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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
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# HOUSE OF LORDS

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Abbreviation	Party/Group
CB	Cross Bench
Con	Conservative
DUP	Democratic Unionist Party
GP	Green Party
Ind Lab	Independent Labour
Ind LD	Independent Liberal Democrat
Ind SD	Independent Social Democrat
Ind UU	Independent Ulster Unionist
Lab	Labour
LD	Liberal Democrat
LD Ind	Liberal Democrat Independent
Non-afl	Non-affiliated
PC	Plaid Cymru
UKIP	UK Independence Party
UUP	Ulster Unionist Party

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## House of Lords

Thursday, 17 December 2015.

11 am

Prayers—read by the Lord Bishop of Chester.

### Introduction: Baroness Brown of Cambridge

11.07 am

*Dame Julia Elizabeth King, DBE, having been created Baroness Brown of Cambridge, of Cambridge in the County of Cambridgeshire, was introduced and made the solemn affirmation, supported by Lord Baker of Dorking and Lord Turner of Echinswell, and signed an undertaking to abide by the Code of Conduct.*

### Royal Assent

11.11 am

*The following Acts were given Royal Assent:*

National Insurance Contributions (Rate Ceilings) Act 2015

European Union Referendum Act 2015

European Union (Approvals) Act 2015

### Nigeria

#### Question

11.12 am

*Asked by Baroness Cox*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of recent developments in the northern states of Nigeria.

**The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns) (Con):** My Lords, the security situation in north-east Nigeria has improved over the past six months, with Boko Haram being driven from key towns. However, Boko Haram remains a threat, launching regular suicide attacks, often using children. We estimate that more than 20,000 people have been killed, more than 2.2 million people displaced and more than 14.8 million people affected by the Boko Haram insurgency.

**Baroness Cox (CB):** My Lords, I thank the Minister for her very sympathetic reply and important information. Is she aware that I returned just last week from areas affected by Boko Haram and found the scale of killing, kidnapping and destruction to be far worse than that reported in the media? As indicated, a reign of terror persists, with continuing kidnappings and killings, despite the Nigerian army regaining some territory, and families trying to return home find everything destroyed, mines on their land and severe shortages of food. In Borno state alone, 875,000 people face emergency levels of food insecurity. What contribution are Her Majesty's Government and the United Kingdom making towards urgently needed provision of security and means of survival for victims of this Islamist terrorist regime?

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** My Lords, I pay tribute to the noble Baroness for her work in such war-torn areas. She sees at first hand the devastation that these depredations by Boko Haram cause to individuals. She is right to point out the terrible position that people face when they seek to go back to what has been home.

In the 2015-16 financial year, the UK has already planned an additional £4 million of humanitarian support to north-east Nigeria, including through the UN and the International Committee of the Red Cross. The UK development programmes in the north-east of Nigeria are supporting civil society organisations and NGOs that are working to reduce intra-community conflict, promote community governance and security dialogue, reduce violence against women and girls, and improve access to schooling in an area where 600,000 children are out of school.

**Lord McConnell of Glenscorrodale (Lab):** My Lords, given the importance in the new aid strategy announced in November by the Chancellor and the Secretary of State for International Development of conflict and development and the link between the two, will the forthcoming bilateral aid review for Nigeria take account, first, of the impact of these troubles in northern Nigeria, the Central African Republic and Cameroon, and secondly the key role that Nigeria plays in ECOWAS not just in economic regeneration and activity in the area but in conflict resolution and conflict prevention?

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** Yes, my Lords. The noble Lord is right to point out Nigeria's position in ECOWAS and how important it is that it plays a strong role there and appreciates the position it ought to take. The advantage of the Conflict, Security and Stability Fund is that now we can have project funding on a four-year cycle, which makes it more certain.

**Lord Chidgey (LD):** My Lords, Boko Haram systematically attacks education provision in the northern states of Nigeria, which now have exceptionally low levels of enrolment in primary, secondary and further education and where many schools have been closed for three years or more. With literacy levels falling to less than 60%, will the Government make representations to the Nigerian Government to prioritise education provision in these northern states? Will they also stress the importance of consistent, regular payment of teachers' wages in state schools, improved teacher training and a focus on reopening closed schools and making them secure learning environments?

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** The noble Lord is right to point to the importance of education, because it provides security for children that they can be with their families and have a future. We have stressed to President Buhari that the work carried out militarily to defeat Boko Haram is only one part of the process. It is crucial that we work to ensure that there is reform of the constitution and the way it tackles and respects minorities. It is also crucial to support education systems for the future security of that area.

**Lord Alton of Liverpool (CB):** My Lords, did the Minister hear from her colleague, Tobias Ellwood, about the testimony given by Victoria Youhanna at a recent meeting here in Parliament? Victoria had escaped from Boko Haram. Given that hundreds of girls are still enslaved, abducted, forcibly converted, entrapped in domestic slavery, used as fighters and denied education, will the Minister—referring to the point the noble Lord, Lord Chidgey, just made—tell us more about what can be done to ensure that girls are able to go back into education and that they are rehabilitated and given help in dealing with trauma? The words “Boko Haram” mean “destroy western education”, and it is therefore important that we show the importance that we attach to education.

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** My Lords, I have not heard the witness of that victim. I clearly sympathise with her experience. I have had the opportunity to hear witness from others about the appalling violence they suffered and witnessed. We regularly raise with the Nigerian authorities rescuing people being held by Boko Haram. We also work to support women and girls in northern Nigeria as part of our general humanitarian response. That includes helping the safe school initiative in north-eastern Nigeria. As part of our work on the prevention of sexual violence in conflict, we help to fund a UNICEF programme which supports the reintegration of victims of conflict-related sexual violence.

**Lord Anderson of Swansea (Lab):** My Lords, what is DfID doing specifically to help those internally displaced persons who simply cannot return home and are forced to languish in deplorable conditions in camps?

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** My Lords, DfID is providing a substantial package of security, development and humanitarian support, including a £6.5 million humanitarian programme and a £5.4 million development portfolio in Yobe state. The funds are used to provide humanitarian support in the protracted food and nutrition crisis. It is important to note that it is not just Nigeria that faces this; it is a matter that reaches across the Sahel.

## Sudan: Human Rights *Question*

11.20 am

*Asked by Lord Chidgey*

To ask Her Majesty’s Government what is their assessment of the current human rights situation in Sudan.

**The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns) (Con):** My Lords, the human rights situation in Sudan remains of serious concern, particularly regarding reports of violations of international humanitarian law and the use of sexual violence in conflict. We consistently raise our concerns with the Government of Sudan and armed opposition groups and, where relevant, in the UN

Security Council. In addition, we supported a renewed mandate for the UN independent expert on human rights at the Human Rights Council this September.

**Lord Chidgey (LD):** I thank the Minister for that response. In 2004, Gayle Smith, the respected US analyst on Sudan, wrote in the *Washington Post*, in terms, that the efforts of the US Administration to end Sudan’s conflict would have been wasted if they allowed the Sudanese Government to continue to commit crimes against humanity. They would have demonstrated to Khartoum that it could act with impunity against its own people. Eleven years later, Gayle Smith has been appointed head of the US International Development Agency. In the mean time, 2.5 million people have been displaced in Darfur and 300,000 killed. Some 500,000 children are suffering from severe acute malnutrition and will die without emergency action. Will the Government remind Gayle Smith of her prophetic words and urge the US agency to join the UK in taking the strongest lead in the Security Council, and in the UN as a whole, to bring to an end Khartoum’s record of human rights abuse and denial of humanitarian aid access?

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** My Lords, we take a very strong position with the Government of Sudan on all those matters, and we work closely within the troika with our colleagues, the United States and Norway. Sudan has suffered now for decades in a situation where its Government appear to ignore the needs of their own population. We work within the United Nations, and of course the Human Rights Council is part of that body. In particular, we support the work of the UN panel of experts to document breaches of the sanctions regime, breaches of international humanitarian law and offences against individuals, which can be followed up because of course no one should be able to claim immunity or impunity for those crimes.

**Baroness Kinnock of Holyhead (Lab):** My Lords, is the Minister aware that the chief prosecutor of the International Criminal Court has strongly condemned the United Nations Security Council for its failure to bring high-profile indicted people, such as the Sudanese President, Omar Al-Bashir, to trial for mass rape and other war crimes in Darfur? Will the Minister confirm that as a member of the Security Council the UK is pressing for justice and the arrest of those who continue to commit atrocities in Darfur?

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** Indeed, my Lords, we press very hard to ensure that those who commit atrocities in Darfur are not able to achieve impunity in that matter. That is important, not only there but around the world. With regard to Fatou Bensouda, the chief prosecutor to whom the noble Baroness referred, of course I do not interfere in her work but I watch her very closely. Much earlier this year I met her and discussed the matters to which the noble Baroness referred. So I assure the noble Baroness that we not only watch; we also press.



**Lord Alton of Liverpool (CB):** My Lords, are we collecting systematic evidence to ensure that material goes before the International Criminal Court to bring to justice those who have been charged with genocide in Sudan? Reverting to the Question asked by the noble Lord, Lord Chidgey, what humanitarian access is now available both in Darfur and in South Kordofan and Blue Nile, where humanitarian agencies have been prohibited from reaching the desperate people in those places?

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** My Lords, I am aware that the UN independent expert has not yet returned to Sudan since his reappointment in October 2014, so we have not been able to test out whether he is able to gain access to Blue Nile and South Kordofan. We will watch to see what happens there. Humanitarian access across the border into the two areas is still judged to be so dangerous that very few organisations are able to commit to carrying out work. It is therefore difficult for Governments to fund them because it is difficult to judge what needs they are meeting and to be able to hold them to account. This is a matter on which we continue to press.

With regard to collecting information, we work with NGOs that are very brave human rights defenders, and we provide assistance where we may, using tools such as the international protocol on the collection of information that may later be used for prosecutions.

**Baroness Cox (CB):** My Lords, is the Minister aware that the regime in Khartoum continues to carry out aerial bombardment of the peoples in Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan's Nuba mountains? They are living in terrible conditions, hiding in snake-infested caves and riverbanks, they cannot harvest their crops and, as noble Lords have already indicated, their humanitarian needs are enormous. The noble Baroness says that it is difficult to find agencies to take the cross-border aid but our own experience is that we work with organisations that are highly respectable. Will the Government continue to consider ways of providing that cross-border aid for the 750,000 people who are dying from lack of food and medical care?

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** The noble Baroness has seen at first hand the appalling violence against people in the two areas. I well remember her description of people trying to seek refuge in a dried-up riverbed infested with snakes, and I am aware that the violence now extends to bombing at night as well as by day. I assure the noble Baroness that we will keep our policy under constant review as regards providing assistance to those who wish to go across the border and that we will lobby both sides to allow humanitarian access to all parts of the two areas from within Sudan.

**Lord Howell of Guildford (Con):** My Lords, the Chinese have been very active both in Sudan and in South Sudan in this area, and have taken quite a forward involvement in the policy problems of the area. Have the Government had any liaison with the Chinese authorities, because they seem to have enormous resources which they can apply, particularly in this

kind of area, and might be of assistance in solving the problems that the noble Baroness, Lady Cox, rightly raised?

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** My Lords, of course we had the Chinese state visit very recently, during the course of which my right honourable friend the Prime Minister discussed the matter of human rights widely with the Chinese President. So we keep the matter under review. In the first instance we want to ensure that any aid provided is provided within international humanitarian law as well as international law itself.

**Baroness Northover (LD):** My Lords, what further progress has been made in restricting the small arms trade, given that every community in Sudan is awash with small arms? Obviously, this is an extremely difficult problem, but international efforts were being made. What further progress can the Minister report?

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** The noble Baroness points to a serious problem, not only in that area but elsewhere. We have made clear to the Government that it is important that they improve their own attitude towards the security of all minorities, part and parcel of which is indeed the restriction of the amount of arms that are available. But I am under no illusions about the difficulty of trying to pursue that.

## Airport Security Question

11.28 am

*Asked by Lord Rosser*

To ask Her Majesty's Government which airports used by flights to and from the United Kingdom have been the subject of a security review leading to enhanced security arrangements since the end of October.

**The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Transport and Home Office (Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon) (Con):** My Lords, since the tragic loss of the Metrojet aircraft we have been urgently reviewing security at a number of airports with flights to the UK and we are working closely with the countries concerned to address any shortcomings that we identify. Noble Lords will of course understand that we do not comment in detail on security arrangements.

**Lord Rosser (Lab):** My Lords, I thank the Minister for that response, and obviously I accept what he said about not revealing details of security arrangements. However, can he say whether these reviews that are carried out are related simply to whether required procedures and processes are in place or do they also look at whether in reality those procedures and processes are being thoroughly adhered to and properly carried out? Obviously, the effectiveness of security arrangements at airports is also dependent on the attitude and approach of the people responsible for applying and implementing them. Secondly, are these reviews of security arrangements at airports around the world, which the Government have said are conducted in conjunction with the sovereign authorities, done on a pre-announced basis as far as the airport is concerned or on an unannounced basis?

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The noble Lord raises an important point about the details of the checks. I assure him that we work very closely with all sovereign authorities on security and security arrangements across the board. He raised the question of culture and people, and that is an important element of our reviews of those countries. We work very closely with the authorities concerned because we are dealing with sovereign nations, which are primarily responsible for the security of their airports.

**Baroness Randerson (LD):** My Lords, Monarch Airlines and Thomson Airways have recently extended the cancellation of their flights until towards the end of January. Can the Minister give us an outline of the discussions that the Government are having with the UK airlines that would normally fly to Sharm el-Sheikh? Do the Government have any knowledge of when it is likely that flights of this nature will resume?

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** I assure the noble Baroness that we are working very closely with UK airlines. Indeed, I pay tribute to them for the extent to which they co-operated to ensure that more than 16,600 UK citizens left Sharm el-Sheikh efficiently and effectively over a small period of time. We continue to work with them. We are also ensuring in all respects that we work closely with the Egyptian authorities to resolve the security issues at Sharm el-Sheikh as soon as possible.

**Lord Geddes (Con):** Can my noble friend assure the House that the review and the discussions that his department is having with airports in this country include the smaller regional airports, which have a reputation of being somewhat porous?

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** We have a very strong regime in terms of our security arrangements. The events at Sharm el-Sheikh raised issues on an international basis, but I assure my noble friend that we continue to review our arrangements not only internationally but, as he was right to refer to, domestically across the airport network in the UK.

**Lord Mawhinney (Con):** My Lords, of course the Government are right not to share security information, but can my noble friend tell your Lordships what arrangements are in place to brief airlines that fly into international airports on any findings that might be helpful to them in determining whether they should continue those flights?

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** My noble friend raises another important point about the relationship with airlines. I assure him that we work very closely with all international partners and, where we can, we share important information with the airlines. They play an important role in areas such as advance passenger information, which in the UK is also shared with, for example, the Border Force.

**Lord Wallace of Saltaire (LD):** My Lords, does this scrutiny extend to private airports and heliports? I was looking at the Channel Islands, for example, as a place which, formally speaking, is within our borders. Some

months ago I looked at the helicopters flown between Brecqhou and Monaco. I am not aware that the Guernsey police ever visit Brecqhou, for example, but when passengers arrive there—it may just be the Barclay brothers and nobody else—there are no border controls. Do we make sure that private flights are covered? A considerable number of these come in and out of the United Kingdom, both to the mainland and to the Crown dependencies.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The noble Lord raises an important point about private flights. I assure him that security arrangements are in place at those airports. I will write to him on the specific airports that he mentioned.

**Baroness McIntosh of Hudnall (Lab):** My Lords, with regard to the concentration of interest on Sharm el-Sheikh and on Egypt more widely, it was recently reported that the preliminary investigation into the incident that gave rise to the most recent security anxieties showed that it was unlikely that that incident was caused by a bomb on board the aircraft. Can the noble Lord give the House the latest information on the status of the investigation into that incident?

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** The noble Baroness is, I believe, referring to the recent reports of the provisional investigation by the Egyptian authorities. Certainly we are clear that the Russian authorities have retained their view that it was an explosive device, and our actions were based on our own assessment and the intelligence reports we had, to ensure that we took effective action to ensure the safety and security of UK citizens. We continue to monitor the situation and we will not restore flights until we are satisfied that new arrangements are in place.

**Lord Rosser:** I inquired whether the reviews of security arrangement at airports around the world, done in conjunction with the sovereign authorities, were done on a pre-announced basis as far as the airport itself is concerned or on an unannounced basis. I do not think that the Minister responded to that point.

**Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon:** What I was alluding to is that we are dealing with sovereign authorities. Of course we will work in conjunction with how they see fit to monitor their airports. It would be inappropriate for a UK agency to demand access based on unannounced procedures that the sovereign authority had not agreed to.

## Syrian Refugees *Question*

11.36 am

*Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will follow the example of the government of Canada in welcoming further Syrian refugees.

**The Minister of State, Home Office (Lord Bates) (Con):** My Lords, we have committed to resettling 20,000 refugees during this Parliament. As part of this, the Prime Minister gave a further commitment in September to resettle 1,000 Syrian refugees by Christmas. With the arrival of two further charter flights yesterday, into Belfast and Stanstead, this target has now been met and exceeded.

**Lord Roberts of Llandudno (LD):** I thank the Minister for his reply. However, we have been shocked this morning to hear of the situation in Sudan and Nigeria, and of the hundreds of thousands of children who are in need there. Is not there something we can do, perhaps by responding to Save the Children's request and admitting 3,000 unaccompanied refugee children and giving them some hope? I ask the Minister to seriously consider how we could respond positively to this. We cannot respond to the situation in Sudan and Nigeria, but we can respond to the situation on our doorstep.

**Lord Bates:** The programme we are talking about is the Syrian vulnerable person relocation scheme. Of course, there are other schemes, such as Mandate and Gateway, which are not country specific and therefore people would be eligible to apply through that route. The noble Lord has been consistent in drawing attention to this. Under the previous Government, he would chide us that the Syrian vulnerable person scheme was too little, dealing with only 160 people in the first year. But in the past three months we have added another 1,000 to that. That is something to be proud of, as is our committing to a further 20,000 by the end of the Parliament, and the fact that we are the second largest cash donor. There is always more that can be done, but I think that we can hold our heads up high, particularly at this time of year.

**The Earl of Sandwich (CB):** My Lords, many local councils have made generous offers to receive Syrian refugees. Has the Home Office considered publishing the figures so that councils can encourage one another to welcome and receive these refugees? It seems to me that there is a lack of information between the councils, and this should be put right.

**Lord Bates:** Richard Harrington, my colleague in the Home Office, is responsible for that and is working with the more than 50 councils that have come forward. Because these are sensitive issues, councils have asked that they choose whether to disclose this information themselves; we do not disclose it on their behalf. On looking into this, there is one issue that has come up. The basis on which people come into this country is that they are given five years leave to remain on international humanitarian assistance. A lot of the accommodation that is provided is short term. The idea is, of course, that we want the people coming in to find work and their children to find schools and, because they are in high need, to have access to medical support. That is one reason why it is slightly more difficult to ensure that the right accommodation comes forward. However, the evidence of the past few months, with over 1,000 refugees arriving here, shows that that is beginning to work.

**Baroness Warsi (Con):** Are there any specific criteria that the Government use, over and above the recognition of these individuals as refugees, in the selection of the people arriving in the United Kingdom? While I am always cautious of trying to prioritise one set of refugees over others, would the Government consider, in the light of the United Kingdom's expertise in preventing sexual violence in conflict, whether there is any way we could take in men and women who were subjected to sexual violence before they fled Syria?

**Lord Bates:** When we set up this scheme we chose, unlike some other countries, to work through the UNHCR. We set certain criteria as to the type of people we regarded as most vulnerable, including those in acute need of medical attention that they could not get locally, women and girls who were vulnerable, and victims of torture or abuse. The UNHCR identifies those people and brings them in. That is one of the great strengths of our scheme—it meets the very issue that my noble friend is right to raise.

**The Lord Bishop of St Albans:** My Lords, I congratulate the Government on the first 1,000 refugees being brought in. I hope that this will continue apace. On the Question of the noble Lord, Lord Roberts, which draws on the experience of Canada, since 1979 the Canada private sponsorship programme has enabled 200,000 refugees to be settled in that country. Privately sponsored refugees are likely to make up around 40% of those coming in over the forthcoming months. It is a good example of big society, whereby churches and community groups are given responsibility for working with resettlement programmes. Have Her Majesty's Government looked into the experience of Canada, and are they considering developing similar programmes in the UK based on that good experience?

**Lord Bates:** We have looked at that programme, which is impressive but unlike ours is not focused on those in greatest need. We are having discussions at present: the Home Secretary is meeting with NGOs and we are talking to them and to church groups and faith groups about setting up a similar community sponsorship scheme, but perhaps not for people in urgent need of attention. That might not be appropriate, as it could not give the care they need. However, going forward, as the scheme expands, we would want to follow that up.

**Baroness Hamwee (LD):** The Minister will be aware that there are many people in this country of Syrian and Iraqi origin, who are settled and pay tax here, who are desperate—I do not think that is putting it too highly—to bring in their own family members from the affected countries and care for them. Are the Government considering relaxing the restrictive rules on family visas to allow these people to play their part in helping their own families and the whole situation?

**Lord Bates:** We are not looking at that particular point—we are quite strict on that. Visas are restricted to spouses and dependent children under the age of 18; we will look sympathetically at exceptional cases involving dependent relatives. One of the reasons why the Syrian vulnerable persons scheme is so appropriate



[LORD BATES]  
is that the UNHCR looks at trying to bring the whole family group to the UK, rather than just one member of it. Therefore, the chances of the situation mentioned by the noble Baroness arising will hopefully be less in the future.

### Arrangement of Business *Announcement of Recess Dates*

11.43 am

**Lord Taylor of Holbeach (Con):** My Lords, it may be for the convenience of the House if I make a short Statement about recess dates for Easter. To save Members reaching for their diaries, as is the custom there will be a printed copy of the dates in the Printed Paper Office. I stress that I make this Statement with the usual caveat that these dates are subject to the progress of business; they are provisional dates. We will adjourn at the end of business on Wednesday 23 March and return on Monday 11 April.

### House of Lords: Strathclyde Review *Statement*

11.44 am

**The Lord Privy Seal (Baroness Stowell of Beeston) (Con):** My Lords, with the leave of the House, I would like to make a Statement on the review of my noble friend Lord Strathclyde on secondary legislation and the primacy of the House of Commons.

On behalf of my right honourable friend the Prime Minister, who commissioned the review, I pay tribute to the noble Lord, Lord Strathclyde, and to the expert panel who assisted him. Before coming on to the review itself, it is perhaps worth rehearsing briefly the circumstances in which it was commissioned.

We have a clear purpose in this House as a revising Chamber, and in so doing, we complement the work of the other place. When we consider primary legislation, the conversation between the two Houses is clear. We can ask the House of Commons to think again through the process of ping-pong, but ultimately the will of the elected House can prevail, with the Parliament Acts available as a backstop.

Secondary legislation works differently. This House can only give or withhold its approval and there is no dialogue. If your Lordships' House refuses to give its consent, the whole process grinds to a halt. It means that, unlike on primary legislation, we are able to exercise a veto, a very significant power, and so by convention we have exercised that power only in exceptional circumstances, doing so on only five occasions since the Second World War.

So withholding agreement to a statutory instrument is rare enough. To take that step on a Budget measure, as we did in October, was unprecedented, and to do that on a Motion where different sides of the House still disagreed as to its effect took us into uncharted territory. Yet only a day after the House exercised its veto, it was invited to do so all over again in respect of an order made under the Electoral Registration and

Administration Act 2013. What had happened previously on two occasions in 13 years very nearly happened twice in two days. The exceptional was becoming a little less rare.

These events put a long-established convention in doubt and raise constitutional questions about the primacy of the elected House which needed to be examined. My noble friend was asked to examine whether there is a better way to handle secondary legislation in order that the elected House of Commons could have the decisive say, just as it does on primary legislation. My noble friend did that in his customary way, with careful thought and extensive consultation with parliamentarians in both Houses from across the political spectrum. The result is a considered report with three aims in mind: to provide clarity, simplicity and certainty in the passage of secondary legislation.

My noble friend outlines three options as to how the other place can be given the decisive say. Option 1 would remove the House of Lords from the statutory instrument procedure altogether, as already happens in respect of some categories of SIs. Option 2 would retain the present role of this House in relation to secondary legislation, but seek to codify the convention that has been put in doubt by clarifying the restrictions on how the House's powers to withhold approval or to annul should be exercised, whether by resolution or changes to our Standing Orders. The third option would create a new procedure in statute. It is a compromise option that in exchange for removing the power of veto would give this House a new power to ask the House of Commons to think again. But the other place would have the final say, allowing it to insist on its primacy and override a rejection by the House of Lords.

My noble friend Lord Strathclyde, in submitting his review to the Prime Minister, has clearly recommended the third compromise solution as the way forward. I should add that he has recommended that the Government, with the involvement of the House of Commons Procedure Committee, should review the circumstances in which statutory instrument powers should be subject to already existing Commons-only procedures, and he recommends that the Government should ensure that both primary and secondary legislation are used appropriately.

My noble friend's report is thoughtful and measured, and deserves proper consideration by the Government before we respond fully. That is what we intend to do. Of course, noble Lords will have views as to the best way forward. We want to listen properly to those views, and to those of Members of the other place, as we decide on our preferred approach. That begins today with this Statement and it will continue with a full debate on my noble friend's report in the new year before the Government respond in full.

As we consider the way forward, it is important that we do so with those aims of clarity, simplicity and certainty in mind. All Governments require and indeed benefit from a strong Parliament holding them to account and providing scrutiny and, as my noble friend's report highlights, the House of Lords has long played its scrutiny role very effectively. But in providing that scrutiny and challenge, it should be the elected



House that has the decisive say on secondary as well as on primary legislation. It is by ensuring that balance that we can complement the other place and best serve the core purpose for which we are here.

I commend the Statement to the House.

11.50 am

**Baroness Smith of Basildon (Lab):** My Lords, I thank the noble Baroness for repeating the Statement and I thank the noble Lord, Lord Strathclyde, and his team for the uncharacteristic speed in which it has completed a government review. However, it has not taken long, has it? This is the first wholly Conservative Government for nearly 20 years and it is the first ever Conservative Government without an automatic majority in your Lordships' House, yet within months they are already trying to change the rules, on the pretext that this House has exceeded its powers.

From the outset, I want to be clear: we do not set our face against change and improvements. It is Labour Peers who have proposed immediate changes in how we operate. We have also proposed significant change through a constitutional convention. The Government have declined to hold such a convention. Instead, we have today's announcement on the Government's growth area of legislation—statutory instruments.

At this point, most normal people's eyes will glaze over, but SIs are the Government's secret weapon. Traditionally, they were not used for issues that should be in primary legislation or for major policy changes where there should be full scrutiny and consideration. But their use has grown over a number of years and, more significantly, at a faster rate since 2010. The tax credits changes originally proposed were a major policy shift, and it would have been entirely appropriate for them to have been considered in primary legislation. But the Government chose to use an SI.

We will want to consider the report from the noble Lord, Lord Strathclyde, in more detail, but I say to the noble Baroness that the process he recommends is a very significant change. First, it is a major departure to use legislation to address this issue. Secondly, in terms of procedure, a statutory instrument is not sent to your Lordships' House from the House of Commons but from the Executive—from the Government. It is not like legislation where proposals are considered and sent from one House to another.

In terms of statutory instruments, both Houses separately consider measures proposed by the Government. Either House can accept or reject, and rejection by either House is in effect a veto. That is why this House has so rarely rejected a statutory instrument. Since 1999, it has happened just four times in 16 years—approximately once a Parliament. The noble Baroness referred to this, but let us be clear that in this Parliament three attempts at a so-called fatal Motion to reject an SI have failed.

The recommendation from the noble Lord, Lord Strathclyde, is that your Lordships' House could send an SI back to the Commons, but there is no guarantee that the Commons will have considered it first and there is no indication of the timescale. This proposal denies your Lordships' House the opportunity to ask the Government to reconsider. It instead sends it to

the House of Commons. I know that other noble Lords share my concern about the degree of scrutiny for statutory instruments in the other place. We know that any Government with a majority would just ensure that a small committee will consider and pass the SI.

Why do the noble Lord, Lord Strathclyde, and the Prime Minister consider such change is needed? We are told that it is because of the tax credits vote. This House fulfilled its duty in scrutinising secondary legislation. Contrary to some reports, we overwhelmingly declined to block the measure through a fatal Motion but supported asking the Government to reconsider and bring forward changes. That is the right and legitimate role of a second Chamber. Indeed, it allowed the Chancellor to reconsider and to bring forward even more substantial changes than suggested by your Lordships' House.

We are also told that the Labour Opposition and the Lib Dems are ganging up on the Government and forcing through legislative change. The evidence for that assertion is feeble. There have been 42 votes in your Lordships' House since the election. The Government have lost 23 and won 19. But, significantly, 16 of those government defeats were on Bills that started in your Lordships' House with no pre-legislative scrutiny and no prior consideration by the other place. We would have been failing in our duty as a second Chamber if we had not appropriately scrutinised that legislation. Those concerns were raised by the Delegated Powers Committee and the Constitution Committee.

The Government's collective memory is at fault. Between 2005 and 2010, the Labour Government lost 105 votes, including a Second Reading and a fatal SI Motion. Between 2001 and 2005, we suffered 245 defeats, and that was with an elected Commons majority of 167. That was when the noble Lord, Lord Strathclyde, was Leader of the Opposition. I think there are two Lord Strathclydes: there is the one who used to do my job as Leader of the Opposition, who would make, and I am sure has made, the very points that I am making now, and then there is the new version that we see today. The only difference is this Government.

The other point is that we lost major and very serious votes on terrorism and security legislation. I cannot recall a single vote that this Government have lost that is of that magnitude or seriousness. It has to be taken into account that we vote far less than the other place. They have voted 143 times in this Parliament; we have voted just 42 times. That is because, in recognising the role of a second Chamber, we are more selective and cautious in choosing when we vote.

So let us be honest with ourselves: this is not about tax credits or any other issues on which your Lordships' House has disagreed with the Government. If it was, it would be a massive overreaction. It is far more serious than that, so let us look at these changes in the wider context of: the misnamed lobbying Bill, or the gagging Bill as it was nicknamed, which has made it so much harder for charities and campaigning organisations to be effective in their campaigning and lobbying; the weakening of freedom of information legislation; and the fact that, for the first time ever, a Government have instructed the Boundary Commission as to how many constituencies there should be, knowing that the reduction

[BARONESS SMITH OF BASILDON]

favours Conservatives over Labour; and at the same time appointing Members of this House at a faster rate than any other Prime Minister in our history, with the greatest ever proportion of government Peers.

The Government are also making it harder, through individual electoral registration, to register to vote, and we have had English votes for English laws—who knows where that will lead? Also, leaping in where the late Lady Thatcher chose not to tread, there is the Trade Union Bill. Not only does that Bill make it harder to fund and to campaign for trade unions, but it will also completely undermine the funding of the Labour Party, while keeping very quiet about Conservative Party funding.

All this paints a very unattractive picture of a Prime Minister and a Government who will not tolerate challenge. They loathe scrutiny; they fear questioning. The evidence base for the changes proposed today are weak. I guarantee and assure your Lordships' House that we are very open to genuine suggestions for clarification, modernisation and changes, but that has to be in the context of fulfilling our duty and our legitimate constitutional role, not just because the Government and the Prime Minister did not like losing a vote.

I ask the noble Baroness four key questions. When will the Government respond to the report? Does she accept the assertion on page 23, and, indeed, throughout the report by the noble Lord, Lord Strathclyde, that too much legislation is being undertaken by statutory instruments and that that should be changed? What consultation will there be prior to a decision by the Government, other than a debate in your Lordships' House? And can she comment on suggestions that the Government intend to use the Parliament Act to force through any legislative change?

**Lord Dholakia (LD):** My Lords, I add my thanks to the Leader of the House for making the Statement and giving us advance sight of the report from the noble Lord, Lord Strathclyde. I also add my thanks to the noble Lord, Lord Strathclyde, and his team. The noble Lord promised the report before Christmas and he has delivered.

My party believes that both Houses should be examining better ways to work together to achieve more comprehensive, more informed and more effective scrutiny of government legislation and the actions of the Executive. We continue to reject the notion that any Government achieving a majority in the Commons should have the absolute power to prosecute their business without the burden of proper checks and balances, particularly as voter turnout declines and Governments are elected by a smaller and smaller share of the vote. We believe that a second Chamber, however it is constituted, should not be a mere echo of the House of Commons. We are interested in ways to strengthen the role of Parliament as a whole, not to convert the House of Lords from a revising Chamber to an impotent debating society.

We firmly believe that there is a strong case for enhanced parliamentary scrutiny of secondary legislation. This is particularly important when the primary legislation introduced by the Government is a skeleton Bill, with

the statutory instruments flowing from it containing provisions which are more suitable for primary legislation. Already in this Parliament, the Government have introduced two such bills: the Childcare Bill and the Cities and Local Government Devolution Bill. If Governments make increasing use of skeleton Bills, it stands to reason that the SIs stemming from them should be afforded much closer scrutiny.

To that end, my party submitted formal evidence to the noble Lord, Lord Strathclyde, suggesting two different mechanisms by which this House could propose amendments to statutory instruments. We firmly believe that such a mechanism would allow the House of Commons to think again and would, in fact, reduce the incidence of this House withholding its approval of a statutory instrument—which, incidentally, has occurred only six times in the last 50 years. We do not believe that this House should be required to give up its power of veto, when this is such a rare occurrence. To do so would change the arrangements agreed by both Houses following the report of the Joint Committee on Conventions in 2006.

Does the Leader of the House agree that this is not simply a matter for the Prime Minister and the Government, but for Parliament? As there are wider implications, not least for the Parliament Acts, does she recognise that a simple amendment to the Statutory Instruments Act 1946 is clearly not sufficient to deal with this important issue? Does she agree that the proper way to proceed would be to reconstitute a Joint Committee of both Houses to ensure that the matter is fully debated?

We will have a further opportunity to discuss this issue and we will certainly have more to say at that time.

**Baroness Stowell of Beeston:** My Lords, I am grateful to the noble Baroness and the noble Lord for not rushing to their own conclusions on the report of my noble friend Lord Strathclyde, which was published today. I was encouraged by what the noble Baroness, Lady Smith, said about how she and the Opposition are very much interested in change that helps this House fulfil its purpose, because that is what I am interested in, too. This House has a very important role in the legislative process and in Parliament. We are here to scrutinise, challenge and hold the Government to account, and I say that as a member of the Government. I know that that is what this House is here to do, and I want it to be very effective at doing all those things. I want its purpose to be fulfilled properly.

Where I differ from the noble Baroness is about what happened in October. That is the problem. We are now confused as a House. We do not quite know how to deal with secondary legislation because the procedures that we have before us have become confusing. We have this massive power of veto and we have a convention which says that we should not use that veto except in exceptional circumstances.

**Noble Lords:** Oh!

**Baroness Stowell of Beeston:** Absolutely, my Lords, we should use it in exceptional circumstances. However, back in October, a new process was introduced concerning

how this House exercised its veto. We have debated in this Chamber whether the amendments were fatal or non-fatal. We exercised that veto on something that related to taxation and spending; we have never done that before. That was unprecedented.

As a House, we need to look at—what my noble friend Lord Strathclyde was asked to look at—how we could provide certainty and clarity so that we carry out our role of scrutinising and challenging the Government more effectively and remove this confusion. He has set out in his report three options and has recommended one. His recommendation is, if you like, a compromise solution. It means that instead of that theoretical power, which we do not use very often, the House will have a new power to ask the House of Commons to think again. That was what a lot of noble Lords had been asking for recently, after the events of October. I urge the House to consider very carefully what is in my noble friend's report. He has canvassed widely in this House and the other place and has come forward with a set of proposals and one that he is recommending. It merits our strong consideration before we rush to any decision.

