

THE HOUSE



Parliament's Magazine

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INTERVIEW

Jon Ashworth
Labour's road to recovery

Zac Goldsmith

The battle for
London gets
personal

INTERVIEW

Andrea Leadsom
Economies of shale

ALSO INSIDE

Mark Prisk
Callum McCaig
Baroness Featherstone
Craig Mackinlay



79.904

Broke &

35

2.8.18.7

137.327

Bad

56

2.8.18.18.8.2



Dr Azra Raza award winning oncologist.
"Our system for developing drugs for cancer is essentially

***broke...** We have to stop studying mice because it is pointless and we have to start studying freshly obtained human cells"* (TED TALK).

S

16

is for **'Scandal of Poor Medical Research'** (British Medical Journal)
 The number of people diagnosed with chronic diseases such as Alzheimers & Cancer rises every year. The number of medicines invented has halved every 9 years since 1950 despite vastly increased funding (Eroom's Law).

C

6

is for **Clinical Trials Continue to Fail**

95% of experimental drugs that show promise during preclinical trials on animals fail in human clinical trials. According to the Medical Research Council *'this low outcome is because early results in animal models do not translate into results in humans'* (Making Sense of Drug Safety Science).

I

53

is for **Invalidity**

Progressive medical scientists assert that the current drug development model is invalid. Dr Godlee, editor in chief British Medical Journal concludes *'If research conducted on animals continues to be unable to reasonably predict what can be expected in humans, the public's endorsement and funding of preclinical animal research seems misplaced'* (BMJ).

E

63

is for **Einstein's definition of Insanity**

"Insanity is doing something over and over again and expecting a different result". Repeated experiments on animal species, proven to be unable to predict the human response, is insane. That this has continued for centuries and remains the basis for current mainstream medical research is INSANITY! Oncologist Dr Azra Raza *"We cured myeloid leukemia in mice back in 1977 and in humans today we are using the same drugs with absolutely dreadful results"*.

N

7

is for **No**

Mainstream scientists refuse to debate the scientific validity of the animal model. EDM 373 requires them to present their case in a moderated public debate which is why we need your support.

**95% of MPs in DODS
poll voted to hear
this scientific debate**

C

6

is for **Change**

Progressive medical scientists assert that cures will only be discovered when mainstream research abandons invalidated use of animals to model human diseases and adopts innovative human-relevant technologies that have a proven track record. For example Skimune, a skin-based model of the human immune response, would have prevented the disastrous Northwick Park clinical trials in 2006.

E

63

is for **EDM 373's call for a Medical Research Enquiry**

The enquiry would explain why the current drug development model fails patients and why human-based medical research is the key to medical progress.

PLEASE SIGN EDM 373 TO HEAR THE SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE

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“I’ve never fought a campaign like this before, but I’ve never been up against an opponent like Sadiq Khan before,” Zac Goldsmith tells us in this week’s cover interview. Last week Khan warned in these pages that the London mayoral contest was taking an increasingly negative and personal turn, and urged his opponent to stick to the issues. This week the Tory candidate hits back [p10], offering a robust defence of his strategy: he has a “duty”, he says, to ensure Londoners have all the facts about the frontrunner before they go to the polls.

As we head off for the Easter recess, both parties will be glad of the break after a bruising few days. Speaking to this magazine before Labour’s latest own goal [p30], Jon Ashworth – of the ‘core negative’ group, incidentally – warns that his party must address the issues voters care about, and adds: “We won’t win elections by shouting slogans.”

Meanwhile George Parker [p5] speculates that Cameron and Osborne could well be missing the Lib Dem buffer they enjoyed in the last parliament. As Lord Ashdown tweeted earlier this week: “Such delicious schadenfreude recalling Osborne boasting he had abolished the Lib Dems. Bet he wishes he had us back now!”

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Commons DIARY



From Bath run to UN delegate, Ben Howlett joins the jet set

Sunday 13 March

After running the 'Bath Half' in the morning I rushed to catch my flight to join my fellow Women & Equalities Select Committee members in New York. For anyone who has ever run a half marathon, you will know just how sore your legs get and I can assure you that an international flight the same day is not recommended! When I landed at JFK my legs and feet were very swollen but the excitement of the week ahead made it all worth it.

Monday 14 March

I woke up ready for the week ahead – this was the first select committee trip to the Commission on the Status of Women, so we didn't know what to expect. It was incredible to see thousands of passionate women from across the globe truly determined to implement the Sustainable Development Goals by 2030.

I got to give the keynote address to the 'Activating Women's Leadership as Key Driver to Achieving Sustainable Development' event, organised by the Justina Mutale Foundation. That was a daunting but exciting experience as my first speech to an international audience, but I hope I got across what fantastic work the Women & Equalities Select Committee is busy doing.

Tuesday 15 March

Today we got to meet the retiring general secretary of the United Nations, Ban Ki-moon (I must admit, I was a little star struck!) As a man at the conference, what he said really struck me: he stressed that the campaign for equality is not just for women, it is a job for men too. True gender equality is created by men and women joining forces and challenging inequalities in society.

As with all conferences, this one was not immune from chatter about future leaders. With Ban Ki-moon's retirement, there was lots of speculation that the new general secretary could be a woman. With names such as Angela Merkel, Michelle Bachelet, Rebeca Grynspar and Helen Clark all in the mix, 2016 could be an exciting time for female leadership.

Wednesday 16 March

One of my highlights from the trip was the UN Women event with the Canadian PM, Justin Trudeau – it is fantastic to see a world leader describe himself as a feminist. In his talk he suggested that on average it takes 14 times longer for a woman to run for office than a man – so in Canada they created the 'Invite Her to Run' campaign to encourage great female community leaders to run as candidates, which has made a substantial change. He even quipped, in his usual tongue-in-cheek, way that "men should count themselves lucky that I only decided to introduce a 50/50 Cabinet".

Thursday 17 March

Met with members of the European Parliament's Committee on Women Rights and Gender Equality where we discussed a range of issues including refugees, gender equality and, of course, VAT on sanitary products. I am pleased that the PM has managed to make real progress on this issue at the European Commission.

As it was St Patrick's Day, we stepped outside of the conference to join in the festivities. New York sure does know how to put on a parade, and there was a lovely festive atmosphere on the streets. I even got my hands on a pint of Guinness to celebrate.

Friday 18 March

Today is the last day of the conference and we boarded the flight home with a stronger resolve to hold the government's feet to the fire on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals. The UK is falling behind many other nations when it comes to gender equality, with only 29% of MPs female compared to 63.8% in Rwanda. We cannot sit back and allow other nations to implement the SDGs if we are to have any credibility at an international level. 🇬🇧

Ben Howlett is Conservative MP for Bath and a Member of the Women & Equalities Select Committee

Better the devil you know?

For Cameron and Osborne, working with a slim majority is proving more difficult than working with the Lib Dems, writes **George Parker**



Are David Cameron and George Osborne missing the Liberal Democrats yet? Ah yes, the good old days when Nick Clegg and his party gave the prime minister a solid Commons majority and provided a useful check against Tory self-harm.

David Laws's new book *Coalition* is a timely reminder of the role played by the Lib Dems in providing stable government in unlikely circumstances over five years and – quite often – their role in saving the Tories from themselves. Laws recounts, for example, how the Lib Dems stopped David Cameron pushing through £10bn of welfare cuts in the last parliament and freezing in cash terms the NHS budget, policies which might have tarnished his “compassionate Conservatism”.

The Lib Dems – and Laws himself – paid the price for this act of generosity at the last election, leaving Cameron and Osborne in charge and free to pursue untrammelled Conservative policies.

Except of course, it did not turn out like that. The events of recent weeks have served as a reminder that Cameron only has a working majority of 17 and – even allowing for Labour's weakness – that is often not enough to get your business through.

Osborne's unravelling Budget was the most graphic reminder of the chancellor's favourite adage: “The first rule of politics is learn to count.”

He just did not have the numbers to push through his £1.3bn a year cut to disability benefits, to raise fuel duty or to reform Sunday trading. Last year's defeat on tax credits was a portent of what was to come.

Part of the problem is that the Tory manifesto contained measures which Cameron and Osborne assumed they would never have to deliver. They believed they could not win an outright majority and that someone – probably the Lib Dems – would

“ In the absence of the Lib Dems, the Tories have formed their own opposition to the chancellor's reforms and have proved rather effective ”

be there to stop them. They included the proposed £12bn of welfare cuts which have caused Osborne so much trouble in recent weeks. Clegg had indicated he would not accept such an assault on the working poor; he wanted higher taxes to play a part in deficit reduction.

In the absence of the Lib Dems, the Tories have formed their own opposition to the chancellor's reforms and have proved rather effective. Indeed, as the new work and pensions secretary Stephen Crabb confirmed, the government now has no plans to carry out any welfare cuts in this parliament. They

would not have got them through.

One of the remarkable features of the last parliament, often commented upon by Tory ministers, was the sheer discipline of Lib Dem MPs in supporting coalition policy even as they headed for ultimate destruction.

Cameron and Osborne, on the other hand, rely for their majority on Tory MPs who are often fighting a proxy war over Europe and are determined to defeat the leadership on any number of unrelated issues. Some of those Tory MPs are not “Friends of George” and feel the chancellor has blighted their careers. Put them all together and you have a dangerous cocktail – as Osborne might have put it – of backbench unrest.

Ironically, the best joke in Osborne's Budget speech was at the expense of Clegg's party, a quip about how he intended to abolish the Liberal Democrats – a measure that was to take effect at midnight.

There was plenty of hollow laughter amid the Lib Dems' depleted ranks at Westminster when it turned out that the joke was actually on the chancellor.

As Paddy Ashdown tweeted: “Such delicious schadenfreude recalling Osborne boasting he had abolished the Lib Dems. Bet he wishes he had us back now!” Ashdown is probably right. 🇬🇧

George Parker is political editor of the *Financial Times*



IDS ON THE MARCH

“Can I ask what the Prime Minister thinks of the Work and Pensions Secretary’s resignation?”

“Following the Member for Chingford and Woodford Green’s decision to quit, how will the Government alter their Budget?” “Lucy from Luton would like to the Chancellor to apologise for championing cuts that even the Member for Chingford and Woodford Green could not abide.” All of these are questions Jeremy Corbyn could have asked David Cameron on Monday. The statement was the first time the men stood opposite each other since Iain Duncan Smith’s shock resignation over the weekend. But Corbyn was so far away from scoring in the open goal he may as well have been playing a different sport. All he had to do was mention the former DWP secretary’s name and the Labour side would have erupted with glee but no. Maybe next time a Cabinet Secretary resigns citing Government cuts as the reason, he’ll ask the right question. After all, it’s a pretty regular feature of Government.

BRUSSELS VICTIMS HONOURED

On Wednesday morning, the Houses of Parliament fell silent for a minute to honour those who were killed in Tuesday’s Brussels attacks. The bombing claimed the lives of 31 victims and injured 260 more. Later that day, Theresa May made a statement on the



Commons NOTEPAD

attacks. She called them “cowardly and brutal”. “I am sure the whole House will want to join me in sending our thoughts and prayers to the victims, their families and those who have been affected by these events.” Ms May pledged to “defeat the terrorists”. “This is the challenge of our generation. And it is a challenge we will win.”

JOINT COMMITTEE

Ever since the Liberal Democrats voted to increase tuition fees in 2010, they have been persona non grata for students everywhere. Fast forward six years, past the almost total obliteration of the party, and there must have been a party meeting. How could the Lib Dems fight (back) their way into the young’s hearts? The conclusion? Drugs, of course. On Wednesday Norman Lamb, flanked by fellow MP Tom Brake, presented his ten minute rule bill to legalise marijuana. Of course, the Norfolk MP displayed plenty of reasons for wanting to lift the ban. The “war on drugs” has cost governments billions, it puts money into the pockets into organised crime, criminals have a direct interest in getting people onto harder drugs, and no one has any way of regulating the drugs. The war on drugs, Lamb told the House of Commons, was a “catastrophic failure”. In an example of how the policy change would help the young, he said: “We criminalise tens of thousands of people every year for the use of cannabis, blighting their careers, damaging their life chances and restricting their ability to travel.” But then he mentioned one young person whose life had not



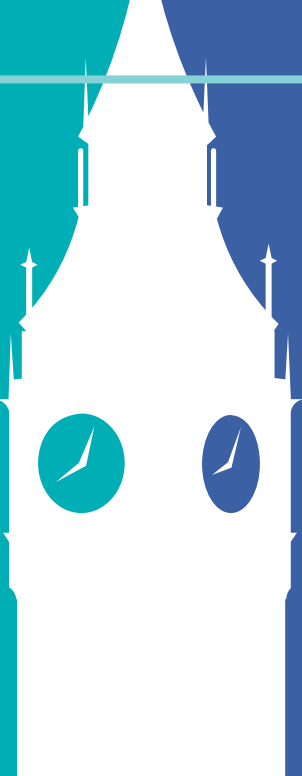
be affected by the drug policy: “It was reported that the Prime Minister and others were caught smoking cannabis at Eton.” And he’s gone on to do quite well....

