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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES  
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# HOUSE OF LORDS

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<b>Abbreviation</b>	<b>Party/Group</b>
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
UUP	Ulster Unionist Party

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# House of Lords

Friday 7 July 2023

10 am

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

## Windrush Generation: 75th Anniversary

*Motion to Take Note*

10.06 am

*Moved by Lord Murray of Blidworth*

That this House takes note of the 75th anniversary of the arrival of the Windrush generation.

### **The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Migration and Borders (Lord Murray of Blidworth)**

**(Con):** My Lords, it is a great privilege and honour to represent the Government at this debate on a topic that matters so deeply to us all. We have, over the past few days and weeks, been marking a supremely special moment in our history. The people who arrived in Britain that June day 75 years ago, and in the months and years that followed, are an essential part of our national story. One can only imagine the sense of excitement, anticipation and apprehension that those aboard the HMT “Empire Windrush” felt as they approached Tilbury and disembarked. There would be hardships and obstacles to overcome but, through sacrifice, endurance and an indomitable spirit, overcome they did. In so doing, they played an invaluable role in rebuilding our country and public services in the aftermath of the Second World War. They were, as His Majesty the King put it so aptly, “pioneers”.

What has come to be known as Windrush Day was a hugely significant milestone for those beginning their new lives here, but there is meaning to be found in that day not just for them but for all of us. This was a seminal moment in our collective history, a symbol of the diversity that is a defining feature of our society. The Windrush generation and its children and grandchildren have enhanced and enriched our society in myriad ways. We see it everywhere, in sport, culture, art, business, politics, the National Health Service and the emergency services—the list goes on. So vast and sweeping has been their contribution that it would be a fool’s errand for me to attempt to do it justice in the relatively modest amount of time available to me.

Instead, I shall simply say this: we owe the members of the Windrush generation a huge debt. Our country would be greatly diminished if they had not come here three-quarters of a century ago. It is right that we cherish them, and it is right that we recognise them, not only for all they have contributed and done but for what Windrush signifies. There are all sorts of ways that we can do that, of course. This year’s commemorations have been especially significant as we mark the 75th anniversary. It has been very special indeed to see the Windrush story showcased so prominently through events, documentaries, articles, exhibitions and much more. Above all, it is through hearing and reading the accounts of those who were

part of this unique story that one gets a true sense of their accomplishments. The anniversary has been joyous and poignant in equal measure, and I sincerely hope that those being celebrated feel that their voices have been heard and their contributions recognised. The Government have supported that effort through educational, arts and sporting projects and activities across the United Kingdom.

Of course, remembrance and recognition need not be confined to anniversaries. We now have a magnificent National Windrush Monument, following its unveiling at Waterloo station last year. The Government were delighted to provide funding for the project, which stands as a permanent tribute to the Windrush generation and its descendants and a powerful reminder of its contribution for the millions of people who pass through one of our busiest stations every year. Many people helped to make the memorial a reality. I am grateful to every one of them, but it would be remiss of me not to single out the contribution of the noble Baroness, Lady Benjamin. This is, of course, a subject of deep personal resonance for her, and I am sure that the whole House will join me in commending her not only on her work on the memorial but also on Windrush generally.

The story of the Windrush generation is uplifting and inspirational—a story of struggles overcome and of resilience through adversity. That the story should come to include a chapter of suffering and distress in recent years is a source of profound sadness for us all. The terrible injustices that have come to light shocked the whole country to its core. What happened to the victims of the Windrush scandal was an outrage; it should never have happened. The effects remain painful and difficult. My department—the Home Office—and indeed the whole Government, are absolutely determined to right the wrongs. Although compensation cannot undo the hurt caused, it was right that the Government put in place schemes to provide documentation and compensation, and I repeat the promises made by successive Home Secretaries that those schemes will not close. We have paid or offered more than £75 million in compensation. We have provided documents to thousands to enable them to document their status.

While righting the wrongs will remain a key focus for the Government, I know that some representatives of that generation are keen for the name “Windrush” to be reclaimed from the taint of that scandal. They want it returned to its original status as a symbol of all that is great about that generation and its descendants—a symbol as strong and visible as the wonderful monument I spoke of a moment ago.

This debate is an opportunity to reflect on all that the Windrush generation, its relatives and its communities have done for our country. It is an opportunity to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the arrival of that ship—a ship of hopes, dreams and opportunities. We are here to celebrate and thank those who came to work in the NHS—then, as now, a social innovation like no other, and one that is of course enjoying its own 75th jubilee. We are here to celebrate and thank those who came to revive the post-war transport and industrial infrastructure without which this country would not have flourished in the second half of that

[LORD MURRAY OF BLIDWORTH]

century. We are here to celebrate and thank those who brought new vibrancy and artistic energy to enrich our cultural landscape and whose contributions have helped to make Great Britain a world leader in the arts.

We know that members and descendants of that Windrush generation continue to serve their country in many guises, including in the police and fire services, education, the care sector and social work. We see other contributions made to our economy, our social fabric and our futures, whether as business and technology leaders, artists, musicians, scientists, designers and researchers and in sport and charity work. Our spiritual lives have been enhanced by the churches, faith groups and religious leadership provided by members of that community and their relatives. By choosing to serve others, every generation inspires and encourages the next and strengthens the bonds between us all.

I look forward to a debate befitting of the significance of this anniversary as we celebrate the undeniable achievements of the Windrush generation and subsequent generations. I know that we will hear heartfelt and insightful contributions across the House. That being the case, rest assured that I will very shortly take my seat. Before I do, I will quote an immensely powerful poem by Professor Laura Serrant:

“You called...and we came”.

That is exactly right. We called. They came. I will be ever grateful that they did.

10.15 am

**Baroness Chakrabarti (Lab):** My Lords, I am very grateful to the Minister for bringing forward this debate and, if I may say, for the tone in which he opened it. It is right that this House should take note of this important anniversary of the arrival of the Windrush generation. This is, as he has said, a moment to celebrate the enormous contribution of so many who came to rebuild Britain after the Second World War. Notwithstanding complex colonial history and a mixed welcome, they came as some of the most loyal and patriotic British subjects to work in our NHS, construction, transport and, as he said, other vital public services—often, it must be remembered, in undervalued and back-breaking employment.

However, we must also reflect, as the Minister has done, on the betrayal of their children. In one of the worst scandals in British history, inhumanity and illegality on the part of government cost people jobs, homes, healthcare and liberty and saw some of them forcibly transported to faraway islands that some had never known in their adult lives, despite lives of hard work and service to the United Kingdom. Many died broken-hearted and uncompensated. Some are uncompensated still; I am grateful to him for his update, but I hope that the noble Baroness the Minister will take the opportunity perhaps to go further on the ongoing plans to right that wrong, and do so for all outstanding claims very quickly. What is His Majesty’s Government’s estimate of outstanding claims for compensation and what prospect is there of resolving all such claims this year or before the next anniversary?

Preparing for this debate gave me the opportunity to return to Amelia Gentleman’s fine book—which will shortly be returned to your Lordships’ Library. *The Windrush Betrayal* records not only outstanding and persistent independent journalism, but the real human stories of Paulette Wilson, who had worked in catering in the other place, Anthony Bryan, Sarah O’Connor and countless others and how their lives were devastated by a toxic cocktail of culture war, cruelty and incompetence which we must never repeat. I commend the book to all noble Lords, particularly those with close interest in the working of the Home Office. I remind your Lordships that the background to that scandal—the scandal of demanding papers of people who had come to this country as children 50-plus years earlier—was called the hostile environment: a policy of targets that will always penalise the lowest hanging fruit, and a policy of deterrence. People who had evidence of working and paying tax for decades were detained and even removed, while their landing cards were destroyed in the annals of the Home Office.

It is incumbent on those who speak from this particular spot to always mention ships. Today that task is easy. However, my noble friend the admiral reminds me that the “Empire Windrush” brought not only Caribbean Britons but a number of Polish refugees to these shores. At the time, they were rightly welcomed by the then Government while the refugee convention was still being negotiated and settled. Today, the refrain is a little different. The refrain is “Stop the boats”. There is a universal aspiration that should be striven for with justice and compassion so that human beings are never again relegated to statistics, with all the consequences that will follow. Debate the boats, by all means, but never let us forget the stories of those who came in ships.

10.20 am

**Baroness Benjamin (LD):** My Lords, I thank the Government for having this important celebration debate, and for their commitment to Windrush 75, which they have shown across many departments. I also thank the Minister for his kind remarks.

Five years ago, when we celebrated the 70th anniversary of Windrush, not many people knew what Windrush meant. Fast-forward to the 75th anniversary and things are completely different, which shows that progress is being made. Every news channel and media outlet and numerous magazines covered the anniversary. They could not get enough of Windrush. The scandal brought it to their attention. This was partly due to the creation of the national Windrush Day—22 June—which was the result of a hard-fought 30-year campaign led by the late Sam King MBE, a Windrush pioneer. It was also due to the National Windrush Monument, created to recognise and acknowledge the contribution made by Caribbean people to Britain, which the Minister highlighted.

I was honoured and privileged to chair the Windrush Commemoration Committee, which was responsible for overseeing that historic creation. This enormous task was a labour of love. It took four hard, challenging years, littered with obstacles and setbacks, but, with total commitment and dogged determination, a magnificent, 12-foot high monument, designed by the

world-renowned Jamaican artist Basil Watson, was delivered and unveiled at Waterloo station last year, on Windrush Day, by the last two known living Windrush pioneers from 1949, Alford Gardner and John Richards, and their descendants. The monument has quickly become a landmark, and Network Rail led a 75th anniversary commemoration event there to celebrate its links to the Windrush generation and laid wreaths in their honour.

The “Empire Windrush” was not the first ship to bring Caribbeans to the motherland in 1948, but it has become a symbol of that quest. The thousands who followed until 1973 also showed great loyalty, courage, bravery, resilience, dignity, pride and fortitude, despite facing rejection, humiliation, violence, death and hatred. They came with hope and optimism in their hearts. Many Caribbean people who visit the monument at Waterloo are moved to tears and overcome with emotion, as it invokes memories of the treatment they received when they arrived in Britain. It has become a place of solace. Some say they wish their deceased relatives were still alive to see this momentous symbol. Many people say, “Meet me by the monument”.

I am part of that lived Windrush experience, because I came to England in 1960 as a 10 year-old, travelling from Trinidad by ship, then by train from Southampton to Waterloo station, arriving on platform 19 with my grip—what we Caribbeans call a suitcase. Proud, I stood just a few feet away from where the National Windrush Monument now stands. Who would have thought? This is why I say to children and young people, “Never give up, always keep hope in your heart”. Today, in every part of British society, people are finally recognising the massive contribution the Windrush generation and their descendants have made. We are no longer told, “You’ve got a chip on your shoulder”. This chapter of our history is now being acknowledged, celebrated and studied in every corner of the country.

My book *Coming to England*, which I wrote 27 years ago, is now read in almost every school in Britain. It is more relevant today than ever. I get letters from seven year-olds saying that they now know about Windrush and they will never be racist towards anyone because of the colour of their skin or because they are different. Childhood lasts a lifetime, so this gives me a great feeling of hope and optimism, especially when I think of the time when I came to Britain and my classmates relentlessly called me racist names and spat at me. They did not know where Trinidad was and told me to go back to where I came from. At that time, some Caribbean children were even put in schools for the “educationally subnormal” because of their Caribbean accents. Things have not entirely changed. Unbelievably, I am receiving letters from children who are suffering racist abuse in schools and on the streets today, like what I had to endure back in the 1960s. More education is needed. We have to fight this scourge.

We are at a significant moment in history, so I ask the Minister: what are the Government doing to further encourage the teaching of the Windrush experience in schools as an important part of British history? We have to see ourselves to know that we belong. The National Archives holds copies of the passenger lists

of many ships that brought Caribbean people to the UK. I wept when I saw my name on one. It is worth mentioning, as the noble Baroness has just said, that not only Caribbean people arrived on the “Empire Windrush” in 1948 but a number of Polish people. Despite also facing adversity, they too have made an enormous contribution to Britain and should be remembered.

This year, as part of the Windrush 75th anniversary celebration, the National Archives formulated an educational schools project to empower ethically informed learning of British history. It arranged for me to speak on a web call to over 15,000 schoolchildren about my Windrush journey. It was so poignant. Who would have thought? King Charles asked me to set up the Windrush Portraits Committee as he wanted to celebrate Windrush 75 by commissioning 10 portraits of Windrush elders over the age of 90—Windrush nobility who have made a contribution to British society in areas such as the NHS and to the economic well-being of Britain across the decades. They are pioneers whose shoulders we now stand on as they had to overcome adversity and prejudices on a daily basis to survive. They have paved the way, and now they have a chance to share the trauma they carried and to tell their untold stories through portraiture. The portraits were unveiled at Buckingham Palace and will be shown at the National Portrait Gallery for seven months. They will become a part of the Royal Collection and represent communities nationwide.

The BBC produced a moving documentary about that project, connecting sitters and artists as they captured the importance of this part of British history—what a legacy. Royal Mail has issued an incredible set of Windrush stamps, which I launched at the Black Cultural Archives. They show how Caribbean culture has helped to shape Britain. The 50 pence coin, beautifully designed by Valda Jackson, also celebrates Windrush 75 and honours those who have paved the way to help enrich British history. The King also held a Windrush 75th anniversary service at St George’s Chapel in Windsor for schoolchildren, which was truly inspirational. The church service at Southwark Cathedral brought church leaders and Windrush communities together from across the country—how things have changed. When Caribbean people first came to Britain, we were told we were not welcome in churches. We had to form our own, black-led churches, such as the New Testament Church of God in 1953, which now has 130 branches across the country full of worshippers.

This year has seen jubilant celebrations of the Windrush 75th anniversary. I believe we must not be defined by the so-called scandal. In fact, I propose it should not be called the Windrush scandal any more but renamed the Home Office scandal. It has caused the misery, trauma and heartache which continue and remain a stain on British society with the unresolved compensation issue of Windrush victims. I have heard from numerous lawyers that the compensation forms are so complex, even legally qualified people have difficulty filling them out.

They tell me numerous claims have been rejected based on inconsistent reasoning and not fully considered, even after appeals. There is a huge backlog of

[BARONESS BENJAMIN]

compensation cases. Only 25% of applicants to the scheme have received payments, and 93% of survivors have not been compensated at all. Many are scared to approach the Home Office as it is also the public body of immigration enforcement, the threat of which many have encountered without the documentation to prove their lawful status. Trust has disappeared, and drastic measures are needed to bring it back.

Four years ago, I pleaded with the Government to establish an independent body to oversee the Windrush compensation scheme. My pleas, and those of thousands of others, have been ignored. Once again, I implore the Government to consider this proposal, or perhaps consider an amnesty and pay claimants in full without the need for the traumatic, stressful and painful application process that victims have to go through. After all, the money is there.

We need to put the stain on British history of the Home Office scandal and hurt caused to the Windrush victims behind us, once and for all. The Windrush generation and the decent, compassionate people of this country deserve no less. Anything less is an insult to people like myself and the thousands of others who have dedicated their lives to this country and who have made a difference to the lives of others. The Prime Minister must show he cares too, by engaging with the Windrush community and the Windrush victims. So far, he has not, and public perception matters.

I am an optimist, and I believe that eventually good will prevail. We all need to work together and continue to build a solid foundation for future generations. That is why I am involved in establishing a national Windrush museum, which will do just that. It will bring together all aspects of lived Windrush experience.

I was honoured to represent the Windrush generation and carry the sceptre with dove, representing equality, spirituality and mercy, at King Charles's diverse and inclusive Coronation, which I believe is a glimpse into the future. Here is to more glorious, all-embracing British historic Windrush celebrations in years to come.

10.32 am

**Baroness Berridge (Con):** My Lords, it is an honour but also a challenge to follow such an inspirational speech by the noble Baroness, Lady Benjamin. It is wonderful that a ship, which it is believed was named after a river in the Cotswolds, is now synonymous with a generation of mainly Caribbean people coming to the UK to make it their home. And what a celebration it has been over the last few years: £750,000 for community celebrations, the wonderful monument that many have spoken of in Waterloo station and the 10 beautiful portraits commissioned by His Majesty the King. Even walking home last night, one of those portraits, of Alford Gardner, was on the digital advertising hoarding as I passed by a bus stop.

I suppose I might be biased, as, although I was brought up in rural, then mono-racial Rutland, I have lived in Trinidad and Tobago. There was a food, a culture, a liming with friends and a freedom in expressing your worship of God that I still so deeply appreciate. However, the presence of my noble friend from the Home Office, alongside the noble Baroness, Lady Scott,

from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities, reminds us that this celebration has been tinged with sadness. Like many churches in the 1950s and 1960s, the Home Office has not always treated the Windrush generation justly or kindly.

There was of course a black community already in the UK. In fact, the first black-led church, Sumner Road Chapel, was established in Peckham in 1906, such were the numbers living here—but Windrush was of course mass migration, which would change the UK, I believe, for the better. I was also reminded recently by a British-Jamaican friend that the reason his parents moved here was because they believed that there were no opportunities for the family, especially the children, back in Jamaica. The way the British ruled Jamaica at that time—it was 14 years after Windrush that Jamaica won its independence—did not give some people confidence in the future for their children.

Of course, so many did make a great future for their children and grandchildren. Although early Windrush migrants faced harsher discrimination than today, sadly some discrimination still exists. The data from the *Commission on Race and Ethnic Disparities* report in 2021 outlined that there are still persistent issues, particularly in education:

“In terms of overall progression, Black Caribbean pupils are the least likely of the main ethnic groups to progress to the more elite high tariff universities by age 19. This progression rate of 5.2% is less than half the overall national figure of 10.9% of all pupils. ... Of the main ethnic groups, the Black Caribbean group is the least likely to attend university after the White British group. ... New evidence indicates that attainment is closely related to socio-economic status”—

a topic in the headlines at the moment.

“once this is controlled for, *all* major ethnic groups perform better than White British pupils except for Black Caribbean pupils”.

I would be grateful if the Minister could answer the question I have previously raised in your Lordships' House, as to whether a specific Windrush scholarship for higher-tariff universities and also Windrush apprenticeships could be founded. Although there are many other issues that need to be addressed to deal with such educational disparities, this would be an important marker.

Of course, there is a tenacity within communities as, despite these educational disparities, and perhaps due to the length of the presence here in the UK as the first mass migration of the 20th century:

“young people from the Black Caribbean ethnic group ... have a much lower unemployment rate than those from the Black African ethnic group, even though prejudice faced by both groups is likely to apply in equal measure”.

Along with other noble Lords, I think it is good to believe that the scheme is not going to close, but I also query what positive action is being taken by the Home Office to find the claimants, not only to improve the processes. I pay tribute to the work that civil servants have done in the face of much scrutiny. Perhaps I boldly say that the only uncontroversial fact of the scheme has been its co-chair, Bishop Derek Webley of the New Testament Church of God—which the noble Baroness, Lady Benjamin mentioned—who has worked honourably on such a controversial project. I hope

that all claimants will be found so the scheme can fade from our memory, as it is rather a cloud on an otherwise wonderful 75-year anniversary.

While we deeply celebrate the amazing people of the Windrush generation, for some there is a haunting of dislocation: dislocation from west Africa; dislocation from the Caribbean; and a dislocation while living in the UK. We are only now beginning to understand the generational impacts for human communities of the severing of ties to land, communities, culture and language. The generational effects of trauma for indigenous people and survivors of the Holocaust might actually, according to research, even be carried in the DNA. We are all the richer and more blessed for the UK Windrush generation, but let us never forget the cost and the suffering over many centuries.

10.39 am

**Lord Rosser (Lab):** My Lords, in the time available I intend to confine my comments largely to the Windrush compensation arrangements, which have been the subject of debate in this House on a number of occasions. The independent Williams review into the Windrush scandal stated that it was “foreseeable and avoidable”. The compensation scheme is intended to compensate claimants for the losses and adverse impacts suffered.

The original impact assessment said that there was “significant uncertainty surrounding the volume of claims and associated costs”, and that:

“Compensation and operational costs are estimated in line with the 11,500 eligible claimants planning assumption ... Total compensation costs range from £20.5 to £301.3 million ... based on the volume range of 3,000 to 15,000 eligible claims”, with a best estimate of £160.9 million. Those figures, and the wide disparity they indicate, reveal that the Government had not a clue about the size of the issue they faced at that time. Indeed, since then, the projected estimated number of claimants has fallen dramatically and somewhat faster than the rate of inflation. What is the Government’s latest estimate of the total number of likely eligible claims, and how have they come to the conclusion that this is the likely figure? What the Government were pretty sure about was that the average compensation payment should be—since the original planning assumption of 11,500 eligible claimants was going to give rise to estimated compensation costs of £160.9 million—some £14,000. That was a worryingly low and miserly figure, as has been argued in previous Windrush debates.

Let us remind ourselves that these compensation payments are intended to cover losses ranging from detention and removal, loss of employment, loss of housing, loss of access to healthcare, lost education, loss of access to banking and what is described as the “impact on normal daily life”, which apparently includes missing key family events or the inability to travel. Included in that must also be the feelings of rejection, humiliation and injustice—of suddenly being told, wrongly, that you have no status and no right to remain in or return to the country you have lived in for much, if not all, of your life; the country you proudly regarded as your home, in the same way as Members of your Lordships’ House do. Is all that worth compensation of initially, on average, £14,000?

Under pressure, the Government now appear to have been shamed into raising that figure to £37,500 on average on the basis of the most recent figures following changes to the compensation scheme in December 2020 and August 2022. Let us get that into perspective. A recent former Prime Minister—there have now been quite a few of those—once infamously described payment of £250,000 per annum for his newspaper column as “peanuts”. In that case, £37,500 is around one-seventh of “peanuts”.

