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Monday
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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
(HANSARD)

HOUSE OF LORDS

OFFICIAL REPORT

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

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MINISTER WITHOUT PORTFOLIO—The Rt Hon. Oliver Dowden, CBE, MP

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THE
PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

IN THE SECOND SESSION OF THE FIFTY-EIGHTH PARLIAMENT OF THE
UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND
COMMENCING ON THE SEVENTEENTH DAY OF DECEMBER IN THE
SIXTY-EIGHTH YEAR OF THE REIGN OF

HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

FIFTH SERIES

VOLUME DCCCXV

FOURTH VOLUME OF SESSION 2021-22

House of Lords

Monday 18 October 2021

2.30 pm

Prayers—read by the Lord Bishop of Durham.

2.36 pm

A minute's silence was observed in memory of the late Sir David Amess MP.

Minister for Intergovernmental Relations
Question

2.37 pm

Asked by Baroness Wilcox of Newport

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Dunlop Review of Devolution, published on 24 March, influenced the creation of the post of Minister for Intergovernmental Relations.

The Minister of State, Home Office and Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities. (Lord Greenhalgh) (Con): The Minister for Intergovernmental Relations is committed to strengthening the union, as he was when he was previously responsible for constitutional integrity, as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster and Minister for the Cabinet Office. My noble friend Lord Dunlop's review considered ways to configure and improve the structures of government in order to strengthen the union, and it aligns with government thinking in this regard.

Baroness Wilcox of Newport (Lab): In its report, the Common Frameworks Scrutiny Committee noted that

"relations between the four administrations of the UK are in a particularly poor state, and that UK intergovernmental relations need to be reset."

Does the Minister accept that it undermines the devolution settlements when this Government bring forward initiatives, such as levelling up and community renewal funds, that have been drawn up without any consultation with the Welsh Government and are administered by UK government departments that have not operated in Wales for over 20 years? Will the new ministerial post address these problematic issues?

Lord Greenhalgh (Con): My Lords, the Government have made clear that they intend to work with the devolved Administrations to ensure that funding is used to best effect and supports citizens across the UK. Discussions relating to specific schemes using the financial assistance power could take place in the relevant departmental interministerial group at the outset of the review of intergovernmental relations. There has been a very clear statement that the devolved Administrations will be part of the governance structures of relevant funds.

Lord Morris of Aberavon (Lab): My Lords, given the comparatively minor disparities in the way that the pandemic has been tackled by Westminster and the devolved Governments, are the Government satisfied that they can prove to the eventual public inquiry that they have done everything to try to establish common policies? Will the Government now announce regular dates for joint ministerial meetings with the devolved Governments? When will the Prime Minister spare the time to chair one of those meetings?

Lord Greenhalgh (Con): My Lords, I do not recognise the lack of engagement with the devolved Administrations. In fact, as we speak, the Prime Minister is in a meeting with First Ministers, and there have been many hundreds of meetings, across Whitehall, with the devolved Administrations—well over 300. The Secretary of State who has responsibility for constitutional matters meets them monthly. That is a framework that is currently working to ensure that the devolved Administrations are listened to very carefully.

Lord German (LD): My Lords, a few weeks ago, the Secretary of State for Wales said that he had to “bite his tongue” when asked about matters relating to the devolved Government in Wales. Subsequently, he went on to criticise some of the health policies of the Welsh Government. On the need for mutual respect between the various Governments of this country, could the Minister tell the House the correct approach that Ministers should take to these devolved matters? Does it always involve biting tongues?

Lord Greenhalgh (Con): My Lords, clearly, there needs to be constructive engagement on devolved matters, and I believe that there is. In fact, the commitment to Wales is really quite considerable: there has been £352 billion of support for the whole of the UK, and, in Wales, this included protecting more than 460,000 jobs through the furlough scheme. We continue to recognise the need to work closely with all our devolved Administrations.

Baroness Eaton (Con): It is important that the Government have appointed a Minister for Intergovernmental Relations. Could my noble friend say how the Minister is engaging with the devolved Administrations and supporting effective intergovernmental working across the United Kingdom?

Lord Greenhalgh (Con): My Lords, my noble friend is right that there needs to be effective intergovernmental working. Indeed, my right honourable friend the Secretary of State is committed to continuing to work effectively with the devolved Administrations and supporting effective engagement across government. My right honourable friend will be writing to the devolved Administrations regarding the arrangements following on from the intergovernmental relations review and the formalised structures for engagement, as part of that.

Baroness Stuart of Edgbaston (CB): My Lords, given our rather asymmetric constitutional arrangements, it is easy to forget that intergovernmental relations matter to Wales, Scotland, England and Northern Ireland. Therefore, does the Minister agree that, if we want fair handling of the four components, it is important that we gather and analyse data in all of them in a way which allows us to make proper and in-time comparisons?

Lord Greenhalgh (Con): My Lords, I accept that it is important that all government decisions should be based on sound analysis and data, which I am sure will be the case as we look to work closely with the devolved Administrations to spend money that was previously as a result of our membership of the European Union.

Lord McConnell of Glenscorrodale (Lab): My Lords, I hope that we can all agree that good intergovernmental relations are based on strong mutual respect, so will the Government please stop referring to the devolved Governments as devolved Administrations and call them Governments, which they clearly are?

Lord Greenhalgh (Con): My Lords, there is no sign of disrespect when we call a Government a devolved Administration, but I am happy to call them devolved Governments in future if that is seen as more appropriate.

Baroness Janke (LD): My Lords, findings of the IPPR show that there are huge differences in regional economic performance and prosperity in the UK and that this is down largely to overcentralised and inflexible governance. Can the Minister assure us that the Government will devolve powers to local decision-makers as a key part of the levelling-up agenda and not allow this to be operated by the dead hand of Whitehall from London?

Lord Greenhalgh (Con): My Lords, the Government remain committed to devolution. On the levelling-up agenda and fund, it is quite clear that, where that money is spent in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland, we will have effective engagement and work closely with stakeholders to build on existing spending, using the economies of scale that we can achieve through expenditure at the United Kingdom level.

Lord Flight (Con): Can the Minister please summarise what, if any, are the important differences between the Dunlop review’s recommendation for a new Cabinet post, a Secretary of State for intergovernmental and constitutional affairs, and the ministerial post created by the Government of Minister for Intergovernmental Relations?

Lord Greenhalgh (Con): I thank my noble friend for wanting that clarity. Day-to-day responsibility for constitutional integrity falls to the Minister for Intergovernmental Relations. Individual Secretaries of State also have a critical role in representing the distinctive voices and interests of Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland in Whitehall and the Cabinet; in representing the UK Government in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland; and in co-ordinating the UK Government’s work with the devolved Governments to deliver for all citizens of the United Kingdom.

Lord Hain (Lab): My Lords, does the Minister agree that there will be a strong UK union only if each of our constituent nations, regions and Governments has a relationship of equals, which, regrettably, has not been the case under this Government? Their high-handed arrogance over the internal market Act and the shared prosperity fund are just two examples. Will the Minister guarantee parity of esteem in the Joint Ministerial Committee, through shared chairing and agenda setting, an impartial secretariat and improved dispute avoidance and resolution?

Lord Greenhalgh (Con): My Lords, I do not recognise that characterisation; there is huge esteem for the devolved Governments. We need to recognise that our United Kingdom is the most successful political and economic union that the world has ever seen, and we continue to build on its strengths.

Lord Roberts of Llandudno (LD): My Lords, last Thursday we welcomed Her Majesty the Queen to the Senedd, and we all rejoiced in the work that the devolved Senedd was doing—but then we have the appointment of this intergovernmental Minister. I thought that there might be some hope there, but he is already Minister for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities. Is this not just something that is a fantasy for this Government?

Lord Greenhalgh (Con): The noble Lord is right that my right honourable friend the Secretary of State has a number of responsibilities, but he takes his ministerial responsibilities with regard to the union extremely seriously, with monthly meetings with all the devolved Governments and First Ministers. I also remind the noble Lord that the Prime Minister is the Minister for the Union and, at this moment, he is speaking to First Ministers. So that engagement is real, and we will continue to work very closely with all the devolved Governments.

Lord Foulkes of Cumnock (Lab Co-op): My Lords, intergovernmental relations are a two-way street. Is the Minister aware that, in Scotland, the devolved Government are spending money on areas that are not devolved, including millions of pounds on overseas offices? Why are the UK Government afraid to bring them into line?

Lord Greenhalgh (Con): I thank the noble Lord for raising this issue. It is quite clear that you need to have the competence to spend taxpayers' money. The best way in which to rein them in is, of course, to win at the ballot box.

The Lord Speaker (Lord McFall of Alcluith): My Lords, all supplementary questions have been asked, and we now move to the next Question.

HIV Action Plan

Question

2.48 pm

Asked by **Lord Cashman**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what funding they will provide to support the new HIV Action Plan to end new HIV transmissions in England; and whether this will be included in the upcoming Comprehensive Spending Review.

Lord Cashman (Non-Afl): My Lords, I beg leave to ask the Question standing in my name on the Order Paper. In doing so, I record that I am a member of the APPG on HIV/AIDS and a patron of the Terrence Higgins Trust.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health and Social Care (Lord Kamall) (Con): The Government remain committed to reaching zero new HIV transmissions in England by 2030, and we continue to make good progress towards this target. In September, the Government committed £36 billion over the next three years for the NHS and social care, but decisions on future funding for non-NHS and social care budgets, including for the new HIV action plan, are being taken as part of the comprehensive spending review.

Lord Cashman (Non-Afl): I thank the Minister for his Answer. He hits the nail right on the head. He will be aware of concerns by NGOs, the Elton John AIDS Foundation, the National AIDS Trust and the Terrence Higgins Trust that the Government will back down on their financial commitments on HIV/AIDS. We need greater commitment to ending transmissions now, not less. Will the Minister therefore ensure that the Government keep their commitments, made at the height of the Covid pandemic in December 2020, by the Chancellor, to end new HIV/AIDS transmissions by 2030? Will he further commit to implement opt-out HIV testing in high incidence areas in England?