The noble Baroness, Lady Smith of Basildon, asked me some questions. She asked specifically when the Government will respond. We will do so in the new year, as I said, but we will not do so until we have had a substantial debate. We can discuss in more detail the contents of my noble friend's report.

The noble Baroness made reference to the use of secondary legislation. My noble friend's report does not say that this Government, or previous Governments, have been using secondary legislation more than in the past. The graph in his report shows that the use of secondary legislation has been quite consistent over about 20 years.

The noble Baroness asked whether we would be consulting further. Clearly, we are listening; I want to hear from noble Lords today and we will again hear what noble Lords have to say in the debate in the new year.

The noble Lord, Lord Dholakia, mentioned that he and his party do not want to give up the veto of this House. He suggested that there should be a Joint Committee to look at this matter. He referred to the Joint Committee on Conventions, which the noble Lord, Lord Cunningham of Felling, chaired back in 2006. There was a convention in this House—the Joint Committee reviewed it when it did that important work in 2006—but, regrettably, that convention has now broken.

**Noble Lords:** Oh!

**Baroness Stowell of Beeston:** We are now looking for a way forward that provides that certainty and clarity, and I hope very much that we will be able to achieve that soon.

**Lord Taylor of Holbeach (Con):** My Lords, we now have a period for Back-Bench questions and I hope that noble Lords will recognise that there is a lot of interest in this matter. As my noble friend said, there will be an extensive debate on this early in January, when noble Lords will be able to make their comments.

It would be helpful if this period were used for brief questions, so that the maximum number of people can participate.

12.08 pm

**Lord Butler of Brockwell (CB):** My Lords, will the Leader agree with me that, for many years now, there has been dissatisfaction in all parts of the House with the binary choice that is open to us for either accepting or rejecting statutory instruments? Will she also agree that it is relevant that the procedure recommended by the noble Lord, Lord Strathclyde, is very similar to that which was recommended by the all-party royal commission under the noble Lord, Lord Wakeham, by the Leader's Group in 2011 and by the Hansard Society and others? It would therefore be unfortunate if the circumstances in which this issue has arisen were to close people's minds to positive consideration of the procedure that the noble Lord, Lord Strathclyde, has recommended.

**Baroness Stowell of Beeston:** I am hugely grateful to the noble Lord for that very important contribution. My noble friend has drawn on some of the extensive work done over the past decade or more by the commission chaired by my noble friend Lord Wakeham. The noble Lord, Lord Butler, is right; my noble friend Lord Strathclyde has come forward with a recommendation that deserves proper consideration, and I really hope that that is what this House will give it.

**Lord Wakeham (Con):** The noble Lord, Lord Butler, has pointed out that we recommended something like my noble friend Lord Strathclyde's third consideration. I was on the Opposition Benches at the time of the report, if I recall rightly. We made that recommendation because we wanted a better way for this House to discuss statutory legislation. It was deliberately designed to do that and, from talking around the House, I know that a lot of people believe that such a proposal is right. While I understand that Front-Benchers have their role in these matters, there is a great deal more support in this House for a proposal of this sort; my noble friend Lady Stowell can take comfort from that. I hope that she will consult widely with people before we finally reach a decision.

**Baroness Stowell of Beeston:** I am grateful to my noble friend for his remarks, and I very much take on board his advice about my approach over the next few weeks.

**Lord Grocott (Lab):** As something of an expert—if I may modestly say so—on government defeats in the House of Lords, can I put it to the Leader of the House that this is no way to effect a substantial constitutional change that would strengthen Government in relation to Parliament, and fundamentally affect the relationship between the two Houses?

The Leader of the House refers constantly to the events in October. They were bizarre. A Government propose a reduction in the income of people in the lowest-paid families. The House of Lords says, "We



[LORD GROCOTT] think you should think again about this". The Government say—amazingly—"We are thinking again, and we've decided that we agree with the House of Lords". Yet the Government persist in what can be seen only as a malevolent way to set up a committee like this to cut the wings of the House of Lords.

This is a significant suggestion to the Government, I hope: if you want to effect change of this sort, do it in the proper, conventional way. That is by proper scrutiny—for which we have the 2006 example readily to hand; it came to conclusions not helpful to the Government, I may say—putting to both Houses the proposal of the Joint Committee of senior Members of both Houses, and then for the Houses themselves to decide whether they want to go ahead with this substantial change. A government-inspired report with no witnesses listed, no evidence taken in public, no calls for evidence in a way that we can understand—this is no way to effect constitutional change.

**Baroness Stowell of Beeston:** My Lords, I have huge respect for the noble Lord, Lord Grocott, and I listen carefully to what he says. The key thing that I am trying to identify in my remarks today is that we are in disagreement about what happened in October. That is what I find regrettable. It means that the important convention, which stood the test of time for so long, has been broken. He refers to the Joint Committee of 2006, which predates my time in the House but I understand from all my reading and research how important and respected it was. That committee reinforced the convention, but the convention that it reinforced has now broken. So what we have done is come forward with something which offers that clarity and simplicity. It draws heavily on previous work that has been done by other groups, such as my noble friend Lord Wakeham's distinguished royal commission. The noble Lord, Lord Strathclyde, has come forward with a proposal and all I ask at the moment is that the House considers it—as indeed we in government are considering it.

**Lord McNally (LD):** My Lords, I sat on the Cunningham committee and I remember the background to it being set up, which was the irritation of the then Labour Government at the behaviour of the House of Lords. The phrase then used was that part of the intention was to clip the wings of the House of Lords. The truth is that Governments do get irritated by this House. I think that I may have expressed the odd irritation myself occasionally from the Dispatch Box. But where the noble Baroness is misleading herself is that the convention laid down by the Cunningham committee has not broken down, because in that convention it very carefully and clearly states that the House of Lords must retain the right to say no. That was a red line for me. The reason for it was that put by my noble friend Lord Dholakia: that without retaining the right to say no, used sparingly, carefully and rarely, we become a debating society.

The noble Baroness has been a very good Leader of this House but I urge her to recognise that the Leader has those responsibilities, beyond government, to lead this House in a way that protects its powers. We must

let go of that right to say no only with very strong arguments to do so. They have not been made today. Go back to a Joint Committee of both Houses, and perhaps even consider the fourth option: that statutory instruments could be amended by this House. That would be a way forward.

**Baroness Stowell of Beeston:** I have huge respect for the noble Lord, Lord McNally, and enjoyed working alongside him in government. I understand how seriously he takes these matters but I am afraid that I also disagree with his description of what happened back in October. In considering that piece of secondary legislation, we did two things: we overruled the House of Commons on a matter of taxation and finance, and we used a type of amendment to a Motion that has never been used before. That is referred to in my noble friend Lord Strathclyde's report.

The point about the power of veto is that we should retain it if we retain our convention not to use it except in very exceptional circumstances. What I am arguing is that we are no longer clear what those circumstances are and by what kind of method we would use that veto. So I am afraid that I feel that we need to be able to reach some agreement and come up with a convention with which we all agree. We have to understand that conventions require all parties to agree. At the moment, I am afraid that we do not agree.

**Baroness Meacher (CB):** My Lords, I applaud the noble Lord, Lord Strathclyde, for his report, and in particular the recommendation in his third proposal, which could be a useful way forward. I also support strongly the words of the noble Lord, Lord Butler. But the noble Baroness, Lady Stowell, repeatedly refers to confusion: she says that we have a disagreement, that we have broken a convention, and so on. I remind the House that on the tax credits issue, we did indeed have a very exceptional set of circumstances. The Chancellor of the Exchequer used a statutory instrument—regulations—to introduce £4.4 billion of cuts affecting very large numbers of extremely poor people across the country. The second aspect of this completely exceptional situation was that we in this House knew that the Government no longer had the support of the elected House of Commons on the issue, now that Conservative Back-Benchers understood the enormity of what the Chancellor of the Exchequer was attempting to do.

Could the Leader of the House agree that this House acts in the way that we did on that occasion only in completely exceptional circumstances? Can she therefore honour this House with a recognition that the House acts very properly and, indeed, acted properly on that occasion in offering the Government an opportunity to listen to the elected House?

**Baroness Stowell of Beeston:** Like the noble Baroness, and as I have already said, I feel very strongly and care passionately about this House having the right to scrutinise and challenge the Government and to do what it is here to do as far as primary and secondary legislation, and policy more generally, are concerned. I welcome what she said about my noble friend's report.



However, by her contribution she has also illustrated what I am trying to say to the House. I do not want to debate the substance of the policy, because we are talking now about procedures. Back in October, the noble Baroness was at pains to tell the House that her amendment was not a fatal Motion but that it would allow the Government to think again. But it was never established in fact that what she was doing did not amount to a fatal Motion—we were in disagreement about it. There is no definition of these things in the *Companion*. We have a choice: we either withhold our consent or we give our consent. It was not possible for this House, using the method that the noble Baroness chose, to ask the Government or the House of Commons to think again, because we do not have that facility. We either approve or we do not.

If the noble Baroness is arguing for this House to be able to ask the House of Commons to think again, my noble friend Lord Strathclyde, in his paper, is suggesting a way which would provide the very thing that the noble Baroness is arguing for today and argued for back in October.

**Lord Cormack (Con):** My Lords—

**Lord Richard (Lab):** My Lords—

**Baroness Hayman (CB):** My Lords—

**The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Earl Howe) (Con):** My Lords, I am sure the House would wish to hear from the noble Lord, Lord Richard, but it is the turn of the Conservative Benches.

**Lord Cormack:** My Lords, I am most grateful. I am sure we are all grateful to my noble friend for what she has said, but I would ask her two things. First, it is right that we should have a full and extensive debate. However, as this report has been produced on the eve of the Christmas Recess, can we have a week or two after we come back where we can talk together informally, across the House, and then have a well-informed debate? Secondly, can that debate be informed by the fact that it is the Government who are answerable to Parliament—not the other way round—and by the fact that we are in this mess largely because of the appallingly inefficient way in which the other place deals with secondary legislation? It is therefore crucial—I ask my noble friend to talk to her colleagues in Cabinet about this—that the other place also debates this matter in detail, so that we have a more satisfactory balance in the way both Houses look at secondary legislation.

**Baroness Stowell of Beeston:** As my noble friend may not have had an opportunity to study my noble friend Lord Strathclyde's report, he might not yet have spotted that it includes a reference to the other place and its role in secondary legislation. My right honourable friend the Leader of the House of Commons is also making a Statement today in the other place about this same topic.

As for when we will schedule the debate in January, clearly we will have to consider the timetabling of it alongside other matters when we return. However, my

main commitment to this House is that there will be a substantial debate; it will be in government time; and we will do so early in the new year.

**Lord Richard:** My Lords, will the Government kindly recognise, if they have not already, that a balance has to be struck between the existing powers of this House and the way in which government carries out its business? There is a good case for this House giving up its veto—I accept that—but there is an undoubted *quid pro quo* that has to be demanded for it, which is that the Government stop playing games with statutory legislation. The reason why we got into this mess in October was because, on a major issue of government policy, not just a minor financial issue, they chose to do it by statutory instrument rather than by primary legislation. There has to be a recognition on both sides in this argument that, if this House is asked to give up a power that it has got but very rarely exercises, the Government and the other place must recognise that in matters that are proper for primary legislation that is how they should do it. I am fortified in that by remarks made by the noble Lord, Lord Lisvane, when this matter was last raised in this House. If the Government can give that sort of assurance that they will not have these wheezes and play the silly games that they have been playing, I am sure we can make progress.

**Baroness Stowell of Beeston:** The noble Lord, Lord Richard, makes an important point about the use of the proper legislative vehicle. I agree with him on that, and it is referred to by the noble Lord, Lord Strathclyde, in his report as a recommendation as well—and that is why I refer to it in my Statement, because it is important that we acknowledge that as well as his other proposals on the powers of this House. I am not sure that I agree with the noble Lord's description of what is happening in the use of secondary legislation by this Government or, indeed, other Governments, but I accept the argument that he makes, and I accept that we have to be constant and vigilant to make sure that we always choose the right vehicle when we bring our measures to Parliament.

**Baroness Hayman:** My Lords, I have long supported improving Parliament's scrutiny of statutory instruments. In that spirit, I say to the Leader of the House that this is certainly a useful report and we should give it proper scrutiny. I have to say also that that proper scrutiny will not be enhanced by the constant repetition of the idea that the convention was somehow broken. It will not be enhanced by suggesting that the tax credit scheme was killed off by this House, when it was killed off by the Chancellor of the Exchequer after this House gave him the opportunity to think again. It is important that we do not allow a mythology to grow around this issue.

Would the Leader of the House agree that, if this House is asked to give up the power to negate in favour of a power to delay, it has to be in circumstances that that delay can be effective, as it was effective in this case? Therefore, there has to be adequate time for the House of Commons to re-examine. Furthermore,

[BARONESS HAYMAN]

the Government have to take into account what the noble Lord, Lord Strathclyde, said, that,

“it would be appropriate for the Government to take steps to ensure that Bills contain an appropriate level of detail and that too much is not”—

as it was in that case—

“left for implementation by statutory instrument”.

**Baroness Stowell of Beeston:** I do not want to rehearse again the events of October. When the noble Baroness has had an opportunity to study the report carefully, she will see that it refers to delay. My noble friend Lord Strathclyde recommends Option 3, and in it he sets out his argument about why delay should not feature as part of his recommendation. That will be something which we will no doubt debate further when we have the debate in January, which I have already committed to.

## Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting

*Motion to Take Note*

12.30 pm

*Moved by Lord Luce*

That this House takes note of the outcome of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Malta on 27–29 November.

**Lord Luce (CB):** My Lords, just over two years ago, the Royal Commonwealth Society concluded in a report that by 2050 the Commonwealth would either be a total irrelevance or a vibrant global entity. Are we doing enough to ensure that it is a vibrant entity? Despite many recent Commonwealth debates in this House with excellent and enthusiastic contributions, many of us feel that successive British Governments have not grasped the opportunities available to us through collaboration with our friends in the Commonwealth. We can now take stock of the latest Heads of Government meeting in Malta. I am delighted that we have many noble Lords who will make their distinctive contributions to this debate and, in particular, that the noble Baroness, Lady Featherstone, has chosen this subject to make her maiden speech. I am very grateful to the Minister for replying and look forward to her assessment of the outcome of the meeting.

There are a number of reasons to be enthusiastic. There is no doubt that the Maltese Prime Minister, Mr Muscat, and his team have shown leadership and commitment to move things forward. That valiant island has taken on responsibility in recent weeks for an African Union/EU summit on migration, the Commonwealth meeting and, shortly, the presidency of the EU.

The fact that our Government have agreed to host the next CHOGM in 2018 gives an excellent chance to give a constructive lead. We must start working now to ensure a high level of participation by Heads of Government at that meeting. We can best do that by signalling our wholehearted commitment to the value of closer Commonwealth co-operation.

Above all, we offer the warmest congratulations to the noble and learned Baroness, Lady Scotland, on her appointment as Secretary-General from next spring. She was nominated by Dominica, the land of her birth, and is rooted in the Caribbean. We are very proud that she is a Member of the House of Lords. I am certain that she will give dynamic leadership and bring benefits to all 53 Commonwealth countries. We wish her every success.

It is important to see this debate in context. Europe's role and influence in the world is currently weak. The eurozone is struck by economic paralysis. Putin's Russia is striking out dangerously in our region and in Syria. In Britain, we wait in a state of uncertainty to determine the nature of our future role in Europe. Meanwhile, the Middle East is in turmoil, posing a serious threat to world stability and bringing massive migration and refugee problems.

Despite all this, Britain is still able to play a constructive role in the world. Our economy is expanding. We have the second-largest defence budget in NATO and spend 0.7% of our national income on development assistance. The British Council, the World Service and our universities give a strong measure of soft power. The Minister made a significant point in the debate last week on NATO and the European Union, showing that we are the only nation to have such a wide range of membership of international bodies, from the UN Security Council, NATO and the EU to the OECD, the IMF and the World Bank.

To cap all this, we have the Commonwealth. It is a unique association of 53 nations sharing a common history and language and aspirations for good governance, the rule of law and increased prosperity. It contains more than 2 billion people, covers a cross-section of the globe from the Pacific to Africa and the Caribbean and includes big states, such as India, and small states, such as Trinidad. Other nations are longing to join it. At a time when civilised values and ways of life are being challenged, it is significant to note that the Commonwealth embraces 1 billion Hindus, over 620 million Muslims, over 32 million Buddhists, 440 million Christians and, of course, thousands of Jews and Sikhs, among other religions.

Let us be clear: this association does not replace, but rather complements, our roles in NATO, the EU and the UN. It provides an exceptional opportunity for all its members to use the soft-power benefit of membership to our mutual advantage. Subject to correction by historians, I know of no other empire that has successfully transformed into a Commonwealth of equal nations. We are part of a family whose circumstances constantly change. My own experience demonstrates this transformation. I served as one of the last district officers in Kenya, did my Army service in Cyprus and was later Governor of Gibraltar, then vice-chancellor of the University of Buckingham with its many Commonwealth students, and, later, chairman of the Commonwealth Foundation. I am also present of the Royal Over-Seas League.

Britain has moved from the paternalism of empire to the equal partnership of the Commonwealth, where we try to solve differences through dialogue based on a culture of personal rapport. It was Nehru in the late

1940s who proposed a formula to end the empire but to allow our links to develop by accepting our monarch as head of the Commonwealth. Without any doubt, it is the Queen who has provided the framework for the links between us through her personal relationship with Commonwealth leaders. She is now ably supported by the Prince of Wales. As Lord Chamberlain, I was able to witness the Queen's deep commitment to and love for the people of the Commonwealth.

Contact between people is the heartbeat of the Commonwealth. Modern technology gives added momentum to this, transforming contact and networking between people and organisations on an unprecedented scale. It is the young who lead the way in networking, and people under 30 constitute 60% of the Commonwealth. The annual Commonwealth Observance Day in Westminster Abbey is full of young people, and this year's theme is "A young Commonwealth". Yet we have clear evidence that we in Britain are failing significantly to teach the majority of our schoolchildren their Commonwealth history and background. I ask the Government to take a lead in changing the curriculum to rectify this.

I welcome the lead by the Commonwealth Secretariat, in partnership with the BBC and the British Council, to promote greater understanding of the values of the Commonwealth Charter through the Commonwealth class project for seven to 14 year-olds in thousands of Commonwealth schools. Following the Commonwealth Youth Forum in Malta, I welcome the encouragement by Heads of Government to promote entrepreneurship, vocational training and initiatives to help young jobseekers. I applaud the dynamic leadership of the Commonwealth Youth Programme, motivating young people to engage with a range of issues in a pan-Commonwealth context. The excellent Commonwealth of Learning uses distance learning to promote education, working, for example, towards eradicating child, early and forced marriage.

I welcome the support from the Heads of Government for the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan. Since the scheme began in 1959, 30,000 people have held awards, the vast majority of them in the United Kingdom. A notable example among their distinguished alumni is Mark Carney, Governor of the Bank of England. While it is inevitably Heads of Government who provide the framework and leadership, it is the non-governmental aspect that can generate networking and enthusiasm. The Commonwealth Charter, to which all Governments are committed, was signed in March 2013. Can the Minister tell us what progress was made in Malta on measures to implement our Commonwealth commitments?

How are we strengthening the commitment to international peace and security? I understand that the Government are contributing financially to a new Commonwealth unit to support efforts to counter extremism and share expertise. How are we contributing to tackling the radicalisation of young people? Are ways being found to help to heal gender issues, to provide respect and protection for transgender, lesbian, gay and bisexual people? Sustained dialogue is surely the best way forward in this area.

On governance and the rule of law, CHOGM announced proposals to tackle corruption and promote co-operation between law agencies in anticipation of the 2016 anti-corruption summit. However, what progress

was made in strengthening judicial independence, building legislative capacity and election monitoring? The Commonwealth model of collaborative and mutual support between Governments and other partners surely deserves encouragement and greater investment. Can we be reassured that officials, especially at DfID, are sensitive to the distinctive benefits and unique strengths gained from working with and through the Commonwealth in this way?

We need a proper system of accountability to ensure progress on the implementation of decisions taken by Commonwealth Heads of Government. For example, the agreement on climate change, concluded in Paris, reflects the Commonwealth leaders' priority for protecting the more vulnerable small island states.

I cannot emphasise enough the importance of interaction between the government and the non-government sectors. We need far greater encouragement for the flourishing of the private sector, ranging from the growth of trade, business and investment to the ever increasing value of civil society and the 85 or so professional Commonwealth bodies.

CHOGM launched a new publication on the advantages of intra-Commonwealth trade, an excellent, well-researched piece of work by the secretariat. Trade between Commonwealth areas, which is estimated at more than \$680 billion, is projected to surpass \$1 trillion by 2020. Can the Minister say something about the Hub & Spokes II Programme, which is destined to increase trade opportunities? I further welcome the launch of the Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council, which focuses on trade and investment, led by the noble Lord, Lord Marland, who is speaking in this debate.

There are over 80 Commonwealth-associated and affiliated professional bodies, which cover every walk of life: universities, local government, architects, judges, magistrates, the press, musicians, medical people, dentists, and the very valuable Commonwealth Parliamentary Association. The Royal Agricultural Society of the Commonwealth and the Commonwealth Study Conference are examples of successful professional bodies. These bodies need encouragement by best-practice stories and seed-corn finance to strengthen their work. I welcome the encouragement by Heads of Government of stronger interaction between the secretariat, the Commonwealth Foundation and these professional bodies. I understand that there were successful forums at Malta for women, civil society, youth and business, and that Heads of Government were able to encourage their work. This shows the vast reserves of good will and expertise on which we can draw through the Commonwealth.

HMG now faces a very real opportunity to work strongly and effectively with our friends and partners in the Commonwealth. This will bring benefits to all members, as well as to the United Kingdom. However, that requires leadership from the Prime Minister and the Foreign Secretary. I should pause and say, in fact, the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs. I know that the Minister of State, Hugo Swire, has given excellent support. All Secretaries of State must be told to think and act Commonwealth. The Secretary of State or senior Ministers must attend Commonwealth meetings on finance law, education



[LORD LUCE]

and health, for example. They must be involved and get to know their Commonwealth counterparts. The Secretary of State for Education must take a lead in ensuring that all schoolchildren are taught about the Commonwealth.

The new Secretary-General will be her own person and must decide herself whether the Commonwealth Secretariat needs to be restructured to fulfil the requirements of the Malta CHOGM. With limited resources, she will have to decide on priorities. The Secretary-General and Commonwealth Governments must take hard-headed decisions about their priorities, and if the Commonwealth is to make progress, the message to all Governments must be the Churchillian “Action this day”.

We all participate in one form or another in the Commonwealth. It provides exciting opportunities for us all. However, perhaps above all we should be reminded that we have a special role which is best expressed in the words of Nehru, which the Prince of Wales spoke of in Malta, that the Commonwealth can best deal with problems with a “touch of healing”. Is that not just what this vulnerable world so badly needs? I beg to move.

12.44 pm

**Lord Howell of Guildford (Con):** My Lords, I congratulate the noble Lord, Lord Luce, on promoting the debate and on his excellent opening speech, which speaks for us all and covers many issues.

I declare my interests as president of the Royal Commonwealth Society, which has 70 world branches, and as chairman of the Council of Commonwealth Societies. I am not quite sure how in 180 seconds or fewer your Lordships are going to be able to make their distinctive contributions covering 53 nations, 2.3 billion people and 33 Heads of State. I think that there is something very wrong with a system that places this constraint on us. However, I shall confine myself to three points.

First, the Malta Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting was brilliantly organised by Malta and its very vigorous Prime Minister, Joseph Muscat, and it went extremely well. It got miserable coverage in the British press but that is another matter. It is excellent news that we will have a new Secretary-General who is a Member of this House. She has great talents and an enormous task ahead, which I am confident she will successfully perform.

The Malta meeting was vastly enhanced by the liveliness of the Commonwealth Business Forum, which preceded the Heads of Government meeting. It was organised with huge efficiency and energy by my noble friend Lord Marland. It should be no surprise that this was such a successful affair. Of course we must get our relationship right with the European Union, but the big economic prizes in the future are going to be outside Europe, very largely in the huge new rising markets of the Commonwealth and their neighbouring countries. That is where we have to succeed, or fail.

It is time for us to understand that the nature and rules of the entire world trading system have changed radically, putting us in the position where the markets

and interests of the Commonwealth are of enormous significance and importance to this country. The Commonwealth is not just another international institution to be kept happy; it is in fact a huge engine of soft power, trust and, indeed, security. One recent encouraging sign was that that was recognised to some extent in the recently published strategic defence review and in the national security objectives, so there is a dawning understanding of the huge significance of the Commonwealth in our own future and affairs.

However, to the sleepy officials and commentators who still have not quite grasped that point, I end my 180 seconds by echoing what Cicero said to the Roman people. We have heard about Nehru; I now add Cicero into the game. Cicero asked, “How long will you go on being ignorant of your own strength?”. That is the message I would like to send to the policymakers of Whitehall.

12.47 pm

**Lord Robertson of Port Ellen (Lab):** My Lords, I, too, congratulate the noble Lord, Lord Luce, on securing this debate and on putting CHOGM and the Commonwealth on the Floor of this House. I join the many people who have congratulated my noble and learned friend Lady Scotland on her election as Secretary-General of the Commonwealth. It is very good news for the Commonwealth. She is a brilliant choice and will strengthen the organisation enormously.

I want to confine my brief remarks to highlighting to the House the work of the Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust. The trust was set up with the blessing of the 2011 CHOGM in Perth, Australia, and under the chairmanship of Sir John Major, to celebrate and mark Her Majesty the Queen’s unrivalled 60-year contribution to the Commonwealth, and indeed her whole life of public service.

I declare an interest because I am privileged to be a trustee of the trust, whose mission is to enrich the lives of people from all backgrounds within the Commonwealth. It does so in ambitious programmes and alliances, working towards eliminating avoidable blindness in people of the Commonwealth and empowering a new generation of young leaders. Sir John reported to the Malta CHOGM on the record so far, and it is a hugely impressive record. The Heads of Government, in their communiqué, recognised the valuable work the trust is doing. It is funded by Governments, corporate partners, trusts, foundations, community groups and indeed individuals across the Commonwealth, and it has made remarkable progress on its objectives.

The fact is that four out of five people who are blind today need not be so. There are simple and affordable means to prevent it and to treat victims, and that is what the trust seeks to address. Because of the trust’s work, already 37,000 people have had surgery to prevent trachoma blindness and 5.5 million have had antibiotic treatment. Diabetes is forecast to increase by 60% across the Commonwealth by 2030—a quite staggering and depressing figure. But with early detection and treatment, it is possible to reduce the risk of diabetic retinopathy, a major cause of blindness, by some 90%. The trust has a programme for that, and another addressing blindness in premature babies.



Finally, under its Queen Young Leaders programme, launched by Princes William and Harry, the trust aims to, and already has sought to, discover, celebrate and develop young leaders in every one of the 53 countries of the Commonwealth. I assure the House that this is a remarkable and inspiring group of young people.

The trust, with its mission to celebrate the Queen's truly remarkable reign, has already made its mark. It was a proud point in the Heads of Government list of achievements that was broadcast from Malta.

12.51 pm

**Lord Steel of Aikwood (LD):** My Lords, I join others in thanking the noble Lord, Lord Luce, for introducing this debate. He reminded us that he began his distinguished career as the district officer in pre-independence Kenya, where I was simply a humble schoolboy. I think that our joint appreciation of the Commonwealth stems from that experience.

I also very much agree with what the noble Lord, Lord Howell, said about us having only 180 seconds. That is a ridiculous way to proceed in this House and I hope that it changes. I feel particularly sorry for my noble friend Lady Featherstone, who has to make her maiden speech in this truncated time, despite all the benefit of her having been a distinguished Minister in the Department for International Development.

By far the most significant outcome of the Malta CHOGM was the election of a new Secretary-General, the noble and learned Baroness, Lady Scotland. I join others in welcoming her election. I hope she will follow her distinguished Caribbean predecessor, Sir Shridath Ramphal, in being really effective. A couple of years ago, I happened to meet him in the Caribbean and, to my astonishment, he gave me the proof copy of his book, *Glimpses of a Global Life*, to read and comment on. His tenure as Commonwealth Secretary-General was certainly a very vigorous one, not always to the comfort of Her Majesty's Government.

The fact that we need a breath of fresh air is typified by what the Foreign Affairs Committee in the other place said in its 2013 report:

"The Commonwealth has appeared less active and less publicly visible in recent years and there is evidence that it is missing opportunities to influence events. The Commonwealth Secretariat must sharpen, strengthen and promote its diplomatic performance".

The committee is right. Before the Malta CHOGM, the noble Baroness, Lady Anelay, said that she hoped they would find a new Secretary-General who would be assertive, proactive and willing to invoke the charter with all its emphasis on human rights, democracy and tolerance. She certainly got her wish. I hope that the noble and learned Baroness, Lady Scotland, having begun by noting that 40 out of 53 of the Commonwealth member countries still criminalise gay people, is going to be very active on the human rights front.

Another important aspect of the Malta CHOGM was that Canada became re-involved in the Commonwealth. That is very important. I last met Mr Justin Trudeau when he was a boy of 10 or 11, when his father introduced me to him. He seems to have developed very well since then. Canada has an important role to play.

We have only 180 seconds, and I want to conclude by quoting from an article written this week by 92 year-old Harry Leslie Smith, who visited the chaos of the jungle refugee camp at Calais:

"The world has changed since I was young. It has not grown harder: just more foolish and selfish. I have seen camps like the Jungle before—at the end of the war. But back then, there was a desire among ordinary citizens and their leaders to alleviate the plight of refugees. Today, it is different. The common will to do good, or at least maintain a decent society for all, has vanished. Our politicians—and we, the ordinary people—are ignoring our moral, political and human responsibility to be our brothers' keepers".

In an unstable world, soft power organisations are extremely important to stress the common values of the Commonwealth. It is uniquely placed to bridge, and not increase, divisions in our world.

12.55 pm

**Lord Janvrin (CB):** My Lords, I, too, thank my noble friend Lord Luce for securing this debate, and I pay tribute to his unstinting support for the Commonwealth over many years.

My noble friend recalled, as do I—I speak as someone who attended nine CHOGMs—years gone past when the UK Government seemed to be less than focused on the Commonwealth. It was perhaps seen as something of a minor legacy issue to be managed. I hope that this is no longer true. The United Kingdom cannot afford to take this unique organisation for granted—indeed, the reverse.

The essential case for the importance of the Commonwealth has been made and spoken of: 53 countries, some 2 billion people in a digital, globalised world. We only have to look at the outcome of the Malta meeting to realise how relevant this organisation remains to the United Kingdom in 2015, whether at the political, economic or wider civic level.

At the political level it is, above all, an essential networking forum—in Malta addressing the urgent issues of terrorism, migration, climate change and sustainable development. Perhaps less prominent in the headlines, but no less important, is the continuing role of the Commonwealth in promoting human rights, good governance and the rule of law.

At the economic level, I, too, draw attention to the impetus given by the new Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council to the Commonwealth Business Forum, which met in advance of CHOGM. The council has a unique opportunity to make a vital contribution to Commonwealth trade and investment in the years to come. The potential for intra-Commonwealth trade is huge and UK companies are well placed to benefit from this.

But it is at the civic—or people—level that the Commonwealth works best and gives the organisation its unique character. By this I mean the work of the Women's Forum, the Commonwealth Science Conference, the Commonwealth of Learning, the Commonwealth Games and some 80 accredited Commonwealth organisations that give this extraordinary club its real meaning.

The Commonwealth is, of course, about politics and economics—but for the citizen it is about sport, learning, science, technology and culture. It is about

[LORD JANVRIN]

people building relationships, greater understanding and shared values. So I hope that the Minister can assure us that we will never again take the Commonwealth for granted but, rather, build on the success of the Malta CHOGM to advance our political, economic and soft-power objectives.

The omens are particularly good, as has been mentioned. The new Secretary-General, the noble and learned Baroness, Lady Scotland, is an inspired appointment and I welcome it wholeheartedly. The next CHOGM meeting will be here in the United Kingdom in 2018. We have a huge opportunity to make a real contribution to the Commonwealth over these coming years. The more we put in, the more we will get out. We have everything to play for.

12.58 pm

**Lord Marland (Con):** My Lords, I, too, thank the noble Lord, Lord Luce, who has kept the Commonwealth flame alive for so long for his kind words towards me and the Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council, which I chair, and other noble Lords who have referenced us.

I declare my interests. As I have already said, I am chairman of the Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council, I chair the Commonwealth Business Forum and I am president of the Commonwealth Youth Orchestra, which has not yet been mentioned.

At the beginning of the Commonwealth Business Forum I asked all the delegates the question: why are we here? It was a good question at the time because to many of us the Commonwealth was in inertia. However, by the end of our three days of conference, there was a clear answer. We had the leadership of the Minister of State, Hugo Swire, who I am delighted to see is attending this debate. We had my noble friend Lord Howell, with his energy for a man of his age, if I may say so, constantly at the forefront of our initiatives. We also had the noble Lord, Lord Kakkar, with his health initiative making incredible strides. Put with that the energy of our new chairman, the Prime Minister of Malta, Joseph Muscat, who at 42 has excellent drive, along with His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales, who is now engaged fully in the initiatives. The appointment of the noble and learned Baroness, Lady Scotland, has already been referred to, which is great news for us all, while of course the rock of this foundation is Her Majesty the Queen, who has kept the show on the road. There is now an opportunity for renewed optimism and enthusiasm.

In the Business Forum alone, where else could you get 1,200 people from 70 countries, including 25 Ministers, 15 Heads of State, the Lord Mayor of London and the Prince of Wales attending an event on the small island of Malta? That in itself is incredibly powerful for people in the business community. In three minutes I cannot tell noble Lords all about what our organisation is up to on anti-corruption and on developing and helping SMEs, but I am available to Members of the House, and indeed to anyone for that matter, for private meetings to describe what we do.

The key initiative to come out of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting was the \$1 billion

Commonwealth Green Finance Facility. This is the most ambitious thing the Commonwealth has done for a long time. It is being led by His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales and Prime Minister Muscat, and is supported by the Governments of Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Nigeria, Malaysia and Canada; in other words, the big Commonwealth countries are supporting the island states in their green and blue economies, which is vital. I had the honour to co-chair the facility with the head of the Prince of Wales's International Sustainability Unit, Justin Mundy. It is going to be a real focus for us over the next 18 months, about which I hope to report more to the House in due course.

1.01 pm

**Baroness Featherstone (LD) (Maiden Speech):** My Lords, I am so very honoured to be here and to have a continuing platform from which to pursue the political passions of my life. But first I thank noble Lords across the House for the warmest of welcomes. I have been utterly charmed and beguiled by the doorkeepers, Black Rod's Office and the police, all of whom I thank for their kindness and courtesy, and not infrequent rescue from a wrong turn. I am delighted to make my maiden speech on the recent Commonwealth meeting, and I thank the noble Lord, Lord Luce, for bringing forward this opportunity to me.

The Heads of Government emphasised the need to protect individuals from all forms of violence and discrimination. Violence and discrimination abound across the world. From the almost two women a week here in the United Kingdom who are killed by their partners or former partners, as you go across the world it just gets worse: acid attacks, female foeticide, breast ironing and rape as a weapon of war. I have raised these issues at the very highest levels in countries where women have no rights and in those where there are laws, but no implementation. However, there is nothing more totemic to illustrate the lack of women's power in this world than female genital mutilation. I am proud to have introduced and spearheaded the campaign in the coalition Government to address FGM both here and abroad.

What I found as I went across the world is that where they oppress and suppress women, they do even worse to homosexuals, and the Commonwealth has a very, very long way to go on this. That brings me on to LGBT rights and same-sex marriage. Same-sex marriage is my happy place in politics. In case not all noble Lords are aware, I am the originator and architect of the same-sex marriage law. I should like to take this opportunity to thank noble Lords on all sides for their contribution to the safe passage of that Bill, with particular thanks to my noble friends on these Benches, to the noble Lord, Lord Alli, for his stupendous efforts, and indeed to the noble Baroness, the Leader of the House—and I say to George Clooney that he chose the wrong woman.

