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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES
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HOUSE OF LORDS

OFFICIAL REPORT

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

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House of Lords

Friday, 26 September 2014.

11.30 am

Prayers—read by the Lord Bishop of Derby.

Deaths of Members

Announcement

11.37 am

The Lord Speaker (Baroness D’Souza): My Lords, I regret to inform the House of the deaths of the noble Lord, Lord Attenborough, on 24 August and of the noble Lord, Lord Bannside, on 12 September. On behalf of the House, I extend our deepest condolences to the noble Lords’ families and friends.

Arrangement of Business

Announcement

11.38 am

Lord Taylor of Holbeach (Con): My Lords, with the leave of the House, I should like to say a couple of things before we start our debate today. The first is to thank all those who have made possible our assembling here today at short notice on recall. We are well served by all who support us here in this House, and their professionalism is manifest by the way we are all able to be here today. I should like to record our thanks to them.

Secondly, turning to today’s debate, there are 58 speakers, and there may well have been more. A number of people decided, as a result of the large number of speakers, to withdraw their names, enabling others to speak for longer. As it is, with 58 speakers, if contributions are limited to four minutes each, we would expect to rise by 4.30 pm. This would allow the House to make its contribution to the debate before the House of Commons votes on its Motion, which is expected to be at about 5 pm.

I remind noble Lords that the clocks are set at zero when they rise, and when the clock shows four, four full minutes will have elapsed so, my Lords, your time is up. Thank you.

Iraq

Motion to Take Note

11.39 am

Moved by Baroness Stowell of Beeston

That this House takes note of developments in Iraq.

The Lord Privy Seal (Baroness Stowell of Beeston) (Con): My Lords, in debating the Motion before your Lordships today, I will set out the Government’s position on developments in Iraq. The question before the

House of Commons today, and the debate for us to contribute to, is how we keep the British people safe from the threat posed by ISIL and, in particular, what role our Armed Forces should play in the international coalition to dismantle and ultimately destroy what President Obama has rightly called “this network of death”.

There is no more serious issue than asking our Armed Forces to put themselves in harm’s way to protect our country. I will set out today why the Government believe that that is necessary. If we are to do this, there is a series of questions that must be answered. Is this in our national interest? In particular, is there a direct threat to the British people? Is there a comprehensive plan for dealing with this threat? Is the military element necessary? Is it necessary for us to take part in military action? Is it legal for us to take part? Will we be doing so with the support of local partners? Will doing this add up to a moral justification for putting the lives of British service men and women on the line? Above all, do we have a clear idea of what a successful outcome will look like, and are we convinced that our strategy can take us there? I will address each of these questions head on.

First, on our national interest, is there a threat to the British people? The simple answer to that question is yes. ISIL has already murdered one British hostage and is threatening the lives of two more. The first ISIL-inspired terrorist acts in Europe have already taken place, with the attack on the Jewish Museum of Belgium in Brussels. Security services have disrupted six other known plots in Europe, as well as foiling a terrorist attack in Australia aimed at civilians, including British and American tourists.

ISIL is a terrorist organisation unlike those with which we have dealt before. The brutality is staggering: beheadings, crucifixions, the gouging out of eyes, the use of rape as a weapon and the slaughter of children. All these things belong to the dark ages, but it is not just the brutality. ISIL is backed by billions of dollars and has captured an arsenal of the most modern weapons. In the space of a few months, ISIL has taken control of territory greater than the size of Britain, and is making millions selling oil to the Assad regime. It has already attacked Lebanon and boasts of its designs right up to the Turkish border. This is not a threat on the far side of the world. Left unchecked, we will face a terrorist caliphate on the shores of the Mediterranean and bordering a NATO member, with a declared and proven determination to attack our country and our people. This is not the stuff of fantasy. It is happening in front of us and we need to face up to it.

Is there a clear, comprehensive plan? The answer, again, is yes. It starts at home, with tough, uncompromising action to prevent attacks and hunt down those who are planning them. We are introducing new powers. These include strengthening our ability to seize passports and to stop suspects travelling, stripping British nationality from dual-nationals and ensuring that airlines comply with our no-fly list. In all this, we are being clear about the cause of the terrorist threat we face. As the Prime Minister has said, that means defeating the poisonous ideology of extremism by

[BARONESS STOWELL OF BEESTON]

tackling all forms of extremism, not just non-violent extremism, so we are banning preachers of hate, proscribing organisations that incite terrorism and stopping people inciting hatred in our schools, universities and prisons.

