

[Government should be about doing the right thing](#) [1]

Written by [Dr Eamonn Butler](#) [2] | Tuesday 21 June 2011



Forestry land sales, GP fundholding, you name it... the UK government has U-turned on at least a dozen important issues. Yes, it's reasonable that if you come up with a policy that raises widespread and unexpected opposition, you might think again. But equally, you shouldn't abandon policies that you know are right.

Now there is speculation that the government might water down its proposed reforms of public sector pensions. Many people who work for the public sector can start drawing their pensions five years before the rest of us, pay less in to get those pensions, and get much more generous, often inflation-proofed, pensions that private sector workers could only dream of. There is more money being paid out on public sector pensions than anyone knows how to pay for ? a debt in hundreds of billions, and rising. It is our children and grandchildren who will end up having to pay this bill, but it is our generation of public sector workers who have got the benefit. This system is not just economically unsustainable, it is morally corrupt.

Politicians naturally have an eye on the polls. The Coalition has given itself a bit more breathing space by declaring that it will stick there in office for the full five years ? instead of the normal practice of going early just in case. Even so, they worry that controversial policies, such as NHS reform, will work, but might not work fast enough for them to get the credit at the polls in 2015.

Perhaps this underestimates the voting strength of a large section of the population who don't come out in street protests, don't appear in newspaper columns and TV or radio interviews, and don't organise strikes ? but who know from their own family and workplace life that the books have to balance. And perhaps it underestimates how much the electorate actually reward politicians for sticking up for things that are right.

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