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Monday  
14 October 2019

PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
(HANSARD)

# HOUSE OF LORDS

## OFFICIAL REPORT

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The first time a Member speaks to a new piece of parliamentary business, the following abbreviations are used to show their party affiliation:

<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Party/Group</b>
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
Lab Co-op	Labour and Co-operative Party
LD	Liberal Democrat
LD Ind	Liberal Democrat Independent
Non-afl	Non-affiliated
PC	Plaid Cymru
UKIP	UK Independence Party
UUP	Ulster Unionist Party

No party affiliation is given for Members serving the House in a formal capacity, the Lords spiritual, Members on leave of absence or Members who are otherwise disqualified from sitting in the House.

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# HER MAJESTY'S GOVERNMENT

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EQUALITIES—The Rt. Hon. Elizabeth Truss, MP  
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MINISTER FOR HOUSING—The Rt. Hon. Esther McVey, MP  
MINISTER FOR SECURITY AND DEPUTY FOR EU EXIT AND NO DEAL PREPARATION—The Rt. Hon. Brandon Lewis, MP  
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The Rt. Hon. Chris Skidmore, MP (Minister for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation) §

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 Michelle Donelan, MP (Minister for Children and Families) (maternity cover) §  
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Andrew Stephenson, MP §

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Colin Clark, MP §

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Leo Docherty, MP

James Morris, MP

Tom Pursglove, MP

Nigel Huddleston, MP

Marcus Jones, MP

Iain Stewart, MP

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Mims Davies, MP (Minister for Employment)

Guy Opperman, MP (Minister for Pensions and Financial Inclusion)

Baroness Stedman-Scott, OBE, DL (Minister for Work and Pensions)

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MASTER OF THE HORSE—Lord De Mauley

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BARONESSES IN WAITING—

Baroness Berridge

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist

Baroness Chisholm of Owlpen

LORD IN WAITING—Lord Bethell

§ *Members of the Government listed under more than one department*

# HOUSE OF LORDS

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THE  
PARLIAMETARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

IN THE SECOND SESSION OF THE FIFTY-SEVENTH PARLIAMENT OF THE  
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND  
COMMENCING ON THE THIRTEENTH DAY OF JUNE IN THE  
SIXTY-SIXTH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

FIFTH SERIES

VOLUME DCCC

FIRST VOLUME OF SESSION 2019-20

House of Lords

Monday 14 October 2019

Queen's Speech

11.30 am

*The Queen, seated on the Throne and attended by Her Officers of State, commanded that the Lady Usher of the Black Rod should let the Commons know that it was Her Majesty's pleasure that they attend Her immediately in this House.*

*When they had come with their Speaker, Her Majesty was pleased to speak as follows:*

“My Lords and Members of the House of Commons, my Government's priority has always been to secure the United Kingdom's departure from the European Union on 31 October. My Government intends to work towards a new partnership with the European Union, based on free trade and friendly co-operation.

My Ministers will work to implement new regimes for fisheries, agriculture and trade, seizing the opportunities that arise from leaving the European Union. An immigration Bill, ending free movement, will lay the foundation for a fair, modern and global immigration system. My Government remains committed to ensuring that resident European citizens, who have built their lives in, and contributed so much to, the United Kingdom, have the right to remain. The Bill will include measures that reinforce this commitment. Steps will be taken to provide certainty, stability and new opportunities for the financial services and legal sectors.

My Government's new economic plan will be underpinned by a responsible fiscal strategy, investing in economic growth while maintaining the sustainability of the public finances.

Measures will be brought forward to support and strengthen the National Health Service, its workforce and resources, enabling it to deliver the highest quality

care. New laws will be taken forward to help implement the National Health Service's *Long Term Plan* in England, and to establish an independent body to investigate serious healthcare incidents.

My Government will bring forward proposals to reform adult social care in England to ensure dignity in old age. My Ministers will continue work to reform the Mental Health Act to improve respect for, and care of, those receiving treatment.

My Government is committed to addressing violent crime, and to strengthening public confidence in the criminal justice system. New sentencing laws will see that the most serious offenders spend longer in custody to reflect better the severity of their crimes. Measures will be introduced to improve the justice system's response to foreign national offenders. My Government will work to improve safety and security in prisons and to strengthen the rehabilitation of offenders. Proposals will be brought forward to ensure that victims receive the support they need and the justice they deserve. Laws will be introduced to ensure that the parole system recognises the pain to victims and their families caused by offenders refusing to disclose information relating to their crimes.

A new duty will be placed on public sector bodies, ensuring they work together to address serious violence. Police officers will be provided with the protections they need to keep the population safe. They will also be awarded the power to arrest individuals who are wanted by trusted international partners.

My Government will bring forward measures to protect individuals, families and their homes. Legislation will transform the approach of the justice system and other agencies to victims of domestic abuse, and minimise the impact of divorce, particularly on children. My Ministers will continue to develop proposals to improve internet safety, and will bring forward laws to implement new building safety standards.

My Ministers will ensure that all young people have access to an excellent education, unlocking their full potential and preparing them for the world of work.

My Government will take steps to make work fairer, introducing measures that will support those working hard. To help people plan for the future, measures will be brought forward to provide simpler oversight of pensions savings. To protect people's savings for later life, new laws will provide greater powers to tackle irresponsible management of private pension schemes.

To ensure that the benefits of a prospering economy reach every corner of the United Kingdom, my Ministers will bring forward a National Infrastructure Strategy. This will set out a long-term vision to improve the nation's digital, transport and energy infrastructure. New legislation will help accelerate the delivery of fast, reliable and secure broadband networks to millions of homes. An aviation Bill will provide for the effective and efficient management of the United Kingdom's airspace. Proposals on railway reform will be brought forward.

A White Paper will be published to set out my Government's ambitions for unleashing regional potential in England, and to enable decisions that affect local people to be made at a local level.

My Government is committed to establishing the United Kingdom as a world leader in scientific capability and space technology. Increased investment in science will be complemented by the development of a new funding agency, a more open visa system, and an ambitious national space strategy.