Of course, some will say, “Any action you take will further radicalise young people”. That is a counsel of despair. The threat of radicalisation is already here. Young people are leaving our country to fight with these extremists. We must take action at home, but we must also have a comprehensive strategy to defeat these extremists abroad. This involves using all the resources at our disposal: humanitarian efforts, which Britain is already leading to help those displaced by ISIL’s onslaught; diplomatic efforts, to engage the widest possible coalition of countries in the region as part of this international effort; and, at the United Nations, leading the process of condemning ISIL, disputing the flows of finance to ISIL and forging a global consensus about preventing the movement of foreign fighters.

This strategy also involves political efforts to support the creation of a new and genuinely inclusive Government in Iraq and to bring about a transition of power in Syria that can lead to a new representative and accountable Government in Damascus who can take the fight to ISIL. Yes, there is one part in all this activity in which we believe our military has an indispensable role to play, so I will turn to the question of why.

Why is the military element necessary? A military conflict is already taking place. ISIL has taken territory and is butchering people in Iraq. Iraqi, including Kurdish, security forces, are already fighting ISIL. We have to decide whether we will support them. This Government believe that we should. If we are to beat these terrorists, it is vital that the international community does more to build the capability of the legitimate authorities fighting extremists. Along with our European partners, Britain has already been supplying equipment directly to Kurdish forces. We are strengthening the resilience of military forces in neighbouring Lebanon and Jordan, and our Tornado and surveillance aircraft have already been helping with intelligence-gathering and logistics to support American strikes on ISIL in Iraq. However, the Iraqi Government want more direct assistance. Earlier this week, the Iraqi Foreign Minister wrote to the United Nations Security Council requesting military assistance to support his own Government’s actions against ISIL. When the Prime Minister met Prime Minister Abadi in New York on Wednesday, he reiterated that request to him. In Iraq, the real work of destroying ISIL will be for Iraqi security forces, but they need our military help and it is in our interests, and theirs, to give it.

The next question is: does Britain, specifically, need to take part in this international action? Again, the answer is yes. The international coalition needs our help, in particular with the vital work being done in terms of air strikes. Britain has unique assets that no other coalition ally can contribute: the Brimstone precision missile system, which minimises the risk of civilian casualties and which the US does not have; our unique surveillance and intelligence capabilities; and our highly professional forces, which are well used

to working with their US counterparts. Those are some of the reasons why President Obama has made it clear to the Prime Minister that America wants Britain to join the air action in Iraq, which has been under way for several weeks now. But it is also our duty to take part. This international operation is about protecting our people, too, and protecting the streets of Britain should not be a task that we are prepared to subcontract entirely to the air forces of our allies.

I turn now to the question of legality. The Attorney-General has given his advice on the action that we propose to take. There is a clear legal base for UK military action to help Iraq defend itself from ISIL. A summary of this legal position is being placed in the Library.

The Iraqi Government have requested our help and given their clear consent for UK military action. There is no question about this. We have the letter from the Iraqi Government to the UN Security Council, to which I have already referred. We have the public statements from Prime Minister Abadi and President Masoum. We have the personal request made to my right honourable friend the Prime Minister and the full UN Security Council by Prime Minister Abadi in New York on Wednesday. There is no question that we have the legal basis for action, founded on the request of the Iraqi Government.

The next question is whether we will be acting with the support of local partners. Again, this is clearly the case. We have a substantial international coalition in place, including Arab nations, committed to confronting and defeating ISIL. Sixty countries are acting in some way to help tackle ISIL. Of those, 10 are Arab states. Five have already taken part in air strikes with the Americans in Syria. Even regional powers such as Iran are publicly condemning the extremists. Yesterday in New York, President Rouhani said that parts of the Middle East are,

“burning in the fire of extremism and radicalism”,

and expressed deep regret that terrorism has become globalised. Of course, our differences with Iran remain. Iran’s support for terrorist organisations, its nuclear programme and the treatment of its people all have to change, and we will not back down on those things. But if Iran’s political leaders are prepared to help secure a more stable and inclusive Iraq and Syria, we should welcome their engagement.

We have a comprehensive strategy for action, with the political, diplomatic, humanitarian and military components that it needs to succeed over time. We have a clear request from the Iraqi Government for assistance; a clear basis in international law for action; a substantial international coalition, including many Arab partners; and the need to act in our own national interest to protect our people. It is morally right that we now move to a new phase of action by asking our Armed Forces to take part in international air strikes against ISIL in Iraq, and we must do so now.

