



Iain Duncan Smith's think tank reminds Burnham he works for them

## Description

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andy burnham

A shady right-wing think tank is reminding Andy Burnham who he really answers to. The Centre for Social Justice is calling on Labour's incumbent Prime Minister to grasp the nettle of welfare reform. Whatever that means.

The CSJ is [making a big hoo-ha](#) of the fact that there have been half a million more out-of-work benefit claimants for each Prime Minister that's lost their job since 2019. Or to put it in terms that aren't highly sensationalist, an increase of 2.7 million.

## Think tank's figures as murky as them

And it didn't take long for them to start shitting on disabled people and equating Personal Independence Payment (PIP) to unemployment and of course they're beating the dead horse on mental health.

The analysis (and we use that term loosely) [said](#)

The number of 16 to 34 year olds economically inactive due to a mental health condition has risen by 76 per cent since 2019, while the number of 16 to 24 year olds receiving PIP doubled over the same period according to DWP figures.

It's very odd that they jump from 16-34 to 16-24, particularly considering that for the most part, they're talking about young NEET people. Most 30-year-olds don't tend to be in education.

But of course, missing from this is the actual figures. The number of 16-34-year-olds who can't work due to mental health conditions [is still just 250,000](#) which is why the age ranges make sense. The fact

itâ??s risen by 190,000 since 2019 should be cause for concern, but not from a right-wing think tank run by Iain Duncan Smith. Also, these arenâ??t out-of-work benefit figures; theyâ??re for PIP.

On top of that, just [465,000 young people are on PIP, up from 230,000](#). And of course, PIP has nothing to do with unemployment and actually enables a lot of people to work. But the right-wing ghouls know their media pals will drip-feed their propaganda to the masses, so they hate disabled people even more.

## Evil Iain Duncan Smith will never go away

The shady think tank was founded by the truly evil Tory ex Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) boss Iain Duncan Smith, who was the architect for all of the partyâ??s disgusting cuts in the 2010s. Since leaving the DWP he runs the CSJ, which regularly influences government policy with itâ??s cruel plans around disability benefits.

Satan reincarnate: [Duncan Smith said](#)

Welfare reform takes **default watermark** one. But the rewards are enormous. Getting fewer than one quarter of those on long-term benefits to work would generate Â£18 billion â?? enough to cut taxes by thousands, slash the defence budget and reduce the defence to 3 per cent of GDP.

Even more importantly, it would transform lives forever by extending all the advantages that come with a job. Whoever emerges as the next Prime Minister must grasp the nettle without delay.

As [disability rights activist Liz](#) pointed out on Twitter, the CSJ, of course, also [has a plan](#) for how they would â??grasp the nettleâ?? (seriously WTF does that mean?!)

The CSJ just popped up to call on next PM (Andy Burnham, a CSJ commissioner) to once again punch down on welfare claimants

The Â£7.4bn they have today said could be â??savedâ??\* would come from

-Removing benefits from 1.1m ill/disabled

-Cutting Â£80 pwk from those who remain eligible <https://t.co/8ZL8j5lh5v>  
[pic.twitter.com/eYNfaezfJ6](https://t.co/8ZL8j5lh5v)

â?? LurgeeLiz (@LurgeeLife) [June 28, 2026](#)

As Liz points out, the CSJ wants to â??saveâ?? Â£7.4 billion by stripping 1.1 million sick and disabled people by changing the eligibility criteria. They also want to cut Â£80 per week from those who somehow still remain eligible for benefits. In short, IDS wants to move the goal posts and then make those who still manage to jump through the hoops even poorer.

## CSJ hate backed by Burnham

The CSJ also reminded us that they want to [stop poorer kids from getting a higher education](#)

The CSJ has also revealed that the well-trodden pathway to university is no longer working for many, with 700,000 working-age people with graduate qualifications – including 100,000 under-30s – now out of work and claiming one or more benefits.

Back in January, the rags had a field day when the CSJ [released a report](#) that made it seem like 700,000 graduates were on unemployment benefits. [The Canary debunked this](#) and explained that the CSJ actually reported that just 110,000 graduates under the age of 30 were out of work and claiming benefits.

However, the age ranges from [data set](#) used go from 16-24 and 25-34, so it’s unclear where their under-30 stat came from. The CSJ is seemingly now trying to cover up that they peddled a much higher, untrue figure to the press.

And fear not, they’ve got the next prime minister to back them up:

The CSJ has begun to change the [orientation](#) in this country about an education that works for all, and it chimes with everything we need to do in Greater Manchester.

If you think it’s odd that Burnham is quoted by them, that’s because [he’s been a commissioner of the CSJ since 2023](#). And it’s not just the Tories that Duncan Smith influenced. The think tank was instrumental in Labour’s current benefit cuts and reform. The disastrous [WorkWell](#), started out as a CSJ policy and is now being heralded across the land.

WorkWell was [originally piloted in Burnham’s Greater Manchester](#), as well as it’s Tory predecessor, WorkingWell, starting there. [As the Canary’s Hannah Sharland exposed](#), Working Well basically amounted to disabled claimants being passed around different services that they could already access without the job centre getting involved.

## Burnham is IDS’s lap dog

Just a few weeks ago, Burnham still seemed to be hellbent on forcing disabled kids into work, [praising the Milburn review](#). As the *Canary* has extensively covered, the Milburn review is [just another excuse](#) for the DWP and government to ruin disabled kids lives.

Any hope that Burnham would care about disabled people went out the window when he appointed another ex-DWP boss James Purnell [as his chief of staff](#). Purnell’s short tenure at the department under Gordon Brown led to the work capability assessment, conditionality, and sanctions.

As the *Canary’s* Hannah Sharland wrote:

At the end of the day, the fact that Burnham rubs shoulders with a think tank that Tory austerity acolyte IDS set in motion tells you a lot about the kind of Labour leader – and

prime minister â?? he would be.

Publicly, Burnham has opposed the disability benefit cuts. However, some are wary that heâ??ll be a shameless turncoat in power.

The Centre for Social Justice donâ??t need to punch down on benefits claimants anymore; todayâ??s move was simply to remind Burnham exactly who he answers to.

*Featured image via the Canary*

By [Rachel Charlton-Dailey](#)

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