When it comes to the level of compensation, we are not talking about some relatively minor event where someone got hurt. I am aware, for example, of a personal injury case involving no loss of income and no hospitalisation as an in-patient, but instead the loss of three teeth and bruising, which resulted in damages and compensation of some £22,500. Compare that to the Windrush generation, of which Wendy Williams said:

“The many stories of injustice and hardship are heartbreaking, with jobs lost, lives uprooted and untold damage done to so many individuals and families ... They had no reason to doubt their status, or that they belonged in the UK”.

Can the Government in their response indicate what the benchmark was against which they determined that the fluctuating levels of compensation we are talking about—initially, on average, £14,000, and now an average of £37,500—are fair and reasonable and should not be higher in the light of the powerful words in the Williams review to which I have just referred?

The compensation scheme was drawn up to save the Government money, since the original impact assessment states under a heading about the benefits of the compensation scheme:

“The Government will also mitigate the risk of litigation and associated legal costs, which is likely to be more expensive than compensation through the scheme”.

The low level of compensation payments also reflects the Government’s hostile environment policy and their austerity programme. In 2012, the then Home Secretary Theresa May said:

“The aim is to create, here in Britain, a really hostile environment for illegal immigrants”.

Clearly the then Conservative-led coalition Government did not believe any previous Government had pursued what they would deem a “really hostile environment” policy.

Wendy Williams said in her *Windrush Lessons Learned Review* that

“the expansion of the hostile environment from 2014 would increase the reach of immigration controls beyond the Home Office, including through increased demands for documentation to prove status, which would ultimately lead to British people being ‘caught up’ in enforcement of the measures”.

Her review also stated that:

“The impact assessments for the Bills leading to the 2014 and 2016 Immigration Acts didn’t go far enough to identify or address possible risks of the proposed hostile environment policies”.

Indeed, the Permanent Secretary at the Home Office confirmed the inadequacy of the department’s impact assessments when he spoke to the Public Accounts Committee about the Windrush scandal on 17 December 2018:

“I completely agree that we should have spotted this issue. It should have appeared in our impact assessments. We should have understood the potential adverse effect of these policies on this population. I completely agree with that”.

[LORD ROSSER]

Everywhere you look you find that the Windrush generation were let down and badly treated by the Government, and particularly the Home Office. If we were talking about more powerful and influential claimants who had been treated in the same way as the Windrush generation, would we be talking about an average compensation payment of just £37,500? I wish I could say yes, but I cannot. Indeed, would we still be talking, or would the matter have been dealt with and finalised a long time ago? Would the position have been the same if the overwhelming majority of claimants had been white? I hope the answer is yes.

Wendy Williams told the Home Affairs Committee in October 2020,

“this is an opportunity for the Home Office to demonstrate that it is taking things seriously. If 164 people have been recompensed, I struggle to see how the Department can justify that”.

Nearly three years on, the Home Office says that under two-thirds of claims, the number of which was far less than expected, have had a final decision—not exactly meteoric progress.

I have some questions in relation to compensation payments. The Government have said that the compensation scheme allows those who have suffered to avoid court proceedings in pursuit of justice. Could they say in their response if an individual accepting a final offer of compensation under the scheme does or does not then preclude themselves from pursuing the matter further through legal proceedings if that is a step they wish to explore?

Given that changes have been made to the compensation scheme since awards of compensation started to be made, have those who received and accepted final offers before the December 2020 and August 2022 changes were brought into effect had their compensation increased to fully reflect the impact those changes would have had on the offers they received and accepted? How many people in this category had their compensation increased as a result, and how many, if any, did not?

What percentage, if any, of Windrush compensation scheme settlements have been subject to confidentiality agreements in the last year, and why? How many current Windrush compensation claims, if any, have been in process for over 18 months?

There was provision for an independent review by an HMRC adjudicator where a claimant is not satisfied with the outcome of their case. Is that still the position? If so, is it still the case that the Home Office can then reject a recommendation of an independent reviewer? If so, how many cases have been referred to the independent adjudicator; in how many cases has the adjudicator increased the level of compensation; and in how many cases has the Home Office rejected a recommendation of the independent adjudicator?

Rejecting recommendations is now an increasing feature of the Government’s approach. On 26 January 2023, the Home Secretary announced that the Government would not implement three of the 30 recommendations of the Williams review. I seem to recollect the Government having previously told this House that it was good news that all 30 recommendations had been accepted. If I am right, can I take it that the

Government’s position is that it is now bad news that only 27 of the 30 recommendations have been accepted? The three recommendations that are now not going to be implemented relate to running a programme of reconciliation events with members of the Windrush generation, appointing a migrants’ commissioner and reviewing the remit and role of the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration.

Wendy Williams’s response was this:

“I am disappointed that the department has decided not to implement what I see as the crucial external scrutiny measures, namely my recommendations related to the migrants’ commissioner ... and the ICIBI ... as I believe they will raise the confidence of the Windrush community, but also help the department succeed as it works to protect the wider public, of whom the Windrush generation is such an important part”.

One inevitably suspects that the present Home Secretary saw the migrants’ commissioner and an increased role for the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration as a potential source of challenge and criticism of government actions and policy. It is most unlikely that the decision was driven by what was best for the public, including the Windrush generation, rather than what was in the best interests of the Home Secretary and the Government.

Many fine words have already been said in this debate about the massive contribution of the Windrush generation to life in this country. Perhaps we should also express our appreciation by looking again at the level of compensation payments, which just do not seem to reflect the effects of what Wendy Williams described:

“The many stories of injustice and hardship are heartbreaking, with jobs lost, lives uprooted and untold damage done to so many individuals and families”.

I ask the Government to look again at the level of the compensation payments and await a response in their concluding reply at the end of this debate.

10.51 am

**The Lord Bishop of Southwark:** My Lords, I am grateful to His Majesty’s Government for the opportunity to debate this important anniversary. On 22 June, together with the Archbishop of the Province of the West Indies, I had the privilege of welcoming to the national service at Southwark Cathedral Their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, bishops from the Caribbean and England, other church leaders, members of the community and, prominently, members of the Windrush generation and their descendants. It was a witness to and thanksgiving for 75 years of change in Britain, the contribution that those pioneers made, how we have changed as a nation and the burdens we have made that generation bear.

The previous week, I attended a reception hosted by His Majesty the King at Buckingham Palace, at which the portraits he had commissioned—we have heard about them—of members of the Windrush generation were exhibited. We not only marvelled at the art but met both sitters and artists. As many of your Lordships will know, the King has previously commissioned series of portraits down the years for those engaged variously in the Battle of Britain and the D-day landings, as well as for those who survived the Holocaust. In each case, we witness in paint people



who are the product of extraordinary lives and whose essential character is distilled on to canvas for future generations to remember, interpret and cherish.

Although each piece is by a different artist, this latest exercise in portraiture, now on exhibition in the Palace of Holyroodhouse, has a common feature of the miracle of human personality into old age—something that I am sure this House will appreciate. Many convey extraordinary power and joy; others, a quiet strength, with struggles along the way chiselled into their features. Portraiture reminds us of the intensely personal nature of life away from the great aggregates that normally determine policy. Here are lives that speak of what Governments and communities did in the past and how we treat them now.

It further reminds me of two photographic exhibitions: the first, by the photographer Jim Grover at the OXO Tower on the South Bank, marking the 70th anniversary of Windrush; and the second, a current exhibition also by him at Clapham Library in the Mary Seacole Centre on Clapham High Street, running until September. It includes an image of the war memorial to African and Caribbean servicepeople of two world wars, which was installed in 2017 in Windrush Square in Brixton in the heart of the global diocese of Southwark.

The noble Baroness, Lady Benjamin, spoke of the magnificent Windrush monument unveiled last year at Waterloo. That is really where we come in with Windrush. The “Empire Windrush” was a prize of war, a German liner renamed after a river in the Cotswolds that returned many ex-servicemen—for many of the Caribbean travellers on board had served in the RAF—to Britain, whose factories, mines and services faced shortages and whose infrastructure was worn out or in ruins. They were adventurous but not needy. The fare was £28 and 10 shillings—it is rare now to find a group such as your Lordships’ House that knows what I mean when I say “10 shillings”—which was a substantial amount, for the average industrial earnings then were less than £6 a week. The Colonial Office billeted them in my diocese in a deep shelter at Clapham South, and the nearest labour exchange was in Coldharbour Lane in Brixton. Hence the association with the area was established. They received a warm welcome from the nearby church of St John, Angell Town. Would that all the churches our friends visited had extended them the same welcome. In many they were rejected and, sadly, that welcome was not to be their experience—a cause of lament, shame and sorrow.

The legacy of the last 75 years is still with us. There are still disproportionate outcomes for which there is no ready or reasonable explanation. In the instance of what we call the Windrush scandal, Amelia Gentleman of the *Guardian* had been publishing articles setting out the problem with unsettling clarity for months; it is good that her book is in the Chamber. The immediate proximity of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in April 2018 made it impossible to ignore what she was saying. The Home Office and the Prime Minister made a public acknowledgement of the wrongs that needed to be righted.

Yet we need to note that, of those affected, only one in four of those who applied to the compensation scheme has received any compensation. The speech

from the noble Lord, Lord Rosser, was telling; 41 individuals who made an application have died while waiting for their claims to be processed. It is worth reminding ourselves that the imposition of what was originally deemed a hostile environment by legislation in 2014 and 2016, requiring proof of a right to remain, has deprived individuals of jobs, homes, benefits and their health. In at least 83 cases—the final total is unknown—individuals with right of abode or indefinite leave to remain were unlawfully deported by the Government.

As one official remarked recently, it represents the crumbling of lives as the weight of unfairness and impossibility is forced upon these people. To have to provide some of the very same documentation that was demanded to prove a right to remain in order to receive compensation leads me to deep concern. It is also a matter of regret that the current Home Secretary decided to drop the Government’s commitment to follow through on the recommendations from the Williams inquiry to establish a migrants’ commissioner; surely that is needed. Reconciliation events have also been dropped, as has the commitment to strengthen the powers of the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration. A commitment made is better when it is honoured.

I am grateful once again to the Government for facilitating this debate, on a remarkable generation who changed this country for the better. Those of us who live in the midst of great diversity need to articulate a narrative of appreciation and respect for the contribution of those who have helped us become the nation and people we are—equal in dignity, humanity and status, in this United Kingdom of different nations and peoples. We encourage the Government to widen its declaration of appreciation and to express a much deeper appreciation of the positive benefits of immigration, which has in so many ways blessed, enriched and changed our national life and identity.

11 am

**Lord Sahota (Lab):** My Lords, it is a real honour to follow the right reverend Prelate the Bishop of Southwark. I thank the noble Lord, Lord Murray, for tabling this Motion. It is indeed a real privilege and an honour to take part in this debate.

This is a momentous occasion—the 75th anniversary of the Windrush generation. It is a joyous moment that holds a great significance not just for Britain but for the entire Commonwealth. As we reflect on the past and look towards the future, let us embrace the remarkable contribution made by the Windrush generation along with the other Commonwealth citizens.

“Windrush” signifies more than just a ship’s journey. It also represents the courage and the sacrifices of all those men and women who left behind their place of birth and childhood friends, and the places and the people they loved so much, in search of a better life. They were the pioneers and trailblazers, who embarked on a courageous voyage to Britain after the war. Some of them had fought for Britain in the Second World War and when the call came, they once more came to the rescue—this time the rescue of British industry.

[LORD SAHOTA]

After the Second World War, Britain faced a severe shortage of labour. To build its infrastructure and economy, the Government invited citizens of Britain's former colonies to fill the void in the labour market—men such as my father, who could not speak a word of English. But they had the guts to get off their backs and sail across the seven seas in search of a better economic life, and work in the foundries, mills and other heavy industries. They brought with them a rich tapestry of music, art, cuisine and literature, creating a multicultural mosaic that continues to thrive to this day. Their influence is evident in the diverse communities up and down the country, the vibrant neighbourhoods that dot the British landscape. Look at the Notting Hill Carnival and Punjabi Mela in the West Midlands—colourful, cheerful and vibrant.

Reflecting back, the Britain of the 1950s and 1960s was on the cusp of modern enlightenment, with new industry, new thinking, new art, new architecture, music, culture, avant garde theatre, the Beatles and the miniskirt. As someone said, the wind of change was sweeping across Africa and Asia.

But—and this is a big but—equality, diversity and inclusiveness were on their way for all races, but they were still some decades away. Racism, prejudice and xenophobia were at their height. Non-white people were treated like second-class citizens. They did the jobs that others did not want to do. They were discriminated against in all walks of life—in housing, jobs, pubs, clubs and every other institution. They suffered just about every human indignity but, slowly and surely, they overcame these indignities. Today, 75 years later, the children and grandchildren of those men and women with fortitude are enjoying the fruits of their forefathers' labour. They are at the forefront of every sphere of our country's life, in music, art, literature, academia, sport, politics and running our beloved National Health Service.

As we reflect on this shared history, let us renew our commitment to building a society that values diversity, embraces inclusivity and upholds the rights and the dignity of all. Let us honour the legacy of the Windrush generation and of the others, whatever their country of origin, by fostering a future where every individual, regardless of their background or origin, can thrive and contribute to the collective progress of our society.

11.05 am

**Lord Hastings of Scarisbrick (CB):** My Lords, this is a marvellous moment when we can celebrate remarkable lives, great sacrificial people, or fill our faces with the tears and sadness of the distress that they feel.

Some 135 years before the “Windrush” ship came to Tilbury docks, a great English writer, Jane Austen, gave us the words “Pride and Prejudice”. For so many who came on the HMT “Empire Windrush”, and for the Windrush generation, it was pride: they were proud to come, to give, to serve, to sacrifice, to rebuild, to be representing their own dignity and their own freedom, proud to help Britain reshape, remake and live again. However, for so many others it became prejudice—fearsome, troubled, traumatic, turbulent and, ultimately, incarcerated.

I am a son of a Windrush family. My father came here in 1954. He was a dental surgeon who trained at Edinburgh University. He gained a medical qualification, then a dental qualification, then a dental surgery qualification—a long journey. His father before him was a doctor, not serving in the Caribbean but as a missionary in Angola, where my father was born. Having come to the UK to train, my father went to Jamaica. In the little town of Savanna la Mar—Sav la Mar, or Sav, as the Jamaicans love to call it—he met my very dear mother. They are both now long passed. He fell in love with her while doing her teeth, which is a curious way to discover someone else's delight. I used to ask my mother, “What did you have in there that was so fascinating?” She never knew, but they married in the parish church in Sav la Mar and made their way here in 1954, coming first to Widnes, a strange little town in the north-west of England where I was born in, dare I say it, 1958.

My father practised at 103 Albert Road, Widnes. I remember so very well that in 1962, when I was just four years of age, I was walking with my mother up the high street towards my father's practice—he was an NHS dentist, because those were the days of NHS dentists. There was a gentle illustration of the travail that was around us. A lady stopped my mother. It always comes back to my mind; I see every second of it. There was I, a little boy holding my mother's arm. It was a winter's day. She had a classic old-fashioned winter coat with false fur around her neck, as we did not have much money. This lady said to my mother, holding her arm, “Tell me, before you came here, did you used to live in trees?”

We laugh at that now but, back then, people's images of us were not quite that of savages but were certainly that we were not sophisticated—that we had come from poverty to enrich ourselves as well as the nation. I remember my mother's gentle and kind response so well. She reached out her hand, took the lady's arm and said, “No, dear. We lived in houses just like you”, and we walked on. She had that spirit of, “I am here to make a life for my family; I am not here to fight your ignorance”.

Just a year ago, at an event in the City of London, a lady had noted that I was on the list of guests and came up to me. She said, “Was your father Petain Hastings of Albert Road, Widnes?” I said, “Yes, he was”. She said, “Well, your father did my mother's teeth, for which I am eternally grateful to you”. I said, “Look at mine; they mirror my father's work as well”, and we shared great grins with each other: pride in service and support, joy in giving, and delight in creating a new life.

My brother was born in Huddersfield and moved to the United States to become the dean of MIT. I remained here to become the chancellor of Regent's University and now the chairman of SOAS at the University of London. We have made a life. But, on the way here today, a Caribbean mother rang me to tell me about her son—32 years of age, reincarcerated for a minor, pathetic, minuscule error. A man who served 10 years inside for crimes he should never have committed, who was released last year, is now back in an approved premises. Why? The prejudicial,

discriminatory mindset of the system did not want to give him the grace of a tiny mistake, given all the progress he had made, but made the assumption of continuing danger.

That remaining prejudice causes this fear of policing and the criminal justice system. I experienced that on Wednesday, after the teachers who were striking took their great parade past Parliament Square. It was difficult to get into the House's parking facilities using my pass, which of course entitles us to be present and not obstructed. A policeman barked at me in an unacceptable way that I should not have moved until he gave me freedom to do so. I pointed out that he had no right to obstruct. He did not like it, but he could not stop me. If I was not me, I might have been banged up against the wall. That is the trauma that the next Windrush generation continue to live with, which must be stopped.

This week's *Voice* newspaper is headlined "Let's save our boys". It is talking about how Caribbean boys are five times more likely to attend a pupil referral unit, which is virtually a direct line to incarceration and imprisonment. The Department for Education and the Home Office know it. The key figure is that 1% of Caribbean children get five good GCSEs at pupil referral units—in other words, persistent, expected failure.

We want to restore the pride in the people who came here to build, but the prejudice remains too persistent. A summary of Jane Austen's great book *Pride and Prejudice* says that it is "A story of girls who made hasty and rash decisions and learned to pay the consequences". The people who came here as Windrush sacrifices did not make hasty decisions, but those who hold prejudice against them frequently do, whether compensations, incarcerations or referrals to pupil referral units.

I ask the Ministers present to stop skirting around these tough issues for young black men and women. Stop skirting around incarceration pressures and give us back the pride that was the reason for coming here and building a nation of equality and opportunity.

11.14 am

**Lord Davies of Brixton (Lab):** My Lords, it has been such a privilege to take part in this debate. To hear the testimony and descriptions of earlier speakers is intimidating. It would be invidious to pick out particular speakers, but I have to mention the introduction by the noble Baroness, Lady Benjamin, explaining how we got here. I also must pay regard to what was said by my noble friend Lord Rosser in his extraordinarily powerful explanation of why there is still so much discontent with the scheme, despite what the Home Office has tried to do.

I hope that I will be forgiven for striking a personal note. Britain, London and Brixton in particular owe a debt to the people of the Windrush generation for all that they have contributed over the last 75 years. It is entirely right that we should testify to that debt in this debate.

I mentioned Brixton because that is where I live and where my partner and I have raised a family, hence my territorial designation. For the avoidance of

doubt, I make it clear that I do not claim to speak on behalf of the people of Brixton. We have three excellent MPs who can do that much better than I can. But I can speak for myself and testify to the debt that we owe the Windrush generation from my experience of living in that part of the inner city for nigh on 40 years—an area that offers so much to what London, the greatest city on earth, has to offer. It is truly a melting pot, mixing the full range of cultures and experiences. At the extreme, it even provides a home for someone like myself who started life in north London. It is a truly multicultural society at ease with itself. Brixton makes no great demands on those who live there; you can certainly be yourself.

As the right reverend Prelate the Bishop of Southwark already mentioned, these things happen partly by chance. The arrivals on that epoch-making trip on HMT "Empire Windrush" were housed in Clapham, so it was to the labour exchange in Coldharbour Lane in Brixton that many came to seek work on their arrival. Later arrivals followed their lead. They sought housing in the area, which was cheap at the time. Much of it was run-down, in multiple occupation and still suffered the scars of the late war, but it was available in those pre-gentrification days. They did not come just to Brixton, of course, but nevertheless the result was and still is a special connection between Brixton and those of the Windrush generation. It has proved to be the centre of many events held to mark this special time.

There have of course been ups and downs—to say the least—over 75 years and some parts of the story are contested. Times were tough. The pioneers and the younger generations who followed had to cope with discrimination and poor living conditions. They had to battle for their civil and employment rights, and doubtless more still needs to be done. However, I believe that, in Brixton, we have created something special that would not have been attained without those who came on the "Empire Windrush" and those who followed.

In moving the Motion and paying tribute to the Windrush generation, the Minister chose the right words, but we are looking for actions not words. I am glad that we have been re-joined by my noble friend Lord Rosser, who made the point so clearly. What happened was shocking and has only been compounded by the difficulties that have arisen.

I want to raise an additional issue: the frozen pensions policy has had a deleterious effect on large numbers of those with a Windrush heritage—not all, of course, but that simply goes to point out the injustice of frozen pensions. I understand that I do not have the right Ministers here to get a detailed response, but it is important to understand that this is part of how people perceive they are being treated by the Government. The policy, for those new readers, is the arbitrary winners-and-losers approach to making increases in UK state pensions for those who choose to retire abroad. Recipients in some countries have increases each year in line with those granted to pensioners in the UK, but those in other countries, totalling half a million, do not: their pensions are frozen at the date they moved abroad and in real terms their state pension falls each year.

[LORD DAVIES OF BRIXTON]

The impact is substantial. Simplifying somewhat, the basic state pension is currently £156 a week, but over half of those with a frozen pension are receiving £65 a week or less. That is lost income each year of £5,000 or more. British pensioners in all but two Caribbean countries have frozen state pensions. Those in Barbados and Jamaica are the lucky ones, but there are 300 people with frozen pensions in Antigua and Barbuda, 1,300 in Trinidad and Tobago, 900 in Grenada, 800 in St Lucia, and hundreds more spread across other Caribbean islands. The injustice of the policy is clear, but the Government and past Governments have hidden behind the need for so-called reciprocal agreements—we pay increases to our pensioners in country Y only if it pays increases to its pensioners in the UK. For many years, successive Governments have consistently refused to negotiate any more such agreements, leading to the entirely arbitrary distinctions we see today.

