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LORD OWEN CONDEMNS "CONSPIRACY OF SILENCE" ON EU-US TRADE DEAL

Introducing his NHS Bill (Amended Duties and Powers) Bill **Lord Owen calls today for transparency from Prime Minister David Cameron over the secret mandate for the EU-US Trade Negotiations** which he hopes to boost at the G8 Summit in five weeks time in Northern Ireland.

"...there is at present no plan to exclude arrangements for health care and protection and in particular for the NHS in its different forms in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland."

"Because of the intense secrecy surrounding the proceedings it has been so far impossible to obtain any assurances on this crucial issue. **The British press so far only cover the trade aspects.**"

"The Prime Minister writing in the Wall Street Journal on Monday made no mention of health nor the **alarming prospect of investment protection being extended to the whole raft of private health contracts in the UK that American health care companies expect to be awarded to them in the next few years.**"

"Such protection could have the effect of health contracts being virtually retained in perpetuity with no democratic right for an incoming government to discontinue the contracts... Ominously, the Prime Minister suggested that 'everything must be on the table'..."

"The Prime Minister in his WSJ article actually had the gall to lecture about transparency... What about the appalling effects of the lack of

transparency on our NHS? **There is a conspiracy of silence about this matter...**"

"It is why I have today presented a short Bill for the reinstatement of the English NHS. Amongst other important matters, [it adds a] Clause would make it impossible for example in the pending US-EU Trade Negotiations for any provisions to be agreed by UK Ministers affecting NHS provision without the UK Parliament or the relevant devolved legislature giving its approval prior to any agreement on or Treaty signature."

"This Clause will be a matter on which candidates from all parties in the June 2014 European Elections will be asked for their views, including UKIP."

Note for Editors. David Owen's full comments can be read [here](#). A note on the changes to the bill can be read [here](#). Copies of the Bill and Explanatory Notes can be obtained from Parliament or from the openDemocracy website, [here](#).

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