

Article review on a revised british constitution



The article written by Donley T. Studlar, a distinguished of political science in the of Virginia, USA, was actually a lecture delivered in the university of Cincinnati in 1998 when, Tony Blair, prime minister of Britain, was in the process of introducing radical constitutional amendments. The highlight of Blair's election manifesto was the constitutional reforms that his part would introduce in order to empower British citizens with more rights and promote their participation in the decision making. Studlar's views were of particular importance because Blair's proposal were seen as highly significant as the Britain is a unitary state with all centralized power vested on the central government not having much transparency in its working processes.

The article primarily discusses seven major constitutional proposals of the Blair government which it intended to reform and implement. They are devolution of Scotland and Wales; election of Mayor of London and major urban areas; removal of voting rights of hereditary peers in the House of Lords; incorporation of European human rights into British laws; freedom of information acts; electoral reforms at various level of government and referendum on changing the electoral system for member of parliament; and legislation for separate Supreme Court as independent judicial authority and stable government in northern Ireland.

The Blair government was able to make significant inroad into the major constitutional reform proposals and help form stable governments in Scotland and wale after devolution. Even the problem of Northern Ireland, beset with internal violence, was relatively sorted out. Decentralization of power to local councils and mayors and right to information went a long way in creating transparency in government work. Referendums were held to encourage and promote public participation in government decision making

<https://assignbuster.com/article-review-on-a-revised-british-constitution/>

were hailed as highly popular mechanism. The one area that became controversial was the reforms in the electoral system whereby though 'single member district system would be retained but instead of casting a vote for one person only, electorate would rank candidates in order of preference, thus assuring majority rather than a plurality of vote for the winner'.

The reform came under a lot of flak from major political parties because the constitutional reform had undermined their political supremacy over the smaller political parties with regional interests. Even the labor party members had shown their resentment against this particular reform, fearing their majority in the coming elections. But I think that this particular constitutional reform is great step towards a genuine public democracy because it not only empowers public but makes efforts to include the regional and local interests of the regional parties. It shows that dynamic decision power and the strong will of Blair to implement his party manifesto and political agenda in the right spirit that it was initially made.