Lord Kamall (Con): I start by paying tribute to the noble Lord, Lord Cashman. We served in the European Parliament together for many years, where he was always a champion of LGBTQ+ issues and made sure that people were aware of the issue of tackling HIV. Funding for HIV treatment and care services is provided by NHS England and NHS Improvement through specialised commissioning. HIV testing and prevention is funded by local government through the ring-fenced public health grant. In March 2020, the Government announced that the HIV prevention drug PrEP would be routinely available across England. The public health grant in 2021-22 includes £23 million to cover local authority costs of routine commissioning, in addition to the £11 million made available in 2021. I give the noble Lord that statement.

Lord Fowler (CB): Is not one of the chief challenges for the Government to combat the stigma and prejudice that still surround HIV and AIDS? Is it not therefore important that there should be a strong public education campaign, run by the Government, to improve public understanding and dispel the myths? Surely, countering stigma must be a key to ending the HIV epidemic.

Lord Kamall (Con): As noble Lords will have seen, there is agreement with the noble Lord's point. As part of the Government's commitment to reaching zero new HIV transmissions in England by 2030, the department is currently developing a new sexual and reproductive health strategy and an HIV action plan. Officials will continue to engage in discussions with the Department for Education during the development of these publications to relate them to how HIV is covered in the statutory curriculum in schools and as part of the intimate and sexual relationships lessons under personal health and social education.

Baroness Merron (Lab): My Lords, HIV can affect anyone, as we know. Despite the success in combating it, further reducing the number of people who remain undiagnosed with HIV will become very challenging unless testing uptake is improved, as my noble friend Lord Cashman said. This is particularly the case for heterosexuals who do not consider themselves at risk of HIV. What assessment has the Minister made of why people who visit a sexual health clinic may leave without testing for HIV? Will he make it a priority to ensure that all those attending sexual health clinics are offered, and encouraged to accept, an HIV test?

Lord Kamall (Con): I am afraid I do not have a detailed answer to the question from the noble Baroness, but I commit to write to her.

Baroness Brinton (LD) [V]: My Lords, the Minister was right to highlight the fact that sexual health funding comes from public health budgets through local authorities. The Terrence Higgins Trust and British Association for Sexual Health and HIV report from 2019 showed that five years of cuts to public health and sexual health funding have had a direct impact on access to sexual health services. So can I push the Minister to confirm that there will be a real-terms cash increase, to fully fund the HIV action plan, to local authorities' public health budgets for the next three years?

Lord Kamall (Con): I thank the noble Baroness for her question. The department is currently developing a new sexual and reproductive health strategy and an HIV action plan, as she referred to. We plan to publish the HIV action plan later this year to coincide with World AIDS Day on 1 December. The action plan will set out clear actions to achieve the interim target of reaching an 80% reduction in HIV transmissions in England by 2025. Publication of the detailed sexual and reproductive health strategy will follow shortly afterwards.

Lord Lexden (Con): Do the Government accept that their forthcoming action plan should have four key features: the expansion of testing; greater support for those living with HIV; increased funding for HIV prevention; and new national prevention programmes? Will the Government provide sufficient resources to achieve all four aims and so enhance their reputation as a global leader in combating HIV?

Lord Kamall (Con): I thank my noble friend for his question. The four features he referred to are aligned with the independent HIV Commission's recommendations. The Government have welcomed the HIV Commission's report and are currently considering its recommendations to inform the development of the forthcoming HIV action plan. Our specific decisions regarding resources for the HIV action plan are being taken as part of the ongoing comprehensive spending review.

Lord Scriven (LD): My Lords, over a year and a half ago, Jo Churchill, the previous Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health, said that the Government were seriously considering access to pre-exposure prophylaxis for HIV in community pharmacies and GP practices. Will the Minister say when this will happen, and, if he cannot, what is holding this up?

Lord Kamall (Con): As the noble Lord says, in March 2020 the Government announced that the HIV prevention drug PrEP would be routinely available across England in 2020-21. It is now routinely available in specialist sexual services throughout the country. The settings in which PrEP could be made available outside these health services, such as pharmacies, will be considered as part of the ongoing work on the development of the sexual and reproductive health

strategy and the HIV action plan. We plan to publish the HIV action plan later this year to coincide with World AIDS Day on 1 December, and the sexual and reproductive health strategy shortly thereafter.

Baroness Masham of Ilton (CB) [V]: My Lords, I welcome the Minister to the fight against HIV/AIDS. Will he agree with me that NHS England, public health, local authorities and voluntary organisations should work together to fight against HIV infection so that it does not become fragmented? Because of the coronavirus infection, many people think that HIV/AIDS has gone away: it has not.

Lord Kamall (Con): I thank the noble Baroness for reminding us that HIV has not gone away. This is why the Government have an action plan. All noble Lords will agree on how important it is to tackle HIV and to raise awareness. The Government hope, in their plan and strategy, to be able to do this as soon as possible, and we remain committed to the goals previously set out.

Building Safety Defects: Costs *Question*

2.56 pm

Asked by Lord Kennedy of Southwark

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to ensure that victims of building safety defects are not liable for the costs of rectifying those failures.

Lord Kennedy of Southwark (Lab Co-op): My Lords, I beg leave to ask the Question standing in my name on the Order Paper and refer the House to my interests as set out in the register.

The Minister of State, Home Office and Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (Lord Greenhalgh) (Con): My Lords, the Government are investing £5.1 billion to remediate unsafe cladding in residential buildings over 18 metres. The Building Safety Bill will require building owners to consider other cost-recovery routes for remediation before passing them on to leaseholders. A new developer tax and levy will make sure that industry contributes. Finally, for the small number of 11-to-18 metre buildings with cladding remediation costs, our support offer will ensure that leaseholders are protected.

Lord Kennedy of Southwark (Lab Co-op): My Lords, that is a very disappointing and, frankly, repetitive response. There has been a clear failure on the part of the Government to protect the innocent victims of this scandal in building safety. The leaseholders need to be supported by their Government and they need to hear clearly from the Government that they are no longer expected to pay for other people's mistakes. Why cannot the Government just say that and make it happen?

Lord Greenhalgh (Con): My Lords, perhaps there is repetition in both the Question and indeed the Answer. The Building Safety Bill, which is going through very close scrutiny in the other place, provides a legal requirement for building owners to explore alternative ways to meet the costs of remediation works before passing them on to leaseholders, along with evidence that this has been done. Of course, we will look at other ways of strengthening the redress mechanisms to ensure that, wherever possible, this does not fall on leaseholders.

The Lord Bishop of Durham: My Lords, have the Government looked closely at the “polluter pays” principle as a way of recouping funds for remediation of building safety defects from those who were initially responsible? Will this, or something equivalent, form part of the Building Safety Bill?

Lord Greenhalgh (Con): My Lords, we are looking very closely at the “polluter pays” principle and the amendments that have been supplied to us by Steve Day. I have asked my officials to meet on a number of occasions; in fact, I am meeting them this Wednesday. There are, however, some difficulties and hurdles that need to be overcome to make this potentially work. I do not exaggerate; they will be quite challenging to overcome.

Lord Young of Cookham (Con): My Lords, since we discussed this on 16 September, we have a new Secretary of State with instructions from the Prime Minister, so we read, to sort out the cladding crisis. While welcoming the new tax on high-rise development and the substantial support that the Government have already offered, this is not enough to prevent innocent leaseholders facing substantial hardship. Further to the suggestion of the right reverend Prelate, should there not be a substantial levy on the developers who built and sold these unsuitable flats?

Lord Greenhalgh (Con): My Lords, we have a new Secretary of State who is putting his fresh eyes on this. We recognise that the developers that put up these shoddy buildings need to pay. Indeed, we may need to look at other people—the cladding manufacturers may also need to contribute to this—because we want to do whatever it takes to ensure that leaseholders are protected as far as is practicable.

Baroness Watkins of Tavistock (CB): My Lords, I declare my interests as outlined in the register. It is intended that there will be a new regime for shared ownership in terms of liability for new leaseholders. However, currently, many leaseholders who own only a quarter of their properties are being expected to recompense the costs for 100%. Can the Minister tell me what the Government intend to do about this? If he cannot, will he write to me, because there is considerable mental anguish among many shared owners—the majority of whom are essential public sector workers such as paramedics, teachers and nurses?

Lord Greenhalgh (Con): My Lords, I recognise the plight that leaseholders in social housing face, particularly those who are shared owners and have only a proportion of the equity. We made it part of our approach to funding for unsafe cladding beyond aluminium composite

material that those costs are borne by the registered social landlords if they are not able to recoup the money from developers. We will continue to urge that these people are protected wherever possible.

Lord Hendy (Lab): My Lords, given the multiple failures of organs of the state revealed in the Grenfell Tower inquiry—through failure to implement the findings of coroners’ inquests, failures of the building regulations, failures of building control and so on—surely the obvious answer is for the Government to establish a fund to pay out to all those who deserve compensation and to use those resources to sue those who are responsible.

Lord Greenhalgh (Con): My Lords, I do not think it is as simple as that this was at the hands of failed regulation, although we recognise that there was regulatory system failure. That is why we are bringing forward the Building Safety Bill. We have put a substantial amount of money towards remediation costs, and we will do what we can to pursue those that have caused this crisis in the first place.

Baroness Pincock (LD): My Lords, a leaseholder in Leeds has received a remediation bill of £101,267—to be paid in the next 12 months. She has no access to the means to pay. What should Emily and thousands of other leaseholders do next, or are the Government accepting that thousands of bankruptcies will ensue?

Lord Greenhalgh (Con): My Lords, I am happy to look at that specific case, because that sounds like an eye-watering sum of money. In the first instance, is full-scale remediation the answer? Has the freeholder looked at mitigation measures that may also achieve an acceptable way of improving things and lowering the fire safety risk? However, that does seem an extremely large sum of money, and I am happy to look into that case.

Lord Blencathra (Con): My Lords, I do not want leaseholders, nor the taxpayer, to pay a single penny towards these remediation works, but I want the housebuilders to pay for every pound that it takes. I am afraid to say that the proposed levy is simply derisory. Will my noble friend campaign in government for a proper, full-scale windfall tax imposed on the housebuilders? In 2019, four companies—Barratt, Wimpey, Persimmon and Berkeley—posted profits of £3.8 billion. I repeat: one year, four companies, £3.8 billion. They should be made to pay from their profits for their shoddy work. Will my noble friend agree with that and just say, “Yes, Lord Blencathra”?