OSBORNE FIGHTS BACK

George Osborne was a man with a plan when he sauntered into the House of Commons on Tuesday morning. A lesser man, well a less confident man, may have been covered by the challenge of addressing his fellow MPs after the weekend



he had had. Iain Duncan Smith resigned, citing his Budget as the reason, and then the House of Commons had ganged up on the Chancellor when he did not show up to a statement on Monday morning. But no, Osborne had a plan. As various Labour MPs attacked the Chancellor for his U-turn on disability cuts, and



Our sketchwriter **Agnes Chambre** rounds up this week's developments in the House of Commons

called for his resignation, or at the very least an apology, Osborne turned all the problems on the party opposite. He attacked Yvette Cooper over her record in the Treasury, Rachel Reeves over flood defences and to top it all off he called for the party opposite to apologise for the financial crash. By the end of the session, the Commons had descended into heckling and criticising, and in a tribute to 2015, Tories started openly asking about Liam Byrne's "there's no money note". This was surely not what those Labour MPs were expecting.

CORE BLIMEY

David Cameron must have thought all his Christmas' had come at once with he opened his Red Box email this morning. As his eyes settled on the words, "if we park Tory splits for a moment," he probably jumped for joy. But it was only going to get better from there: "The best political story of the day has to be the revelation that Labour MPs have been ranked from "core" to "hostile", Matt Chorley's email read. Of course, the Prime Minister took full advantage of embarrassing and damaging Labour leak. During PMQs, he was asked about IDS's resignation, but gone was any



need for an actual response. "I don't know why the Shadow Leader of the House is shouting at me, we've got a very interesting document today, we've got the spreadsheet of which Labour MP is on which side, the Hon Lady is shouting, she's 'neutral but not hostile'," he cried the Chamber to the delight of the Tories. He continued: "The Chief Whip on the other, the Chief Whip is being a bit quiet, there are five categories, we've got 'core support', I think you can include me in that lot - we've got 'core plus', the Chief Whip's being a bit quiet because she's in 'hostile'.....Hands up who's 'core support plus'?" With roars of laughter coming from every side, he added: "Mr Speaker, I thought I had problems!" But Corbyn channelled his best geography teacher in his response: "If I could invite the Prime Minister to leave the theatre and return to reality." Well, that'll teach Cameron.

EU CAN'T SAY THAT

After years and years of Boris Johnson's Daily Telegraph columns, in which he picked and probed at aspects of the EU without recrimination, he has finally been asked to explain his hyperbolic prose. He wrote in the newspaper that EU rules prohibit people from "recycling a teabag" and would stop "children under eight cannot blow up balloons". On Wednesday, Andrew Tyrie, in front of the Treasury select committee appeared to really enjoy ripping apart the validity of Boris's claims: "What it actually says, Boris, because I've got the toy safety directive here, it's asking that this warning be placed on the packaging," he said. "It's not requiring or forbidding." The same happened over the teabag comment: "It's not true, though, to say there is an EU regulation or directive that prohibits people from recycling teabags. It's a misrepresentation to say people are being prevented from recycling teabags." Now Tyrie was really in his stride, on the EU's alleged coffin dimension regulation, the Chairman told Boris: "The story is a figment of your imagination." But Tyrie didn't stop there, as the London Mayor spluttered and squirmed, the Chairman tightened the screws even further: "I've been through quite a list there, either of things which require quite a bit of qualification to understand, or where I think a reasonable person would say, you've either exaggerated or misinterpreted the extent to which the words..." I wonder how poor Boris will approach his newspaper column next week. 🇬🇧



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Q&A

Mark Jolly Professor of Sustainable Manufacturing at Cranfield University discusses the findings from a joint research project with Coca-Cola Enterprises on sustainable manufacturing for the future

What inspired you to take on this research?
At Cranfield University we aim to generate and transform knowledge, translating it for the benefit of society, government and commerce. This is a vision we share with Coca-Cola Enterprises (CCE), and it provided the motivation to embark on a joint research partnership with them to explore the future of sustainable manufacturing in the food and drink industry – looking ahead to 2050.

Why is this research so important?
Sustainable manufacturing is the process of creating products through economically-sound processes that minimise the negative environmental impacts whilst also conserving energy and natural resources. Much progress has been made in this area, with businesses around the world working to better utilise materials, make more efficient use of resources such as energy and water, and reduce waste. But more can be done. Manufacturers also have the opportunity to positively contribute to their local communities and society at large.

It was these considerations which framed the conversations at our initial roundtable event with industry and academic peers, and later informed our first white paper, released in June 2015. This preliminary report identified six major themes for more detailed analysis, which we believe must be addressed in the coming years to achieve fundamental, industry-wide change: People, Big Data, Technology, Collaboration, Value and Resilience.

These core topics also formed the starting point for our next phase of research, where we delved deeper into the future of sustainable manufacturing. Whilst we expected the findings from this research to represent significant challenges for the sector, it is essential for businesses of every size to question how they go about their operations. Pioneering manufacturers who lead the way will strengthen the economic sustainability of their own business and in-turn their wider industries.

What did your research with Coca-Cola Enterprises reveal?
Our second white paper, the culmination of six months of research, shares a vision and roadmap towards sustainable manufacturing for the future, presenting the challenges and opportunities the industry needs to address to achieve rapid change. We unearthed five pathways, with specific actions that businesses great and small can apply. We believe these will truly impact not only their own organisations, but also their employees, their consumers, their customers and the wider society in which they operate.

These pathways are: **Anticipating the future, Providing nutrition, Sharing the benefits, Inspiring the next generation** and **Joining forces**.

1. Anticipating the future – this pathway identified that in the future, industry's use of big data and the Internet of Things will increasingly help to assure quality and address resource productivity, evolving

further to improve efficiency across the broader supply chain. Technology and analytics will facilitate greater real-time visibility, with innovations such as sensors giving rise to 'smart' operations, supporting better decision-making and the balance between supply and demand. The key action for the food and drink industry will be to share more information with customers, using rich data to optimise the production process and utilise sensors to focus on land health and energy consumption.

2. Providing nutrition – the food and drink industry is facing greater scrutiny in all aspects, from the healthiness of ingredients and organic produce to the ethics of food labelling and animal welfare. 'Smart' ingredients will emerge, with the potential to replace or alter other content such as sugar, fat and salt. Businesses in the sector must continue their efforts to reduce waste and offer new services with increasing emphasis on personalisation and nutrition.

3. Sharing the benefits – the sharing economy is a powerful trend that is affecting all industries. We expect increased industry collaboration to emerge in the coming years, from companies co-creating new products to sharing intellectual property for the benefit of the entire sector. The food and drink industry should work

towards engaging society and sharing benefits when creating products, putting wellbeing at the centre of delivery and encouraging open innovation as a way to protect the environment.

4. Inspiring the next generation – with growing automation of both hard technology and soft information technology, fewer people will be developing, managing and improving complex businesses. However, these people will remain vital to tackling the challenges of sustainability. With the industry also facing a growing skills gap as a generation of experienced employees retire, in future companies will need to integrate more with universities and schools in order to reach learners as early as possible.

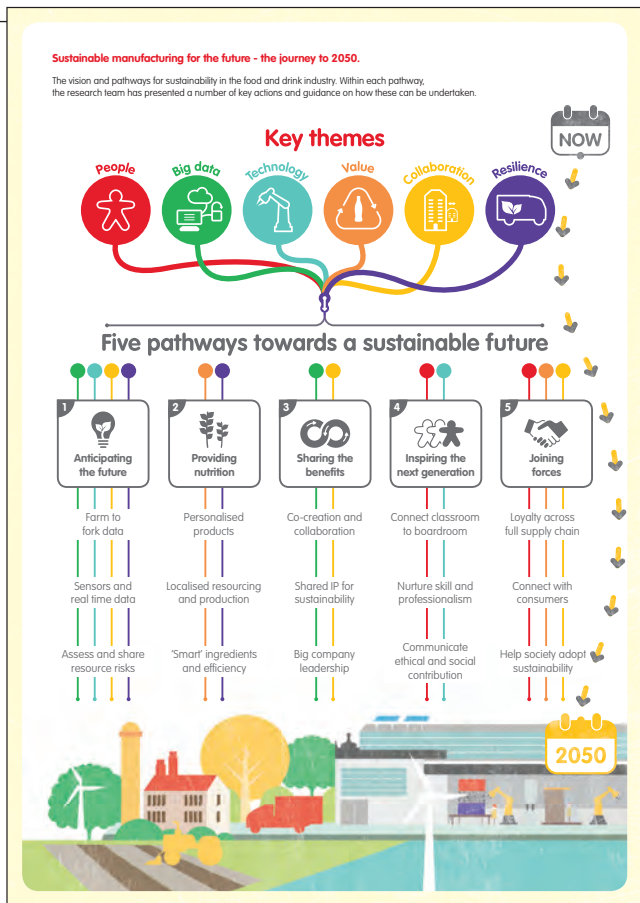
5. Joining forces – how value and leadership is understood will change dramatically as companies join forces with each other, and with customers and society. This will become accepted as the only way to grow positively whilst reducing impact and footprint. It will require manufacturers to be key agents of change; to use the unique capabilities and insight they possess to help educate and strengthen different aspects of the value chain.

Why are these findings significant and what should manufacturers do?
The manufacturing industry in Great Britain has been through many eras of transformation, and in the face of major challenges to the price and availability of resources, it is currently undergoing another period of change. Manufacturing has brought about massive benefits to society through the provision of products that make our lives easier, more enjoyable and enhance our wellbeing. For the food and drink industry to continue to

serve the needs of society and to match the expectations of customers it will have to demonstrate a commitment to change. To enhance the sustainability of operations, organisations must work boldly together on the pathways we have identified through our research.

We should celebrate the fact that Great British manufacturing is extremely progressive in terms of technical advancements, product innovation and its ability to react to customer demand. However, leadership will be key in accelerating progress towards a truly sustainable future whilst facing a new set of business challenges. Collaboration and leadership by both individuals and organisations featured strongly as core themes throughout our research and it is my personal belief that actions taken by forward-thinking businesses, such as Coca-Cola Enterprises, will be crucial in leading the industry on the journey to a sustainable future.

For the full report please visit www.cokecce.co.uk



Coca-Cola Enterprises

Sustainable manufacturing for the future:

The journey to 2050: research on the vision and pathways for sustainability in the food and drink industry in Great Britain.
March 2016

Cranfield UNIVERSITY



INTERVIEW

Zac in action



As the battle for the capital turns personal, **Zac Goldsmith** says it's his "duty" to make the choice facing Londoners clear. The Conservative candidate talks to Josh May

“I've never fought a campaign like this before, but I've never been up against an opponent like Sadiq Khan before.” Zac Goldsmith has discovered the contest to be the next Mayor of London is like none other in British politics.

The Conservative MP made his name in Parliament as an independent-minded campaigning backbencher who often forged alliances with opposition MPs. This election campaign has seen him move into unfamiliar territory as the battle against his Labour rival turns deeply personal. Goldsmith's key attack against Khan centres on authenticity.

He comes armed with a number of issues on which Khan has purportedly U-turned: the mansion tax, sanctions against Israel, building on the green belt. He gives this damning verdict on the Labour candidate's character: “The truth is I don't know who he is. I don't know what he stands for.”

He contrasts his own long-standing opposition to a third runway in West London with Khan's recent conversion to the cause. “On Heathrow, just a few months before this election he was passionately in favour; he's now passionately against. He tells us the facts have changed on air quality, but they haven't. He was begged by his own buddies in government not to promote a third runway on air quality grounds and it was of zero interest to him at the time.”

The animosity of the campaign against Khan has been the subject of some controversy. Some have suggested that the attacks are such a departure from Goldsmith's previous style that they must

be the work of the team around him. If so, the candidate himself is certainly throwing himself into the plan wholeheartedly; he describes it as his “duty”, “responsibility”, “obligation”, “job” to flag up the risks of Khan reaching City Hall.

“I know that this campaign can't just be about my offer to London versus his offer to London because my offer to London is based on things which I know I can deliver,” he says.

“That is not true of my opponent. He will fundamentally change his position depending on the audience he's speaking to; he will promise things he has no intention or ability to deliver and it's my job to make that clear. If I don't then people won't have the full grasp of the facts before they make a decision on 5 May.

“So that requires you to point out where he is being inconsistent, where he is promising things that can't be delivered, or where he's flip-flopping all over the place. On all the big decisions, on all the big issues facing Londoners we've heard complete opposites over and over from the same man. That's the problem. I think it's a very bad look in politics; I think it's one of the reasons why people are increasingly pulling away from politics.”

He adds: “If I want to make this campaign an effective one, I'm required to not only talk about what I'd do for London, but to make the choice very clear. So if that's a negative campaign then so be it. I have to do what I have to do; I have a responsibility to get this right.”

One of the most provocative criticisms of Khan came from defence secretary Michael Fallon, whom the Labour

Words: Josh May
Photos: Paul Heartfield

candidate accused of having “demeaned” his office. Fallon’s charge was that Khan was a “Labour lackey who speaks alongside extremists” and who “cannot be trusted” to keep London safe from terrorism. Although Goldsmith does not repeat the phrases, which were perceived by many as a bid to draw attention to Khan’s Muslim faith, he does not retreat from them.

