



## GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSION TARGETS

*Alan Simpson (Nottingham, South) (Lab):* What plans she has to make greenhouse gas emission targets statutory and binding.

*The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Margaret Beckett):* Ratification of the Kyoto protocol on 16 February will mean that the UK is legally bound by protocol to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 12.5 per cent. below 1990 levels in 2008 to 2012. We are well on track to meet this commitment. We currently have no plans to make further specific and quantitative legally binding greenhouse gas emission targets.

*Alan Simpson:* Members on the Labour Benches will rightly be proud that it was a Labour Government who gave themselves the legally binding duty to abolish fuel poverty in its entirety by 2016, and who set targets for the reduction of domestic greenhouse gas emissions by 20 per cent. by 2010. Before the Secretary of State allows the Conservatives to berate her on this, she should recall that they opposed the introduction of that legally binding framework, warning the House that it would result in a nation—

*Mr. Speaker:* Order. I think that that is enough for the Secretary of State to go on.

*Margaret Beckett:* I am grateful to my hon. Friend. He is right to highlight the fact that many on the Conservative Benches denied the existence of fuel poverty. They certainly showed no sign of recognising its tremendous impact on many households in this country. We are very proud that more than a million families have been helped under this Government's programme, and that we are now able to invest extra resources in taking the programme forward to do even more to alleviate the distress caused to vulnerable households.