Just to remind ourselves, members of the Windrush generation were invited to live and work in the UK to help run Britain, and they devoted their working lives to this country. It is manifestly wrong to punish them so severely simply because they have returned to their countries of birth for retirement.

11.22 pm

**Baroness Twycross (Lab):** My Lords, I declare my interest as London's Deputy Mayor for Fire and Resilience, as I will refer to the Mayor of London and the London Fire Brigade in my speech.

I join others in thanking the Minister for his warm words about the contribution of the Windrush generation. I have particularly enjoyed, and feel privileged to speak in, this debate today, not least hearing from those noble Lords whose journey to this House started with their parents deciding to take their families on a journey to this country on a boat from the Caribbean.

It is really important to celebrate the pivotal role that the Windrush generation and their descendants have played in the UK as a whole, particularly in London. I agree with my noble friend Lord Davies of Brixton that London is the most fantastic city in the world. He spoke with warmth about Brixton and the rich cultural and economic contribution that the Windrush generation made to his part of London.

In many ways, his London is my London: I spent my early childhood in south-east London, with Brixton Market on our doorstep. As an adult, when I returned to south London, I had the fortune to meet the late Sam King MBE, who has already been mentioned in the debate. As noble Lords will know, he was one of the first passengers to arrive on the "Empire Windrush" at Tilbury docks on 22 June 1948. The welcome that the new arrivals received from the mayor at Lambeth Town Hall, based in Brixton, was one of the only formal welcomes that the newly arrived people from the "Empire Windrush" received. The right reverend Prelate noted that there was a welcome in one of the local churches as well. The local MP also spoke up for them. Not surprisingly, many of the new arrivals made

Brixton and the surrounding areas their home and, as we noted, their descendants remain at the heart of the community.

As the noble Baroness, Lady Benjamin, said, Sam King was one of the co-founders of the Windrush Foundation and became the first black mayor of Southwark. He was rightly proud of his journey and what he achieved. It is right that Windrush Square in Brixton, close to where he and other arrivals on the "Empire Windrush" lived, is in the heart of that local community.

In the narrative of post-war arrival, it is especially important to honour the acts of courage and service that preceded this, especially during the World Wars, which claimed the lives of thousands of their compatriots. While we celebrate the story of Sam King and the many others who came to help us build post-war Britain, the story of how they and their descendants were treated is clearly not one of which this country should be proud. We should and must celebrate those of the Windrush generation who worked in our hospitals and on our transport system, and who have made an invaluable contribution to this country's success since their first arrival 75 years ago. However, as other noble Lords have already made clear, we also need to recognise the hardships and extreme prejudice that so many of those arriving on the "Empire Windrush" and later boats experienced.

The Windrush generation was invited to this country, yet they faced terrible, racist treatment in the UK, and some of their descendants continue to. Despite these conditions, the Windrush generation helped to build our NHS, staffed our Air Force and military, supported Londoners throughout London's transport system, and enriched the fabric of this country as a whole through lasting legacies in sport and music, founding the Notting Hill Carnival, and so much more.

Regrettably, the prejudice is not confined to the history books, in which it should belong. The Windrush scandal and this Government's hostile environment, which has already been mentioned, have caused untold pain. The disgraceful treatment and the subsequent delay in paying the compensation that people are due is nothing short of shameful. Too many people are still waiting for apologies, compensation and access to justice. Others have already asked for clarification, and I look forward to the Minister's response to the questions relating to this.

A true tribute to the Windrush generation would be for the Government to implement all the recommendations in the *Windrush Lessons Learned Review*. It is highly regrettable that the current Home Secretary has watered down the Home Office's commitment to accept all of HMI Wendy Williams's findings. Will the Government now review this decision and implement all the recommendations?

Funding for community organisations has been a key part of the Mayor of London's response to the scandal. In the years since the scandal first came into public consciousness in 2018, the mayor has dedicated over £100,000 to funding front-line organisations across London to support Windrush communities specifically. This includes dedicated funding initiatives led previously by the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants

and now led by Action for Race Equality. Previous funding was used for a range of activities, including campaigns, legal advice sessions and outreach efforts to bring information and support to those who may not access it otherwise. In recognition of the way that immigration advice access has been decimated by successive cuts, and in order to support Londoners to access their rights, the mayor has consistently invested in efforts to bolster wider capacity of immigration advice and support services across our city. More recently, he has launched the migrant advice and support fund, which supports organisations providing specialist holistic services to Londoners with immigration needs, including people from the Windrush communities. This fund provides £750,000 over 12 months.

The Greater London Authority, led by the mayor, stands with the Windrush generation in their fight for justice. The mayor is, as he says often, the son of a bus driver who came to this country to build a new life for himself and his family and to contribute to this country's future. Much emphasis has been placed on the role of the Windrush generation in supporting Transport for London, the wider transport networks and the NHS. The Windrush generation has a much wider legacy in our city, including among black firefighters and other staff from the London Fire Brigade, some of whom joined the Walk of Witness from Waterloo station to Southwark.

This House has previously debated the culture review that took place at London Fire Brigade. No institution in this country is immune from needing to examine how it treats those from black and minority ethnic communities. However, as deputy mayor for fire, I am proud of how the brigade is tackling this issue head-on and playing a leading role within the fire sector in addressing institutional racism and the inequalities and prejudices that it finds. No institution or sector can be complacent. We must learn, and adjust how we behave and how we challenge behaviours.

Finally, I will reflect on a more positive and celebratory note of this debate. I would like the House to note the huge contribution of the Windrush generation and their descendants to the arts in this country, from the food of south London to music, literature and visual art. The Windrush generation brought a wealth of new musical styles with them, including jazz, blues, calypso, ska, gospel, Latin and reggae. Their descendants went on to pioneer many of the genres that are popular today, such as garage, jungle, grime, dubstep, and drum and bass. In literature, we have many examples of remarkable writing, some of which are now rightly taught in schools.

I conclude by quoting *Small Island* by Andrea Levy, herself a daughter of Jamaican parents:

“There are some words that once spoken will split the world in two. There would be the life before you breathed them and then the altered life after they'd been said. They take a long time to find, words like that. They make you hesitate. Choose with care. Hold on to them unspoken for as long as you can just so your world will stay intact”.

For me, this quote is a reminder of how powerful but also how dangerous words can be—how they can heal and how they can divide. In this debate on the anniversary of the Windrush generation's first arrival in the UK,

and in a week where we have in this House debated the Illegal Migration Bill, we would all do well to remember the power of language.

11.31 am

**Lord Cormack (Con):** My Lords, I rise to speak in the gap, having given notice. I was inspired to do so by the noble Baroness, Lady Benjamin, who made a passionate and at times justifiably angry speech, and who was herself very properly recognised and made a member of the illustrious Order of Merit. There can be no better example of the Windrush generation and what we are talking about today.

It was also appropriate that the noble Baroness, Lady Twycross, talked quite considerably at the beginning of her speech about the National Health Service. It really is a happy coincidence that we were celebrating the 75th anniversary of the health service on Wednesday and we have this debate today, because, without the contribution of the Windrush generation and their families, the National Health Service would not be what it is. We owe them a very great debt.

There has been an underlying theme to this debate that I want to dwell on very briefly. It is that cruelty never pays and “Do to others as you would be done by”. We have to remember that, not only as we think back with shame to what happened a few years ago but as we look at the way we are tackling problems today.

I was deeply disturbed to read in the *i* newspaper this morning of the painting over of Mickey Mouse pictures and other things that had been put into centres where there are unaccompanied children. Whoever is to blame for their being here, they are not. It seemed a deeply unfortunate and frankly rather cruel gesture. We have to remember that, as we remember and repent for the way Windrush generation descendants were treated a few years ago.

Kindness may not get you everywhere, but it gets you a long way and it helps to make a cohesive society. If this debate is to have any legacy, it must be to make our society more cohesive, more united and more—if I dare use the word, and I do so with pride—patriotic.

11.35 am

**Lord Ponsonby of Shulbrede (Lab):** My Lords, I thank the Minister for tabling this debate, and particularly for the tone with which he introduced it. The whole debate has been uplifting, but it has also been realistic about the problems that are faced and the recent scandal.

The arrival of HMT “Empire Windrush” at Tilbury docks on 22 June 1948 has become a defining moment of modern Britain. The ship carried about 500 passengers from across the Caribbean, and that generation and those that came after have shaped our society, whether by rebuilding post-war infrastructure, playing a key role in getting our transport network functioning properly, or supporting the fledgling NHS.

The Windrush generation has not always been treated fairly, especially by Governments keen to be seen as tough on immigration, but Windrush Day, and maybe this debate, should be taken as an opportunity to

[LORD PONSONBY OF SHULBREDE]

celebrate those who, by seeking a better life, have made all our lives better too. I will first mention the Windrush scandal and then conclude on the more positive contribution that the Windrush generation has made to our country.

The Windrush scandal—or perhaps I should say “Home Office scandal”, as recommended by the noble Baroness, Lady Benjamin—began in 2018. It concerned people who were wrongly detained, denied legal rights, threatened with deportation and, in at least 83 cases, wrongly deported from the UK by the Home Office. Many of those affected had been born British subjects and had arrived in the UK before 1973, particularly from Caribbean countries as members of the Windrush generation.

As well as those who were deported, an unknown number were detained, lost their jobs or homes, had their passports confiscated, or were denied benefits or medical care to which they were entitled. A number of long-term UK residents were refused re-entry to the UK; a larger number were threatened with immediate deportation by the Home Office. This was linked by commentators to the hostile environment policy, initiated by Theresa May during her time as Home Secretary.

The Windrush compensation scheme was launched on 3 April 2019, and there have been various reports criticising its effectiveness and slow rollout. It is not known how many people were directly impacted by the scandal, but around 6,200 people have claimed compensation and 1,600 have received payments. Around 16,200 have been helped to secure documentation on their status or citizenship. Some 41 people who have submitted a claim for compensation have since died. Of the 2,235 claims in progress as of April 2023, 16% had been in the system for over 12 months and 7% had been in process for over 18 months. So I have some questions for the Minister. How many people are waiting for compensation from the Government? How long do the Government estimate it will take to complete all the active compensation claims? Do they think that the processing of these claims should be taking this long?

My noble friend Lord Rosser—I welcome him back to his seat after an absence of about seven months—referred at length to HMI Wendy Williams’s original review of the scandal. There were about 30 recommendations in Wendy Williams’s report and the Government have not implemented all of them, as we have heard. The Government dropped recommendations 3, 9 and 10—to host a number of reconciliation events, to introduce a migrants’ commissioner and review the remit and role of the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration, and to include consideration of giving the ICIBI more powers with regard to publishing reports. In January this year, the Government had implemented about eight out of the 30 recommendations. That is different from the figure that my noble friend Lord Rosser gave. I would be grateful for guidance from the Minister about the correct figure.

The *Guardian* has reported that the unit tasked with reforming the Home Office post Windrush is being disbanded. Is the Minister able to say whether that is

correct? Can she also say whether there are any plans to enact recommendations 9 and 10 of Wendy Williams’s report?

I want to talk more positively about the contribution the descendants of this generation made to our society. I have done a quick review of recent press articles and I will mention some names: Mica Paris, singer, broadcaster and actress; Colin Jackson, 110-metre hurdles Olympic silver medallist and broadcaster; Don Letts, film director; Jay Blades, host of “The Repair Shop” and charity founder; David Harewood, actor and director; Linford Christie, gold medallist; Linton Kwesi Johnson, poet, musician and activist; Clive Myrie, journalist and newsreader; Sir Steve McQueen, film director, producer and screenwriter; Don Warrington, actor; Sir Lenny Henry, comedian. The list goes on, and this was from just a cursory review of recent press.

My right honourable friend David Lammy described the 75th anniversary celebrations as bittersweet, and the noble Lord, Lord Hastings, referred to pride and prejudice as a theme in his speech. I think they are both right in the way they characterise these celebrations. As an Opposition spokesman, I say to the Government that it is for them to follow through on the promises they have made to the Windrush generation and to seek to rectify the wrongs of the past.

11.42 am

**The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (Baroness Scott of Bybrook) (Con):** My Lords, I thank my noble friend Lord Murray of Blidworth for tabling this important and special debate. It is right that the House takes this opportunity to honour a landmark anniversary in our nation’s history. I am sure I speak for us all when I say that the moving reflections we have heard today from across the Chamber speak volumes about how much the Windrush generation mean to us all and what a mark they have made on our society since their arrival 75 years ago. I thank noble Lords for their contributions today, and I am proud to be able to add to them on behalf of the Government.

Last month, I had the privilege of attending the national service of thanksgiving at the right reverend Prelate’s Cathedral in Southwark to mark national Windrush Day. It was a truly inspirational day of music, prayers and shared reflections on the experiences and impact of the Windrush generation and their descendants. They included a poem from the young poet laureate of Croydon, Shaniqua Benjamin, who calls herself a hybrid of Jamaican, Grenadian and Croydonian, which painted a remarkably vivid picture of the rich cultural heritage of the Windrush generation and their wider influence. I cannot do justice to her words, but I thoroughly recommend watching an online rendition of that poem. It brilliantly captures the flavour of the Windrush generation’s first impressions of their mother country in all its complexity: the sense of excitement, as we have heard today, and the opportunity to help Britain rebuild, but also the struggles and the terrible prejudice they faced and the monumental part they and their descendants have since played in our nation’s post-war transformation. We undoubtedly would not be the multicultural success story we are today

without all that they have contributed and continue to contribute in every sphere of our national life. The tributes paid by noble Lords bear testimony to this.

For our part, the Government are committed to celebrating this wonderful Windrush legacy through national and local commemorations. Five years ago, we introduced Windrush Day in response to Patrick Vernon's hugely admirable campaigning. I salute him again for securing this milestone around which we can all come together every year.

Of course, as we have heard today, one of the most permanent and visible markers of our gratitude to the Windrush generation is Basil Watson's magnificent national monument at Waterloo station. If noble Lords have not seen it, I ask them to go to see it. It is incredibly poignant to think that long after the first arrivals are no longer with us, millions passing through Waterloo will continue to see this and think of them and all they gave. I extend the biggest of accolades to the noble Baroness, Lady Benjamin, who, as always, spoke so eloquently and passionately in today's debate, for her work, alongside the fantastic Windrush Commemoration Committee, which I also thank, with my department to get that monument built.

This year's commemorations are particularly special because they mark the 75th anniversary of the Windrush arrivals. Fittingly, my department is leading the biggest programme of Windrush commemorations since they began across the length and breadth of the country. In the run-up to Windrush Day, the Levelling-Up Secretary and the Home Secretary hosted a reception at No. 10 to thank those working with Windrush communities locally and nationally. Rudi Page was awarded the Prime Minister's Point of Light honour in recognition of his outstanding volunteering efforts supporting Caribbean, Commonwealth and ethnic minority communities.

We have also announced our largest Windrush Day grant scheme, totalling £750,000 in funding, which is going to 45 community groups, local authorities and charities spread across the UK. I am glad that the noble Lord, Lord Davies of Brixton, is in his place because they include the Brixton Project, a community-led carnival of art, theatre and music, and the Blackstory Partnership, which is putting on a myriad of events, from performances of West Indian music to a book launch at a commemorative Windrush 75 event in Birmingham. Thanks to the National Lottery Community Fund, sponsored by DCMS, we are backing a further 75 community events and activities.

As the noble Baroness, Lady Benjamin, and others so passionately argued, we need to keep the Windrush generation's legacy alive by ensuring that young people learn from and celebrate it. To this end, we are providing new educational resources on the National Windrush Monument website and have teamed up with the leading educational charity, Speakers for Schools, to organise a series of school talks by inspirational public figures with Windrush connections, such as Basil Watson and the actor Paterson Joseph. Available in person and online, these have the potential to reach of thousands of pupils across the country.

As we moved through the debate, starting with the noble Baroness, Lady Chakrabarti, it was obvious that I would need to answer the questions and challenges

from noble Lords on the Windrush compensation scheme. I will not mention all noble Lords, but they know who they are and it will be in *Hansard*.

The Home Office remains totally committed to righting the wrongs experienced by members of the Windrush generation, although we recognise that no amount of money will ever make up for the suffering that people experienced. So far, more than £75 million has been paid or offered under the compensation scheme and thousands of people have been helped successfully to apply for the documentation confirming their status or British citizenship. Payments to date include some significant sums. The noble Lord, Lord Rosser, said that there are very small numbers, but over 240 people have been paid £50,000 to £100,000, while more than a dozen people have been paid more than £200,000. The Home Office's priority is to award the maximum compensation at the earliest possible point to all these people.

Some 66% of claims have had final decisions and the majority of claims in progress are less than six months old. I say in response to the noble Lord, Lord Rosser, that only 7% are more than 18 months old. However, there are 14 categories and each person's experiences and circumstances will be different. It is right that the Home Office takes the time to ensure that each claim is considered and understood carefully so that it can offer people the maximum compensation to which they are entitled. That said, the Home Office will continue its efforts to reduce the time it takes to process claims. The length of time that individuals must wait for their claim to be allocated to a substantive decision-maker is less than five months, down from 18 months a year ago.

The Home Office is committed to keeping the compensation and documentation schemes open. The scheme is not closing; it is remaining open. The Home Office firmly believes that moving the operation of the compensation scheme, as has been suggested, would significantly delay what we consider, and I know noble Lords consider, to be vital payments to people. All this has been reinforced by an independent adviser to the scheme, Professor Martin Levermore, in his report, which was published in March 2022. Since the scheme's inception, the Home Office has continued to listen to feedback from all sorts of stakeholders. It has made significant and positive changes and improvements and will continue to do so as more evidence comes in. For example, in 2021-22, the Home Office published a new claims form, as mentioned by the noble Baroness, Lady Benjamin, in collaboration with stakeholders. I know that it is a longer form, but stakeholders are in agreement that it is an easier one. It is in plain English and it has much more targeted and simpler questions for people to understand and complete. As I said, all the changes that we are making are being made in conjunction with stakeholders.

The Home Office has a multilayered approach to reviewing the process continually in order to ensure that we have an appropriate level of external scrutiny. That was brought up by a number of noble Lords, including the noble Lord, Lord Rosser, and the right reverend Prelate the Bishop of Southwark. The tier 1 review is conducted by a separate team that has not worked on any claim and so is totally independent. The tier 2 review is an independent review processed

[BARONESS SCOTT OF BYBROOK]

with the Adjudicator's Office, and the Home Office has accepted all recommendations made by the adjudicator.

I mentioned Martin Levermore. He regularly engages with officials and publishes annual reports on the scheme. His second report was published in May 2023 and is on GOV.UK. The Home Office also publishes a factsheet that has granular transparency. That is published every month and will provide details on a wide variety of aspects of both the casework and the ongoing reviews.

As I said, there is no cap or limit on the amount of compensation that the Home Office will pay out. When the scheme was announced, it was assumed that a high proportion of those who applied to the status scheme might then seek compensation. It is interesting that, although 16,200 individuals had been provided with documentation confirming their status or British citizenship as at quarter 1 of 2023, the experience has been that many of them have not suffered losses or detriment owing to being unable to demonstrate their lawful status in the UK, so they have not needed to claim compensation.

It is important that, as my noble friend Lady Berridge said, we continue to outreach to those communities to ensure that everyone understands the scheme and how to contact it. The Home Office has hosted 200 engagement outreach events, including 120 one-to-one surgeries, since 2018. It has worked closely with grass-roots and community organisations, reaching hundreds of thousands of individuals through the community fund. It has also run national media campaigns and will continue to make efforts to reach anyone who so far has not contacted it. We are doing everything we can.

I hope that that has answered a number of questions, but there were some specific ones. The noble Lord, Lord Rosser, asked about benchmarks. Responses to the call for evidence and the public consultation shaped the design of the scheme. We considered guidance in the Parliamentary and Health Service Ombudsman's principles for remedy on establishing time-limited compensation schemes and other good practice in that sector. The December 2020 changes increased compensation under the impact on life categories to bring them more in line with the Judicial College guidelines for the assessment of general damage in personal injury cases. We have gone through the normal process that we would do in order to look at benchmarking for this compensation.

The noble Lord, Lord Rosser, the noble Baroness, Lady Twycross, and the right reverend Prelate the Bishop of Southwark brought up Wendy Williams's three recommendations. When Wendy Williams wrote the report, she recognised the challenges and applauded the Home Office response to the challenge. As I stated, the Home Office has regular reviews and delivers the intent of all the recommendations, but not in a specific way. Extensive continual consideration of how to deliver the scheme is embedded in and throughout the department.

The Office for the Independent Examiner of Complaints, set up last year in response to the Windrush lessons learned review, is in place. There is also insight

and challenge from the Windrush working group. There has been a major internal change in culture and the willingness to listen as policies develop and implementation has begun. The Home Office will continue to challenge itself internally on its culture on this subject.

The noble Lord, Lord Rosser, brought up the issue of compensation previously accepted if claims are relooked at. Whenever changes are made, they are applied retroactively.

The right reverend Prelate the Bishop of Southwark brought up the important issue of deaths of claimants while still awaiting compensation. It is really regrettable that any claimant passes away before a compensation award can be made. The Home Office prioritises claims where we are aware of any critical or life-shortening instances in any claimant. Where someone passes away before their claim is finally resolved, we work closely with the representatives of their estate, normally their family, to ensure that compensation is paid as quickly as it possibly can be.

My noble friend Lady Berridge brought up an interesting idea, which she has mentioned before in this Chamber, on a specific Windrush scheme for scholarships. She knows that I have passed this on to the Home Office; I have not had a response yet, but I have promised her that I will give her the response as soon as it comes through, and I will.

My noble friend Lady Berridge and the noble Lord, Lord Hastings of Scarisbrick, brought up the important issue of the educational outcomes of young black men and women. It is more complicated than just all black men and women; it depends on their heritage quite a lot. The DfE has done a lot of work on this and has a lot of information on it. I do not have it to hand, but I will certainly ask the DfE to write a letter, and I will put a copy in the Library.