“The point that’s been made relates to judgement. If you want to tackle extremism, if you want to be the head of the police, which is what the mayor will have to do, if you want to be the mayor of the most important city in the world, there are questions to be asked about someone who is willing to share a platform over and over and over again with people who do have extreme views. And I think, really, this is a legitimate question to be asked.”

Does he agree, then, that Khan “cannot be trusted” with London’s security? “I think his judgement has fallen so short that he has to make the case himself as to why he’s fit to hold this post.”

Previous incumbents of City Hall have been defined by their independence from parties’ top teams, a tradition into which Goldsmith fits easily. But unlike Khan, who has been at pains to distance himself from the party leadership during the campaign, Goldsmith has tried to position himself as the negotiator who can work with his colleagues in Westminster.

“To be an effective mayor you have to be able to get a good deal from the Government,” he says. “Ken showed that. Whatever one thinks of his policies, he was an effective mayor and Boris has shown that as well... That for me is a big and bold distinction between myself and my opponent, who just has no record at all of working with anyone at all outside his own political party.”

That embrace of the party establishment can have drawbacks, though, as demonstrated when a joint appearance with George Osborne was targeted by protesters angered by cuts to disability benefits in

the Budget. Those cuts have since been scrapped – something Goldsmith describes with characteristic understatement as “not unwelcome news” – and he says the “savvy” denizens of the capital will not let the issue colour their choice on 5 May. The same holds, he argues, for his decision to back Britain leaving the European Union, the impact of which will be “immeasurably small” or non-existent.

“Londoners can separate parliamentary and government business from the job of the mayor, in the same way that I don’t think Europe is a distraction to the mayoral contest. Europe divides London straight down the middle, but people understand that it’s a separate issue; it’s not the job of the mayor to set the terms of welfare, nor is it the job of the mayor to take us out of Europe or keep us in Europe. I think people understand that.”

And he is sanguine about the splits at the top of the party triggered by Iain Duncan Smith’s resignation from the Cabinet: “If you look at the evidence, the party is united around me, for me to win on 5 May... They [the party] also understand that this is the biggest election between now and the general election, so it matters politically as well. So there’s no division as to where we stand on 5 May.”

Goldsmith did divide the Conservatives on one occasion in the last parliament, however. His unsuccessful bid in 2014 to strengthen significantly the Government’s recall proposals won the support of almost half of Conservative MPs in a free vote but fell well short of getting through thanks to a strong Labour turnout against his amendment. That campaign, too, bleeds into his narrative on Khan.

“I got a text a few hours before the vote from one of the frontbenchers saying ‘you ought to know that they [Labour] are whipping, they are whipping the party to vote down your amendment’. And the person doing the whipping was Sadiq Khan, who I’d spoken to about recall and who had told me he was supporting [it].”



Although reluctant to ruin the surprise of his upcoming manifesto proposals – “I’m not going to burst my own bubble here” – he confirms that he will bring forward plans “to make London’s democracy more vibrant”.

“I’m a big advocate of direct democracy and I’d like us to go as far as we can go... I will continue, as long as I’m involved in politics, pushing for direct democracy, of which recall is just one small part. And I’d like to have much more use of referendums;



“Khan will be a disaster. We’ll have four years of bickering, blame and inaction”

I’d like to have much more use of petitions, meaningful petitions; and I’d like people to take much more control over the way they do politics and be able to hold politicians to account much more than they currently do.”

One Labour MP who ignored that whipping operation and voted with Goldsmith on recall was Jeremy Corbyn. Goldsmith was one of the first last summer to warn his Conservative colleagues that Corbyn becoming Labour leader would spell bad news: either through a struggling opposition failing to hold government to

account, or because the left-winger could capture the mood of the country. He stands by those comments.

“If you don’t have proper opposition, the government doesn’t work so hard and that’s not a good thing for anyone. But the bigger risk, actually, is that he captures people imagination and what I think is a very extreme and very radical offer gets picked up and forms the next government. That ought to scare the hell out of a lot of people.”

Some have seen the recent turmoil

within the Conservatives as the product of a government that has grown complacent due to Labour’s disunity. But Goldsmith is agnostic on whether his warning has been realised yet.

“Would things be different now with a different leader? Well, of course they’d be different but I don’t know if they’d be better or worse. It’s very hard to know. We’d still be heading towards the mayoral elections, we’d still have the European referendum six weeks later and we’d still have the deficit to get under control. We’d still have many >

of the same issues to deal with.”

One unquestioned side effect of Corbyn’s election is the addition of “Islington” to the lexicon of political pejoratives. Is it unfair to depict Islington and the Hampstead of the traditional “Hampstead socialists” in this way? Goldsmith responds with a grin: “Every area has its own character. Sometimes that manifests in their politics and it manifests in lots of other ways as well. As you’d expect me to say, I want to be the Mayor for all London: Hampstead, Islington, Bromley and Bexley and everything in between.”

Another side effect of the Islington MP’s victory is that London is looked upon increasingly as a Labour stronghold. The Opposition’s gains in the capital in last year’s general election and Khan’s comfortable though not decisive lead in the opinion polls make Goldsmith the underdog in this contest. But he insists London is not a “Labour city”.

“It is a place where I think people are less attached to the rosette than they were in the past, and that’s a very good thing for democracy. It gives an opportunity to people like me, who on paper start very much on the back foot, 500,000 votes behind Labour. It gives me an opportunity to make the case with people who might not traditionally vote Conservative.

And I think it’s working and I think the momentum – small ‘m’, the real momentum – is with my campaign.”

Goldsmith’s manner has – at least when he is not talking about Khan – been characterised by reserve and courtesy.



What, to go back to David Cameron’s Partridge-esque declaration last year, pumps him up? Spreading the capital’s prosperity to all Londoners was his original stimulus, he says, but that is now being run close by a desire to keep City Hall out of

Labour hands.

“I want to pick up where Boris has left off, I want to keep that success going but I want to find a way of making it work across the board because the reality is that, despite that success, too many people have been locked out and priced out of their own city. And that’s a dangerous place for a city to be in, and if we don’t resolve that issue, if we don’t make London affordable to Londoners then London will cease to be the most important city in the world. We all have a stake in that and that matters a great deal. That’s my principle motivation.

“But having thrown my hat in the ring, Labour has been through its various whatever you want to call it, bouts of madness. They’ve selected a candidate and I feel now that I have a duty to ensure that London makes the right decision on 5 May... [If Khan becomes mayor of London,] I believe that will be a disaster. We’ll have four years of bickering, blame, inaction; London will have a figurehead who is just, in my view, not fit for that office and I think he will be unable, because he’s unwilling, to get a good deal from government. And I think that’s a genuine threat, so my motivation has been amplified by the decision taken by the Labour party.”

The race to be next mayor of London has certainly seen a development of Goldsmith’s public image. He is confident that this more combative demeanour stands him in good stead for 5 May.

“If I keep on doing what I’m doing, I think it will be the right result.” 🏰

CYBER CRIME

A THREAT THAT CANNOT BE IGNORED

Cyber crime is a 'Tier 1 Strategic Threat'.

For this reason, new laws are being enacted at a rapid rate everywhere. Most of these laws have key aspects in common:

- 1 They carry swingeing penalties for non-compliance – particularly where negligence is involved, and;
- 2 They carry heavy revenue based fines, and;
- 3 They seek to single out and name those who have been 'negligent' in their duty of care of data they have custody of, and;
- 4 Most have, or seek, surprisingly extensive cross-jurisdictional reach.

The risk to all of us from cyber crime is high and exponentially rising. Any and all data has a value. Criminals are determined to steal whatever they can – and once they have it, they have an efficient market in the deep-web on which to trade it.

By the end of this decade, it is estimated that the global cost of cyber crime will substantially exceed \$2 trillion – if each of those \$'s represented 1 second of time, that would be equivalent to over

62,000 years. The target of the cyber criminal's interest is not always obvious. They may be after something that you have, but they may just be looking for a stepping stone to another objective – as many as 80% of all breaches in larger enterprises are traced back to somewhere in the supply chain – a spoofed (hijacked) email address, for example, may provide exactly what they need.

No enterprise is too big, nor too small, to be of interest to cyber criminals. Regardless of what a slick salesman might tell you, there is no silver bullet which will protect a potential from the attentions of a determined hacker. Crucially though, around four out of five breaches have their genesis in human error (or a malicious act). This is known as the 'insider threat'. This means that a huge proportion of any company's risk can be managed down by removing, or at least significantly reducing, that insider threat.

"It is a very sad thing that nowadays there is so little useless information around"

Oscar Wilde

Criminals are in the business of making money. They go where the money is. Like any business, they are driven by risk and reward. Every difficulty that they face in achieving that goal will likely reduce their interest in targeting a particular victim – there is always someone else who has not bothered. By implementing a concatenated information security plan which looks at broader security issues (including cyber), supported by an active governance regime, the risk of a data breach can be significantly managed down and, in the process, the potential victim becomes a much less attractive target too.

FRACK TO THE FUTURE

WORDS: KEVIN SCHOFIELD • PHOTOS: PAUL HEARTFIELD

Andrea Leadsom is on a mission to change the terms of the debate and win a fair hearing for fracking. The energy minister talks to Kevin Schofield

Fracking, it is fair to say, does not get a great press in this country. Rightly or wrongly, those who oppose hydraulic fracturing – to give it its Sunday title – garner more headlines than the technology’s proponents.

They claim it causes earthquakes, poisons drinking water and blots the landscape. Much better to rely on windfarms and solar to meet the UK’s future energy needs, they say.

Andrea Leadsom, however, is on a mission to change the terms of the debate. She is almost evangelical about fracking, which she is convinced is the answer to Britain’s energy conundrum – an increasing dependency on gas at a time when we are producing less and less of the stuff here in the UK.

She says: “As things stand, we have 40% of our gas being supplied from the North Sea basin and that’s reduced from what used to be almost all of it. In the next 15 to 20 years that will reduce to 25%, so the difference is made up of imports from Norway and largely Qatar.

“There’s the ridiculous argument that somehow we don’t need gas, we can just do it with windfarms and solar. Of course that’s absolutely implausible. 85% of us use gas for heating and cooking, so we’ve got to have it. Gas is absolutely essential to the UK’s energy security and we’d be mad not to look at what we can do at home.”

For the uninitiated, fracking involves drilling deep into the earth and then sending a high-pressure blast of water, sand and chemicals into the rocks below to release gas. Large amounts of shale gas have been identified across the UK, and drilling licences have been awarded to a number of companies. But thus far, no applications have received planning permission.

According to the energy minister, Britain is in danger of missing out on a technology which will generate jobs, grow the economy and keep the country’s radiators on for years to come.

She also takes head-on the green lobby’s safety concerns, insisting the

safeguards are in place to make sure fracking can be both clean and safe.

“It is way safer than most industrial processes,” she insists. “We’ve been properly regulating offshore and onshore gas for 50 years and have got the toughest regulations in the world.

“People say it’ll cause earthquakes. It’s true it has caused some seismic activity, but that’s not the same as an earthquake. During the process of the actual hydraulic fracturing, an independent well inspector will be standing at the well head with very sophisticated equipment and in the event that you get seismic activity that is greater than slamming a door or jumping off a ladder then they will call a halt and carry on at another point.

“People argue that the chemicals used are absolutely poisonous and again that’s just not true. They are fully disclosed and published. They are not carcinogenic. Poisonous chemicals are not being put back into the water table. It is simply not





“The day after Brexit you wouldn’t find international uncertainty. It’s just scaremongering”

The alternative to fracking, says Leadsom, is an increasing reliance on imported gas – putting Britain’s energy supply at the mercy of international events.

“There are geopolitical risks. If you are completely dependent for your core energy supply on imports then there are risks. As things stand we’re not concerned about gas security, but those things can change. There will always be a need to import gas, but how much are we comfortable importing?”

We meet just days after the Energy and Climate Change Committee published a scathing report into the government’s decision to cut subsidies for a number of green initiatives. Investors had been left “spooked”, according to its chairman Angus MacNeil, putting billions of pounds of much-needed cash for the sector at risk.

Leadsom, however, rejects the criticism and suggests that the investors are crying wolf.

“We’re not scrapping renewable subsidies, we’re simply saying that as soon as you can you should be standing on your own two feet,” she says.

“In 2011 we reduced subsidies for solar, and the green lobby came out saying this would destroy the solar sector, yet in the year following the reduction, the deployment increased enormously. Literally since we’ve done the review of subsidy levels in the Feed-In Tariff, we now have two quarters of evidence that shows, yes, renewables developers can still deploy even with the reduction in subsidy.

“While I am a big supporter of business, and it is absolutely their right to seek the highest profit possible, it is the job of government to look

the case that contaminated water will end up as drinking water. It’s just not true.”

Politics, of course, is the art of the possible. And the reality is that local councillors, with one eye on the ballot box, have very little incentive to give the green light to controversial schemes which could see them turfed out on their ear come the next election.

