

Chapter 2 – *The Politics of Welfare*

A key development in the summer of 2007 has been the succession of the former Chancellor, Gordon Brown, to the position of Prime Minister. This was anticipated to signal a possible emphasis on more left of centre and progressive social policy developments. The signs are contradictory. Gordon Brown's initial moves were to bring a wider than usual variety of politicians into a central grouping of advisors and cabinet members to be a government of "all the talents". This might imply that he would borrow social policy ideas from the other parties – and indeed he has been accused of this. However the policy programme set out for his first year in government in the traditional November Queen's speech has been typified by incremental social policy developments – more money for health, housing and education.

Nick Manning,
November 2007