My Ministers remain committed to protecting and improving the environment for future generations. For the first time, environmental principles will be enshrined in law. Measures will be introduced to improve air and water quality, tackle plastic pollution and restore habitats so plants and wildlife can thrive. Legislation will also create new legally binding environmental improvement targets. A new, world-leading independent regulator will be established in statute to scrutinise environmental policy and law, investigate complaints and take enforcement action.

Proposals will also be brought forward to promote and protect the welfare of animals, including banning imports from trophy hunting.

The integrity and prosperity of the union that binds the four nations of the United Kingdom is of the utmost importance to my Government. My Ministers will bring forward measures to support citizens across all the nations of the United Kingdom.

My Government remains committed to working with all parties in Northern Ireland to support the return of devolved government and to address the legacy of the past.

My Government will take steps to protect the integrity of democracy and the electoral system in the United Kingdom.

My Government will continue to invest in our gallant Armed Forces. My Ministers will honour *The Armed Forces Covenant* and the NATO commitment to spend at least 2% of national income on defence.

As the United Kingdom leaves the European Union, my Government will ensure that it continues to play a leading role in global affairs, defending its interests and promoting its values.

My Government will be at the forefront of efforts to solve the most complex international security issues. It will champion global free trade and work alongside international partners to solve the most pressing global challenges. It will prioritise tackling climate change and ensuring that all girls have access to 12 years of quality education.

Members of the House of Commons, estimates for the public services will be laid before you.

My Lords and Members of the House of Commons, other measures will be laid before you.

I pray that the blessing of Almighty God may rest upon your counsels".

11.50 am

*The House adjourned during pleasure.*

3.30 pm

*Prayers—read by the Lord Bishop of Coventry.*

## Select Vestries Bill

*First Reading*

3.37 pm

*The Bill was read a first time pro forma.*

## Queen's Speech

*Debate (1st Day)*

3.38 pm

**The Lord Speaker (Lord Fowler):** My Lords, I have to acquaint the House that Her Majesty was pleased this morning to make a most gracious Speech from the Throne to both Houses of Parliament assembled in the House of Lords. Copies of the gracious Speech are available in the Printed Paper Office.

I have, for the convenience of the House, arranged for the terms of the gracious Speech to be published in the *Official Report*.

### *Motion for an Humble Address*

*Moved by Baroness Anelay of St Johns*

That an humble Address be presented to Her Majesty as follows:

"Most Gracious Sovereign—We, Your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Lords Spiritual and Temporal in Parliament assembled, beg leave to thank Your Majesty for the most gracious Speech which Your Majesty has addressed to both Houses of Parliament".

3.38 pm

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns (Con):** My Lords, it is my privilege, on behalf of all noble Lords, to thank Her Majesty for honouring our House with her presence to deliver the gracious Speech from the Throne. I am, as ever, grateful for all that she does for our nation and our Commonwealth of nations. Her Majesty's exemplary attention to duty is her greatest gift to us all. It was also a great pleasure to have with us today Their Royal Highnesses the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall.

I thank my noble friends on the Front Bench—the Leader of the House and the Chief Whip—for entrusting me with this duty. All Leaders of the House have a tough job, but the challenges since the State Opening in June 2017 have been particularly testing, and my noble friend the Lord Privy Seal has demonstrated her mettle in dealing with them. My noble friend the Chief Whip and Captain of the Honourable Corps of Gentlemen-at-Arms is fairly new to his post, but he has held ministerial office for the past five years, both in the Whips' Office and the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport. He has consistently demonstrated his respect for this House and its Members.

The first time I attended the State Opening of Parliament was in October 1996, a couple of weeks before I took my seat. I was a guest of my dear and noble friend Lady Secombe, who is in her place today. As I watched the afternoon debate, and listened to Lord Gray of Contin move the Motion for an humble Address, it never crossed my mind that, one day, I might be entrusted with that privilege. I sat in the Gallery, just above the Clock which measures the minutes, and now even the seconds, of our speeches. If at times my eyes stray heavenwards during a debate, it might—just might—be not that I am showing any impatience at the length of the speeches of others but that I am simply recalling that moment, all those years ago, and the swift passage of time.

The past month has witnessed extremely challenging times. The challenge for me now is to be mindful of the guidance in the *Companion to the Standing Orders* that it is customary for my speech to be uncontroversial. In the non-Prorogation—

**Noble Lords:** Oh!

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** In the non-Prorogation, I was part of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association's UK delegation to attend the Commonwealth parliamentarians conference in Uganda. I flew overnight to Entebbe to join the other delegates from this House—the noble Lords, Lord Foulkes of Cumnock and Lord Purvis of Tweed—and delegates from the House of Commons. I planned to stay for six days to take part in the women's conference and the main conference. I was there six hours before flying back, overnight, to the UK. What had happened? The clue is in the date: it was Tuesday 24 September.

As soon as I arrived at the conference hotel by Lake Victoria, I registered as a delegate and sat patiently in a very large, busy room, waiting for my security pass to be issued. My chair faced a vast TV screen which was broadcasting the BBC's live feed of the noble and learned Baroness, Lady Hale, delivering the judgment of the Supreme Court—with the sound turned off.

**Noble Lords:** Oh!

**Baroness Anelay of St Johns:** Not by me—the sound was turned off and there were no subtitles. It was a most bizarre experience. Suffice to say, as a consequence of the court's decision, all three of us from this House decided we should return overnight to join the sitting of the House the next day, which we did. All but two

of the MPs followed the “requests” of their Whips to return ASAP, and the two MPs who stayed to hold the fort at the conference were paired—at least, I hope they were.

I congratulate the UK branch of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association and thank it for the work it does so admirably to support and strengthen parliamentary democracy throughout the Commonwealth; the head of which is, of course, Her Majesty. The UK's role in promoting democracy and human rights, and in defending the rules-based international system, remains vital, not only within the Commonwealth but around the world. That is especially true at a time when we witness the suffering of civilians as they are killed, injured or driven from their homes in conflicts where there is little or no regard for international humanitarian law—places such as Syria and Yemen today. Diplomacy must be engaged steadfastly to resolve such disputes and bring an end to the misery suffered by the casualties of conflict. The UK has a vital part to play in that diplomatic work.