Leadsom implores her town hall brethren to look at the bigger picture and ignore the “scaremongering” of fracking’s many opponents. “It’s simply not right that the local authority needs to look into the entire safety and environmental issues because they are dealt with by the Environment

Agency and Health and Safety Executive,” she insists. “What local authorities need to be looking at is the impact on local people.

“I appreciate it’s incredibly difficult politically, but looking at the benefits to the community they should be weighing that against lorry movements etc. Don’t be brow beaten by very scaremongering accusations into failing to take a decision or making a negative decision.

“It’s for local people to decide, but I do think this has become a situation where local people are not being given a balanced perspective. It’s foregoing a great opportunity for a new industry that could create £35bn for GDP and thousands of new jobs.”



Pathways 2030 launches at Energy UK

As the UK's energy sector publishes its Pathways Report, setting out a roadmap for the GB Electricity Sector to 2030, Energy UK's chief executive, Laurence Slade said:

The UK's power sector is poised to make a real contribution to the country's energy challenges and ready to deliver affordable, reliable and clean energy to customers the length and breadth of the country. The industry has changed massively in recent years. Britain is seeing new, reliable and renewable sources of energy coming on stream and the sector is committed to moving forward with customers at the heart of everything it does. Gone are the days when choice meant picking from just six big companies and only having a standard service – new suppliers, and the roll-out of smart meters, is changing all that.

Over the next decade, the industry will continue to evolve as Britain develops and adopts cleaner, cheaper energy where more is generated locally. And, while demand for electricity seems likely to grow more slowly than once thought, energy efficiency will have a starring role in controlling household energy bills and carbon emissions. But the energy sector cannot meet the country's green goals alone and energy companies are looking for ways to work with other industry sectors - as well as consumers.

Working with customers will always drive innovation while putting power in the hands of users to deliver warmer and more energy efficient homes. I look forward to a future that is more responsive to their needs but, for that to become reality, government must adopt a costed, considered and stable end-to-end approach to policy and investment where the impact of decisions is thought-through across not just the electricity and heat sectors but joined up with other areas, like transport.

A positive partnership with government will allow the energy sector to play its part in meeting the considerable challenges facing the country in balancing costs with affordability while meeting environmental and energy security goals.

But this is not the work of one parliament of a single political party. It will take cross-party thinking and commitment to the future. But it can deliver both cross-departmental and long-term policies that underpin the economic confidence of investors. I am an optimist. I believe that through working with government – in its broadest sense at Westminster, Holyrood and, even in Brussels should the will of the British people keep us there - the UK energy industry can deliver affordable, reliable and clean energy now and into the future.

This is an exciting time for the energy industry. The next ten years will see many changes for the better, but key to it will remain putting customers first and in control of the energy they use.

Read the Pathways Report at: www.energy-uk.org.uk/publication/342-research-and-reports/pathways-2030.html



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after the bill payers' interests.

"The evidence is that businesses can still deploy up to the level of the cap with a 67% reduction in the subsidy. Does that mean that they do still need the higher subsidy or not? It would appear they don't need it.

"My response to the select committee is look at the evidence of whether they keep investing. If they do, we were right, and at present there's no evidence that they're not investing."

percentage of those export to the EU. And yet 100% have to abide by EU regulations.

"It's the regulations that are really petty around things like the content of a sausage. We abide by that, but colleagues on the continent don't. They are hindering employers from wanting to take on new people.

"If we had our own ability to write these rules for ourselves we can deal with the unintended consequences. But where

bonuses not being paid to bankers, if we can make our own decisions. This is very damaging for our ability to control the City. We need to be able to regulate it."

Like the opponents of fracking, Leadsom says those leading the Remain campaign – including her boss in Number 10 – are also guilty of "scaremongering" in an attempt to get their own way. Their warnings about the fate which they say awaits the UK outside the European Union are "totally overblown", she says, particularly when it comes to the doom-laden forecasts that the ensuing uncertainty will lead to job losses and a severe economic shock.

On the contrary, she insists that a devaluation in Sterling could even be a good thing for UK plc.

Leadsom says: "The day after Brexit you wouldn't find international uncertainty. It's not the same as when Britain left the ERM, because that was a systemic shock. Brexit is simply a political adjustment and it's not the case that the day after we left the EU everything would change.

"You might get a bit of volatility, but that is a markets thing, but the issue of what would happen to the economy is completely different and people should stop conflating the two. It's just scaremongering.

"It's simply not true to say that because there would be volatility in the City, therefore our economy would collapse.

There's also a very strong case that a bit of devaluation in Sterling is a good thing for the UK. Our problem is there hasn't been an export-led recovery. What happens if you have a slightly weaker Sterling? Our exports become more attractive. So a bit of devaluation of Sterling would be good for our deficit and for our export-led recovery. A very strong currency can be damaging or helpful, but a bit of devaluation isn't a bad thing just now.

"What people have to look at is immediately following a decision to leave, nothing would change. There is nothing to fear." 🇬🇧



No conversation with a Tory MP is complete these days without a discussion about Europe. To no one's great surprise, Leadsom is a committed Brexiteer. Her reason for wanting the UK out of the EU is a simple one, to allow British politicians to set to rules that the rest of us have to live by.

As a former Treasury minister, she insists the economic benefits of EU membership are far outweighed by the costs. "The shackles of being members of the EU is costing us jobs," she declares. "60% of people employed in this country are in SMEs and very often a small

they are written at 28 member state level, it's extremely difficult to get round it."

As an example, she offers up the EU-wide cap on City bonuses.

She says: "I know a lot of people think those in the City shouldn't get any bonuses full stop. But employers that want to keep competitive with US and Asian employers are now forced to put up fixed pay instead.

"That denies them the opportunity to reduce their costs when the business isn't going well. So there's a very fundamental unintended consequence. We'd all agree with the principle of huge

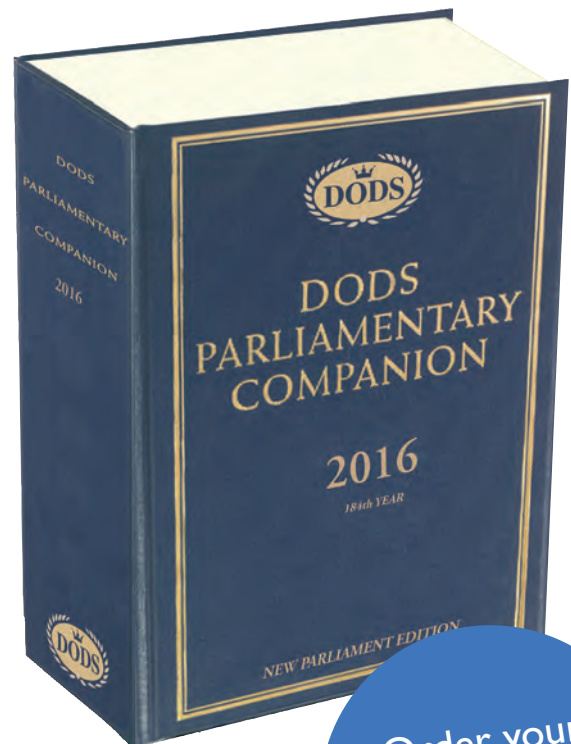


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David Cameron
Prime Minister



Sinking feeling

Last week the chancellor overhauled the North Sea oil tax regime in a bid to rescue the troubled industry. But is the package enough? **Peter Jones** visits Aberdeen and finds a city on the edge

Dawn breaks coldly in Aberdeen the day after the George Osborne's Budget. Light struggles through unbroken cloud smothering the city. Dank tendrils of mist drift round chill granite buildings which, full of sparkling vitality when the sun shines, now crouch dully. Red tail lights in traffic jams building at 6.30am seem to signal the city is in danger.

Its economy is. The oil on which it has boomed and blossomed has crashed to a third of its 2014 value. The local daily newspaper, *The Press and Journal*, has been recording a relentless roll of jobs lost by the hundreds week after every week. Thousands of households have lost salaries of £50,000 plus; more have seen incomes cut and squeezed.

The post-Budget day *P&J*, however, has good cheer, billing George Osborne's offshore oil tax cuts as a "£1bn North Sea bonanza". Yet underneath, it asks nervously: "But is it enough?"

The businesspeople gathered by Aberdeen & Grampian Chamber of Commerce in a riverside hotel to discuss the Budget – about two-thirds of them from the oil and gas industry, the rest bankers, accountants, lawyers, and hoteliers – don't seem to think so.

Asked if the Budget has made them feel more confident about their business, half a dozen raise a hand. About a dozen feeling less confident raise theirs. The rest of the 230 breakfasters don't move, reflecting the uncertainty shivering their bottom lines.

The frost runs right through the city. Hotels which two years ago happily sold beds for more than £200 a night, now have rooms at less than £100; lots of them. Booking restaurants is easy; discounted meal deals plentiful.

Taxi drivers grumble that fares are fewer and tips miserly. Food banks are busier. Retailers' tills open less frequently; Andrew Begg, a city centre shoe-seller, says shops with online arms are doing OK. He doesn't



“We needed something that encourages people to be here for the long term. We didn’t get that”

have one and is getting by with ever-tighter cost controls.

This speaks of a city in hard times but still some way above the breadline. Unemployment figures confirm the impression. Since September 2014, when oil prices started falling off the \$110/barrel cliff edge, the numbers unemployed in the five parliamentary constituencies in and around Aberdeen have more than doubled.

Sounds scary, but the numbers in February 2016 are still low, having risen from 1,643 claiming Jobseekers Allowance

or universal credit eighteen months ago, a rate of just 0.9%, to 5,215, or 2%. Real unemployment is higher (figures are not available) but looks to be still below the UK average.

Nibbling a croissant, Laura Anderson, an accountant, explains: “Those who earned big and spent big are in trouble. Those who saved something, well, they’re not claiming benefits, they’re on the golf course and hoping things will be better soon.”

She adds that relatively low-paying food and drinks companies no longer struggle to fill vacancies. Simon Warner, a recruitment specialist, says: “I have got accountants retraining as restaurant chefs. Oil and gas specialists are looking overseas and getting jobs, if they have worked abroad before.”

The city seems to be hunkering down in frugality, hoping it is temporary, and aiming to make it through to an upturn. Derek Leith, an EY accountant with 26 years’ experience working with the industry, says George Osborne didn’t encourage one.

The North Sea, which first produced oil in 1975, he says, is now mature, and oil, though there may be up to 20 billion barrels yet to come, is harder and more expensive to produce from smaller prospects than elsewhere in the world, making increasingly scarce global capital harder to attract.

Sustaining the supply chain, which the Treasury estimates employs 250,000 and has healthy exports, is more important, he argues, than offshore tax revenues which should have been cut to just the ring-fenced corporation tax of 30%.

“We needed something making a big impact and sending a significant signal on investment – that the UK has a fiscal regime which encourages people to be here for the long term. We didn’t get that,” he says.

By 5pm, red tail light queues in the descending gloom are lengthening. Summer seems a long way away. 🏠

Peter Jones is a freelance journalist



A Carbon Capture and Storage strategy is vital if the UK is to meet its emission commitment, says **Callum McCaig**

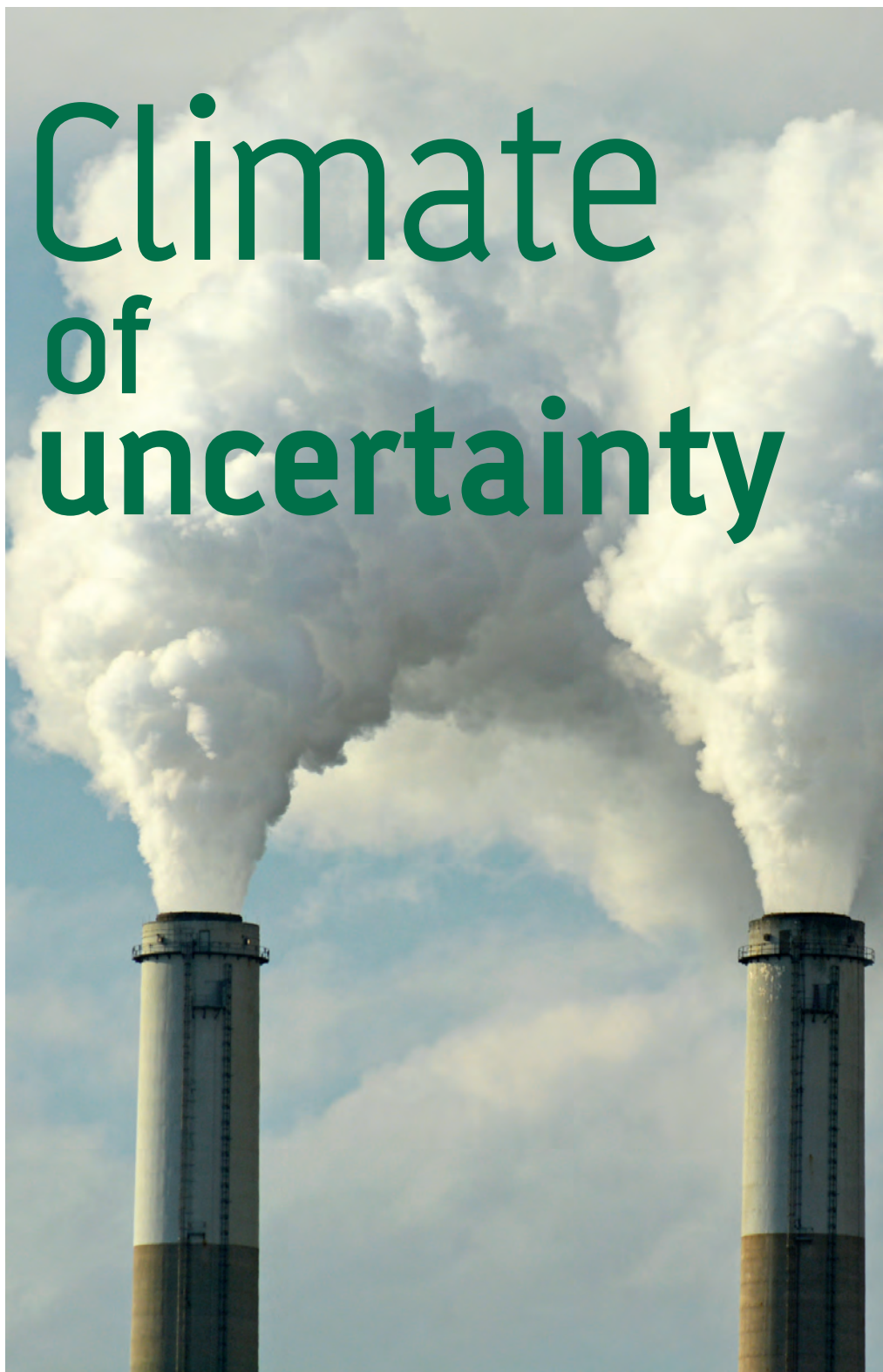
Last year, the chancellor's announcement that he was pulling the plug on a £1bn prize fund for Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) was met with dismay from across the energy industry. Only months beforehand, the Conservative secretary of state for Energy & Climate Change had insisted that CCS was essential for the decarbonisation of industry across the UK.