I went on to push international LGBT rights as a DfID Minister, and this will be one of my ongoing passions, as will disability in the developing world and, indeed, the contaminated blood scandal. But my main focus will be on my role as energy and climate change spokesperson for the Liberal Democrats. The

extraordinary feat of agreement in Paris last week, when the world came together to address climate change, was a totemic, hope-giving, heart-stopping moment, but it will be actions rather than words that deliver. From wild child to the heart of the British establishment, I am delighted to be here and delighted to serve.

1.05 pm

**Lord Kakkar (CB):** My Lords, it is a great pleasure and privilege to follow the noble Baroness, Lady Featherstone, and to congratulate her on a powerful, thoughtful and compassionate maiden speech. Her remarkable contribution to this Parliament in the other place and her service in two government departments, the Home Office and the Department for International Development, are highly regarded, and her further contributions on many important issues that are deeply held in your Lordships' House will be greatly welcomed in the years to come.

I also thank my noble friend Lord Luce for introducing the debate, and in so doing I declare my own interest as chairman of the advisory board of the Commonwealth Health Hub within the Commonwealth Secretariat and as chairman of the Healthcare Business Group of the Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council. I should also declare an interest as chairman of UCL Partners because some of our organisations are involved in the work of the Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust.

The recent Heads of Government meeting reaffirmed the importance of a focus on healthcare in the Commonwealth. There is great disparity in what is currently achieved. Life expectancy in Lesotho is 48 years while in Australia it is 82 years. A woman is 300 times more likely to die of complications in childbirth in Sierra Leone than she is in Singapore, and in Malta there are 300 times as many doctors per 100,000 population than there are in Tanzania, so there are great opportunities. It is reassuring to see how the Commonwealth is now mobilising itself to address this vitally important issue, one that is of significance to every Commonwealth citizen.

Within the secretariat, the health hub has now created a platform that will provide the opportunity for communication and contact across the largest single grouping of healthcare professions in the world. Those professionals are serving a population of some 2 billion people. But it is thanks to the support of the noble Lord, Lord Marland, and the Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council that a further group has been established to bring forward a broader base of partners to address important Commonwealth opportunities. This group of partners, which is drawn from Government, the independent commercial sector and the charities sector, will address four important issues as agreed at the recent Commonwealth Business Forum. These are to develop new methods for financing healthcare projects across the Commonwealth nations, to aggregate those opportunities for development into large enough pools that independent finance can be brought to bear and is attractive to those who are prepared to make long-term commitment, to ensure that appropriate methods of regulation of healthcare systems are achieved across the Commonwealth nations, and to ensure that opportunities for education and training are delivered

to a similar standard in order to drive improvements in outcomes and thus improve the long-term prospects of all Commonwealth citizens.

1.08 pm

**Baroness Prashar (CB):** My Lords, I begin by thanking the noble Lord, Lord Luce, for securing this debate. In introducing it he spelled out the remarkable advantages of the Commonwealth for Britain. The CHOGM in Malta was by any standards a success. Thankfully it has succeeded in re-energising the Commonwealth and instilling a stronger sense of purpose. Equally successful were the meetings of the Business Forum, the People's Forum, the Youth Forum, and the first ever Women's Forum—and above all, as we have heard, the Commonwealth has elected its first ever female Secretary-General, the noble and learned Baroness, Lady Scotland. I send her my warmest congratulations and I wish her well in this very important and challenging role.

I am pleased that the next CHOGM will be held in the UK. It will be an opportunity to build on the success of the 2015 Malta CHOGM, as stated by the noble Lord, Lord Luce, and it will be our opportunity to provide leadership. This success must be built upon and the momentum for reform kept up. No doubt it will be the intergovernmental Commonwealth which will be the driver for change, but the non-governmental Commonwealth is a crucial partner if the Commonwealth is to become an effective force for good.

The professional, social, cultural and personal connections of peoples are the Commonwealth's enduring features because they are embedded in people's hearts, identities, experiences and memories. They are now vastly strengthened by the information revolution and modern communications. Commonwealth Governments and the official Commonwealth machinery must now catch up with the real network of relationships. The Commonwealth Secretariat must become less top-down.

Two changes are needed to do that. In 2013, in a debate in this House, I suggested that the Commonwealth Secretariat should aim to have three regional offices—in Asia, Africa and the Caribbean—with the Secretary-General retaining the leadership and overall responsibility for implementing decisions by Commonwealth Heads of Government and acting in accordance with the Commonwealth charter. These centres would channel impetus and initiative from the regions and would be guided and supported by the secretariat.

These regional offices would not only increase visibility but would help to build strong, purposeful partnerships and links with the non-governmental Commonwealth. At present, the relationship with non-governmental sectors is far from satisfactory. Steps need to be taken to bring more closely together the significant and representative Commonwealth organisations in partnership with the secretariat. The Commonwealth Secretariat would be better supported and more effective if the major non-governmental bodies representing civil society, professions and interests were engaged in a routine, constant dialogue and exchange, and worked together to tackle the challenges facing them in the 21st century. It is about a different way of working to maximise impact, which is why I was very pleased that



[BARONESS PRASHAR]

the Prime Minister mentioned civil society, youth and education bodies when committing £1 million each year for five years to counter extremism. Will the Minister assure the House that the Government will continue to encourage the secretariat to involve the non-governmental sector more meaningfully and urge reforms to make the secretariat less top-down and more inclusive?

Finally, does the Minister agree that it is in Britain's national interest to be fully engaged with both the Commonwealth and the European Union, and that it is not a binary choice as suggested by some? It was significant that when talking about migration, which is now a global problem, Heads of Government noted the outcomes of the Valletta summit on migration.

1.12 pm

**Lord Tugendhat (Con):** My Lords, I, too, thank my noble and very old friend Lord Luce for launching this debate, and I join in the congratulations to the noble and learned Baroness, Lady Scotland, on becoming Secretary-General of the Commonwealth. I was particularly heartened to see that she has already said that an important commitment is to promote the decriminalisation of homosexuality and same-sex relationships in the Commonwealth.

Forty-two of the 54 member states have laws against same-sex relationships. When one considers that, it is very hard to understand the words in the communiqué of the Heads of Government that emphasise the need to protect individuals from all forms of violence and discrimination. There really is a disconnect on that point. It is an important point because if we are to sustain support for the Commonwealth and encourage it, that support will be eroded if there is this big distinction between the way in which we look at things in this country and in other countries, and what happens in those countries which have these criminal offences.

According to the Human Dignity Trust and Commonwealth Lawyers Association, the Commonwealth accounts for more than 60% of HIV cases worldwide, although for only 30% of the world population. So it is not only a moral issue; it is also a public health issue. Again, I see a profound disconnect between the words in the communiqué and the reality. I note that in the communiqué, there is a public health paragraph that particularly mentions malaria and polio but has no mention of HIV.

I hope that the noble and learned Baroness will turn her attention to the way in which the Heads of Government meetings are organised and the frequency with which they take place. They are supposed to be Heads of Government meetings. Yet at the Malta meeting, there were only 31 Heads of Government. In particular, the Prime Minister of India, who found time to go to Paris, was unable to go to Valletta. In Colombo, there were 27; in Port of Spain, there were 34; and in Perth, there were 35. That is not a very good turnout and if you compare it with a European summit, a G20, an ASEAN or almost any other international gathering, it is a very poor turnout indeed. I hope that the noble and learned Baroness will turn her attention to whether this could be improved, whether the sequence should be altered or whatever other changes are required.

I said that the Indian Prime Minister was not there, which was particularly important. Trade in the Commonwealth is increasing, which is very encouraging. But if trade in the Commonwealth is to increase further, India will be crucial. India will be the powerhouse. Therefore, the engagement of India in the Commonwealth is of the greatest importance. That, too, I hope the noble and learned Baroness will turn her attention to.

1.16 pm

**Lord Judd (Lab):** My Lords, like others I am very grateful to the noble Lord, Lord Luce, for having introduced this debate today. I am very glad that in doing so he emphasised the role of the Queen. It would be impossible to overestimate the role she has consistently played in holding the Commonwealth together, which comes from her personal dedication to the objectives of the Commonwealth and her vision in seeing its potential relevance. Her contribution to Britain's relationships with the world as a whole should also never be underestimated. I might just add that I saw this in action when I had the privilege of being the Minister accompanying the Queen on a visit to the Gulf right back in 1979. I have admired her ever since.

It is important to remember—I think that our debate has emphasised this—that it is not the British Commonwealth and has not been for a long time. It is the Commonwealth, of which we are privileged to be a member. We will be judged by the positive contribution we make to that and not by relying on history and status.

I hope that my noble and learned friend Lady Scotland, whom I warmly congratulate on having got this post—I also congratulate the Commonwealth on having the good sense to appoint her—will see, among other things, the potential that Britain brings in its membership of the Commonwealth to strengthen relations between the European Union and the Commonwealth. That should be a very high objective.

Above all, the Commonwealth will be judged by its effectiveness. The noble Lord, Lord Steel, was right to say that she should look for examples in this context. I am quite certain all of us would agree that Sonny Ramphal was second to none in his vision, determination and drive. His would be a very good example to follow.

In saying that the Commonwealth must be effective, I hope that it will establish clear priorities on the importance of its work with youth and education in our totally interdependent world. I also hope that it will emphasise its work on human rights and I endorse every word of the speech made by the noble Lord, Lord Tugendhat. It is a cruel contradiction that we have this rhetoric about freedom and democracy, to which I hope most of us and most members of the Commonwealth are completely committed, and the reality of what is happening in the field. It must be effectively addressed.

1.19 pm

**The Earl of Sandwich (CB):** My Lords, this is always a happy occasion. There is nothing quite like the Commonwealth to bring that essentially British sense of satisfaction that we are bringing good into the world. I have been reading letters home from



Sir Edwin Lutyens 100 years ago. He was the very British architect of New Delhi, who at first could not be doing with the extravagance and romance of Moghul styles. He had to compromise. That is what Britannia must continue to do: accept a diminished role in world affairs while sharing her experience and high standards with 52 other nations. It is a remarkable achievement, although still a work in progress.

Undoubtedly, CHOGM at Malta has made progress in many areas, such as education, human rights, gender balance—as demonstrated by our Secretary-General—small states, climate change and the new forestry initiative. Yet, rifts within countries remain. Cyprus is one example. We should expect the Commonwealth to be more of a place of reconciliation. I would like it to look outward again, to countries such as Burma, South Sudan and Nepal. Unfortunately, South Sudan has had more than its fair share of violence and conflict. I have advocated its membership, but until it restores unity, there can be no question of that.

Nepal, on the other hand, remains an obvious candidate because of the many associations with Britain over the last 200 years, including the Gurkhas and tourism—although sadly, in my view, no longer the monarchy. In the last few months Nepal seems to have emerged from the political turmoil that followed the civil war. There is now a new constitution after many years of discussion, a new Parliament, and a new Prime Minister, president and speaker, the last two being women. The time seems ripe for a new attempt to bring Nepal into the Commonwealth, not least to help resolve the fuel blockade on the Terai border with India, which has so damaged the economy. I wonder whether noble Lords recognise the extent of the current humanitarian crisis in Nepal, originating from the two earthquakes this summer and now considerably worsened by the blockade. Our strong links with India surely require us to make much more effort to bring the main parties together, as well as the Nepalese people directly affected.

Finally, there is our own monarchy. The Queen's close involvement will of course give the Commonwealth added value, which we all hope and assume will continue. I have one request of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. It is unfortunate that the villa in Valletta that is the Queen and Prince Philip's former home is at the mercy of developers, when it could become an important heritage site for Malta. Perhaps the FCO, in the name and spirit of the Commonwealth, could make a further effort to put this right—I boldly suggest even making it a gift to Her Majesty after so many years of service.

*1.22 pm*

**Lord Sheikh (Con):** My Lords, I also congratulate the noble Lord, Lord Luce, on initiating the debate. I will use my limited time to focus on the need to build our overseas trade relationships.

There is great demand across the world for the establishment of regional trade agreements to help individual economies without putting sovereignty at risk. The Commonwealth is essentially a ready-made trading network. It comprises a healthy mix of large and small, developed and developing, landlocked and island economies. It also contains some of the most promising emerging markets, such as India, Malaysia

and South Africa. In 2013, Commonwealth members' combined exports of goods and services were valued at \$3.4 trillion—about 15% of the world's total exports. Around half of this comes from developing countries. Given the growing significance of developing countries in the world economy, this presents vast trading opportunities for the Commonwealth.

I recently held in your Lordships' House a debate on bilateral trade with Africa. One-third of African countries are Commonwealth members, including Mozambique and Rwanda, which are both members of the 7% club in Africa. I believe that the Commonwealth as a whole should be looking to capitalise on the many opportunities provided by the African continent. Trade within the Commonwealth must also be considered. Intra-Commonwealth trade now stands at \$600 billion and is projected to pass \$1 trillion by 2020. It is estimated that when both bilateral partners are Commonwealth members, they tend to trade 20% more and generate 10% more foreign direct investment inflows. It is thought that our historical ties, shared values, familiar administrative and legal systems, the use largely of one language and a strong diaspora community all contribute to these benefits.

With all this in mind, I welcome the new trade financing fund that will boost trade capacity for smaller and developing Commonwealth countries. This will in turn benefit us all. I would like to see greater exposure for the new Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council and proper recognition of the important role it can and should play.

There are of course challenges, one of which is climate change. Many Commonwealth countries have high export concentrations in a range of climate-sensitive sectors, including agriculture, resource extraction and fisheries. Some countries also need assistance with unlocking the full potential of their private sector. This includes issues such as infrastructure, access to finance and developing trade strategies. Commonwealth countries must work together to find solutions to these challenges.

*1.26 pm*

**Lord Watson of Richmond (LD):** My Lords, I, too, add my thanks to the noble Lord, Lord Luce, for initiating this important debate. I suppose I should declare two interests. One is that for six years I chaired the Council of Commonwealth Societies, in which role I was succeeded by the ever-young noble Lord, Lord Howell. I also chair the Commonwealth publisher, Nexus.

In attracting the attention it deserves, paradoxically, the Commonwealth—and, indeed, CHOGM—is challenged by some of its greatest strengths: its global reach of 53 countries; its diversity; and its highly developed economies, right the way through to, for example, India. But it also has less-developed, hard-pressed economies—in many cases in small island states—that are vulnerable to the impact of climate change. There is then the extraordinary fact, referred to several times in the debate, that 60% of the 2.2 billion inhabitants of the Commonwealth are aged under 30.

Diversity makes the Commonwealth somewhat hard to describe and its interests hard to define. It is not

[LORD WATSON OF RICHMOND]

easy copy for the media. Television finds it simpler to cope with Davos in January than it does with CHOGM in December. In the United Kingdom the Commonwealth is generally regarded as a good thing, but what is its clout? Uniquely, the Queen has given it its face and identity. Her commitment to the Commonwealth is one of the greatest achievements of her reign, but maybe her contribution peaked at Marlborough House when she signed the charter. It is interesting that on the very first page of the charter, the Commonwealth is described as,

“a compelling force for good”.

Who can really explain why? The answers are of course there—a shared language, shared values and many shared legal systems—but “compelling”?

I will briefly focus on two facets that can prove to be truly compelling in the years ahead. The first is the Commonwealth’s support and advocacy for what the Prime Minister has described as,

“judicial independence, legislative capacity building and election monitoring”—[*Official Report*, Commons, 30/11/15; col. 3WS.]

In all these, the secretariat—now to be headed by the noble and learned Baroness, Lady Scotland, who is a wonderful appointment—acts with discretion and a great deal of effectiveness. It is becoming more and more important. We are all depressed by the advance of extremism and the violence attached to it—of course we are. But the fact is that the thrust of history is not with that violence, nor that extremism. South Africa’s transition from apartheid, in which the Commonwealth played a vital role, illustrates that. Although Myanmar is not currently in the Commonwealth, the elections held there point in the same direction. What is greatly important is the monitoring of elections and the effectiveness of transitional jurisprudence. The Commonwealth can indeed play a compelling role in that.

Secondly, and finally, there is the Commonwealth’s unique network of small island developing states, to which I have referred. Given their importance in the Paris agreement on climate change, CHOGM was a kind of curtain-raiser for Paris. It was no accident that the President of France attended CHOGM. The potential of the Commonwealth is indeed compelling. It constitutes one of the greatest assets for good in our dangerous world.

1.30 pm

**Lord Hylton (CB):** My Lords, the excellent Library Note on the Heads of Government Meeting made no mention of India and Pakistan. I seek to make only one point about them—namely, the need for détente. These Commonwealth members have the two largest populations and are immediate neighbours. They have fought several wars and for too long have coexisted in a kind of cold war. Attempts at “cricket diplomacy” have not brought a real thaw. They share a long frontier, but I understand that there is only one land crossing point for travellers.

The need for détente and for the maximum person-to-person and group-to-group contact is surely obvious. I am glad to say that the young parliamentarians in both countries have led the way. Links between schools,

universities and civil society at all levels should be made. Dialogue and exchanges of all kinds would create the right climate for intergovernmental negotiations and agreement. Their Governments can hardly fail to know that huge increases in trade, services and investment in both directions could be had; it just needs a modicum of good will and a strong desire to find the common good of both countries.

As has been mentioned, we all welcome the recent appointment of the noble and learned Baroness, Lady Scotland, as Commonwealth Secretary-General. I urge her to put inter-Commonwealth détente at the top of her agenda.

1.32 pm

**Baroness Berridge (Con):** My Lords, living in Manchester during the 2002 Commonwealth Games was my first real exposure to the Commonwealth brand. I think that I was a product of the lack of focus in our education system to which the noble Lord, Lord Luce, referred, but it was odd as I have lived in both Trinidad and Ghana. So it has been the work of your Lordships’ House, through the focus of my noble friend Lord Howell, that has illustrated for me the importance of, and the future for, the Commonwealth.

With only three intergovernmental structures—the secretariat, the Commonwealth of Learning and the Commonwealth Foundation—there is, unlike with the EU and the UN, not a huge bureaucracy. The Commonwealth could be a nimble network of equals that gets things done; and in Malta it certainly got things done. The vision and commitment of the Prime Minister and President of Malta were inspiring. There was no better advertisement for the first ever Commonwealth Women’s Forum than the chair of the Malta CHOGM task force holding the whole thing together—the inspirational Ms Phyllis Muscat, who is no relation to the Maltese Prime Minister. The steely focus of my noble friend Lord Marland, who ran the Commonwealth Business Forum like a troop commander, also saw the revitalisation of the Commonwealth’s business focus. However, business needs stable government, the rule of law and respect for human rights. One has to accept the gulf between the values of the Commonwealth charter and the reality of the lives of many. However, the huge change in Sri Lanka since it hosted CHOGM is remarkable. The UK made the difficult but, with hindsight, correct choice to attend that CHOGM. The voters of Sri Lanka, some of whom have told me that they were publicly shamed by the focus that CHOGM gave to their country, have, I hope, changed the course of that nation for good.

I declare my interest as the project director of the Commonwealth Initiative for the Freedom of Religion or Belief at the University of Birmingham. It was vital to see that human right stated in the communiqué as the cornerstone of democratic society. The key Commonwealth priority of countering extremism is noted by Her Majesty’s Government as being connected to this human right. While many in the Commonwealth will look to us to see how, in countering extremism, we uphold the values to which the Magna Carta gave birth, especially freedom of expression, the Commonwealth is a network of equals. There is no magic bullet for countering extremism, as more than 10 years of the

Prevent programme have shown. The Commonwealth is a network where we can humbly think and analyse together the best policy solutions to this pressing global issue, especially for young people.

Many Commonwealth roles are already held by bodies in the UK such as the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission, which now chairs the Commonwealth Forum of National Human Rights Institutions, and the new, most impressive Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Secretary-General, a British Guyanan FCO director, Akbar Khan, and, of course, the new Secretary-General, the noble and learned Baroness, Lady Scotland, who will not only inject energy and clear leadership but will pour herself out tirelessly, I am sure, to enhance the Commonwealth for its citizens. For the next two years, Malta chairs the Commonwealth and then the baton will pass to the UK. I join the noble Lord, Lord Luce, in asking my noble friend the Minister to outline how it is proposed to promote the Commonwealth among British young people, so that in 2018 they have more awareness of the Commonwealth than I did in 2002 in Manchester.

1.35 pm

**Lord Anderson of Swansea (Lab):** My Lords, I congratulate the noble Lord, Lord Luce, on this initiative and on becoming the Chancellor of the University of Gibraltar. We rejoice with him at the appointment of the noble and learned Baroness, Lady Scotland. She will be a consummate diplomat, as Chief Emeka Anyaoku was, for example, in relation to South Africa.

The Secretary-General has been mandated to review the governance of the Commonwealth Secretariat—yet again—but nothing was said about the resources of the secretariat. The secretariat is a poor relation, with very limited resources, whatever is concluded about governance. The last figures I have suggest that three countries—the UK, Canada and Australia—pay two-thirds of the budget. India contributes only 4% and Nigeria only 1.4%. This surely represents a lack of commitment. Again on the subject of commitment, at the Colombo CHOGM only 26 Heads of Government attended. How many actually attended the Malta CHOGM?

I pose two questions to the Minister. Over the past 10 years there have been serious discussions about welcoming new members. Rwanda came in in 2009, but the Islamic Republic of Gambia is out. Some other countries have been mentioned. What, for example, is now happening about South Sudan, which has been on the table since 2011? I do not believe that Ireland has yet been mentioned. There are, of course, major burdens of history to overcome. The time may not yet be right, despite the highly successful visit there of Her Majesty the Queen. May I suggest to Her Majesty's Government that we should consult Ireland about possible attendance at the London CHOGM in 2018, in whatever capacity it finds acceptable? Clearly, President Hollande did not worry about his national sovereignty in attending the Malta CHOGM.

Secondly, paragraph 52 of the communiqué drew attention to special guests such as the United Nations Secretary-General, which illustrates the status they accord to the Commonwealth, and there were many

representatives of international and other organisations. President Hollande was present. That was relevant, of course, in relation to preparation for COP 21, and as a representative of La Francophonie. It is important that the two organisations, though very different, work together.

As a senior member of the European Union—of course, Malta and Cyprus are members of both organisations—we must clearly show that it is absurd to talk of a choice between the European Union and the Commonwealth. Will the Minister confirm that the Government will fully consult the Commonwealth in general, and the overseas territories in particular, as we approach the referendum debate? The Minister will well know, for example, the very deep concern in the Falklands and Gibraltar at the possibility of exit. Both would lose a very powerful advocate in Brussels in the shape of the UK.

1.38 pm

**Baroness Flather (CB):** My Lords, everybody has expressed delight at the election of the noble and learned Baroness, Lady Scotland, to the post of Secretary-General. I am sorry but I have to do the same. I like to think that it is good to have friends in high places. I hope that the noble and learned Baroness will be very successful.

I think that I have spoken in every Commonwealth debate that the noble Lord, Lord Luce, has initiated. It is wonderful that he keeps on bringing these debates to your Lordships' House, thus giving us the opportunity to think about the Commonwealth more seriously than we normally do. Once again, I thank him for that.

We were so delighted that CHOGM had a women's meeting—we should be delighted, because it was the first time. It has even been said that there should be a women's meeting every time CHOGM takes places. Can you think, though, of a men's meeting where women do not attend? We have a women's meeting where the men do not attend. Who holds the power? Who holds the decision-making? It is the men, but they do not attend the women's meeting—they do not listen to what women have to say about the issues that concern them. This bothers me greatly.

I believe it is the first time that there has been more general agreement between all the attendees that they will do something about climate change. It is really amazing that there was an agreement. When, however, do we think they will have an agreement about working on violence against women or about population and access to family planning? The Commonwealth does not have to fall in with Saudi Arabia, which is not part of the Commonwealth. Nor does the Commonwealth have to fall in only with Catholics. There are Catholics within it and they do not have to practise family planning, but it should be available to everyone else. I wonder whether it will ever happen.

On a previous occasion, I said that, without rule of law, nothing can change in a country. We have to think about that. Corruption is endemic, we all know that. It will not go away just by our waving a little piece of paper saying, "We will tackle corruption". I am from India and, although I have lived here more years than I lived in India, I know India well because I go there



[BARONESS FLATHER]

every year. Corruption is endemic and I do not know what the present prime minister is doing. So far, there is no sign of anything except that people come to work on time. That is the only thing that anybody has noticed.

We have laws on the treatment of women. Somebody mentioned about making them work—they do not work, nobody bothers about the laws. Women suffer all the way through. Unless we deal with the needs of half of the population of developing countries, we cannot be called civilised.

1.42 pm

**Lord Rana (CB):** My Lords, I add my thanks to the noble Lord, Lord Luce, for initiating this important debate. I also congratulate the noble and learned Baroness, Lady Scotland, on being appointed to that very important position. I am a great believer in the Commonwealth, which is a unique, multicultural, multi-institutional organisation spanning six continents of the world, bringing together nearly one-third of the world's population and promoting multi-identity.

I welcome the Government's pledge of £5 million for a new Commonwealth counterextremism unit. I anticipate that other countries will follow the lead of the UK and Australia. Since last year, I and some of my colleagues have been talking to the Commonwealth Secretariat about establishing such a unit. The biggest threat to the world today is terrorism, and its legacy in the Commonwealth is far too visible, from the Troubles in Northern Ireland to the Kashmir dispute. Just yesterday, Boko Haram left another 30 dead and 20 wounded in terrifying attacks on three villages in Nigeria, adding to the 6,644 lives that it has already claimed, according to the *Global Terrorism Index*.

Speaking from my own personal experience, the best way to counter terrorism and civil unrest is through a twin-track approach, with dialogue and education and with the use of force against those who are not interested in talking. Some 60% of the Commonwealth population are under the age of 30, and the majority of them live in developing countries. The role of education in promoting peace, democracy and respect for each other is essential in shaping these young minds—they are the future of our world. At an educational complex that my trust funded in Punjab, we have 130 students from the Kashmir Valley, who grew up in that troubled space. Through education and by mixing with other children, it is amazing how the mindset changes.

I am also in the process of establishing a new Institute for Conflict Studies and Resolution Strategies in Punjab and in Northern Ireland. The intention is to put into practice the recommendations of the 2007 Commonwealth report *Civil Paths to Peace*, which were reaffirmed in Malta this year. I attended the CHOGM and my colleagues and I had the opportunity to give a presentation on the importance of setting up a unit, such as the one I mentioned, on resolving conflict, studying and opening the debate while these things are happening.

I am delighted that the noble Lord, Lord Anderson, referred to Ireland. I have been talking to people over the past few years and encouraging dialogue on Ireland

rejoining the Commonwealth. I am glad that, in April this year, the Royal Commonwealth Society set up in Dublin for the first time and had support from senior members of the Dublin City Council.

1.46 pm

**Baroness Uddin (Non-Affl):** My Lords, I, too, would like to thank to the noble Lord, Lord Luce, and I refer to the stated aims of the Commonwealth Secretariat's commitment to,

“support member countries to prevent or resolve conflicts, strengthen democratic practices and the rule of law, and achieve greater respect for human rights”.

I was reminded in August as we passed the 182nd anniversary of the introduction of the Slavery Abolition Act that, just yards from this Chamber, in Victoria Tower Gardens on Millbank, sits the Buxton memorial fountain. This monument, built in 1866 and originally housed in Parliament Square, was created in commemoration of the abolition throughout the British Empire of the transatlantic slave trade and in recognition of the efforts of a significant group of parliamentarians and other prominent citizens who dedicated their lives to the cause. This subtle neo-Gothic construction is, sadly, among only a handful of monuments that recognise the pain, torture and suffering of an estimated 30 million black men, women and children whose forebears were kidnapped in chains from their homes on the coast of western Africa. They were destined for lives of servitude, brutality and enslavement or were often thrown overboard en masse en route to the slave markets in Europe and the Americas in order to achieve greater profitability from insurance claims.

The African slave trade was introduced to Britain by Drake and Hawkins in 1567 and was to continue for the next 300 years. This trade in human misery was to bring, shamefully, untold wealth and prosperity to our lands. The Royal African Company is noteworthy: its principal business was in African slavery and many of its shareholders sat in this House and the other place.

Is it not a tragedy that, to this day, we have not made any attempt to properly recognise the real victims of the slave trade? Is it not a stain on our history and the history of the Commonwealth that, to date, not a single penny of compensation has been paid to restore some of the injustices committed to the real victims of what must be defined as one of the greatest crimes against humanity and what many refer to as the “Holocaust of Empire”? I should like to place on record there has been an abject failure of creating any monument to recognise the role played by those who were themselves enslaved in undermining and challenging the brutal system that cruelly punished them for several hundred years.

The other point I wish to draw to the House's attention is the imperative of the Commonwealth's role in peacebuilding and, in this context, I draw attention to the war of independence between Pakistan and Bangladesh. It ended 44 years ago yesterday, but protracted tensions remain. Since 2010, I have spoken in this House of the more than 300,000 women raped as a weapon of war by the Pakistani army. Nothing can compensate for the violent deaths of loved ones, torture, slavery and rape, but reparation and



uncompromising apologies might begin the process of acknowledgment of the wrong done, and even assist in the healing process for the nation and its people.

We have a strong first woman in our new Secretary-General, my noble and learned friend Lady Scotland, who will take charge of the Commonwealth. I wholeheartedly salute her. She has campaigned robustly on justice and peace, and I hope very much that she will make time to integrate reparation and apology in her priorities for the greater peace among Commonwealth members.

1.50 pm

**Lord Lexden (Con):** The communiqué issued at the end of the Malta meeting included a ringing reaffirmation of the Commonwealth's commitment to human rights, declaring them to be,

"equal, indivisible, interdependent ... and universal".

However, we were entitled to expect those fine sentiments to be accompanied by an explicit indication of the need for determined action in an area to which I am glad that Members of this House and the other place now regularly return, as has happened in this debate—I refer to the criminalisation of homosexuality in the overwhelming majority of Commonwealth countries. Gay people in both Houses of our Parliament have a responsibility to encourage change among our Commonwealth friends and partners.

Gay people in this country have witnessed a transformation in their position in our society, securing an acceptance, understanding and legal status that they have never had before in our history. It is natural for us to want to extend the benefits of change that we have gained over the last 50 years to gay people in Commonwealth countries, united to us by ties of kinship, affection and history.

This is not a question of seeking to impose British liberal values on other countries where earlier intolerant, illiberal British values were planted in days of Empire. The values that we promote are universal and international, embodied in the UN charter and, more recently, in the Commonwealth's own charter. It was good that, in Malta, the issues that concern LGBT people so deeply were discussed in the Commonwealth People's Forum; it would be better still to have them drawn into the main sessions of the conference itself.

It is now four years since the Commonwealth Eminent Persons Group unanimously recommended that,

"Heads of Government should take steps to encourage the repeal of discriminatory laws",

against homosexuals. This matters not just as a fundamental human rights question, but as a precondition for relieving so many Commonwealth friends from the pain and suffering of AIDS, to which my noble friend Lord Tugendhat made reference. The EPG was quite explicit on that point, saying that,

"discriminatory laws ... impede the effective response of CW countries to the HIV/AIDS epidemic".

I repeat the statistic that my noble friend gave us: countries of the Commonwealth comprise 60% of people living with HIV globally, while representing 30% of the world's population. It is a statistic to keep always in the forefront of the mind. CHOGM adopted the important EPG report in 2012. What has become of it?

We all know that change is unlikely to come quickly everywhere throughout the Commonwealth, but gay people hope and pray for the creation of sustained, serious momentum for change.

1.54 pm

**Baroness Barker (LD):** My Lords, I thank the noble Lord, Lord Luce, for his debate, which reminds us of the importance and power of the Commonwealth as a forum for economic, social and political dialogue of nations around the world. Today it was particularly inspiring to listen to my new noble friend Lady Featherstone, speaking in her characteristically determined way about her commitment to pursue equalities throughout the Commonwealth; we have all seen it over the last five years, often in times and places where it was difficult and dangerous to do so. Similarly, we have seen her commitment to the rights of disabled people around the world. I am delighted that she will henceforth take part in our debates; she will be a great addition to this House.

Like many others, I congratulate the noble and learned Baroness, Lady Scotland. She has an outstanding record of commitment to human rights, and a unique ability to talk to a diverse range of people at different levels of society. She is an outstanding choice for her job. I am pleased that, since she became Secretary-General Designate, she has talked of the need to begin a respectful and constructive dialogue around LGBT rights, because I wish to follow many others in this debate on that subject. I do not want to repeat what they said, but 40 of 53 Commonwealth countries criminalise consensual gay relations. In some countries, the situation is getting worse. Using the blueprint of Section 28, Nigeria introduced a draconian law in 2014 that does not just criminalise gay people but carries the threat of prison for 14 years. Brunei is phasing in a new penal code that will apply the death penalty—stoning to death—for consensual gay sex.

It is in that context that I ask the noble Baroness how much progress was made in Malta on the long and difficult journey towards building consensus around gay rights in the Commonwealth. In particular, what work was done to take those people from the Commonwealth who are interested in pursuing economic progress and link the two? We now have a growing body of evidence that, when individual workers are frightened for their lives and of being arrested and do not have access to appropriate healthcare, their ability to be productive in competitive businesses is demonstrably impaired. It is not just that we have to share with the countries of the Commonwealth the need to give people appropriate political rights; we have to present to them the economic evidence from which we have already learned. That way, the millions of people throughout the Commonwealth—those who are gay and those who are not—will benefit greatly from our experience.

1.57 pm

**Lord Taylor of Warwick (Non-Affl):** My Lords, I too thank the noble Lord, Lord Luce, for securing this timely debate. Of course I add my congratulations to

[LORD TAYLOR OF WARWICK]

the noble and learned Baroness, Lady Scotland, on being appointed as the next Commonwealth Secretary-General.

Many compelling and positive facts about the Commonwealth have been eloquently stated today but, in addition to the facts, the Commonwealth is a family, as was emphasised by the noble Lord, Lord Luce. My father came to Britain in the late 1940s after serving as a sergeant in the British Eighth Army in the Second World War. As a Jamaican, he was a member of the Commonwealth and, in coming to England, he did not see himself as travelling to foreign parts; he was coming home to the motherland. Sadly, although he was a qualified accountant, the only job he could get was as a toilet cleaner at a factory in Birmingham. His fortunes changed when Warwickshire County Cricket Club discovered that he could play cricket. The headline in the local *Sports Argus* was “Warwickshire sign Jamaican immigrant”. But the following year, in 1949, when he scored 121 runs against Leicestershire, the headline then read “Warwickshire saved by local Brummie Taylor”.

My father’s story, and that of many immigrants to Britain from the rest of the Commonwealth, builds on that concept of family, but what kept him going was a belief—his Christian faith. Although the Commonwealth heads meeting was essentially a political and diplomatic event, it recognised that the various faith groups in the Commonwealth had a role to play in its future. In Britain, as in other Commonwealth countries, there are Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu, Sikh, Buddhist and other faith communities that are networks of leadership and expertise. There needs to be more of a partnership between Commonwealth Governments—including this one—and these groups in tackling such issues as terrorism, migration, human rights, poverty and equality.

In Britain alone, there are nearly 5,000 black majority churches. The black Pentecostal churches have more than 300,000 members. Black churches such as Glory House, KICC and the Redeemed Church of God attract thousands of people to each service. The congregations there are mainly from Africa and the Caribbean, and many of those people are successful professionals. They are part of the wider Commonwealth diaspora that is keen to help with the ongoing problems highlighted by the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting. In recognising the faith groups, we must not let the fruits of the spirit go sour.