Whatever the pressures may be on our internal politics, it is crucial that the UK continues and strengthens its diplomatic work around the world. We can be proud of the expertise of Her Majesty's ambassadors and high commissioners in their promoting of our values, which are inherent within the rules-based international system. They deserve our wholehearted support. I was therefore pleased to see that the gracious Speech stated that as we leave the EU the Government will continue to ensure that the UK continues to play a leading role in global affairs and promote its values. That commitment comes at the very end of the gracious Speech.

The Speech begins by making it clear that the Government's priority has always been to secure the United Kingdom's departure from the EU at the end of this month. Parliament continues to have the opportunity to consider the implications of this and of the Government's wider proposals in the gracious Speech during our debates over the forthcoming week.

The gracious Speech sets out the broad swathe of the Government's manifestly ambitious plans, which will have an impact on every department of government. For example, the proposals will: strengthen public services such as our National Health Service, with a welcome reference to mental health; reform adult social care; ensure that all young people have access to an excellent education; improve infrastructure and connectivity across the country; implement new regimes for fisheries, agriculture and trade; reform the immigration system; tackle crime while also enhancing the integrity of the criminal justice system; protect our natural environment for the long term; and focus on tackling climate change in our work alongside our international partners. To deliver those proposals, a new economic plan will be underpinned by a responsible fiscal strategy, investing in economic growth while maintaining the sustainability of the public finances. I wish my noble friend the Chief Whip—and he is a friend—every success in his task in securing enough time for the House to carry out its usual line-by-line scrutiny.



[BARONESS ANELAY OF ST JOHNS]

We will shortly hear from my noble friend Lord Dobbs, who will second this Motion. I have read many of his books over the years and I very much look forward to hearing from him today. I am always encouraged by the resilience of his fictional hero, Harry Jones. Whatever disasters fate or fist throws at him, he seems impervious to all and wins the day, just like my noble friend. At home, our bookshelves groan with the weight of books published by noble Lords of all parties and none—I can see them here today—and indeed those of our much-respected Lord Speaker.

I have three of the Lord Speaker's books. I am currently rereading *AIDS: Don't Die of Prejudice*. It is such an impressive investigative book. However, I am not planning to reread any time soon my copy of another of his books, entitled *A Political Suicide*. But I hope that my noble friends on the Front Bench would like to borrow a copy of another of his books that I have to hand—it is upstairs if they want it. It is called *Ministers Decide*. They will find it useful for many years to come. In the meantime, I beg to move the Motion for an humble Address to Her Majesty.

3.49 pm

**Lord Dobbs (Con):** My Lords, I second my noble friend's Motion for an humble Address. I understand that this honour—and it is indeed an honour—is often reserved for a younger and up-and-coming Peer.

**Noble Lords:** Oh!

**Lord Dobbs:** Yes, I am a little bewildered too. I endorse the fine words of my noble friend thanking Her Majesty for the great honour she did us here today, despite the attempts of protestors to close down Parliament. I had thought that that was Boris's idea. I also thank our doorkeepers, the police, our security staff, our caterers, our cleaners and everyone who under Black Rod's guidance has worked so hard to make this occasion possible. Their job is not easy. It sometimes carries significant risks. They should be proud of what they have achieved today.

I also want to thank my noble friend Lady Anelay for her fine words. What a pleasure it is to follow her. However, I have a confession to make: that has not always been the case. She was my first Chief Whip and, if I may say so, magnificent. She dominated the seas like a great battle cruiser, loading three or four Back-Benchers into the breech and aiming us at the enemy—I am sorry: the Opposition. One of my first debates in this House was on the Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Bill. Noble Lords may remember it. Our Liberal Democrat colleagues in coalition demanded a referendum—a binding referendum, no less, but life moves on. I was young and naive. I listened to an amendment being put by my noble friend Lord Forsyth of Drumlean, and I was impressed by his arguments. I went out of the Chamber to tell my Whip that I was having difficulties, and she, very sensibly, advised me to go and have a cup of tea. But I was confused, and at this point I must have lost my presence of mind because I spurned the tea, returned to the Chamber, listened to more of the debate and

voted for the amendment and against my Government. That was perhaps nothing more than a youthful indiscretion, except that the Government lost that crucial Division—by one vote. I scarcely need to tell noble Lords the direction in which the guns of my noble friend were then pointed, so it is a special delight to be able to follow her today.

I am much looking forward to the response by the noble Baroness, Lady Smith of Basildon. Some say she is a remarkable Leader of the Opposition, and I wholeheartedly agree. She also once died in my arms. It was during one of the pre-Christmas theatrical jollies staged every year by the noble Baroness, Lady Andrews. They are so much fun. I played the romantic lead, and the noble Baroness played the impressionable maiden. I fear we were both tragically miscast. I persuaded her of my honest intentions, and with her dying breath she fell into my arms. Isn't fiction wonderful? However, I fear political fiction may have run its course. How can it possibly keep up?

In order to be entirely cross-party, I should mention that while the noble Baroness, Lady Smith, died in my arms, there was a time when I almost died in the arms of the noble Lord, Lord Sharkey, who I think is lingering somewhere if he is not in his place. He and I have been colleagues and friends for many years. We joined this House together. Some years ago, we were flying back in a private plane from Germany. It had been a successful business trip, and he opened a bottle of champagne—at 10,000 feet in an unpressurised cabin. The effect was truly dramatic, but I do not blame him for that near-death experience; I simply put it down as another lesson in the unintended consequences of his party's policies.

This day has been wonderful. This gingerbread palace of ours was filled with colour and excitement this morning. I am struggling to imagine quite such exhilarating times in the QEII conference centre. We were treated to a gracious Speech that covered such a breadth of ground that some idle cynics might suspect there is an election around the corner. However, after Brexit, we will have many things to catch up on, whoever is in government. I dream of the days when we are beyond Brexit.