Having shortlisted Peterhead and White Rose to deploy CCS in 2013, this turnaround by the UK government further highlighted not only the lack of understanding that it has for the industry, but also its complete disregard towards cutting carbon emissions and its lack of consistency on energy policy. There is a stark contrast between actions at home and the rhetoric of government at the Paris climate talks.

On a UK-wide basis, the cumulative market value of CCS has been estimated to be between £15bn-£35bn, depending on the size and scale of the projects that were implemented. By throwing such a curveball so close to the end of a four-year competition, the UK government has shown a short-sighted attitude to CCS, without providing a response on an alternative system that will cut the country's carbon emissions.

Not only this, the government's own advisors from the Committee on Climate Change had made it clear that without CCS, the cost to cut these emissions by 2050 could almost double. The Committee on Climate Change also recommended not only that both the projects at Peterhead and White Rose were completed, but also that two further sites should be developed. Continuing to disregard the advice of professionals and its own advisors, the

Climate of uncertainty





“The government seems to be focused on breaking down key sectors of the energy industry rather than supporting them”

UK government seems to be focused on breaking down key sectors of the energy industry rather than supporting them.

With successful CCS projects happening throughout the world, the £1bn competition was an opportunity for the UK to show that with the right funding and investment, we can build an innovative and proactive industry that is committed to cutting carbon emissions.

It is also important to reflect on what has been happening in the wider energy industry, most notably the downturn in oil and gas. With a lack of support from the UK government, as well as a high number of redundancies, the north-east of Scotland has been hit particularly hard by the falling oil price.

Should the project at Peterhead have proven successful, Shell had estimated that the total number of jobs created could have been in the region of 600. This certainly would have gone some way to alleviate the fears surrounding the job market in Peterhead and the wider north-east of Scotland.

Instead, the chancellor chose to whip the carpet from under the feet of the competitors within weeks of final submission of their projects. All the more galling was how this was announced to the stock market moments after the end of the Autumn Statement, meaning the Chancellor was able to avoid awkward questions.

Damage has undoubtedly been done, but the reality is that we will need CCS to meet our climate commitments. That is why I called for the secretary of state to bring forward a strategy for CCS in my amendments to the Energy Bill. Even with cross-party support, disappointingly, this was defeated by a mere 39 votes.

Going forward, the UK government must act quickly to bring clarity to this matter for the benefit of the energy industry, and beyond. 🇬🇧

Callum McCaig is SNP MP for Aberdeen South and SNP Spokesperson for Energy and Climate Change

Permission creep

Are local communities being left behind in the government's push for fracking? Dods political consultants **Arpinder Baryana** and **Rob Micklewright** look at the PR war

Two hot topics in this parliamentary session have been the government's devolution and localism agenda and the prolific use of Secondary Legislation to pass controversial policies, which came to a head last year with the vote on tax credit changes. Both of these issues have collided in the fraught debate on hydraulic fracturing, or 'fracking' for shale gas, a key resource underpinning the government's current energy policy.

At a time when the government is giving local communities determination over planning for onshore wind farms, changes made through amendable primary legislation, MPs and commentators have been quick to highlight that the opposite appears to be true for fracking applications. Since last autumn the communities and local government secretary has been able to call in

fracking applications that are taking too long through the local planning process.

In December, the government's statutory instrument setting out exactly where fracking could take place, including under national parks, was passed, despite protests from Labour about a lack of opportunity for parliamentary scrutiny.

Two weeks ago further regulations removing the need for planning permission for borehole drilling for groundwater testing and seismic monitoring were published, hidden in a statutory instrument extending permitted development rights following a campaign from music industry groups to help protect music venues.

Responses to the consultation on the proposed changes called for the boreholes to be subject to local determination through the planning process appear to have been ignored.

If unchallenged in Parliament, the regulations will come into force on 6 April and could speed up the planning process by 12 months. Local campaigners have said the changes amount to "permission creep".

It is of course perfectly legitimate for the government to introduce changes through Secondary Legislation. However last summer three ministers wrote a letter to the chancellor setting out how the government's push for shale could be achieved and high amongst the to do list was "to foster a climate of opinion in which the development of our shale resources is seen as safe and acceptable to a majority of the public, nationally and locally, i.e. communities likely to be directly affected."

“ The government is determined that shale gas underpins future UK energy policy, but there are still barriers to overcome ”

In other words there is a PR war to be won to make fracking acceptable to local communities and it could be argued that taking determination away from local councils and implementing significant planning changes through an unamendable statutory instrument was not the best way to do it.

The government is determined that shale gas underpins future UK energy policy, but with a slim majority and Tory MPs representing many of the affected areas, there are still barriers and challenges for the policy to overcome.

Not that the prime minister seems too concerned – when challenged across the despatch box recently on the issue he replied simply "we have a proper planning system for deciding these things". It remains to be seen if communities believe that is the case. 🇬🇧

Arpinder Baryana and Rob Micklewright are political consultants at Dods Monitoring



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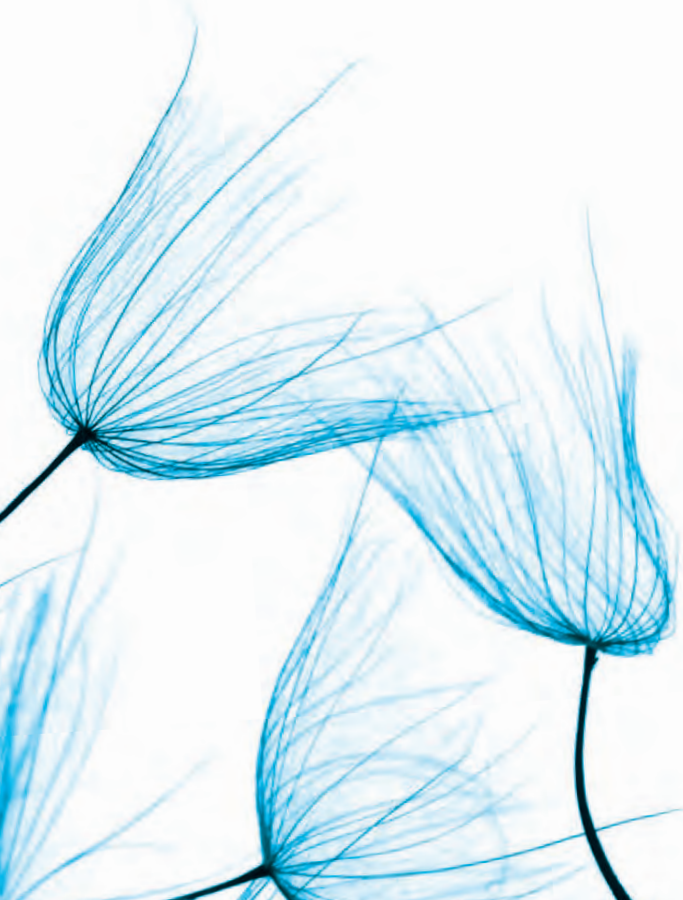
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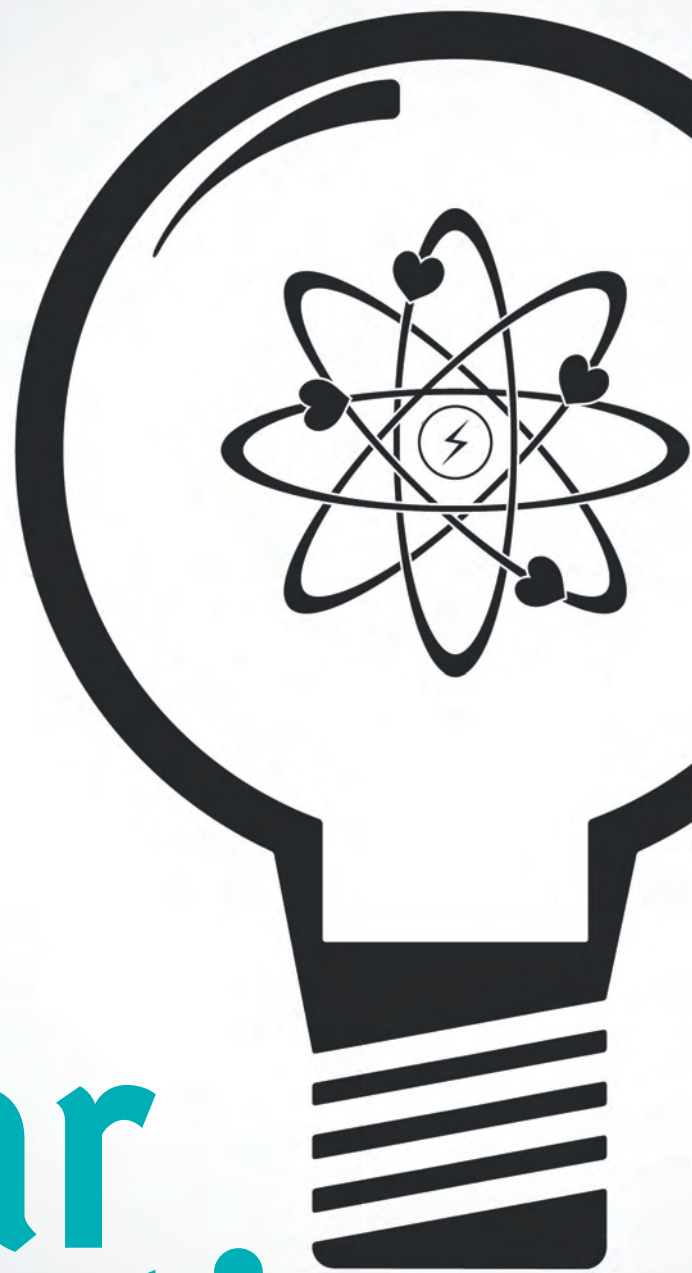


The UK has a once-in-a-generation chance to lead on the development of SMRs, writes **Richard Caborn**

naction by Government is leaving UK energy policy literally out of steam. And it was all predictable.

In January 1993, the Commons Select Committee for Trade and Industry urged ministers to consider how investment in new nuclear power could be delivered. I chaired hearings that revealed we needed the development of new build in nuclear generation in the UK as well as a prudent use of British coal burnt to generate electricity.

But the lure of gas was irresistible. Michael Heseltine, then president of the Board of Trade, rejected our advice; the UK stood down our nuclear engineers and electricity companies sped toward unbridled development of gas-fired power stations, creating a short term, high risk energy policy.



The nuclear option

We now face a potential energy gap, difficulties in meeting our legally binding international environmental obligations and unwisely embarking on a very expensive nuclear investment at Hinkley Point.

This is now in doubt with the developments at EDF over the last few weeks, but if it does go ahead it will be constructed by a company that has never met the basic rules of production. And to boot, the building of this £24bn-plus station will have little or no British content.

“We face a potential energy gap and difficulties in meeting our legally binding environmental obligations”

So is there a British resolution to the British energy crisis?

Could we produce cost effective nuclear power from stations that have a large British content based on UK intellectual property that could be exported, as well as meet environmental targets?

The answer is yes. And we could be the global manufacturing centre for the new generation mini-nuclear reactors.