Lord Greenhalgh (Con): My noble friend knows that government is not quite so simple. In all seriousness, we have stated publicly that the new tax on developers will raise at least £2 billion over 10 years. We know that the amount of money required is far in excess of that, but there is no upper limit, and we still have not yet announced the detail. We take my noble friend’s point on board with regard to the windfall tax.

Baroness Eaton (Con): My Lords, as others have already said, it is important that the polluter pays, rather than leaseholders, who are victims. Can my noble friend the Minister provide further details regarding this residential property development tax which has been alluded to in previous questions?

Lord Greenhalgh (Con): My noble friend is right that we need more detail. Details of the residential property developer tax will be announced at the Autumn Budget on 27 October, so we will have to wait till then. However, I want to make it clear that the figure of £2 billion over 10 years is an absolute minimum and I hope that we will go far further than that when the rates are finalised.

Baroness Thornhill (LD): As has already been stated, social housing providers are having to pick up the bill for all of their properties. These sums are having a significant impact on their budgets and are detrimental to their ability to provide more, and better-quality, social housing going forward. Are the Government monitoring the impact of this on providers' budgets, in particular the opportunity cost that is lost to the sector, and looking at how this will affect their ability to do the jobs that they want to do to improve their social, affordable and supported housing properties in the future?

Lord Greenhalgh (Con): My Lords, we are working very closely with the sector. I point out that there was a £400,000 fund specifically for providers in the social sector to remove aluminium composite material, the most serious form of unsafe cladding. In addition, where social landlords are thinking of passing costs on to leaseholders, there is an opportunity for them to apply to the building safety fund, which many of them have indeed done.

Baroness Jones of Moulsecoomb (GP): Could the Minister answer my question in very simple language, because I just do not understand this? The leaseholders did not design the building, do not own it and did not apply the faulty cladding to it. So why are they paying anything at all towards replacing it?

Lord Greenhalgh (Con): It is quite clear that the building owner and freeholder have responsibility for keeping the building safe. Whether the costs are passed on to leaseholders is a matter for the individual lease, but we are doing all we can to step in to help recoup the money that should rightly be paid by the developers and have also put forward taxpayer funding to the tune of over £5 billion at this point.

The Lord Speaker (Lord McFall of Alcluith): My Lords, all supplementary questions have been asked and we now move to the next Question.

Horizon Europe *Question*

3.07 pm

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what caused the delay to the United Kingdom's application to join the Horizon Europe research programme; and when they expect research institutes to be able to bid for new project funding.

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist (Con): The UK and the EU agreed the terms for our association to Horizon Europe under the EU-UK Trade and Cooperation Agreement. The UK stands ready to formalise our participation, but there have been persistent delays from the EU. I can assure the noble Lord that UK entities are already eligible to apply ahead of us formally associating, and we encourage UK researchers to take advantage of this opportunity.

Lord Berkeley (Lab): I am grateful to the Minister for that Answer. However, friends who are involved in this in Brussels and the UK say that there are delays on both sides. I believe that there are protocols which still need to be adopted by a joint EU-UK committee, which is responsible for the UK's participation in these programmes. Could the Minister confirm this? Does this committee exist and has it met? When do we expect it to reach decisions so that the money can start being spent?

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist (Con): I assure the noble Lord that the delays are not coming from our side. The TCA was ratified. It required pieces of EU programmes legislation to be in force, which is why we did not join Horizon Europe instantly when we signed the TCA last December. Iceland, Norway and Ukraine have all joined the programme recently but there is no such committee yet in existence and this Government continue to apply pressure to the EU Commissioner about this.

Lord Holmes of Richmond (Con): My Lords, does my noble friend agree that, as so many of the issues and opportunities we face are global in nature, we need to look to all our international partners and friends across Europe and the Commonwealth and right around the world for research connections and collaborations? International research collaboration is the brightest, best and most transformative piece of soft power.

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist (Con): I thank my noble friend for his—as usual—to the point question. The Government are committed to making the UK a global science and research superpower. We are a partner for choice for many world-leading and rapidly growing R&I nations. Through our interactions with other Governments, we know that there is significant and growing demand from world leaders such as the US and Japan to commit more funding to collaborative research. I could point my noble friend and the House to various examples, including the £12 million UK-Japanese LongOps project to help faster and safer decommissioning at Fukushima; the £20 million UK-US collaboration on the Thwaites Glacier; and the New Variant Assessment Platform, which is undertaking Covid-19 genomic sequencing at Porton Down for the whole world.

Lord Hannay of Chiswick (CB): My Lords, in his speech in Lisbon last week, the noble Lord, Lord Frost, simply stated flatly that the UK's request for participation in the Horizon programme had been blocked. That seems slightly at variance with what the noble Baroness said in her original Answer to the noble Lord, Lord Berkeley. Which is the authorised version, and if it is blocked,

what are the Government doing to get it unblocked? Is it anything to do with other issues which are not going so well between the UK and the EU?

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist (Con): My Lords, the authorised version is that the delay is not coming from our side. The UK's participation in the Union programme under the TCA and the Northern Ireland protocol—the issue to which he alludes—are completely separate issues. We see no legal or practical reasons why we should not be able to formalise our participation swiftly. The UK-EU joint declaration published alongside the TCA set out both parties' intention to formalise UK association at the earliest opportunity, and we stand ready to implement that agreement. It is regrettable that, as regards the negotiations with Switzerland, Commissioner Gabriel has brought in other issues to delay its entry into the same programmes, notably in relation to the EU cohesion programmes which the EU wish Switzerland to pay for before it is allowed to enter Horizon.

Lord Lennie (Lab): My Lords, following on from the noble Lord, Lord Hannay, and my noble friend Lord Berkeley's Question, just a couple of weeks ago the European University Association said:

"The lengthy process of associating the UK to Horizon Europe ... is creating unnecessary insecurity within the European knowledge community, and this insecurity threatens plans for scientific cooperation—with negative consequences for both the EU and the UK."

Does the Minister agree with that assessment?

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist (Con): The noble Lord is absolutely right that the delay is causing unnecessary insecurity within the entire European knowledge community, not just in the UK. Our participation in Horizon Europe will support these continued partnerships between UK and European research and science experts, which is a win-win for all parties, not just in Europe and the UK but globally as well.

Baroness Smith of Newnham (LD): My Lords, in response to the noble Lord, Lord Lennie, the Minister has pointed out that these are important collaborative activities. Could she say what the Government are planning to do, in addition to engaging in funding with Horizon Europe, about ensuring mobility for academics, which is also part of the European research framework? I declare my interests as laid out in the register.

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist (Con): The noble Baroness is right to bring up mobility. We are committed to making the UK the most attractive destination in the world for scientists, researchers and innovators. The global talent visa achieves this. Through the Horizon Europe programme, UK research organisations and higher education institutions can continue to participate in world-leading programmes. There is no restriction on British academics travelling to Europe to access Horizon grants, and through the Turing scheme the UK Government are also providing funding for more than 40,000 participants from schools, colleges and universities to study and work across the globe during the 2021-22 academic year.

Baroness McIntosh of Pickering (Con): Will my noble friend join me in congratulating the University of York on the excellent work it is doing for BioYorkshire? Will she in turn use her good offices to ensure continuity of funding for the five missions agreed at COP 25, in particular those covering soils and oceans, to ensure that our global reputation is maintained?

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist (Con): I can indeed join my noble friend in congratulating the university on its work and confirm that Horizon's five missions—cancer, soils, climate change, oceans and cities—are all issues with which we wholeheartedly agree and on which we are furthering research. We have always been clear that our priority is to support the UK's R&D sector, and we will continue to do that in all future scenarios.

Baroness Bull (CB): I declare my interests as set out in the register. The EU Research Commissioner recently told MEPs that, while British researchers' participation in the current scheme is assured,

"For the next programming period, we need a little bit more time, a little bit more information to evaluate all this in a more in depth way."

How do the Government interpret those remarks and, given that other agreements with the EU are now being revisited, what reassurances can she give the research community that the commitment to Horizon Europe will not be withdrawn or substantially renegotiated?

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist (Con): Any remarks that increase uncertainty among the research and knowledge community are obviously unhelpful. The UK's participation in Union programmes under the TCA and Northern Ireland protocol are separate issues. We have negotiated those issues and provided all the information. I can but reaffirm that the delays are not coming from our side, and we see them as distinctly unhelpful for all concerned.

Lord Moynihan (Con): My Lords, despite the delays, can my noble friend confirm that the content matter of the health cluster of Pillar 2 remains a vital area of research for the UK—namely, to promote and protect human health and well-being—as that is exactly what was envisaged with the new centre for health promotion announced by the Prime Minister in March of this year? Does she agree that that remains a priority area for far-reaching research here in the UK, so that we help people lead active and healthy lives and are better able to prevent and fight illnesses?

Baroness Bloomfield of Hinton Waldrist (Con): My noble friend is right to concentrate on the health benefits of many of the Horizon Europe projects. Over its lifetime, we expect the Commission to set aside more than €8 billion for the health research cluster, to which UK entities will be able to apply. One example may be the Joint Programming Initiative on Microbial Resistance, a collaboration of 28 countries across the globe tackling that resistance. The UK's association to Horizon Europe will enable the UK to continue to collaborate with European partners to tackle health-related global challenges, to the benefit of everyone.

Arrangement of Business

Announcement

3.17 pm

Lord Ashton of Hyde (Con): My Lords, before we proceed to the Motion in the name of the Senior Deputy Speaker, it might be helpful to the House if I say a few words about the proceedings for the remainder of this afternoon. After the Motions in my name and that of the noble Lord, Lord Gardiner of Kimble, the House will adjourn during pleasure until 4 pm. This is to allow tributes to Sir David Amess to begin in the House of Commons and for the Prime Minister and leader of the Opposition to speak in the other place. The House will then resume for tributes to Sir David.

There is no speakers' list, and any Member may speak from the Chamber. Arrangements have been made to allow those who are permitted to participate virtually to do so. There are three virtual speakers, and they will come after the most reverend Primate has spoken on behalf of the Lords spiritual. Tributes will last until 5.20 pm. The House will then adjourn until 2.30 pm tomorrow, and there will be no further business today.

At 6 pm, there will be a service of prayers and remembrance for Sir David at St Margaret's Church. The Lord Speaker will lead from the Chamber to the church at 5.30 pm, after the House adjourns at 5.20 pm, so noble Lords who are attending the service in St Margaret's should be ready to move from the Chamber by 5.30 pm.