There has always been a bit of Hogarth about our politics. We fight for our beliefs with passion, and no one can doubt on which side of the Brexit lawn I have parked my lawnmower. However, if we are to bind the wounds and eventually to come to some form of reconciliation, we must learn once again the art of listening and try to understand the passions of those who oppose us. We cannot go on as we are, ripping up the roots of our democracy: tolerance, self-restraint and that sense of responsibility to others, without which our individual rights are meaningless.

In recent days we have seen a so-called performer on stage waving the severed head of the Prime Minister while shouting obscenities. We have heard remainers describing Brexiteers as Nazis, and leavers talking of stuffing the Krauts. No, no, no, my Lords. I hope that it is not controversial to suggest that we have, on all sides perhaps, gone too far. We used to have a voice that rang around the world. When President Xi of China came to this Parliament a few years ago, I

presented him with one of my books, *House of Cards*. It is quite a hit in China, I am told—they think it is a documentary. I wrote a dedication for him and this is what it said:

“Where we agree, let us rejoice. Where we disagree, let us discuss. And where we cannot agree, let us do so as friends”.

Perhaps that is naive but I hope not. Today, who would look at our system and our recent conduct and hold it up as an example to follow? Report after report from this House has emphasised the importance of deploying our soft power in the challenges that lie ahead. However, if we are to offer lessons to others, we must relearn those lessons ourselves. Therefore, I cling to those words and the hope that, where we cannot agree, we do so as friends.

As my noble friend pointed out—so eloquently that there is no need for me to repeat it all—optimism explodes from every line of this gracious Speech rather like the champagne of the noble Lord, Lord Sharkey. There is enough clean air for the most jaded of souls, and I am delighted at its focus on tomorrow and particularly the young. By that, I do not mean up-and-coming young Peers like me but those whose first political memories might have been the bombing of the Twin Towers, after which came war upon war in Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya and Syria. Then we threw at them the mother and father of financial crises and drowned them in debt. Now, they look aghast as we do war among ourselves. Somehow, we have turned politics into a game that seems to have no rules and no referee. Can we not do better than that? We must do better than that.

However, I am an optimist—I have to be. I have four kids and am a grandfather and a Tory Back-Bencher, all roles for which survival requires endless doses of optimism. There will be life after Brexit, new mountains to climb and, yes, risks to take to reach those summits, but once we are there the view can be magnificent. There is no view more glorious or exhilarating from any summit in the world than that across the open highways, pleasant pastures and green mountains of our United Kingdom. Like my noble friend, I raise my eyes to heaven in the hope that I have not died in your Lordships' arms. I humbly beg to second the Motion.

#### *Motion to Adjourn*

Moved by **Baroness Smith of Basildon**

That this debate be adjourned until tomorrow.

4 pm

**Baroness Smith of Basildon (Lab):** My Lords, this is my third Queen's Speech debate as Leader of the Opposition, although it has been a while since the last one. After three Queen's Speeches, three debates and three different Prime Ministers, the dire state of national governance means that I cannot rule out taking part in a fourth or even fifth debate in the coming months. It could be a bit like the proverbial No. 9 bus: you wait for ages and then three come along at once. On recent form, who knows how many Prime Ministers we could see in that time? It is therefore surprising that the first Bill of this Session and in the Queen's Speech is not the Fixed-term Parliaments (Repeal) Bill.

As always, our proceedings started this afternoon with two memorable and quite remarkable speeches. The noble Baroness, Lady Anelay, has always enjoyed the respect of this House, both as a formidable and fearsome—as we heard—Chief Whip, and as a softer, highly regarded Foreign Office Minister. That softer side was evident in a friendship that she established at the Foreign Office with Palmerston, otherwise known on Twitter as “DiploMog”, the Foreign Office cat. Such was the affection between them that on the day that the noble Baroness left the Government, from DExEU, Palmerston suddenly decided that he would leave the comfort of the Foreign Office; he unexpectedly crossed the road and walked purposefully across Whitehall just to bid her farewell.

On her introduction to your Lordships' House in 1996, the noble Baroness went through the same process as us all in choosing her title; but hers turned out to be slightly more expensive. After being told that she could not have Woking, she selected “Baroness Anelay of St John's”, after the village, with an apostrophe. Garter King of Arms informed her that that was fine, but when he checked historic and ancient documents residing in the village, he decided that it should not have an apostrophe—so all the road signs had to be changed.

Few could match the theatrical style of the noble Lord, Lord Dobbs, and the flourish of his speech. I hope that, in future, we will see him in cameo roles as his books are filmed. Perhaps he could be the Alfred Hitchcock or Colin Dexter of the House of Lords. The noble Lord has an enviable reputation as both a writer and a politician, having worked at the highest levels of Conservative Administrations for many years. I can perhaps help him with his worries about being seen as a young, up-and-coming politician. He may recall that he was described by one national newspaper as, “Westminster's baby-faced hitman”.

While the memory of the noble Lord, Lord Dobbs, is almost correct, I have to say in my defence that I feel that I swooned rather than died in his arms—and we were play-acting. But he told me some time ago, as we toured the bowels of the building, that he was writing a new book, based once again on the political machinations of Westminster. Noble Lords will understand my nervousness after he promised—or, perhaps, threatened—that I would be a character in such a future book. Ever since then, I have treated him with the utmost respect and laughed at all his jokes; I hope he has seen sufficient amusement from me today. The book has not appeared yet, but as he said, he is probably hampered by the fact that fiction can never be as bizarre as reality. His speech today was an impressive response. Perhaps he will say, “You may think that, but I couldn't possibly comment”.

This was an unusual Queen's Speech. We were expecting great things, given that Prime Minister Johnson tried, and failed, to have an unprecedented five weeks' preparation rather than the usual five days. Normally, a Queen's Speech comes after an election as an opportunity for the Prime Minister to put their mark on the forthcoming programme of government for at least the next year. However, with Mr Johnson clearly desperate for another election, this Queen's Speech could be

[BARONESS SMITH OF BASILDON]

little more than the market testing of his manifesto for the next election, rather than a serious programme for the next Session.