These SMRs (Small Modular Nuclear Reactors) have been in naval service for some time, but not in civil nuclear power generation.

There is no practical reason why SMRs cannot come ashore. A UK Government funded report suggested there was potentially a “very significant” global market for hundreds of SMRs (65-85 gigawatts) by 2035 with dozens of SMRs (7GW) sited in the UK. The market is worth an estimated £250-400bn.

Just a small share of that market has the potential to be a huge boost to the chancellor’s ‘Northern Powerhouse’ by doubling the manufacturing base of South Yorkshire, which stands at £22bn.

In the vanguard of SMR development is the Nuclear Advanced Manufacturing

Research Centre (NAMRC) in Sheffield. Its £40m-plus investment in real time nuclear manufacturing and research is pioneering. Chief executive Mike Tynon says “small modular reactors have not been built anywhere in the world but they provide the best hope for boosting British manufacturing through energy policy”.

We need ministers to form partnerships with the private sector to deploy the skills of our engineers at the NAMRC and to produce the first British built SMR.

That could and should lead to the UK establishing the world’s first SMR production company, rolling-off for that £400bn global market factory assembled reactors comprising UK manufactured components.

Action is needed urgently. Gordon Waddington, author of a report for the National Nuclear Laboratory, has urged development of SMRs.

The technology has a bright future, he said, because of the demand for low-carbon electricity. But the next two or three years are critical if SMRs are to be deployed widely in the next decade, and the UK has a once-in-a-generation chance to be at the heart of it.

“The window of opportunity for the UK is there but it will not be open for ever,” Waddington said.

We need to back British engineers and British manufacturing

Decisions by EDF in the next few weeks could open the window of opportunity for British built nuclear reactors even wider. 🇬🇧

Richard Caborn was MP for Sheffield Central, 1983-2010

Balance of power

Jon Ashworth says joining Labour as a 15 year-old boy from Bury was “one of the proudest moments” of his life. But he fears his party is losing touch with the issues voters really care about. The shadow minister without portfolio talks to Kevin Schofield

Words: Kevin Schofield
Photos: Paul Heartfield

In Jon Ashworth’s office is a flip-chart, on which are scribbled a list of places and dates.

They are the stop-off points for the round-the-country tour he is conducting to try to work out how Labour can win again.

During his travels he has met many former Labour voters who switched to the Conservatives in 2010 and currently have no intention of switching back. The solution, as far as the MP for Leicester South is concerned, is pretty clear.

“We’ve got to persuade them that we have answers for the issues that affect their lives,” he says.

If this reads like a statement of the bleedin’ obvious, then you obviously have not been paying attention to what has been going on in the Labour party these past six months.

While membership has soared since Jeremy Corbyn became leader

– “a tremendous opportunity”, says Ashworth – the party seems no closer to winning back power than it did on the morning on 8 May last year.

Corbyn’s most fervent supporters believe power can be regained through an alliance of left-of-centre voters and those who, for whatever reason, have never darkened the door of a polling station in their lives. That, says Ashworth, is fanciful stuff.

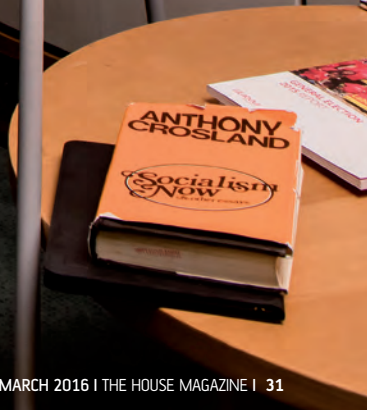
He adds: “It seems to me though that we’ve still got to do a big job of persuasion. It’s important that we are out in the communities listening to people and persuading them we have the practical answers and offer optimism and hope for them and their children. We need to improve the conditions of people’s lives, to give people opportunity and the freedom to improve their lives.

“But to do that we’ve got to persuade people to look at us, because people





Wed 5th Feb - SOUTHAMPTON
Thurs 6th Feb - BARNSTAPLE
Mon 8th Feb - IPSWICH
Tues 9th Feb - ROSSENDALE + DARWEN
10th - 11th Feb - Qatar
12th Feb - SHEFFIELD
March - SOUTH EAST
March - NORTH WEST
Wed - Any Questions
March - DURHAM (reg. conference)
Wed - WEST MIDLANDS
March - DERBY (conference)
Wellingborough



moved away from us at the last election, people who had voted Labour in 92, 97, 2001 and 2005, but moved away from us in 2010 and 2015. We've got to win them back. The route to power is by persuading people who voted for us before to vote for us again."

What's more, he is hugely sceptical of the vote-winning capabilities of going on marches, organising petitions and staging demos, all pastimes which those of a left-wing bent adore.

"You're not going to win elections by shouting slogans and hoping that sound and fury will bring the Tory walls of Jericho tumbling down," says the shadow

"You're not going to win elections by shouting slogans and hoping that sound and fury will bring the Tories down"

minister without portfolio. "All of us who want to see a Labour government have a responsibility to be listening to people and responding to them."

Issues such as Trident renewal and the future of the Falklands occasionally come up on the doorstep "when they're in the media", says Ashworth. What's left hanging is the fact that they are only ever in the media when they are raised by the Labour leadership.

He adds: "From my experience, people are more interested in their local school, they're more interested in zero hours contracts, part-time work, cuts to ESA or tax credits. These are bread and butter issues that people are more worried about and are looking to us for reassurance.

"One of the problems that politics faces is that I know Labour people switched to Conservative, but there isn't any enthusiasm for the Conservative party. People look at the scale of the issues facing the economy and they despair. We've got to convince them that we can provide the answers."

Ashworth's quest to make Labour electable again will take him to Canada during the Easter recess. He plans to meet up with strategists from the Liberal party, which won a surprise victory in the country's general election last year.

One of the key phrases used by their leader – and now prime minister – Justin Trudeau, was 'Conservatives are not our enemies, they're our neighbours'. Ashworth believes Labour should bear that in mind, rather than attempt to demonise Tory voters.

"Just because someone voted Conservative the last time, it doesn't mean

they're bad people," he says. "It doesn't mean their values or their instincts are not respectable, of course they are. They did that because they thought it was the best thing for them and their family at that time.

"Sometimes people think 'oh they voted Conservative, so they will only ever want very right wing policies', so if we say we want to win them over that's a code for saying the Labour party has to be right wing. Not at all.

"If you speak to people who voted Conservative, it's because they thought at the time the Conservatives were offering them security for their family and local community, and that's what we've got to do. I don't think they voted Conservative because they want to see the NHS undermined, or more zero hours contracts or widening inequality."

Although recent polling has been more positive for Labour, with one last week putting the party ahead for the first time since Corbyn took on the top job, the question of his long-term future continues to pre-occupy many of Ashworth's colleagues.

He says deputy leader Tom Watson was right when he called on those involved

in briefing against their boss to "calm down". "Jeremy has a mandate to lead the party, party members have given him the responsibility of getting us back into government and that's what they want.

"Party members want to see us heading for government, not to replace one set of politicians for another set of politicians, but because they know the difference we can make to their lives."

Brought up in working class part of Bury, Ashworth knows the misery that poverty can bring. His mum was a barmaid in Manchester clubs, while his dad was a croupier in the city's casinos. He remembers his mum's Sunday afternoon ritual of counting up the 10p pieces she got in tips to top up her meagre wages. After his parents divorced, he would spend his weekends at his dad's house.

But it was very far removed from the traditional father-son relationship. His voice lowers as he recalls the experience of being, to all intents and purposes, his father's weekend carer.

"My dad was an alcoholic and from about the age of eight or nine I used to look after him at weekends because he was drunk all weekend," he says. "Growing up I would often go to his house and open the fridge and find it full of bottles of white wine. Nothing else. I had to drag him to the supermarket, or as I got older I just used to go myself.

"He was a working class man from Salford. He had a terrible drink problem and what happened was he got to about 59 and he turned round to me one Christmas and said 'by the way I'm going to live in Thailand' and he literally just went. I never saw him again.

"By all accounts he lived by the beach, drank every day and three years later I got a phone call to say he was dead. He was 61."

His experiences growing up shaped his determination to enter politics and improve chances for those from similar backgrounds. The impotence of opposition, therefore, makes him angry.

"My dad was a very clever man but

in those days, if you failed your 11-plus you were never given opportunities. That's always driven me to try and change things for the better," he says.

"I don't want to be the only kid that went to my comprehensive school who becomes an MP. Why should I be the only one? That's why I'm in Labour politics.

"That is why it's our duty and responsibility to work out how we win back power. And there's no route to winning back power without persuading people who once voted for us to come back to us. If we can persuade non-voters to start voting Labour brilliant, but that in and of itself will never be enough."

His whistle-stop tour of the country recently took him to both his former school and former university. Both experiences were bittersweet.

He says: "At my old school they told me they think things now are worse than they were when I was there in the 1990s. They tell stories now of children sleeping on floors with no carpets, children with disabled parents who are seeing their benefits cut. It isn't fair. What start in life are some of these children having?

I went to Durham University and they said the fees for staying there will be £7,000 a year. Working class kids can't afford that.

"I just wonder whether in this day and age would I have gone on to be a Labour MP and a member of the Shadow Cabinet?"

Becoming a Labour member at the age of 15 "was one of the proudest moments of my life", says Ashworth. As someone who worked for the party – he was once part of New Labour's feared 'rapid rebuttal unit' – he has a kinship with those currently toiling on its behalf. And he is angered by attempts by John McDonnell to axe the party's Compliance Unit, which is designed to keep out extremist elements.

He says: "People go to work for the Labour party because they want to see the Labour party win elections, it's as simple as that. Staff work all hours, they up sticks at a moment's notice to go to a by-election



somewhere, they book into a Travelodge, sometimes they sleep on floors in these Travelodges for weeks and weeks and they do it because they want Labour to win.

"People go with four hours' sleep on general election campaigns because they want the Labour party to win and that is a noble motivation.

"I just feel that some of the stuff about units being abolished is unfair because party staff can't answer back. Party staff will be working flat out in the local elections because they want us to succeed and that is entirely noble and commendable and we should defend them for that."

Ashworth is heading for a meeting of Labour's NEC after our interview, offering another chance for him to spend some time with Ken Livingstone. The former London mayor, a key Corbyn ally, has earned a reputation in recent

months as a one-man gaffe machine.

If he hasn't been telling Labour colleagues with mental health issues to seek psychiatric help, he's been comparing MPs to Jimmy Saville. Ashworth drops a clear hint that he would not be unhappy were Livingstone to lose his place on Labour's ruling body.

"Ken's up for election at the moment so maybe people will make their own judgement about that," he says. "The thing that strikes me when he speaks out is how old fashioned he is. It reminds me of jokes people made in the '80s and '90s. They're jokes you cringe at now, but you can imagine people in the '80s and '90s getting away with. Making jokes about mental health feels very 20 years ago."

Ken Livingstone may soon be part of Labour's past, but Jon Ashworth is destined to play a big part in its future. 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿

Falling short



When it comes to accountability, the EU is not meeting the high standards the British public expects, says **Craig Mackinlay**

During the countless debates on Brexit and the UK that will take across the UK between now and 23 June, the public will see and hear many dry figures, partial statistics spun this way and that, and endless ‘if and buts’. However, one issue that cannot be ‘spun’ is a fundamental criticism that the EU, and in particular the European Commission, is not transparent or accountable to the taxpayer.

“ The EU has morphed into an opaque and unaccountable political behemoth run by an unelected European Commission ”

The British public will be voting on its future, and it needs to know who runs the show in Brussels, who controls the purse strings, and who makes the laws. The public expects high standards from its domestic parliament and civil service. The UK government has ensured we have greater accountability and transparency than ever, with FOI playing its part. But the same cannot be said for the European Commission and its 28 commissioners.

The early years of the then European Coal and Steel Community brought traditional enemies to the same table, healing wounds and extolling the virtues of the market economy. It was the beginning of a trading bloc, in vogue and fashionable at that time. One could argue that the Eastern European countries, released from behind the iron curtain, could attach themselves to western economies, get guidance as they developed their democracies, and receive a huge slug of EU cash into the bargain.

When Margaret Thatcher campaigned for a Yes vote in 1975, with the UK divided, unproductive and literally the ‘sick economy of Europe’, many could see the benefits of being part of the economic community -

because that is how it was sold and perceived.

Today, the European Union is no longer a simple free market trading bloc. It has morphed into an opaque and unaccountable political behemoth run by an unelected European Commission. Member states and sovereign parliaments play second fiddle. The commission has been dogged by accounting scandals and fraud for decades. The embarrassment of 1999 should not be forgotten, when the commission, led by Jacques Santer, was forced to resign en-masse following allegations of budgetary fraud and cover-ups.

We should not forget the waste within the Common Agricultural Policy and the immorality of fish discards allowed by the



Common Fisheries Policy. The risks of a single currency being used across diverse economies - way out of step with each other - were ignored. The British public never accepted the Euro, and we avoided the same pitfalls that created economic stagnation across the continent.

Few members of the British public could name any of the 28 European commissioners, or what purpose they serve. Who are they, what do they do and who are they accountable to? Here are just two examples.

