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25 October 2015

Dear Ms Walker,

### **Public challenges in relation to your party's policy document**

I have read your [policy document](#), and wasn't surprised to discover a large number of statements which anyone with an informed interest in gender-related matters would find erroneous, or at the least deeply contentious. The document cynically conflates inequalities of outcomes with inequalities of opportunities, demands women be privileged in appointments to lucrative and influential positions, and demands women be compensated for their freely-made choices – such as their lines of employment, hours worked – usually at the taxpayers' expense. Men pay 72% of the income tax collected in the UK, a sum worth [£69 BILLION in the 2012/13 tax year](#). I can find no mention of the taxation gender gap in your document.

A more accurate name for your party would be the Women's Extension of Privileges party, so you could retain the acronym WEP. No need to thank me. One clear objective of your party, albeit unstated, is the creation of legions of female grievance collectors.

Surprisingly, for such a professionally-produced document, it contains no Table of Contents. Please find one attached. Again, no need to thank me.

This letter, challenging only a small proportion of the material in your policy document, has been posted on our [website](#). I shall be citing materials from your document, highlighting them in yellow. My challenges are highlighted in blue.

(Page 3) WE are the Women's Equality Party, a new collaborative political force in UK politics uniting people of all genders, diverse ages, backgrounds, ethnicities, beliefs and experiences in the shared determination to see women enjoy the same rights and opportunities as men so that all can flourish.

In the UK, what are the rights and opportunities that men enjoy, which women don't?

There are many rights and opportunities in the UK that women enjoy, but men don't, they're outlined in our [election manifesto](#). In the pursuit of gender equality, would you support British women losing the rights

and opportunities they currently enjoy, which men don't? Or should British men gain those rights and opportunities?

(Page 6) WE will ensure all women who want to work can do so and are paid fairly for it. WE will work to end the bias in pay for occupations perceived as 'male' or 'female' that means caring work is paid less than manual labour.

Rather than seeking to negate the impact of the law of supply and demand on wage rates, might a better solution be for more women to engage in manual labour, perhaps establishing their own companies to ensure highly skilled, efficient, commercially competitive, all-female work teams?

(Page 9) The pay gap widens for women after 50.

I refer you to an article by William Collins, [Gender Income Propaganda](#). He states:

There is no pay gap between the ages of 18 and 40. The oft-claimed gender pay gap is obtained by averaging full-time hourly rates over all age ranges. Anyone claiming that this is evidence of gender discrimination must therefore answer this question:

Why does the evil patriarchy give a pass to women in the age range 18 to 40? Why does the discrimination only start for women over 40?

(Page 11) The joys and responsibilities of parenthood are not shared equally in our society. And in later life, care for elderly parents tends to fall to daughters, rather than sons. This holds back women in the workplace – but men suffer from this imbalance, too: denied the opportunity to care for and enjoy time with their children or parents and penalised if they do choose to leave or reduce their work for caring.

Here, as throughout the document, you appear to be in utter denial that men and women tend to make different choices, when faced with the same challenges. Men tend to be more work-centred than women, women tend to seek a more satisfying work/life balance than men. Females are more likely than males to engage in part-time work from the point of leaving full-time education, while males are more likely than females to engage in full-time work over the same period. You also appear to have no interest in making women happy, by respecting their wishes. You want to reduce them to little more than economic workhorses.

Dr Catherine Hakim, a world-renowned sociologist, published a paper on [Preference Theory](#) in 2000, showing that while four in seven British men are work-centred, only one in seven British women is. This has obvious implications in the workplace and elsewhere, including how heterosexual couples address the issues of earning incomes, and caring for children and/or parents. Do you consider Dr Hakim's research or conclusions flawed in any ways? If so, how?

(Page 14) WE will work to build a general social and legal expectation of the full involvement of both parents in the lives of their children even if the parents are not together, unless there is a pattern of violence or clear risk to either parent or child.

While this appears laudable, it begs the question of who decides whether there has been 'a pattern of violence or clear risk to either parent or child'. Would you agree that a conviction in a court of law would be considered sufficient evidence, and nothing less? The alternative is to allow one parent – invariably the mother, from experience – to make false accusations of violence or risk, thereby stripping a father from his children – probably for life.

The male:female suicide rate has risen in the past 30 years from 1.7:1 to 3.5:1. Denial of access to children commonly leads – as we would expect – to reactive depression, and therefore suicide, as I explained in an [article](#) in the *International Business Times*. Denial of access to children is emotional abuse of both fathers and their children.