We are very clear about what success would look like. We would see a stable Iraq and, over time, a stable Syria as well; and ISIL will have been degraded and then destroyed as a serious terrorist force. However, we should not expect this to happen quickly. The hallmarks of this campaign will be patience and

persistence, not shock and awe. We are not deploying British combat troops but providing air power in support of local forces on the ground. No British or western troops will occupy Iraq, and many other elements will be needed for long-term success: the need for an inclusive Iraqi Government and for the Sunni tribes to rise up against ISIL; and the need for a Syrian Government who represent all their people. Even after ISIL has been dealt with, we should be in no doubt that future Prime Ministers and future British Governments will stand at this Dispatch Box dealing with this issue of Islamist extremism in different forms and in different parts of the world.

ISIL has sprung up quickly, and around the world we see the mayhem caused by other groups: Boko Haram in Nigeria, al-Shabaab in Somalia and al-Qaeda in Yemen. We are dealing here with a generational struggle caused by the perversion of one of the world's great religions—Islam—but I have no doubt that it is one that this country is more than equal to.

I will say a few words about Syria. Syria is where ISIL has its headquarters and large numbers of its fighters, and where it holds British hostages. People will rightly ask why we are taking military action against ISIL in Iraq but not in Syria. Let me be clear about the Government's position on this: there is a strong case for the UK joining in international action against ISIL in Syria. ISIL must be defeated in both Iraq and Syria. We support the air strikes being conducted by the United States and five Arab nations against ISIL in Syria but today we are discussing only the action that the UK proposes to take in Iraq. The Government will return to the House of Commons for a separate decision if we propose to take military action against ISIL in Syria.

In this Government's view, the legal position is clear: there is a legal case for action in Syria, as there is in Iraq. However, the whole House is aware that there are a number of additional complications with regard to Syria. There is no legitimate Government there, a civil war is under way and there are regional and international angles that do not apply in Iraq. So the Government will return to the House of Commons on this issue if they judge it necessary to do so.

To conclude, it is inevitable that the shadow of the United Kingdom's previous military involvement in Iraq hangs heavy over both Houses of Parliament today. However, the situation we face today is very different. We are acting in response to a direct appeal from the sovereign Government of Iraq to help them deal with a mortal terrorist threat to Iraq and to Britain. We are not acting alone, but as part of an international coalition of 60 countries, many of them from the region and all of them committed to rolling back ISIL, however long and difficult the task may be. This is not 2003 and we must not use past mistakes as an excuse for indifference or inaction.

We will play our part in destroying these evil extremists. We will support our Muslim friends around the world as they reclaim their religion. Once again, our inspirational Armed Forces will put themselves in harm's way to keep our people safe. I pay tribute to their extraordinary bravery and service. I commend the Motion to the House. I beg to move.

11.55 am

Lord Hunt of Kings Heath (Lab): My Lords, I am grateful to the noble Baronesses the Leader of the House and the Lord Speaker for readily agreeing to the recall of your Lordships' House on such an important day. I also echo the thanks of the Chief Whip to the staff of the House and congratulate him on his appointment.

My right honourable friend the leader of the Opposition has made it clear that the Opposition will support the government Motion concerning military action against ISIL in Iraq. We do so on the basis that this is not about ground troops from the UK or UK military action elsewhere, as the noble Baroness has made clear. It is a mission aimed specifically at ISIL.

It is important we understand that ISIL is not simply another terrorist organisation. We have seen its hostage-taking, including innocent British and American citizens, the murder of David Haines and the holding of other British hostages. It is not just British citizens who are being threatened, but people from many different backgrounds, countries and creeds. The accounts we have heard of the actions of this organisation are chilling and are often taken against Muslims. As leading British Muslim scholars and imams wrote recently, ISIL is perpetuating,

"the worst crimes against humanity. This is not Jihad—it is a war against all humanity".

ISIL's ideology has nothing to do with the peaceful religion practised by people across the world and by many in our country.

It is always a heavy responsibility that falls to us as we decide whether to commit UK military forces, particularly when we are doing so in the absence of a threat to us by another state. When we have considered military action in previous debates in the House, the Opposition have set out criteria by which to assess the case for action. I return to those criteria today.

First, there is a need for just cause in any action we take. We believe that ISIL establishes this case on the humanitarian grounds I have already set out, and on the grounds of national interest. The international instability that will be created by the overthrow of the democratic Iraqi state would clearly have implications for the stability of the region and therefore for the United Kingdom. That includes the possibility that Iraq will become a haven and training ground for terrorism directed against the UK.

Secondly, military action must always be a last resort. Again, we believe this criterion has been met. ISIL has shown that it is not an organisation that could or should be negotiated with. However, any military action must be accompanied by political, diplomatic and humanitarian action against ISIL, including strengthening an increasingly inclusive and democratic Iraqi state. That work is under way. However, to make the political, diplomatic and humanitarian action possible, there must be military action to contain and help to counter the threat of ISIL in Iraq.