The European commissioner for the budget, Bulgaria's Kristalina Georgieva, is responsible for over £100 billion a year in taxpayers' money and should be focused on

solving the gross problems of accountability and transparency in EU spending and tackling member states' misuse of funds. The EU's own anti-fraud office (OLAF) has said over €1 billion has been lost to fraud and corruption; with Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary accounting for more than a third of corruption probes alone. The EU's spending on staff and building costs still comes to an eye-watering €8.75 billion a year, at a time when national governments are taking tough decisions on their budget spending.

Instead, this commissioner is spending her time travelling internationally, with some saying she is lining up her next job as UN Secretary General. Her last six months of travel reads like a political campaign, or a

new television series for Michael Palin: she spent 20 days in Washington DC and New York, speaking at UN and foreign policy events, and globetrotting to Dubai and Addis Ababa, when her role demands her attention to the EU budget in Brussels. She was ultimately unsuccessful in even getting the nomination from her home country of Bulgaria.

Another commissioner worth looking at is commissioner for regional policy, Romania's Corina Creușu. She has been questioned because her agenda showed that for 2015, she didn't hold meetings on Mondays, Thursdays or Fridays and missed more than 20% of the obligatory commission executive meetings. This means commissioner Creușu essentially only worked two days a week, but still earned a basic salary of €250,000 a year. Let us not forget the accumulating pension as well.


The EU has an abominable track record of keeping tabs on the spending of billions of euros every year. We know of the 'ghost airports', a racketeering scheme on a EU-funded highway construction project in Italy, allegations of bribery by construction contractors and so on.

The EU shouldn't fear transparency and accountability. It has been given opportunity after opportunity to put its house in order, but it is still lagging far behind the standards that are appropriately expected of ourselves.

Today we are simply seeing the end result of decades of centralising more and more political decision-making in Brussels and away from sovereign parliaments. Citizens are holding us to account but it certainly doesn't seem as if the EU is any closer to cleaning up its act.

We'll be voting on Britain's future in June, and the public must take a closer look at the goings-on in Brussels; a depressing story if they can bear it. 🇬🇧

Craig Mackinlay is Conservative MP for South Thanet and Founding Member of Conservatives for Britain



European Commission president Jean-Claude Juncker and vice-president Kristalina Georgieva

“ Quote of the week ”



“Once in a while there are major challenges that test our humanitarianism. Europe’s refugee crisis is surely one such challenge”

Lord Dubs urges peers to back his amendment on Syrian refugees

STATE OF THE PARTIES:

Conservatives	251
Labour	213
Crossbench	177
Liberal Democrats	108
Non-affiliated	24 (-1)
Bishops	26
DUP	3
Ukip	3
Plaid Cymru	2
UUP	2
Green	1
Other	5
Disqualified	8
Leave of absence	30 (-1)

Lord Bates (C) has resigned as Minister of State at the Home Office, to take effect at the end of this month. He vacates his post in order to take part in a solo walk across South America, in support of the UN Olympic truce and to raise funds for UNICEF.

Lord Keen of Elie QC will act as a Lords spokesperson for the Home Office in addition to his other responsibilities as Advocate General for Scotland.

The first instalment of Lord Bates’ adventures will be published in the next edition of The House Magazine.



lords GALLERY

Words: Serena Cowdy

LORD DUBS CHAMPIONS SYRIA’S CHILD REFUGEES

Monday was the third day of the Report stage of the Immigration Bill. Amendment 116A, moved by Lord Dubs (L), was the subject of lots of press and public attention. Which is understandable, focused as it was on the safety of unaccompanied refugee children fleeing from the Syrian crisis.

Specifically, Dubs’ amendment called for arrangements to “relocate to the United Kingdom and support 3,000 unaccompanied refugee children from other countries in Europe”, in addition to the resettlement of children under the

Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme.

According to Save the Children, there are currently some 24,000 unaccompanied child refugees in Europe. The charity argues that as a fair share, the UK should take in around 3,000 of those children. Dubs added that he hoped other countries in Europe would follow suit.

Lord Dubs’ gentle and dignified address to the Chamber was lent further weight by his personal experience of seeking refuge in the UK at the beginning of WWII. As he explained: “I arrived in this country in the summer of 1939 as an unaccompanied child refugee. This country at the time offered

FOLIC ACID STALEMATE FOMENTS FRUSTRATION

Also on Monday, Lord Rooker (L) asked an Oral Question relating to the possible fortification of flour with folic acid. As with Lord Dubs’ amendment, the discussion focused on the welfare of children. The tone of the exchange, however, was quite different.

Rooker pressed the parliamentary under-secretary of state for health – Lord Prior of Brampton (C) – on the introduction of measures that might reduce the number of stillbirths, abortions and live births of babies with serious lifelong disability due to neural tube defects.

Clearly frustrated, Rooker (chair of the Food Standards Agency from 2009 - 2013) highlighted the “direct and indisputable link” between neural tube defects, lifelong serious disability in babies who are born

alive and folate vitamin deficiency.

“It was the UK that told the world this in 1991” he said, “and 83 other countries have thanked us by using the policy to reduce the number of abortions and babies born with lifelong disabilities.”

“ Is this not like English ministers having a polio vaccine and refusing to use it? ”

Responding to Prior’s admission that the government has “no plans to introduce the mandatory fortification of flour with folic acid”, Rooker’s anger was palpable: “Is this not like English Ministers having a polio vaccine and refusing to use it?” he asked. “The minister should be ashamed of

safety to some 10,000 children. It is thanks to Sir Nicky Winton, who helped to organise Kindertransports from Czechoslovakia, that I got here at all. I almost certainly owe my life to him.” Strong stuff indeed.

Dubs said he had been surprised by the level of public interest in and support for his amendment, and emphasised that the case for it was far stronger than just what happened to him. “Once in a while”, he argued, “there are major challenges that test our humanitarianism. Europe’s refugee crisis is surely one such challenge.”

Emphasising just how vulnerable unaccompanied refugee children are, Dubs highlighted the fact that some have apparently disappeared already, and may have become the victims of child traffickers, prostitution or slave labour. “Is it not a dreadful thing that children have just disappeared in modern Europe?” he asked.

Next to speak was The Lord Bishop of Chelmsford. In support of the amendment, he highlighted the work the Church does

in his own Colchester diocese – welcoming refugee families to this country – and called the support of 3,000 children “a small but beautiful thing that we could do.”

Crossbenchers and Liberal Democrats also went on to back the amendment, with several citing the experiences of loved ones who, as refugees, had sought safety in the UK in years gone by. Baroness Neuburger (LD), referenced her uncle, who came to the UK at the age of 13 as a semi-unaccompanied refugee from Nazi Germany.

Speaking against the amendment, Viscount Hailsham (C) outlined what seemed to be the two main reasons for the government’s opposition to the proposal. First, he argued that “if you admit children who are not accompanied at the moment of admission, you expose the country to a whole range of further applications by those who are related to them; and if you make it mandatory, you have deprived yourself of the ability to regulate that flow.”

Hailsham’s second objection related to the ‘pull’ factor. “My own fear”, he explained, “is that if the House made this obligation mandatory, that would encourage people to send their children from where they now are into Europe, unaccompanied.”

Backing the amendment, however, Lord Scriven (LD) responded to these suggestions robustly. He went so far as to call it a “complete nonsense” to suggest that the amendment would act as a pull factor. He continued: “It suggests that parents and children are sitting in a war-torn part of the world and suddenly say that because 3,000 children have been accepted into the United Kingdom they are going to send their children here.”

In the event, peers voted overwhelmingly in support of Lord Dubs’ amendment - the latest in a series of votes the government has lost in the Lords this parliament. It was adopted by 306 votes to 204 – a majority of 102. 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿



the situation he has been forced into by his colleagues”.

Prior argued that fortifying bread with folic acid was not a “silver bullet” that would cure all babies with neural tube defects. “We are talking,” he continued, “about fortifying flour for the whole population in order to reach about 120 babies.”

However, the mood of the House was definitely in line with Rooker’s on the issue - and Prior admitted as much. Baroness Gardner of Parkes (C) emphasised that the House had debated the topic many times. “The view around the House has been almost unanimous that something should be done to deal with this problem.” She added. “Why, therefore, is it not done?”

It seems the House should not expect progress on the issue any time soon. 🏴󠁧󠁢󠁥󠁮󠁧󠁿

Lords DIARY



Baroness Featherstone cries shame at IDS' benefit claim

Thursday 17 March

Walked from Highgate to Mornington Crescent this morning because the sunshine was beautiful and I am on a get fit mission.

Arrived at Lords in time for 'prayers' and questions; did some general administration and then headed back home to do more paperwork. I do all my writing at home and all my administration and legislative stuff at the House.

In the evening I head out again to talk to Kings College students about my recently released book *Equal Ever After*. My behind the scenes story of how, as the originator and architect of the same-sex marriage law, I did it.

Friday 18 March

Today I am working from home gathering all the information I need for the Energy Bill which will be coming back to the Lords straight after the Easter Break. I have to confess that I then spent the evening gorging on *House of Cards*.

Sadly today is also the anniversary of the death of my nephew. He died age 35 leaving a 10 month old baby girl. He was a haemophiliac infected by the NHS with Hepatitis C and exposed to CJD. The government still has not acted not only to compensate properly – but also to ensure appropriate and speedy treatment for health, insurance and other needs. There is yet another (in a long line) of consultations currently out to assess needs. Let's hope this time the government shoulders its responsibilities and acts appropriately and generously. Haemophiliacs and their families shouldn't have to beg.

Saturday 19 March

Walking, writing and cooking today. One of my resolutions following losing my seat is to cook one new thing a week. I didn't cook for 17 years except for Christmas. I am loving it. Mind you – once a week is fun – would hate to do it every day.

Afternoon met with a supporter who wants to help with my work on energy and climate change. Brilliant offer.

Sunday 20 March

Watched Marr. IDS! Too little, too late? Real or crocodile tears over cuts to disability benefits? I was apoplectic watching IDS praying in aid of 'discretionary money for hard cases' in terms of bedroom tax: it was the Liberal Democrats who refused to support the Bill unless there was an adequate discretionary fund. Extraordinary internecine war in Tory party.

Went to *Vogue* exhibition at National Portrait Gallery looking at the 100 years of *Vogue*. Couldn't help note that the covers today aren't a patch on the stylishness of yesteryear. Arrived back too late to join our local Stronger In stall in Crouch End. Will deliver leaflets as penance.

Monday 21 March

Immigration Bill due to go 'til midnight and it does. Lords won vote on refugee children. Ashamed of government's refusal to bring 3,000 child refugees here.

Tuesday 22 March

Meeting this morning with my sister and another mother of haemophiliac boys to discuss how we can make sure the government does the right thing this time. Whenever I have gone to meetings in House, where the parents of haemophiliac children have told their stories, I am reduced to tears. My fear is that the government will tinker around the edges and still leave the partners and families of haemophiliacs in great difficulties. 🙏

Baroness Featherstone is Liberal Democrat Spokesperson for Energy and Climate Change

Season of hope



Easter is a timely reminder for politicians that following a dark night, joy comes in the morning, writes Reverend Hudson-Wilkin

As MPs, you will no doubt be looking forward to being with your families, catching up with your friends and spending time in your constituencies over the Easter recess.

Displayed on the shelves in most of our local supermarkets, in preparation for Easter, we already have a choice of chocolate bunnies and hot cross buns. Growing up in a poor environment in Jamaica, we had home-made hot cross buns but chocolate bunnies would not have been found in our home.

Looking back, my real treat was having a role in the Easter Play. At least 2 months before Easter, we would have started studying for this production – based on the biblical events beginning with Palm Sunday and taking the audience on a journey through Holy week.

We re-enacted the story of the last supper where Jesus had his final meal with his friends, shared with them his belief that one of them would betray him while another would deny him. They are puzzled and reaffirmed their loyalties; but, the dice has already been thrown.

Next, we did the foot washing – Jesus teaching the disciples, by example, to serve one another. Peter was adamant: “Lord you will not wash my feet”. Jesus insists that he must be allowed to. He really wanted them to learn this important message, ‘that service must be an expression of our love for one another.’

The scene in which we performed the

arrest and trial of Jesus provided us with the opportunity of drawing in a larger group of performers. Before long we were shouting in unison “crucify him, crucify him.” In a crowd, we get caught up in the moment, joining in, without stopping to ask ourselves what it is all about. Good Friday is gritty, painful. It ends in tears. We see the tears of a mother at the loss of her son; the tears of the women who had followed Jesus during his ministry and indeed the tears of those

“ Throughout our lives, we often have experiences that are akin to the Good Friday story ”

who thought they were simply bystanders. In the presence of the cross, there can be no bystanders and Simon of Cyrene, called upon to help carry the cross of Jesus, learnt that the hard way.

We would be mistaken however if we are left to believe that Good Friday was the end. It is only the beginning. At the heart of the Christian faith is the message of hope. We

are powerfully presented with the dramatic meeting of the risen Jesus with Mary in the garden; she presumes him to be the gardener and is surprised when he calls her by name. At once she knows that she has met the risen Saviour. She is in effect, the first Apostle, sent by Jesus to go and tell the other disciples that he is risen.