(Page 20) Fleeing an abusive partner can be the most dangerous time for a victim of domestic violence and her family. WE believe in the absolute right to a place of sanctuary for women, children and other victims of domestic abuse.

Who are these ‘other victims’, and do you think they should receive support in proportion to which, as a group, they are victims of domestic violence?

(Page 21) Graphic showing 8.5% better performance from diverse boards.

Are you claiming a causal link between appointing more women to boards, and enhanced financial performance? If so, what is your evidence for a causal link rather than correlation, for which there are more obvious explanations than a mysterious ‘female factor’?

(Page 22) Prosecution rates for sexual violence remain shamefully low. WE will work tirelessly to change the culture of disbelief that pervades our criminal justice system and ensure services are available that encourage and enable victims to come forward, and allow evidence to be collected. WE will:

- Create a compulsory online “unconscious bias” training programme for all jurors to complete before participating in a jury and incorporate training on sexual violence and unconscious bias for all police, magistrates, and judges.

Do you not understand that ‘a culture of disbelief’ is central to a legal system in which people charged with crimes are considered innocent until proven guilty? In calling for a change in the culture, presumably to a ‘culture of belief’, you are calling for those alleged with sexual offences to be considered guilty until proven innocent. This will encourage women to make even more false allegations. Would you accept the need for those suspected of sexual offences to remain anonymous until and unless convicted of the charges? And would you back mandatory lengthy prison sentences for those convicted of making false allegations?

(Page 30) It should be simple: half the population are women, so half of our legislators should be women, too.

It should be simple: half the population are women, so half of our sewage workers, garbage collectors, long-distance lorry drivers, security personnel, and people working on fishing boats, should be women, too. Hmm, maybe it’s not simple, after all. Would you support quotas for women in these lines of work, and if not, why not?

In our [election manifesto](#) we outlined 20 areas in which the British state assaults the human rights of men and boys, through its actions and inactions. Can you outline the areas where the British state assaults the human rights of women and girls, specifically?

Women have clearly been advantaged historically, not disadvantaged, by the majority of legislators being men. If more legislators were female, we could reliably expect women and girls to become ever more privileged. This has nothing to do with equality, and everything to do with further *privileging* of women. Ernest Belfort Bax, a socialist journalist and philosopher, predicted this ‘direction of travel’ in a book published in 1913, *The Fraud of Feminism*. It’s free to download [here](#).

It has long been known that far more men than women seek to become prospective parliamentary candidates (PPCs). I worked as a business consultant for the Conservative party (2006-8) and in 2008 the party chairman was Caroline Spelman MP. She admitted in a BBC radio interview that in 2008 there were 10 men seeking to become PPCs for every woman who did so.

On p.33 of your document you call for 50% of ministerial posts, including 50% of Cabinet posts, to be held by women with immediate effect. Only 20% of Conservative MPs – 68 out of 331 – are women, yet following the last general election David Cameron gave a third of ministerial positions to women, earning him his fourth consecutive [Toady of the Year](#) award.

On average female Conservative MPs – in common with female MPs in other parties – are younger and less experienced than their male colleagues. In calling for female Conservative MPs to occupy 50% of ministerial and Cabinet posts, you are calling for a class of MPs which is relatively young and inexperienced (women) to be privileged by 250% in relation to a class which is relatively older and more experienced (men). **How do you justify this privileging of women, and do you recognize the promotion of a group of young and inexperienced people will inevitably have a detrimental impact on British politics? Is this a price worth paying, and if so, why?**

(Page 31) **Women on Boards:** Many British businesses have woken up to the benefits of having women in senior leadership positions. But progress is not fast enough and we need to support women in the so-called “pipeline” to board level, so they do not continue to fall behind their male peers in their 30s and 40s because of family responsibilities. WE believe quotas will be necessary as a short-term measure – not just at Board level but at Executive Committee level too.

- WE will expect a balanced board in all listed companies by 2025, with businesses making progress every year towards that goal. That means by 2020, 40% of board and Executive Committee positions should be held by women.
- WE will permit some flexibility in individual companies to accommodate a deviation of one or two individuals. The legal requirement will be that no more than 60% of these posts should be filled by either gender.
- WE will encourage private companies to reach the same goal.

Our associated organization [Campaign for Merit in Business](#) – C4MB – has been campaigning against the government’s bullying of FTSE100 companies into increasing the proportion of women on their boards since 2012. That year, I gave evidence to House of Commons and House of Lords inquiries. A video of my appearance before the House of Commons ‘Women in the Workplace’ inquiry is [here](#).