Thirdly, there must be a clear legal basis to provide legitimacy and legal force to our actions. As I have said, we support the Motion because we will be responding to the request of a democratic state in Iraq, fighting

[LORD HUNT OF KINGS HEATH]

for its own survival. I believe that the legal case is clear and I echo the comments of the noble Baroness the Leader.

Fourthly, we must believe that there is a reasonable prospect of success before we take the grave step of committing our forces. Therefore, we need to be clear about the aim of the mission, which is to reinforce the democratic Government of Iraq, and to prevent the advance and help to roll back ISIL at the invitation of that democratic Government by using international military air power while the Iraqi army and the Kurdish Peshmerga conduct a ground campaign against ISIL. That is why it is right that the use of air power is accompanied by training and resources to support their efforts. Nobody should be in any doubt that this is a difficult mission and that it will take time, but there is already evidence that the US action is having the effect of holding back ISIL.

The fifth criterion is that there must be broad support in the region for reasons of both legitimacy, because this action must not be seen as a new form of imperialism, and effectiveness, because regional support is essential to the long-term success of the mission. At the end of August the Arab League made a statement calling for comprehensive measures to combat ISIL, and we now see a regional coalition of Jordan, the UAE, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia and Qatar, as well as many other countries.

Finally, the proposed action must be proportionate. We must make sure that innocent civilians are protected. The Opposition welcome the assurances that we received in this regard, including concerning the need, as always, to do everything possible to avoid civilian casualties.

Having scrutinised these six conditions—just cause, last resort, legal basis, reasonable prospects, regional support and proportionality—we believe that they have been met. However, there are also a number of reasons why Britain should act and not stand by. We have been asked to help by the Iraqi Government. Our traditions of internationalism have always meant that we reach out and help others in need. A decision not to join would be a decision not to use our military capability to assist those in desperate need.

As the noble Baroness the Leader said, this is different from 2003. This case is about supporting a democratic state. There is no debate about the legal basis for action in Iraq. There is no argument about whether military action is a last resort, because surely nobody, whatever their view on the Motion being debated in the other place, can argue that there can be negotiation with ISIL. There is broad international support, with all 28 EU member states and the Arab League providing support in one way or another. This is multilateral action prompted by a legitimate democratic sovereign state.

There is no graver decision for our Parliament and our country, but protecting our national interests, security and the values for which we stand is why the Opposition will be supporting the action set out in the Motion being debated in the other place.

12.02 pm

Lord Alderdice (LD): My Lords, I wish to identify myself with the appreciation expressed to the noble Baroness the Leader of the House, the noble Baroness the Lord Speaker and our staff in facilitating this important debate today.

The question that is being put to our colleagues in the other place is a very specific one about air strikes and military intervention in Iraq. Given the engagement that we have had in Iraq and the very specific request from the new Prime Minister of Iraq for assistance in defending his country against a brutal insurgency whose stated intention is the destruction of his country and other countries in the region, we have little alternative but to join the others in rendering such assistance as we can reasonably provide.

While it is the duty of Members of another place to vote on that specific question, it is the responsibility of your Lordships' House to consider the wider questions and to proffer such constructive advice to Her Majesty's Government as we can. The proposal being put to the House of Commons does not include engagement on Syrian territory, for obvious political and legal reasons, but this leaves a major lacuna in the military strategy, at least so far as the United Kingdom is concerned. Military means in Iraq—and indeed if extended to Syria, as our colleagues in the United States have done—may be able to contain ISIS's rapid advance, and it would be a mistake to underestimate their importance. However, they will not be able to destroy or defeat ISIS, which President Obama appeared to claim in one of his earlier speeches. The defeat of ISIS will come about only when local Sunni populations, tribes and allied groups in ISIS-occupied territories turn against ISIS. That could be made more difficult if heavy air strikes alienate populations and create a common enemy. We must reflect on the enormous effort that was made against al-Qaeda, which did indeed reduce its capacity, but has created many other even more brutal organisations right across the region and much more widely.

As we think on these questions it seems to me that they point to wider questions about the strategy being adopted to the growing tragedy of the region and, indeed the wider region. I want my noble friend the Minister to give an assurance and a commitment to a much more thorough-going examination of our national strategy, which must involve not only the wider Middle East, but the implications in north Africa, where already there are groups identifying with the caliphate and, of course, in respect of Russia, whose influence in Syria and more widely, is critical. Our relationship with Iran is also part of the changing character of our engagement. In that regard, I understand that for political reasons the Prime Minister and other colleagues speak passionately in terms of good and evil. Very wicked things are happening and there are people of evil intent and acts.