Taking the programme at face value, we welcome legislation aimed at tackling domestic abuse, improving mental health, protecting children and young people from online harm, and dealing with the poor management of private pension schemes. Some of these important issues were already being considered by the previous Prime Minister and indeed in previous Queen's Speeches. Others have been championed for some time by colleagues from across this House, including many from these Benches. However, a number of key issues are missing. Where is the promised veterans Bill? There is nothing on housing and there is more about being seen to be tough on crime than genuinely tackling the causes. We also have Brexit-related Bills on agriculture, fisheries, immigration and trade, all of which had already begun their legislative process but were subsequently abandoned.

The Government promise legislation to implement new building safety standards. One of the casualties of cuts to local government funding has been the enforcement of building regulations. They are designed to ensure high standards, including on safety and the environment. Yet with fewer inspectors on the ground and government changes to planning laws, it is easier now for the unscrupulous or the ignorant to flout the law. While we welcome improving and monitoring standards, the Government have to understand that they have already hollowed out the current system. In addressing this, we want to ensure that any new regime is necessary, has real teeth and is not just warm words and another layer of bureaucracy.

We also have serious concerns about the proposed electoral integrity Bill. Clearly, we should do whatever is necessary to stamp out any abuse of the system, but we must also take care that the scale of changes is proportionate to the problem and does not have unintended consequences. I am not convinced that introducing photo ID checks meets that test, so we will need to scrutinise the detail. One of our priorities for electoral integrity would be to ensure that those who have the greatest stake in the future—16 and 17 year-olds—also have the right to vote.

Yet again, we have a commitment to outer space, perhaps a ruse of the Prime Minister to make another hackneyed joke about putting Opposition MPs into orbit. It does sound a bit pie in the sky to talk about outer space when the Government have delayed HS2, failed to make a decision on airport capacity, and cannot get their act together on lorry parks in Kent. It sometimes feels as if the Government live in a parallel universe.

I suppose we should not be surprised that Mr Johnson chose not to repeat David Cameron's commitment, emphasised in the 2016 Queen's Speech, confirming the sovereignty of Parliament and the primacy of the House of Commons. At the time, we felt it was an unnecessary reminder, aimed at your Lordships' House, but as the Brexit crisis has unfolded, it is the current Prime Minister who has been forced to recognise the sovereignty of Parliament and Commons primacy.

In the last Session, your Lordships' House dealt with around four dozen Bills and over 2,000 SIs. Many amendments and changes were put forward, with a fair number accepted by the Government or, if voted on and sent to the Commons, agreed in full or in part. When the Commons disagreed with our amendments, we respected its primacy. Recognising our constitutional role, particularly in such challenging political times, we rightly also considered and passed two hugely significant Bills agreed by MPs without government support. In our parliamentary democracy, it would have been completely wrong for this House to have rejected legislation that commanded the support of MPs, just because the Government did not like it. The Government were also right not to use this House, as some urged, to try to wreck that legislation.

We will continue to undertake our responsibilities and obligations regarding legislation with due diligence. It is therefore extraordinary that a member of the current Cabinet, having previously praised us for our maturity, wisdom, learnedness and experience, has now called for the abolition of your Lordships' House. Indeed, he is previously on record praising the great benefit that comes from our independence. But it has to be said, that was before we disagreed with Mr Jacob Rees-Mogg. That probably explains his change of opinion more than his discovering an important point of constitutional principle.

There can be no doubt that we are living through extraordinary times. None of us can predict the future; at the moment we cannot even predict what will happen over the next week, with Parliament having an emergency and exceptional sitting on Saturday. It is not just because of the Brexit negotiations, unpredictable as they are, but, even more seriously, a consequence of being at a pivotal and troublesome moment in our nation's history. Few that took part in the 2016 referendum, in good faith, could have imagined that we would be in such an uncertain position today, 1,207 days later. The 2017 Queen's Speech talked about providing certainty and making a success of Brexit. Apparently, it was then a priority to build a more united country, yet we are more uncertain and divided than ever. Having been told so often that Brexit would be easy—that, freed from the so-called shackles of the EU, we would emerge phoenix-like, stronger and better than ever—many dared to believe those promises.

It is clear now that those promises were based on little more than a wing and a prayer. The rhetoric, false promises and hopeful statements, ministerial and otherwise, that accompanied the campaign and the years since have debased our democracy and our values. As competing pressures inevitably meant that a Brexit deal was tougher to nail down, the blame game began, with parliamentarians, lawyers and others labelled "traitors" and even "enemies of the people" for daring to fulfil their constitutional role. The added potency of terms such as "die in a ditch" and "surrender Bill" appear to be part of a clear sabre-rattling attempt to create hostility and conflict between the electorate and MPs.

I will pause while the noble Baroness, Lady Goldie, gets her phone. She is not guilty. I thought it was Boris Johnson making a quick call to check what I was saying.



In recent years we have seen the rhetoric reach new levels of toxicity in an increasingly desperate attempt to lay responsibility at the door of others. Each time the negotiations get difficult, there is a blame game to point the finger at anyone but the Prime Minister. But at what cost? Whatever the outcome of the Brexit debacle, what comes next will seal the future and values of our country for at least a generation.

So where do we go from here? Reflecting on the debate since 2016, it feels as though the values that have underpinned British Governments since 1945, including Conservative-led ones, have been jettisoned. I am talking not about specific policies, but about the conventional wisdom that it is the duty and responsibility of government in its widest sense to seek to unite rather than divide and to act for the whole nation rather than any party or narrow interest. While the upping of that at times dangerous rhetoric is designed to win votes, the public are more dispirited and have a greater sense of disappointment, disengagement and disillusionment about Parliament and politics than ever. They see the escalating rows over Brexit with no unifying conclusion, which ensures that the other concerns and issues that affect their everyday lives fall by the wayside. The current tone of public discourse and debate means that too many of our citizens, young and old, have so little confidence and optimism that they either lose hope or would rather be cold and wet protesting outside than ever think that they could be in here making the decisions to bring about the change that they seek.

I believe, and I think this House believes, in the power of government for good—in its power to effect change and its duty to provide hope and optimism for the future. The bungling of Brexit has sapped the energy, ambition, intellect, creativity and finances of our country. The brightest and the best could have been directed towards the greatest challenges of our generation. Instead, they have been pulled one way and then another in trying to cope with Brexit. Where is that strategic vision and national collective ambition?