I may not have answered all the questions, particularly on the technical issues of the noble Lord, Lord Rosser. We will look at *Hansard* tomorrow, and my noble friend said that he will write with anything further that I have not covered.

I thank everyone here for their powerful contributions and tributes to the extraordinary Windrush generation. I emphasise the Government's unwavering commitment to ensuring that we never forget what it has done for us in this United Kingdom. We are so thankful that those first 500 people made that journey and arrived on our shores on that momentous day in June 75 years ago. They are a credit to their community and this country, and it is the greatest privilege to be able to celebrate and honour them today.

*Motion agreed.*

## **Creative Industries (Communications and Digital Committee Report)**

*Motion to Take Note*

12.02 pm

Moved by **Baroness Stowell of Beeston**

That this House takes note of the Report from the Communications and Digital Committee *At risk: our creative future* (2nd Report, HL Paper 125).



**Baroness Stowell of Beeston (Con):** My Lords, it is a privilege and a pleasure to chair the Communications and Digital Committee and to introduce this debate. I am delighted that many of my fellow committee members, both current and former colleagues, will contribute to this debate on our creative industries report, published in January. I make special mention of the noble Baroness, Lady Featherstone, who is not here today as she is still recovering from an injury—I know that she would be here if she could. She was a strong advocate for our inquiry.

Before I go any further, I pay tribute to the excellent team that advises and supports us; indeed, it deserves a huge amount of credit not just for its hard work but for the quality of our work. It is led by our exceptional committee clerk Dan Schlappa, and we are also ably and professionally supported by our policy analyst Emily Bailey Page, Owen Williams from the Press Office, Rita Cohen—one of the best and most reliable administrators I have ever come across—and Soham Karwa, a second year PhD student temporarily on attachment to the committee from Imperial College. On the committee itself, we are lucky to have such a diverse array of knowledge and expertise from across the media, digital and creative sectors. I thank all members for their dedication and contribution to our collective effort.

Some noble Lords may remember that, as part of our inquiry, we took evidence from Ai-Da, the robot artist. The House will be pleased to know that she is not here today to accompany proceedings, but the release of ChatGPT in the time since we had to reboot her during her evidence shows just how fast technology is moving and why we need a coherent strategy to ensure that the creative sector keeps pace and can thrive in the modern world.

This debate is timely, coming shortly after the publication by the Government of the *Creative Industries Sector Vision*, which my committee has been calling for. I was pleased to see that it recognised and directly addressed many of the key concerns we raised in our report, which I will come to later.

First, let me clarify what we are talking about and why it matters. The creative industries are an economic powerhouse, generating £108 billion a year and employing over 2.3 million people. Between 2011 and 2019, job growth in the creative industries was three times that in the UK overall. This job market offers a range of rewarding roles, with many vocational entry routes. Clusters of creative businesses are located across the country, which supports levelling up. Creative sector businesses are addressing net-zero challenges by driving innovation in concept design and material sciences.

Much of the growth potential lies in areas that combine technology with creativity, and the UK has particular strengths here. Our gaming market is worth £7 billion alone, and our animation market is world-renowned. A record £5.6 billion was spent on film and high-end television production in the UK in 2021. The number of UK firms working on immersive technologies rose by over 80% between 2016 and 2021.

The UK has long been regarded as a global leader in both the privately funded and the publicly funded creative sectors, and rightly so. But international

competition is hotting up. In the last 10 years, the global value of exports of creative services has more than doubled to reach \$1.1 trillion. Countries across the world are seeking a greater slice of this lucrative industry. Let me explain how. Many of the things that made the UK successful—like fiscal incentives, public arts programmes, centres of excellence and high-end production centres—are being copied and improved on by Governments abroad. At the same time, small UK businesses are selling up and, with them, valuable intellectual property is moving overseas.

UK experts are being left out of leading international research collaborations, which leaves us less influential and less engaged at the cutting edge of innovation. Huge American tech giants are dominating the emerging market in virtual and augmented reality, and they are reaping huge dividends from all of the consumer data that this generates. Also, technological advances and disruption risk shifting people out of the creative workforce and, in the process, reducing the vibrancy and creative spark on which so much of our economic success depends. In short, we face mounting challenges and cannot take the continued success of our creative industries for granted.

When we published our report, we had major concerns about how seriously the Government were taking this sector and the challenges it faces. Political attention had waned in recent years, I regret to say. The sector scarcely featured in the Chancellor's 2022 Autumn Statement and was not among his key growth industries. International summits were being skipped by Ministers, and industry experts had started to speak openly about the UK's decline in a fast-moving and highly competitive global market.

We also had concerns about what seemed to be an incoherent policy landscape holding the sector back. UKRI, the national funding agency for investing in research and innovation, was proposing to cut the creative industries clusters programme, which had delivered unprecedented success and return on investment. The Intellectual Property Office was proposing a new text and data mining regime that would undercut creative sector business models. To be blunt, Whitehall was blindly favouring new technology at the expense of creative IP. Efforts to tackle skills were not aligned with industry needs, and support for organisations receiving public funding placed too little emphasis on the innovation, cross-sector collaboration and sustainability that are key to ensuring the arts sector's long-term success.

It is vital to stress that championing the creative industries is not a matter of special pleading. There is a serious and well-evidenced business case for the sector to sit at the heart of the UK's future growth plans.

Perhaps I may at this point direct a comment to the creative sector itself. The emphasis from some who work within it on how it is "special" and should not be dirtied by talk of money, efficiencies and the value it adds to the economy has not always helped its cause and I would argue to those who maintain that position that it does need to change.

Given the importance of the sector, I was very pleased to see the new sector vision, which is a collaboration between government and the creative

[BARONESS STOWELL OF BEESTON]

industries and sets out plans and commitments to help the creative sector fulfil its potential. While, of course, it is not perfect, it addresses some of the core issues we raised.

First, the new level of political attention is notable. The Chancellor has now included the creative industries in the UK's priority economic growth areas. The sector vision has a foreword from the Prime Minister. These changes matter, and industry will be paying attention. I believe this recognition at the very top of government has not happened by accident.

Second is the new £50 million of funding being provided to continue the creative clusters programme. This will build on the hugely successful previous round of clusters, which exceeded expectations and provided a proven model for stimulating innovation and generating significant returns on investment. I must emphasise, however, that while this investment is welcome, UKRI and the Government must ensure that the value generated by previous clusters is not lost; they must be supported to transition to a long-term, sustainable footing. One practice that we saw quite commonly across the policy areas relevant to the creative industries was what I might describe as a bit of "initiative-itis": instead of sticking with what is proven to have worked, trying to reinvent things and start again from scratch.

The additional £75 million investment in the CoSTAR programme to boost R&D is also welcome, and speaks to the fact that the nexus between technology and creativity is a core UK strength that we should double down on.

Thirdly, the Government's commitment to dropping the proposed text and data mining regime is crucial. I understand that the Intellectual Property Office is now working on a new voluntary code. My committee will keep a close eye on how that develops, because creative businesses, whether they are in the music industry, publishers, artists—all of them—remain very concerned about getting this right. As we emphasised in our report, developing AI is important—indeed, we have announced today that our next inquiry is on AI—but it should not be pursued at all costs. Otherwise, we will find that things we value and make us distinctive as a country gradually disappear in the name of efficiency and technological progress.

The previous proposals, which have now been scratched, threw creative sector businesses under the bus, and needlessly so. The trade-off does not need to happen in this way: many sectors marry technology and creativity very well, and generate huge profits in the process, without undermining IP and business models. A fair deal that promotes innovation and supports the creative sector is possible, and we look forward to seeing the IPO's plans in due course.

Fourthly, the Government have committed to using a data-driven approach to mapping skills requirements in the sector, which will make use of the new Unit for Future Skills. This too is vital. There are thousands of training courses and initiatives, yet far too many employers say that skills shortages are getting worse and that the Government do not have a good enough plan to address this. The first step is to set out exactly where the most acute shortages are. The Government must

ensure that this then informs policy decisions around the development of apprenticeships and T-levels, and the provision, funding and advertisement of lifelong learning courses.

On the subject of skills, I will reiterate the committee's recommendation that innovative ideas, such as the flexi-job apprenticeship, should be scaled up to address a pressing problem: namely, that apprenticeships should be an excellent route into the sector, but many of them are poorly suited to the industry's work practices and SME-dominated set-up. The Government have committed to ministerial round tables to discuss creative apprenticeships and say that they will "improve" the flexi-job model. I would be grateful for further clarification from my noble friend about what specific changes and improvements are planned, and the timeline for delivering them.

Fifthly, we called for better support for SMEs to boost growth. I was pleased to see that the Create Growth Programme is receiving a funding uplift. It will be important to review the most successful outcomes of this programme and help scale learnings more widely across the country. There are other welcome commitments around delivering national plans for cultural and music education, joining up the creative sector with public health, and awareness of how the sector relates to environmental targets.

I cannot claim that the sector vision addresses all the committee's concerns. The UK's definition of R&D for tax relief, for example, is an outlier compared with other OECD countries. It remains overly restrictive and excludes a large proportion of work in the creative sector. As one business owner told us, it can mean that technical staff are able to claim R&D relief but the key creative contributors working on the same project cannot. As a result, the whole team's ability to innovate is limited by the number of creatives the company can afford to employ.

I appreciate of course that we cannot distribute endless tax cuts, but we can double down on our strengths and at least explore further options for stimulating more innovation. I reiterate the committee's call for the Government to look at this issue more seriously by expanding the definition of R&D. A limited pilot could be a good start.

I would also welcome more clarity on what is happening with careers guidance. The committee's inquiry heard evidence that guidance is patchy and needed significant improvements. This is vital to getting young people into the right courses and jobs, and filling extensive skills gaps. The sector vision refers to "inspiring creative careers guidance", but does not say much about what that actually means. Perhaps it will be addressed in the forthcoming education plans; I would certainly welcome clarification from my noble friend if he can give that today.

Finally, we also need a solid plan for dealing with technological disruption. Technologies are moving at breakneck speed—to state the obvious. We cannot simply wish them away or pretend that they will not have significant disruption, particularly for people who have roles with insecure contracts and work in areas of the creative industries that are more exposed. The Government are not there to back up everyone's

business models, but they can create the conditions and planning to help UK businesses prepare and adapt. Supporting businesses and freelancers to be more resilient, dynamic and flexible will stand them in good stead to manage the looming changes facing the sector.

Other countries will doubtless be looking at this, and the UK must not be left behind. I look forward to seeing the Government's response to the Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre's report on working practices and hope that it will address, in further detail, concerns about helping businesses and freelancers understand and manage the impacts of technological disruption.

This sector vision is very much the start, not the end, of a process. We must not be lulled into a false sense of security: publishing a plan does not mean that it will automatically be successful, or indeed that other countries will not similarly publish ambitious plans which see the UK fall behind. Continued high-level political commitment will remain crucial. As I said at the beginning, our creative industries are critically important to our national life and economy. They help us to unite and generate our collective pride in being British and to promote the best of British around the world. They do not deserve special treatment or exceptions from the basic demands placed on all businesses and organisations which are necessary for their survival, but we need to make sure that the right policy frameworks are in place and that we take them seriously. In the end, their continued success will be down to the creative industries themselves and the very many talented people who work within them.

There is much more ground that I could cover, but I am sure that it will be picked up by other noble Lords in the debate, which I look forward to hearing. I beg to move.

12.21 pm

**Baroness Rebuck (Lab):** My Lords, I draw the House's attention to my interests in the creative industries as set out in the register. I pay tribute to the skilful and consensual chairing of the inquiry by the noble Baroness, Lady Stowell of Beeston, and to the skill of our clerk and the rest of the team in helping the committee distil this rather amorphous subject into a robust set of recommendations, which, as we have heard, perhaps made some contribution to recent policy announcements.

However, at the time of the inquiry, the mood music from government was fairly grim for the creative industries: the BBC was under siege, Channel 4 was going to be privatised, unhelpful copyright changes were being tabled, and the successful creative clusters initiative was languishing on the cutting room floor. There was little recognition of the creative industries' significant contribution to the UK economy or that the sector's job growth, as we have heard, was over three times that of the UK as a whole. There was little acknowledgement of the civic contribution of the arts, and no vision for the future.

We are now on our third Prime Minister and third Culture Secretary since we began the inquiry a year ago, but in June, as we have heard, a creative industries vision document was published, which talked of growing

these industries by £50 billion by 2030, a renewed focus on creative clusters, and the possibility of 1 million extra jobs. That is refreshing, but there is no room for complacency, and we still risk losing the leading global role of the UK creative industries. Academics warned that we were in danger of frittering away our great talents, while other countries move ahead with relentless policy focus and investment. As is noted in the vision document, the export of our creative IP alone is one of our great strengths. Figures released on book publishing support that, showing an export growth in English language books in 2022, with sales to Germany, the largest of the European markets, up by 27%, and to Spain up by 30%.

However, in the time I have in the debate, I will concentrate on what I think is the biggest threat to our long-term growth in the creative industries: the issue of skills. How will we fill those promised extra 1 million jobs? Creative skills must be developed alongside STEM subjects, from nursery through to further, higher and postgraduate education. The current Department for Education's consistent blind spot on the value of the humanities must be addressed. Universities such as East Anglia, have drunk the Kool-Aid of the Government's rhetoric on so-called low-value humanities courses. Under financial duress, East Anglia is planning to cut its world-renowned creative writing course, which launched the careers of Kazuo Ishiguro, Anne Enright and Ian McEwan, whose novels are exported and translated the world over and the source of so many top British films.

Dr Darren Henley of Arts Council England told us that the three pillars of education were numeracy, literacy and creativity, which I hope will figure strongly in the cultural education plan which may be published later this year. I would add oracy to that list, as suggested yesterday by Keir Starmer, having seen the positive effects of this educational focus when I visited School 21 in Newham some 10 years ago and was so impressed by the articulate and imaginative students I met.

I know that the Minister supports a cultural education plan, but I still wonder why the EBacc continues to be so narrowly focused, excluding creative and tech skills, and why creative industry careers guidance is so inadequate, resulting in 41% of 16 year-olds not knowing that they could have a career in our successful screen industries. Time after time, we heard evidence of creative industries being held up through a lack of workforce skills. Some 88% of creative employers find it hard to recruit the right staff, against 38% across the rest of the economy, which is bad enough. That statistic was quoted to the inquiry by a Minister from the Department for Education. ScreenSkills told us that skills shortages were the biggest inhibitor to growth, and one fast-growing gaming company was turning work down because it could not recruit people with the right skills.

Why is it so difficult for government to fully embrace the STEAM agenda? By STEAM, I of course mean science, technology, engineering and maths, but the "A", for me at least, means the whole of the humanities and the teaching of creativity and critical thinking. One academic said that, despite the evidence of science, technology and artistry as the unicorns of the modern

[BARONESS REBUCK]

world, so many students were nervous about investing in their creativity. Surely the Government must recognise the central role of the humanities, imagination and critical thinking in harnessing technologies such as AI, which will have such a profound effect on every aspect of our society.

One of the starkest concerns for me was the 70% drop in the take-up of the design and technology GCSE over the last decade, higher even than the 40% decline in other creative subjects. How could this happen, when arguably one of the most successful companies in the world, Apple, was born through a unique combination of the technological vision of Steve Jobs and the world-beating design of Sir Jony Ive? A product of our own—creative higher education—is now under threat.

People say that a reimagining of the education system would be difficult, if not impossible, but we had some very interesting evidence from Dinah Caine, chair of the STEAM initiative in Camden, London. I declare that my daughter is the leader of Camden Council and that it is the borough in which I live. I knew that it had started a STEAM agenda some five years ago to build a bridge for the kids on the local housing estates, who would walk past the glass edifices of Google, Meta and even St Martin's School of Art and think that they were never for them.

Today, many young people's lives in the borough have been transformed by hearing of the opportunities available and by getting top careers advice and work placements inside these exciting institutions and in many smaller creative businesses. However, I had no idea of the effect on education in the borough and the power of the STEAM teachers' networks with local businesses. I therefore asked to visit Torriano Primary School in Kentish Town, home to 446 children, of which just under 50% were on free school meals. Walking into the school and seeing the accomplished art on the walls alongside representation of polymers created by five year-olds was impressive enough; then I heard that six and seven year-olds had worked with an engineering company to design a greenhouse of the future and had coded a watering app to use the least amount of water for the seeds to grow. Yes, six and seven year-olds were combining tech, design and creativity to invent the future. This school, a beacon of STEAM excellence, was also delivering the national curriculum—it can be done.

I realise that the Minister cannot wave a magic wand and secure an instant new skills pipeline for the creative industries, but, with the promised 1 million new jobs to fill, can he reassure us that he recognises the skills threat and will advocate with the DfE at all levels to ensure a fundamental focus on arts and creative education alongside STEM, and that skills are a "cross-ministry issue", to quote Sir Peter Bazalgette, co-chair of the Creative Industries Council and co-author of the vision document? Can the Minister confirm his support for the STEAM agenda and the key role of teaching and nurturing creative and critical thinking, without which the threatened decline of our world-leading creative industries will be a self-fulfilling prophecy.

12.30 pm

**Baroness Bonham-Carter of Yarnbury (LD):** My Lords, I also welcome this report. We are an island with a wealth of creative talents, which have shaped and illuminated our history and national identity, and our modern and wonderfully diverse United Kingdom, and we must remain a brilliantly creative nation. However, we cannot be complacent, because the sector is fragile; it needs attention and nurturing to continue to flourish.

This is an excellent report from the Communications and Digital Committee—sadly, I no longer sit on the committee—and I congratulate the noble Baroness, Lady Stowell, the chair, and whoever came up with the title. Plaudits there, as it is very apt. The report addresses that complacency and points out that, despite annual, biannual and more red carpet back-slapping, our creative industries continue to be undervalued and undercapitalised. Further congratulations are due because, as the noble Baroness, Lady Stowell, mentioned, the Government's *Creative Industries Sector Vision* document was published last month and has taken on a lot of what the report says. Since the publication of the committee's report, as the noble Baroness, Lady Stowell, said, the Chancellor has identified the creative industries as one of the five key growth sectors.

I shall become a little repetitive, I am afraid, but it is important that people from across the House mention what I know the Minister knows I am going to talk about—the problem that we have with our education system and skills. Why do the Government not understand the importance of creative and cultural education, which supports and feeds into the skills pipeline of this incredible sector?

This Government say that arts subjects are not strategic priorities. Do they not understand that arts and culture education is integral to what they recognise as a priority sector? No—they persist with a STEM-obsessed EBacc. As Grayson Perry said many years ago—and he was so correct:

"If arts subjects aren't included in the Ebacc, schools won't stop doing them overnight. But there will be a corrosive process, they will be gradually eroded ... By default, resources won't go into them".

That is what has happened. Compared to 2022, entries at GCSE have fallen dramatically in art and design, drama, music and performing, and expressive arts—I shall not give figures—and it is the same at A-level.

It is suggested that it is up to individual schools to choose what is in their syllabus, but in the state system there is no incentive to offer creative subjects. There are 119 accountability measures that a state secondary must consider and, as I understand it, not one of them pertains to the arts. Just look at the stark difference with the private sector, which recognises the benefits, because it is a fact that schools providing high-quality cultural education get better academic results. It is a fact that private schools entice parents with access to culture. As Mark Rylance has said:

"If, in modern day England, an institution like Eton deems drama important enough to have two theatres, why are we allowing the government to cut arts education from the life of the rest of our young people?"

As Lib Dems, we have always argued for STEAM, not STEM. There should not be a choice between arts and science—they are symbiotic. As the committee report says:

“Employers are increasingly calling for a blend of creative and digital skills. This interdisciplinary approach needs to be encouraged at school”.

The noble Baroness, Lady Rebusk, mentioned the Jony Ive case. Sir Peter Bazalgette, co-chair of the Creative Industries Council and co-author of the sector vision, has said:

“Our global competitiveness will increasingly depend on the fusion of creative and technological innovation”.

He also asked:

“Wasn’t the last industrial revolution powered by steam? There’s a lesson there for us”.

Indeed, the Victorians understood that it was this very fusion that fuelled the first Industrial Revolution. They had a department of science and arts, and invested in what was to become the V&A to develop the skills needed to feed British industry of that time. To ensure that the generation of the fourth industrial revolution is a generation of creators, schools need to be empowered to promote not just science or arts but the arts-science crossover. Sadly, this is an area in which the Government are not in listening mode, and there will be no move on the EBacc.

This report recommends that Ofsted’s outstanding ratings should be given only to schools that can demonstrate excellence in creative and technical teaching—something the Lib Dems have long called for. Does the Minister agree, and, more importantly, will he convince his colleagues in the education department?

The disparity between access to creative subjects for children in state schools and those in fee-paying schools leads to a pipeline of talent that has become ever more dependent on the affluence of parents. Research by the Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre has found that people from more privileged backgrounds are twice as likely to be employed in the cultural sector. This means less diversity in every sense.

There are T-levels, which should be able to provide a vocational route into creative occupations and help alleviate this problem, but in their present incarnation they are not user-friendly for the creative industries. The requirements for workplace placements are hard for SMEs to follow, and the sector is full of SMEs. Training pathways are confusing for students and employers; clearer routes into the industry are needed. I am sure my noble friend Lord Foster will speak more on this, but the present apprenticeship system is also not flexible enough.

Then there is HE, as the noble Baroness, Lady Rebusk, mentioned. Lately, there has been an unhelpful rhetoric about the low value of creative courses, emanating from the Department for Education. This is both a case of misunderstanding and short-sighted. Many of those starting out in the creative industries work flexibly in freelance roles, so will take time to generate higher salaries—their jobs are not only very worthwhile but they contribute to one of the highest growth sectors of

the UK’s economy. I am not sure that Minister Lopez, in her reply to the committee’s report, understands that. She refers to

“stringent minimum numerical thresholds for student outcomes”.