We must beware of thinking about the conflict in entirely Manichean terms of good and evil. Everyone on our side on this does not share our democratic values and our commitment to human rights. That fact in itself has contributed to the tragedy of the region. Let us add to our understanding from the excellent academic work being done at places such as

the International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation and Political Violence at King's College London. I declare an interest as a patron and as director of the Centre for the Resolution of Intractable Conflict at Harris Manchester College, Oxford.

We are in a very dangerous place. The whole of that region—and countries much more widely—are dissolving into chaos. This is not simply a war like in the past. It comes close to home because it affects many people here. It is inevitable that there will be those who will want to conduct atrocities in this country to prosecute the aims of ISIS and others. There is also the possibility—indeed, almost the inevitability—of a whole new generation of young people being drawn into the jihadist orbit, just like the Arab Afghans going to Afghanistan in the 1980s. This will preoccupy us for a long time.

Pope Francis indicated a fear on his part that we were falling piecemeal into a world war III. He is not a man who speaks lightly about these things. While there is a grave decision to be taken by our colleagues at the other end, it is made all the graver because we are slipping, at least in some parts of our world, into something of a dark age. We must pray that it does not last as long as the religious wars in our own continent some centuries ago.

12.08 pm

Lord Hannay of Chiswick (CB): My Lords, when the matter of Iraq was last debated on 25 June in this House I said:

“I very much hope that we, too, will respond positively if we are asked to help by the Iraqis or if the Americans indicate that they would welcome more help”.—[*Official Report*, 25/6,14; col. 1327.]

Both those conditions have now been met, so I support the Government's intention to participate in the air strikes against ISIL as part of a wide-ranging coalition, including many of Iraq's neighbours, having already carried out reconnaissance flights, having begun to supply arms to the Iraqi Kurds and having brought humanitarian relief to the Yazidis, the Christians and other religious minorities being persecuted and murdered by ISIL.

Of course, none of these are easy decisions to take, nor are the options facing the Government good ones. But the case for acting now seems to me compelling and the arguments against inaction, while close allies such as the US, France and a number of Arab countries with whom we have long-standing links of friendship and co-operation are fully engaged, seem to me overwhelming. On the legitimacy and legality of those actions, the position with respect to Iraq would, as the Attorney-General has advised, seem to be clear-cut. We have been invited to intervene by the legitimately constituted and recently democratically elected Government of that country, which has been attacked by elements based in its neighbour, Syria. The fact that that Government have recently been reconstituted on a more inclusive basis than their predecessor is clearly very welcome. Now that we are preparing to back up our support for them in deeds and not just in words, we are better placed to urge them to follow up with deeds what they have said about healing the sectarian divisions in Iraq, which helped to create the conditions

that led to the present crisis. It cannot be said too often that Iraq will not achieve stability and security unless its Sunni and Kurdish populations are treated equitably and in an inclusive manner by the Shia majority.

So far as the legitimacy and legality of operations within the territorial limits of the state of Syria are concerned, the situation is less clear-cut. Indeed, it is decidedly murky, as are most policy options with respect to that country. The following considerations are, however, worth bearing in mind. First, military operations against Iraq are being launched by ISIL from the large area in the east of Syria which it controls. The Assad regime seems to be both unwilling and unable to do anything to prevent that, which is assuredly its duty under international law. Secondly, that regime has already made a mockery of its responsibility to protect its own citizens, and ISIL is riding roughshod over that responsibility in the areas it controls, as is evidenced by the recent flight of tens of thousands of Syrian Kurds over the border into Turkey. Indeed, ISIL is violating many of the commitments contained in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights to which all member states have subscribed, most brutally and sickeningly in its publicised executions of innocent civilian hostages, including one of our own compatriots.

All that adds up to a justification of the action already being taken by the US and a number of Arab states against targets in Syria, even without any explicit UN Security Council authorisation of such action. Are these circumstances in which the coalition against ISIL should concert its action with the Assad regime? That is neither necessary nor desirable. That regime has committed and is still committing terrible crimes against its own civilians. It is a regime which, despite its accession to the treaty banning chemical weapons, and in violation of it, is dropping canisters of chlorine on civilian targets. However, I hope that the Government will remain alert to any opportunity that may occur to revive the dormant UN negotiations for a political transition in Syria. In the longer term that is surely the only way forward. We should be trying to enlist Russian and Iranian support for the resumption of those negotiations, and I hope that the gradual improvement of our relations with Iran, characterised by the Prime Minister's well timed meeting with President Rouhani in New York earlier this week, will facilitate that. Perhaps the Minister in replying to this debate can say whether the Prime Minister and President Rouhani discussed Syria, and if so, in what terms.