Today, for all the new technology that wallpaper our everyday lives, at times it can feel as though we are in an era of make do and mend. Any Government with a sense of purpose would at least try to define, with honesty, a route to some sunny upland or other, which Mr Johnson's regime is sadly lacking. So it is little wonder that today we see so little of that hope and optimism, referred to by the noble Lord, Lord Dobbs, that is the backbone of any modern state. Our young people have to believe that there is a future with a personal, professional and selfless opportunity to be able to work; to be able to own or rent a secure and affordable home; to be able to trust in a health and care system for them and their families; and to be able to believe that the environment will be cleaner and better for their children, and that they will be safe and secure. Those are modest desires, which a good state should enable, if not trying to create a utopian view of the good society, then at least aspiring to be a better one.

Given that this Queen's Speech is a pitch to the electorate, can it deliver that optimism to bring about a different, better future? Robert Kennedy was inspirational. Quoting George Bernard Shaw, he said:

"Some men see things as they are and say, why; I dream things that never were and say, why not".

Those words are so apt. It is not just about government. We need to encourage others to share that dream and ask, "Why not?" It may sound a little whimsical, but that is what successive and successful Governments have done when making the case for office, rather than having base arguments about the left and right of politics. They have been able to engage others to share that optimism, share that vision and have confidence that the Government will enable the delivery of that vision.

It is really hard to define what generates public optimism, but there are pivotal points in our recent history to which we can look for guidance. A war-weary public, while grateful to and admiring of Churchill, was enthused by the hope of a new Britain under Clement Attlee. The white heat of technology promised by Harold Wilson engaged those who sought a more forward-looking, socially liberal society. Margaret Thatcher gauged the temperature of Britain during the industrial strife of the 1970s and, despite my strong disagreements with much of her programme, initially had a vision and successfully convinced others to share it. Tony Blair's "Britain deserves better" resonated with young and old alike, and things did indeed get better.

There is no quick way of turning this dire state of affairs around, but it is incumbent on us all to find a way forward. It is not enough to have a manifesto, or even a Queen's Speech, with promise. It has to be more about genuinely making a difference on the issues that matter to us citizens, not about issues that matter to Westminster. The relationship between the public and the institutions of state and politics has been strained to the limit. An attempt to win votes by stretching it just a little further is doomed to a failure greater than losing an election. That is the big responsibility for government today. Who knows? In seeking to rebuild that trust, we may help not only to heal divisions, but in time to bring about the new optimism that we need, followed by a renewed commitment in our politics to deliver the legislation and honour that promise.

I beg to move that the debate be adjourned until tomorrow.

4.18 pm

**Lord Newby (LD):** My Lords, it is a great pleasure to begin by congratulating the mover and seconder of the humble Address. The noble Baroness, Lady Anelay, made a typically thoughtful and polished speech. I worked closely and happily with the noble Baroness during the coalition, when she was Chief Whip and I was her deputy. She was renowned for always being in control of events, and for her even temper. I know of only one case when each of these very considerable attributes was found wanting.

The first state visit in which she participated in her role of Captain of the Gentlemen-at-Arms—that of the Emir of Qatar—began at Windsor. The noble Baroness, and my noble friend Lord Shutt, as Captain of the Yeomen of the Guard, were in full regalia for the welcome procession, which they viewed from under a grand porch in the castle's courtyard. As the mounted

[LORD NEWBY]

cavalry disappeared through another archway, they realised that they were alone. They did not know how to get to the dining room, where they were due to have their lunch. Two staircases beckoned: they took the first. As they reached the landing at the top, to their consternation an elderly lady on the arm of a younger son hove into view. "Are you lost?", asked the Queen, adding, "I am sure Andrew can show you where you need to go".

There was only one occasion when the noble Baroness, Lady Anelay, and I had angry words. For reasons which some noble Lords will remember, the Liberal Democrats decided that they could not support—and would seek to scupper—proposals to change parliamentary constituency boundaries, even though that was the formal policy of the coalition Government. I had the task of informing the noble Baroness that this was what we planned. Her response was pithy and furious. It was, however, a mark of her professionalism and generous nature that the incident had no permanent impact on our relationship, and she continued to play a major part in ensuring that the Government were both strong and stable.

The noble Lord, Lord Dobbs, gave a characteristically witty and erudite speech. However, I feel for him: he has made a career as a novelist by writing about somewhat improbable events in Parliament in an entertaining and compelling manner. But real events in recent months have made his plots seem pretty tame and I do not see how he will ever be able to write about Parliament again. No plot which he could devise would be more fantastical than current reality. He will, I hope, be able to survive on the royalties of his past triumphs.

We have just completed the longest parliamentary Session for more than 350 years. It is also one which has achieved the least. Domestic policy-making has increasingly ground to a halt as Brexit has dominated departmental activity and civil servants from departments such as the Department for Education have been drafted into others such as Defra to undertake Brexit-related work, leaving a void where policy-making should have been in their home department. On foreign policy, our influence in the Middle East and elsewhere has diminished as the Government have become increasingly dysfunctional. Our international reputation has plummeted. I have just returned from Australia, a country which the Government would have us believe will provide us with new trade and prosperity were we to leave the EU. Yet even the least sophisticated taxi driver in Sydney sees what is happening here, shakes his head in disbelief and thinks we have gone mad.

Today's speech is unique in that it has been written by a minority Government who are desperate for an election. It is normally the other way around: you have the election first. It is not a programme which the Government have any possibility of implementing. It is a Tory general election manifesto. Leaving aside Brexit for a moment, as a programme for government it fails woefully to address, far less offer solutions to, the long-term challenges facing the country. It is a series of newspaper headlines rather than a basis for dealing with pressing problems. Knife crime is in the headlines, then let us have more police. There is nothing

about the complex causes of knife crime, which need a government response across a range of programmes, not least the restoration of decimated youth services. Some people are worried about crime more generally, so let us lock up more foreigners and increase sentences. There is nothing about providing the resources needed to make the rehabilitation of offenders a reality rather than a pipe dream. The NHS is struggling, so let us have more hospitals—although probably not very many more. There is nothing about how to fill the pressing and growing problem of staff shortages across the NHS, particularly in rural areas, which Brexit is exacerbating.