Does the Minister not accept that reducing outcomes to salary alone is both unhelpful and simplistic?

Finally, I come to the issue of careers advice or lack of it, again mentioned by the noble Baroness, Lady Rebusk. We need institutions and businesses from the creative industries collaborating properly with schools. My noble friend Lord Willis chaired the Youth Unemployment Committee, which recommended that careers guidance should be a compulsory element of the primary and secondary curriculum. This committee’s report recommends the same: expanding programmes that provide guidance for routes into the creative sector. I hope the Minister agrees with that. On which point, would it also be a good idea, as recommended by the report, for the Secretary of State for Education to sit on the Creative Industries Council alongside the DCMS Secretary? This would surely help co-ordination between creative business needs and skills.

However, not all is gloom. There is money promised for cultural education in the sector vision, and this provides the opportunity to plan and fund new activities taking place within and outside schools. It is essential that creative subjects are not shoe-horned into the corner of a crammed school timetable.

Another big positive is the noble Baroness, Lady Bull, who everyone holds in high esteem and who we will hear from in a minute. She is chairing a group coming up with a national cultural education plan. I am glad to say that, in this instance, it appears that the DfE is working alongside DCMS. Let us hope that when the noble Baroness and her team deliver a solution to righting the wrongs I have been discussing—which I am sure they will—the Government will listen and will provide adequate funding support.

To go back to the gloom, this Government’s record is not very good. Where is the arts premium, a manifesto commitment lost? Music hubs have been reduced from 116 to 43. But what a good report. I hope the Government understand that to continue to flourish in this area—in which we excel—we need to invest in our future and our future talent. I end with the words of the noble Lord, Lord Bragg:

“Athens managed to become world-renowned through its arts. Two and a half thousand years later, we still gaze at the results with awe”.

12.41 pm

**Baroness Bull (CB):** My Lords, I draw the House’s attention to my interests as set out in appendix 1 of this report and updated in the register.

It is a privilege to speak today as a member of the committee that produced this important report. The committee includes a wide range of experience and expertise. I also want to say how much we miss hearing today from the noble Baroness, Lady Featherstone, who always speaks with so much passion on these issues. Of course, the expertise of its members can make the chairing of any committee a challenge. I pay tribute to our chair, the noble Baroness, Lady Stowell,

[BARONESS BULL]

who navigated between different views with great skill and brought healthy and well-reasoned challenge to the arguments and assumptions of those of us who have been advocating for the sector for so long. This was genuinely welcome: it strengthened our arguments and made for a better report.

I acknowledge the superb clerking team and the first-class academic support we received from Professor Dave O'Brien. Their first contribution was to take the committee's broad interests and ambitions and focus them into an inquiry that was achievable in the allotted time and would complement the many excellent reports and pieces of research on the sector that already exist. Over the course of the inquiry, we were fortunate to hear from the authors and generators of some of that existing material. I point in particular to the research from the AHRC-funded Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre, whose work is specifically calibrated to inform policy. This is not to undervalue the many submissions we received, from which we learned so much.

What they told us—and what we concluded—was that the UK's creative industries continue to be an economic powerhouse. Our opening paragraph quotes the Government's own figures—that they generate

“more value to the UK economy than the life sciences, aerospace and automotive industries combined”.

This comparison is so oft cited that I asked whether we might find an alternative expression of the nearly £116 billion GVA that the creative industries contribute, but I was rightly shouted down. It tells a compelling story and, besides, it was this well-established evidence of success, alongside the clear potential for growth, that led our chair to sum up the committee's view by describing the Government's failure to grasp the opportunities and risks for this sector as “baffling”.

From different witnesses we heard how the creative industries should be at the heart of government plans for economic growth. The sector has outpaced the general economy, it is growing in every part of the UK, and job growth over the decade from 2010 was five times higher than that of the UK overall. I am aware that this is a higher figure than the noble Baroness, Lady Stowell, quoted, but I am quoting the figure referenced in the sector vision. It is a sector that contributes to other national priorities, including health and well-being, civic engagement, social cohesion and place making.

Given these wide-ranging benefits, unlocking the potential of the creative industries will necessarily involve a level of policy coherence and departmental join-up that we did not find. Some of the disconnect and lack of engagement was, frankly, alarming. We noted a degree of complacency and, in some places, a regrettable sense that, despite all the evidence, the sector's potential is still not taken seriously. I exempt the Minister at the Dispatch Box from this criticism; I think the whole House recognises his commitment to arts, culture and the creative industries.

We found blind spots in education, with a mismatch between careers guidance, apprenticeship schemes and sector skills shortages. We noted few incentives for young people to study the combination of creative and

technical skills that the industry requires. We found a persistent and unhelpful rhetoric of “low-value” courses in higher education that fails to take into account the realities of work in the sector. We could not understand why a highly successful model of innovation, the creative clusters programme, was being discontinued. We heard that international tax relief schemes were undercutting the UK, making it less attractive for creative businesses.

What concerned us was not just the range of individual issues, important though they are; it was the policy incoherence, different levels of engagement among departments and repeatedly changing Ministers that formed the backdrop against which the impact of rapidly developing technologies on the creative industries will play out. These technologies will fundamentally change the way content is made, experienced and disseminated. Some of our most fascinating discussions were about how the opportunities for innovation and growth that this represents are balanced with the regulatory and rights issues that arise and the potential impact on creative jobs.

Some argued that the sector was less exposed than others because creativity is a uniquely human skill. Others were not so sure, arguing that if one definition of creativity is the ability to recombine knowledge in new and original ways, an AI tool—which has theoretical access to everything that humans have ever written or said—could, in theory, come up with something that is entirely novel, whether or not the machine knows it. This may be the 21st-century equivalent of the infinite monkey theorem.

The sector vision has set out how the Government plan to address some of the issues we raised, and I particularly welcome the announcement of renewed support for creative clusters. But other responses have been more disappointing, including to our recommendation that the R&D definition needs to change. While we argued that the Government's definition is narrower than that in other OECD countries, the response claimed it to be consistent with the OECD Frascati standard. It is worth explaining exactly why this is not the case. There is an anomaly in UK policy in that HMRC also requires that R&D relates to scientific or technological delivery, despite the Frascati manual having a wider scope.

DSIT's guidelines on the meaning of research and development for tax purposes specifically state:

“Work in the arts, humanities and social sciences ... is not science for the purpose of these Guidelines”.

This means that R&D in the creative industries that draws on these disciplines is excluded from targeted R&D incentives, and this is not consistent with other OECD countries. I apologise for heading into the weeds on this point, but the sector vision's ambition for increased R&D would carry more weight if HMRC did not dismiss the research on which much of it relies as ineligible for tax relief.

Our specific focus for this inquiry inevitably meant that we did not address all the issues that threaten the sector today. We did not comment on the disproportionate impact that Brexit is having on the next generation of talent. We did not discuss the distribution of arts funding. We touched on issues of inequality, specifically

in relation to the ways in which automation could hit hardest those on lower salaries or insecure contracts, but our remit was not to investigate the reasons for stubbornly persistent inequalities of opportunity and access: the disparity of arts provision between independent and state schools, the reliance on freelancers and the precarity it breeds, the long hours and low pay—all the factors that risk widening the gap between those who can afford to work in the sector and those who cannot. I welcome, therefore, the specific focus on inclusivity in the workforce in the sector vision and look forward to seeing its ambitions turned into action.

The fact that these issues were not part of our inquiry does not mean that the committee does not recognise their importance—far from it. Many members wanted a broader remit than time would allow, and I hope that future inquiries will see the committee focus its efforts on these critical challenges.

I always find these debates on reports in which one has had a hand rather difficult to navigate. I have skated across the broad terrain and hovered briefly over one or two topics that were in—some out—of scope but everything that I want to say about this issue is in the pages of the report; I hope that Ministers across government will reflect carefully on what it says. Unless we address the current disconnect between the sector's potential and cross-government priorities, and unless Ministers recognise the necessity of cross-departmental collaboration, the UK's creative future and the well-evidenced contribution that the creative industries make to our economic, social and cultural well-being will remain very much at risk.

12.50 pm

**Lord Vaizey of Didcot (Con):** My Lords, it is a great pleasure to take part in this important debate. I refer to my register of interests, where I have numerous creative jobs, including being the president of Marlow Film Studios; that is probably the most specific one. I just want to say how grateful I am to follow such incredible and eminent speakers, all of whom have genuine and real experience of working in the creative industries. My former chair, the noble Baroness, Lady Stowell—I say “former” because I was kicked off the committee—gave an incredible outline of the report, setting out all the key details; of course, she has worked at a senior level in the media. We have also heard from the world's greatest publisher, the noble Baroness, Lady Rebuck; the noble Baroness, Lady Bonham-Carter, who has had a glittering career in the media; and the noble Baroness, Lady Bull, one of our foremost arts educators and practitioners—and we still have the world's greatest Methodist preacher to come.

I welcome the Government's vision for the creative sector industries. It was clearly provoked by our hard-hitting report; through the recommendations that we made, we managed to force some importance concessions from the Government and get a comprehensive strategy from them for the creative industries. It is a bit depressing, when the Government represent the creative industries, that they cannot come up with a more poetic title than *Creative Industries Sector Vision*; it does not exactly make for light or enjoyable reading, but we know that the spirit is willing and the Government are working to support our creative industries.

As noble Lords can probably tell, I want to provide a bit of a corrective because I do not think that the Government tell their own story well enough. For example, they deserve an enormous amount of praise for the way in which they handled the cultural recovery fund during the pandemic; it really made an enormous difference. There is also their recent announcement of the cultural education advisory council to implement the cultural education plan and the new music education plan. That is to be ably chaired by the noble Baroness, Lady Bull; there are one or two glaring omissions in the people appointed to that commission, but we will skate over them.

One thing I always think when we talk about the arts is that it is important for Ministers—this is just a word of sage advice for my noble friend Lord Parkinson, who is without question the best arts Minister we have had since 2016—always to keep hold of the outputs, not the inputs. There is always a tendency for those of us who care passionately about the arts to talk constantly about the inputs, such as better budgets and so on, and not look at what is happening around us.

Let us look around us. The recent reopening of the National Portrait Gallery was a complete triumph. In my role as a Tate trustee, I am looking forward to the complete refurbishment of Tate Liverpool. There are new storage facility sites for places such as the Science Museum and the Natural History Museum. There is the reopening of the children's museum via the V&A and V&A East. Factory International in Manchester reopened recently, reassuringly over budget. Of course, the Manchester Art Gallery has also been a triumph. In Birmingham, there are the Steven Knight-led film studios; there are also new proposals for studios in the north-east. Look at the kind of leadership that we still enjoy in the creative industries; for example, with David Chipperfield recently winning the Pritzker Prize, the Nobel Prize for architecture.

These are all great stories. Only today, if you read the excellent newsletter the *Vaizey View*, written by Alex Pleasants, you will see a reference to music exports having increased by 20% in the last year alone. No doubt many of us here will celebrate that tomorrow night in Hyde Park when we pop along to watch Bruce Springsteen. When the noble Baroness, Lady Bonham-Carter, mentioned Melvyn Bragg, I was wondering whether to refer to his interview in his absence. In it, he bemoaned 12 years of Tory philistinism. Nothing could be further from the truth, as there have been huge success stories along the way. I noted that he compared a successful arts policy with the success of Athens. I do think that the one glaring omission in the Government's arts policy is the return of the Parthenon sculptures to Athens, which will unleash a huge and thriving cultural partnership between Greece and the UK.

These are all great success stories. It sounds facetious, but the most important thing that the creative industries and the arts sector need from any Government is proper, committed and passionate leadership. It is important that we have Ministers who are there for a significant length of time and it is good to see that the noble Lord, Lord Parkinson, looks like he will never leave his post. That is very important. It is important that we celebrate, for example, David Chipperfield

[LORD VAIZEY OF DIDCOT]  
receiving the Pritzker Prize. I do not know whether the Prime Minister wrote to him, but these are the kinds of success stories that the Government should be talking about, even if they are not directly responsible for them.

To put it another way, the relentless and pointless attacks on the BBC just undermine some of the great jewels in the crown of our creative industry sector. Any sensible Government would stop them and celebrate these incredible success stories, because the UK's creative industries are, without doubt, a massive success story. There are lots of intangible reasons why that might be the case—the English language, our ability to grow and export to the US, and so on. British individualism—the fact that we have been able to be rude about our politicians for the last 400 years—may be a factor that allows us to follow our creative nose, but there are other things that the Government could do.

At the core of what makes a successful creative industry ecosystem, to use a rather crude and inept word, is tax policy. Here again the Government deserve an enormous amount of credit for: maintaining the film tax credit and even improving it over the last couple of years; the video games tax credit; the television tax credit; and the museum and theatre tax credits, which, again, they extended. Those are very good things. Noble Lords have referred to the R&D tax credit. I know of one video games company that has taken a year to get its R&D tax credit, which may not even come through. I would be interested to know the Minister's view on whether there is perhaps a silent agenda to make it tougher for the creative industries to access the R&D tax credit. It remains a very important piece of fiscal support for the creative industries.

The other important role is having a proper intellectual property regime. As the noble Baroness, Lady Stowell, pointed out, the Government have climbed down, thankfully, on their proposals to weaken that regime. Again, this is about constancy and certainty. People do not want to hear bright ideas about messing about with an IP regime that, broadly speaking, works, is robust and which people rely on. One of the points that is referred to in the report is the need to scale up funding for our creative businesses and the fact that many are sold too early. This is a conundrum that is very difficult for the Government to solve. They have world-class incentives for start-ups. The same kinds of incentives do not necessarily exist for scale-ups but at the same time, there is nothing that one can do about the fact that in the US there is a huge wall of capital that can be deployed, which is not deployed in the same way in Britain.

I will pause and talk a bit about education and skills, since that seems to be the main topic that is emerging in the debate. This took up a lot of my time as a Minister. I referred earlier to the Government's cultural education plan, which is a good thing. Again, one has to be robust to a certain extent. It is often down to head teachers to put in place a strong creative curriculum for their pupils. There is nothing stopping visionary secondary heads doing it but, of course, government can help. Things such as the EBacc did not help particularly. We talked in the culture White Paper about a proper school engagement plan in the

arts, twinning arts institutions with schools and allowing children to have work placements—not just front of house or on stage but working across the whole range of different jobs that exist in any arts or creative industry organisation.

Sorting out creative industries apprenticeships is long overdue. The apprenticeship levy itself is a terrible policy to which for some reason the Government remain committed. Sorting out creative industries apprenticeships and the freelance nature of work in many creative industries should certainly be a priority.

The Government also need to get their hands around our conservatoires and specialist arts education institutions. They really are world class. We talk about the Ivy League and Oxbridge, but no country in the world has such an incredible infrastructure of these colleges. You visit them and see some of them being held together with sticky tape. They do not have a strong relationship with government and are not celebrated as a collective force. As far as I can see, there is no real, coherent strategy to support them going forward. We have things such as the Music and Dance Scheme, but these are random and bitty. It needs some coherence. This is a free hit for the Minister, because it need not cost much money and engagement at a senior government level would be so welcomed by these institutions.

I praise the Labour Party for its announcement on education yesterday. It was wonderful to see a commitment from the party opposite to put cultural education at the heart of schools until the age of 16. I learned a new word: oracy. That is really important in terms of the class ceiling and giving kids at state school the opportunity to debate and argue, with the self-confidence that it gives. That goes to the heart of why arts education is so important; it is not just about skills and creative skills but about self-confidence. Things such as the music education plan are not about creating the next generation of world-class violinists, although that would be a welcome development, but about giving a lot of children who would not have that opportunity incredible self-confidence in their achievements.

I will not dwell on Brexit, but it has obviously been a massive and comprehensive disaster for the creative industries in the UK. Even one small win, such as allowing our musicians and artists to tour freely in Europe, would be welcome. I know the Minister will redouble his efforts to sort out this unholy mess. He is not immature enough to keep blaming our European partners for being unable to solve that problem.

In summing up, I started with leadership and I will end by saying that we need joined-up government for the arts and creative industries. I have always thought that. The excellent suggestion from the noble Baroness, Lady Bonham-Carter, about putting the Education Secretary on the Creative Industries Council goes to the heart of that. At the heart of education, health, levelling up, and soft power and diplomacy lie our creative industries. They are world class, world beating and something of which we should all be immensely proud.



1.03 pm

**Lord Lipsey (Lab):** My Lords, I am glad to start my speech by agreeing with two things just said by the noble Lord, Lord Vaizey. First, the current Minister should stay in his post for ever. However, this will require a small sacrifice on his part, in changing from his side of the House to ours, before he is eligible.

Secondly, I agree with the noble Lord, Lord Vaizey, about the ghastliness of the phrase “creative industries”. It is hopeless for describing what we are talking about. “Creative” immediately makes you think of a painter scratching away on her canvas, but this goes far wider than art and the arts. They are a terribly important part of the creative world, but this sector is a financial as well as an artistic powerhouse. It deserves a better name. “Industries” just makes me think of LS Lowry and those smoky chimneys, but you have fewer smoky chimneys with this than with anything else.

With that aside, this is a valuable report. I was a member of the committee, so I am showing off a bit, but the real credit belongs with the staff, who get through more work in a day than I do in a month, and with my fellow committee members and our chair, the noble Baroness, Lady Stowell.

We say in our report that the Government have been complacent. I cannot help but think there is a bit of a paradox here: you can hardly pick up a newspaper now without a picture of a grinning Rishi Sunak in white overalls and black protective goggles proclaiming that Britain’s future lies in the creative industries. Meanwhile, the reality is, in our report’s words, a “lack of focus” by government. The creative industries, or whatever we will call them in a better world, do not even feature in the Government’s five priorities for growth, and they did not mention them in the last Autumn Statement. The reality seems a lot less present than the glorifying pictures of the Prime Minister.

When we see the flaws in policy, they are major. As we point out,

“UK tax relief ... remains restrictive ... The UK business environment lacks sufficient incentives for small businesses to scale at home; too many sell up”—

perhaps to other international firms—

“Data collection in both Government and the sector is muddled and under exploited. Academic research funding does too little to encourage commercially orientated creative projects ... Successive governments’ efforts to address skills shortages have fallen far short of what is needed”.

Those are direct quotes from our report and have been reflected, for example, by the noble Baroness, Lady Rebuck, on skills. It is a pretty damning indictment.

That said, the Government seem to be waking up. Perhaps it is partly the result of our report. Who knows? In June they published their creative industries—those words again—sector vision. This directly addressed two of our recommendations: the Government have ditched their plan to turn copyright into a Wild West where AI producers could simply steal the data produced by others, and they have revived the creative industries clusters programme, a highly successful policy that had been due to meet its maker in March 2023. Those are promising steps forward.

There is much more that our report recommends, and that our committee and others will continue to push, until the lights go on in Whitehall. The plain

fact, and a frightening one, is that if Britain does not succeed in this field, it is difficult to see where its future economic dynamism will come from. It has been high in the Government’s rhetoric but, for too long, not high enough in their practical policy agenda. That must change.

1.08 pm

**Lord Berkeley of Knighton (CB):** My Lords, like others, I welcome this report. I congratulate the noble Baroness, Lady Stowell, and her colleagues on the many cogent and important points that they make. Likewise, but to a rather lesser degree, I welcome the Government’s response. It acknowledges some of the failings identified in the committee’s report but does not satisfactorily deal with some of the more profoundly serious problems facing the creativity of this country and its future, as identified in the report.

Being a report from the Communications and Digital Committee, there is naturally considerable stress on technology. But, in today’s world, everything is to a greater or lesser degree wrapped up in the hungry but enabling embrace of technology. I remember Brian Eno showing me, about 15 years ago, how he had managed to create sounds on video games that would change every time somebody put in an input. In other words, you would never get the same piece of music twice; every fresh input would create a new sound. This defies the imagination. That was 15 years ago, so that gives you an idea of the way technology is beginning to frame things and the skills we need to continue it.

Whether it be the electronic creation of film and pop music, journalism, computer-controlled lighting for dance and theatre, or the streaming of live concerts from Wigmore Hall, the Barbican or venues up and down the country, technology is at the heart of creative thinking and creativity. I welcome the fact that a lot of the money that goes into concerts, theatre and ballet now enables the wider public—the people whose taxes pay for it—to see these things. That is a huge step forward.

We have heard of the pre-eminent role that creativity plays, both financially and socially, in our lives. In this regard, it is held highly by the Government. At least, that is what they repeatedly tell us, but it does not always seem that the Government understand the sector’s problems. When they do—here I agree with the noble Lord, Lord Vaizey, that we must salute things that have been done well—we have welcome results, such as the extension of VAT relief for orchestras and theatres for another two years. I compliment my co-chair on the APPG for Classical Music, Barbara Keeley, for pursuing this successfully in the other place. I too acknowledge the support for much of the sector during the pandemic; we must not take that for granted. I do not overlook the plus side. Necessarily, though, to be of any constructive use, it is the downside to which we must address ourselves.

I do not apologise for repeating the committee’s ominous conclusion that the Government’s current policy towards the sector is “complacent” and “risks jeopardising” its commercial potential. The sector “scarcely featured” in the 2022 Autumn Statement and was not identified as one of the Government’s five priorities for growth. The report said the sector should

[LORD BERKELEY OF KNIGHTON]  
 “sit at the heart of the UK’s future growth plans”.

I could not endorse that more.

The Government have rejected the committee’s suggestion that tax relief should be applied to those areas where innovation is born and developed. This is surely an error, since future success, and therefore economic prosperity, depends on innovation and new ideas. A lack of R&D is inimical to future development.