In conclusion, clearly, the success of the operations against ISIL will depend crucially on the effectiveness of the coalition. I would be grateful if the Minister in winding up could say something about the structure of co-operation which is being put in place for that coalition. As he well knows, running coalitions is a labour-intensive business.

12.13 pm

The Archbishop of Canterbury: My Lords, the danger of this debate is that we speak only of Iraq and Syria, ISIL, and armed force. ISIL and its dreadful barbarity are only one example of a global phenomenon, as the

[THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY]

noble Baroness the Leader of the House mentioned. We will not thus be able to deal with a global holistic danger if the only weapons we are capable of using are military and administrative, and if we focus only on one place. It is clear, as the noble Lord the Leader of the Opposition set out so clearly, that we need to take this action now. However, it is also necessary over time that any response to ISIL and to this global danger be undertaken on an ideological and religious basis that sets out a more compelling vision, a greater challenge, and a more remarkable hope than that offered by ISIL. We must face the fact that for some young Muslims the attractions of jihadism outweigh the materialism of a consumer society. As the noble Lord, Lord Alderdice, implied, if we struggle against a call to eternal values, however twisted and perverted they may be, without a better story we will fail in the long term.

The vision that we need to draw on is life-giving. It is rooted in the truths of the Judaeo-Christian tradition, relying heavily in the Middle Ages on the wealth of Islamic learning and that of the other Abrahamic faiths, not necessarily enemies, and enriched by others, such as Hinduism and Sikhism, in recent generations. Religious leaders must up their game, and the church is playing its part. It is the role of the church I serve to point beyond our imperfect responses and any material, national or political interest, to the message of Jesus Christ and the justice, healing and redemption that he offers.

But in the here and now there is justification for the use of armed force on humanitarian grounds to enable oppressed victims to find safe space. ISIL and, for that matter, Boko Haram and others, have as their strategy to change the facts on the ground so as to render completely absurd any chance of helping the targets of their cruelty. It is clear from talking this week with Christian and other leaders across the region that they want support. The solidarity in the region is added to by the important statement from the Grand Imam of al-Azhar on Wednesday. The action proposed today is right, but we must not rely on a short-term solution on a narrow front to a global, ideological, religious, holistic and transgenerational challenge. We must demonstrate that there is a positive vision far greater and more compelling than the evil of ISIL and its global clones. Such a vision offers us and the world hope and assurance of success in this struggle, not the endless threat of darkness.

12.17 pm

Lord Howard of Lympne (Con): My Lords, it is a rare privilege to follow the most reverend Primate the Archbishop of Canterbury, and I do so with great trepidation, which is only slightly mitigated by the fact that I agree with very much of what he said.

Many voices far more eloquent than mine have described the evil nature of ISIL and the threat that it poses. It has committed unspeakable acts of inhumanity on countless innocent civilians and undoubtedly poses a significant threat to the region and to us. I was horrified yesterday morning to hear on the radio my old friend Simon Jenkins dismissing the threat to us as

no more than the risk of a few bombs going off on the streets of London. Those who are charged with the responsibility of protecting the citizens of this country cannot afford to take such a cavalier view.

The question before your Lordships is not how barbaric ISIL is or how grave is the threat that it poses; the question is what should be done to confront that threat and, in particular, what part this country should play in that endeavour. The United States has belatedly accepted that it needs to assume a leadership role. It has assembled a coalition that includes a number of states in the region. Other countries, including France and the Netherlands, have already taken action. Belgium will join them if its parliament votes in favour today. The Government of Iraq, who are most immediately at risk, have asked our Prime Minister—the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom—to make a contribution to that international effort. Is it seriously suggested that we should decline this request and that we should turn a deaf ear to that cry for help? What sort of a country would we have become if we had refused to play our part in this international endeavour to confront evil?

Of course it is true that air strikes alone will not definitively defeat or destroy ISIS. In due course it may well be necessary for action of a different kind to be taken, but the imperative now is to contain it, stop its advance and degrade its capability. That would give time—time for the Iraqi and Kurdish forces to improve their effectiveness; time for the Sunni tribes of Iraq to see that it is in their interests to oppose ISIL rather than to join it. They want to be on the winning side, and who can blame them after the treatment meted out by ISIL to those who have opposed it in vain? If the coalition can convince these tribes that it will be the winning side, that will do as much to win hearts and minds as anything else.

In my opinion, the case for supporting the action that the Government propose to take is overwhelming. It is a just cause. It is a moral cause. It is a practical cause. It is a lawful cause. It is a cause deserving of support from all quarters of your Lordships' House.