2 pm

**Lord St John of Bletso (CB):** My Lords, I join in thanking my noble friend Lord Luce for taking this opportunity yet again to discuss the value of the Commonwealth and the outcome of the recent CHOGM. That meeting had many successes and certainly raised many challenges. One of the great successes was the establishment of the Commonwealth climate finance access hub, which was timely ahead of the COP 21 meeting in Paris. The CHOGM was also timely because it was ahead of this week’s WTO meeting in Nairobi, where the Commonwealth Secretariat and the United Nations conference on trade met to address trade and development issues.

In my limited time I want to touch on two issues: good governance and trade. Some 60% of the members of the Commonwealth are made up of young people, and the biggest challenge many of those people will face is spiralling unemployment in their countries of origin and the desperate need for foreign direct investment. To quote from one of the many press releases:

“The global community is now tasked with translating the aspirations”,

of the SDGs,

“into practical action, including within the realm of ... policymaking”.

On the issue of good governance, I have become increasingly alarmed by current developments in South Africa, which has for many years been a key member of the Commonwealth. We all had great expectations for the rainbow nation under the admirable leadership of Nelson Mandela but, sadly, Jacob Zuma has been the most disastrous and destructive President. His move last week to remove the Finance Minister, who rightly vetoed yet another of his extravagances, is typical of his autocratic and irresponsible leadership. This has not just led to a dramatic collapse in the South African rand; over the last five years, we have seen a huge drop in inward investment into that country, which relies on foreign direct investment to promote sustainable development. President Zuma’s poor governance has given the country an uncertain future. Equally, Robert Mugabe, who is now well into his 90s, has been clinging to power in Zimbabwe for far too long. The prize of new leadership in Zimbabwe and South Africa is enormous. When this happens, I hope that Zimbabwe will rejoin the Commonwealth.

Finally, I hope that progress can be achieved on removing trade barriers in Africa to create a truly African continental free-trade area. This would be a catalyst to boost trade substantially between African countries, of which 17 are members of the Commonwealth. The value and future of Commonwealth trade is well documented in the secretariat’s trade report. I have always been a great and firm supporter of the value of the Commonwealth in jointly tackling all the challenges as one big family. In this respect I am glad that in her inspired new appointment, the noble and learned Baroness, Lady Scotland, can now drive these initiatives forward.

2.04 pm

**Baroness Wilcox (Con):** My Lords, I thank the noble Lord, Lord Luce, for bringing to the House this debate on the report of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Malta in November, at which the noble and learned Baroness, Lady Scotland of Asthal, was elected as the next—and the first woman—Secretary-General. Her renowned experience, enthusiasm and wisdom will make her a worthy champion, as she reaches out to achieve her stated goals of democracy and development.

As the very first speaker, the noble Lord, Lord Luce, had the most time—I have the least—and he gave us a tour de force. I felt a sense of excitement as he spoke—a need to be involved. I felt ashamed of how little I have actually done since I joined this organisation. On looking back, I realise I have never attended anything, so I feel now that I really must

contribute more. I look forward with enthusiasm to the Minister's response to some of the noble Lord's questions, which I could never have explained away, but I am delighted to be here.

I mainly wish to speak about the Commonwealth scholarships, which demonstrate the importance of the Commonwealth to individuals, especially the relatively young. Tens of thousands apply for these awards each year and 25,000 have benefited from those the UK offers. In many cases, the awards have transformed their lives and the societies in which they live. Many award-holders develop lifelong links with the United Kingdom—a talented and influential example of soft power, which is a credit to our country.

The Commonwealth scholarships scheme has enjoyed support from Governments of all parties over the years. It is critical that this continue and that there is scope to be more ambitious. The newly announced DfID priorities rightly focus on the very poorest and most fragile states. The majority of Commonwealth scholarships are already made to such countries, so the scheme is ideally placed to develop new initiatives. Combining a development scheme with support for the Commonwealth offers a win-win situation. A friend of mine, who got me interested and who was a Commonwealth Scholarship Commissioner, recently attended the welcome day for the new intake of more than 400 scholars and fellows who are based across the United Kingdom. He told me that the enthusiasm and commitment which they exuded made it one of the most exhilarating occasions he had attended for a very long time.

Finally, as a serving member of your Lordships' European Union Select Committee and as a businesswoman, I was taken, as we approach our in-out referendum, by an article in the *Daily Telegraph* of 27 November on the Commonwealth meeting. It was titled, "The EU or the Commonwealth? Britain can have both", and in it Anthony Bailey said:

"Increased trade with Commonwealth countries is perfectly possible for Britain".

It does not have to mean one or the other, or that Britain will have to leave Europe if it is to continue to support our Commonwealth. He continued:

"The emerging economies of the Commonwealth suddenly look ... exciting",

so absolutely everybody will want to talk to them and take part with them. He went on:

"The transformed international scene is now filling up with a quilt of new networks and alliances. The Commonwealth and Europe are two of these. Britain should be leading in both".

As he said,

"Britain's best service to the Commonwealth is to stay and shape a European Union which needs Britain more than ever".

Now, there is something new to think about.

2.08 pm

**Lord Chidgey (LD):** My Lords, first, I congratulate the noble Lord, Lord Luce, on securing this debate at such an appropriate time for this House. In his contribution, he recognised the commitment of the Maltese Government at their CHOGM. He made an interesting point about whether the United Kingdom would do the same at our London CHOGM in a

couple of years' time. He brought a very wide range of issues before us and reminded us that it is of course the young who lead the way.

The noble Lord, Lord Howell, set out the scale of the Commonwealth, in spite of the lack of time for Members in this debate and the lack of interest in the British press in covering the Commonwealth. He said that there are big prizes in growing markets for the Commonwealth. He ended with a very apposite question: "How long will we be ignorant of our own strength?". What a wonderful comment to think about.

The noble Lord, Lord Robertson, talked about the Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Trust and commented on the commitment of Her Majesty the Queen in her 60 years' service to the Commonwealth.

My noble friend Lord Steel reflected on his boyhood in Kenya. I was going to say that he was in the hands of the noble Lord, Lord Luce, but "patronage" would probably be the right way of putting it. He made the point that there are great things to come from the newly elected Secretary-General, the noble and learned Baroness, Lady Scotland. She has noted that 40 out of 53 Commonwealth countries still criminalise homosexuality and has therefore set herself a target for change, which is admirable.

The noble Baroness, Lady Featherstone, made such a wonderful maiden speech in only three minutes, which is quite remarkable. She set out the passions in her life: the protection of individuals from violence and discrimination; the protection of women; the abolition of FGM; her commitment to LGBT rights; and fighting climate change. My noble friend Lord Sandwich gave us the wonderful example of Lutyens and his view of architecture in Delhi—which of course most of us will have seen—setting standards that can be adopted and adapted for a wide range of issues across the Commonwealth.

That of course reminds us of potential Commonwealth members, as did the noble Lord, Lord Rana. It just so happens that I have some strong connections with the Republic of Ireland and I often work with Irish MPs on capacity-building projects in southern Africa. It is slightly difficult when I invite them for a meeting in this place, because to get here they have to come through security at Cromwell Green, which is not particularly attractive for them.

As the noble Lord, Lord Luce, pointed out, the Commonwealth stands out among organisations for the particularly broad range of professional and civil society bodies that enable citizens in member states to work together and provide mutual support. This is acknowledged in the opening words of the Commonwealth charter:

"We the people of the Commonwealth".

The charter also recognises,

"the important role that civil society plays in our communities and countries as partners in promoting and supporting Commonwealth values and principles".

My noble friend Lord Watson expanded on this and emphasised it in his speech. As the chair of the advisory council of the Commonwealth Policy Studies Unit, I had the opportunity to attend the 2011 CHOGM in Perth, Australia, where the Commonwealth charter was presented.



[LORD CHIDGEY]

At the Malta CHOGM, Her Majesty's Government chaired the round table on LGBT issues, and I would be grateful if the Minister could advise us of the outcomes of that round table, as this has become such a pertinent topic in our debate today. In their 2015 CHOGM communiqué, Heads of Government paid tribute to the many Commonwealth organisations and individual citizens who had gathered in Malta. They contributed in a diverse way to advancing the Commonwealth's values, principles, goals and priorities.

A very significant Canadian contribution is the Commonwealth of Learning, or the COL, an outcome of the 1987 Vancouver CHOGM. The COL has been generously supported by Canada and other member states, and is still based in Vancouver. Under the leadership of Professor Asha Kanwar of India, it continues to deliver an important expression of intergovernmental co-operation on education, which has always been a primary area of Commonwealth focus.

In Malta, Heads of Government welcomed the work of the COL and its "learning for development" approach in enhancing access to quality education and training, leading to employment and entrepreneurship. They envisage that under its new strategic plan, and through the use of ICT, it will add value to national efforts to accelerate progress towards achieving the sustainable development goals. Heads of Government expressed particular appreciation for the Virtual University for Small States of the Commonwealth—another COL initiative—and in particular its use of innovative technologies for human resource development in small states and the special initiative to prevent child marriage.

While in Malta for the CHOGM, Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull of Australia announced that his country would double its financial contribution to the COL. This is a great boost in support and will help the COL to improve the lives of thousands of vulnerable girls and women. As Professor Kanwar pointed out when acknowledging the values of this fresh financial commitment, investing in girls and women yields high returns.

The work of the Association of Commonwealth Universities, which I think the noble Lord, Lord Luce, also mentioned, and of the Commonwealth Scholarship and Fellowship Plan, and the contributions of the Commonwealth Scholarship Commission, are impressive in their impact and influence, offering beacons of hope and real opportunity for many of the most promising young people. Scholarships, fellowships and other forms of educational exchange are critical to building and sustaining pan-Commonwealth co-operation and are an important way of showing the commitment of the United Kingdom to international development and understanding.

I encourage DfID and the FCO to find ways of strengthening scholarships and fellowships as a powerful strand of influence and good will, not least because of the way in which Commonwealth undergraduate and postgraduate students are able to carry forward and expand their links with this country and more widely through the Commonwealth's networks of professional and civil society organisations, to which I have already referred. Under the coalition Government, it was

particularly satisfying how BIS and UKTI provided support for special fellowships in connection with the Commonwealth Science Conference held in Bangalore. This revival of a gathering that had not taken place for 50 years showed renewed understanding of and confidence in the importance of the Commonwealth as a forum for co-operation and exchange.

In their Malta communiqué, the Heads of Government paid tribute to the Science Conference and welcomed Singapore's offer to host the next Commonwealth Science Conference when it convenes in June 2017. The conference attracts and warrants the attention and investment of resources by such eminent institutions as the Royal Society, the Indian Institute of Science and the National Research Foundation in Singapore. We should also pay tribute to the imaginative partnership project, Commonwealth Class, which is bringing understanding of their Commonwealth identity to a new generation of Commonwealth citizens. Again, the noble Lord, Lord Luce, picked up on this. Led by the British Council and the Commonwealth Secretariat, the project presents high-quality videos and learning materials on the values of the Commonwealth charter. Schoolchildren around the world can work together online and acquire citizenship skills and a global perspective.

Initiatives such as this, particularly for schools and young people, are needed more now than ever. The Commonwealth has the reach, the diversity and the networks to lead in advancing respect and understanding. In this context, I commend the very welcome support being provided by the Government and other member states for a new unit in the Commonwealth Secretariat to focus on the vital work of countering violent extremism. Through its work on civil paths to peace, the Commonwealth collectively has given a lead in finding innovative and inclusive ways of peacebuilding and national development. From its earliest days, and on crucial issues such as fighting institutional racism, particularly in southern Africa, the Commonwealth has been able to lead and convene for progressive and liberal approaches.

We look forward to a new chapter opening under the stewardship of the noble and learned Baroness, Lady Scotland—a citizen of Dominica, let us not forget. As so many other noble Lords have done, I congratulate her warmly on her appointment as Commonwealth Secretary-General. This must be the best thing since sliced bread as far as we are concerned. Finally, I am delighted we have had the opportunity, in this most timely debate, of considering the contribution the Commonwealth makes and how, to quote the theme of the 2015 CHOGM, it is adding global value.

2.17 pm

**Lord Collins of Highbury (Lab):** My Lords, I, too, thank the noble Lord, Lord Luce, for initiating this important and timely debate. I also congratulate the noble Baroness, Lady Featherstone, on her excellent maiden speech. I hope she will not hold my efforts in Hornsey and Wood Green on election day against me—nevertheless, it was an excellent maiden speech.

In a world that faces huge challenges—the greatest number since the Second World War—it is important to recognise the key role that the Commonwealth,

with 2.3 billion people, which is one-third of the world's population, can play in supporting each member in addressing them. The theme of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting held last month in Malta was:

“The Commonwealth—Adding Global Value”.

That is key to its purpose and success in the 21st century. It cannot replace the peacebuilding role of the UN or be a substitute for the EU in terms of trade, but it can complement and enhance the goals of these organisations.

It of course gives me great pleasure to congratulate my noble and learned friend Lady Scotland on her election as Commonwealth Secretary-General. In taking over on 1 April next year, she will become the first woman to occupy the post. My noble and learned friend has been a great champion for human rights and dignity, and I strongly welcome her vow to build, “consensus on a revitalised Commonwealth”, which will focus on the, “twin goals of democracy and development”.

As we have heard, the Heads of Government addressed climate change, sustainable development, trade and investment, migration and countering violent extremism and radicalisation. In doing so, they reaffirmed their shared commitment to the values and principles of the Commonwealth charter.

In today's debate, I want to focus on the twin goals that my noble and learned friend Lady Scotland identified as her principles: democracy and development. In their final communiqué, the leaders welcomed the adoption of the 2030 UN agenda for sustainable development: 17 goals and 169 targets aimed at resolving sustainable development issues such as poverty, ill health and inequality. The Commonwealth leaders described the agenda as “historic” and as, “containing the ability to change the world”.

They agreed that the Commonwealth should provide assistance to member states in order for them to attain long-term debt sustainability.

The universality of the goals and the specific commitment to leave no one behind are key to the importance of Commonwealth involvement. They pose a challenge for developed countries as well as developing ones. In particular, they challenge all countries to ensure that the most marginalised groups are targeted over the next 15 years. Goal 16 on peace and justice is a major step forward for linking peace and development and ensuring that human rights and trusted institutions are now a universal commitment. The specific inclusion of goal 5 on gender equality, focusing on the importance of the empowerment of women and girls, their education and other gender-related issues as a priority within the work of the Commonwealth Secretariat, is extremely welcome.

The preparations for the data revolution are vital, as accurate data and their disaggregation at the country level as well as globally is fundamental to ensure that goals are met for everyone. I therefore welcome the agreement that the Commonwealth should facilitate member states' efforts to obtain adequate and predictable resources from a variety of sources, technology and capacity-building to achieve the sustainable development goals.

As we have heard, the continued engagement of civil society in the monitoring and implementation of the SDGs is also key to the Commonwealth's involvement. There are concerns that in some countries civil society will be marginalised again. What steps have the Government taken to lead by example in developing a country plan for the implementation of the SDGs involving NGOs and parliamentarians?

The Heads of Government acknowledged that all human rights are equal, indivisible, interdependent, interrelated and universal, and urged members to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms. They recognised that freedom of opinion and expression, freedom of peaceful assembly and association and freedom of religion or belief are cornerstones of democratic societies and important for the enjoyment of all human rights, including the right to development, and are fundamental to achieving the sustainable development goals. As the noble Lord, Lord Tugendhat, reminded us, they emphasise the need to protect individuals from all forms of violence and discrimination.

What discussion took place in Malta on the agenda for the forthcoming UN humanitarian summit in 2016, at which a number of the SDGs will need to be addressed? As many noble Lords mentioned today, the omission from the final communiqué recognising the rights of LGBT people was disappointing. Same-sex sexual conduct between consenting adults continues to be criminalised in 40 of the 53 countries of the Commonwealth. As we have heard today, a lot of those laws are a hangover from British colonial rule. While they remain on the statute book, they have a continuing impact of fear, stigma, rejection, violence and, far too often, murder. The persecution and criminalisation of identity can also, as we have heard, decimate efforts to halt the spread of HIV. It often results in gay people not being able to access the healthcare, education and employment that they need, preventing access to HIV testing and treatment.

There was some progress in Malta. Like the noble Lord, Lord Lexden, I welcome the policy dialogue held between LGBT activists from across the Commonwealth and policymakers, including the noble Baroness, Lady Verma, the International Development Minister. To what extent were various CHOGM forums utilised to make the case for decriminalising consensual sex between same-sex adults? Will the Minister urge the Commonwealth institutions to draft a comprehensive good practice model of sexual offences for member states?

As recognised by my noble and learned friend Lady Scotland at Malta, we do not have the right or the opportunity to force states to decriminalise, but we can start with a really good conversation, to work with them so that they understand the economic as well as the human rights issues involved in making that necessary change. Were any efforts made towards a more pragmatic and constructive bilateral engagement with particular countries at Malta?

Finally, I refer briefly to many people whom many noble Lords have met: brave people who daily go about their lives in the knowledge that being themselves could lead to imprisonment or worse. What direct assistance will the Government provide either financially

[LORD COLLINS OF HIGHBURY]  
or politically to support the development of lesbian, gay and bisexual movements worldwide, but, in particular, in the Commonwealth countries?

2.27 pm

**The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns) (Con):** My Lords, I, too, congratulate the noble Lord, Lord Luce, on securing this timely debate on the outcome of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Valletta. I welcome contributions from noble Lords on all sides of the House; despite the short time limit for contributions, they were very valuable. In particular, of course, I welcome the maiden speech of the noble Baroness, Lady Featherstone. It is a delight to hear from here, as it was in another place and in cross-departmental meetings which she chaired and I attended.

Before I address some of the main issues raised today, I join Peers in paying tribute to Her Majesty the Queen. Her Majesty has been steadfast in her support for the Commonwealth. She has helped it develop from a group of just seven members in 1952 to the global organisation of 53 countries that it is today, spanning every continent, all the main religions and almost a third of the world's population. Indeed, the Queen opened this year's meeting, and was joined in Malta by His Royal Highness the Duke of Edinburgh and Their Royal Highnesses the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall.

There has been much reflection today on the pleasure at the appointment by the leaders at CHOGM of the noble and learning Baroness, Lady Scotland, to be the next Secretary-General. Dominica should be proud of the campaign that it ran in support of the noble and learned Baroness. I congratulate it and her on the result. It is good for the whole Commonwealth.

The United Kingdom wanted the strongest possible candidate to drive the Commonwealth forward and steer the organisation through reform. We believe that the noble and learned Baroness is the right person to ensure that the Commonwealth has a strong voice and is able to impact on the most pressing global challenges and unite its members behind the Commonwealth's values. So in answer to questions about our role in pressing ahead with reforms, of course it will be the noble and learned Baroness, Lady Scotland, who leads, but we look forward to working with her when she takes up office in April 2016 and in the build-up to the next CHOGM, which will take place in the United Kingdom in the spring of 2018. She can count on our support for the reforms for which she has been mandated.

The United Kingdom sees the Commonwealth as an important network to promote shared values and interests and strengthen prosperity, security and the rules-based international system. That is why we committed in our manifesto to strengthening the Commonwealth's focus in promoting democratic values and development. This year's CHOGM offered a vital opportunity to do that and to increase the organisation's impact and relevance after a difficult meeting in Colombo two years ago. Malta's theme of "adding global value", as the noble Lord, Lord Chidgey, said, focused leaders'

discussions on areas where the Commonwealth can make a real difference at a time of unprecedented global challenges. In tackling issues such as extremism, climate change and sustainable development, the Commonwealth has unique strengths to offer: its global reach and diversity; its shared legal systems, language and values; and its extensive civil society and youth networks.

I was asked in particular what we were doing as a Government to teach schoolchildren their Commonwealth history and background. The Government have reformed the national curriculum, and the new curriculum has been taught in schools from September last year. So there are already opportunities for schools to teach pupils about the Commonwealth. Today I encourage schools to consider how best they can make use of those opportunities and develop them to fit them to the circumstances of their particular area and needs.

The Prime Minister led a strong UK delegation to Malta. He was supported by the Foreign Secretary, who attended the CHOGM Foreign Ministers meeting, and by the Minister of State for the Commonwealth, my right honourable friend Hugo Swire. My noble friend Lord Maude, the Minister for Trade and Investment, attended the Business Forum, along with Hugo Swire. My noble friend Lady Verma, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department for International Development, represented the UK at the Women's Forum and the People's Forum. This shows that the Government are deeply committed to the Commonwealth, not just out of a sense of tradition and obligation but out of a belief in political freedom, which has underpinned the organisation for more than 65 years, and is as relevant now as it was at the time of the London Declaration. The Commonwealth is a unique organisation in the world order, and this Government firmly believe that it can be a force for good around the world, by promoting freedom, democracy, human rights, development and prosperity.

I was asked about others who attended. They comprised 12 Presidents, 22 Prime Ministers, 34 Foreign Ministers from the Commonwealth itself, and President Hollande and Ban Ki-moon joined for a climate session ahead of the successful COP 21 Paris meeting.

At CHOGM, Commonwealth leaders were united in their strong condemnation of the recent attacks in Paris and elsewhere. They agreed that countering extremism would be a new Commonwealth priority, and committed to increasing co-operation between Commonwealth member states. The UK's pledge of up to £1 million per year for the next five years to set up and support a dedicated Commonwealth unit to counter radicalisation and extremism will help to deliver this. The unit will co-ordinate sharing of expertise between Commonwealth countries, and work with them and the Commonwealth's civil society, which as noble Lords have said is so important, and with youth and education networks to counter extremism propaganda, including on the internet. We also announced seed funding to establish a counter-radicalisation youth network across Commonwealth countries. With 60% of the Commonwealth's population under the age of 30, this will be an important initiative to support moderate youth voices.



Climate change, which has been mentioned much today, is one of the greatest challenges the world faces. It affects all Commonwealth states, and is a threat to not only our environment but our development, security and economies. At CHOGM, leaders agreed a climate action statement, which sent a strong message, ahead of the United Nations climate negotiations in Paris, on the need for a credible and effective global agreement. The Commonwealth's 25 small island developing states are of course particularly vulnerable to climate change and natural disasters. At CHOGM, the Prime Minister announced a package of initiatives aimed at supporting efforts to build their resilience, increase their access to climate finance and reduce their reliance on aid.

I was made keenly aware of this, because climate change is part of my FCO responsibility, working with the lead department, DECC, and I hosted diplomatic meetings for those small island states that are at threat of inundation and change to their way of life. It was so important that at CHOGM we were able to announce our support, which includes £20 million to help the SIDS access disaster risk insurance; £5.6 million of assistance to develop maritime economies; and up to £1 million for expert assistance to access development finance. In addition, UK funding will support a new Commonwealth climate finance access hub, and we will be supporting a new working group within the Commonwealth to identify ways to leverage private sector investment for green projects. I was asked about that and yes, indeed, we shall support that.

In line with the 2030 agenda for sustainable development, and with the values set out in the Commonwealth charter, Commonwealth leaders also agreed that good governance and respect for the rule of law are vital for stable and prosperous societies as well as for efficient, effective and accountable public institutions. The Commonwealth agreed to make anti-corruption work a priority, committing to strengthen efforts to tackle corruption, including through increased transparency and co-ordination among law agencies. The Prime Minister co-chaired a side event on anti-corruption with the Botswanan President, which helped to generate momentum towards the UK's anti-corruption summit next year.

On the plans for the UK to take forward its own work on sustainable development goals, it is essential that we lead by example, as we have, in coalition and with the support that we gave to the Labour Government when they were in office. We have given our co-operation to all the issues surrounding climate problems. We have also faced the same cross-party agreement over our approach to sustainable development goals. I was able to take part in discussions, when I was appointed a year and half ago to the Foreign Office, and I have valued the support that I have received around this House in taking forward DfID's work on putting into good practice what we have signed up to.

On values and good practice more widely, the Commonwealth reaffirmed its commitment to promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms and to support the empowerment of women and girls. I noted keenly the words of the noble Baroness, Lady Featherstone, about the importance of pursuing the eradication of FGM. She has my full support as a Minister and, I know, the full support of this House.

LGB&T rights continue to be a major source of division among Commonwealth members, but we were able to secure recognition in the CHOGM leaders' statement of the economic potential that can be unlocked by tackling discrimination and exclusion.

At the leaders' retreat, the Prime Minister called on the Commonwealth to stand up for LGB&T and wider human rights. My noble friend Lady Verma, which whom I work very closely on the eradication of violence against women and girls and on the whole issue of LGB&T rights, urged the Commonwealth to do more when she chaired a People's Forum panel on LGB&T issues. Was it enough? No—we would have liked more, and we will continue to press for more, because it is right that homosexuality should be decriminalised around the world.

The Prime Minister also called for the Commonwealth to do more to hold countries to account when they fail to live up to their responsibilities as Commonwealth members. In particular, he urged all members to send a strong and consistent message to the Maldives on the need for political dialogue and the release of political prisoners. At its meeting in the margins of CHOGM, the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group voiced serious concerns at recent developments in the Maldives, which it agreed were deserving of formal consideration. A ministerial delegation will visit the Maldives early next year and report back to the ministerial action group. At this point, I pay tribute to the work that my noble friend Lady Berridge does with regard to freedom of religion and belief internationally. I assure her that human rights discussions are never complete unless we also within those discussions consider the impact on and importance of freedom of belief and, indeed, of freedom of expression.

I was asked, in particular by the noble Lord, Lord Luce, what progress is being made in strengthening judicial independence, building legislative capacity and election monitoring. Through its strategic plan, the Commonwealth Secretariat has worked to deepen adherence to Commonwealth political values and principles. This has included observing 13 elections in 11 countries in the past year, working with a number of members on the promotion and protection of human rights and supporting the development of national institutions effectively to facilitate the administration and delivery of the rule of law and justice.

Much mention was made today of the importance of business and trade throughout the Commonwealth. Commonwealth leaders agreed to advance global trade negotiations and, in particular, to ratify the WTO trade facilitation agreement. In the run up to CHOGM, the business forum brought together more than 1,300 delegates, 180 political and business leaders and 15 Heads of Government. I congratulate my noble friend Lord Marland on his efforts in organising that event under the auspices of the Commonwealth Enterprise and Investment Council, to which the UK provides support. I am most grateful to him. In addressing that forum, my noble friend Lord Maude underlined the importance of leveraging Commonwealth trade. He also held bilateral meetings with a number of Commonwealth partners to promote trade with the UK.

[BARONESS ANELAY OF ST JOHNS]

Before turning to the question asked by the noble Lord, Lord Luce, about hubs and spokes, I will say that today I have been invited to walk down memory lane a little and to rehearse some of the debates we had during the passage of the European Union Referendum Act. How wonderful to say the word “Act” instead of “Bill” at long last, after Royal Assent this morning. I had better not tire the House by going over it again, but as noble Lords pointed out today, it is crucial that it is not a binary choice. I like having all things in my life, and we can have both those institutions.

I was asked about the trade hubs and spokes programme. It is a long-term capacity-building support programme that strengthens the abilities of African, Caribbean and Pacific countries to formulate, negotiate and implement trade policies and participate in international trade negotiations. The programme does this by deploying experts into 11 regional organisations—the hubs—and 36 government finance and trade ministries—the spokes—so that they are on hand to provide advice to Governments. I am grateful to the noble Lord, Lord Luce, for referring to this because it is not particularly well known. It has run since 2004. It is a joint project funded chiefly by the European Union with support from the Africa, Caribbean and Pacific group secretariat. The Commonwealth is a co-donor. It is responsible for implementing the programme. The other co-donor is the Francophonie, the French equivalent of the Commonwealth. More than 70 developing countries in the ACP group are eligible for assistance from the hub and spokes programme. That is essential.

The noble Earl, Lord Sandwich, was one of those who referred to membership. In particular, he mentioned Nepal. We welcome applications to join the Commonwealth when countries can demonstrate the necessary requirements and dedication to the Commonwealth’s core values, particularly in relation to human rights, good governance and the rule of law. Existing support from the international community, including the UK, in areas such as governance will help Governments make progress in meeting the criteria for membership. Decisions on membership are made by consensus of all heads of Commonwealth members based on applicant countries meeting the criteria. In 2014, during a visit to Kathmandu by my right honourable friend the FCO Minister of State Hugo Swire, the Government of Nepal noted an interest in joining the Commonwealth. We encourage Nepal to follow that up with an informal expression of interest to the Commonwealth Secretariat. That is the way to start the process.

Taken together, all the issues which have been discussed today by noble Lords are crucial to the future success of the Commonwealth. All the issues discussed at Valletta and the outcomes achieved there represent a successful summit for the Commonwealth and the United Kingdom. There is now a real opportunity for the Commonwealth to build on the discussions in Malta and demonstrate unity and a shared sense of purpose in tackling the most pressing global challenges and upholding democracy, human rights and sustainable development across the organisation and the whole world.

The UK is committed to helping the Commonwealth unlock its vast potential, and we will use the opportunity of hosting CHOGM in 2018 to do just that. Our focus will also be on taking forward the initiatives announced in Malta, in co-ordination with the Commonwealth Secretariat and our Commonwealth partners, in particular to increase the Commonwealth’s capacity to counter extremism and support its small island developing states.

We look forward to working with a range of partners—civil society and NGOs are vital to any work—across the Commonwealth institutions, which are essential, the Commonwealth regions and bilaterally to maximise the impact of the Commonwealth and ensure that it is re-energised, remains relevant in the 21st century and delivers prosperity and security to every one of its members.

2.46 pm

**Lord Luce:** My Lords, I have attended several debates on the Commonwealth in the past nine years, but I think I can say without any shadow of doubt that this is the most encouraging one I have taken part in, not just because of the number of speakers, albeit for three minutes each, but because of the range of subjects across all the affairs of the Commonwealth. The number of noble Lords who actively participate in various aspects of the Commonwealth, from health to trade, business and other areas such as education, is very striking. Yesterday, I spoke briefly to the noble and learned Baroness, Lady Scotland, and what struck me was her infectious enthusiasm which seems to have been picked up today during the course of this debate. It is good that we have enthusiasm, but the challenges in front of us in the Commonwealth are enormous. I shall single out one subject which has been highlighted a lot today, which is human rights issues. The Commonwealth is surely the right forum for trying to move these issues forward and solve them through persistent and constant dialogue, which is what the Commonwealth is all about.

It remains for me to thank all noble Lords who have taken part in this debate and to congratulate in particular the noble Baroness, Lady Featherstone, on a very striking speech. I am very grateful to the Minister for a characteristically thorough and thoughtful reply to this debate.

*Motion agreed.*

## Local Government Finance *Statement*

2.48 pm

**The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Communities and Local Government (Baroness Williams of Trafford) (Con):** My Lords, I wish to repeat a Statement made earlier by my right honourable friend Greg Clark in another place.

“I believe our gloriously diverse country will prosper more if the districts, counties, towns and cities that make it up have more power. If you accept that, it follows you must believe councils to be capable of exercising that power. Over the past five years, councils

have shown great responsibility. When local authorities account for a quarter of public spending, it was always the case that they would have to carry their share of reducing the largest deficit in post-war history. Not only have they done so, but public satisfaction with their services has been maintained or improved. I would like especially to thank the staff of those councils most deeply involved with the recent floods; their commitment to their residents is exemplary.

I cannot credit councils with acumen and then deny them candour. More savings need to be made as we finish the job of eliminating the remaining deficit, so I have listened carefully to councils as we prepared this settlement. They asked for: the right to spend locally what they raise locally; help with adult social care; expenditure savings which recognise what has already been achieved; recognition of the higher costs of providing services to sparsely populated rural areas; encouragement for cost-saving innovation; rewards for new homes; complete transparency with regard to resource allocation; and a move beyond one-year-at-a-time budgeting.

This provisional settlement meets all those objectives. Let me explain. Local government will be transformed by localism. In 2010 councils were 80% dependent on central government grants. By 2020 they will be 100% funded by council tax, business rates and other local revenues. Retaining 100% of business rates forges the necessary link between local business success and local civic success. To support this further, we will grow the Local Growth Fund to £12 billion by 2021—a Conservative-led revolution, transforming overcentralised Britain into one of the most decentralised countries in the world. Authorities will also be able to spend 100% of capital receipts from asset sales, to fund cost-saving reforms. We will publish guidance to assist authorities in this matter.

The spending review set out that, based on OBR forecasts, overall local government spending would be slightly higher in 2019-20 than in 2015-16. Core spending power for councils will also be virtually unchanged: £44.5 billion in 2015-16 and £44.3 billion in 2019-20. In real terms, this requires savings of 6.7% over this spending review period, compared to the 14% announced at the spending review of 2010.

The unanimous view across local government is that its biggest cost pressure is care for our growing elderly population. In September, the county councils and the Local Government Association wrote to me, estimating that these costs would require an additional £2.9 billion by 2019-20. Some local government leaders proposed an innovation: a social care council tax precept of 2% a year, guaranteed to be spent on social care, equivalent to £23 per year on an average band D home. In the spending review the Chancellor and I agreed, and will ensure that the precept is transparently itemised on residents' bills. We will go further: we knew that some councils would not raise enough from a 2% precept, so we announced a fund of £1.5 billion a year to support councils in working with their local NHS to address the pressures on care. Today I allocate that £1.5 billion to complement the new precept—that is, more goes to councils that raise least from the precept.

We recognise in the distribution of resources the particular needs of councils with social care responsibilities. Local government asked for £2.9 billion by 2020 as a

contribution to the costs of social care. In this settlement we will make up to £3.5 billion available by that year, distributed fairly towards local authorities with social care responsibilities. I applaud the maturity of local government as a whole in telling me that they accept that this prioritisation implies, over the next few years, that those councils with social care responsibilities should have relatively more resources than those councils which do not have them.

Some district councils—those with low council tax bases or which serve the most rural areas—face particular pressures. So while this settlement maintains the core referendum threshold at 2%, the threshold for the lowest-cost district councils will be £5 a year, so they are not punished for being economical while those that have spent more in the past were allowed to spend more now.

I will increase support for the most sparsely populated rural areas by more than quadrupling the rural services delivery grant from £15.5 million this year to £65 million in 2019-20, by which time, when 100% business rate retention has been achieved, we can consider what further correction is due. I will also protect, in real terms, the £30 million funding for lead local flood authorities, and the £2 million for those authorities to act as statutory consultees in planning sustainable drainage systems.

The new homes bonus provides valuable funding, and, as importantly, encourages housebuilding, so I can announce today that I will extend the bonus indefinitely but with some changes, on which I am consulting. All savings will be retained by local government to contribute towards social care.

In a world in which only a small proportion of councils' funding will come from central government grant, we require transparency on the components of financial resources available to councils. I have noted the criticism of the Public Accounts Committee and the DCLG Select Committee about previous inclusions of the existing Better Care Fund and the public health grant in councils' spending power. I will follow their advice and henceforth report only resources over which councils have discretion.

In addition, in all the figures in the settlement I have chosen to understate the maximum resources available to councils. For example, in line with the OBR, I assume that councils will increase council tax in line with inflation rather than the referendum threshold of 2%. I expect that, as previously, councils will increase bills by less than their full entitlement. Had I assumed that maximum figure, though, over £0.25 billion extra in total resources would have been recorded as available to councils.

The main reason that councils keep liquid reserves is as a buffer against unpredictable year-to-year budgets. Local government has consistently told me, and for generations told my predecessors, that greater certainty about their income over the medium term would allow it to organise more efficiently and strategically, and put some of those safety-net reserves to more productive use. So in this settlement I do something else that local leaders have yearned for: for the first time ever, I offer a guaranteed budget to every council that desires one and which can demonstrate efficiency savings for next



[BARONESS WILLIAMS OF TRAFFORD]

year and for every year of this Parliament—a four-year budget to give certainty and confidence; a settlement that maintains the financial resources available to councils in 2020 at around the same level as they are today, while giving incentives for local government to make significant savings; a settlement that directs up to £3.5 billion to care for our elderly citizens; and a historic settlement that does what campaigners for devolution thought they would never live to see, which is local councils answerable to local people, rather than central government. I commend it to the House”.