St Margaret's has limited capacity, and preference is rightly being given to Members of the House of Commons. There are limited places for Members of this House to attend. I am sure noble Lords appreciate the reason for this and, on behalf of the usual channels, I ask that only those noble Lords who knew Sir David best seek to attend the service this evening. For those going to the service, St Margaret's has requested that face coverings are worn in the church and that those attending take a Covid test. Tests are available now in the Bishops' Bar and in the atrium in Portcullis House. The Chapel of St Mary Undercroft remains open for private prayer and reflection, and a condolence book is available in the Royal Gallery.

The main business that was due to take place this afternoon—namely, the second day of Report of the Skills and Post-16 Education Bill—will now be taken on Thursday.

International Agreements Committee

Membership Motion

3.19 pm

Moved by The Senior Deputy Speaker

That Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town be appointed a member of the Select Committee, in place of Lord Goldsmith, and that Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town be appointed Chair of the Committee.

Motion agreed.

Rating (Coronavirus) and Directors Disqualification (Dissolved Companies) Bill

Motion to Refer to Grand Committee

3.20 pm

Moved by Lord Ashton of Hyde

That the Bill be referred to a Grand Committee on Tuesday 19 October for debate before second Reading.

Lord Tyler (LD): My Lords, can the noble Lord the Chief Whip explain exactly what the procedure will be, as this Bill apparently is to go into Committee before it reaches this House for Second Reading? Can he elucidate on what would happen if the House does not give the Bill a Second Reading?

Lord Ashton of Hyde (Con): It is not going to Committee; it is going to Grand Committee. It will be rather like a statutory instrument. The debate will take place in Grand Committee and then it will come back to the Chamber for a vote to commit the Bill so that if—which I hope is unlikely—a Member wanted to vote on not giving the Bill a Second Reading, they would be able to do it in this Chamber.

Motion agreed.

3.21 pm

Sitting suspended.

Tributes: Sir David Amess MP

Tributes

4.01 pm

The Lord Speaker (Lord McFall of Alcluth): My Lords, before I call the Leader of the House to begin the tributes to the late Sir David Amess MP, I would like to make some brief remarks of my own.

Sir David was not a Member of this House, but he was one of us. He was a true parliamentarian. He was also an exemplar of decency and courtesy. When I entered Parliament in 1987, Sir David had already served in the Commons for four years. I quickly found myself working with him on cross-party and international issues, as well as on social campaigns and causes that promoted the common good. David relished working across the party divides. He was not tribal. As an example to the society we live in, he embraced minorities and was tolerant, not intolerant. His willingness to reach out and engage with those he represented went to the heart of what he considered to be his vocation in life. He could never have been accused of being remote or detached.

He championed Private Members' Bills on animal welfare and fuel poverty, always speaking up for his constituents and placing their concerns at the heart of his work here in Westminster. He was well known in his local area and was keen to engage the local press in his many campaigns; his frequent engagement with the sub-editors obviously paid off when, following a trip to Rome, one headline read "Pope Francis meets David Amess".

His character was well known. At the weekend, I heard one TV commentator refer to him as a little eccentric. Well, if that was the case, I declare: long live eccentrics. Not once did I meet him in these corridors over the 34 years we served together without being met with an enormous smile as he bounded toward me with a spring in his step. He had an ability to make every encounter bright—something which reminded me time and again of the inherent goodness of humanity.

Today, Parliament mourns. We join with his family, his friends, his staff and those who knew him and worked with him. It is right that we conclude our proceedings today by joining together with the House of Commons to pray for him, remember him and celebrate all that he was and all that he gave to this place and to the nation.

The Lord Privy Seal (Baroness Evans of Bowes Park)

(Con): Like all noble Lords, I was shocked, shaken and saddened by the tragic death of Sir David Amess on Friday. He was killed while holding a constituency surgery in a place of sanctuary, serving the residents of Southend West as he had done proudly since 1997. As the Lord Speaker said, Sir David was a veteran parliamentarian of almost four decades who was admired and respected across both Houses of Parliament. Only three other sitting MPs have served the House of Commons and their constituents longer than Sir David had.

A working-class boy from the east end of London, Sir David was first elected in Basildon, in 1983. It was a bellwether seat for the 1992 general election which he held on to with the backing of Essex men—and women—providing the pivotal moment of the night that Sir John Major won an unexpected majority. At the 1997 general election, Sir David moved to the neighbouring constituency of Southend West, and our very own Lady Smith followed him as the MP for Basildon. She tells me that she soon discovered that one of Sir David's traditions was giving students a spelling test on primary school visits. Apparently, he had a preoccupation with two words in particular, and the local schools had posters of them plastered all over the walls to ensure that their students were ready to impress their visiting MP. I understand that there is a certain cohort, educated in south Essex, who have Sir David to thank for being able to spell “yacht” and “unnecessary” correctly.

In his new seat, Sir David continued his tradition of campaigning in a motorhome, playing his song, which I assure noble Lords I will not attempt to sing but which went:

“Vote, vote, vote, for David Amess,

David is the man for you.

If you want to be true blue, and to air your points of view,

Then David Amess is the only man for you.”

Although his campaign style was compared to that of an ice-cream vendor, it was authentically Sir David, and it worked.

Throughout his parliamentary career, he was well known as a dedicated Brexiteer, a doughty animal rights campaigner, a devout Roman Catholic and a devoted constituency champion. It is true to say that he achieved more on the Beck Benches than many of

us Ministers manage to achieve in government; he piloted numerous Private Member's Bills into law, such as those on cruel tethering and warm homes, helped to ensure that the bravery of Raoul Wallenberg was recognised with a memorial statue, and organised 200 inspirational students from the Music Man Project to perform at the Royal Albert Hall and again at the London Palladium.

There cannot be anyone in this House who is not aware of Sir David's campaign to make Southend a city, a campaign that he pursued doggedly and determinedly, but with the humour and warmth that characterised his approach, because above all, he was a kind, generous and decent human being. I am delighted to tell the House, if noble Lords did not know already, that the Prime Minister has confirmed that Her Majesty the Queen has agreed that Southend will be accorded the city status that it so clearly deserves.

I was not lucky enough to have known Sir David well personally. However, from the stories that I have read from colleagues, friends and strangers over the weekend, it is clear that he was a wonderful man who touched the lives of many. So many colleagues have commented on his love of being a parliamentarian. Whether in the House or in his beloved constituency, he had as much joy and enthusiasm in his fourth decade in the job as he did in his first, and that enthusiasm was infectious to all with whom he served. A former colleague of mine from Policy Exchange, who began his career working for Sir David, shared what many have commented was an accurate reflection of his character: not being bothered about missing or even returning a call from David Cameron, the then Prime Minister, yet turning his office upside down to find a missing local charity invitation for a duck race, and moving heaven and earth at all hours of the day for constituents in need.

My husband, James, joined the House of Commons following the last election, and experienced Sir David's generosity of friendship first-hand. They spent some time together recently, during lockdown, discussing Sir David's new book, *Ayes & Ears*, as part of his virtual book tour. Said with great humour and a big smile, it is fair to say that Sir David's opening line of “Now then, James, someone told me that you sleep with a member of the Cabinet” was not the introduction that James was expecting. In his book, Sir David asked how someone like him, born into relative poverty and with no great political helping hand, became a Conservative Member of Parliament.

The many thousands of people that he helped, and the causes that he supported, will be for ever grateful that he made that journey from those humble beginnings in Plaistow. As would be expected from Sir David, the proceeds office book will go to three charities whose causes he consistently championed: Endometriosis UK, Prost8 and the Music Man Project.

I stand here today not just as the Leader of this House but as the wife of an MP. I see the vital work they do day in, day out, on the front line to help some of the most vulnerable people in society: listening and offering support, and speaking up for those without a voice, all to serve the people in their constituencies,

[BARONESS EVANS OF BOWES PARK] regardless of how they voted. Of course, for many of your Lordships here today, that was your daily reality when you served in the other place.

Alongside Jo Cox, we now have had the horror of two MPs in the last five years killed while doing their jobs—simply serving their constituents, as they were elected to do. One of our own colleagues, the noble Lord, Lord Jones of Cheltenham, was badly injured and his aide Andrew Pennington killed in a horrific act of violence. Any attack on any parliamentarian is an attack on our democracy. All of us, across both Houses, across all parties and groups, stand together in condemnation of these senseless and callous attacks. It is right that the security measures in place for MPs are reviewed, but we cannot allow these dreadful events to break the close link between MPs and their constituents which is so central to our democracy.

It has been a devastating week for our party, our Parliament and our country, with the loss first of our dear friend James Brokenshire, and now of the much-loved Sir David Amess—both men taken from us too soon and with so much more to give. But today, I know I speak on behalf of the whole House when I say that our deepest sympathies are with Sir David's family, friends and staff, especially his wife Julia and their five children. We have lost a dedicated public servant and a colleague, but they have lost a husband and a father. I hope they can find some comfort in our admiration and respect for the most decent of men.

Sir David's family have called on everyone to set aside their differences and show kindness and love to all—something we should all reflect on. I know that there are many noble Lords who wish to speak today who had the honour of knowing Sir David much better than me. I look forward to learning more about him from them, but I have no doubt that we can all learn from Sir David's example of compassion, kindness and public service.

Baroness Smith of Basildon (Lab): My Lords, I think the whole House welcomed the noble Baroness's very emotional, genuine and fond tribute to Sir David.

As the news unfolded on Friday that Sir David Amess had been attacked, our hope that he had not been seriously hurt was mixed with that dreadful feeling we had in the pit of our stomachs that something deeply shocking and terrible had happened. When it was confirmed that he had not survived, it was hard to find the words to convey our feelings about this act of devastating horror.

We send our deepest and heartfelt condolences to Sir David's wife Julia, their children, their wider family, and his many friends and colleagues. Their loss is profound and overwhelming. We also feel for the staff who were with him at the time; the emotional shock that they suffered will be deeply felt for a long time.

I also take this opportunity, as the noble Baroness did, to express our sadness and condolences on the death of another Conservative MP, James Brokenshire. It is a cruel connection that James also had strong Essex links, having been born in Southend and previously represented Hornchurch. As she said, both men have left us too soon and had so much more to give.