12.21 pm

Lord Reid of Cardowan (Lab): My Lords, I have no hesitation in saying that I believe that Parliament will support the Government on this today. So I want to confine myself to two simple questions. The first is: what are the political objectives? Force has no utility unless it is used in pursuit of political objectives. In Iraq they are clear: the defeat and degradation of ISIL, and support for the democratically elected Government. In Syria it is essential that we have some inkling of where the Government are going because you can separate the issue in terms of Motions but you cannot separate it in reality. It is much more complicated and more conflicted. Put simply—I disagree with a colleague, the noble Lord, Lord Hannay, on this—it is not the wisest course to try to get rid of ISIL and Assad at the same time. Both may be devils but perhaps we ought to consider at least that the devil we know may be better, at least temporarily, than the one that we are only beginning to know. That is a hard decision to make but this is realpolitik.

My second question is this: what is the strategy? Or rather, where is the strategy? By that I do not mean military strategy but what militarists would call the overarching, grand strategy. While it is doubtless necessary to degrade ISIL at the moment, we need to be alert to the contagion that has resulted in, for instance, al-Qaeda rebranding itself and murdering French citizens in Algeria last week, and attacks in Mumbai, Yemen, Somalia and so on. That is not to mention Libya, which is now an ungovernable mess—a reservoir of terrorist ammunition for the rest of the country as a result of a “tactical intervention”. That is what worries me if, on this occasion, we are confining this to a tactical intervention. If all we do is limited military intervention, push on with tactical strikes and then look for the so-called exit strategy, we will achieve nothing. We will go round in the same circle again in another part of the world.

Surely, of all the lessons of Iraq—I disagree with a lot of what I think are superficial lessons—one is that it is quite possible to win a decisive military battle: the first six days were very successful, but it was the next six years that were the problem. Building the peace is an essential part of a grand strategy. If we do not have plans to build that peace on a wider scale then we will just go back to where we were before.

Let me conclude by saying what I believe a grand strategy is about. It is not grandiose but quite simple, and I would identify three elements. First and foremost, it does not confuse combat, or even decisive battles, with winning anything other than a short-lived, fragile peace or truce, during which we will actually win the longer term.

Secondly, grand strategies cannot be delivered successfully without a wide coalition. While I welcome the Arab states being involved, the wide coalition is answered by asking not just, “Who are our friends?”, but, “What are the interests of other people?”. Given some of the threats I have mentioned, Russia, China, Iran and others have the same interests as us against that primary threat. We should be talking to them. The decision this House made in Syria last year resulted in a realignment because we moved from getting rid of Assad to getting rid of chemical weapons with the support of Russia, Iran and so on. That is the second element.

The third is that such coalitions require capacity that goes well beyond military capability. If a strategy does not include public services such as education, health, sanitation, water supplies and so on—a real intervention to establish the winning of the peace—then, as I said earlier, we may well snatch defeat from the jaws of victory. This time when we act, let us work through not only the tactical and military interventions but the grand strategy to win the peace as well as the short-term battles.

12.25 pm

Baroness Falkner of Margravine (LD): My Lords, the question that this House, and more importantly the other place, have to address today is this: what is the question to which engaging in a fourth Iraq war is the answer for the United Kingdom? The noble Baroness the Leader of the House set out a clear and

structured argument and I want to debate directly with her on the points she made. She said that one of the issues was the threat to the British people. I will be the first to commiserate with the families and friends of those who have been so brutally murdered, but the threat to the British people has certainly been ongoing since 2001. We have domestic measures in place and I welcome the fact that the noble Baroness has today outlined further domestic measures, but the threat to British people on the streets of the United Kingdom is not going to be ameliorated by entering into another war in Iraq.

The noble Baroness recognised in her speech that radicalisation is already here, but she felt that we need to take the battle to the Middle East. She mentioned beheadings and crucifixions, but she did not tell the House that these are acts which are the daily bread and butter of the Saudi judicial system. We are flying sorties with pilots we can make eye contact with whose judicial system crucifies and beheads on a regular basis. She talked about radicalisation. What are we doing to get the Saudis to tackle the perpetrators of hate against Shias, among others, in their Friday sermons week after week after week? I have raised this in the House more than once.

Why is the military element necessary? The noble Baroness put it to us that it is under way because it is happening; in other words, it is a fait accompli. We have a fait accompli and so we must engage. But US firepower is more than adequate to degrade ISIS. I do not think that it will destroy it—bombing from the air will not do so—but it is certainly adequate to degrade ISIS even without the Arab allies who are alongside and who have adequate weapons to do the job with the Americans.