2.57 pm

**Lord Beecham (Lab):** My Lords, I refer to my local government interests in the register. I extend the customary thanks to the Minister for repeating the Statement, but I can offer few thanks for the substance of the Statement or the malign effects that it will have on local communities and the services on which they rely. The Minister in a previous life was a highly respected council leader. She has earned similar respect in this House. Not for her the shocking lack of understanding displayed by the Prime Minister in his exchange of correspondence with the chief executive of Conservative Oxfordshire about the impact of government policies on local authorities—supported over the last five years, I remind the House, by the Liberal Democrats.

However, this year’s settlement takes us to a new level. A week ago, I spent three hours at a meeting of Newcastle’s health scrutiny committee discussing possible cuts in social care and public health provision of an unprecedented severity. The clock is being turned back by 40 years to a time when, as chairman of social services, I helped to transform provision of these key services in Newcastle. A combination of cuts in funding and cost pressures, the latter of which the Government studiously ignore, will next year be reflected in a requirement for the city to save £221 million on a council budget of what had been £280 million in 2011-12. This grim scenario is of course not confined to Newcastle. Councils of all political colours, all over the country, are facing similar pressures, as the Conservative-led Local Government Association—whose chairman is in his place today, and I welcome him—has pointed out. Such pressures are aggravated by new costs such as the so-called national living wage, which will impose a responsibility to pay £330 million extra next year, rising to £834 million by 2020, or the deprivation of liberty assessments amounting to £172 million—again unfunded, like other new burdens.

In his Statement, the Secretary of State declared:

“When local authorities account for a quarter of public spending, it was always the case they would have to carry their share of reducing the largest deficit in post-war history”—

words which the Minister has repeated. In fact, of course, local government has taken the largest cut of any part of the public sector or government departments—and, by the way, the Chancellor has still missed his deficit reduction targets.

In this year again, local government is taking a huge hit relative to other departments. One of the few positives to emerge is that, as the LGA had requested, we will now have a four-year budget. As yet, however, the funding formula remains unchanged, and while

revenue support grant will disappear by 2020, it is entirely unclear how the increasing reliance on business rates will work in practice given the wide disparity of such income between different authorities. As yet there are no details of how there might be an equalisation scheme, although I understand that the Government may consult on this.

Moreover, the worrying trend of reverting to a 19th-century poor law system for income support, reflected in the localisation of council tax support, is apparently now to be followed by localising the attendance allowance paid to 1.5 million people over 65 with a disability who need personal care, which costs in total some £5 billion. What assurances can the Minister give about how this sum will be allocated and whether it will be ring-fenced? If it is to be ring-fenced, what is the point of the change?

The decision to allow councils to increase council tax by 2% without a referendum in order to support social care is welcome as far as it goes. However, it does not go very far. In Newcastle, we would raise only £1.7 million, which is a fraction of the cuts that are looming over our social care budget; and of course in a city where 70% of council tax payers are in bands A and B, the 2% yields much less than in other, more prosperous parts of the country. The Government have announced their intention of addressing that issue but it is unclear how they will do so, and after all, councils have little time before they have to announce their budgets. In any event, it is unlikely that a new formula will make a radical difference to the kind of figure I have referred to for Newcastle. Similarly, we await details of changes to the new homes bonus, under which Newcastle and many similar authorities have been net contributors to other, more affluent areas.

Public health is another area in which the Government play the three card trick. Having, rightly, restored public health responsibilities to local government, 42 years after Sir Keith Joseph removed them, this Administration imposed an in-year cut of £200 million in the current year and go on to impose in the Statement and the spending review additional cuts of 3.9% in real terms every year until 2020, which amount to a staggering £533 million. These cuts, moreover, will inevitably lead to greater pressure on the NHS, which is itself facing unprecedented financial challenges.

The Government make much of their devolution agenda. What we are witnessing and what today’s settlement exemplifies is that responsibilities for large areas of public services are being devolved without adequate resources to deliver them. Long on rhetoric, short on cash, the Government will the ends and withdraw the means.

I have sought to exemplify some of the problems that my city and my constituents will face as a result of today’s announcement. However, of course, these effects will be felt to varying degrees in most local authorities across the country. The House is fortunate in having among its Members on both the Government and Opposition Benches a number of experienced former council leaders—one of whom I suspect will speak to this Statement very shortly in his capacity as the Lib Dem spokesman on local government. However, it also has several former Secretaries of State, none of

whom is in their place today, and with all of whom I used to do battle as council leader and subsequently chairman of the Association of Metropolitan Authorities. I never thought I would say this but I am, to my surprise, feeling almost nostalgic for those days, given what their successors are now doing. The Statement that has been announced today will inflict great damage to local government in this country. I fear that, again, it is a case of the Government passing the buck but emphatically not passing the bucks.

**Lord Shipley (LD):** My Lords, I thank the Minister for repeating the Statement and declare my vice-presidency of the Local Government Association. One figure missing from the Minister's Statement was the reduction by 24% of central government funding support for local government over the spending review period. When taking into account the forecasts of income raised locally by councils, the overall position is a 6.7% real terms reduction over those four years. However, that is of course a national figure and will be very different in individual authorities.

I remind the Minister that during the last Government, the National Audit Office consistently warned that the department needed to understand much better the impact of its decisions on local authority finances and services. The Public Accounts Committee, in a report two years ago entitled *Financial Sustainability of Local Authorities*, identified that while the department collected a significant amount of data from local government, it had not made clear how it would monitor councils' ability to cope with funding changes. Then, in November last year, the head of the National Audit Office warned:

"The Department really needs to be better informed about the situation on the ground among local authorities across England, in a much more active way, in order to head off serious problems before they happen".

Can the Minister say what the Government have done in response to the criticisms of both the National Audit Office and the Public Accounts Committee?

Much has been made of the extra 2% on council tax to help maintain adult care services, and there has been an admission that different councils will raise different sums of money from that 2%. In London, for example, Newham will only be able to raise 4.1% of extra funding whereas Kingston upon Thames will have 11.3% extra. What has been done to equalise the cash available in the central allocation of grant to reflect this? I note that in the Statement, the Minister said there will be an allocation of £1.5 billion to complement the new precept and then went on to say, "that is, more goes to councils that raise least from the precept".

So far, so good, but does that mean that enough is going to those councils? Simply telling us that more is going to go to them is not sufficient. Will the Minister bear in mind that the total sum being made available falls well short of the £6 billion the Health Foundation estimated will be needed by 2020?

Much is being made of the fact that by the end of this Parliament, local government will keep all the revenue from business rates. I understand that there will be guarantees of continued comparable funding at current levels, but any growth will stay locally. One consequence of that is that poorer areas are likely to get poorer while richer areas, because they can keep an

increase in business rates income, are likely to get richer. What is the Government's policy on equalisation, given that there will be no more revenue support grant?

Finally, earlier this week we heard that inspection figures indicate that the number of children's services departments rated inadequate outnumber those rated good. This was described by the Government as a failure of state provision, but the implication was that it was all the fault of local government. We have reached a tipping point whereby the availability of money matters, and the Government have an absolute obligation to meet National Audit Office criticisms of their lack of understanding of the consequences of their actions. Government cannot go on requiring councils to deliver more services to more people with less real cash. It is an impossible task; will the Minister care to admit it?

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** My Lords, I thank both noble Lords. I have been busily jotting down notes and will try to respond to them as effectively as I can.

First, I thank the noble Lord, Lord Beecham, for his gladness at seeing some certainty in the funding over the next few years. Perhaps I may address some of his concerns, particularly about the efficiencies that local government has had to make since 2010 and going forward. Nobody could deny that the efficiencies the public sector has had to make have been, by their nature, very difficult. Everybody in the public sector has had to bear the brunt of the need to reduce the deficit, and I commend local authorities for the work they have done over the last five years. They have been innovative and enterprising, and satisfaction with local authorities has been either maintained or improved.

The noble Lords, Lord Beecham and Lord Shipley, are absolutely right about the revenue support grant. It will reduce to virtually nothing by 2020 and the figure for this year shows a reduction, because of the increasing localisation of business rates. Local authorities now retain approximately 50% of their business rates and they will retain 100% by 2020. Mayoral areas will be able to increase their business rates in due course.

The noble Lord, Lord Beecham, talked about social care. A precept can be raised for social care which will be 2% above the 2% cap that triggers a referendum on council tax. The noble Lord may be interested to know that for Newcastle, this would mean £20.7 million by 2020.

The noble Lord also mentioned the comments of my noble friend Lord Porter. I am sure that in due course my noble friend will want to speak for himself. However, today he said:

"The government has listened to what councils said we need and has delivered. More independence to serve our communities, a fair financial settlement for all types of councils, more resources to help care for the elderly and the certainty of long-term budgets". That is really welcome and I wish that it had been in place when I was a leader. My noble friend went on to say:

"This settlement should mark the beginning of a new age of independence and responsibility for local councils. In local government we will make a success of it, building on the hard work of the last five years.

[BARONESS WILLIAMS OF TRAFFORD]

Councils will be in greater control of their own destiny. It is an exciting time to be a councillor and this reform gives us ... the biggest chance for a generation to serve our residents in a way that we know best”.

The noble Lord, Lord Beecham, also asked about attendance allowance. We will be consulting on the devolution of that.

The noble Lord, Lord Shipley, talked about the concerns of the National Audit Office and the Public Accounts Committee. Within local authorities there is a Section 151 officer who, every year during the budget process, comments on the sustainability or otherwise of a council’s budget. We believe that local authorities and local areas are best placed to know the dangers or otherwise of their future funding and, to my knowledge, no Section 151 officer has made an adverse statement on sustainability.

The noble Lord also asked about the £1.52 billion to complement the precept. The local authorities that are least able to raise the funding will be protected by a greater proportion of that £1.52 billion. I think that recognises, fairly, that those local authorities still have to provide social care. Local authority leaders have said to us that they need £2.9 billion. We will be providing £3.5 billion over the next few years, so I hope that gives the noble Lord some satisfaction.

The noble Lord also talked about poorer areas being likely to get poorer because of the RSG reducing to nothing by 2020. There will definitely be some form of equalisation. Councils such as Westminster raise well over £1 billion in business rates and other local authorities may see reductions. For the latter there will also be some sort of floor protection through business rate equalisation.

3.14 pm

**Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer (LD):** My Lords, for decades many people have campaigned about the plight of sparsely populated rural areas, and I very hesitantly welcome the part of the Statement that deals with that. However, I ask the Minister to be very careful about this—it would be really cruel if it were a false dawn. Given that such areas have very little capacity for business rate retention because, by their nature, they do not collect much in the way of business rates, what criteria will the Government use to judge the further correction that she mentioned?

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** My Lords, in answer to the second part of the noble Baroness’s question, that will be determined in due course. As I said to the noble Lord, Lord Shipley, the Government will not let the councils that will really struggle in that area fall beneath a certain level. Regarding the rural services delivery grant, this is not a false dawn. The increase is a quadrupling, so the Government recognise some of the problems rural areas face. The more sparsely populated they are, clearly, the more money they need per head to provide basic services.

**Lord True (Con):** My Lords, I fear this is perhaps not the settlement local authority leaders have “yearned for”, to repeat the slightly gushy phrase used in the Secretary of State’s Statement. However, it would be extremely churlish not to welcome the four-year settlement

proposal. Whatever sort of certainty it is, it is important that we have that basis, and I thank my noble friend for that.

I also thank her for recognising the efforts that local authorities, of all stamps, have made. We have made huge economies—ahead of the Government in many respects—and we will carry on doing so. However, I hope the Minister will be prepared—my honourable friend Tania Mathias made the same point in the Commons—to recognise the position of anomalous authorities. At first blush, our area stands to lose nearly 40% of our RSG at a stroke in one year, and we have more over-65s than other authorities in London that are twice the size, so there is a need for dialogue here.

I also ask my noble friend to be cautious about devolution. Some of it is genuine and welcome, but too much is illusion and some of it is an instrument of control. It would be good if, in the dialogue over the next few months, local government and central government between them could disentangle what devolution means.

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** I thank my noble friend for, as always, his very sensible words. I said in my previous answer that I wish that when I had been a local authority leader I had had some sort of certainty as we lurched from year to year with local government settlements. I thank him for making the observation that the certainty is welcome. It also encourages councils to look at their reserve position. By their nature, reserves are for one-off, planned spending and are never intended to prop up revenue spending. However, if you know what your four-year position is, you can use reserves for one-off measures.

My noble friend talked about the reduction in RSG and—I presume by inference—the changeover to business rates. The Government will be consulting widely on that. I hope to see people like my noble friend coming to discuss with my department how some of the anomalous situations that might arise, particularly with an older population, can be dealt with through this process.

I take his point about devolution, but he will not be surprised to hear that, as a former Greater Manchester councillor, I do not perhaps share so much of his pessimism about it.

**Lord McKenzie of Luton (Lab):** My Lords, the Minister will be aware that in April next year we have the introduction of the single-tier state pension and with it the end of contracting out. In Budget 2013 it was recognised that, from April next year, that would garner the Government an extra £5 billion a year. It was said at that time that those funds would be used to help fund the costs of the lifetime care cap, which was to be set at £72,000 and introduced in April 2016. That of course has been deferred, so what is happening to those resources if they are not going to be applied to that?

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** I always know that when the noble Lord stands up he may ask a difficult question that I may struggle to answer. Could I please return to him in writing, as I quite frequently do?



**Baroness Farrington of Ribbleton (Lab):** My Lords, I declare a former interest as a member of local authorities. However, I rise to defend not local authorities but the people who want the services of local authorities. Local authorities can be held up as something to shoot at, whereas it is local people who will suffer. If she cannot answer now in detail, would the Minister please write to tell me how on earth there is going to be a correlation between the amount local authorities can increase in expenditure—2% on the rates—and equalising the income they get while having regard to the very different levels of need in different areas? I understand that there is to be detailed discussion on the £1.5 billion, and so, unusually, I ask the Minister not only to write to me but to keep me up to date by writing frequently.

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** I hope I do not have to write too frequently and that the words I write give her some comfort. To reiterate—and I think I possibly did this last year—the 10% of local authorities in the most deprived decile frequently get more spending power than the 10% in the top decile. At the moment, it is about 24% more. However, I understand the noble Baroness's point about the changes and how we will ensure that vulnerable people are protected. I am sure I can give her comfort in the letter that I will write to her. We do not want to see the most vulnerable people in our society suffer in any way—quite the opposite.

**Lord Tope (LD):** My Lords, I declare my interest as a vice-president of the Local Government Association. The Statement comments that by 2020 councils will be 100% funded by council tax, business rates and other local revenues, but it says nothing about the centrally imposed council tax referendum threshold. Surely it must be a logical extension from 100% local funding that there is no need for such a centrally imposed threshold, something else that local government of all parties has campaigned for for years. The LGA also referred to what it calls the “cost-shunting carousel”, whereby local government has imposed upon it large numbers of obligations and responsibilities, either from legislation or other impositions such as the national living wage. It calculated that that totalled £6.3 billion. Will central government at least try to agree with the LGA a list of what those obligations are and try to see whether they can get an agreed figure, rather than as at present, when it all happens, in effect, by stealth?

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** My Lords, the move towards business rate retention of 100% is in itself a freedom for local authorities not having to rely on the Secretary of State to tell them what they are going to get or not get. If I was a local authority leader, I would thoroughly welcome that, particularly where local authorities are innovative. As to whether the 2% cap will be in place when we are at the point of 100% business rate retention, as far as I know as I stand here now it will be, but I cannot speak for five years hence. In terms of local government obligations, when new burdens are brought in there is generally an assessment of those and that is taken into account.

**Lord Beecham:** My Lords, in view of her statement that it is an exciting time to be a local councillor, would the Minister agree that it would have been an exciting time to be a passenger on the “Titanic”?

**Baroness Williams of Trafford:** I do not think that I would have liked to have been on the “Titanic”. But I say to the noble Lord, in all sincerity, that I campaigned for years for devolution, and across different parties, in Greater Manchester. We never thought that we would get it. What is an exciting time is, as a Minister, to have been able to bring the legislation through.

## Paris Climate Change Conference

### *Question for Short Debate*

3.26 pm

*Asked by Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress was made at the COP 21 climate change talks.

**Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer (LD):** My Lords, the Statement on Tuesday gave this House the opportunity to congratulate all those involved in the COP 21 talks: Laurent Fabius in particular and the French presidency in general, and of course our own UK team, including the noble Lord the Minister, and I am delighted that he is replying to the debate this afternoon. He has come back hot-foot from Paris, and I warmly repeat those congratulations formally in this debate.

Today is also an opportunity to explore in a little more depth the big questions for the UK that follow on from those successful talks and just how the Government will build on the successful outcome of COP 21. I am especially looking forward to the maiden speech of my noble friend Lady Sheehan, as I am sure the whole House is.

Paris has given tremendous political momentum that we must capture. It has been a very long time coming. I see that the noble Lord, Lord Prescott, is in his place, and I am sure that he feels it has been a really long time coming because he put so much personal effort into making sure that it stayed a live issue.

I will take a quick glance back and then a slightly longer look forward. I am sure that all noble Lords remember the time when climate change was labelled a “green” issue for scientists only. Although politicians talked about it, and NGOs mobilised people around the issue, it was not considered a “serious” issue like defence, foreign affairs or the economy. It was the noble Lord, Lord Stern, who focused attention on the fact that climate change affected all those serious issues fundamentally. He made people understand that economically it made absolute sense to tackle the issue. That enabled a position in the UK where the draft Climate Change Bill enjoyed all-party consensus and was passed as the Climate Change Act. The private sector began to ramp up its investments in a low-carbon future, but the financial woes of 2008-09 meant that momentum slowed to a crawl. It was only the valiant efforts of a few, such as my friend the right honourable Ed Davey, that kept it alive at all.

[BARONESS MILLER OF CHILTHORNE DOMER]

With a successful COP 21 we can again look to the future. I do not think that that future is a fantasy; it really is very nearly a reality. In that future your home could be its own powerhouse. It could be a flat in a building that is both a powerhouse and a green lung. Solar and ground source energy will mean that being cold due to fuel poverty will shortly be as unthinkable as not having running water in your home is now. Battery technology is moving on apace and storage will no longer be a problem. There will be a smart home that regulates itself according to your wishes. I welcome the Minister's statement about the ambition for smart meter rollout in the near future.

The town and city of the future will have clean air and lots of green surfaces absorbing rainfall. Its businesses will have a circular economy where the waste from one process will be material for another and transport will be clean and green. This is not a fantasy future. The technologies are either in place or in development.

It is not only about new build. The BRE briefing paper just out shows how simple changes to the homes of older people could save the NHS £600 million a year. However, this future needs investment in research, skills development and support for private investment that moves us in that direction. I am sure my noble friend Lady Parminter will mention the solar power debacle. This future has to happen fast, of course, because our country urgently needs hundreds and thousands of affordable homes.

My first question to the Minister is: why do the Government think that affordable housing is incompatible with developing zero-carbon homes? Various organisations, such as Cardiff University and the BRE, have developed models of homes that are incredibly energy efficient and cost £1,000 or less per square metre to build. So the models are out there and they are coming in at the right price.

Some of the technology is incredible. Let us take as an example an everyday product such as cement. I have learned that cement as your Lordships know produces about 5% of the world's carbon emissions. But the new-style cement being developed will be carbon negative because it will be able to sequester carbon dioxide as it ages, and that is in development now. So there are lots of very exciting things going on.

There are many things we need to do differently to address the climate change issues. We need, for example, to farm differently. We need to look after the soil, which can absorb much more carbon if it is full of organic matter. Soil that is rich in organic matter not only can grow more food but can absorb more water and suffers less erosion—and yet the UK has no soil strategy.

Looking abroad, one of the great success of COP 21 was that the final draft positively mentioned forests, particularly those in tropical areas. Your Lordships will know of the critical role that forests play. The UK can be rightly proud of its contribution to the REDD-plus programme which supports forested nations to restore millions of hectares of lost or degraded forests. It is another win-win programme because it not only has great climate change benefits but will restore habitats to many of the species that the human race has driven to the edge of extinction through the loss of their habitats.

This future will not be easy. Funding, of course, will be a major issue, as has been highlighted and spelled out by the IMF, which talks of the need for an international agreement on carbon prices and the sort of deal that would generate substantial fiscal revenues by eliminating fossil fuel subsidies and by charging for the damage caused by emissions. It is pretty complicated stuff and I am not going to try to address it today.

This picture is set against the background of falling prices for fossil fuels. While that will certainly bring joy to the motorist at the pumps, it will bring its own difficulties and make it harder to invest in renewable technologies in the short term. That is where the Government come in. It could also have a destabilising effect on some of the big oil-producing countries and, again, we will have to consider that in more detail later.

The noble Lord, Lord Deben, chair of the Climate Change Committee, said recently that the UK should be proud to have created a vehicle such as the Climate Change Committee, giving long-term certainty within a short-term democratic political system. He hit the nail on the head and was quite right. Without that committee, the momentum from Paris would inevitably dissipate as other political issues came up the agenda, not least Europe. So we warmly welcome the fact that we will have the fifth carbon budget in the first half of next year. It will be a chance to highlight the practical measures that the UK can take to get it back on track to meet its targets. At the moment we are not even on track to meet existing targets, let alone the new ambitious ones.

As I mentioned, the low-carbon future is not just about meeting targets: it offers so many win-win opportunities for a cleaner, healthier future for people. It is essential that the Government resist the old, tired siren voices that decried the debate on the Statement by calling it a love-in. Those voices have no place in the sort of future we are trying to build for our children. We all have a responsibility to wholeheartedly seize the opportunities, ramp up the targets and invest in all our futures.

3.36 pm

**Lord Giddens (Lab):** My Lords, the responses to COP21 have been almost comic in their divergence—or would be comic if the issues were not so serious and consequential. Benny Peiser, a climate sceptic, says that the agreements are,

“non-binding—and, ergo, toothless”.

Al Gore, a pillar of the climate change establishment—if I may put it that way—says that this is an historic turning point. Bill McKibben, our well-known environmentalist says:

“This agreement won't save the planet, not even close”.

Which of these views is correct? Perverse though it may seem, all of them are. They all grasp aspects of the problems which now face us.

COP21 was certainly an historic turning point so far as COP meetings are concerned. There are other noble Lords here who, like myself, were present in Copenhagen at COP15. So what happened there? Twenty-one years of nothing much happening. This is a much greater event than has been achieved in any previous

COP meeting. It is a massive advance in terms of a comprehensive approach. I, too, congratulate the French leadership on what it has achieved

Benny Peiser and others are right to say that the UN has little global power, which rests largely in the hands of nations and blocs of nations, and international law has no teeth. It is right to stress, as McKibben says, that we are miles away globally—I have to stress this—from coping with the risks which climate change presents to our civilisation. They are risks which no civilisation previously has ever had to confront. We are nowhere near on a global level confronting them.

I shall make three brief points to which I ask the Minister to respond. First, whatever happens with the COP agreements, bilateral relations will remain crucial. China, the US and India produce well over 50% of total global emissions, so keeping those countries working together is absolutely essential. However, what will happen if a Republican President is elected in the United States? What strategy would this Government then adopt for the continuation of bilateral relations since they are so crucial to the planet's future?

Secondly, the agreements supply the “what”; that is, what should be done. At the moment, globally, we do not have a “how”. Renewable technology is simply not up to the task of replacing the massive impact of fossil fuels. We must have technological breakthroughs in, for example, energy storage. Bill Gates is right to say that we need an energy miracle, and at least he is putting a lot of money after that statement. The Government have mentioned mission innovation. What concrete strategies will they put in place to follow those initiatives up?

Thirdly and finally, the plans that countries have for scrutinising their emissions are important because they make them transparent, but obviously that is not enough as a sanctioning mechanism. The only way these agreements will have real substance is if they are incorporated into national law, not just international law. The UK has been a leader in this. The Labour Government set up a good scheme which successive Governments have followed. What will the Minister do to put pressure on other countries to embody these agreements in national law rather than only in international law?

3.41 pm

**Baroness Sheehan (LD) (Maiden Speech):** My Lords, it is indeed a great honour and privilege to be asked to serve in your Lordships' House. It is a task that I do not undertake lightly and is one that I intend to fulfil with diligence to the best of my ability. Special thanks are due to my noble friends Lady Barker and Lady Kramer for their welcome support on the day of my introduction to this place. Perhaps I may also take this opportunity to thank noble Lords from all sides for their kind words of welcome.

As a young university student, I and some friends worked and travelled our way across America. One night in Chicago, we lost the car. To this day, I do not believe that my husband appreciates the importance of his unerring sense of direction to our enduring relationship. So, as one who can lose her way in a one-way street, noble Lords will appreciate the sincerity in my words

of thanks to all the staff of your Lordships' House, the clerks, doorkeepers, restaurant and security staff, who have all been so unfailingly kind in redirecting me on numerous occasions.

Today, I am reminded of another daunting occasion when I was the new girl. On a freezing cold day in January 1965, newly arrived on a BOAC jet from Pakistan, I can vividly recall my first day of school, unable to speak a word of English. Tooting in south-west London became home. It is not a great distance from Tooting to Wimbledon, where I spent many years working on behalf of local residents as the parliamentary candidate for my party, the Liberal Democrats. That my title should include those contiguous parts of my personal and political lives, which retain a special place in my heart, is fitting.

I have been many things in my life—among them an auxiliary nurse, an O-level and A-level chemistry teacher, a full-time mother and a councillor for Kew ward in the London Borough of Richmond—but it was my passion for environmental issues that led me to opt out of a career in advertising and return to my roots in science. So I congratulate my noble friend Lady Miller on securing this most timely debate. To my mind, the high probability of anthropogenic climate change was established several decades ago, but, sadly, we have had to wait for disastrous events to strike every part of the globe multiple times before a sense of urgency has taken hold. So, imperfect though the COP 21 agreement is, it is nevertheless crucially important that 195 signatories have agreed to pull in the same direction.

But I would like to turn to a possible impact of climate change which does not translate into a bad weather event but rather into the mass movement of people. Some in your Lordships' House may be aware that I have taken an interest in the issue of refugees, who are arriving in ever greater numbers in Europe. And so it was with interest that I read an article in a recent issue of *New Scientist* entitled “Climate as a cause of Syria's conflict?”. The article refers to a peer-reviewed paper by Colin Kelley of the University of California, Santa Barbara. It is an interesting paper and well worth reading in its entirety. It goes without saying that we must treat with great caution the possible links between droughts, migrations and conflicts, but I believe we must also question whether the impact of our changing climate on the existence of those who do not enjoy a buffer against the vagaries of the weather, which leaves them even more susceptible to geopolitical events, will come back to bite us here in Europe.

3.45 pm

**Baroness Young of Old Scone (Lab):** My Lords, I congratulate the noble Baroness, Lady Sheehan, on her maiden speech, short though it had to be on this occasion. I am sure that noble Lords will welcome her to our House, and welcome in particular her commitment to energy and climate change issues, as well as the hugely germane point about the relationship between climate change and mass migrations into the future. I pay tribute also to her local experience in contributing to a greener Wimbledon, and her tireless campaigning for better local health services. She is an excellent addition to our House.



[BARONESS YOUNG OF OLD SCONE]

I also congratulate the Government and the Minister on the role they played in the historic COP 21 agreement. Success will, however, depend on all countries implementing rigorous and, in many cases, rather heroic measures once they get back home from the euphoria and exhilaration of Paris and recover. The noble Lord, Lord Giddens, rightly looked at the global issues; I want to plunge to a much more local basis and home in on what this means in one small but important and quite illustrative area, and that is energy efficiency.

Obviously, decarbonising our energy supply is hugely important, but so is reducing the demand for energy, particularly in the domestic sector. If I were the Minister, I would say that good progress has been made and that 70% of homes with lofts are now insulated and that 73% of homes with cavity walls no longer have their cavities. But these figures alone mean that 30% of lofts are not insulated and that cavity walls are not protected to effective standards of energy efficiency. In houses with solid walls, only 4% have effective insulation. In that small area of domestic energy efficiency, still a lot has to be done.

However, in the Autumn Statement, the Chancellor axed the energy company obligation. The Green Deal has virtually gone. They were both key measures in retrofitting carbon reduction into the nation's housing stock. We are told that there is to be a new scheme in 2017, which is quite a long way away. Again, the Chancellor has almost halved its budget from the previous schemes. The Secretary of State has reasserted government plans to deliver 1 million efficiency upgrades during this Parliament, but how will that be done? In itself, that is a 78% reduction in the number of homes which received support for energy efficiency during the previous Parliament.

The same is true for new builds. Time prevents me from going into detail but, again, apparently driven this time by pursuit of the holy grail of deregulation, we have lost the sustainable buildings code and the zero-carbon homes policy. Will the Minister tell us how energy efficiency will be secured in the domestic setting in new and existing housing? For me, that would be not only a practical act but also a totemic signal from the Government to show that they are in earnest about the implementation of the Paris agreement and particularly to show that the Chancellor is in earnest about its implementation.

3.49 pm

**The Lord Bishop of Salisbury:** My Lords, I thank the noble Baroness, Lady Miller, for this debate and congratulate the noble Baroness, Lady Sheehan, on her maiden speech. What a great debate in which to make a maiden speech, when we are looking so much towards the future.

On Tuesday, we congratulated the Government, the Minister, the officials from DECC and some Members of this House on the contributions that they made in Paris. Many people will feel that this is an agreement for which they hoped and prayed. Someone said, "I can't really comment. It was near miraculous". I think that that might be true. It is particularly significant in

the wake of the terrorism in Paris on 13 November. Terrorism seeks to divide us and creates fear. This agreement of nearly all the world acting together gives hope, which feels to be a very important statement. I have said before that I am particularly grateful for the creation of a predictable framework of \$100 billion of climate finance for poor countries. That is particularly significant at a time when questions are being asked about overseas aid. This is an important contribution to that debate.

Among the faith communities, there has been a striking convergence of views about the environment. A Greek Orthodox theologian commenting on the Pope's encyclical said that this is an issue that relativises all our other differences. Therefore, all people of faith and of no faith are able to act together in the care of our common home. All commentators have said that the key to Paris is its implementation.

It is very exciting to see how many things have been initiated this week and in the weeks preceding Paris which are already organising responses in institutions and organisations. We seem to be at a tipping point towards a low-carbon economy. It is really important that this impacts across the whole of government policy and that the Treasury understands it. This morning's announcement about feed-in tariffs and solar energy is relatively good news—there will be a 64% reduction in the feed-in tariff rather than the proposed 87%.

In preparation for Paris, I went to a conference of European churches in Westphalia, a relatively poor part of Germany. Seven people were walking from Flensburg, on the Danish border, to Paris. On the day I was with them, 150 of us were walking, and at a town meeting in the evening there were about 400 people. The region had realised that 90% of its costs of energy were leaving the region. Therefore, there was huge enthusiasm for onshore wind and community energy schemes as a way of retaining money within the region.

Markets do not exist in a vacuum; they are created or made. It is really important that the Government think hard about how to create markets in which community energy becomes a more obvious way of creating renewable energy. If the Government are rightly concerned about subsidies of the way in which energy is produced, in addition to thinking about the subsidies of renewable energy, ending fossil fuel subsidies is a first step in speeding the renewable transition. It would create a triple win of enhancing energy security, reducing emissions of greenhouse gases and bringing improved fiscal space for governments. It seems an obvious thing to work towards—and quickly.

We asked for an ambitious deal in Paris, and I think that we got it. We also need to go much further. The noble Lord, Lord Giddens, was right. The desire to pursue further efforts to bring global warming to 1.5 degrees centigrade is creating a lot of discussion about how realistic that is, but it is a good thing to have high ambitious and to try to do the right thing. I applaud the ambition and I applaud in particular the role played by the Marshall Islands in this. It is good when small countries make a big difference in raising our ambitions through the "high ambition coalition".

Climate change is, in many ways, the big challenge that we face. It requires new thinking and provides

new opportunities. This is an area in which being satisfied with meeting mid-range goals is not right. We must set our sights higher to exceed our ambitions.

3.54 pm

**Baroness Northover (LD):** My Lords, I, too, thank my noble friend Lady Miller for securing this very timely debate and for her long commitment to this field. I also pay tribute to my noble friend Lady Sheehan for her excellent maiden speech, and that of my other noble friend Lady Featherstone, in which she also mentioned climate change.

We know that the poorest will be affected the worst by climate change, but we all will be. Climate change plays its part in the conflict in Sudan, which we discussed earlier. Drought preceded conflict in Egypt and Syria. Every day we see results of that, as my noble friend Lady Sheehan just made clear. The agreement in Paris must be a major step on the way to tackling this.

Together with the noble Lord, Lord Prescott, I attended a parliamentary meeting hosted by the National Assembly and Senate in Paris alongside the main Paris conference. I was immensely encouraged by what I heard and the commitment that countries were making. I was struck by the emphasis on those who are particularly vulnerable to climate change, such as the Pacific island states, or indigenous people in South America, represented by, among others, a wonderful Andean MP, whose name, Hilaria Supa Huamán, sounds—appropriately for her—like superwoman. We know that we need some outstanding statesmen and stateswomen if we are to implement what was agreed at Paris. It is good to see women playing that part as women will be especially vulnerable.

There seemed to be an iron determination in Paris that this global conference should succeed, with what it means for future generations, especially given the recent terrible atrocities in Paris. There are some hopeful signs. Use of renewables in developing countries looks set to leapfrog what is happening elsewhere, just as the mobile money M-Pesa system did. Bloomberg puts investment in renewables in Africa almost level pegging with that in the West, and it is soon to overtake it. It does indeed mean, as Hillary Clinton made clear after the conference, that development does not have to be sacrificed for climate change.

That is why the Government's stance in the United Kingdom since the election has been so surprising and, frankly, disappointing. They cite the Climate Change Act, but it is not an Act that they initiated. They cite what was done over the last five years, but that was by a Lib Dem-led department that had to fight the Treasury all the way under different leadership. The Government's actions since May have taken the country backwards. That is deeply worrying, as the noble Baroness, Lady Young, pointed out.

Recently, I met a young Kenyan entrepreneur whose firm, SunCulture, focuses on solar power in agricultural irrigation. He lost investment from a UK firm when the UK Government reversed their support for solar. This is an area where UK companies could lead the field. We have the science and engineering skills. I am sure that the Minister has a very strong personal

commitment here, so will he assure me that no UK ODA money will go towards supporting fossil fuels? Most especially, can he take back to the Government the need to match their rhetoric in Paris? The UK must once again lead in tackling climate change.

3.58 pm

**Lord Judd (Lab):** My Lords, I warmly thank the noble Baroness, Lady Miller, for introducing the debate. Her credentials in this field need no defending. Her consistent interest throughout her parliamentary life in Westminster has been very special and challenging.

There are lots of people to be thanked and congratulated on having brought about the positive results in Paris: the Ministers, all the leaders from around the world, their civil servants, industry—all sorts of people. But we should also give a special word of thanks to the NGOs, which, when it was not popular to be raising these issues, were nagging and urging us to see the seriousness and immediacy of the issue. They have driven forward with so much energy towards what happened.

I see a partnership with those NGOs in fulfilling the potential. Let us remember that all we have from Paris is hopeful potential. I know from the sphere of work in which I have worked for most of my life that it is crucial to set aside money to tackle issues of justice and adaptation in less affluent countries. The challenge we face in doing that is ensuring that the money gets to the people who will really make a difference. In that sphere the contribution that can be made by NGOs is almost second to none. Therefore, I hope that the Government will reassure us that they will make partnership with NGOs a priority in bringing about the potential results.

I make just one other observation. It was very significant that the noble Baroness, Lady Miller, said that this issue was not just about low carbon but a healthier future for people. That is a vision which we all ought to share if we want a cleaner and healthier environment. We need to be imaginative and say that this issue is not just about alternative energy. We are trapped into talking about alternative energy all the time. We do not give sufficient emphasis in this country to energy conservation. It should be a real priority for new engineers starting their careers to consider how they can make a contribution in the sphere of energy conservation. We also need to look at different techniques from those used in the past. I have never understood why we have not given a higher priority to geothermal energy.