Everybody knows, of course, that this speech cannot be implemented by this Government and that the urgent and overarching question is that of Brexit. It is still unclear whether the Government will secure a new withdrawal agreement which could be brought before Parliament this month. If they fail, their position, though not that of Parliament as a whole, is to leave the EU with no deal, with all the costs that that will bring. During our debates this week, I am sure that we will hear descriptions of these costs across a whole raft of policy areas. I simply remind the House that, according to the IFS and Citibank, no deal would double government borrowing. According to the outgoing Chief Medical Officer, no deal would lead to additional deaths. According to the former head of MI6, it would seriously jeopardise the fight against crime and terror.

Fortunately, last month Parliament passed the Benn Act, which means that we are unlikely to leave the EU at the end of the month. It seems that this position will be formalised in the parliamentary debates this coming Saturday.

Even if a deal were somehow reached, would that be in the country's long-term interest? As we spent 150 hours debating the withdrawal Bill last year, it was noticeable that, in subject area after subject area, the best the Government could say was that if we succeeded in reaching agreement with the EU after we had left, our position would not be much worse than at present—not "better" than at present, just not much worse. In recent months, the Government have stopped even pretending that, outside the EU, we would be better off than now or that there would be any identifiable, tangible benefits whatever. Their sole purpose in pursuing a disastrous policy is that they must respect the will of the people. On these Benches, we agree, but it is the will of the people today that should be respected and not that of a somewhat different cohort of people some three and a half years ago. The will of the people today was set out clearly in the massive poll of polls reported in the *Evening Standard* last week, which showed that there has been a majority in the country for the past two years to remain in the EU. "Ah," say noble Lords opposite, "but you can't trust the polls". Again, we agree. That is why we do not have government by opinion poll; we have government by real polls, and so we now need such a poll.

Indeed, all parties now agree that we must go back to the people to seek their guidance. The only dispute is over what kind of poll we have. The preferred course of the Government and, I think, that of the Labour Party is that we should now move to a general election.



From a purely Liberal Democrat perspective, a general election looks extremely attractive. We would increase our position in the Commons probably very substantially, but we all know that general elections are not fought on a single issue, however much individual parties might wish them to be. In any election, the character and attributes of the party leaders will weigh with many voters at least as much as Brexit, and recent polls show that so will familiar domestic issues such as health, education and crime.

Were an election to result in no single party being able to form a Government, as seems highly probable, all that we would have done would be to delay a decision on Brexit and arguably make taking one that much more difficult. It will come as no surprise to noble Lords that, from these Benches, we believe that, instead of having an election, we should now have a confirmatory referendum on whether the country wishes to leave the EU on the basis that will now be before us or whether we should remain. Once the referendum has taken place, we should then have a general election to determine the course which the country will follow for the years ahead.

That election, whenever it comes, will be a battle of values to a greater extent than any election in our recent history. On our side will be those who embrace the future, celebrate diversity and would put the country on a sustainable environmental and economic path. Against us will be those who hanker after the past, who see tolerance as a sign of weakness and who propose short-term fixes to long-term problems. The next few months will be pivotal to the country, our children and our grandchildren. We owe it to them to make the right choice.

4.29 pm

**The Lord Privy Seal (Baroness Evans of Bowes Park) (Con):** My Lords, it is a pleasure to follow the noble Baroness, Lady Smith, and the noble Lord, Lord Newby, and to support the Motion. I am honoured to stand here once again, as Leader of this House, ready for a new Session of Parliament. For centuries, this House has played a vital role in making and shaping the laws of the United Kingdom, checking and challenging the Government of the day. Now, as we grapple with the most significant peacetime event in our nation's history, the thorough and detailed scrutiny for which this House is known will be more important than ever. At a time when our politics and constitution are under an intense focus, your Lordships' experience and expertise will be vital in fulfilling that crucial role.

I am delighted to be joined once again by the noble Baroness and the noble Lord, with whom I have worked throughout the last Session. There may have been a number of late nights and challenging debates over the last three years, but I would like to put on record my thanks for the constructive and respectful way in which we have worked. It has been crucial to the effective running of this House and I am confident it will continue. I hope that we can continue our tradition of sampling a selection of the noble Baroness's legendary gin collection at various particularly hot points during this Session.

It is a pleasure to add my congratulations to those already expressed to my noble friends Lady Anelay and Lord Dobbs for their moving and seconding of the humble Address. My noble friend Lady Anelay served on the Conservative Front Bench for over 20 years, first in opposition and later in government. I have it on good authority that, when she served as Chief Whip, Whips' meetings enjoyed unprecedented popularity with fans of a good Bloody Mary. On the hunt for more exotic cocktail recipes, Lady Anelay later went on to serve as Minister of State in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, DfID and DExEU. She has also served as a trustee for UNICEF UK and as the Prime Minister's special representative on preventing sexual violence in conflict. She currently chairs our influential International Relations Committee. Her thoughtfulness, determination, fortitude and commitment to public service are legendary. We are fortunate to have her with us in this House, as well as her beautiful handbags, which I understand Mr Anelay is despatched to purchase on a regular basis—well done him.

My noble friend Lord Dobbs is, of course, best known as a novelist, Emmy-nominated screenwriter and television producer and, above all, as creator of the most infamous Chief Whip of all, Francis Urquhart. I am pleased that my noble friend does not seem to have taken him as a role model—yet. We may wonder what he would have made of our current politics, but I suspect he would have been completely baffled. Like many of my noble friends, Lord Dobbs' career benefited greatly from Lady Thatcher. Although he was never made a Minister, he was, he thinks, much more fortunate than that. He had, in his own words,

“a ferocious row with Margaret Thatcher. It was one of the most painful moments of my life but it led me to write *House of Cards* ... Funny to think I owe it all to being beaten up by Maggie”.