Since 2012 we have given a great deal of publicity to [five longitudinal studies](#), all of which demonstrate a causal link between increasing female representation on boards, and corporate financial *decline*. We have challenged hundreds of individuals and dozens of organizations which support ‘more women on boards’ to direct us to longitudinal studies demonstrating a causal link between more women on boards and enhanced financial performance, and no such evidence has ever been provided to us.

A link to all our public challenges of proponents of ‘more woman on boards’ is [here](#). One of the proponents is [Susan Vinnicombe](#), Professor of Women and Leadership – no, seriously, that’s her title – at the Cranfield International Centre for Women Leaders. For many years she’s been the world’s foremost proponent of ‘more women on boards’. In 2012, in the aforementioned House of Lords inquiry, she had this exchange with Lord Fearn:

**Lord Fearn:** Is there a strong business case for improving the gender diversity of boards? If so, does it follow that there is also a strong business case for increased gender diversity on boards across the EU?

**Professor Susan Vinnicombe:** (earlier comments omitted, but available in the next link) Thirdly, there has been quite a push in the past – indeed, we ourselves have engaged in such research – to look at the relationship between having women on corporate boards and financial performance. We do not subscribe to this research. We have shared it with chairmen and they do not think that it makes sense. We agree that it does not make sense. You cannot correlate two or three women on a massive corporate board with a return on investment, return on equity, turnover or profits. We have dropped such research in the past five years and I am pleased to say that Catalyst, [Note: a New York based radical feminist campaign organization] which claims to have done a ground-breaking study on this in the US, officially dropped this line of argument last September.

The full exchange with Lord Fearn is [here](#).

Our question in this area is particularly simple. **Given the overwhelming evidence which demonstrates that appointing more women to corporate boards leads to financial decline – even when the majority are appointed as non-executive directors – what is the business justification for doing so?**

**(Page 33) WE will not allow all-male companies, those with all-male boards, or those without a gender diversity policy in place, to supply to government at any level.**

Many companies supply to only the public sector. Your policy would mean that such a company, with an all-male board, and employing maybe thousands of men and women, would have no options other than appointing one or more women to its board – which will probably lead to financial decline, as per the causal link we've already indicated – or to cease trading. **Could you confirm that you regard making men and women redundant an appropriate penalty for a company's refusal to appoint a female director?**

I look forward to your response, and would ask for it – emailing me at [mike@j4mb.org.uk](mailto:mike@j4mb.org.uk), please – by 5pm Friday, November 6. Feel free to get in touch with me at any time, my mobile number is 07967 026163. Thank you.

Yours sincerely,

Mike Buchanan  
PARTY LEADER

Table of Contents

Page(s)	Content
3	Introduction
4	The WE model
6	<b>Equal pay</b> Transparency on gender pay
7	Zero tolerance for workplace discrimination Investing in childcare
8	Supporting savers and boosting women's pensions
9	Valuing experience: the workplace for older women
11	<b>Equal parenting and caregiving</b> Equal parenting – equal leave
12	Flexibility for all
13	Dads matter: changing the stigma The value of care
14	Shared parenting and relationship breakdown
16	<b>Equality in education</b> Beyond pink and blue: the earliest conceptions of gender
17	Equal opportunities in teaching and school leadership Supporting all young people into adulthood
18	Sex and relationships education
20	<b>Ending violence against women and girls</b> Sanctuary for those fleeing abuse
21	Graphics: Ending violence against women and girls Equality in the media Equal representation
22	Prosecuting violence against women and girls The importance of specialist support
23	Changing culture An end to trafficking and sexual exploitation
26	<b>Equality in the media</b> Sexualisation and violence against women
27	Gender stereotypes and ideals Representing the people
28	Online and social media
30	<b>Equal representation</b> Equal opportunity in politics
31	Women on Boards
32	Graphics: Equal pay Equal parenting and caregiving Equality in education
33	Leading the way from government <b>Putting it into practice</b>
34, 35	<b>WE are so grateful</b> ... to hundreds of women, and at least 18 men who should hang their heads in shame: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Andy Woodfield</li> <li>- Neil Roberts</li> <li>- Simon Browne</li> <li>- Edward Collier</li> <li>- Richard Clifford</li> <li>- Jim Turner</li> </ul>

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|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- David Mellor</li><li>- Andrew Mallick</li><li>- Andrew Morton</li><li>- Peter Goodridge</li><li>- David Hickey</li><li>- Matthew Sweet</li><li>- Andy Scott</li><li>- Nick Dickson</li><li>- Ben Hammersley</li><li>- Paul Hodgson</li><li>- Gregor Truter</li><li>- Michael Howlett</li></ul> |
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