Throughout our lives, we often have experiences that are akin to the Good Friday story. Those looking through the political lens, might recognise threads of this story in the political goings on in the last couple of weeks. The Easter story however is one of hope rooted in Good Friday. You see, there can be no resurrection without Good Friday. The two are entwined reminding us that while we are going through the darkness of Good Friday, there is hope (light at the end of the tunnel). It is this sense of hope that propels us into the future and gives us new life. In the words of the Psalmist, “weeping may remain for a night, but joy cometh in the morning.” 🌿

The Reverend Rose Hudson-Wilkin is the 79th Chaplain to the Speaker of the House of Commons



Spreading the harmony

Parisians gather at Notre Dame cathedral for a service for the victims of November's terror attack



This spring Parliament's Choir will perform at two special events to show solidarity with the people of Paris, **Mark Prisk** explains

Following the terrorist attacks in Paris last November, there was a real sense of shock, not least because music lovers were particularly targeted in those attacks.

So when the authorities at Notre Dame Cathedral invited us to perform there, we felt this was a wonderful chance to show our fraternity with the people of Paris. To underline this, we will be performing the same programme in both Cadogan Hall, on April 27 and Notre Dame Cathedral, on May 3.

Over one hundred members of the Choir will be singing, supported by the Southbank Sinfonia and works will include Poulenc's exuberant, yet profound setting

of the *Gloria*, Gounod's *Messe Solenne* and Herbert Howell's exquisite coronation anthem *Behold, O God Our defender*. The concerts will also feature a new setting of *Tu Es Petrus* by the Parliament Choir's Composer-in-Residence, Nicholas O'Neill, drawing on ideas from the composers of Notre Dame more than eight hundred years ago.

The Notre Dame concert is the latest in a series of international initiatives by the Choir in recent years. We have sung with the Czech Parliament Choir and in 2014 marked the centenary of the beginning of the First World War with a joint concert in Westminster Hall, with members of the Bundestag Choir.

Our concert in Paris is kindly being sponsored by BT, Airbus, EDF and Bouygues SA and HM Ambassador Sir Julian King is generously hosting a reception for us with leading French dignitaries and members of the Assemblée Nationale.

It's part of an exciting period for the choir. Our membership is growing again with over 140 people from across the Parliamentary estate.

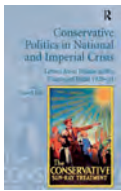
Our repertoire is rich and increasingly varied and we are also about to launch a new *Friends* scheme, for those people who enjoy our concerts and want to support both our music and our charitable work in helping young people in music, notably through our sponsorship of the Southbank Sinfonia.

The London concert is on April 27th, 7.30pm at Cadogan Hall, London SW1. Tickets from Cadogan Hall Box Office www.cadoganhall.com or 020 7730 4500.

The choir rehearses every Monday evening from 6.15pm in St Mary Undercroft, Westminster Hall. Contact secretary@parliamentchoir.org.uk or www.parliamentchoir.org.uk. 🏰

Mark Prisk is chairman of the Parliament Choir and MP for Hertford and Stortford

This invaluable set of Stanley Baldwin's letters tells the inside story of an underrated PM, writes **Lord Lexden**



Conservative Politics in National and Imperial Crisis

Letters from Britain to the Viceroy of India 1926-31
 Edited by Stuart Ball
 Ashgate Publishing Limited

For some years after his death in 1947, it seemed likely that Stanley Baldwin would go down in history as one of the worst of all Britain's prime ministers alongside his successor, Neville Chamberlain.

Churchill, who had at one time praised him to the skies, later denounced him for allowing Hitler to menace European peace by postponing the start of British rearmament because of its electoral unpopularity. In a vicious phrase that stuck, Churchill accused him of putting party before country.

The man whom Baldwin himself chose as his official biographer, G.M. Young, a supercilious intellectual, agreed. "No one who remembers the early months of the Second War can deny that Churchill is here giving voice to the judgement, or sentiment, of multitudes", he wrote, endorsing the attack.

In recent years a great deal of academic research has been done on many aspects of Baldwin's career with the active encouragement and participation of his grandson, the present Earl Baldwin of Bewdley, a thoughtful cross-bencher.

Churchill's damning verdict no longer stands. It is now clear that Baldwin (and Chamberlain after him) steadily rebuilt Britain's armed strength in a determined and prudent manner after 1934, giving priority to air power, as Churchill had commanded. That did not stop him constantly complaining that the pace was too slow, hoping by his widely publicised

Reviews

criticisms to win himself a place in government.

Modern research has also established that Baldwin was a consummate Tory leader who held firmly to the centre ground of British politics, cleverly outmanoeuvring the strong right-wing elements in the party whose strident demands would have set class against class in vehement fashion. That would have played straight into the hands of the Labour Party, as it displaced the Liberals to become the second party in the state. Baldwin (not Disraeli) was the first person to use the phrase One Nation. It summed up his entire political philosophy.

“ It was Baldwin's great strength to appeal far beyond the ranks of traditional Tories, garnering support in particular from natural Liberal voters whose own party was floundering ”

No one has done more to make Baldwin's true political stature clear than Stuart Ball, Professor of Modern British History at Leicester University and the leading academic authority on Conservative history in the twentieth century. Having written incisively and at length about the flourishing fortunes of the party under Baldwin, he

has now published an invaluable set of some 180 letters, many of them long as well as richly informative and well-written, sent by Baldwin himself, his Cabinet colleagues and other senior Conservatives to Edward Wood, who was made a peer as Lord Irwin on his appointment as Viceroy of India in 1926. He started to prepare the sub-continent for self-government. Later as Lord Halifax he would become Chamberlain's controversial foreign secretary and the Labour Party's preferred candidate for the premiership when Chamberlain fell in May 1940. Labour trusted his progressive instincts while regarding Churchill as a right-wing diehard.

Time and again Irwin's correspondents extolled Baldwin's virtues, which contributed so significantly to the Conservative Party's political ascendancy in the 1920s. Writing on 12 August 1928, Neville Chamberlain reflected on the importance of the numerous speeches "in which Stanley excels, which he enjoys making and delivers admirably, speeches at public dinners of scientific, literary or artistic bigwigs, speeches at Universities or public-schools, these have wide publicity and are enjoyed and admired by all parties and particularly perhaps by Liberals. Therein lies a tremendous asset to our party".

It is hard today in the age of the trite sound-bite to realise the cumulative effect

that eloquent speeches delivered to a wide range of audiences, many of them non-partisan, could have in the making of a Conservative statesman's reputation. It was Baldwin's great strength to be able to appeal far beyond the ranks of traditional Tories, garnering support in particular from natural Liberal voters whose own party was floundering. As Chamberlain put it: "I have long since become aware of a certain simple shrewdness about him which seems to provide him with an instinctive knowledge of the mind of the common man."

In the same letter Chamberlain also paid tribute to Churchill, "a real man of genius", but one more fitted to opposition than government because of his difficulty in distinguishing between practical and unworkable policies. "In opposition", wrote Chamberlain, "his want of judgment and his furious advocacy of half-baked ideas would not matter, while his wonderful debating and oratorical gifts would have free play".

At this point Churchill was in government as Chancellor of the Exchequer. In 1927 he denounced – along with almost every other member of the Cabinet – the proposal that women should have the right to vote on the same terms as men. "The Cabinet went mad yesterday and decided to give votes to women at the age of 21 [even though] every speaker was against the proposal", Irwin was told on 13 April 1927.

So too were members of the party. "Conservative Associations all over the country are sending in frantic messages. The Central Office is proportionately disturbed, and I am afraid S.B. is having a rough time and rather looks like it", a letter of 28 April added.

But Baldwin, a close friend of Mrs Pankhurst, persisted. The party has him to thank for sweeping away an injustice to women whose votes would return it to power many times over the years ahead.

Baldwin soon sensed the damage an unwise policy could do. He rapidly dropped a detailed scheme for Lords reform drawn up by a Cabinet Committee in 1927 when



Stanley Baldwin, center, with James Henry Thomas, left, and Neville Chamberlain, right. Baldwin "steadily rebuilt Britain's armed strength in a determined and prudent manner after 1934", Lexden writes

it became clear that the proposals, which involved strengthening the powers of the Upper House and bringing in a batch of county councillors while cutting the number of existing peers entitled to sit, would split the party and hand a gift to Labour. One of the many critics, Lord Crawford, doubted whether it would even tackle the major weakness of the Lords. He wrote on 24 June 1927 that "one of the chief sources of criticism of the existing House is that peers attend so badly, whereas under the new scheme I do not think they would attend any better". Many MPs "thought an elective element was very necessary", another correspondent added a few days later. With internal arguments mounting, Baldwin's decision to leave the Lords unreformed was greeted with sighs of relief.

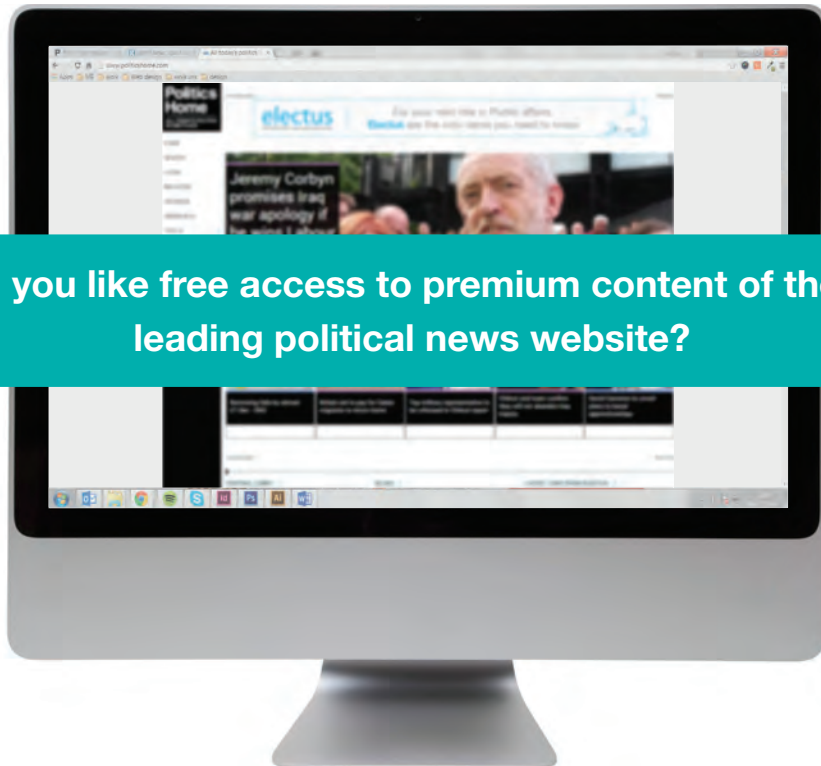
The letters are by no means confined to matters of high politics. On 8 August 1928 Lord Crawford wrote about his efforts to secure the skull of George Curzon, the great Indian Viceroy and unsuccessful contender

for the Tory leadership in 1923, for the Museum of the Royal College of Surgeons. His skull was thought highly desirable "as being that of the man who has worked hardest in history". Curzon died before Crawford got round to asking him if he would mind being beheaded in the name of science. His widow was "coaxed and flattered and cajoled" without success, but said that "George would have looked upon the idea as the greatest compliment he had ever received in his life".

These letters to a distinguished reforming Viceroy tell the inside story of Baldwin's leadership of the party over six eventful years. They have been edited with meticulous care by Professor Ball. He even provides a footnote explaining the meaning of *ad infinitum*. 🇬🇧

Lord Lexden is a Conservative peer and historian. His history of the Carlton Club published in 2007 to mark its 175th anniversary has just been reprinted

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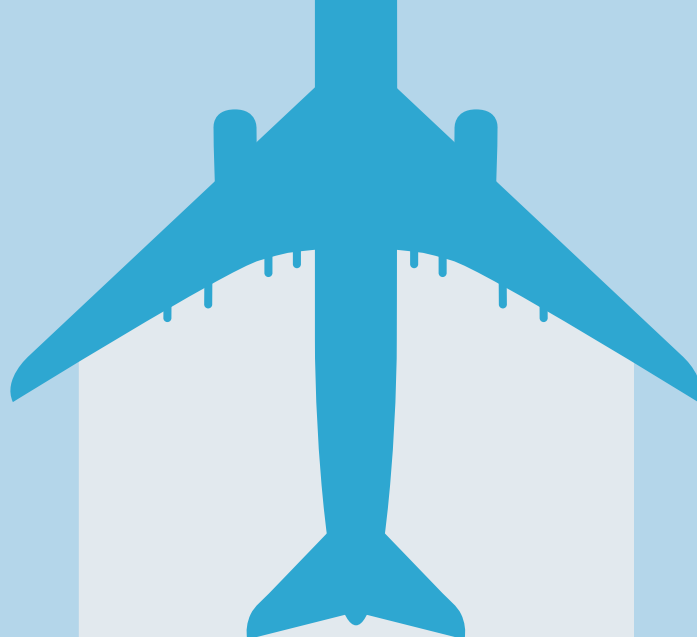
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