I first met Sir David Amess in 1983, when he famously achieved that remarkable victory that many thought impossible: winning the newly drawn parliamentary constituency of Basildon, where there was not a single Conservative councillor. At the time, I was living in Southend and working for the League Against Cruel Sports. David was one of the then small group from his party strongly supporting our campaign to ban fox hunting and hare-coursing. He remained passionately committed to the welfare of animals; indeed, his recent, final comments in Parliament—though none of us knew they would be so—were to urge for debate on animal welfare.

Over the years, our paths criss-crossed in Basildon, Southend and Westminster—and, just occasionally, on the same side of an issue. Leaving Basildon for Southend was both painful and an opportunity for him. As with everything else, he embraced his new constituency with enthusiasm, commitment and genuine affection, which, as has been clear from the responses of his constituents, was warmly reciprocated.

4.15 pm

Throughout his nearly 40 years in Parliament, he was a formidable campaigner on a range of issues, usually triggered by a constituent who had come to him for help. At the end of term in the House of Commons, Sir David would always be there until the very end, making the most of an opportunity to speak in the Adjournment debate on the constituency issues closest to his heart. There were often a lot of them. His last opportunity to do so was on 22 July this year. You have to smile and admire the fact that, with just a three-minute time limit, he managed to raise the issues of care home costs, building regulations and accessibility, zero-carbon emissions, energy costs, gas boilers, tidal power, jet skis, single-use plastic, sewage discharge, the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, trees in Southend, the export of live animals, the Pensions Ombudsman, charity raising by a constituent, vulnerable children, the Olympics and Paralympics, the Royal British Legion and a memorial to Dame Vera Lynn. He finished by saying that "we must make Southend a city."—[*Official Report, Commons, 22/7/21; col. 1212.*]

Some made the mistake of not initially taking his Southend campaign seriously, but he was totally committed. A few weeks ago, he formally launched the bid for city status. In typical Sir David style, it was quite an occasion, with the town crier and local dignitaries all there in Southend in support. The council leader, Ian Gilbert, told me that Sir David arranged everything, saying of the event:

"It had a serious purpose but also a great sense of fun, which was the hallmark of Sir David's work".

As the whole House heard, we greatly enjoy the fact that the Queen has now given permission for Southend to become a city. What a great tribute, which will be well received not just in Southend but across the whole of south Essex.

To those who knew him best, it comes as no surprise that so many shared their experiences of acts of kindness and support from David when they needed it most. A good friend of mine, Southend Labour Councillor Julian Ware-Lane, was David's opponent in the 2015 and 2017 general elections. Julian tragically died before

his 60th birthday. David's thoughtfulness and kindness, including visiting Julian in hospital, was not something that most people knew about, but it meant so much to Julian and his friends and family. It is clear from accounts over the weekend that this was not a random act but part and parcel of how Sir David lived his life. The Mayor of Southend, Councillor Margaret Borton, spoke for the whole town and wider when saying:

"To have him taken away in this manner is a tragedy for our community".

It is too easy and too lazy for some to be cynical about MPs, councillors and indeed all politicians. At its most benign it is uninformed and unfair. At its worst it has devastating and heartbreaking consequences. We will celebrate Sir David's life and achievements, although today we mourn his loss. We also mourn the loss of what this attack represents. The similarities between the murders of Sir David and Jo Cox are deeply disturbing. Like so many other MPs, they put their heart and soul into being the best they could be. That means face-to-face engagement with constituents, many of whom will become friends. Those meetings, events and surgeries, visits to schools, factories and businesses, and even being stopped in the supermarket, are all part and parcel of being a local MP at the heart of your community.

It was just over five years ago when we gathered here to pay our tributes following the mindless and needless violence that had taken Jo's life. For her family—indeed, for her sister Kim, who now represents the constituency—the manner of Sir David's death brings back all that horror and fear. I said then:

"When good people of passion and principle tell their family and their friends they want to be a councillor or a Member of Parliament, I want their families to be proud of them, not to fear for them."—[*Official Report*, 2016/16; col. 1334.]

This is the third time since 2016 that this House has paid tribute to a dedicated public servant colleague killed in the line of duty—Jo Cox MP in 2016, PC Keith Palmer in 2017, and today Sir David Amess. They were killed because they embodied the best of selfless public service. Others will recall previous attacks, not least that on Nigel Jones—now a Member of your Lordships' House, the noble Lord, Lord Jones of Cheltenham—in 2000, when Andrew Pennington was killed, and the attempted murder of Stephen Timms MP in 2010. Yet here we are again. Again, we are talking about dialling down the toxicity of debate in modern politics; about how social media, especially when used anonymously, can be chilling and scary; and about how we respect and protect our MPs. The talk has to stop; it is not enough.

On behalf of these Benches, I pay tribute to the life and work of Sir David Amess and offer our condolences to those who knew and loved him.

Lord Newby (LD): My Lords, I begin by joining the Leader of the House and the Leader of the Opposition in expressing my condolences and those of my colleagues to the family and personal friends of Sir David, and to his wider family, the constituents of Southend West.

For Liberal Democrats of my generation, the point at which Sir David first made an impression on us was general election polling day in 1992. I was with Paddy Ashdown in his cottage near Yeovil on polling night. Michael Buerk had a BBC camera in the street

outside. The opinion polls were suggesting a hung Parliament and we were, naturally, extremely excited at this prospect—until the first result of the evening came in from a Conservative seat, namely Basildon, when the smiling features of Sir David confounded the predictions of the exit polls and our hopes. Michael Buerk folded up his equipment and slunk away. Sir David's delight counterpoised our disappointment.

In the years since, I have had little personal contact with Sir David, but a surprising number of my colleagues in your Lordships' House have—in work ranging from the Industry and Parliament Trust and the Iran Freedom Movement to the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Fire Safety and Rescue. They share the common reflection that he was a lovely person: courteous, entertaining and completely devoted to serving the public good and his constituents. In short, he had exactly the qualities that people wish to see in their elected representatives. He will certainly be greatly missed equally in Westminster and Southend.

Today, as we remember Sir David, our minds inevitably turn to the murder of Jo Cox, the deadly attack involving my colleague and noble friend Lord Jones of Cheltenham and the attack on Stephen Timms. After each of these terrible incidents, there was understandable soul searching on why the attack happened and how similar attacks might be avoided in future; and the same thoughts are in our minds today. It is obviously appropriate that there will be a review of the security of MPs to see what additional measures might be taken that are consistent with MPs being able to continue to meet their constituents and hear their concerns.

We in your Lordships' House are in a somewhat more fortunate position than our MP colleagues. Although, like them, we may receive abusive emails—or at least I do, every time I make a speech about Brexit—threats to our physical safety are, I believe, pretty rare. We will therefore largely be bystanders in the formal security review. But, for anybody involved in politics at any level, this tragedy should give us pause to consider how we conduct ourselves and the contribution we make to the heat generated by public debate. As we do, we might start by heeding the words of the Amess family and thinking about how to embody them in the way we go about our business. The family have said that they want people to

"set aside their differences and show kindness and love to all ... be tolerant and try to understand."

In politics it is not always possible to set aside differences altogether—but it is always possible to show kindness and consideration to all. There could be no better way of respecting the memory of Sir David than to make tolerance and kindness our watchwords as we face the challenges of the months ahead.

Lord Judge (CB): My Lords, so many noble Lords know Sir David—or knew Sir David—that I shall be brief. On behalf of the Cross Benches, we respectfully and mournfully join in and associate ourselves with the expressions of condolence and sympathy to Lady Amess and her family on what is, obviously, a calamitous loss—made, I suspect, much more poignant by the time when it happened, the occasion when it happened and the cruel circumstances in which it happened.

[LORD JUDGE]

An MP for 40 years was cut down while doing his job—an MP who, by all accounts, had that wonderful additional attribute, beyond serving the needs of every one of his constituents, of having an independent mind. Everything I have read about him tells me that he did. He was his own person, and we need Members of Parliament like that.

As I say, I did not know him. I know that the most reverend Primate the Archbishop of York will be speaking soon, and he was a personal friend, so noble Lords will want to hear from him and not me, but I must add something. Can we think about the way in which we deal with these issues ourselves? Can we reflect on the impact on the House of Commons, rather than on this place? Can we reflect—and I do, with sympathy and concern for the other place—on the troublesome paradox that it seems to require a catastrophic disaster, such as this murder or the murder of Jo Cox, to bring back to mind, and highlight before the public, the societal contribution and the contribution to the welfare of the nation that is going on with 650 elected Members of Parliament sitting in the other place? We owe them rather more, do we not, than a fleeting acknowledgement on an emotionally induced occasion? If we could retain, recover or find a way for the public to appreciate what our Members of Parliament do, we would be living in a much happier society. You do not have to agree with your MP, but you do have to respect him or her.

For today, though, noble Lords have heard enough from me. Our thoughts from these Benches are with Sir David's family, his wife and his friends, many of whom are in this Chamber; and let us not overlook the unhappy people who were there, very close to the scene at the time.

The Archbishop of York: My Lords, on behalf of the most reverend Primate the Archbishop of Canterbury, the bishops of the Church of England and, I am sure, all Christian people and all people of good will, I am here to offer the family of Sir David Amess and the constituents of Southend West my condolences and the assurance of the prayers of the Church. I am very grateful for all that has been said thus far, and, certainly, we on these Benches wish to associate ourselves with those comments.

As was said, I considered David Amess a friend. Leigh-on-Sea is my home town. Southend—now the city of Southend—is where I grew up. This appalling murder happened in streets I know well, just around the corner from where my mum lives. It was characteristic of David, whom I got to know during my time as Bishop of Chelmsford, that, when I was appointed, he was one of the first people to congratulate me. When I was translated to York, it was the same. He thought this was another way of putting Southend on the map: a boy who went to a secondary modern school in Southend was now the 98th Archbishop of York. He was so pleased. Last time I saw him, he asked to have his photograph taken with me.

I reckon that, now Southend has been declared a city today, forget about a statue of Vera Lynn at Dover; we are going to put a statue of David Amess at the end of Southend pier. He was—and I know this

from the work I did with him—a deeply committed constituency MP. He exemplified what that means. He knew the people he served, and in the constituency he was completely colour blind to political difference. He just served the people he had been elected to serve.