As a composer, I should declare an interest where intellectual property is concerned, but I would like to share the experiences of some of my colleagues. I think we all feel torn by the dilemma of, on the one hand, wishing to see music—this applies to other art forms and journalism as well—disseminated as widely as possible so that the greatest number of people can enjoy it, but against that is the problem that, if you can access intellectual property for free or for very little, the creators become disfranchised. It is not just the creators: as we heard from the noble Baroness, Lady Rebuck, publishers and record companies become disinclined to invest in music that is widely available.

I will give an example: if you have to realise a one million streams to earn just touching four figures, you will begin to see the problem. Furthermore, the illegal reproduction of sheet music only compounds the problem. I have a friend who has just released a song for a very worthwhile charity, but all it can really achieve is to draw attention to the cause, because the income stream, whatever the degree of success, will be negligible.

On the other hand, these are the norms in an ever-changing world that is now, to a degree, beyond our control. So, rather than complaining, we must take advantage of the many opportunities while safeguarding as far as possible current and future IP protection. On that note, the committee’s concerns over data mining, IP and AI seem extremely serious, and I am glad that the Government have decided to pause deliberations in this area for further reflection.

Having formed a cultural attachment to the University of East Anglia a few years ago, I, like the noble Baroness, Lady Rebuck, was dismayed to hear of the threat to the stunningly successful and highly regarded writing course. Thanks to the input principally of Malcolm Bradbury, among others, it has produced writers such as Angela Carter, Ian McEwan and Kazuo Ishiguro. However, I was not entirely surprised: a few years ago, the vice-chancellor wrote to congratulate me on receiving an honorary doctorate of music. Six months later, he wrote to say that the department of music, which was giving me the honorary doctorate, was closing. I just could not believe it. There are things that we have to protect; we cannot take for granted things such as the UEA writing course. The music has gone—let us not allow that writing course to go down too.

The University and College Union recently said that 31 of 36 cuts at UEA’s faculties would fall on the arts and humanities. I fear it was ever thus; that is why this report warns the Government that they must take care to protect creativity in this country and invest further in it. Whenever savings have to be made, it tends to be the arts and humanities that are the first to suffer. I understand why people are reluctant, for

example, to look towards the NHS or education. It is always the arts and humanities which suffer, and we have to protect them. I would argue that they promote a more cohesive society as well as being a sound investment, as Treasury receipts demonstrate.

I was very interested when the noble Baroness, Lady Stowell, said that we sometimes do not serve our own cause well in the way that we talk about receipts and things like that, and that things should change. I would welcome hearing from her the ways in which we could improve that dialogue. After all, whether you are a composer, a writer or a Peer in the House of Lords, we are here not just to scrutinise but to learn. So, if there are things we could do better, I would be interested to hear about them.

The downgrading of our skills development goes back to the loss of arts in state schools, which means, for instance, that instrument tuition and provision has become the preserve of the affluent. The noble Lord, Lord Vaizey, is right in saying that the individual headmaster can make a huge difference, but if there are no peripatetic teachers or instruments, even an enlightened head is going to be up against it. This was a point that the noble Baroness, Lady Barran, reiterated when I asked her about how we are going to find more skilled teachers for music in schools. She conceded, as I think the Minister has, that there is a real problem here. It is something the Government need to address.

If it is only the affluent pupils learning the violin, the clarinet or the guitar, what does that say about levelling up? I know, like others, that the Minister is deeply committed to music, and I apologise for repeating ad nauseam my concerns in this area. However, the fact is that exposure to music and the arts at an early age is, to my mind, the overriding issue in the creative health of our nation. After all, these are the artists and the teachers of the future. As we have just heard, the decline in the number of students taking arts in schools is therefore desperately worrying. Goal two of the Government’s *Creative Industries Sector Vision* aims to:

“Build a highly-skilled, productive and inclusive workforce for the future, supporting million more jobs across the UK”.

How do the Government reconcile that aspiration with the lack of arts opportunities in state schools, which is where it starts?

Let us suppose that despite these difficulties you make it as, for example, a performing musician. The lack of royalties from the dissemination of your ideas, which I have already mentioned, will mean that you or your group, be it pop or classical, will need to tour to make ends meet. Here, as the noble Lord, Lord Vaizey, mentioned, you will encounter further obstacles in terms of the time and money required for visas in Europe and the lunatic rules of cabotage that will affect the transport of your instruments and staging, even if you yourself manage to get there.

I think the Government need, as many people have said, to think as though they are an orchestra. You have the brass there, the strings here—you have education here and you have business here—and they need to join up to make a synchronous sound. I know the Prime Minister is looking at the desperate pleas of the science community in relation to the Horizon program.

I think we should link these endeavours in the light of the progress made with the Windsor Framework. Even committed Brexiters acknowledge that there is much to sort out in order to create a better exchange of scientific and artistic ideas. That exchange—that curiosity—is the daily bread of progress, whether it be in the arts or business. The secret to writing a great book, or composing a piece of music or a dance, is the ability to refine, to hone, to improve and to admit that something is not quite right. That is what we need to do in relation to our cultural life and its relation to our nearest neighbours.

Finally, despite all the problems that the creative industries face, we will go on creating and performing. That is the nature of the creative imperative, but it is not something we should take for granted or take advantage of. There is so much, as the Minister will doubtless acknowledge, to build on. I hope that he and his colleagues will hear the concerns outlined in this excellent report because, I assure him, they reflect wide concern and fears on what you might call the shop floor of our creative industries. They are full of ideas, but they really are struggling.

1.22 pm

**Lord Griffiths of Burry Port (Lab):** My Lords, there has been so much wisdom shared. I am a member of the committee, and I am glad to be surrounded by other members of the committee—it is like a Sunday School outing; we have can have a cream tea on the Terrace afterwards—particularly because we have been able to give force to the thinking incorporated in the report. At the end of a week when, with the debates on a certain Bill dominating the space, I have had nothing but murderous thoughts about people on the opposite Benches, the debate allows me to emphasise that I have such positive things to say about the chair of the committee. It is wonderful to have a nice antidote to some of my dark thoughts this week. Her skill is terrific. My noble friend Lady Rebuck has already talked about the consensual way that she had us all working, and that is certainly true. Beyond that, to take the recommendations of the report in January through to the Government's response in April and then the Government's statements in June, incorporating so much of the thinking of the report, suggests there was a bit more than simply consensual working and that there was focused thinking and follow-through, which seems to me to be very considerable. One quality of the noble Baroness, Lady Stowell—I will get it off my chest now—is that she knows the highways and byways of how politics works and she gets into the kind of web of things. We have our lovely thoughts, we shape them as we can, and then she takes them away and worries away in the right places so that we get some kind of progress.

By the way, it is lovely to respond to the noble Lord, Lord Vaizey, who is clearly possessed of all the skills necessary to recognise a fine Methodist preacher when he sees one, and I must pay him my tribute.

My intellectual life was marked seriously by the novels of CP Snow and the idea of *The Two Cultures*. In those days, it was arts and science. I had a particular proclivity for pure maths, but I could not do it because

it was a choice between arts or science, so I ended up with English, French and Latin. None of them gave me any mathematical scope at all. The idea of technology, possibly, and the humanities being two cultures is the one that our report seems to knock on the head. Cross-government working has been mentioned again and again; from a government end, the approach to creative industries must be generic, not departmentalised or compartmentalised. That is the first thing. The other thing is to recognise, as the noble Lord, Lord Berkeley, said, that creativity, technology and imagination all work together.

Others have great expertise and life experiences which I do not have; I have others, but not those. I will now share a couple of my experiences. In 10 days' time, at the Old Street roundabout near Moorgate, a new school will be opened—or rather, a refurbished Victorian school in a very unprepossessing site will be opened. It is the Central Foundation Boys' School. Around £51 million will produce a brand new school with a fantastic head teacher. The skills that have been referred to repeatedly and the need not to put the thinking of one discipline and another into silos are being incorporated. This is the kind of school that will be equipped with the necessary wherewithal to shape young minds in cross-referencing the ability to think outside the box with science and technology. This will be wonderfully provided for.

It is a state school, it is downtown and it is in Islington. There is nothing special about the catchment area, but the pupils will learn the skills we have been discussing today. I am happy to offer that information for the general interest. How can we do something like that? Because we had £51 million to spend. How many state schools across the land do not have and will not have the wherewithal? Some of their buildings are falling down and they do not have modern, state-of-the-art facilities.

We also have a Central Foundation Girls' School. Twenty years of my life have gone into governance and the shaping of policy in both these schools. Out in Tower Hamlets, 85% of the girls are Bangladeshi and come to school in their hijabs. At that school, we are bringing back former pupils to remind those caught up in a culture that tends to be inward-looking about what will help them to break into new avenues of understanding, of self-development and of contribution to the common good.

I am very proud of those schools. It is 18 months since I stepped down from my responsibilities there, so I do not declare an interest as there is no conflict. It does, however, seem to incorporate a certain spirit at a young age. When I go for the opening in 10 days' time, it will all begin with a concert. At one stage, they asked the trustees if we could help them to buy 20 pianos. I have never bought more than one in my life. They need 20 pianos so they can have rehearsal rooms and all the rest of it. That is my first experience.

The other is perhaps more homely. My wife would go over to Tower Hamlets to fetch my grandson, little Thomas—he is not little; he is a teenager now—from his primary school to take him home two days a week. On one occasion, holding his grandmother's arm, he said, "Grandma, I am a chatterbox. I love talking. It is

[LORD GRIFFITHS OF BURRY PORT] my grandpa, you know". He went on to say, "But I'm going to be quiet for a few minutes. Please understand. Don't worry. My head is bursting with imagination". At home, his father, who is a mathematician, and his mother, who is a teacher, ensure that he has cross-references to every conceivable thing in the world. He has sat down and explained cosmology to me.

All I want people to understand is that the educational challenge for a nation such as ours is to open people's minds from the earliest possible age—we heard about seven year-olds building greenhouses—to the possibilities of working with hand and brain, and thinking and feeling, so that the composite whole that comes out of all of that is a creative contribution to the well-being of the land and the improvement of the people who live in it.

1.30 pm

**Lord Clement-Jones (LD):** My Lords, it is a huge pleasure to follow the noble Lord, Lord Griffiths, who I am sure has lived up to every expectation that the noble Lord, Lord Vaizey, had when he mentioned him. He captured the exact phrase: this debate so far and the committee's report have shown themselves to be the antithesis of the two cultures that CP Snow wrote about and that existed at that time.

I declare my interests in the register. It is a great pleasure to take part in this debate, and I was pleased to hear what the noble Baroness, Lady Stowell, had to say and the challenging way in which she presented the committee's report. This is not a done deal; there is much more to be done. Not having been a member of the committee, I will raise for the Minister a few issues and questions that are of particular interest and concern to me.

I became the Front-Bench spokesman for the creative industries for my party back in 2004, and we have seen enormous changes in those nearly 20 years, with the rise of the digital economy. I very much welcome what the committee said about that and the way in which the noble Baroness introduced its report in that context. So, although I welcome the creation of the new Department for Science, Innovation and Technology, I am rather conflicted because I believe we need to be very clear about the vital role that digital technology plays and will continue to play in the arts and creative industries, and about the need to plan for its impact. I very much hope that the CMS department, as we must now call it, continues to have a strong focus on this; it cannot simply subcontract it to another government department. We heard about the size of the creative industries, certainly prior to the pandemic, growing at twice the rate of the UK economy. So, as was said, there is no case for any complacency or government denial that this sector continues to be of huge importance.

It is clear from the speeches that we heard that the committee has already had results, in the stimulation of the production of the sector vision, which sets out a strategy for increasing the sector's growth and which I welcome. Of course, we are now in a much better position to judge whether the Select Committee's recommendations are being met, in the light of that document. But, perhaps going a bit further than the

committee's report, like the noble Baroness, Lady Rebuck, I believe that the creative industries are working against a backdrop of severe and chronic skills shortages, in terms of recruitment, retention and diversity.

I was very much taken by BECTU's briefing to us saying that thousands of freelancers are leaving the industries for better pay, better conditions and more stability elsewhere. It points out that creative freelancers were hit particularly hard by the pandemic, which we all know about, with many of them ineligible for government support schemes. I entirely agree with BECTU because freelancers are absolutely at the core of the creative industries. It says that the Government must

"work with unions and industry to ensure the sector is an equal, safe and rewarding place to build a career".

Without that, there is little prospect of the Government's second skills-related goal, set out in the sector vision, being achieved.

IP is an area where I have a particularly strong interest. Nowhere is government action—or inaction—more relevant than in respect of IP since it is central to the creative industries. It is good to see that it formed a strong part of the committee's recommendations: first, the pause to the text- and data-mining regime; and, secondly, recommendations to ratify the Beijing Treaty on Audiovisual Performances—that is, performing rights—which would grant performers the right to be identified as the performer and the right to object to distortion, mutilation or other modification to the recorded or broadcast material that would be prejudicial to their reputation. That is an unpacking of what the Beijing treaty essentially does.

It was good that the Government's response was positive in both respects. Particularly as a result of Patrick Vallance's digital review, the Government committed to working with users and rights holders on text and data mining; for example, by producing a code of practice by the summer and helping to ensure that the tech and creative sectors can grow together in partnership. I welcome that, and I pay tribute to the efforts of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Intellectual Property and of the Alliance for Intellectual Property, which I believe was instrumental, along with the Select Committee, in persuading the previous IP Minister, George Freeman, not to go ahead with the original proposal. But who is being consulted on the code of practice? When is it going to be published? Will it be published in draft form? What impact is it intended to have?

Likewise, the Government's response on the Beijing treaty was positive, but they said:

"The Treaty also contains optional provisions which"

the UK will need to decide

whether and how to implement",

and that to ratify the treaty, the UK will need to decide on specific options for implementation through stakeholder consultation. That sounds a bit qualified. I very much hope that the Government, who said they were going to publish the consultation in spring this year, will get on with it. We are well out of spring now, so where is that consultation? When can we expect it?

Why are we over two years down the track from the original call for views on signing up to the Beijing treaty?

There are many other issues relating to IP. We have the worrying aspect of calls for changes to the exhaustion regime. A recent *Telegraph* piece, with the misleading sub-heading:

“Controversial EU law bans firms from selling legitimate branded goods if they are already on the market in a country outside the bloc”

seems to have been inspired by the European Research Group of Back-Bench Conservative MPs. Actually, that is a sovereign decision of the UK; it is entirely at the UK’s behest. It is in its interests to keep exhaustion as it is; it would be deeply damaging for the creative industries to change that.

There are other international issues relating to the disclosure of unregistered designs overseas, particularly in the EU, a subject that I very much hope that the Government have under review. Similarly, on the question of unregulated representatives in the IP system, changes have long been asked for by CITMA.

There is a very welcome reference to IP in the sector vision, which states:

“Central to our business environment is the UK’s IP framework ... We also understand that technology must advance in harmony with the creative sector to ensure creators are not unintentionally negatively impacted by these advancements”.

But we need to go further in the AI age. I am delighted that we have AI and IP under one Minister now, but the IPO needs to grasp the nettle, particularly in respect of performing rights, which have been the subject of a major campaign by Equity, Stop Stealing the Show. As it says, performers are having their image, voice or likeness reproduced by others, using AI technology, without consent. This goes further than anything that would be covered by the Beijing treaty. We are talking about deepfakes, now easily generated by AI, and this includes visual works as well as music performance. What can the Minister say about the Government’s response to this?

There are many other questions relating to the creative industries. On music venues, I welcome some of the support that has been given there. We have the whole question of creative clusters, and I congratulate the committee on their focus on that. I was in Yorkshire recently, the home of XR Stories and Production Park. They are really impressive, demonstrating the marriage of creativity and technology. We have heard about the post-Brexit touring restrictions from the noble Lord, Lord Berkeley, and the noble Baroness, Lady Bull; that is of huge importance.

Finally, I welcome the work of the British Academy in trying to change the narrative around skills and the humanities. These are the social sciences, humanities and the arts for people and the economy, now described as SHAPE. The chair of Goldsmiths, Dinah Caine, recently said at a meeting in Parliament that the UK was working to become a science superpower but that it was already a creative power; she stressed the interdisciplinary links and called for the divides to be removed. That is exactly the way forward, and it is very much in line with the committee’s recommendations.

1.42 pm

**Lord Watson of Invergowrie (Lab):** My Lords, three weeks ago I congratulated the noble Earl, Lord Clancarty, on securing his QSD on freelancers in the arts and creative industries, but I said then that we needed a fuller debate as soon as possible. I had no expectation that such an opportunity would arrive quite so soon, but I am delighted that today we are able to have a comprehensive debate around the excellent report produced by the Communications and Digital Committee, compellingly introduced by its chair, the noble Baroness, Lady Stowell.

As I did last month, I will highlight the crisis facing grass-roots music venues, to which I was pleased to hear the noble Lord, Lord Clement-Jones, refer a moment ago—but first I want to offer some comments on the committee’s report. The title says it all, really, because our creative future genuinely is threatened unless the Government, either this one or the one who follow them, take note of the powerful messages contained in the report. Given the economic value generated by the creative industries, placing that sector at the heart of any Government’s growth plans ought to be a no-brainer—so I was pleased to hear the noble Baroness, Lady Stowell, say that the Chancellor had now added the creative sector to his growth priorities. That is to be welcomed, because hitherto Conservative Governments have not only undervalued the arts and the creative industries but have actively downplayed the role which arts and creative subjects have to play in education, both in schools and at universities.

In terms of the latter, Ministers have in recent years dismissed arts degrees as self-indulgent and virtually worthless, falsely claiming that overwhelmingly the role of higher education should be to produce the engineers, technologists, mathematicians and scientists that the economy of the future will require. Of course, the STEM subjects are important, and we need them to thrive, but that can happen while still leaving sufficient bandwidth for arts and humanities courses. To deny that is to accept the Government’s anti-intellectual view of higher education—something that I find rather ironic when I consider how many current and recent Ministers went from private schools to study PPE at Oxbridge.

That ideology has led to the closure of arts and humanities courses in universities across the country. Last month we saw perhaps the most egregious example, as admirably outlined by my noble friend Lady Rebuck and the noble Lord, Lord Berkeley. The University of East Anglia announced that more than 30 arts and humanities teaching posts were to be cut, perhaps fatally, from one of the most famous creative writing courses in the world. I make no apology to the noble Lord, Lord Vaizey, who I see is no longer in his place, for using the term “philistinism”, because many more aspiring writers will be denied the chance to follow Ian McEwan, Kazuo Ishiguro and others, were that course to close.

Equally, the Government’s marginalising of arts and creative subjects in schools is well known. On schools, we have just been treated by my noble friend Lord Griffiths—and I should say I regard all his contributions as a treat—to news of the new school in

[LORD WATSON OF INVERGOWRIE]

Moorgate, which I am sure he has downplayed his own role in bringing about. The ultimate success of that school will depend on a combination of factors, but I argue that the key factor in its success will be its teachers. I say in passing that this morning I spent some time in Victoria Tower Gardens, adjacent to Parliament, meeting striking teachers. I think they are being treated disgracefully, and I think it is such a shame that people who have dedicated their careers to bringing forward the next generation have been forced to take strike action to achieve fair pay.

I am a member of the Education for 11-16 Year Olds Committee, and we have heard many witnesses decry the manner in which the introduction of the EBacc in 2014 has squeezed arts and creative subjects from the core curriculum, leading, as many noble Lords have said, to far fewer people now sitting GCSEs in design and technology, music and other creative subjects. After reading this report, I was left with a distinct sense of *déjà vu*, given the evidence submitted to the Education for 11-16 Year Olds Committee. I will not repeat the damaging statistics on the fall-off in creative subjects, mentioned by several noble Lords.

I also recognise the report's support for STEM to become STEAM, with the addition of arts subjects. Design and technology continues to flounder as a subject that school pupils are encouraged to take with them from key stage 3 to key stage 4 when they start preparing for their GCSEs. I echo the report's call for careers education in schools to be developed to include guidance on routes into the creative sector. The committee also shines light on the impact of skills shortages, which are acute in the creative industries, as my noble friend Lady Rebuck highlighted.

All of this should fit like a glove with the development of the Government's lifelong loan entitlement, which aims to provide people with the ability to upskill and reskill throughout their working lives. To undervalue the role of the arts and the creative industries within that makes no sense at all. Pathways that support more flexible ways to study are needed now more than ever. In 2020-21, the Open University had more than 50,000 students in its faculty of arts and social sciences, enabling people to develop their skills in the creative industries as they earn or juggle study with caring responsibilities. It is instructive to note that the Open College of the Arts will become part of the Open University next month.

I turn now to the crisis facing grass-roots music venues, on whose behalf the Music Venue Trust campaigns vigorously. The Minister used the debate secured by the noble Earl, Lord Clancarty, last month, to which I referred earlier, to announce an additional £5 million for Arts Council England's supporting grass-roots live music fund. That was very much welcomed by the sector, not least because so far this year, one music venue has closed every week across the UK.

That is not because people are losing interest in music; there were 22 million audience visits to a gig in 2022. More than 30,000 people work in this sector, and grass-roots music venues are the research and development department of the UK's £5 billion-a-year music industry. Eight new arenas are proposed to

open in the UK in the next five years, and all will be reliant on the talent pipeline that starts at the small venues that I frequent, such as Ain't Nothin' But The Blues in Soho, The Silver Bullet in Finsbury Park and Mercato Metropolitano in Elephant and Castle. But the owners and operators of big arenas have no record of making a financial investment in that pipeline.

I am afraid that I will not be joining the noble Lord, Lord Vaizey, to see Springsteen in Hyde Park tomorrow; I prefer more intimate venues. There is no good reason why the promoters of that event, and the other major players in the music industry, should not reinvest in the talent and venues that are supporting it and supplying the next generation of performers. One means of achieving that would be for every ticket sold for each music event at an arena, stadium or major festival to contain a contribution to the grass-roots circuits that supported and developed the talent on which the success of that event depends.