I am not sure other victims of Lady Thatcher's handbags have felt quite as charitable.

On important occasions such as this, it is only right that we recognise the hard work of the House authorities, and all the staff, in making today's ceremony such a success. Despite sometimes being asked a lot of, they work with great professionalism to make sure that your Lordships' House runs as smoothly as it does. I know that all noble Lords will join me in thanking them for everything that they do. I also thank the police service for working tirelessly in advance of our State Opening today. Parliament may be a focal point of peaceful protest, but it is also a place of work and there is much for us to do. We are all grateful for their efforts. Finally, I pay tribute to those who serve, and have served, in our gallant Armed Forces, at home and abroad, to keep us safe. I am sure that the whole House will want to acknowledge the sacrifices made by those men and women, and by their families.

There have been a number of changes on the Government Benches over the last few years—I know it has been a long one; I am sorry. I am very grateful to my current Front-Bench team for their hard work and support and put on record my thanks to those who have stepped down—please remember, this was a long Session; it is not me—the noble Lords, Lord Taylor of Holbeach, Lord Young of Cookham, Lord Henley, Lord O'Shaughnessy, Lord Prior of Brampton, Lord Price, Lord Bates, Lord Nash and Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth,

[BARONESS EVANS OF BOWES PARK]

and the noble Baronesses, Lady Fairhead, Lady Mobarik, Lady Manzoor, Lady Buscombe and Lady Anelay. Fortunately, we continue to benefit from their involvement in the work of the House in other ways.

The legislative programme laid out today represents an ambitious new domestic agenda under the leadership of my right honourable friend the Prime Minister. With a set of liberal, one-nation policies that combine the power of free markets with strong public services, we aim to unleash everyone's potential no matter who they are or where they live: measures to support and strengthen our National Health Service, its people and buildings; new money for our schools, so that every child gets a world-class education no matter where they grow up; investment in transport and technology, so that prosperity reaches all corners of the country; and measures to tackle violent crime, protect our police and restore trust in our criminal justice system. All of these are measures to protect and promote the people of all four corners of our nation and to rejuvenate our country by renewing the ties that bind us.

However, to focus on this new, exciting agenda for our country, we must get Brexit done. From our very first day in office, this Government have been committed to securing a deal with the EU that works for the whole of the United Kingdom. Legislation to enable the implementation of a deal will be brought forward following any agreement reached at this week's European Council meeting. When we leave the EU on 31 October, we will be free to take advantage of the opportunities that await us, with a new agricultural regime that works for British farmers, a new fisheries regime that takes back control of British waters and new trade deals forged with our partners and allies over the world.

We will continue to champion our values, robustly making the case for democracy, the rule of law and free trade. With these principles in mind, we will transform our immigration system into one that attracts the brightest and best. The new immigration Bill will end free movement and introduce a new and fair modern system that celebrates immigration to the UK from every corner of the globe. We will honour and protect the European citizens who have chosen to make the UK their home with an indefinite right to remain. They have built their lives in this country and contributed so much to our communities. We will forge a new relationship with our partners in the EU that will cement our reputation as a strong and reliable neighbour.

Returning to our ambitious domestic agenda, I will briefly highlight four priority areas for this Government. First, to support our world-class National Health Service, we will provide the resources needed for the successful rollout of our NHS long-term plan in England. This includes reforms to how we provide social care for adults, ensure dignity in old age and improve care for those receiving mental health treatment.

Secondly, this Government will work tirelessly to make our streets safer and ensure that victims receive the justice they deserve as well as the help they need. We need robust measures to tackle violent crime, and we will make improvements to the parole system,

improve safety in prisons and champion the rehabilitation of offenders. Through a package of new measures we will better protect domestic abuse victims and their children and, above all, we will deliver 20,000 new police officers to uphold the law.

Thirdly, this Government will invest in improving infrastructure across the country to spread opportunity and boost living standards. From new rail networks to superfast broadband, we will champion our businesses and provide the services they need to thrive. With investment in our world-beating scientific and research sectors, reliable digital services and new energy infrastructure, we will boost productivity and unleash potential in all parts of the United Kingdom.

Finally, this Queen's Speech sets out the Government's ambitious plan to redouble our commitment to enhance our environment and promote and protect the welfare of animals. We will become a global leader on environmental protection with a new environment Bill to take us towards our ambitious and legally binding 2050 net zero target.

This is a bold and exciting new agenda for the UK that will improve lives at home and enhance our place in the world. We will, in the words of the Prime Minister,

"dedicate ourselves again to that simple proposition that we are here to serve the democratic will of the British people".

This Government will get Brexit done and bring our country together. I support the Motion.

*Debate adjourned until tomorrow.*

## Senior Deputy Speaker

4.39 pm

*Moved by Baroness Evans of Bowes Park*

That the noble Lord, Lord McFall of Alcluith, be appointed as Senior Deputy Speaker for this Session.

*Motion agreed nemine dissentiente.*

## Principal Deputy Chairman of Committees and Chair of the European Union Committee

4.40 pm

*Moved by Baroness Evans of Bowes Park*

That the noble Earl, Lord Kinnoull, be appointed Principal Deputy Chairman of Committees, and as Chair of the European Union Committee, for this Session.

*Motion agreed nemine dissentiente.*

## Stoppages in the Streets

*It was ordered that the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis do take care that the passages through the streets leading to this House be kept free and open and that no obstruction be permitted to hinder the passage*

*of Lords to and from this House during the sitting of Parliament; or to hinder Lords in the pursuit of their parliamentary duties on the Parliamentary Estate; and that the Lady Usher of the Black Rod attending this House do communicate this Order to the Commissioner.*

### **Members of the House**

*It was ordered that a list of Members of the House, prepared by the Clerk of the Parliaments, be printed.*

### **Hereditary Peers: By-elections**

*The Clerk of the Parliaments laid before the House, in accordance with Standing Order 10(5), a register of hereditary Peers (other than Peers of Ireland) who wish to stand in any by-election for membership of the House held in accordance with Section 2(4) of the House of Lords Act 1999; it was ordered that the register be published.*

*House adjourned at 4.40 pm.*





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