4.30 pm

But I want to say this: hate cannot win. It may score many points and land many punches, but it cannot win, because, trusting no one, hate just ends up with endless divisions and suspicions, and, in the end, it just consumes itself. Sorry—I am going to go into sermon mode just for a moment, sisters and brothers. Love is always stronger; it is always more tenacious; its patient endurance draws us together. By love, I mean not just warm feelings of well-disposed good will but that deeply committed determination to get up each morning and live what you believe in, put the needs of others before yourself and recognise our common humanity. That is where the word “kindness” comes from: it is linked to the word “kin”. It means that we belong to each other; we serve the common good; we know that our best interests are absolutely interwoven with those of others, and they lead to those things, those values and that vision, that are worth living for.

This love is what we on these Benches see in Jesus Christ. It was that love and faith in Christ within the community of the Church that was the source and sustenance of David Amess's vision and values. It was this that enabled him to reach across party-political divides, get on well with everyone and exhibit a good-humoured generosity and a kindness that is, sadly, often woefully lacking in public and political discourse today.

These same values, this same vision, are held in our democracy. They require us to listen and to love one another, especially those with whom we differ and disagree, and to attend to each other's needs and serve the common good. They call us to speak kindly of each other, to think well of each other and to act generously. It is because Sir David Amess so exemplified those things, regardless of what his politics happened to be, that we are so easily able to come together and remember him, to esteem his contribution to public life and to mourn his death—but not be defeated by the hatred that killed him.

I will conclude with some words that I wrote in a newspaper yesterday about his faith:

“David Amess didn't wear his faith on his sleeve. He wore it in his heart.”

That is the best place for faith because, when you wear it in your heart, it shapes everything.

The Lord Speaker (Lord McFall of Alcluth): My Lords, I will call three remote contributions before opening up to the rest of the House.

Baroness Brinton (LD) [V]: My Lords, my noble friend Lord Jones of Cheltenham cannot be in his place today but has asked me to start by saying something on his behalf about Sir David Amess. As noble Lords have already heard, my noble friend Lord Jones was himself attacked, and his aide and friend, Councillor Andy Pennington, was killed, at a constituency surgery in 2000.

My noble friend wants me to say on his behalf:

“To learn David’s life has been taken is the most unimaginable shock. I simply can’t believe this has happened again, and to the kindest, most decent of men.

He was a mate, David. We were on opposite sides of every debate, he voted the wrong way on most things and disagreed with me on just about everything. We were in different parties but always got on well. He was a wonderful personality and worked exceptionally hard for his constituents.

He was a proper parliamentarian, a dedicated public servant and a lovely man. If he bumped into me when he had visitors to the House, he’d say, ‘Oh and this is my friend Nigel, he was attacked, you know? Do you remember, he was on the television?’ I’m appalled that he has suffered like this.

David, like my friend Andy Pennington and I, was just trying to do the job to the best of his ability. Our democracy relies on an open channel between those in power and the people who we represent. It’s vital to be able to meet people face-to-face so they can feel we are here and working for them.”

Turning to my own tribute, I first got to know Sir David when I joined your Lordships’ House a decade ago and he quickly nobbled me—there is no other word—to join the all-party group for fire safety and rescue, which he chaired; I really did not have a choice. He had been a friend of my father, Tim Brinton, having met when they were MPs together, and David knew that my stepmother, Jeanne, had been a Conservative chairman of the Kent fire safety committee and that I had campaigned actively for sprinklers in schools. But that was David: every argument well researched, compliments paid and, before I knew it, I was even an officer of the all-party group too. To the utter bemusement of the much younger members of the all-party group and visiting experts, he usually introduced me as Tim Brinton’s daughter, which always made me very proud. Their friendship was based on rejecting preferment but loving the core job of being an MP, both in the constituency and in the House.

Over the decade that followed, I saw David’s campaigning zeal through the work of the all-party group, holding Ministers and sector professionals to account. Schools Fire Minister after Schools Fire Minister and Building Planning Minister after Building Planning Minister were truly held to account in David’s inimitable style. Of course, our work became even more important after the tragedy of the Grenfell fire and still is not over. We will carry it on in his memory.

Many have spoken since Friday of David’s kindness, decency, courtesy and humour. I have seen all in plenty. I was unwell for a large part of last year, and he rang me regularly to check on my progress. I want to send my deepest sympathy to Julia, their children, his wider family and all his staff and colleagues.

In this day and age of daily abuse—online and in person—death threats, attacks and even murders, David stood as an oasis of reasonable behaviour and genuine affection for all those who crossed his path. In 2017, Christians in Politics ran a campaign for learning to disagree well. I cannot think of a better example than David of always disagreeing well. In political terms, we were polar opposites, but, with him, that was never a barrier: he always found what we had in common, and we could stand together. His faith was intrinsic to every action, every word he uttered and every passing smile to faces that he recognised. May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

Baroness Harris of Richmond (LD) [V]: My Lords, we never discussed politics: David knew mine and I his, and it was always like that over the years we worked together. He succeeded me as chair of the Industry and Parliament Trust in 2014, having been a board member himself for a number of years previously. I always valued his contributions, if not always the way he put them.

I well recall him saying to me before one meeting, with that lovely crinkly smile on his face and his eyes twinkling, “Now, Angela, this isn’t going to take too long, is it?” The agenda was huge.

Nick Maher, the trust’s chief executive, told me a lovely story which epitomised David. He was introducing the Lord Mayor of London at an event and said, “I would like to introduce the lord mayor. Of course, none of us can aspire to be lord mayor because we don’t have enough money and didn’t go to the right school.” The room went very quiet. That was so David. You never really knew what he might say next. I know that Nick would also want me to say that David would always go that extra mile for the IPT, was adored by the staff there and worked enormously hard for the trust, which he continued to chair until 2017.

We also worked together on the British Parliamentary Committee for Iran Freedom. David was passionate about the Iranian resistance movement, and we shared many platforms together over the years. His commitment to everything he campaigned for was inspiring.

He was a kind, funny and thoughtful man, dedicated to his beloved Southend, which I often teased him about as I had worked at the airport there in my younger days. He was totally without malice or nastiness and always charmed everyone with whom he came into contact. It is almost impossible to believe that anyone would want to harm him, let alone attack him so brutally and fatally. He was a true parliamentarian, who lived for his family and for his constituency—in that order—and his loss to us is deeply felt and incredibly painful.

Baroness Masham of Ilton (CB) [V]: My Lords, as many people were, I was especially shocked and saddened when I heard of the terrible murder of David while he was helping his people. I had the privilege of working with him on liver disease and hepatitis C. He was always cheerful and good to be with. We shared an interest in animals and the same faith. We are the poorer for having lost two very good Members of Parliament while they were doing their work. I send my heartfelt condolences to his family. Could priests be allowed to attend a crime scene so that they can give the victim their last rites, especially when they are dying?

The Lord Speaker (Lord McFall of Alcluith): My Lords, I open to the House.

Lord Howard of Lympne (Con): My Lords, David Amess and I entered the House of Commons together at the 1983 general election. He was my colleague and friend for nearly 40 years. He was, as so many others have said, a really lovely man. He was one of that select band of people who are truly life-enhancing. When you left a meeting with David, even a chance encounter, you felt happier and better than you had felt before.

[LORD HOWARD OF LYMPNE]

He was one of those rare human beings who looked for the best in others and, in doing so, brought out the best in them. He was a living antidote to the cynicism with which so many regard politics and politicians, and I join so many others in expressing my heartfelt sympathy to his family. He was, of course, a Conservative, and his conservative beliefs were deeply held and truly felt. However, as so many have said this afternoon, they did not in any way prove an impediment to his working with others across parties for the causes in which he believed.

4.45 pm

This appalling tragedy has focused attention on the constituency role that was the core of David's parliamentary life. It is one of the great strengths of our parliamentary democracy that every Member of the House of Commons represents a constituency. In my opinion and on the basis of my 27 years in that House, the constituency surgery plays a key role in the bond between a Member of Parliament and his or her constituents. It ensures that whatever our failings—and heaven knows there are many of them—it is quite difficult for a Member of Parliament to be out of touch.

Many years ago, not long after President George Bush senior had failed in his bid to be re-elected, I was visited by a presidential contender from the United States. He asked what plans I had for the weekend and I explained that I would be in my constituency, holding my surgeries. He asked what they were. He was very puzzled. When I explained, he expressed his surprise that a Cabinet Minister—which I was at the time—would be spending his weekend on this kind of activity. If George Bush's Cabinet had held surgeries, he said, he would still be President.

Although I have no doubt that measures can be taken to improve the security and safety of Members of Parliament, I hope that nothing will be done to weaken the links between Members and their constituents, in which surgeries play such an important part. That would be the very opposite of the legacy which David Amess so richly deserves.

Lord Clarke of Nottingham (Con): My Lords, I knew David Amess when he first came in because I was elected before him. For nearly 40 years, I was on good and friendly terms with him as a parliamentary colleague. I am as shocked as anybody in this House that such a man should come to such a terrible end.

We are all saying the same things about him and the tributes that were paid publicly last week by various people repeated the same points. As others will wish to join in, I will not repeat them all. The reason is that on this occasion the things are all true. We have a very good convention in this country that if you have to pay tribute to someone when they die, you find something polite to say. I have heard people say very moving things about people whom I know they thought privately were rather nasty pieces of work, but they were sympathetic when they died.

With David Amess, as everybody has said—and for the sake of others I will not just repeat it all—the first words that come to mind, or variants of them, when

you think of him is that he was a very nice man. I cannot believe that a man like that ever had an enemy and that applied to his political life as much as to his private life. People from across the other side of the aisle from him, people from different parties who disagreed profoundly with him, have said these things. I, too, was a Conservative but it cannot be said that David and I were on the same wing of the broad coalition—as it is with all political parties in this country—that is the Conservative Party. He was a very fierce Eurosceptic. He was a great supporter of capital punishment. These are opinions which, to put it lightly, I do not share.

He was one of that group—the majority of British politicians—who would never have dreamed of allowing political disagreement to interfere with personal friendship. He respected the true right of free speech in a free society, which is that you respect the integrity and the sincerity of the person with whom you are having an argument and you maintain civilised dialogue. He was also an enthusiast—a hard-working, enthusiastic Back-Bencher who never betrayed the slightest interest in being such a keen party man that he was seeking preferment.

He always had campaigns. I shall not list the ones that I have encountered over the years but, at any given stage, he pursued quite a lot of campaigns, and he pursued them all with the same energy and enthusiasm. His personality was always amusing and engaging, and it was one of the things that forwarded what he was trying to argue for and helped recruitment to it.