We have had a tremendous moment of hope and a great gate has been opened. We now have to march through it, but consistency will be vital. If we are to play the lead role in the world that we want to, everything the Government do has to be seen to be utterly consistent with the objectives to which they subscribed in Paris and in which they played a key part. Measures which they may think are justified, but which to the world seem to be marching in the opposite direction, will be highly counterproductive. Therefore, consistency and comprehensiveness by the Government are vital.

4.02 pm

**Lord Prescott (Lab):** My Lords, I add my congratulations to the noble Baroness, Lady Miller, on making an excellent speech at the appropriate time. This debate is not solely about what was agreed at Paris, but the progress that will be made following that. The noble Baroness, Lady Sheehan, talked about refugees in her excellent speech. We talk a lot about the environment and the economy but refugees may well become one of the biggest complications in this agreement. Therefore, I want to spend the few minutes I have bringing home to noble Lords what we have to do to make sure that the promises made are carried out. That is the real issue.

I declare my interest in the Kyoto process and have negotiated various COPs during the last 18 years. I have seen the difference between them. In Kyoto, we only tried to get agreement from 40 industrial nations. To get an agreement from 190 nations is a magnificent achievement for French diplomacy. There is no doubt about that. However, the whole thing changed at Paris. People began to accept the scientific findings on climate change. That was brilliantly brought out by one of the heroes of this campaign, Al Gore, in his film “An Inconvenient Truth”. He made an excellent, powerful speech at Paris, which brought home to delegates how the situation had become worse since Kyoto. The noble Lord, Lord Stern, undertook an excellent review entitled *The Economics of Climate Change*. Over the intervening 18 years, people began to accept the intellectual basis of the science of climate change and its economic consequences, and those campaigners deserve credit for that. I also pay tribute to the negotiators, the French and the role played by the Government. I will come back to the Government shortly.

The other factor was the Civil Service. One of the best civil servants that I had in Kyoto was the major person who convinced the others that we could have a formula for the connection between climate science and the temperature itself. In fact, there were two people: Peter Betts, who is working with the Government at the moment, and Peter Unwin, who worked with me—civil servants of the best order. They provided the theory, analysis and connection that made it possible to convince people they should go along that particular path. They did a great job.

The others who played a part are the politicians themselves. GLOBE International, the Senate in France, the Council of Europe, the Climate Parliament and the IPU have, together, pressed governments to do things. At the time of Kyoto there were only 42 pieces of environmental framework legislation throughout the world; now there are 880. That came as a result of the pressure by NGOs and other political people to make a difference. They will be important in seeing that Governments carry out what they have promised. Those promises in Kyoto were fine but, as was mentioned, my own Government have cut zero-carbon housing and the carbon storage system, and they have taken subsidies from renewables to give to the oil industry. That was not what was promised in Paris. Paris will only prove successful if people carry out what they promised to do.

I would suggest that the Climate Change Act we introduced, followed by the creation of an independent committee, is the only way to keep the Government on their toes and to deliver what they promised. We are the only country that has a legal framework. I suggested during the negotiations that every parliament should enact climate change legislation in their countries, which would give the Back-Benchers the strength to force Governments to carry out what they need to do. That is the way we get the legal framework and the understanding. I hope we will now look seriously at how to make sure these promises are really implemented.

4.06 pm

**Baroness Parminter (LD):** I add my thanks to those expressed by others to my noble friend Lady Miller for initiating this debate on what is, even if we do not all agree with the terminology, as the noble Lord, Lord Giddens, pointed out, an undoubtedly historic agreement. The inclusion of regular reviews of the activities of nation states is to be particularly welcomed. The comment made by the noble Lord, Lord Giddens, about how those reviews might be integrated into national legislation is an interesting one that bears further scrutiny. Like others, I congratulate those in this House who played a part in this success, including the Minister, and I also congratulate my new noble friend Lady Sheehan. It is a combination of action at the global, national and local levels—including in Wimbledon—that will deliver progress on this historic agreement.

I want to touch, as others have done, on the apparent failures since May in the Government’s policies in this area, which seem, in the light of Paris, to be somewhat counterproductive and short-sighted. First, as the right reverend Prelate said, the cuts to the cheapest forms of renewable electricity—onshore wind—and to the solar industry were relatively good news. Indeed, the relatively good news was that it was a cut of 64%, rather than 87%, but it is still a threat to the 19,000 British jobs that are dependent on the speed of development in that industry. It is somewhat put into perspective when you consider the £1 billion that the Chancellor put aside in the Budget last week to bribe people to support fracking.

I echo the comments of the noble Lord, Lord Judd, and the noble Baroness, Lady Young, on the Government’s paucity of ambition on energy efficiency. It is a retrograde step and the noble Lord, Lord Deben, who is not in his place, as Chairman of the Committee on Climate Change, said only last week that it is an area in which we have failed. The Minister, in the debate on the Statement on Tuesday, said of energy efficiency:

“As a country, we probably need to do more on demand management”.—[*Official Report*, 15/12/15; col. 1976.]

We certainly do, and I have a question for the Minister in addition to those asked by the noble Lady, Lady Young: do the Government intend to bring forward new building standards as a matter of urgency, given that zero-carbon housing and the code for sustainable homes have been removed? If not, how will we give developers certainty about their costs in building the thousands of new homes that we need, so that we do not end up retrofitting homes that we propose to build in the very near future because they are not sustainable?



I have one further question and a comment. The question is about the need for a secure investment framework to support renewable energy. The markets will clearly be responding to the messages in Paris. We have already seen the shares of SolarCity, the biggest residential installer of solar in the US, jump by 12% on Monday. In the UK we need much clearer signals, so what guidance have the Government given to the new National Infrastructure Commission, given that one of its three focuses is to be on ensuring that investment in energy meets future demands? How do we make sure that that is renewable energy?

Finally, most of us agree that Paris was a success as we seek to tackle the challenge of climate change. Also, on a day when the Prime Minister is looking at our relationship with Europe, it is important to remember just how much the Paris negotiations have shown that we in Britain should play our role. By playing a strong role at the early stages of the Paris negotiations, we were able to put pressure on the US and Chinese to come forward with strong proposals early on. We would not have been able to do that as one country on our own. The fact that the Government recognised that we in Europe were able to use that leverage and influence was to their credit but shows that, if we are to solve global problems, Britain is stronger in Europe.

4.11 pm

**Lord Stevenson of Balmacara (Lab):** My Lords, I join others in thanking the noble Baroness, Lady Miller, for her skill in securing this timely debate and her felicitous choice of time-slot, which allows us to deal with not only the outturn from COP 21 but what the Government will do to try to resolve that. I also thought her speech was extremely interesting, wide ranging and far seeing. She highlighted a point that a number of noble Lords picked up on—without really noticing, we have moved from regarding green issues as very much a techy subject to something we must all take on board and deal with. I also congratulate the noble Baroness, Lady Sheehan, on an excellent maiden speech. We will all look forward to more contributions on climate change and refugee issues if she is able to speak as she did today.

The title of the debate is indeed about progress on COP 21, but today we have talked mainly about what the Government will do to meet Britain's climate change commitment. As my noble friend Lord Judd said, we are looking for consistency—in the aspirations achieved in Paris, and in the political reality on the ground. That has been picked up outside. Business leaders, academics and environmental campaigners all believe that recent U-turns on wind, solar and other clean technologies have fatally undermined the UK's ability to meet the new CO<sub>2</sub> targets. Many noble Lords have pointed out that, since the 2015 general election, the Government have cut, delayed and scrapped the Green Deal home improvement fund and the zero-carbon homes policy. They have cut solar and onshore wind subsidies and undermined progress on carbon capture and storage.

It will be obvious to anyone who knows the structure of our Front Bench that this is not my area; I should have started by apologising for the fact that I am

neither my noble friend Lord Grantchester, who had commitments up in Liverpool and had to go back, nor my noble friend Lady Jones; I am sure that the whole House will join in sending condolences to her on her recent loss. However, as an outsider watching the politics of this, it is obvious from the debates around COP 21 and the good points made today by a range of speakers across the House that there seems to be a green moment. By that, I mean a short period in which the political calendar will allow a determined Government to sweep through some very far-reaching, game-changing proposals. Does the Minister recognise that, with a good Paris behind him, momentum on his side and support all round Parliament and beyond, there is an open goal? Do his Government have the policies to take advantage of this green moment? Perhaps more importantly, do they have the courage?

4.14 pm

**The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Energy and Climate Change and Wales Office (Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth) (Con):** My Lords, this has been a debate of very high quality and I thank the noble Baroness, Lady Miller, for raising this topic in the House and setting out how important it is for the whole world, which it certainly is, and presenting the case with such clarity and vision.

As noble Lords will be aware, I repeated a Statement in the House on Tuesday, after the Secretary of State had reported to the House of Commons on Monday. I absolutely agree with the points made by the noble Lord, Lord Prescott, about the inspiration at Paris of many political leaders and others, including businesspeople and Members of this House. He singled out in particular Vice-President Al Gore—I think that people remain Vice-Presidents—and the noble Lord, Lord Stern. It is absolutely true that they made outstanding contributions, as did others. The noble Lord is also absolutely right about the role of negotiators. He mentioned Pete Betts, who had a key role to play, as did Ben Lyons and others who worked fantastically hard.

The Paris agreement is an historic achievement and takes a significant step forward towards reducing, on a global scale, the emissions that cause climate change. The right reverend Prelate paid tribute to France and the French for staging this conference as effectively as they did with their considerable diplomacy. In the light of the dreadful terrorist attacks, that was no mean feat. Not many nations could have pulled that off but I absolutely agree that the French did. I also agree with what he said about the role of faith, with people of many different faiths coming together to help build this agreement, which we as a world succeeded in achieving in Paris.

As has been said, the agreement protects not just our environment but our national and economic security, and that is true worldwide. It also brings with it new opportunities for growth, innovation and well-being. For the first time ever, all parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, representing nearly 200 countries, made a commitment to act. The noble Baronesses, Lady Northover and Lady Miller, and the right reverend Prelate also made the point about the role of small nations alongside large ones.

[LORD BOURNE OF ABERYSTWYTH]

One heard as much at the conference and on its fringes about the Marshall Islands and Tuvalu, quite rightly, as one heard about China, India and others. I met representatives from Greenland, for example. It was a truly international agreement that has set out a clear, long-term goal for the world to achieve net zero emissions in the second half of the century. The long-term goal sends a strong signal to investors. That is important globally because of the likely—almost inevitable—reduction in the cost of many renewables because of the fact that nations and businesses around the world will be investing in them.

From the United Kingdom—and, indeed the EU—point of view, we had three major objectives: a rules-based system, which this is; a long-term goal, which we have achieved; and a review system, which again we have achieved. In fact, there are two systems of review. We were part of a “high-ambition coalition”, which also included the United States. I think that the noble Lord, Lord Giddens, raised questions about the role of the US. We are certainly hoping that this agreement will be ratified while President Obama is in office, and I think that is the likelihood. Obviously we cannot influence domestic policy in the United States, much as we may on occasion be tempted to do so, but we are sure that it will be validated and passed there.

The agreement is based on the INDCs—that is, the contributions—of 187 countries. This level of commitment is unprecedented and the review cycle, which I have mentioned, is central to the ambition. The noble Lord, Lord Giddens, asked how that would be enforceable. It is enforceable in that every five years, countries will come back. It is a question of whether they restate their ambitions or ramp them up; that will be central to the way that this develops.

As investment grows, the costs of low-carbon technologies will come down. The noble Baroness, Lady Miller, asked about battery technology. That is vitally important; for example, we are looking across government at electric cars and zero-carbon cars. I come back to the importance of the clear investment signal.

The financial aspects of this agreement are also important. There is to be \$100 billion of support a year from the public and private sector, which will help developing nations, particularly small island developing states. On enforceability, again, some states will be ensuring that they meet their objectives because they will be getting financial assistance to do so, so the two will go hand in hand. There are obligations in the agreement to come back with mitigation measures every five years and to take part in the global stock-take, which will also happen every five years but on a different cycle.

The UK is, as I think was said, a substantial donor. We already have £3.87 billion in the International Climate Fund, helping millions of the world’s poorest. The noble Baroness, Lady Northover, referred to this absolutely important point and asked whether we were able to give a guarantee that this will not go to any projects that have a carbon element. A carbon-proofing system is being applied in the ODA and we will be watching that like hawks, because we are the

first developed country to commit to end coal-fired power stations. That is very significant and was commented on repeatedly at Paris. It sends out a clear signal. We are at some stage going to have to send out a similar signal about gas, of course, although that will not be just yet, as we need gas to transition to the lower-carbon—ultimately zero-carbon—economy that we want. Clearly, the worst fossil fuel is coal, but gas is a fossil fuel, too, so that will need to be addressed. As a nation we will have to face up to that.

The noble Baroness, Lady Sheehan, referred most graphically to the global dimension, in a speech of moving personal reminiscence and very reflective thought, setting out her personal commitments. I am sure that we will hear much more from her on these issues as she participates in the life of the House. It was an excellent and outstanding maiden speech, on which I congratulate her massively.

During the two weeks of the conference, we saw a huge mobilisation of business—the first time really, I think, that it had happened on this scale. I am sure that the noble Lord, Lord Prescott, will back that up. We have not seen the involvement of business at previous conferences on the scale that we saw in Paris, which had the presence and indeed the support of the Governor of the Bank of England—Mark Carney—Michael Bloomberg, Richard Branson, Paul Polman and a whole host of national leaders in business and other fields.

Forestation was mentioned. We have played a significant role in relation to REDD, and have committed money to Colombia, which has a very good record on halting deforestation. It is part of a progressive alliance, and we have committed money there as well. One should acknowledge the outstanding and not inconsiderable role here of His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales. He saw this issue before many others, and his support, both generally at the conference and over time, has been extremely important.

I will try to deal with some of the other points. The noble Baroness, Lady Young, mentioned insulation. She is absolutely right, and we are committed to 1 million more homes in this Parliament. The noble Lord, Lord Judd, referred to demand reduction, which is important and which we are looking at. The smart meter programme commits us to that. Building standards were mentioned. I hate acronyms but one that is probably quite appropriate is a very interesting project called BAPS—buildings as power stations—which I visited just outside Swansea, run jointly by the university and private industry, with involvement that is almost totally British. These buildings do not cost an awful lot to erect, and the department is looking at this because it helps with the housing situation as well. So there are things to be looked at there.

I will try to cover some last points very quickly. The noble Baroness, Lady Parminter, asked about the importance of engaging with the National Infrastructure Commission. I assure her that we are doing that, particularly on the issues she mentioned, which are covered by one of the work streams. Work is still going on to finalise the terms of reference but clearly it is clearly a very important commission in terms of large-scale projects and in terms of the messages that it sends out.

I very much welcome the role of the noble Lord, Lord Stevenson, and his modesty in claiming that he does not know a lot about these things. He seemed to me to know quite a lot. I agree with him about the significance of these issues and the fact that we have to think across government—which I hope we are doing—to look at the challenges that lie ahead, which are significant.

I thank noble Lords very much for their participation in the debate and once again in particular the noble Baroness, Lady Miller, for bringing it forward. It is a very timely and important debate, and I am sure we will return to these issues again and again. I certainly hope so, because this very important issue has been ramped up significantly by the highly successful conference in Paris. We should never forget that. We talk about the road through Paris—it is not an end in itself but a staging post—but, that said, we can give ourselves two pats on the back for Paris. However, the job is not done and there is still much to do. That will often be through the reviews—both through the global stock-take which starts in 2018 and takes place every five years, and through individual countries coming forward with their contributions every five years starting in 2020.

### National Lottery

*Motion to Take Note*

4.24 pm

*Moved by Lord Holmes of Richmond*

To move that this House takes note, on the occasion of its 21st birthday, of the contribution made by the National Lottery to sport, culture, charities and national heritage throughout the United Kingdom.

**Lord Holmes of Richmond (Con):** My Lords, it is a pleasure to open this debate on the National Lottery's 21st anniversary. It is a story of transformation of our arts, culture, sport and heritage right across the country. I start by thanking noble Lords who will be speaking in this debate for the expertise and wisdom that they will bring, not least my noble friends Lord True and Lady Bottomley: the former ensconced at the very heart of Downing Street at the time that the National Lottery came about; the latter one of the first Secretaries of State for Culture Media and Sport, seeing fundamentally and at first hand the positive impact that the lottery had on culture, sport and the arts in those early years.

I am also very much looking forward to the two maiden speeches from the noble Lord, Lord Beith, and my noble friend the Duke of Wellington. In the noble Lord, we have someone whom we can congratulate on his 42nd year in Parliament, although it looked a little tricky when he began. In his first year as an MP, he had to fight his seat no fewer than three times. My noble friend the Duke of Wellington is well known as a patron of the arts, and his commitment to education is shown in no better way than the family's connection to Kings College London. Having done some research, I found that he has not only a title as prestigious as the Duke of Wellington but another title, which I think any Brit would hold close to their heart: that of Prince of Waterloo. It is clear that in our two maiden speakers we will experience a very interesting Beith Wellington.

I could have picked almost any element of the lottery story and it would have been a tale of transformation, be it the £34 billion to good causes, the 450,000 grants up and down the country, or the line of beauty in all those buildings transformed through lottery grants. There is the Great Court of the British Museum and the marvel that is Tate Modern. Outside London, there is the Eden Project, and over in Margate, the Turner Contemporary, a fabulous new space, has had 1.8 million visitors, bringing £41 million to transform Margate's local economy. I could highlight the more than 700 playing fields that have been saved or the £750 million that has been invested in renewing our parks and gardens. Each story is a local story which has a national connection to this greatness that is the National Lottery.

However, I want to focus on my lottery story as a recipient, a distributor, an administrator and, amazingly, on a midweek in May in 2006, I actually got to press the button to start the Wednesday evening draw. I did not win. When I was on the Great Britain swimming team, the lottery came in about halfway through my career, so I could see fundamentally at first hand the before and after impact on sport. Before the lottery, success in sport was largely in spite of rather than because of any funding. The SportsAid Foundation did a great job, but it could do only so much. We desperately needed a model if we were to stand on the world stage. If it could be made any clearer, in 1996 a sporting nation as great as Britain came back from the Olympic Games 36th in the medal table.

When lottery funding began, for understandable reasons it largely went into capital projects, both in sport and the arts. There was great nervousness about putting money into revenue or individuals, but we desperately needed it in sport if we were going to change that approach. When the athlete personal awards came in, they enabled sportsmen and women to wrap around them all the services and support that they needed to compete on the world stage, be that physiotherapy, dietetics, podiatry or video analysis—everything to enable that individual to give the best performance possible. That is what we needed; the transformation could hardly be clearer. In Atlanta, the Olympic team was 36th; in London it was third, and the Paralympic team was also third—impossible to imagine or achieve without that lottery funding.

New athletes coming on to the team now take lottery funding for granted, and so they should; they can concentrate 100% on giving the best performance of their lives. There could not be a clearer testament of the transformation of the landscape. The sport strategy launched this morning by our fantastic Minister for Sport will also add to this success. Clearly, the Minister understands the need for world-class performance and grass-roots funding; as the strategy sets out, it is about our sporting futures. Similarly, on Sunday we will have the "Sports Personality of the Year"; on that list of 10 who we get to choose to vote from, how different might the list look were it not for the National Lottery.

When I finished competing, I became a lottery distributor on the board of UK Sport, where we funded the athletes who were preparing for the Olympic and Paralympic Games in London 2012. Governing



[LORD HOLMES OF RICHMOND]

bodies run sport and athletes win the medals; our role was to put in place as efficient a funding stream and pipeline as we could to get the funds to the sports and athletes who could deliver on that world stage. At that time, UK Sport was the leanest and most cost-effective lottery distributor in the game, and it was fantastic to be part of it.

When I started at London 2012, again I became a lottery administrator. If noble Lords cast their thoughts east to the park, the stadia, the aquatic centre and the velodrome, none of it would have been possible without the Olympic Lottery Distributor. Nothing could have transformed east London like an Olympic and Paralympic Games, and the lottery was right at the heart of that. Similarly, it was a game changer for the Paralympic Games, with a huge grant from the OLD enabling the Paralympics Games for the first time ever to sell all the seats for all the sessions and to do a fantastic broadcast deal with Channel 4, which had 500 hours of coverage. There was complete commitment from Channel 4, broadcasting across Britain and rippling out around the world to make the Paralympic Games for the first time a world sporting phenomenon. The National Lottery was right at the centre of that project.

It was not just about sport. I was lucky enough to launch the unlimited art programme alongside the Arts Council England, with £6 million going into disabled arts programmes, funding artists such as the amazing Rachel Gadsden, who has also done a number of projects in Parliament recently. We launched at the Festival Hall with the noble Lord, Lord Hall, and as part of his overextensive biography read out by the organisers, they said that a long time ago he had written a book about coal. As the audience was quite young at this event, I felt it only right when I stood out to speak to point out that the book that the noble Lord had written was about the energy source rather than the “X Factor” judge.

Sport, art, culture and heritage are supported, transformed and enabled as a result as the National Lottery—stuff that would not have happened had it not come into play in 1994. But that is the upside. What about some of the clear and present dangers? There are plenty. The so-called “society lotteries” which have parked their tanks on this space, if not going against the letter of the law, certainly question the spirit of the law. The plan to increase the prizes that can be offered through those sources, potentially from £400,000 to £5 million, can only have a detrimental effect on the National Lottery. Where does it go in terms of the intent of Parliament? Parliament’s intent was to have one National Lottery, a focus for the nation’s heads and hearts, to get the maximum public interest, the maximum prize pot and the maximum funds to good causes with minimum cost, minimum red tape and minimum fraud. What do society lotteries contribute in this space? Let us look at the prize pots. The Health Lottery offers the minimum 20% and the People’s Postcode Lottery offers 27% while the National Lottery offers 41%. What about the flip side in terms of cost? The People’s Postcode Lottery’s costs are 35%, and the Health Lottery’s costs are an amazing 50%, which can be set against the National Lottery’s 5%.

Similarly, there has been a terrible blurring, a polluting, of the clear blue water which should exist between gambling and the lottery. It seems extraordinary that rather than simply playing the lottery with a chance of a big prize and knowing that your money is contributing to good causes, people choose to bet on the outcome of the lottery. This has been a problem since 1994, largely through betting shops, but the internet has enabled it to get to an industrial level, getting round, and in many cases, close to, the letter of the law and frustrating Section 95 of the Act. If we look at what is happening with EuroMillions, people are using a loophole to be able to bet on EuroMillions, and this is promoted outside the UK even though essentially it is one lottery across the whole European area. This has to be addressed if we are not going to see a cannibalisation of the National Lottery and the funds for good causes.

I have a number of questions for the Minister. What is the Government’s view on maintaining the current cap on lotteries other than the National Lottery and on putting a cap on the expenses that they can charge? What is the Government’s position on prohibiting all betting on lotteries? If they do not accept that, what view do the Government take about how and where such alternatives promote their betting products? We see a product such as Lottoland promoted heavily in the UK although it is based in Gibraltar. What does it contribute to good causes? What does it contribute to the United Kingdom? It heavily piggybacks on the language and the words “lotto” and “lottery jackpot”. Should this be allowed? What is the Government’s view on Lottoland and other agencies betting on the National Lottery? Finally, if there is no prohibition, would the Government consider using Section 14(7) of the Act to bring in regulations to ensure that betting on lotteries is seen as a pure lottery so that a licence would be required? Through that there would be much more control of this element of the market and, not least, a minimum return to good causes.

In conclusion, I turn to the father—the daddy—of the lottery, Sir John Major. What courage, what boldness to bring this into play. It shows the difference that one person can make if they have a vision, if they have a belief that something can be brought about in the face of opposition from all sides and all elements of society from Whitehall all across the piece. He believed it could be brought about, and so it was. A number of years later, I was talking to Sir John, and he said that on the day of the launch he went through Victoria station and bought a lottery ticket. He spent the rest of that week in a cold sweat thinking about what would happen if he had the winning ticket. How would he tell Norma and the family that he would not be able to claim the prize?

With £34 billion to good causes, an Olympic team lifted from 36th position in the medal table to third, and 450,000 grants to arts, culture, heritage and charities—grants that are transforming our communities, our cities and our country for the better for ever—that is a prime ministerial legacy and a very happy 21st birthday. I beg to move.

4.40 pm

**Lord Pendry (Lab):** My Lords, I am sure that the whole House will applaud the noble Lord, Lord Holmes

of Richmond, for bringing this subject to the House today and the way in which he has introduced it. I have had the pleasure of seeing the noble Lord participate in the Paralympic Games; indeed, he stands out as one of the greatest British Paralympians, along with the noble Baroness, Lady Grey-Thompson. We are very fortunate to have both of them as colleagues in this House, and indeed in this debate.

The long journey that the National Lottery has taken since its inception is indeed a remarkable one. When it began, it was not everyone's cup of tea. Yes, both major parties espoused the concept, but on my side of the House of Commons we had to overcome a particular problem—namely, the football pools industry, based mainly though not exclusively in Liverpool, where the Labour MPs were naturally concerned about jobs and the potential damage to their communities if a national lottery was introduced, and about its impact on the pools industry. Those MPs' voices were heard during the passage of the Bill—so much so that I, who led for the Opposition, insisted that we had a free vote at Second Reading. During the further stages, Labour made a series of amendments in an attempt significantly to improve the Bill as it stood. One of the most important points was additionality, ensuring that lottery funds would not act as a substitute for funds that otherwise would have been provided by conventional public expenditure.

Since its inception, the National Lottery has had lasting and positive effects on the arts, culture, sport and heritage, as the noble Lord, Lord Holmes, has already said. Indeed, some £34 billion has been raised for good causes, with 20% of that figure going to sport. Sport has benefited enormously by way of thousands of grants totalling some £5.5 billion. The effects of these grants has been enormous. The noble Lord, Lord Holmes, himself has been a beneficiary of the funding for elite sports, giving athletes like him the freedom to focus on their talents and perform at a higher level. Of course, this was not always the case. In 1992, the Olympic double bronze medal winner Simon Terry returned from Barcelona only to find that the Department of Social Security had cut his benefits. Not only was there little or virtually no support for athletes competing in the Olympics but, in the case of Mr Terry, he was subject to punishment by the then Government.

The National Lottery has helped to turn this around. As a result of the focus on elite athletics and high-performance sports, UK Sport has helped Team GB climb from 36th place in the Atlanta Games in 1996, where we won only one gold medal and a total of 15 medals, to a staggering third place—as the House knows—in London 2012, when we won 29 gold medals and a total of 65 medals. That is truly an astonishing feat. We hope of course that we will even surpass this at the Rio 2016 Olympics.

The National Lottery has of course gone beyond focusing just on elite sports. Since 1993, some of us have argued for a more inclusive approach to sport funding by the National Lottery. I am pleased to say that since then the remaining four distributing bodies, including Sport England, continue to provide an exclusive approach to sport, focusing on promoting and increasing public participation. The House may know that I am

president of the Football Foundation, and I can confirm the long-lasting impact National Lottery funding—a significant amount of money—has made through its investment via the foundation into improving the country's local sports infrastructure. For example, a £30 million lottery fund investment via the foundation between the years 2002 and 2005 helped bring about partnership investments of an additional £16 million, thus turning that £30 million into £46 million of grass-roots sports projects. This was used to create state of the art grass-roots facilities that continue to provide sporting activity for thousands of regular users each year ever since.

We have come a long way in the last 21 years, but in order to ensure a secure and strong National Lottery that is truly “national” in its scope, which is beneficial to people across the UK through good causes, the Government must remain committed to pursuing policies which ensure that the lottery is properly protected. As Camelot points out, this should include, among other protections, safeguards against potential competitors by maintaining current safeguards. This would allow the National Lottery to continue to work by maximising funds for good causes.

In conclusion, we are grateful to the noble Lord for bringing this to our attention and enabling us to outline some of the most fantastic achievements of the National Lottery over the last 21 years.

4.47 pm

**Lord Addington (LD):** My Lords, looking down this list I thought, “What shall I speak about?”, and thought, “Well, of course I normally talk about sport”. However, I saw that the noble Lord, Lord Holmes, would start the debate and the noble Baroness, Lady Grey-Thompson, would come very quickly after me, as well as the noble Lord, Lord Pendry, who has been talking about sport for longer than me—one of the few people who has. I will therefore try to go a little wider than just sport today, because the National Lottery has affected virtually all aspects of life.

When the lottery first came in—and whatever is said about Sir John Major, he will get a gold star for this—nobody was quite sure what was coming. There was a lot of fear: apparently it would lead to the entire nation becoming degenerate gamblers—you name it, everything was said about it. It has changed virtually all aspects of our lives, usually for the better, and has meant that we have a fund which has effectively guaranteed activity because there is a defence against the vagaries of politics. Sport is a very good example of that; we now have a bedrock of public money which is more difficult to manipulate than just about anything else. This is also true of most other aspects of the lottery expenditure, although there have been changes; the biggest one, which sport is probably guilty of, is the Olympics. However, would we have been able to do that without it? Once again, I am reminded that the noble Lord, Lord Holmes, has got there in front of me on this one. However, everything—heritage, charities—has been touched by the lottery and this underlying bedrock of support. Initially we spoke about additionality. This type of funding is not like putting a conservatory on a building; effectively it is like laying down an extra foundation beneath the building.

[LORD ADDINGTON]

There is another thing that the noble Lord, Lord Holmes, beat me to, but it is going to be the theme of my speech—the question of how we ensure that the National Lottery continues at its current strength and in its current shape. The other lotteries, such as the Health Lottery, have already been talked about. If we allow these lotteries to come in, we must place the same restrictions on them and say that they must give the same proportion of money as the National Lottery. This, I hope, will mean that they do not bother but, if they do, they must be placed under an obligation to give.

In the case of the Health Lottery, what have we discovered is the best thing for people's health? It is prevention, and apparently sport is the wonder drug. So why the hell do we allow something to call itself the Health Lottery and not fund sport, or at least grass-roots sport, in some way? If you want the clothes, you have to walk the walk. I know that I have mixed up two analogies there but there we are. If you are going to take on something that involves good will, you have to back it up. That is only fair. If you can do that and still make the business worth while, I do not mind, but you have to make sure that you support the good causes and the other things that go with that. Even the most ardent sportsman will probably agree that we should have a good heritage sector and that the arts are not a bad thing. We should go across the piece. Unless we protect the great legacy that the lottery has given us, we will lose out on its benefits.

Sports policy has gone through something of a revolution, and I congratulate the Government on at least coming forward with the idea of having such a policy. However, I am afraid that experience tells me that delivering on it, so that it goes across everything else, is slightly more difficult. There was a new announcement about starting early—that is, getting into the education system earlier, as opposed to concentrating on getting children involved at the age of 14. Possibly the change was more to do with austerity than anything else, but that is by the by.

All those things—all the new developments in sport—involve going into the other bits of government. Virtually everybody who has looked at this has said, “Oh, that's a good idea”, and the same will be true of most of the arts and so on. If you want it to work properly, you have to relate it to other bits of government. The problem is that bits of government do not like changing what they do because they know what their priorities are, even when it is obvious that they cannot achieve everything that they want alone. The National Lottery is a wonderful vehicle for going across and through.

I leave noble Lords with this thought. The National Lottery has to be protected because it has the ability to reach slightly further than the ordinary concepts of government. It can go across the piece and is more difficult to counteract. If we can use the moral authority that comes with the National Lottery, we will achieve and back up the benefits that we get from purely financial gains.

4.53 pm

**Baroness Grey-Thompson (CB):** My Lords, I thank the noble Lord, Lord Holmes, for tabling this debate

this afternoon. It was a privilege to be on the same team as him—at least when we were playing sport together.

Celebrating the 21st birthday of the National Lottery is perfect timing for the launch of the Government's new strategy for an active nation. I congratulate the Government on that. There are some really positive things in there in terms of encouraging physical activity. If we have more active children with better physical literacy skills, it will be good for our medal chances but it will also be good for the health of our nation. I am also delighted to be heading a working group looking at the duty of care. The work of that group is going to be quite wide ranging.

I have a number of current interests in sport and they are all listed in the register. I also have a number of historic interests. I sat on the Sports Council for Wales, the English Lottery Awards Panel and UK Sport, and I was a lottery-funded athlete.

The last 20 years have been an interesting time in the development of sport. We have gone from being the plucky British athletes who turned up and had a go to teams which are taking on the world—and lottery funding has done that. Lottery funding has changed the mentality of athletes.

If we look at the context, 20 years ago I was part of the Manchester bid that went up against Sydney for the 2000 Games. There was a very brief period then when I was disappointed that we did not win. It did not matter that we had 100 years of data to show that there was more rain in spring in Sydney than there was in Manchester in the summer—all they had to do was show a picture of Bondi beach and they came through on top. But I am glad that we did not win because, without the lottery funding and the time that it took to embed into sport, we would not have had the success that we did in 2012.

The Sports Council for Wales ran some innovative programmes, including the Elite Cymru programme, which supported young athletes but also looked at education and the transition out of sport. At one point, the English Lottery Awards panel had the enviable job of allocating £20 million a month to new sports facilities. But it also changed the ethos of a number of clubs. Some clubs that had a blackball rule were told that they could not have any money. When they realised that there was money on the table, clubs that only allowed women to use the back entrance suddenly decided that that was not a bastion they had to defend. We also realised that the clubs that were getting money were the ones that were really good at filling out forms—so the priority areas initiative meant that funding was equitable for sports clubs and initiatives.

In 1996, the Olympic team won a single gold medal; the Paralympic team won 39 golds and was third on the medal table. When it was announced that because of the poor Olympic performance we were going to have lottery funding into sport, I started to say, “Well, actually, the Paralympic team—”, and then decided that I would be quiet, because for me it was about driving change and promoting inclusivity. This was an opportunity to get national governing bodies to think about disabled athletes. Up until that point, they really had not considered it.



In the early years, there were a number of sports that struggled. Sports had not been used to writing performance plans or having to justify where their money went. Some sports embraced it early on, such as cycling and rowing; other sports took longer to get used to it. But look at the amazing success we have now across all the Olympic and Paralympic sports and wider. We are showing the world what a wonderful sporting nation we are.

There were national disability sports organisations, and unfortunately some of the work they did has often been forgotten. They did a huge amount of work in bringing on and developing young athletes, and they still have a really important role to play in multisport activities for young people. Lottery funding meant that national governing bodies that wanted money had to take on supporting Paralympic teams. There was some success. They were advised that they should be inclusive, and some have been better than others.

I would like the Government to ensure that there is genuinely equitable treatment within elite sport for disabled athletes. This goes beyond the provision of kit. It is about representation on websites and the promotion of athletes. The public expect it, especially after 2012. They do not think that disabled athletes should be treated as second-class citizens. Occasionally, that still does happen. I ask the Minister whether the equitable funding of disabled athletes is taken into consideration.

It is a hard balance. In a changing world of sport, programmes for talented athletes start younger and younger—my own daughter is on a regional talent programme. There must be balance between education, sport and the transition out of sport, to make sure that the athletes who leave are able to come back and work in the sport as coaches or volunteers. I have no problem at all with every last ounce of talent being wrung out of a sportsperson while they are on lottery funding, but the transition out of sport is incredibly important and is a difficult one for a lot of athletes to deal with. Sport teaches you so many positive things and we should be able to funnel that into other areas.

Lastly, along with other noble Lords, I pay tribute to Sir John Major and all those who campaigned for lottery funding. It has contributed hugely to our medal success, it has been an inspiration to young athletes, and it contributed to the success of 2012 and our reputation worldwide as an amazing sporting nation.