The noble Baroness, Lady Stowell, mentioned the committee's recommendations on research and development. Currently, R&D tax relief is limited to science and technology applications, but the impact of creative arts and the contemporary music industry supports a multi-billion-pound industry, and the returns are not felt at the grass-roots level. It does not recognise the work done by the creative industries to improve the UK's economy, through the live music ecosystem, the recording industry and the tourism and hospitality sectors. Most grass-roots music venues operate at a loss when supporting the development of upcoming talent, and their role as a research and development department of the music industry should be recognised by broadening the work that qualifies as R&D to include creative industries and grass-roots music venues.

There is also a strong case for parity with other cultural industries through tax relief. For example, the concessions available to theatres fail to recognise that the inherent risk involved in creating a performance excludes musicians, who often require the greatest investment to produce their tours. If theatre tax relief was amended to performance tax relief, it could be extended to include grass-roots music venues.

I congratulate the committee on producing a report with many positive recommendations for ensuring that this country has a creative future. I very much hope that the Minister will live up to his billing from all sides of your Lordships' House and that he has a speech that will show that the Government are now prepared to recognise the huge contribution that the creative sector makes, not just to the economy but to the quality of life of so many people.

1.52 pm

**The Earl of Clancarty (CB):** My Lords, this is an important report and I congratulate the noble Baroness, Lady Stowell, on her introduction to it. The report divides into two parts. The first concerns the problems facing creators when they are already creating—IP and tax relief are just two examples—and the second explores how to get creators to that point when they are having to deal with those problems; the chapter on skills is about that. There is a horse-and-cart aspect to this, although skills are also needed to sustain the industry as well.

I will pick out a couple of things that the report highlights, one from each of those areas. While bearing in mind the technological/business bent of the report, I will try to explore the idea of the arts as a thing in itself—a kind of missing key for the Government in the puzzle about how we drive forward these industries.

First, there has clearly been some success in drawing the Government's attention to some of the concerns raised by the report. For instance, one issue I raised in January in an Oral Question referencing this very report was the concern over a broad copyright exception for text and data mining, which the noble Lord, Lord Clement-Jones, talked about in some detail. Can the Government update us as to where things currently stand with the IPO on this? Have the Government asked the IPO to pause the originally proposed changes, as they said they would in response to the report? Importantly, how much are interested parties, such as the music sector, being kept in the loop on this? I look forward to, I hope, a detailed response from the Minister on that.

Secondly, the statement on higher education in paragraph 158 in the chapter on skills says:

“The Department for Education's sweeping rhetoric about ‘low value courses’ is unhelpful”.

Other noble Lords have referred to that. This concern was raised by my noble friend Lady Bull today, as well as in an Oral Question on higher education on 28 June, in which she made the point that

“individuals can and do choose to pursue careers that earn lower salaries but have vital social and cultural value”.

One might add artistic value, an aspect of work that makes it a valid contribution by an individual to society, irrespective of the economic value of that work.

Artists, as we discussed in the debate on freelancers recently, want to be paid. Artists and technicians want to be paid more, but they should not be penalised if that is not achieved. The Minister's reply to my noble friend's question was that

“it is ... important that students are really well informed and understand the choices they make when they opt for one qualification or another”.—[*Official Report*, 28/6/23; col. 700.]

That is perfectly right, but what the Minister did not say is that universities can now be penalised for what are wrongly regarded as low outcomes, and courses can be withdrawn. In this case, the Government's response to that recommendation was, frankly, more than unhelpful.

The cutting of arts courses in universities pre-dates this new policy, as the noble Lord, Lord Berkeley, referred to, since cutting arts courses has been perceived over a period as an easy option when a university has got into trouble financially. It is perhaps better if financial problems can somehow be avoided altogether. In this sense, too, there is an analogy with schools today and their arts offer, which is hugely important for the creative industries. In a sense, the new regulation acts as a further turn of the screw.

The University of East Anglia has suggested something that the DfE could do that is a relatively small change but could make a difference to finances: to drop the metric that separates Russell group applicants from other universities so that there is more of a level

playing field and application interest is better shared across the university landscape. Many of the problems that have occurred are to non-Russell group universities. In very general terms, that is perhaps indicative of the conflict between the academic and the creative that is bedevilling education more widely. This would be in line with the egalitarian principles of the DfE's lifelong learning policy. It would also fit with Robert Halfon's assertion in his speech to the Higher Education Policy Institute's annual conference on 22 June that universities should not exist to reinforce privilege. I ask that the Minister pass this suggestion to the DfE. It might well help save further cuts to creative courses.

On school education, the obstacle of the EBacc is rightly highlighted in this report, as is the current emphasis on STEM rather than STEAM in schools—although I note that careers advice is given rather more space. The fact remains, however, that the erosion of an arts education in schools is now an urgent matter. Why does it matter? It matters both to the arts in their own right and to the creative industries as a whole. One has only to think of our great designers in so many areas, as the noble Baroness, Lady Rebuck, pointed out, for whom an arts education was key.

Another question is how those who are to take up a T-level in a creative subject are to be enthused in the first place. If one considers the talent pipeline or training pathway most practically as a series of stages—one might almost say key stages—the Edge Foundation, with its particular interest in technical education, is entirely convinced of the importance of arts subjects in schools as a crucial stage along the way. It has to be art and design as well as design and technology, as well as other arts subjects. If the Minister doubts the urgency I refer to, I ask him to look at the new *Art Now* report, produced by the All-Party Group for Art, Craft and Design in Education, of which I am a vice-chair, which finds that 67% of teachers surveyed are thinking about leaving the profession, with well-being and workload cited as major reasons.

There is a case to be made that as technology changes, other new media can and should be introduced in schools, but, most usefully, this should be as part of an arts education. In drama in schools, for example, we should think not just about acting and directing but about lighting, sound, set design and digital input. All these technical jobs are much-needed skills in theatre and the performing arts in general, but it needs investment, and what hope is there at present for that additional investment in schools if we are not even reaching first base in our arts education offer? Private schools are streets ahead.

This report is called *At Risk: Our Creative Future*. Three things threaten our creative future. One is the erosion of our arts education, the importance of which I have just outlined and to which this report refers. The second is the huge fall over the past 13 years in public funding for the arts, which has clearly reached a crunch moment this year. The Arts Council's grant in aid has shrunk by 47% in the past 15 years. Perhaps I should add that the most startling observation I have heard recently in this House was made by the noble Lord, Lord Razzall, in the recent local government debate when he observed that Stuttgart's arts funding is

[THE EARL OF CLANCARTY]  
 “greater than the whole of the Arts Council budget”.—[*Official Report*, 15/6/23; col. 2181.]

That is very much food for thought.

The arts are separate from the rest of the creative industries but, paradoxically, are their beating heart. Harm the arts and you harm everything, because of the dependency of the creative industries as a whole on the arts sector, which, as the great research project that it is, inherently needs the public investment that has been steadily removed in recent times. It should be emphasised too that the amount of money that should be afforded to the arts is a drop in the ocean in Treasury terms. Cuts are a political decision. Public funding of the arts has consciously not been addressed in this report but business cannot do everything.

Finally, the third major threat to the creative industries is Brexit, as the noble Lord, Lord Vaizey, talked about. We have talked quite a bit in Parliament about music touring, but Brexit is affecting every part of the creative industries and we do not talk enough about that. I will give just one example: architecture. In a survey conducted this year, Dezeen found that 84% of the architecture studios surveyed

“would rejoin the EU if the option was available”,  
 with many citing

“higher construction costs, difficulties attracting European talent and additional administrative burdens”.

The founder of one Somerset-based studio that is now thinking of leaving the UK said:

“Brexit has been a catastrophe ... The barriers are obvious but it is the cultural loss that is even greater. Architecture depends on cross-cultural exchange of ideas and benefits from free movement. It is staggering how diminished the UK scene has become post-Brexit”.

These are the challenges. The solutions are obvious—increasingly so in the case of Brexit—although it would take some political bravery to effect them. I hope that a Government do.

2.02 pm

**Lord Young of Norwood Green (Lab):** My Lords, it is a pleasure to follow the noble Earl, Lord Clancarty. Coming at what seems to be the end of this debate, almost everything that should have been said probably has been, so I am going to struggle to see whether I can introduce some further thoughts; I will certainly do my best. I declare an interest as a national apprenticeship ambassador. I will come on to the question of skills.

I echo the point made by the noble Baroness, Lady Stowell, about the quality of our clerical support. It demonstrates what high-quality civil servants are capable of producing. They were phenomenal in their work rate and the quality of what they produced. I congratulate the noble Baroness; she had what I can only describe as an eclectic committee but she drove us to produce a coherent, focused, influential and succinct report. All those factors are important. Somebody else has already paid tribute to the noble Baroness’s ability to wheel and deal in government departments, and that was justified praise.

In a first for any committee, as the noble Baroness mentioned, we interviewed a robot. Noble Lords will be pleased to know that, when I questioned the robot’s

interlocuter, he said, “No, she cannot demonstrate empathy”. I reminded him that I had a certain sense of déjà vu because somebody who has been mentioned twice in this debate, Ishiguro, was the man sponsoring this particular robot. For those of you who have not listened to it, I recommend going on BBC Sounds and listening to “Klara and the Sun”. It is the most fascinating story and one that will make you think, I believe.

The noble Lord, Lord Berkeley, who unfortunately is not in his place, told us about the problems with streaming. I was thinking about what was probably one of the greatest exhibitions that we will ever witness: the Vermeer exhibition at the Rijksmuseum, which, unfortunately, I did not manage to see. However, there is an astonishing film of it. I do not know whether it could be done, but it would not be a bad thing if we showed it in every school. It is an amazing film; he was such an astonishing artist.

Hardly surprisingly, I will focus on skills. The noble Lord, Lord Vaizey, was a bit dismissive of the apprenticeship levy. I think he is wrong; it was brave of this Government to introduce it. It focused employers’ minds. Is it perfect? Of course it is not. Does it need reform? Of course it does, for the reasons that many people have indicated, but we should not throw the baby out with the bath-water. It required thousands and thousands of employers to think about training. Did they do it well enough? No. Is it flexible enough, as a number of people asked? No, it is not, by any means.

There was also a lot of talk about career guidance, which is phenomenally important. It is not just career guidance, which is better than it used to be; it is the importance of getting young people into work experience and work placements. Nothing beats that—well, there is only one other thing that is as good as that, which is getting young people who are involved in art, culture and the performing arts to go into schools. That peer group influence is fundamentally important.

If I have one criticism, it is that the committee did not have many interesting visits and we did not travel very far. The noble Baroness, Lady Stowell, is very economical—I am only partially jesting. However, we went to the BBC at Salford, and what it is doing there really is important. We also had another visit; if people have not been there, I recommend that they go to Royal Holloway to see some of the stuff going on there. It really is amazing.

There has been lots of talk about the next generation, which is fundamentally important. It all starts with the early years. If any group suffered during the pandemic, it was that age group. I also say to the Minister that we need to look at how we fund education. Over £20 billion is outstanding in student loans. We have to ask ourselves: is that the best way of doing it? In my view, it is not. It should move over to taxation, where everybody would pay. That would be a much fairer system, and perhaps we could then focus more money on where it is absolutely needed.

I will congratulate Keir Starmer. I am a paid-up member of “pedants are us”, and I reckon my vocabulary is as good as most people’s, but I had to check the dictionary when I heard the word “oracy”. I first thought that it was something to do with oratory. It is



not at all; it is the ability to express oneself in and understand spoken language, which is subtly but importantly different. It was first recorded in 1960; it took a bit from “oral” and a bit from “literacy”. So he gave us a new and very important word. Young people’s ability to express themselves with confidence is fundamental. It is embarrassing to find that private schools understand this. It is an example of why I am totally opposed to people saying that there is no room for private schools in education. In my view, there is. They often pioneer the way. They need to work together with state schools.

I want to end on a positive note. Have the Government got it all right? Of course they have not, which is why our report strikes the right note. However, they are listening. There is so much going on: we are world leaders in animation and in computer games. Our contribution to music is absolutely astonishing.

Even in my humble local area, the highlight of the social event of Norwood Green’s year—our village day—was two groups of bhangra dancers, one with children and the other with grown-ups. The audience was absolutely captivated—what an example of cultural diversity, music, skills, drumming, et cetera. I am pleased to say that the landlord of my local pub, the Plough—I will give him a plug—sponsors so much live music, whether it is jazz, folk or something else.

There are some important lessons for the Government to learn. I look forward to the Minister’s response; he has quite a task, but he has been praised so much I am sure he will do it well. I end by saying that I like to think that our committee, under the able chairmanship of the noble Baroness, Lady Stowell, has made an important contribution to the creative economy.

## 2.10 pm

**Lord Foster of Bath (LD):** My Lords, I, too, serve on the Select Committee and pay tribute to the noble Baroness, Lady Stowell, for her chairmanship and her excellent speech. I will avoid making any comment on the allegations of her frugality. I join her in thanking our excellent staff and in paying tribute to my noble friend Lady Featherstone, because it was her debate in November 2021 on government policy, funding and attitudes towards the creative sector that was a catalyst for the committee’s inquiry. Many of us in that debate—and the noble Lords, Lord Lipsey and Lord Berkeley, and others today—concluded that while both past and present Governments talked up the importance of the creative industries, they failed to understand them and their specific needs.

The noble Lord, Lord Vaizey, rightly pointed to some important lifelines given to the sector during Covid. I have praised the Government for that on several occasions. However, even while trying to help, the Government’s limited understanding of the sector resulted in, for example, a furlough scheme that failed to address the needs of the high number of part-time and self-employed people in the sector. As a result, as we heard in a recent debate, 38,000 such people left the sector in 2020.

A similar lack of understanding has led to the ill-suited apprenticeship scheme we have heard about and a Brexit deal that has damaged touring musicians

and many organisations which previously benefited from talent from other European countries coming here, as the noble Lord, Lord Berkeley, reminded us. Since the noble Earl, Lord Clancarty, referred to architecture, it is worth reminding ourselves of a very recent survey which showed that 90% of architectural firms believe that Brexit has harmed their practice.

The committee’s report also argues that the Government are overly complacent about the contribution that the creative industries make to our economy. It was, indeed, a wake-up call. As others have indicated, judging by the response, the Government have, at least in part, listened. Certainly, there is much to welcome in the sector vision. Like the noble Baroness, Lady Stowell, and others, I particularly welcome the decision to ensure the continuation, with further funding, of the creative industries clusters.

An important part of the report which many noble Lords have picked up on addressed the acute skills shortage in the sector, which, frankly, is the biggest inhibitor to growth. The sector vision does at least recognise the problem, and it contains some welcome proposals, including—as we recommended—improved careers advice and improvements to the apprenticeship scheme.

However, we know that evaluation of the flexi scheme concluded that it was not flexible enough and that employer costs were unsustainable. The sector vision promises to “improve creative apprenticeships” but, frankly, gives no detail. Like others, I ask the Minister to say more about this welcome commitment without throwing out the baby with the bathwater, as was raised in the debate.

There are other issues that need to be addressed. As I have mentioned, we have debated the sector’s reliance on part-timers and freelancers. Given that so many left during the pandemic, it makes sense to look at ways to resolve the issues that caused them to leave and so help future retention. In that debate, I raised two issues but got no response at the time, so I hope the Minister can respond when he winds up.

The first was the current benefit scheme, which, as many of us know, was not designed for the tax and employment status of freelancers. What are the plans to address this and ensure their entitlement to protections, such as parental leave and sick pay, that full-time employees already have? Secondly, on tax, following the decision to drop plans to reform IR35, what will be done to develop a tax system that can unlock the agility of freelance work?

The key solution to meeting the skills shortage lies in our schools, colleges and universities. Here I address what the noble Baroness, Lady Bull, called the Government’s “blind spot”. The sector vision promises:

“We will build a pipeline of talent into our creative industries, from primary school to post-16 education”.

It specifically, and critically, acknowledges:

“The sector increasingly relies on a fusion of creative and STEM ... skills”.

Many of us have been saying that for years, not least my noble friend Lady Bonham-Carter, who, like many others, repeated that again today. The noble Baroness, Lady Rebuck, and the noble Lords, Lord Vaizey,

[LORD FOSTER OF BATH]

Lord Berkeley and Lord Watson, my noble friend Lord Clement-Jones and the noble Earl, Lord Clancarty, all said that we need STEAM not STEM.

However, our report says that

“there are too few incentives for students to study a combination of creative and STEM subjects”.

As noble Lords have said, the main culprit is the failure of the schools’ EBacc to include art or design components, sending a message that creative knowledge and skills are not a route to jobs.

Numerous figures have been cited. The Select Committee, for example, notes that, since the introduction of the EBacc in 2010, there has been a 70% decline in GCSE entries in design and technology and a 40% decline in other creative subjects. This means that A-level entries have also declined, which hardly helps to meet the acknowledged need for a fusion of creative and STEM skills. However, as again we have heard, the Education Minister told the committee that there are no plans to change the EBacc. Surely the Minister acknowledges that the Government need to rethink this.

There is some hope with the advent of T-levels, but the situation in higher education is equally worrying. Echoing what was said by the noble Lord, Lord Watson, and the noble Earl, Lord Clancarty, one witness told us that there is

“worrying rhetoric about creative degrees being low value”.

It is hardly surprising, therefore, that courses have closed and that student numbers decline.

Our Select Committee believes, as my noble friend Lady Bonham-Carter mentioned, that the basis on which the Office for Students developed the measurement of low-value courses was badly flawed. Despite our recommendation that the measure be revisited, the Government’s response was a stonewall defence of the current arrangements. I hope the Minister will acknowledge that the skills gap is not helped if fewer and fewer students pursue creative courses at university. Frankly, I am at a loss to understand why this Government, as they acknowledge the need for a fusion of creative and STEM skills, seem determined to prevent it happening.

I agree with the noble Lord, Lord Berkeley, the noble Earl, Lord Clancarty, and other noble Lords who have argued that, if we are to have successful arts courses in our educational system, we need the arts themselves to flourish, yet many provider organisations are facing cuts and uncertainty, as we have heard. Frankly, it is likely to get worse. I will give just one example of why. Local councils are the biggest funders of arts and culture in England, yet just this week—two days ago—the LGA announced that councils are struggling to fill a £3 billion black hole caused by inflationary costs and soaring demands for their services. In such circumstances, councils will have less to spend on discretionary functions such as funding the arts. I hope the Minister’s department is making representations to secure a better funding deal for our councils.

Finally, I turn to another key issue in the report: the crucial importance of a robust intellectual property framework to underpin the creative industries, ensuring

financial recompense for those working in them. As others have said, we have a world-renowned IP framework, but, as the report points out, there are many new challenges to it, and my noble friend Lord Clement-Jones described a number of them.

I pick up just one: the development of AI, which of course offers huge opportunities but also challenges. He referred to the IPO abandoning plans for the damaging exception to copyright for text and data mining purposes—again, something recommended in our report. I hope the Minister will agree that there should be no new copyright exceptions in relation to AI. The development of AI models means that a great deal of content has to be ingested. In many cases, the developers are seeking permission from the creators to use this content and pay for licences, and that is of course welcome. However, I understand that some of the larger AI developers, often household names, believe that they do not have to seek permission or licences, claiming exceptions to avoid paying for content. This is a very live issue, as illustrated by the recent application by Getty Images for a High Court injunction to prevent Stability AI selling Stable Diffusion in the UK, claiming copyright infringement in the training process of Stable Diffusion.

I hope the Minister, on behalf of the Government, will be prepared to agree that, on a point of principle, those large developers, which are likely to make many billions of pounds from their services in the next few years, should license the content that they are ingesting. Will he make sure that those businesses are told so in no uncertain terms, and at the same time ensure that they understand that they are going to be required to keep accurate, detailed and transparent records of all the data they ingest?

It has been a fascinating debate, with many important contributions. It is the time of year for the school report, and on the creative industries my report for the Government would read something like, “Gaining a better understanding, about which we are pleased. Making good progress but with many outstanding issues”—such as reforming the Ebacc, expanding eligibility for R&D tax credits, and increasing support for freelancers. There is still no room for complacency.

2.22 pm

**Baroness Merron (Lab):** My Lords, I too am grateful to the noble Baroness, Lady Stowell, for her much-applauded work as chair of the Lords Communications and Digital Committee. I also thank the members of the committee, many of whom are here today. I am sure it is a mark of the success of the committee that so many are here to contribute as they have. This is indeed a first-rate report, which I hope will be a springboard for more action.

I welcome the focus on the changes needed for skills and talent because of new technologies and innovation, which was well illustrated in the contribution from the noble Lord, Lord Berkeley. It is particularly timely that we look at this report, not just because it follows the Government’s publication of the *Creative Industries Sector Vision* a few weeks ago but because we are in a post-pandemic world. I hope the committee will take some pleasure—I am sure it will do so modestly—in

the fact that the Government have finally published a vision. That is very welcome, but, as ever, I am sorry that it took until 2023 to see it.

The report we are discussing noted a number of key points, including that the creative industries are a major contributor to the UK economy, generating more value than the life sciences, aerospace and automotive industries combined. That is a weighty contribution. The committee concluded that the Government's current policy towards the sector is

“complacent and risks jeopardising the sector's commercial potential”.

I am sure that the Minister heard that very clearly.

I will reference skills shortages. The committee claimed that technical skills shortages in the sector were widespread. It argued that the education system, as we have heard in this debate a number of times, is equipping people very poorly for the reality of work in creative occupations, and in particular for the freelance market, which, as we know, is very common in the sector. The committee also criticised the Government's rhetoric about low-value courses at university level. It said that some graduates of these courses

“take time to generate higher salaries. That does not mean their studies ... are less worthwhile.”

I hope that the Government take account of this point.