I join noble Lords in all sympathies to his family, and I agree that the tragedy of this latest disaster for our democracy and our Parliament is that the victim is one of the very nicest political practitioners of any political view that I, and most of us, have encountered. It is a truly moving occasion.

On the wider aspects, you can never make controversial figures such as Members of Parliament totally safe—there is an element of minor and quite acceptable degree of risk for any Member of Parliament, however obscure and quiet. We have always had a fringe of violence in recent years; people have talked of the most recent four knife attacks, all by lunatic madmen. I think that through my time in the House of Commons I lost about six of my colleagues, who were killed by IRA terrorists and others. The most well-known occasions were the Brighton bomb and the murder of Airey Neave in the Palace of Westminster. There were others—I have not counted them all. We have to have precautions, and we have always had to have them. When I was a controversial and prominent figure, there were several weeks when the Nottinghamshire police advised me that they would like to have a Special Branch policeman sitting in the outer office of my surgery. Nothing ever came of it. The death threats that I got were usually from harmless lunatics who were just trying to frighten or offend me. But to a certain extent, it is difficult to minimise. I fear that, whereas the IRA was at least predictable, had a coherent political agenda and was determined to use terrorist violence to advance it, nowadays it is loners, fanatics and madmen, people with perverted views of their own, and it is very difficult to guarantee security against such people.

I shall only echo what everybody else has said about the contribution that political debate can make. The deteriorating tone of debate over the last 10 or 20 years is somehow encouraging these mad loners to start emerging and becoming active. There is an absurd cynicism among the public towards the political class. I fear that if you told the majority of the public in casual conversation that most MPs were crooks and only in it for what they were getting out of it, and it does not matter who you vote for, they would agree, although it is a bizarre, ridiculous and untrue allegation. Standards of honesty in the House of Commons are rather higher on average than the standards of honesty among the general public—although all groups have scoundrels, and the House of Commons has always had one or two.

The public exchange of views has become nastier and simpler. Politicians themselves are partly to blame, but social media has had a dreadful effect on the tone of debate, and the media give more courage to the lunatic fringe on the edge of perfectly good lobbies than they do to the people arguing the cause. As parliamentarians, we all have to maintain the standards, as we undoubtedly do, and mourn the loss of a very great, very nice and hard-working parliamentarian.

Lord Alton of Liverpool (CB): I associate myself with the remarks of the noble and learned Lord, Lord Clarke of Nottingham, particularly about the declining standard of political debate. He is also right to remind us of the high price that so many in politics have to pay. I was elected to the House of Commons in 1979 on the very day before Airey Neave was murdered in the precincts of Parliament. It was with profound and aching sorrow that I heard the shocking news on Friday that Sir David Amess MP had been murdered. Over the past 40 years, David and I had become close friends, and I shared many platforms with him, in his constituency and elsewhere.

We both had our working-class origins in the East End of London and, indeed, were baptised within a year of one another in the same church by the same Franciscan priest. He often joked that there must have been something in the holy water. His faith was in his DNA, and it animated his belief in public service and the principle of duty.

I first met David when he came into the House in 1983. From across the House, we joined forces in taking up the case of Raoul Wallenberg, the Swedish diplomat who saved thousands of Jewish lives from the Nazis. In 1997, thanks to David's assiduous campaign, a statue was erected to Wallenberg outside the Western Marble Arch Synagogue. There were other campaigns, about Soviet Jewry and the plight of Alexander Ogorodnikov, a Russian Orthodox dissident. We frequently shared platforms to highlight the persecution of people because of their religion or belief or human rights violations, especially—as we have heard from others—the situation in Iran.

David's faith informed his passionate commitment to the very right to life, human dignity and the common good. But it was also rooted in his absolute conviction that an MP's first priority was to their constituents. It was the death of a constituent from hypothermia which led to his successful Private Member's Bill on fuel poverty.

Just a few weeks ago, David asked me to take part in the launch of his memoir, *Ayes & Ears*. Typical of David's kindness and generosity, as we heard from the Leader of the House, the proceeds of the book were dedicated to three charities: Endometriosis UK, Prost8 and the Leigh-on-Sea-based Music Man project. David's causes were rooted in the neighbourhoods and people he represented. He was committed to direct face-to-face engagement, which, as the noble Lord, Lord Howard, was right to remind us, is at the very heart—the essence—of being a Member of Parliament. Indeed, the noble Lord contested the constituency I was ultimately elected in in a previous general election, and he knows, as I do, that it is a precious relationship you have with your constituents. But now it has taken David's life, as it took the life of Jo Cox, as the noble Baroness, Lady Smith, reminded us, and Andy Pennington. If it had not been for a mercifully foiled plot, it would have also led to the murder of another friend since teenage days—Rosie Cooper, the Labour Member of Parliament for West Lancashire.

But as Mr Speaker, Sir Lindsay Hoyle, has rightly said, heinous crimes must not be allowed to drain the lifeblood from our representative democracy. This was an attack on democracy itself. We would be making a terrible mistake—and I know it is not what David would have wanted—for his death to simply lead to more barriers being put between the people and their representatives. We will all want to understand the killer's motivations; to delve deeper into the failure of the Prevent programme; and to understand the radicalisation which takes place in our prisons and through the promotion of intolerant, toxic and violent ideologies, sometimes with the indulgence of social media. Our thoughts today should also be with every family in this country—far too many—who have lost loved ones to knife crime.

As David's family said in a statement today, people of faith, from all the great religions, and people of no faith must work much harder to create a more respectful society which honours difference. Too often we have been in denial about the sources of the hateful threats to the foundations of a liberal, open and pluralistic society. As David's horrific death demonstrates, notwithstanding all the good in the world, we still have the capacity to do truly evil things.

His death reminds us of the deep-seated challenges we face. Above all, it will have devastating consequences for his family and loved ones, and my principal thoughts and prayers today are with Julia and their children. May this good man now rest in peace.

Lord Rogan (UUP): My Lords, I will be brief to allow other colleagues to say a few words.

On this sad occasion, when we mourn the death of our colleague, I remember a smile—the smile of David Amess. I have known David for some 15 years, and I never saw him without that smile on his face. In those years, I never heard a bad word said about him. How could there have been? He was, in the true sense of the word, a true and perfect Christian gentleman.

I remember fondly an all-party delegation to the Philippines led by David. It was an honour and privilege to be a part of it and to be with him. He moulded a very diverse group of parliamentarians into a very

[LORD ROGAN]

united group. His personality, charm and smile charmed the pants off all the Philippine members we met, both Ministers and parliamentary delegates.

As many have mentioned, Sir David had many interests; one was a keen and abiding interest in Northern Ireland. Each time we met, either the first or second sentence he would say was, “Well, Dennis, how’s Northern Ireland? How can I help?”.

Julia Amess has lost a husband. David’s children have lost a father. We parliamentarians have lost a colleague. Northern Ireland has lost a friend. David, we all miss you.

5 pm

Lord Forsyth of Drumlean (Con): My Lords, as time is short, I will not say very much about David. So much has been said already. We both entered the House of Commons on the same day, along with my noble friend Lord Howard. David served for 38 years; I lasted 14 before I was asked to leave.

I am grateful for that in some ways, because I missed the cesspit that is social media. I used Twitter for about three months, but that was as much as I could stand. That is not to say that lots of negative material was directed at me, but social media is a cancer at the heart of our political system. The fact that people can write this stuff anonymously and without being accountable for it is something that needs to change.

David was an exceptional person, but there are many exceptional people at the other end of this building, as there are in this House. The role of an MP is not a job, but a vocation. At this moment, as we think of David’s family, we should think of the sacrifice they have made. There are the endless phone calls on a Sunday afternoon about drains, someone’s views or to say that “You’re not getting your message across”. Those who have been in the House of Commons will be very familiar with those. There are the distractions—the inability to go and see your children play sport and so on. It is a complete way of life and the support which David had from his family is something we should all be profoundly grateful for. That he should be robbed of the joy of retirement and the chance of seeing his children perhaps go on to produce grandchildren is a particularly savage thing to have happened to such a nice man.

I looked at *Hansard* for this year to see what David had been saying. He spoke on topics from endometriosis to forced adoption, from car charging points to the Maldives fishing industry, from motor neurone disease to night flying, from knife crime to Operation Yewtree, and of course the now celebrated campaigns for city status for Southend and a memorial for Vera Lynn. Both David and Vera were great patriots and supporters of our country and, to echo the noble Lord, Lord Rogan, David was also a fantastic supporter of the union of the United Kingdom.

The launch of the campaign for the statue of Vera Lynn included a song called “Irreplaceable”—how ironic. David is irreplaceable to the people of Southend; he was a one-off—I hope that will not be used by anyone in the by-election campaign. I began to think about which song would be appropriate for David.

I thought of Vera Lynn’s “When You Hear Big Ben, You’re Home Again”, but then thought that, with David’s hugely energetic campaigns, it is probably “Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition”.

David Amess and the noble Lord, Lord Alton, worked tirelessly in support of persecuted Christians around the world. We should honour that by tackling these issues and recognising that it is in all our interests and in our nation’s interests that we support freedom of expression and freedom of religious belief. David Amess was a champion of that.

Lord Blunkett (Lab): My Lords, we have heard wonderful tributes by people who knew Sir David much better than I did, but I want to put on the record very briefly some messages that I picked up from his constituents. Jill Allen-King, aged 82, has written about her guide dog. Most recently, she asked me to write a foreword for her latest book about being blind in lockdown. In that book, she talks about Sir David, and when I phoned her a couple of months ago, she described what a wonderful man he was: attending charitable dos when it would have been a lot easier not to; helping her with fundraising; and being there at the drop of a hat. That was the measure of Sir David Amess.

Like the noble Lord, Lord Newby, I remember him from 1992, because two or three days before the Sheffield rally, I went to Basildon to campaign and it was patently obvious then that we had lost. I knocked on doors, and the response was not just about whether people were going to vote for Labour: they were going to vote for David. I went back and reported to headquarters that we were shot. Unfortunately for us, we were.