4.59 pm

**Lord True (Con):** My Lords, what a privilege to follow a great Olympian and congratulate another great Olympian, my noble friend Lord Holmes of Richmond, for initiating this debate. As he and I share an office and he lives in my borough and has a vote in the local elections, I probably had to take part. But in fact it is an unmitigated pleasure to salute the lottery. I also very much look forward to the maiden speeches of my noble friend the Duke of Wellington and the noble Lord, Lord Beith. He will probably remember hearing his colleague, the noble Lord, Lord Maclennan of Rogart, liken Sir John Major to the Emperor Nero for proposing a lottery on the Second Reading of that Bill. However, that was long ago. I say to the noble

Duke that I never saw the first Duke of Wellington nipping out to buy a lotto ticket in the corner shop. However, having looked into it, I found that the great duke devised a lottery to dispose of jewels the British Army had won in the Mahratta wars. Unfortunately most of the tickets went unsold because he did not have a Camelot. The British Army is no Camelot, whatever other marvels it does.

I do not claim to be a progenitor of the National Lottery, although I did have a ringside seat in No. 10 in those days. From that standpoint I must reaffirm that there is absolutely no doubt whatever that it would never have happened but for Sir John Major. I remember at one time, in a Conservative Whitehall in 1991, it seemed that only the Prime Minister and my noble friends Lord Baker of Dorking and Lord Patten of Barnes were batting for it.

As the noble Lord, Lord Pendry, reminded us, when the Second Reading came in the Commons, introduced by another great supporter, the noble Lord, Lord Brooke, of Sutton Mandeville—it is sad not to see him in his place today as he is no longer a Member of this House, having taken retirement—the Labour Party Front Bench called it the unacceptable face of nationalisation.

I say these things—they may seem unkind—about Liberal Democrats, Conservatives and Labour merely to point out that it needed great vision and drive to go through those doubters, and John Major had that. He once wrote, “Would it not be marvellous if Britain won the Davis Cup?”. What a ridiculous idea.

I won a fair prize for multiple numbers in the second ever draw but I have never managed to do better than the minimum since then. I do not know what that signifies. Perhaps the right reverend Prelate would say, “Lead us not into temptation”. However, I have supported the lottery.

Perhaps I may offer one slightly off-beam thought. I know the lottery is stretched and that there is no review until 2023, but might consideration be given to some gentle easing of restrictions on the support of overseas sites that are indisputably part of and projectors of our national heritage? The presence of the noble Duke calls to mind taxpayers’ money committed by George Osborne to restoration of the battlefield of Waterloo because he likes military history. Could not the Waterloo battlefield and such like it qualify as part of our national heritage which might merit support? What about the saving and documenting of monuments abroad, created by the British, which might be threatened by anti-colonial sentiment?

There are great academic and quintessentially British institutions which happen to be sited abroad—for example, the historic British School in Rome, in which I declare a paternal interest as I have come to know it and have a connection with it through my son, who is an academic. That school is housed in an amazing, huge and costly building designed by Lutyens as the British pavilion for the great exhibition of 1911. It was granted in perpetuity to the British nation on condition that it be used exclusively as a British research centre for archaeology, history and the fine arts, which it has been ever since. It is a home from which some remarkable breakthroughs in learning have been made and some

[LORD TRUE]

of the greatest university teachers of the Commonwealth have emerged. It cannot be sold. It is inventive in raising resources, although its lease excludes commercial activity. It is an architectural jewel and an enormous and prestigious asset for our country.

That is just one example. If I had more time, I could mention other British institutions that I can readily call to mind. However rich in what they give, and although they may be seats of “soft power” for Britain—in the jargon—what they have represented in our heritage cannot be assisted, as they are our outside the United Kingdom. British schools and the field of Waterloo are just two examples of what I mean. Could we not look at easing the boundaries, in some small way, of what is defined as UK heritage? After all, it is a scant vision of our heritage and our future if we see it stop at Land’s End.

5.05 pm

**Lord Puttnam (Lab):** My Lords, I too thank the noble Lord, Lord Holmes, for making this debate possible, and I agree with every word he had to say. I should declare a couple of interests as a former member of the Arts Council lottery panel and as president of the Film Distributors Association. I should like to touch briefly on three areas, which can be described as historical, numerical and philosophical. As the noble Lord, Lord Holmes, and others have made clear, this story has several heroes, chief among whom has to be Sir John Major, who managed to steer the concept through a largely sceptical Cabinet. I also mention Peter Brooke as the heritage Secretary and his Minister, David Mellor, who saw off what my noble friend Lord Pendry described as the “ambivalence” of our own party as well as the rather more vocal concerns of the faith communities. They were so concerned about the impact on charitable giving that in this House the legislation was described as being “morally flawed”. I hope that the right reverend Prelate the Bishop of Chester will be able to reassure us when he speaks that many of those earlier concerns have now proved to be unfounded.

It is my belief that the National Lottery has proved to be an unqualified success, not just in its impact on our arts, sport and heritage, but also as an example of the manner in which brave, well-considered and well-administered legislation can have a positive impact on the whole of civil society. It is worth asking in what other country could many billions of pounds be raised and spent on 450,000 projects both large and small without any accusation of corruption? It is an enviable record and one of which we as a country should be extraordinarily proud.

The Minister who took on much of the heavy lifting associated with the implementation of the legislation, the noble Baroness, Lady Bottomley, will be offering her own thoughts in a moment, but as one of her initial appointments to the Arts Council lottery panel, this is a good point for me to recall that much of the success of the lottery is a direct result of the courage and imagination with which she steered this unique initiative through some difficult early years, sometimes in an atmosphere of downright media hostility. We all learnt a lot, not least from the incredible

tenacity of our fellow panel member, the late Paddy Masefield, who forced us to understand the imperative of enabling disabled access as an essential component of a grant and not just as a “nice to have”. The legacy of the noble Baroness for the incoming Labour Government was wonderfully well nurtured and, I would argue, well built upon.

As for the numerical evidence of the lottery’s success, noble Lords will not be surprised if I use the film industry as the example that I am most familiar with. Once John Major, as Prime Minister, had agreed with the late Lord Attenborough’s plea that the British film industry should qualify as a lottery recipient, new life was breathed into an industry that was in every sense on its knees. I shall let the numbers speak for themselves. Feature film production in 1994 stood at 46, while last year it was 222. The value of the UK spend on feature films in 1994 was £243 million, and last year it stood at £1.471 billion. UK box office receipts in 1994 were £356 million, and this year we estimate that they will touch £1.3 billion, the highest figure for 45 years. Lastly, UK admissions in 1994 were 123 million, while this year they are estimated to come in at more than 175 million. That is a staggering turnaround for which many will rightly claim credit, but I would argue that the success was kick-started by the confidence and the resources that were made possible by the National Lottery.

Lastly, I have a somewhat more philosophical thought. By far the greatest obstacle to the legislation we are rightly celebrating was the Treasury and its horror at the essentially hypothecated manner in which lottery money was going to be distributed. That was something it could not tolerate. I realise that the chances of any Back-Bench Member of your Lordships’ House persuading the Treasury to reflect on its orthodoxy are about the same as those of a snowball in hell, but if we are right in believing that a leap of imagination such as that represented by the lottery can deliver remarkable results, then surely there are real lessons to be learnt. Is it not just possible that the dead hand of orthodoxy could be lifted sufficiently, so as at least to look at other ways of achieving much-needed social benefits?

I am an unapologetic believer in firm regulation but I am also a supporter of well-targeted levies to achieve ends. By way of example, where will the resources come from to address the financial nightmare of unchecked levels of obesity? Surely, a levy on the type of foods that have been identified as its cause could be directed straight into the NHS, where the tragic results are being wrestled with daily. Valuable lessons can be learned from the success of the National Lottery but I fear that few of them have been taken up, let alone replicated. Like the noble Lord, Lord Holmes, at times I fear for the future of the lottery.

Finally, only 1.8% of the vast revenues that accrue to the English Premier League find their way into the development of that sport at its grass roots. If embarrassment or any other growing sense of unease fails to get the EPL to reflect on the inadequacy of that commitment, is it not time for this, or perhaps a future Government, to come up with an imaginative means of persuading the organisation to reconsider its priorities?

5.10 pm

**The Lord Bishop of Chester:** My Lords, most of us will remember the strapline which launched the National Lottery: “It could be you”. Well, I never quite believed that it would be me but, nevertheless, the lottery has had great success over time. Many people thought that it would slightly fade from view and lose some of its initial gloss. Indeed, people worked out that it probably would not be them at all. It is very interesting how it has become a national institution. In that sense, we have been led into temptation on a grand scale.

Understandably, over the years the churches and other faith communities have had a somewhat uneasy relationship with gambling, but quite soon the faith communities worked out that it would be entirely right to accept funding from the lottery for the preservation of the fabric of historic churches and for their adaptation for wider community use. In country areas in particular, the local church often provides the natural focus and perhaps the only building where community groups can gather. There are a number of examples in my diocese where lottery funding has enabled such church buildings to be adapted and freed up for wider community use through the addition of toilet and kitchen facilities, DDA compliance, decent chairs and so forth. As I recall, it was especially around the millennium that there was a particular focus on this kind of project.

Rather greater sums overall have been given to preserve the fabric of historic churches and places of worship. During the time of the lottery, grants for this purpose have totalled around £0.5 billion, including some very large grants to cathedrals. For example, the work on the great east window of York Minster is just nearing completion. Other cathedrals have major projects to improve what is called, in the tourist trade, the visitor experience. From my own cathedral at Chester, I know the importance that a cathedral often has in the wider visitor and tourist strategy of a city. A host of imaginative initiatives are undergirded by the contribution which the HLF makes to building maintenance.

Cathedrals readily catch our attention, but more than 40% of the grade 1 listed buildings in England are local Anglican parish churches. Many are grade 2 or 2\* and I think the total is about 8,000. The HLF channels money to these churches through its grants for places of worship scheme. To give an illustration from the diocese of Chester, one of 40 dioceses in the Church of England, in the past three years 13 of my churches have been awarded grants, which typically are around £200,000 and total well over £2 million. That is serious money in anyone’s book. The work is often on roofs, spires, windows and stonework but sometimes, like cathedrals, the project has a wider focus.

Another example, which was just before the last three-year period, was at Daresbury, between Runcorn and Warrington, the parish where Lewis Carroll’s father was vicar and Lewis Carroll was brought up. Very imaginatively, a visitor centre attached to the church has been built to the same high standards as the fabric of this grade 1 church. Visitors come from all over the world to see the exhibit and the memorabilia in the church. In addition, the local community uses that room as a meeting point. The HLF contribution

to this project was £370,000, but the parish itself raised more than that—£430,000—to fund the overall project. That illustrates a very important feature of the HLF grants to churches: typically, the funding is part of a wider project and corresponding amounts are raised locally and from other sources.

I have been involved in a number of fundraising ventures over the years, not least when I was vicar of Beverley Minster in Yorkshire. The general rule, of course, is that nothing succeeds like success—that is, it is much easier to raise money if you have a start and something substantial to build on. That is where the HLF grants have been particularly valuable. They have drawn in matched and other funding.

I end by speaking of a much smaller project, but one in my diocese, in the small village of Barthomley, near Crewe. Its population is two or three hundred but it has a marvellous grade 1 church building. I suspect that as HS2 comes to Crewe it will be caught up in the wider development and housebuilding in the area, but we will have to wait and see. The HLF grant enabled the church to tackle urgent structural repairs, but that also released the church to have a vision for other things: to establish a volunteer group to create and monitor a wildlife area in the churchyard and keep the whole churchyard in good condition, and to create in the church a timeline display of its long history. It is also notable because, quite without my agreement, they decided to add a gargoyle over an effigy of myself—I put that in for completion and declare an interest, but I hope that the HLF money was not used for the effigy.

I simply pay tribute to the hugely valuable contribution that the HLF has made to this feature of our national life.

5.16 pm

**The Duke of Wellington (Con) (Maiden Speech):** My Lords, I am very honoured to become a Member of your Lordships’ House and I thank all those who voted for me. It is a proud but humbling moment to sit in this House, carrying the name of my forebear, Arthur, first Duke of Wellington. He was made a Peer in 1809 after the Battle of Talavera in northern Spain. During the years of the Peninsular War, he was elevated through the grades of the peerage, and on his return to England in June 1814 he took his seat in this House on the same day as a Baron, a Viscount, an Earl, a Marquis and a Duke—surely a unique event in the history of this House. For the rest of his life he was an assiduous attender and, although a Tory, always considered himself first and foremost a servant of the state. By extraordinary good fortune for me, I hold the name in the year of the bicentenary of the Battle of Waterloo. Each day of my life I am conscious of what a privilege that is.

I must now pay tribute to my predecessor as a representative hereditary Peer, Arthur, Lord Luke. He was a Peer much loved and respected in this House. I am honoured to have taken his place.

I must apologise to the House that I may not be able to stay to the end of the debate. I have for many months been booked to travel this evening to South Africa for a family wedding. With my inexperience of your Lordships’ House, I had not realised that there



[THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON]  
 might be two Statements today, which have delayed by a considerable margin this debate. I hope that the House will forgive me, as no discourtesy or disrespect is intended. I particularly wanted to contribute to this debate, and I congratulate my noble friend Lord Holmes of Richmond on not only proposing this Motion but introducing it in such an impressive way.

We celebrate today the National Lottery etc. Act 1993, which has turned out to be one of the most important pieces of legislation passed, as other noble Lords said, by the Government of Sir John Major, to his great credit. He could not possibly have foreseen how successful it would be. Very few parts of the country have not been recipients of benefactions of the lottery distributors. I will mention, if I may, three examples.

I had not realised that I would be following the right reverend Prelate, but the first example is the church in Colmonell in South Ayrshire, near where my family has agricultural property, which received a grant to help repair its organ. It could not possibly have raised the money without that help. Secondly, the Loddon School in Hampshire for children with severe autism, of which my wife is patron, received a grant to build a swimming pool for the children. My third example is Winchester Cathedral Trust, of which I am a trustee, which received a very large grant to repair the fabric and improve the educational and visitor facilities. These examples demonstrate the breadth of the reach of the grants, both geographically and quantitatively.

I hope that the Minister—the noble Baroness, Lady Neville-Rolfe—will allow me, without being considered controversial, to make some observations about the process of the distribution of the funds. Ministers have directed that the distributors of lottery money should have total costs of no more than 8% of the money distributed, and I must say this seems quite high to me. Other non-departmental public bodies are cutting expenditure, and surely the distributors should be required to do likewise. The relatively well-paid officials will argue that costs are already tightly controlled and that no further savings are possible, but other public bodies have reduced costs and in the private sector there are grant-giving charities with lower cost percentages. All these distributors have become more bureaucratic since they were started and this might be a good moment to reduce the bureaucracy.

I have another suggestion. The Big Lottery Fund reports to the Cabinet Office, and the arts, sport and heritage distributors report to two different Ministers in the DCMS. Should they not all report to one Minister, probably in the DCMS? At the moment, all the trustees are appointed by government. The Government should consider appointing only a minority of the trustees and allowing the rest to be appointed by the bodies themselves. This would make each organisation feel more like a grant-giving charity and less like an institution under the influence of government Ministers. There have been occasions in the last 21 years when Ministers have been tempted to direct funds to particular causes, but the lottery distributors were always intended to be independent of government.

I conclude by saying that nothing I have said should detract from my great admiration for the founders of the National Lottery and everything which has been achieved in these 21 years. Long may it continue to transform so many aspects of our national life.

5.23 pm

**Baroness Bottomley of Nettlestone (Con):** My Lords, it is a privilege and a pleasure to welcome my noble friend the Duke of Wellington to this House. He did not have to be introduced in the normal way because, in the quaint ways of the House, his title was already known to the House authorities. Of course, he may be the ninth, but he is the first elected Duke of Wellington to this House—we do not need to go into too much detail about the size of the electorate. We know, however, that during this year he has spoken with great force and passion about the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Waterloo. We have only to step a little way into the Royal Gallery to see the magnificent picture and be reminded of all that that battle meant for the future well-being and prosperity of Britain, and how it changed the 19th century for us all.

I have known the noble Duke for many years since he was a Member of the European Parliament, when I first was a Member of Parliament for Surrey. I dare say that we will hear his views on that subject in our debates in the next year or two. However, he is also the most distinguished chairman of the council of King's College London, a wonderful, world-class university, founded by his predecessor, the Duke of Wellington, and King George IV. It is the fourth oldest in the country, one of the top 20 in the world, with a formidable reputation. I think that we will hear from my noble friend his restless, relentless passion for excellence nationally and internationally. He may not always be an easy colleague but his heart and his passions will be in the right place. I am pleased, though, that the last time we heard a speech from a Duke of Wellington—in 1981, according to the Library—he was supporting the Government on the British Nationality Bill. I hope that my noble friend will follow that example as often as possible.

I want also to make a comment about the right reverend Prelate, because my father was chairman of the Churches' Council on Gambling at some stage. When I took on the stewardship of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, it was rather different from the NHS, which was very heavy pounding all the time; this role, essentially, was about allocating resource, but as generously as possible. As the noble Lord, Lord Puttnam, said, we took it extraordinarily seriously, in a very principled, independent style. The Secretary of State was most certainly not allowed to meddle; the distributors were independent and she was reminded of this frequently.

However, I did breathe on the chairman of the Heritage Lottery Fund quite frequently. Lord Rothschild, as many know, is always a man with a plan and there were many plans to which he allocated the resource most skilfully. My strong view was that the Bible story is not that church congregations, of any denomination, should be building a preservation society; the work of the church, or any faith group, is about looking after the poor, the needy, the vulnerable and the dispossessed.

However, we love our church buildings in this country and the more the Heritage Lottery Fund can do to help preserve our magnificent church—and other faith—heritage, the better.

My other issue was on the nature of the millennium. It was not a state event, a celebrity event, or a military event; it was a faith event. The projects supported by the Millennium Commission were therefore very much about regeneration, building communities, and sustainability. Mention has been made of village halls and of churches—the focal points in people's communities, where they could come together.

I spent many hours with the late Bishop of Liverpool looking for signs of compulsive gambling but I did not find them then and I have not found them now. I pay tribute, also, to some of the other particularly valuable individuals involved. The Millennium Commission greatly benefited from Sir Simon Jenkins and Jennie Page. She had been the chief executive of English Heritage and Sir Simon later became chairman of the National Trust. The investment in those wonderful, landmark projects lasts to this day. Our colleague, the noble Baroness, Lady Benjamin, was a member of the Millennium Commission, as was this House's current top star—if I may say so—the noble and learned Baroness, Lady Scotland, who has just been elected to become the Secretary-General of the Commonwealth; a wise and good woman she was then. I had to spend a little time with Anthea Turner and Mystic Meg, but I will not expand on that in my short time now.

Sir John Major has also been given wonderful credit. He said,

“man cannot live by GDP alone ... A country can only be strong, healthy, and contented if it burnishes its heritage, encourages its citizens to pursue excellence in sport, and cultivates widespread appreciation of the arts”.

It was beautifully put—and how wonderful those many investments have been.

The British Museum was built on a lottery originally. William Cobbett, a former constituent of mine, as it were, in the early 19th century, was furious about lottery money being spent on the British Museum. He said:

“Why should tradesmen and farmers be called upon to pay for the support of a place which was intended only for the amusement of the curious and the rich, and not for the benefit or for the instruction of the poor? If the aristocracy wanted the Museum as a lounging place, let them pay for it”.—[*Official Report, Commons, 25/3/1833; col. 1033.*]

It is, of course, now one of the most popular, visited institutions, with 7 million visitors last year and a further 43 million online. So many of our other wonderful projects can boast similar success.

It is not only London, however, and I must mention Hull, the City of Culture 2017. It has the university at which the Minister for Sport, Tracey Crouch, was educated; she launched the sport document this morning. With the City of Culture lottery resource, Hull is able to do in a very deprived area of the country all that we would hope for from our most prosperous regions.

This project has been shared by many. It has moved from cynicism to celebration. We need to be vigilant and watchful. I warmly congratulate my noble friend Lord Holmes of Richmond on a wonderful opportunity for us to have an excellent debate before we break for Christmas.

5.30 pm

**Baroness Pitkeathley (Lab):** My Lords, it is a privilege to speak in the debate of the noble Lord, Lord Holmes, and to follow the noble Baroness, Lady Bottomley, whose role as a midwife to the National Lottery has already been acknowledged.

I have several interests to declare. Twenty-one years ago I was the recipient of a large grant from the then National Lottery Charities Board, later the Community Fund, which transformed the work that I was able to do for carers. I was then for six years the first, and as it turned out the only, chair of the New Opportunities Fund, an initiative of the 1997 Labour Government. Subsequently, I was a player in the merger between the Community Fund and the New Opportunities Fund, which resulted in the creation of the Big Lottery Fund. So I have a lot of baggage around this topic, and those experiences have led me to be an enormous admirer—I might say a fan—of the contribution that the lottery has made to our national life, and I am happy to wish it a very good 21st birthday.

No community in the United Kingdom has not benefited from lottery funding but, even 21 years after it started, it is frustrating that some of its true successes are too little understood. Some have a high profile; we have heard a lot today about projects in sports, arts, heritage and so on. But in my view, what should really be celebrated is the stunning contribution that big lottery funding has made to local community projects. It is no exaggeration to say that people's lives, especially those of people who are in some way disadvantaged, have been transformed by lottery money. An example is projects that promote better mental health—everything from giving children the skills needed to cope with life's pressures, to funding support groups for those suffering from mental health problems such as dementia.

The lottery has helped people and families who are caring for loved ones. Local arts projects, including community choirs and community theatres, help communities come together, celebrate their culture and learn new skills. We have helped veterans and their families to lead successful civilian lives and deal with issues such as physical injury and post-traumatic stress disorder. We have had projects that tackle health inequalities, promote greater well-being and support those suffering from poor health and conditions such as diabetes, cancer and heart disease.

Every aspect of British society, at all ends of the social spectrum and age scale, has had help from the lottery. I shall give two examples. Over the past five years, 150 projects have been set up across England to engage young people from all backgrounds to be part of a movement to drive local social action. At the other end of the age scale, the Silver Line has been funded, a freephone helpline open 24/7 all year round offering information and befriending for older people experiencing loneliness—a major problem in our society, as we know.

The New Opportunities Fund was a pioneer in funding innovative projects in health, education and the environment, some of which have become embedded in the provisions that we now expect in our communities. Breakfast clubs; after-school activities; older people's

[BARONESS PITKEATHLEY]

centres, which encourage not only physical good health but emotional health by encouraging social contact and providing advice and support—all these have been set up through pioneering grants. The Big Lottery Fund has developed and improved on those pioneering projects, and now 12,000 projects are funded every year. Mostly, the grants are small; we should remember this, particularly as we have been talking about huge grants today. Most grants made are under £10,000, but they add up to £700 million a year given to local organisations that receive little or no government funding, local or national.

Little wonder, then, that with so much support for big social problems being dependent on the lottery, there was alarm—panic, even—at the thought that the Chancellor intended to raid the Big Lottery to solve a problem that he had with DCMS funding arts organisations. The Chancellor was well advised to retreat from this idea, if he had it. It would have been immensely unpopular with the voluntary sector at a time when it is badly hit by other funding costs. Every MP would have hated it, as every constituency benefits from lottery money. The public, who are now used to appreciating that their ticket money goes to good causes, would also have been extremely displeased. Everyone will understand that the billions in the lottery coffers are tempting to Chancellors, especially at times of austerity. But I hope that the Minister will assure the House, at least so far as it is within her control, that future Chancellors will not be tempted.

One of the criticisms often levelled at lottery funding is that the application process is too bureaucratic and cumbersome. This may have been justified in the early years, as I have reason to know, but I must take issue here with the noble Duke, the Duke of Wellington. I am sorry to take issue with his maiden contribution but I must commend the Big Lottery Fund on the progress it has made in simplifying its procedures, especially by setting up a network of local managers across the UK who work with and in communities to help organisations apply for funding and make sure that money is channelled where it is most needed, and most simply. Can the Minister confirm that this approach of making it as simple as possible will continue to be encouraged? It will mean taking the risk that sometimes grants will go wrong, but that risk must be seen as proportionate. So I hope that that will continue to be the Government's attitude: to ensure that the money is as accessible as possible to the many thousands of people who wish to make an application.

5.36 pm

**Lord Beith (LD) (Maiden Speech):** The noble Lord, Lord Holmes of Richmond, was very kind and generous in his references to me and to the circumstances of my election, 42 years ago. It was with a majority of only 57 votes. I never imagined that I would manage such a long political survival, still less that I would find myself in this haven of political survival, the House of Lords. But I believe in the need for a Second Chamber and it will be an honour to serve in it, just as it was an honour to represent in the other House the beautiful Berwick-upon-Tweed constituency, covering 1,000 square miles of Northumberland.

I am very grateful for the warm and friendly welcome I have received in this House from noble Lords and the very helpful staff. I am delighted to renew so many friendships with those on all sides of this Chamber whom I have worked with, taken evidence from or contended with in years gone by. As I seek to follow the slightly different ways of doing things at this end of the building, I have been allocated a widely respected mentor and guide who knows exactly how to keep me in order: the noble Baroness, Lady Maddock, has been doing that ever since I married her.

I hope to be able to contribute to some of your Lordships' deliberations on matters which engaged me as a committee chair and committee member in the other House—the justice system, for example, and the oversight of intelligence agencies, as well as issues of concern to the north-east of England. As someone who has always stressed within my own party the importance of political philosophy as a benchmark for policy and action, I may take the occasional opportunity to say why the fundamental principles of liberalism remain vital to our country's future—but that is for another day.

Turning to today's debate, I welcome the recognition that the Motion gives to the massive benefits National Lottery funding has brought to so many aspects of life. Others have dealt with sports funding, arts funding and the Big Lottery Fund. I want to refer, as the right reverend Prelate did, to the Heritage Lottery Fund. In doing so, I draw attention to my registered interests in voluntary roles as president of the North of England Civic Trust and president, previously chairman, of the Historic Chapels Trust. Both these bodies have used Heritage Lottery grants to restore and reopen buildings which would otherwise have been lost to the community.

The Historic Chapels Trust has rescued 20 disused places of worship of denominations other than the Church of England, which has its own Churches Conservation Trust. From a tiny Methodist chapel in the Cornish village of Penrose to a magnificent Gothic Unitarian church in Todmorden and a Catholic chapel inside a medieval pele tower at Biddlestone in Northumberland, the trust has restored buildings to communities that feared they would be for ever lost.

I have had few more rewarding moments in my voluntary work than the day we reopened the partially restored, massive Bethesda Methodist Chapel in Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent. It had been boarded up and unsafe for 20 years, and in one afternoon, 1,000 people came through the doors, many of them clutching photographs of family weddings and christenings which had taken place in the building. This was possible because of HLF support, alongside local community effort. Similarly, in the heart of a deprived area of Sunderland, the North of England Civic Trust restored and opened up the Exchange Buildings, in which a diverse range of activities were able to take place. It was saved from demolition with a £2.7 million HLF grant.

HLF funding does not merely bring buildings back to life. It helps to regenerate areas. It helps to create employment and promote vital skills: the North of England Civic Trust's heritage engineering programme, funded by HLF, created 38 bursaries, most of whose participants now have jobs in engineering. I find HLF a decentralised and friendly organisation, willing to



maintain contact through the often challenging stages of a project and ready to commit at an early stage—a point that the right reverend Prelate mentioned—rather than wait in the wings. That means that projects can sometimes get off the ground because of that HLF commitment.

I have two suggestions for HLF. One is that it look again at its regional distribution of funds. Because budgets are on a per head basis, the north-east budget is one of the smallest, but the region has a disproportionately high number of historic buildings and buildings on the at-risk list. Secondly, all the grant-giving bodies and the DCMS itself need to recognise the financial sustainability problem for bodies like the Historic Chapels Trust, most of whose buildings are in its care because they are so special that it would be unacceptable to convert or alter them. Some of them, therefore, have very limited potential to create an income stream.

But alongside these suggestions I want to make it clear that funding through HLF has sustained and enhanced the character of many of our towns and villages. It has opened people's eyes to the value of the built heritage and has made locations available for community activities. It has reached the parts that taxpayer funding would not have reached. It is not there to replace public funding but to achieve things which would never have survived the budget battles of Whitehall in a time of austerity. The Heritage Lottery Fund and the other lottery funds deserve these 21st birthday greetings.

5.42 pm

**Lord Cormack (Con):** My Lords, it is a particular pleasure to follow my noble friend Lord Beith—as I will call the noble Lord, Lord Beith—this afternoon. We became friends shortly after he entered the House of Commons following a memorable by-election. There were, if I remember correctly, three Liberal by-election winners that day, and he was the survivor. He was the survivor not only because we all need a little luck in politics but because it became immediately apparent to his colleagues in the other place that here was a man who was fundamentally decent and dedicated to responsible and proper values. He demonstrated that throughout his career in the other place. I hope that he is going to enjoy this place as much as he enjoyed the other one and that he will be able to make as lasting and important a contribution to our work as he did to the work of the House of Commons.

I was not going to speak in this debate after learning this morning that there were two Statements, but because I saw that I had been listed after my noble friend Lord Beith, I felt I must try. I am most grateful to the noble Lord, Lord Holmes, who introduced this debate with great skill and great sensitivity, and I am grateful to the three Front-Bench speakers for accepting that I cannot be here for the wind-ups as I have a long-standing engagement—not in South Africa for a family wedding, but to preside at the annual Award for Responsible Capitalism in Lancaster House. As the Secretary of State for business and industry is going to make that presentation, I had better be there.

I first put my name down to speak in the debate because I was one of those who—along with Sir Ivan

Lawrence, who introduced a Private Member's Bill on the subject—advocated a national lottery many, many years ago. I well remember the day when Sir John Major, who has been rightly praised during this debate, said yes, he did support it, he would support it and he would see it through. He was as good as his word.

Prime Ministers are remembered for different things, but very few Prime Ministers are remembered for founding institutions which have changed the shape of society. One is Harold Wilson. His Open University has brought enormous benefits to untold numbers of people. Another is Sir John Major, because the National Lottery has touched our national life in such a positive and vibrant way.

I will concentrate for the remaining 180 seconds of my speech on my home city of Lincoln, where I live within the shadow of the cathedral. We were the recipient of a grant for more than £12 million for Lincoln Castle. Some of your Lordships have been to see what was done—I see the noble Lord, Lord Lea, nodding. The castle, which was frankly run down, has been absolutely transformed. The noble Lord, Lord Phillips, has also seen it. Magna Carta has been given a special home. The trust of which I am chairman had to raise the money for that; and that is right, because there should be challenges and matching funding. For the first time ever, people can walk around the walls of Lincoln Castle and see one of the most significant Conqueror's castles in the country in a way that they could not before.

Earlier this year, the National Lottery announced that, subject to our being able to raise £3 million in Lincoln, the cathedral—the incomparably beautiful Lincoln Cathedral—would also have £12.2 million. It is one of the most glorious Gothic buildings in the world. It is a cathedral which, in the words of John Betjeman, brings people to their knees when they enter it, whatever faith they have or have not. This £12.2 million will enhance and improve the visitor and educational facilities and enable more and more people to come to this great building and appreciate and enjoy it.

If the National Lottery had done nothing else, it would be remembered for ever by the people of Lincoln and those who visit it, but it has done so much more. The field of sport has been graphically and splendidly covered by my noble friend Lord Holmes and the noble Baroness, Lady Grey-Thompson. We can thank the lottery on a whole variety of fronts, but the heritage of our land has been preserved in a way that it could never otherwise have been.

I was chatting to the Bishop of Chester about his gargoyle over lunch, and we both said that, great as the need still is, the built heritage of our cathedrals, churches and chapels is probably in better shape than it has been for centuries. That is mainly due to the National Lottery. I am delighted to support the Motion; I am deeply sorry that I have to leave before the end; but I wish my noble friend Lord Holmes further success in his sporting endeavours.

5.48 pm

**Lord Lea of Crondall (Lab):** My Lords, I am very glad to follow the noble Lord, Lord Cormack, because I did indeed enjoy a visit to Lincoln, which he organised.

[LORD LEA OF CRONDALL]

I am one of the vice-presidents of the All-Party Group on Arts and Heritage. The cathedral is of course wonderful; he mentioned the castle and I recall the Wren Library as well.

I enjoyed both maiden speeches. I make just one remark on each, and say to the noble Duke, the Duke of Wellington: I hope that when he boards his plane at Heathrow or wherever, he does not have to sit down and mutter, "That was a damn close-run thing".

The noble Lord, Lord Beith, is very welcome. I can only conclude that he has finally realised that in the House of Lords the Lib Dems do not need to be too committed to the precepts of proportional representation. However, he made a very good point about proportionality with regard to regional expenditure through the lottery fund. Can the Minister confirm what I think is a good pattern of regional spend? I do not know whether she will have the figures available. That leads to a point that is in the back of my mind about Manchester, which I shall come to.

The noble Lord, Lord Addington, reminded us that the most wonderful transformation of the Great Court of the British Museum is a National Lottery Fund project—I think that that is what he alluded to. It is an uplifting experience to go into what had been a murky space, which now crowns the achievement of the British Museum under Neil MacGregor. We can now say that it is second to none—not second to the Hermitage, the Louvre or the Prado. It is absolutely wonderful. I can admire the new roof from my London flat; it is a great feather in the cap of the capital.

It is worth pausing on the dilemma in this country of the Great Wen. The noble Baroness, Lady Bottomley, referred to the William Cobbett reference to the Great Wen. He was not a great admirer of it—the stockjobbers going down to Farnham, not knowing the difference between a stoat and a ferret, dressed up by the tailors of London in country gear. A lot of that still goes on. But outside of the Great Wen, we have a phenomenon of growing inequality between north and south, as everybody knows, which some people think insoluble. I shall make just a couple of remarks about that. The Minister comes from BIS, not DCMS, so perhaps she can echo the particular dimension of how the lottery fits into that picture.

There is another way in which big money is spent in this field—philanthropy. It is true of the British Museum and many other great institutions that there is private philanthropy, but it is right to suppose that it is very much London-orientated. I would be surprised if the Minister had any numbers on that, but I would be surprised if that was not the case.

One project that I need to mention is the People's History Museum in Manchester. A few years ago it got a grant of £7.5 million from the HLF, and it was reopened in 2010. Its throughput of visitors is now four times what it had been before. I take that as an illustration of the fact that capital and revenue are really complementary to each other; there is no point in saying that capital is very important and sniffing about revenue grants. Could the Minister comment on that? There are many bits of lateral thinking going on about transitional expenditures, and so on, but the fact is that one cannot live from hand to mouth for

ever. Some of us helped to raise £300,000 in the past couple of years for a gallery in the museum of heroes of people's history. It is not just about the Labour movement, it is about people's history. No fewer than 25 Members of this House each put in £3,000 among the £300,000.

Will the Minister ask her colleague, the noble Lord, Lord O'Neill, whether there is a heritage dimension of the northern powerhouse idea because I shall finish on an economics note? There is no doubt that in the great cities of the world there is now huge connection between the buzz of arts and culture and the buzz of the economy. I hope that in due course the Minister or her colleague will write to me on that point if she cannot respond to it today.

5.55 pm

**Viscount Falkland (CB):** My Lords, I, too, thank the noble Lord, Lord Holmes of Richmond, not least for giving me the opportunity that I had been hoping for to congratulate the National Lottery and its funding arm on its extraordinary collaboration with the British Film Institute. Not surprisingly, this was touched on by the noble Lord, Lord Puttnam, in his speech, and I am sure that the noble Lord, Lord Stevenson of Balmacara, will agree. He has had a heavy day and has been in his place for many hours. He was a distinguished head of the British Film Institute at a time when things were much more difficult than they are now.

One of the great decisions that was taken—I hope that this is not a contentious remark—was when it was decided to say goodbye to the British Film Institute's predecessor, the UK Film Council. What has happened since then has been quite extraordinary. One has to congratulate Amanda Nevill, the chief executive officer of the British Film Institute, on creating the extraordinary relationship with the lottery. Of course, the lottery does not go into film production finance but goes into development. The British Film Institute's £40 million fund puts it in a position where it funds 30 feature films a year, but films the expensive development costs of 100 films are funded by the lottery. This has made an enormous difference to the number of films that are made.

