date: 17th April 2024

The Rt Hon Steve Barclay MP
House of Commons
London
SW1A 0AA

Private & Confidential
via email

xxxxxxxx – Case Reference

Dear Steve,

Re: The public health crisis created by UK social policy reforms¹
[Justice, Power and Resistance 6\(2\): 217-228](#)

I acknowledge receipt of your letter of 15th April 2024, claiming to be in response to my correspondence of 15th February 2024² whilst totally dismissing the content of it, which I find unacceptable, as is your total dismissal of published critically acclaimed peer-reviewed research which identified the public health crisis created by UK social policy reforms.¹

Your claim that the UK Government “remains fully committed to the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities” really has very little meaning given that there have now been three UN reports exposing the unacceptable treatment of the disabled community by the UK Government, which appears to have escaped your attention, as recently mentioned by a UN panel last month.³

A United Nations panel has presented UK government officials with a stark assessment of reforms to the benefits system over the past 14 years, describing a political agenda that “demonises” disabled people and results in unacceptable living standards.

The observations came at a session of the UN Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities that was held in Geneva yesterday, following-up previous inquiries, including a damning 2016 report. That document found welfare reforms since 2010 had resulted in “grave and systematic violations” of disabled people’s rights. ...

We see a reform agenda that is framed in a political narrative that demonises disabled people, including proposals to cut disability benefits to reward working people by cutting taxes – which tells disabled people that they are undeserving citizens,” she said.³



You may recall that in the past I received no less than six emails from you, all claiming to fully support the research findings of the Preventable Harm Project⁴ and granting permission for me to mention your support whenever I wrote to Ministers. However, this past support seems to have slipped your memory since attending the Cabinet, but you should be alert to the fact that I still have those supportive emails from you. ...

On a related subject, which I have alerted you to in the past, it remains shameful that a former Secretary of State for Work and Pensions continues to make offensive remarks regarding the disabled community in the national press,⁵ and a recently appointed Chief Secretary to the Treasury felt the need to make offensive comments both in the press and in TV interviews, whilst managing to cause distress to those in greatest need with her inappropriate comments.⁶ Your failure to acknowledge this unacceptable political attack against those in greatest need, when you benefit from detailed published research evidence, remains lamentable. This relentless political attack against the chronically ill and disabled community is another reason why UN experts have exposed the UK Government³ for the preventable harm they have created which is ideologically motivated.¹

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mo Stewart', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mo Stewart

Fellow, Centre for Welfare Reform
Research Lead, Preventable Harm Project



Author [‘Cash Not Care: the planned demolition of the UK welfare state’](#)
Producer [The Preventable Harm Project](#)
Editor [Influences and Consequences](#)

Copied to: Rosemary Keyess, UN committee expert & co-rapporteur
Laverne Jacobs, UN committee expert & co-rapporteur
Kamran Mallick, CEO Disability Rights UK
Katie Schmuecker, Principal Policy Adviser JRF

- 1 [Justice, Power and Resistance 6\(2\): 217-228](#)
- 2 [Redacted-letter-to-Save-Barclay-MP-Feb-15th-2024.pdf \(mostewartresearch.co.uk\)](#)
- 3 [United Nations takes aim at UK's disability benefits reforms \(civilserviceworld.com\)](#)
- 4 [Mo Stewart Research | Cash Not Care](#)
- 5 [Stop sick people from languishing on benefits \(telegraph.co.uk\)](#)
- 6 [Disabled people must work from home to do 'their duty', says UK minister | Benefits | The Guardian](#)