My noble friend Lady Rebuck made a very strong point, as have other noble Lords, that creative skills are not stand-alone: they sit neatly with technology, science and other skills. This was borne out by my noble friend Lord Griffiths, who described a new school facility, and a new approach, which meshed all of these skills together. My noble friend Lady Rebuck quoted the figure that 88% of the creative sector find it hard to recruit the technical workers that they need with the right skills. I have heard that many times over, including on a visit to the National Theatre. It is right to emphasise that this is something we hear wherever we go throughout the creative sector—I say that phrase with some trepidation because of the comments from my noble friend Lord Lipsey, who has begged for a new form of wording, which I think we will all have to work on.

Where are we to find a pipeline of the right talent? Where is the joined-up work across government, particularly between the Minister's own department and the Department for Education? Where is the measure of the impact of the work that goes on, such that it is, across the whole of government? As the noble Baroness, Lady Bull, rightly said, the committee was critical on this point, referring to policy incoherence at a time when the world is moving on at pace, with or without the United Kingdom.

I also echo the observation by the noble Baroness, Lady Bull, that the remit of this report did not include consideration of Brexit, inequalities, arts funding or poor terms and conditions. I say that not as criticism of the report—far from it—but to emphasise the point. The noble Earl, Lord Clancarty, the noble Lord, Lord Vaizey, and others also emphasised that these matters need very real consideration. I hope the committee will perhaps be able to turn to these points, as I feel it has a valuable contribution to make.

I acknowledge the role of the sector. Creativity is a huge part of our national identity. However, like everything, as this committee report states, it needs nurturing. The UK is home to many innovative tech start-ups, and our music and other creative output such as films, games and so on are exported across the world. Creativity, in all its forms, is one of the UK's most successful and best-loved exports, and tourists flock here to visit museums and galleries. As we know, the creative sector is worth billions to the economy, as well as being an essential part of human expression.

This has been highlighted by an open letter that was recently published. It was signed by more than 100 prominent actors, artists and authors, including Olivia Colman, Grayson Perry and Philip Pullman, just to mention a few, who say that,

“Creativity drives innovation, progress and personal fulfilment”.

They also say that the arts currently risk being

“a pursuit that only the most privileged can follow”.

They praise the commitment by Keir Starmer to reprioritise creativity and other human skills, particularly in a world of artificial intelligence, in order to instil more creativity in the school curriculum.

Young people, in particular, have responded very positively to this because they know that they need education and training to prepare them for the work that the creative sector offers. Indeed, it offers so many opportunities, and I am grateful to the noble Lord, Lord Vaizey, who was generous in his acknowledgement of those commitments and spoke about welcoming the fact that Keir Starmer has announced that students will study a creative subject or sport to the age of 16. This will include, as a number of noble Lords, including my noble friend Lord Young, have said, that they need to be confident and eloquent in speaking. I agree that this is very much a life skill that will carry students through, not just in the creative sector, but in every sector that they may choose to work in.

The committee's report talks about addressing blind spots in education and is critical of what it calls the Government's “Lazy rhetoric”, which I mentioned earlier, about the supposedly low value of arts degrees. This is a point that has been picked up by the All-Party Parliamentary University Group which has also expressed concern about the cutting of creative courses and has flagged that measuring the outcomes of studies just 15 months after graduation means that there is no scope for tracking the career trajectory of creative arts students. The Society of London Theatre and UK Theatre have noticed the massive decline in arts GCSE entries—there was a 40% drop between 2010 and 2022—and they have called on the Government to reverse this. They also raise issues around the application of the apprenticeship levy, which is something that clearly needs looking at. It would be interesting to hear any comments the Minister has on that.

The committee's report also talks about the relative lack of government support for the creative industries since the pandemic. The Music Venue Trust speaks about the lack of business energy relief for venues and says that this is contributing to 2023 potentially being the worst year for venue closures. It also raised concerns about the lack of a talent pipeline, noting that while big venues and festivals are going from strength to strength, future headline acts need somewhere to start

[BARONESS MERRON]

their careers, which is something my noble friend Lord Watson spoke of. It would be interesting to hear from the Minister what he feels about the proposal for a levy on tickets sold for large events in order that the proceeds could subsidise smaller events. It is an interesting idea and certainly has similarities with the restoration and other levies that are put on London theatre tickets.

This debate has also underlined why we must support live music in all its forms. It is struggling to survive for all the post-Covid and funding reasons which your Lordships' House speaks about and considers on so many occasions. Supporting live music in our local communities, regionally and nationally, is vital, as is supporting it in our Parliament. We have the Statutory Instruments, a quartet which has performed in the Commons and the Lords. I welcome the cross-party initiative to bring live music to Parliament. With this in mind, I am certainly looking forward to the Yehudi Menuhin School event in November which my noble friend Lady Wheeler has initiated in conjunction with the noble Earl, Lord Clancarty, and the noble Lords, Lord Clement-Jones and Lord Blackwell. This has been a rich and, as ever, creative debate. I hope very much that this report will support the improvements that your Lordships' House has long and repeatedly called for.

2.35 pm

**The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Culture, Media and Sport (Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay) (Con):** My Lords, this has indeed been an excellent debate. I agree with the noble Lord, Lord Griffiths of Burry Port, that it has been an uplifting way to end what has been a long and busy week in your Lordships' House. Like everyone who has spoken, I am very grateful to my noble friend Lady Stowell of Beeston for tabling this debate and for how she opened it and outlined the work of your Lordships' committee. I am in the slightly unusual position of having been a DCMS Minister when the department began the inquiry and when it reported but having in the interim sat briefly on the committee, so I can join with the deserved plaudits which were raised for my noble friend on how she chairs that committee, the remarks that have been made about the cross-party and consensual way that it operates, and the regret which was shared by all that the noble Baroness, Lady Featherstone, could not be here to join in our debate today.

As everyone who has spoken knows, the creative industries make an invaluable contribution to this country, as an economic powerhouse and by enriching the lives of everyone that they touch in the UK and around the world. As many noble Lords have noted, the creative industries have grown one-and-a-half times as quickly as the rest of the economy between 2010 and 2019, generating £108 billion in GVA in 2021. Their growth in terms of jobs has been even more marked. Their strong performance and potential is why my right honourable friend the Chancellor selected them as one of his five priority sectors in the 2022 Autumn Statement. I am grateful to my noble friend Lady Stowell for her recognition of the renewed level of political attention and support that the creative industries have across government.

The report of your Lordships' committee has been timely as well as important. We share a passion for ensuring that we have a thriving, growing creative sector. The Secretary of State and I were delighted to receive the committee's letter welcoming the publication of the Government's *Creative Industries Sector Vision*. I agree with my noble friend Lord Vaizey that it may not have the glitziest name, but the sector vision is just that. It is a forward look and a starting point for us to work with the industry on the goals and objectives outlined in it. It marks a commitment between government and industry, which come together through the Creative Industries Council, to take action, for us to build on the solid foundations of the sector deal which was announced in 2018 to meet our jointly agreed goals by 2030. These are to:

"Grow creative clusters across the UK, adding £50 billion more in Gross Value Added ... Build a highly-skilled, productive and inclusive workforce for the future, supporting one million more jobs across the UK ... Maximise the positive impact of the creative industries on people, communities, the environment, and the UK's global standing".

We have demonstrated our commitment to the sector by providing over £300 million in support since 2021. The sector vision itself was supported by a further £77 million of funding. This will go to supporting key industry priorities, including ones which noble Lords have highlighted today, such as the importance of live-music venues. We have provided £5 million to expand Arts Council England's support for live-music venues. The noble Lord, Lord Watson of Invergowrie, is right to highlight the important work that it does in supporting emerging artists. As with the sector deal in 2018, we expect these public commitments to unleash even larger amounts of private investment across the sector.

I am delighted that my noble friend Lord Vaizey was here to remind us of how much positive news there is across the creative industries, as well as to issue the challenge for us to tell our story more proudly. I am grateful for his kind words and for jinxing my career prospects in government. I feel about him as TS Eliot did about Ezra Pound in his dedication to *The Wasteland*, "il miglior fabbro".

But we know that this diverse and dynamic sector delivers high-value, high-skilled jobs, from advertising to theatre, publishing to film and much more besides. It sets us apart on the international stage, distributing British content across the globe and enhancing our soft power, through talent, cutting-edge technologies and infrastructure, and strong intellectual property frameworks. We have made great progress but, as your Lordships' committee points out, there is more to do. I will pick up on some of the issues raised in the debate and in the committee's report.

The creative industries are a remarkably innovative sector and have been at the forefront of developments in artificial intelligence and immersive technology for many years. This crossover, also known as "createch", has become especially prominent in recent months, with advances in AI technology. As my noble friend Lady Stowell reminded us, Ai-Da the robot was a star witness in the committee's proceedings. The creative industries have been key users of AI for many years, in sectors such as video games, publishing and advertising.

AI has enormous potential to deliver high-quality jobs and opportunities and to enable further growth in the creative industries.

However, it is important that we harness the benefits of AI while also managing the risks, including in the domain of copyright, which many noble Lords spoke about. It is vital that creatives are fairly compensated for their work—the noble Lord, Lord Berkeley of Knighton, spoke powerfully about the challenges and some of the numbers involved in doing that. The UK has world-leading protections for copyright and intellectual property. We know how important maintaining these are for the success of our creative industries, and we understand creators' concerns when their work is used by artificial intelligence without their consent.

The noble Earl, Lord Clancarty, asked for an update on our work in this area. The government response to the Vallance *Pro-innovation Regulation of Technologies Review* in March confirmed that we would seek to develop a code of practice on copyright and to allow AI innovators and the creative industries to grow together in partnership. We want rights holders to be assured that AI firms will use their content appropriately and lawfully, and we want to ensure that AI-generated outputs are labelled appropriately to provide confidence in the origin of creative content.

We want to take a balanced and pragmatic approach. As my noble friend Lady Stowell noted, the Intellectual Property Office is working with representatives from across the creative industries, as well as AI firms, to develop good practice, guidance and other measures that support this goal. Those working-group meetings are happening as we speak, and officials from DCMS are observing them and attending an informal project board with colleagues from the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology and the Intellectual Property Office. The IPO is aiming to publish a principles-based code in draft before the Summer Recess, and it will outline next steps in this work.

Noble Lords talked about the importance of creator remuneration in music. We have always supported industry-led approaches—legislation is often not the best answer, and it is certainly rarely the swiftest. For example, with music streaming, the industry has worked together to produce an industry commitment to improve metadata and is close to reaching an agreement on transparency. Similarly, we think that an industry working group is the best way to reach a consensus on creator remuneration, building on the steps that individual companies have already taken.

The music industry is already a major driver of economic growth and investment in the UK, and the Government are eager to ensure that it remains globally competitive. That is why, in the sector vision, the Government trebled funding for the music exports growth scheme to £3.2 million over the next two years, helping emerging artists to break into new global markets and to ensure that the UK's music sector remains one of the biggest music exporters in the world. This week, we had the very welcome news from the BPI that UK music exports jumped 20% last year to break £700 million for the first time.

Businesses also need to be able to invest in order to grow, and tax can be just as important in their growth cycle as access to finance. A number of noble Lords

talked about the importance of tax reliefs. We recognise the importance of competitive creative industries tax reliefs to provide incentives in the screen sector in the UK. In 2021-22, a total of £989 million was paid out across our tax reliefs for film, television and video games, supporting over 1,800 productions and games.

The Government are committed to ensuring that our audiovisual tax reliefs remain world-leading and continue to best serve the needs of creative companies. Reforms to those tax reliefs, announced by the Chancellor at the Budget, will ensure that the tax system continues to drive growth and delivers on our commitment to build an enterprise economy, as well as bringing greater clarity to businesses about eligible productions. We want to work closely with the VFX sector on boosting growth and supporting a pipeline of talent into this cutting-edge UK industry.

Thanks to the redoubtable campaigning and effective evidence marshalling of the sector, the Budget this spring extended the higher rates of tax reliefs for theatres, orchestras, museums and galleries by two years, estimated to be worth £350 million collectively. I have already heard from theatres and producers about the difference it is making in terms of the creative risks they are able to take and the programming they are now doing for the months ahead.

My noble friend Lord Vaizey of Didcot asked about R&D tax reliefs, which are a vital part of growing businesses across the UK. As he knows, the UK is unique in having two R&D schemes: one for large businesses, and one for smaller businesses. Earlier this year, my noble friend will have seen that the Government ran a consultation which sought views on a simplified R&D tax relief scheme, merging the two schemes. The Government are considering their response to the consultation and will publish draft legislation on a merged scheme for the technical consultation. My noble friend, however, will have to wait for a fiscal event to hear more about the work which may flow from it.

My noble friend was also right to remind us of the importance of conservatoires and centres of excellence. Like the noble Baroness, Lady Merron, I look forward to the Yehudi Menuhin event later this year. I had the pleasure of going to one of the school leavers' concerts with my noble friend Lord Blackwell last year. It really was remarkable. I began today by visiting Camberwell College of Arts, which has nurtured and developed world-leading arts and creativity in this country for 125 years. I went to its MA show to see some of the current postgraduate students' work.

In the 2021-22 academic year, the Department for Education asked the Office for Students to invest an additional £10 million in our world-leading specialist providers. We have maintained that level of funding at £58 million for the current academic year.

Noble Lords rightly noted the creative industries' impact on broad swathes of our lives as well as the economy. We know that this means it is more than just DCMS which has a role to play in providing support for our creative industries. I was much taken with the analogy given by the noble Lord, Lord Berkeley, of the Government as an orchestra and his desire to hear a more synchronous sound from us. The committee's

[LORD PARKINSON OF WHITLEY BAY]

report is correct that a plan on its own is not enough and cross-departmental collaboration will be key to its success. However, I am delighted to say that we have made excellent progress in this area, as shown by the breadth of commitments contained in the sector vision. We are working with His Majesty's Treasury on new funding for the sector; with the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology on cutting edge R&D through the CoSTAR programme and the next wave of creative clusters; with the Department for Business and Trade on boosting creative exports; and with the Department for Education to build the talent pipeline, through a range of skills and education initiatives.

I certainly agree with the noble Baroness, Lady Rebuck, that the skills pipeline is of critical importance to our creative industries. That is why I am delighted that this week we have announced further members of the panel who will be working with the wonderful noble Baroness, Lady Bull, to develop a cultural education plan for the Government. She has been working incredibly hard on it. I attended one of the listening exercises she held a few weeks ago and I was at the Royal Opera House to attend the head teachers' symposium, where we gathered further thoughts to feed into it. I will begin next week at the Department for Education, meeting the whole panel with the noble Baroness. Furthermore, the upcoming round table on apprenticeships will be co-chaired by both the Education Secretary and my right honourable friend the Secretary of State for DCMS.

My department is working closely with the Department for Education and with the industry to drive forward the work to build a highly skilled workforce and support 1 million more jobs across the UK. We will publish the cultural education plan later this year and deliver the national plan for music education, driven by my noble friend Lady Fleet. That included £25 million in capital funding for musical instruments. We will explore opportunities for enrichment activities as part of our wraparound childcare provision. We will improve creative apprenticeships, with regards to small and medium enterprise engagement, training provision and the effectiveness and sustainability of the flexi-job model. We will support the rollout of T-levels, and complementary high-quality, employer-led level 3 qualifications, and we will work with the industry so that it can take advantage of skills boot camps at national and regional levels, and benefit from new local skills improvement plans and the lifelong loan entitlement in 2025.

Noble Lords asked for more detail on the creative careers programme. They are right that there can be a lack of understanding about jobs in the creative industries, such as over the sheer availability of roles that there are. For instance, it takes some 500 different jobs to make a single blockbuster movie. There are also misconceptions about the stability and accessibility of creative jobs, which is why the work that we are doing in the sector vision aims to improve understanding and challenge those misconceptions, including through the Discover Creative Careers programme.

The noble Lord, Lord Clement-Jones, was right to highlight the importance of freelancers in the creative industries. Last month we had a very good debate

focused specifically on them. The policy and evidence centre delivered its independent review of job quality and working practices in the creative industries earlier this year, and that was co-funded by DCMS. The Government and the industry will set out an action plan to address the recommendations later in the year.

The noble Lord, Lord Foster of Bath, asked about the benefits system and how it interacts with freelancers in the creative sector. Again, we touched on that in the debate last month, and I know that Equity is holding an event next week. Unfortunately, I will be in the Chamber as we work on the Online Safety Bill, but I am glad that it is coming to engage colleagues from across the House and from the departments for work and education on it.

I will take back the idea from the noble Baroness, Lady Bonham-Carter, about the Education Secretary joining the Creative Industries Council but, as she may well know, Sir Peter Bazalgette, who jointly chairs it, is a non-executive director at the Department for Education, which helps with that join-up across government. I will also take back to colleagues in the Department for Education the point made by the noble Earl, Lord Clancarty, about the dichotomy with the Russell group universities.

Tackling skills gaps and shortages through all these initiatives is work that is being done. It requires significant evidence and data, which is another area on which we are working with the Department for Education. Our understanding of the creative industries through evidence and data is constantly expanding. Where gaps remain, such as forecasting skills needs, the DfE's Unit for Future Skills is working to fill them, in partnership with analysts at DCMS and the Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre. Furthermore, inspired by the BFI's film and high-end TV skills review, the Creative Industries Council has committed to delivering subsector skills reviews over the next year, giving a clearer picture of the gaps and shortages particular to each subsector of the creative industries.

I am incredibly proud of the creative industries sector—

**Lord Clement-Jones (LD):** The Minister has covered a great deal of ground, but he has not covered the implementation of the Beijing treaty and the performing rights issues in the light of AI, or some of the other IP issues. Will he write?

**Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay (Con):** I will, although I may not be able to say much more than I am happy to say now in response to the noble Lord. The discussions on the code of practice are ongoing, and a public update will follow shortly; if it follows shortly enough for me to write with more detail, I will. If not, I hope he will be satisfied with that for now.

Many questions were noted in the debate over the past three hours, and I have tried to cover as many of them as I can. As noble Lords noted, the report touched on huge numbers of areas but also highlighted further areas for us all to explore in government and in your Lordships' committee. I am very proud of the work that we are doing through the creative industries

sector vision and, if I may say so, as a former member of the committee, I am very proud of the report that your Lordships' committee has published.

The clear passion was evident from every noble Lord who spoke in this debate, and their anxiety to get this right for the future. Perhaps, on a sunny Friday, I may also say that I detected notes of optimism, both in the tributes being paid to new and established schools, at Old Street and in Camden. I hope that they will allow some of that optimism to extend to the work being done in government. I look forward to working with noble Lords from across the House to put it into action.

2.55 pm

**Baroness Stowell of Beeston (Con):** My Lords, I am very grateful to the Minister for that very comprehensive response to this debate, which has covered a huge amount of ground. I join my noble friend Lord Vaizey in paying great compliments to him as a tremendous Arts Minister. I do not know whether he is as good or better than the last Arts Minister—who is also with us in the Chamber today—but we are very grateful to have him in that post. I am also very grateful to all noble Lords who have spoken in this debate today, for the very generous comments that have been made in my direction, to the committee as a whole and to those who support us in our work.

I will offer some concluding comments. It is probably worth me saying something which I did not say at the beginning, which is that the underlying premise of our inquiry was about identifying the risks and opportunities of technology as it impacted on the creative industries. Even with that framework, there was clearly a huge amount of ground to cover.

The noble Lord, Lord Berkeley, expressed an interest in my comments about how some of the creative industry leaders or high-profile figures might change if they are to be taken more seriously. One of the things I would say in response to that is that through doing this inquiry, I now really believe and understand the economic value of the creative sector. I have always known it was important, but I did not see it in those terms before. That has shifted my whole perspective on it. It might be worth sharing that when I was a teenager and had just moved to London, I went back home and told my dad I had met somebody who described themselves as “a creative” when I asked them what they did for a living. My dad's response was, “Well, that sounds like a good excuse for doing nothing”. Now he was a brilliant painter and decorator—the best in the area—but he was also somebody who was good at art and is quite creative. The reason why I think this is important is that there has always been something of a separation in the way people perceive creativity: as something which is important but not necessarily a powerful driving force of our economy.

Technology has now given the creative industries the opportunity to show that they are part of the economic powerhouse, as has already been said. Our report calls for the creative industries to grasp that opportunity, and to make sure that they are not overpowered by technology or deprioritised because of it. We have seen and discussed this threat today, in particular in the context of IP. They should not be afraid to use it and grasp it. Those parts of the creative industries whose underlying purpose may not be commercial should use the overall commercial opportunity of the sector that they are a part of as a way of capitalising on their importance and contributing to something that is bigger than themselves.

One of the main areas of policy that was raised in the course of everybody's contributions was skills and education. I again urge the Government and the creative industries, when they look at and consider this topic, to work even harder at gaining some mutual understanding in this area. As has been commented on, our report refers to what we described as:

“Lazy rhetoric about ‘low value’ arts courses”,

which risks deterring people from pursuing an education and career in the creative sector. The point we were trying to make is that, although we share the Government's concern about some degree courses not representing value for money or value to anybody specifically, they should not, in highlighting them, group everything in that category.

It is important for the creative industries to be grown-up and realistic in the way they talk about that too. It was compelling to hear one of our witnesses during our inquiry, Seetha Kumar from ScreenSkills, make the point that a lot of people go to university to study skills and get degrees when that was not the best way for them to get into the creative industries. There were much better routes to do that, and that organisation wanted to create and support more of those opportunities. It was refreshing to hear somebody from the creative industries say that honestly in the course of our evidence.

As has been said, it is important that the sector vision identifies the fusion of creative and STEM skills as an important part of the future. There has to be a lot more collaboration and understanding by the Government as to what is needed from the creative sector. I also urge the creative sector to get better at being specific about what it needs and wants to see changed. If it can be specific, the Government will have a much better opportunity to respond to those needs.

Overall, the debate has shown the importance that all of us collectively attach to our creative industries. Long may they continue. We want to see them thrive and for everybody to have a good opportunity to be a part of them.

*Motion agreed.*

*House adjourned at 3.03 pm.*