I say to the most reverend Primate the Archbishop of York, “Yes, we must not let hate succeed”. There is a “Panorama” programme on BBC television tonight, “Why do they hate me so much?” Yes, social media has whipped this up and made it more prevalent and dangerous. However, apart from those who are seriously mentally ill, to whom the noble and learned Lord, Lord Clarke, referred, we have a phenomenon of hate that is about difference, intolerance and the way in which people can no longer have the dialogue that allows us to speak strongly, think emotionally and believe that our values are worth fighting for, but do so by upholding them in the spirit of democracy. So often now, the hate is about—with Sir David, it certainly was not about the individual—our system, our democracy and the world around us.

One thing that I picked up over the last few weeks about Sir David that is very close to my heart was his engagement with young people learning about politics, citizenship and democracy. If there is one thing that we can carry forward, which I hope will bring comfort to his family and close friends, it is being able to teach our young people how to do democracy, how to be understanding and how to have very strong opinions but express them in a way that is respectful to others as well as to themselves. If that comes out of this and people can have a dialogue across the country about how we could make that work better, Sir David’s life—wonderful as it has been—will also be remembered for making another contribution, like that of Jo Cox, to changing the way in which we do our politics.

Lord Young of Cookham (Con): My Lords, I will pay a very brief tribute to David, based on 32 years of shared friendship in the other place. As my noble friend Lord Howard said, he was basically loyal to his party. Speaking as a former Chief Whip, of the 876 votes in the 2010 Parliament, David supported the Government 97.6% of the time. No one could complain about that. However, he was a man of strong principle, impervious to the bait of ministerial office, as my noble and learned friend Lord Clarke said.

When he voted against the Government, he did so on a matter of principle. Your Lordships might be interested to hear that he voted against the Government on the House of Lords Reform Bill in 2011. He also voted against military action against Syria, when the Government were defeated, and he opposed the badger cull, animal welfare being one of his special subjects. More recently, he actually voted against the Government on leaseholder compensation post the Grenfell tragedy, on which many of us may share his views.

His sunny optimism, revealed by that broad smile, his basic decency, his generosity and his modesty made him a great colleague. We would see him walking briskly from engagement to engagement with a sheaf of papers under his arm, his timetable fractured both here and in Southend by his willingness to stop and talk to colleagues. The shadow Leader mentioned his insistence that the House of Commons should not adjourn for the Christmas Recess until it had answered 18 issues of great importance to the burghers of Southend. Just pity the Leader of the House replying to that debate.

I mention one other factor about David. He was generous with his time and happy to visit and speak in the constituencies of Conservative MPs—an obligation often overlooked by his more self-important colleagues. He was also capable of mischief. He once came to North West Hampshire, and the convention is that the visiting speaker pays a glowing tribute to the industry and energy of the incumbent, however well founded in truth that may be. But there was none of that from David. “Great to be here in George’s patch,” he began, “but I don’t want to waste time talking about him. I want to tell you about myself.”

Reading and listening to the tributes paid to David over the weekend, I asked myself whether people would join the dots and link the tributes we are paying to David today with those we paid last week to James Brokenshire and those we paid earlier to Jo Cox. I realised that those public servants, whom fate has cruelly taken from us too early, were between them more representative of this country’s often-abused public servants than the bad apples who get us unfavourable publicity. David’s family has expressed the hope that some good should come from this tragedy. David was essentially a generous man, and he would not mind sharing some of the tributes to him more broadly if it helped to change the perception of the profession to which he has selflessly given his life.

Lord Blencathra (Con): My Lords, I was also elected in 1983, but I first discovered Sir David’s fundamental decency, integrity and courtesy when I was a junior Whip. Later, I was David’s Chief Whip for four years. I held him in the highest regard because he was the sort

of MP we Chief Whips liked and rated—not because he sycophantically voted for us 96% or 97% of the time, but because he always told us well in advance on the 3% of occasions when he could not because his conscience and constituency priorities prevailed. Chief Whips can live with MPs who have that level of courtesy and decency.

As has been said, he was deeply religious. That clearly influenced his views on political issues, but he was always capable of seeing the other point of view. He always disagreed with the viewpoint, not the person making it; that is a sign of greatness and generosity of spirit. He followed the great commandment of Jesus to love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind, and love your neighbour as yourself. Well, David loved 70,000 neighbours—all his constituents in Southend West—and people further afield in the UK and even further afield around the world, as has been said. In fact, those suffering in the world were David’s neighbours—and not just people; as the great hymn by Cecil Alexander says:

“All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small,
All things wise and wonderful,
The Lord God made them all.”

If the Lord God made them, David Amess defended them.

I say this carefully: I think that David died a Christian martyr. I mean “martyr” in the proper Greek derivation of the term meaning a witness and nothing else. He died a witness to his belief in the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity and to their practical realisation, including in working for others until the very end. He did his duty to his God, his family, his constituency and his country. What truer passport is there to eternal life? I am reminded of the opening to the anthem “In Paradisum”, which was sung at the funeral of Lady Thatcher. It begins:

“May the angels lead you into paradise”—

but there will be no resting in peace for David Amess in paradise, for even now he will be campaigning among the angels and archangels for heaven to be granted city status.

I pass on my sincere condolences to Lady Amess, David’s children and all those others who may have been traumatised by his awful murder. It was a privilege to know him and I really liked serving with him.

Lord Cormack (Con): My Lords, there is one aspect of Sir David’s work that is perhaps not widely known. Every year for the last 30 years, he took into his office a young American student from the Catholic University of America. I had the honour of arranging the programmes over those years, so I worked closely with him. He gave those young people a wonderful insight into British parliamentary democracy. Those young people, who had perhaps met the Senators or Congressmen they had worked for on the Hill only once in a three or four-month period, saw Sir David every day. He took them to his constituency. They saw at first hand what it meant to be personally represented. They all benefited from that experience, and he made an intangible contribution to British-American relations in the process.

5.15 pm

Lord McLoughlin (Con): My Lords, I had the pleasure of getting to know David when I first came into the House in 1986 after a by-election, and he was incredibly helpful to me at that time. Like my two predecessors in the Whips' Office as Chief Whip, I got to know him over a period of time. It is fair to say that David followed two Whips: the Conservative Whip and the Whip of the Catholic Church, and the Catholic Church would always take precedence over the Conservative Whip. However, I am glad to say that they did not often collide, on parliamentary occasions at any rate.

David was a man of true belief and deep conviction. After what happened to him last week, his family will be asking, "Why?" I do not think there is an answer. It is random devastation—devastation that could affect almost any parliamentarian. As we have heard today, the issues that David covered, the projects that he raised and the campaigns that he fought for and fronted were so widespread that everyone could see what a superb constituency Member of Parliament he was.

One of the things about the House of Commons is that sometimes we come across some very strange people. They are well represented in Parliament overall, and Parliament is stronger for it. We have to come across those people, meet them and listen to them—although sometimes we might not listen for too long. I hope his family can come to accept that while their husband and father was taken from them and he cannot be replaced, this was a random attack by an evil person.

Lord McColl of Dulwich (Con): My Lords, I also pay tribute to Sir David, whom I admired and with whom I had dealings over many years. It would be a fitting tribute to him if all in both Houses would emulate his gracious words and actions and avoid, as he did, aggressive words, false allegations and visceral hatred. Such an improvement should also involve the media. This would be a great tribute to a great man, a loyal friend and a fine Christian gentleman.

Lord Moynihan (Con): My Lords, it is almost 40 years since the first meeting David and I attended on our respective roads to Westminster, entering Parliament for marginal constituencies in 1983. Here was a man who was constructive, committed, amusing and always willing to go the extra mile for you, or indeed for anyone he felt he could help. We stayed close for many decades.

Last week, at his request, I was with him on a delegation to Qatar, where his charm and mischievous sense of humour, deployed in a way only David could get away with in front of the most elevated in society, was put to wonderful effect. It was so good to be with him. On asking the Father Emir how many children he had, and receiving the reply "24", he promptly reached for a small House of Lords picture frame as a gift and challenged him to fit all 24 into the frame. When he told the Emir, who had just received a copy of David's book, that he could "throw it in the wastepaper basket",

that led to more laughter and marked him out as being wonderfully self-deprecating. We flew out sitting together and flew back chatting away. The mission had been one of the most successful we had been on.

His sensitivity and determination to help rehouse the 13 unaccompanied Afghan children with British family connections; his strong Catholic faith; his work as a strong supporter of Israel, yet always welcomed and respected in so many Arab countries; his ability to bring together and unite members of many a parliamentary delegation; and the quips and asides that always raised a smile, were there for all to see.

As co-founders and co-chairs of the All-Party Group for the Olympic and Paralympic Games, we were planning a celebration for our Olympic and Paralympic medallists here in the Lords, an event he was much anticipating. It was no surprise, then, to receive the following tribute from the president of the International Olympic Committee, Thomas Bach, who yesterday wrote:

"Sir David fought keenly for sport and for all it could do. He understood that the Olympic Games are the only event this can bring the entire world together in peaceful competition ... He worked tirelessly to keep the games free of politics and dispute."

David was a true friend. He proved that politics was more than the collective DNA of ministerial ambition. It is, as has been said many times, not least in this House, about public service, about challenging and changing the lives of constituents, even in the smallest possible way; and to make a difference to your constituents and the causes you felt passionately about was everything that David stood for. He was a decent, uplifting, unstintingly hard-working, kind man with a mischievous sense of humour; an outstanding parliamentarian and constituency MP; devoted husband to Julia and loving father to their children; and such a loyal friend and colleague to so many of us. At the end, he was doing what he loved best and what he was brilliant at: helping his constituents, and not least realising his long-standing ambition that Southend, for which he long campaigned, should be a city, both on earth and, God willing, in heaven.

Lord Ashton of Hyde (Con): My Lords, as I explained earlier, we have to end now because the House is going to join the House of Commons and process at 5.30 pm behind the Lord Speaker to St Margaret's. However, I am of course aware that many other noble Lords would have liked to pay tribute to Sir David today. Those Members who have not had a chance to speak may email their speeches to *Hansard* by noon on Friday. Those speeches will be included in a special collection of tributes published by *Hansard* which will be sent to Sir David's family. I shall now adjourn the House so we can join the procession starting at 5.30 pm from the Chamber.

The Lord Speaker (Lord McFall of Alcluith): My Lords, Members who wish to take part in the procession to the service in St Margaret's should wait in the Chamber as we prepare to leave in the next few minutes.

House adjourned at 5.23 pm.