I came into the House in 1984 when I was a callow youth of 49 years old—that is what it felt like in those days because the average age was rather higher. The leader of the SDP, who sat just below where the noble Lord, Lord Puttnam, is sitting now, encouraged me to throw myself in rather early in my career, and the Films Bill of 1984, which became the Films Act 1985, was the first Bill I worked through all the way. I learned a great deal about the way legislation passes through your Lordships' House. It was very memorable. The noble Lord, Lord Puttnam, was actually speaking of later, but in 1984 the audience was going down and the box office take was at an extraordinarily low level. It was around £84 million and now it is more than double that. I am talking about theatrical—that is, cinema—attendances.

People see films on many platforms nowadays, so there is a huge interest in cinema. This has resulted in a huge increase in the opportunities for young directors, producers and performers, and it has increased the reputation of our history in this area. Although our

cinema has been predominantly commercial, it still has an astonishing history, with some enormously great films that have been highly commercial but have also been enormously inventive. I am thinking now of “The Third Man”, which crosses my mind as I speak. So the lottery has been an extraordinary lifeline to the film industry.

I consider, and I think many noble Lords feel the same, that film is very important. It has never been viewed, as it is in France and other countries, as essentially a cultural part of our life, but nevertheless it is incredibly important. People should read stories, see films and learn stories through the visual media. One has to say that the doom-mongers of those times were not right to say that television had wiped out cinema and that it would not survive. It certainly has survived, and so has television; I think everyone now realises that they are two different mediums.

This has been an interesting opportunity to listen to some very interesting speeches. I have to say that the maiden speeches were exceptional. I remind the House that the election of the noble Duke was an amazing result. A friend of mine in the House whom I shall not name and I often speculate on what the odds might be at hereditary Peers’ by-elections. Conservative odds are always the most difficult because that party has the highest number of people putting their names forward. However, this result was a racing certainty.

6.01 pm

**Baroness Heyhoe Flint (Con):** My Lords, I am not used to coming in batting at number 15, but I thought I would perhaps nudge a few quick singles and hope for the odd bonus ball by the end of today’s debate. I thank my noble friend Lord Holmes, a fellow Wolves supporter; he will be pleased to know that I have my badge on today in honour of Wolves. I think that he is a great case study in demonstrating good value for money from National Lottery funding. I am not so sure whether it funded his interesting sense of humour—I do not think that I can compete with the “Beith Wellington” quip, but I will do my very best.

We have heard inspiring speeches as openers from my noble friend and from my noble friend the Duke of Wellington. There is actually some cricket on in South Africa after his family wedding, but I am sure that that is sheer coincidence. I welcome the noble Lord, Lord Beith, and thank him for his warm speech.

But for that lottery funding, the noble Lord, Lord Holmes, might not be here with us. The House would certainly be a poorer place without his expertise—not forgetting his faithful guide dog Lottie. I presume that Lottie is the name given to her because it is short for “lottery”. Is that why? The noble Lord earned the status of legend with his international Paralympic swimming—a 17-year career, nine golds, five silvers and one bronze. I think he was being very modest in the mention of his achievements. Pre-lottery funding achievements included Seoul in 1988 and Barcelona in 1992, but achievements post-lottery funding for elite sport include Atlanta in 1996 and Sydney in 2000.

Apart from the elite lottery funding, we have heard that Britain zoomed from 36th in the medal table in Atlanta in 1996 up to third place in the Paralympics

and Olympics in London. In those 21 years, the total sum of lottery funding of £34 billion has seen between £6 billion and £7 billion funding sport—it is rather a wide gap in billions between six and seven, is it not? Still, that is wonderful support for sport.

I join the Sir John Major fan club for his granting of the licence for the National Lottery. His vision supported his belief that sport, the arts, heritage and charities enhanced quality of life for millions of people but such areas too often missed out on realistic funding because of the perhaps indecent scramble for taxpayers’ funding from the Treasury. His inspiring solution, the National Lottery, sought to provide vital funding free of government interference. I received a note from Sir John this week to remind me to mention—and repeat—that this has to be more accepted so that the predators do not eat away at National Lottery funding as a substitute.

The lottery triumph provides welcome funds for grass-roots community sports and facilities. Sport England uses it to invest in 46 national governing bodies through its whole sport plan, which is geared to get more people of all ages playing sport. By 2017, £400 million will have been invested in this scheme. I will give noble Lords a couple of the myriad case studies from the England and Wales Cricket Board, of which I am a director, clearly to show what a difference lottery funding has made. The protecting playing fields programme granted £57,500 to Quatt Cricket Club in Shropshire to create a second ground, which has now led to a 59% growth in junior membership. The inspired facilities programme granted £75,000 to Yapham Cricket Club in east Yorkshire to create a dedicated programme for women and girls’ cricket, of which I slightly approve, and to build a new pavilion to serve all ages and genders.

The Sport and Recreation Alliance, in line with Sir John Major’s philosophy, asserts once again that there is a very important balance and differentiation between Exchequer and National Lottery funding so that the core functions of the lottery are protected and not considered a substitute for the withdrawal of Exchequer funds. With this protection in mind, the Sport and Recreation Alliance ran a dynamic campaign in advance of the spending review called “#GetYourKitOn” to make the case for the value of grass-roots sport and its funding. With an amazing number of 17 million Twitter timelines, the campaign had a total reach of almost 8 million, and it sent 1,300 direct messages to the Chancellor—I am sure he read every one—plus other actions on Her Majesty’s Treasury Facebook page and George Osborne’s Twitter feed. The wonder of modern-day communication has its uses.

The outcome for sport from the spending review was largely welcome and positive, and we now know that the Government recognise the vital distinction between Exchequer funding for sport and the funds it receives from the National Lottery. The Prime Minister says in the foreword of the new strategy for sport, published only this morning, that,

“we will change sport funding so it is no longer ... about how many people take part, but rather how sport can have a meaningful and measurable impact on improving people’s lives”.



[BARONESS HEYHOE FLINT]

Another theme from there—a little nudge towards the lottery—is the establishment of a new governance code,

“mandatory for all sports bodies that want to receive public funding from 2017”.

What of the future? Can the Minister give her thoughts on inactivity, which is almost a national pastime in itself? I suggest that a ring-fenced National Lottery fund could be created to tackle this challenge. Secondly, could the National Lottery application funding programme be simplified? The funding landscape is far too complex and many volunteers find it extremely difficult to complete the application—note that the rigour is exactly the same whether it is for a £5,000 or a £1 million project.

Just to show that I am not just sport-centric—perhaps some people might say eccentric—I thank the National Lottery for the return of Victorian grandeur to the modern parks in Wolverhampton: East Park, West Park and Hickman Park, so that the locals say, “The National Lottery is awlright!”. Still to be completed is the wonderful city-centre restoration of our historic Queen Street, with cash support of almost £2.3 million.

Therefore, a very happy birthday to the National Lottery—you have been transformational for sport, recreation and the community. On 19 November, Noel Edmonds hosted the first draw. Now, where did Sir John put his lottery ticket?

6.08 pm

**Lord Giddens (Lab):** My Lords, to change the metaphor deployed by the noble Baroness, in academic life when you are chosen to speak last in a debate at the end of a long day you call it the death slot. This will probably be the death slot for me in another way, because I will take quite a lot more of an interrogatory attitude towards the National Lottery and lotteries in general than any noble Lords have adopted so far. But I join all other noble Lords in congratulating the noble Lord, Lord Holmes, on the exemplary way in which he introduced this debate and on his stellar Olympic career. He is the only student that I know of from my classes in Cambridge who won nine gold medals. Of course, plenty of students won six but that is not quite in the same league. He introduced his speech in a wonderfully lucid way.

Sociologically and politically, lotteries are an intriguing phenomenon. A large number of countries have national lotteries and most have embraced them enthusiastically. In the United States, \$70 billion is spent annually on state lotteries. That is an amazing amount. It is half the budget of the largest state in the US—California, which has an economy almost the size of that of the UK. In the US, \$1 billion is spent on advertising alone.

Lotteries are surrounded by humour and jokes, although my joke is not a very good one. Joking always denotes ambivalence, and there is a lot of ambivalence and criticism—quite rightly, I think—surrounding lotteries. Question: What is a lottery? Answer: A tax on people who are bad at maths. The chances of winning a jackpot are infinitesimally small:

one in 40 million for lotto in this country and one in 260 million in the US. According to Camelot, 70% of the UK population regularly plays the lottery, but to me—speaking sociologically, I suppose—the question “Why?” is a very real one.

We can easily see why Governments like lotteries and we can see why noble Lords in this debate who have been recipients of lottery money like them. They provide a substantial source of revenue handed over in a voluntary, even enthusiastic way. They are very different from an orthodox tax in that respect. Yet I suggest that the respectability that they have achieved, which I think has been very visible in all the contributions in this debate, is odd for three reasons, which noble Lords will be glad to know I will not develop at length. First, it is a form of gambling. Secondly, it is regressive—that is, poorer people spend a far higher portion of their revenue on lotteries than more affluent people. Thirdly, lotteries—not always but quite often—fund elite projects which are remote from those punters. In addition, there is the issue of addiction, which the noble Lord, Lord Holmes, mentioned at the beginning.

Naturally, Camelot is anxious to downplay these issues. It has to be said that Camelot appears to be one of the best-run lotteries in the world. It is run in a fairly exemplary fashion and is very aware of its responsibilities. I accept all the wonderful things that have been said about what is achieved through the National Lottery. As it says on its website:

“We want large numbers of people to spend small amounts each”.

That is a very desirable and laudatory position. To me, however, two questions remain, and they should be asked and responded to: why do so many want to spend even small amounts on the lottery when they have a close to zero chance of winning large sums of money; and, are we doing enough to monitor its more negative aspects? I have been thinking quite a lot about why so many people are attracted to playing the lottery and the conclusion that I have come up with is that there is a cluster of motivations.

Most of the research that we have on this seems to come from the US, not from this country. For many who are really struggling, playing the lottery and hoping for the jackpot is a “hope for a miracle” position. When you have a fairly hopeless life, people are not stupid—they know that they are not going to win but they still think, “Well, I might”. For others—at least in this country—it seems to be a kind of glorified reality game show, creating a feeling of belonging. For others, perhaps there is an altruistic element.

Can the Minister first of all tell us whether there is any research on all this? I checked, and it was very difficult to find any systematic work on it. Most of the work we have comes from the US and is moderately negative in its conclusions. Secondly, can she tell us how much research is funded by Camelot or other organisations on the demographics of players and the prevalence of addiction? It is conventionally said, and said very assertively, that playing the lottery has no relationship to other forms of gambling. I cannot find the evidence for that, and evidence drawn from other countries seems to suggest the opposite—so I would be interested in whatever comments the Minister cares to make.

6.16 pm

**Lord Clement-Jones (LD):** My Lords, I join other noble Lords in thanking the noble Lord, Lord Holmes of Richmond, for a wonderful personal introduction to the debate and for allowing us to indulge our enthusiasms and perspectives on the achievements of the National Lottery. This is really a very fitting pre-Christmas festive celebration of an extraordinary achievement—a national achievement, I would say. I very much agree with the noble Lord in his tributes to Sir John Major, and many noble Lords have paid tribute also to the noble Baroness, Lady Bottomley, for her contribution to the creation of the National Lottery.

I would also like to congratulate our maiden speakers today. It is not often that I welcome a Duke, let alone the noble Duke, the Duke of Wellington, who seems to share some of the attack of his distinguished predecessor. I am sure that he will be a great addition to our debates in this House, especially about education, the arts and heritage. I am also delighted to welcome my noble friend Lord Beith, an extremely distinguished member of my party who may be interested to know—he may even be horrified to know—that his by-election in 1973 was the reason I joined the Liberal party way back when. I very much welcome him to our debates, especially as part of what will now be, united in a single House, an even more formidable husband and wife team.

The figures quoted for the National Lottery by the noble Lord, Lord Holmes, and many others are, by themselves, extraordinary and bear repeating: 450,000 grants awarded in the last 21 years and £34 billion raised for good causes. As my noble friend Lord Addington said, indeed the National Lottery has changed our lives.

In the course of this, we should not forget that the operator has had a huge part to play. I pay tribute not only to the generosity of the National Lottery players but also to Dame Dianne Thompson, who headed Camelot for 15 of those 21 years. The noble Baroness, Lady Bottomley, mentioned the former distributors such as the Millennium Commission, which need to take credit for the projects that they undertook. However, I want to recognise and acknowledge the role of the current lottery distributors, which have had the difficult job of making some of those funding decisions: Arts Council England and other national arts distributors; the BFI, which the noble Lord, Lord Puttnam, and the noble Viscount, Lord Falkland, paid tribute to; the Big Lottery Fund; the Heritage Lottery Fund; Sport England and the other national sports distributors; UK Sport, and so on. Many of those organisations have been mentioned by noble Lords today.

As so many noble Lords have pointed out, it is the individual projects funded in so many different sectors and regions of this country that stick in the mind and are the real cause of celebration. I want to mention some of the passions and enthusiasms that have been brought up during the course of the debate. The noble Lord, Lord True, oversees cultural assets, and there does seem to be a hole in the system there. The noble Baroness, Lady Pitkeathley, covered carers and community projects. The noble Lord, Lord Puttnam, and the

noble Viscount, Lord Falkland, talked about the film industry with great passion. The right reverend Prelate the Bishop of Chester, the noble Duke, the Duke of Wellington, and the noble Lord, Lord Cormack, talked about historic churches and cathedrals and, in particular, the role of match funding. The noble Baroness, Lady Bottomley, of course talked about Hull, the City of Culture. That is an extremely important project for which I share her enthusiasm.

Sports should have their own section. The noble Lord, Lord Holmes, elicited a brace of Paralympians, including himself, to take part in this debate, and the noble Baroness, Lady Heyhoe Flint, is never far away in talking about the sporting projects that she supports. Of course, the National Lottery contributed £2.2 billion towards the London 2012 Olympics and Paralympic Games infrastructure—a huge achievement—let alone its support for all the athletes. My only regret is that noble Lords did not mention rugby in the course of the debate. Over the last 20 years, the National Lottery's £202 million of support for grass-roots rugby, with the RFU, has been quite extraordinary.

As an inveterate Londoner I have my own favourites. I am an inhabitant of the Great Wen, as the noble Lord, Lord Lea, put it, and I am going to be a little parochial in my enthusiasms. In the past 21 years we have seen our London museums and galleries—which, to me, symbolise the huge improvement in the quality of our lives in this city—develop dramatically. Projects have included the spectacular Great Court of the British Museum, which many noble Lords have mentioned, the new World Conservation and Exhibition Centre, the Ondaatje Wing of the National Portrait Gallery and the Cutty Sark. Anyone who has been underneath the Cutty Sark will have seen its amazing new copper hull. Also included are the brilliant British Galleries at the Victoria and Albert Museum which have allowed many more people to enjoy its collection. So it goes on, with new projects at the Royal Observatory Greenwich, the Science Museum and the South Bank Centre, all planned with National Lottery money.

There are also, of course, inspiring community and arts projects. As a trustee of the Barbican I am particularly interested in the CREATE London programme, run by the Barbican. I cannot omit to mention the bandstand on my local Clapham Common—no project is too small to have the attention of the National Lottery—which is one of the hundreds of parks and open spaces in Britain which have been revitalised using National Lottery money.

The Big Lottery Fund deserves a mention of its own. I admit to some scepticism and concern on its formation but it is now a vital source of funding for some of the UK's most disadvantaged groups and communities. The noble Baroness, Lady Pitkeathley, was particularly eloquent on that subject. As president of Ambitious about Autism, I appreciate many of the projects for the benefit of autistic children that have been funded by the National Lottery. I was interested to hear the noble Duke, the Duke of Wellington, mention a project in Hampshire. TreeHouse—now Ambitious about Autism—benefited from the “People's Millions” in 2007. There are new projects such as Autism Ambassadors in Enfield and Speaking Up

[LORD CLEMENT-JONES]

Together run by Advocacy for All—all of which are directed for the benefit of autistic children and their parents. It is extremely important that we maintain those projects.

Such is the normally uncontroversial nature of the National Lottery that I think I last spoke in the House on this subject nearly 10 years ago when the National Lottery Bill, which created the Big Lottery Fund, was before the House. At the time the NCVO said that there should be three tests of any new lottery distributor: a guaranteed percentage of funding for voluntary organisations; independence from government; and grant making to remain additional to existing public spending. That was agreed by Ministers and their noble friends at the time we debated the Bill. I believe that all three tests have been observed by the National Lottery, but does the Minister believe that the principle of additionality still applies to all distributors, and that it is being observed by them and by government, in particular in relation to arts funding?

There are concerns about the future. We have to remember who is paying the piper: it is the public. In 2013 Camelot raised the price of a Lotto ticket from £1 to £2 and it was controversial. This October, Camelot said that a new millionaire raffle would guarantee at least one millionaire per draw and that the chances would be better of winning at least £1 million. But contradicting Camelot, statisticians suggest that the chances of winning the jackpot have actually moved from one in 14 million to one in 45 million, so there is much unhappiness. Do we know what the impact on sales has been? Is the National Lottery subject to the law of diminishing returns? After all, sales were at a peak in the 1990s.

Since its foundation, the Health Lottery has been cited as a possible threat, and it was mentioned in this debate. What is the approach of the Government to the National Lottery? Will they cannibalise it, as some noble Lords have said? Finally, the noble Lord, Lord Gardiner, promised increased transparency for the distributors. What progress is being made on that?

6.25 pm

**Lord Stevenson of Balmacara (Lab):** My Lords, like everyone else I should like to thank the noble Lord, Lord Holmes, for securing this debate. As the noble Baroness, Lady Heyhoe Flint, said, he embodies the spirit and reality of the lottery and is a living example of what it can do for you. Indeed, his speech was, as always, so good that it is difficult to think of anything to say to follow it up. I was only a little surprised that he did not take a leaf out of another book and do a British bake-off to produce a cake with candles. I am still waiting for that because 21st birthdays would not be the same without a cake.

I congratulate the two maiden speakers today. Both noble Lords were able to pull off the difficult trick of respecting the conventions of the House while also raising some quite trenchant issues which will need to be addressed. They both left us wanting more, which is a wonderful trick to pull off if you can.

When you come to your Lordships' House, you often find that bits of my life come back to confront

you, and today is one of those days. I was a director of the British Film Institute, as has already been mentioned, at the time when the lottery was being conceived and developed. For much of the time I was at the BFI my Minister was the noble Baroness, Lady Bottomley, who spoke so warmly and well about the way she managed the lottery and how it has turned out. I have to say that she and I fell out a number of times. It is difficult to think that that could happen with someone so pleasant and who is such good company, but I wanted the BFI to be a lottery distributor and she did not agree. We disagreed, but actually it worked out well for me because it meant that I could apply for lottery funding, whereas as a distributor I would not have been to do so. I managed to persuade my governors that they should go for a huge amount of lottery funding during my final few years at the BFI, much of which we received.

One of the people who helped us was, of course, my noble friend Lord Puttnam, who not only was involved in developing the way in which funding could flow towards film making, but also was able to provide funds for the IMAX, which now stands on the London South Bank and is a great success. During that time I also went to see the noble Lord, Lord True, in his eyrie at No. 10, although he probably does not remember that. I tried to batter his ears about my problem with my then Minister, but he was very resistant. I thank him for that because again it worked out quite well.

As befits a 21st birthday party, the tone tonight has been celebratory. I think that we should recognise that the lottery had a difficult conception and birth, and those who were involved, including my noble friend Lord Pendry, have given some good examples of why that was. When I was at the BFI we had a problem with one of our board members, Alexander Walker, who was against the whole idea because he did not approve of gambling. Since he was the film critic of the *Evening Standard* at the time, it was quite difficult to persuade him to keep quiet when it was important that the voices speaking up for the lottery should come through.

But the lottery has grown up well and is now a fit and healthy adult. It is remarkable because it is flexible. It has been able to move and change with the ways in which public and political opinions have moved. It has produced a terrific slew of activity. It has transformed many places—the BFI would not be the place it is today without the funding that has come through that route. As my noble friend Lord Puttnam said, it has produced a range of incredibly good buildings and good works without scandal and without any problems, as far as we are aware.

As the noble Lord, Lord Beith, said, it has reached areas that central funds never would have reached, and that is an important part of it. The concept of additionality is important, but it is probably more abused than used in terms of how decisions are taken. What seems to happen is that, by keeping a separate funding structure for the lottery, decisions made by people involved in it are able to come through in a way that they would not have done if it had been done by central government.



The very distinguished speakers in the list have covered the field where the lottery currently funds and have highlighted the difference that lottery funding has made across sport, the arts, heritage, charity and voluntary work. I hope that the Minister will comment on the points that have been made. I will raise one or two myself and I am particularly interested in the point made by the noble Lord, Lord True, about the restriction on funding abroad, which seems quaint now. If he wants a list, I have one, but I want to add to it the Lines of Torres Vedras, which I raised in this House only a year ago. It seems extraordinary that that great achievement of the noble Iron Duke's ancestor has been restored entirely without British contributions. There are many graves and memorials there that would benefit from lottery funding. I put my plug in now.

The noble Baroness, Lady Grey-Thompson, made good points about the way in which sports funding goes, particularly the need to make sure that Paralympic athletes are given a fair crack of the whip at the same time as others are being considered. I should like to add a couple of points that we have made in previous debates about the differential support which appears to be happening in women's sport, of which I think that the Minister is aware, and the problems that the current funding arrangements through the lottery have for team sports, which do not seem to do as well as perhaps they should, particularly compared to individuals.

We should bear in mind the points made by the noble Baroness, Lady Pitkeathley, about the risk to many particularly good small schemes. Probably, when looked at from the heights of Whitehall, they do not add up to very much and look very small, and could be scooped up and used for other purposes. Of course, they matter very much in the realisation of the projects that they do in communities up and down the country. It is very important that those of us who care about these areas fight for projects that the Big Lottery Fund and others are able to support.

I end with three issues that perhaps also could be picked up by the Minister. The first is small but important. In his maiden speech, the noble Duke mentioned that there might be an issue about the costs of distributors. We were warned by a previous Minister to have nothing to do with the way in which distributors organise and run things. I want to steer between those two positions. There probably is an issue that could be looked at. If the Minister is going to do so, could she look at the various remits adopted by the organisations concerned? I just happened to notice, for instance, that Arts Council England's remit is a mission to provide "great art for everyone". Obviously, the lottery side of that would be different but it is still within the overall ambit of the Arts Council England. The Arts Council Northern Ireland says that it is,

"the lead development agency for the arts in Northern Ireland".

There is a world of difference between those two approaches. I wonder whether that is being brought through in the way in which lotteries are being distributed.

Secondly, several noble Lords raised the matter of threats to the National Lottery, which is a nationalised industry in the sense that it is the one organisation which has the ability to raise funds for good causes and is protected by legislation for that reason. But it will come to nothing if the other society lotteries, such

as the Health Lottery and the People's Postcode Lottery, are to be given the same abilities to operate as the National Lottery. It would just mean that the money is not as well spent. If we do not attack the questions of cost base and profit making within those society lotteries, we will all lose as a result.

As the noble Lord, Lord Holmes, said, we need to think quite carefully about the connection now developing between lotteries and gambling. It has been going on for a long time and he was right to say that, but it has reached new heights and there is an issue here which could spoil what we have and we would not want to do that.

My third and final point is about the imbalance of spending by the lottery across the country. Although the lottery is very good at reporting back to the areas where it is spending money to make sure that those who buy tickets know where that money is going, recently there has been a report by Peter Stark, Christopher Gordon and David Powell which shows that spending by Arts Council England has consistently favoured the capital as against the rest of England. The report is available and should be read. The headline figure is that 61% of the spend currently goes to London and only 39% goes to the rest of England, but London has only 15% of the population. Something ain't right there.

Anyway, happy birthday National Lottery. It was said, "It could be you". It has never been me but the combination of a flutter and a feeling that, by playing the lottery or buying a ticket, you are helping good causes is a very powerful way to make sure that money goes in the way that it should to good causes—and long may it last.

6.34 pm

**The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills and Department for Culture, Media and Sport (Baroness Neville-Rolfe) (Con):** My Lords, I also congratulate my noble friend Lord Holmes on securing this debate to celebrate 21 years of the National Lottery and I thank him for his kind words. Both his success on sports and disability bodies and his achievements in the field of sport are really remarkable—the only Briton to win six gold medals, in his case for swimming, at a single Paralympics. Both have benefited enormously over the last 21 years from the National Lottery.

I also congratulate my noble friend the Duke of Wellington, whose DNA is part of our national heritage, and the noble Lord, Lord Beith, on their excellent maiden speeches—a taste of the vim, vigour and wit they will bring to our House.

Like my noble friend Lady Bottomley, I love the Maclise picture of the Battle of Waterloo in the Royal Gallery—and, indeed, the one of Trafalgar—but I always feel faintly embarrassed when I bring French guests here and show them round the Palace.

I have to declare a special interest. I was working with Sir John Major at No. 10 when the National Lottery was launched in 1994. He said on the occasion of the first draw:

"The country will be a lot richer because of the lottery. It is in every sense the people's lottery".

[BARONESS NEVILLE-ROLFE]

It was, as many have said, a brave move and it has been an amazing legacy. I was delighted to hear the tributes from my noble friends Lord True and Lord Cormack, and from my noble friend Lady Bottomley, who has done so much for heritage. She and others have rightly mentioned so many others who have contributed to the lottery over the years. Successes always have many parents, quite rightly.

To try to respond to the philosophical question put by the noble Lord, Lord Giddens, some 70% of all UK adults play the lottery, no doubt in the hope that they might become a multimillionaire. It is regressive and the chances are slim, but it is a free country and people enjoy playing the game and the thrill of even a small win from the annual pot—£3.9 billion last year—of tax-free prize money. They also have the satisfaction of contributing with every ticket purchased to the national Exchequer via lottery duty, which currently amounts to £870 million a year, helping to pay for everything from schools to overseas aid.

They also play in the knowledge that they are thereby giving to good causes. As many have said, since 1994 more than £34 billion has been raised for arts, sports, heritage and charities in the United Kingdom. More than 464,000 projects have been funded—an average of more than 700 in each parliamentary constituency. These projects have together made a huge difference, as we have heard. Maybe this responds to the noble Lord: I am not aware of the kind of research that he inquired about, but I will talk to the Gambling Commission and to Camelot and, if I may, I will write to him after the debate.

In sport, funding from the National Lottery helped deliver the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and played a huge role in our medal success. The lottery funds more than 1,000 elite athletes, including our medal hopefuls in their preparations for Rio. I agree with the noble Baroness, Lady Grey-Thompson, about the importance of funding elite disabled athletes. Indeed, UK Sport is directly investing £355 million into summer Olympic and Paralympic sports during the current Rio cycle—an increase of 7% into Olympic sports and of 45% into Paralympic sports. The lottery has also helped to finance a vast array of community sports facilities.

Last week, I had the pleasure to hear one of our greatest sporting heroes, Sir Chris Hoy, speak at an event celebrating the anniversary of the National Lottery. Sir Chris spoke of how lottery funding enabled British cycling to become the best in the world. Since 2009, Sport England alone has invested more than £52 million of National Lottery money in the sport of cycling, allowing an extraordinary attention to scientific detail and leading to many successive incremental improvements in technique. It has supported facilities such as the Manchester and London velodromes and a National Trust cycling trails project, and there have been hundreds of small grants to help local cycling clubs.

In the House today we have a number of elite sportsmen and sportswomen. It has been good to hear how the lottery has benefited all kinds of sport, from rugby, where I endorse what the noble Lord, Lord Clement-Jones, said, to swimming and cricket. I pay

particular tribute to my noble friend Lady Heyhoe Flint for the tireless work she has done, and continues to do, for women's cricket—and I note what the noble Lord, Lord Stevenson, said about women's sport more generally.

Today is a good day for sport because Tracey Crouch, a great sportswoman herself and Sports Minister, published her strategy, with a foreword by the Prime Minister himself. It provides a way forward for public support for sport in the UK, drawing on the strengths of the lottery. Sport England will now be able to fund projects to promote wider physical activity as well as other sport. I will pass the comments of my noble friend Lady Heyhoe Flint to Sport England.

I pay particular tribute to the noble Baroness, Lady Grey-Thompson, for agreeing to accept the challenge of chairing the independent working group on a new duty of care for participants in sport, which we also announced this morning. I am delighted that the Premier League has agreed to contribute more than £100 million to grass-roots football, which was a concern of the noble Lord, Lord Puttnam. This will greatly strengthen football at community level across the country both in terms of improving facilities and running projects that will have a positive impact on people's lives.

**Lord Puttnam:** Is that an additional £100 million or the £100 million—because the figure I had was that it is putting in only 1.8% of its revenue?

**Baroness Neville-Rolfe:** It is £100 million. I think that it may have been trailed before, which is perhaps what the noble Lord is referring to, but I will clarify the position.

The lottery has provided much needed resources for the arts. It has supported national institutions, many of which have already been mentioned, including the Royal Opera House, and community arts, as well as British film, which the noble Viscount, Lord Falkland, mentioned, with a fitting tribute to the work of the noble Lord, Lord Stevenson, at the BFI. To give ballast to the powerful comments of the noble Lord, Lord Puttnam, lottery-funded films have won 32 Baftas and 14 Oscars.

A few months ago, I toured the lottery-funded Royal College of Music with Madame Peng, the Chinese First Lady, enjoying some wonderful performances and visiting its intriguing museum. This is one of our many world-class institutions, and it was a pleasure to showcase it to international dignitaries.

Turning to heritage, funding through the Heritage Lottery Fund has helped us as a nation to commemorate so many of our important anniversaries, including the First World War centenary. There is a very diverse range of funded heritage projects—that is very much a strength—and that represents the truly national nature of the lottery. As someone with a huge passion for cathedrals and churches, I was delighted to hear from the right reverend Prelate the Bishop of Chester. I agree with him about Chester Cathedral and Beverley Minster. The noble Lord, Lord Cormack, rightly spoke of Lincoln Cathedral. As they said, what is good about the HLF is that it attracts matching funding from businesses and others in local communities, so that the money goes twice as far.

The noble Baroness, Lady Pitkeathley, and the noble Lord, Lord Beith, rightly said that it was important that we have simple, non-bureaucratic arrangements for distribution. In fact, there is some good practice, although others have expressed concerns, I think notably in the sports area. I should add that I had the fortune of visiting the Wedgwood Museum in Stoke-on-Trent, where lottery funding has helped save this important collection.

One of my new responsibilities at DCMS is the National Archives, another recipient of lottery funding, and the noble Lord, Lord Beith, will be glad to hear that I admired the restoration of a large-scale map of Berwick when I visited. At the micro level, Heritage Lottery Funding has helped to create the wonderful Blake mosaics under the arches over the river in Lambeth. It is worth noting that more than 40% of funding from the HLF goes to the voluntary and community sector.

My noble friend Lord True and the noble Lord, Lord Stevenson, spoke passionately about the case for some overseas heritage sites attracting lottery funding support. I have always wanted to visit the Lines of Torres Vedras. At present, the Heritage Lottery Fund funds projects based only in the UK, as I think noble Lords know. However, funding may be available for activities outside the UK, including museum visits or travel to heritage sites. To date, the Heritage Lottery Fund has awarded more than £60 million to First World War projects in the UK. In addition, the Big Lottery Fund's Heroes Return programme has enabled more than 58,000 World War II veterans to return with their families to the places where they served—so there is some activity, though admittedly at the edges.

From parks to village halls, sports clubs and charities, National Lottery funding has been at the heart of many wonderful community initiatives. Only 1% of grants are for £1 million or more. The great majority, some 71%, are for £10,000 or under. Seventy per cent of funding goes outside London and the south-east. Forty per cent of lottery good cause money—£670 million last year—goes to the Big Lottery Fund, our single largest distributor. This funding provides invaluable support to charities, community and voluntary projects up and down the country, such as pensioner groups, play schemes, allotments, community centres, scout huts and, indeed, the Clapham bandstand.

My noble friend the Duke of Wellington dared to offer an early comment on the machinery of government. He will be interested to know that the Big Lottery Fund was once within DCMS but that the sponsorship is now split with the Cabinet Office. I will certainly factor in his views in our ongoing consideration. I will also ask the distributors to see whether their administrative costs could be further reduced. These are currently set at a maximum of 5% for grant processing costs and 8% for administration costs. I note what he said about remuneration levels for distributor board members. Lottery money should, as far as possible, go to good causes.

In answer to the question from the noble Baroness, Lady Pitkeathley, as set out in the Chancellor of the Exchequer's Autumn Statement, there are no plans to reduce the Big Lottery Fund's allocation. The fund will continue to receive 40% of National Lottery good

cause money; sport, arts and heritage will continue to receive 20%. The noble Lord, Lord Lea of Crondall, asked about regional distribution. I have already said that our most recent figures show that 70% of good cause funding in England has been outside London and the south-east since the lottery began—I am happy to share more detailed figures with him and other noble Lords after the debate—though of course many national charities and bodies have their head offices in London but use lottery money outside, so that complicates the picture.

To pick up on a point made by the noble Lord, Lord Beith, since 1995 more than £331 million of lottery money has been spent on heritage projects in the north-east. Distributors run specific programmes, such as the recent Doncaster activity pilot, to encourage applications from areas that currently receive lower levels of funding.

My noble friend Lord Holmes and the noble Lords, Lord Addington, Lord Pendry and Lord Stevenson, all expressed concern about competition for the National Lottery from society lotteries, particularly so-called umbrella brands such as the Health Lottery and People's Postcode Lottery. In March, as many noble Lords will know, the Culture, Media and Sport Select Committee, then under a very distinguished chairman, published its report on society lotteries, which covered many issues raised by noble Lords today, including caps on prizes and expenses, betting on lotteries and requiring large society lotteries to pay tax in the same way as the National Lottery. The Government are currently taking expert advice from the Gambling Commission on all those issues.

The noble Lord, Lord Clement-Jones, asked about additionality. The Government are committed to that principle. Safeguards are in place, including the requirement for distributors to say in their annual report and accounts how the additionality principle has been applied. I am also a fan of transparency, which he mentioned.

Last month, Ed Vaizey—my ministerial colleague at the DCMS—unveiled a commemorative image celebrating 21 years of the National Lottery at the Lowry in Manchester, itself another great National Lottery-funded institution. The image has recently finished a tour of other National Lottery-funded venues, and shows over 50 projects, celebrating the great breadth and diversity of lottery funding support across the arts, heritage, sport, charity and voluntary sectors.

In celebrating 21 years of the National Lottery, we are celebrating not only our Olympians—some are here today—and Oscar winners; we also celebrate the achievements of those in our communities who, with support from the National Lottery, have volunteered their time to make our country a better place—people such as Edna Smith from Leicester, who has been awarded a special achievement award for her work with the charity Home-Start, which provides support to parents experiencing difficulties.

The lottery is an established and popular British institution, for all the reasons we have discussed. Unlike the English State Lottery, closed down in 1826, it has become part of the fabric of our national life. Criticisms could be made but let us remember that, unlike many



[BARONESS NEVILLE-ROLFE]  
things involving government, it is entirely voluntary. We should recognise the pleasure that it gives in a sympathetic and positive spirit. I thank my noble friend for giving us the opportunity to set all this on the record today.

6.51 pm

**Lord Holmes of Richmond:** My Lords, it has been an excellent debate. I thank all noble Lords for their wit, wisdom and erudition, not least the two marvellous maiden speakers, the noble Lord, Lord Beith, and my noble friend the Duke of Wellington. I have one piece of advice for my noble friend the Minister: when she is

showing French visitors around the Royal Gallery and is in front of that painting, perhaps she could say, sotto voce, "Quel dommage".

The National Lottery is a national treasure. What a gift it is from Sir John Major, but we have to be constantly alert to the threat from those who would plunder and purloin that treasure. It has delivered across art, culture, sport, heritage and charities for 21 years. It should carry on flying high for decades to come if we keep that focus and attention, and ensure that we keep it in people's heads and people's hearts.

*Motion agreed.*

*House adjourned at 6.53 pm.*



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