The United States is currently engaged in six military wars. It is engaged in Afghanistan, Pakistan, Yemen, Somalia, Iraq and now IS in Syria. The noble Baroness described what success will look like. She said that it would look like a stable Iraq and a stable Syria. The question I would ask is this: if she genuinely believes that that is achievable, when does she expect to see that happen? I am afraid that it is obvious that I do not think that engaging in air strikes is the answer for a stable Iraq and Syria. Does she expect to see it happen in a decade? Does she expect it in two decades, and after how many more are killed? We have seen 200,000 killed in Syria and we did not engage. When this is all over, will these countries be the same territorial states that we see today?

My preference would have been for us, as a P5 country, to have engaged in the Middle East in a regional conference that included all the P5 countries in order to bring about a sustainable end to the conflict in the Middle East. It would have involved a renewed effort in Israel-Palestine. It would have involved now, reluctantly, talking to Assad as part of the solution and certainly to keep Iran on form.

We are rushing into action which will inevitably have broader consequences than we can see today. The Motion before the other House does not provide the considered space that we should have to consider whether we can do anything in the Middle East and, if so, what?

12.30 pm

Lord Jay of Ewelme (CB): My Lords, I strongly believe that we should join in the military intervention in Iraq but with our eyes wide open. The Iraqi Government have asked for our support, so intervention would be legal. We have excellent Armed Forces to provide that support. We would be joining a coalition with Iraq and, crucially, with others from the region. We know what our aim is: namely, to degrade and weaken ISIS so that properly trained Kurdish and Iraqi forces can regain control of those parts of northern Iraq now under ISIS control and thus remove the prospect of a vicious and maverick fundamentalist state in the Middle East threatening our and others' interests. But it is in the achievement of those aims that the problems may lie. The only certain thing about war is that it never turns out as you expect. When the difficulties arise, the arguments for involvement in the first place can start to look, with the benefit of hindsight, distinctly shaky. Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya all show that.

Therefore, let us look beyond today. It is not clear that airstrikes will be enough. Nor is it clear that the Iraqi and Kurdish fighters, even when trained, will be able to defeat ISIS on the ground, even an ISIS that has been weakened by airstrikes. So our trainers may edge ever closer to a combat role, with all the risks to them and to opinion at home that that will bring. On the political level, I suspect that Iran will continue its shift from enemy to ally—an uncomfortable but, I suspect, necessary process that was inevitable from the day that a Sunni-led Government were replaced in Baghdad by a Shia-led Government.

Finally, the logic of not intervening in Syria, while in my view correct today, will look increasingly uncertain as it becomes clear that the Syria-Iraq border is no more than a line on a map. The question of the legality of an intervention in Syria, even if there is no UN Security Council resolution because, for example, of a Russian veto, will become paramount. I believe that it will not be an insoluble problem—Kosovo is a precedent—and I note what the Minister has said. None the less, it would be a difficult issue.

These are not questions that need or can be answered now. But if we agree to a military intervention in Iraq now, as I believe that we should, we should do so in full recognition of the probability, and I would say certainty, that some or all of these questions—British troops on the ground, intervention in Syria, perhaps in semi-alliance with Bashar Assad, and closer alliance with Iran—will arise in, say, two or three years' time. We cannot afford ourselves the luxury then of saying that if we had appreciated the difficulties now we would not have voted for intervention today. As I have said, I am strongly in favour of that intervention today but with our eyes wide open.

12.33 pm

Lord Hurd of Westwell (Con): My Lords, just over a year ago, our House, alongside the other House, was asked to take a decision about military action in Syria. At that time, on the arguments before us, I was critical of that idea because there was too much fuzziness about the account given of our objectives, our allies

and, indeed, our enemies. But, as a result of the time that has passed, a terrible clarity has now taken the stage.

ISIS is comparable to a plague. We have all seen the black flags on its troop carriers and tanks and increasingly we see it as a new sort of black death sweeping across the region. We are right to do that. We are right also to welcome the fact that there is now less uncertainty about our allies. In particular, a considerable number of Middle Eastern states are taking part in the action in which we will now join.

I want to make two points. One is that we have in a way—I believe rightly—changed our constitution without anybody noticing. I think that it is now inconceivable that this country would go into a war or into substantial military action without the approval of, at any rate, the House of Commons. That is a big advance constitutionally, in my view, and I hope that it will stick. But we should not go beyond that into thinking that we sitting here or they sitting down the Corridor are in some way equipped to run a war and to decide who is worth supporting and who is not worth supporting. This is going to be a struggle. It will take a long time and go through many twists and turns, as it already has done and will continue to do. We have to put a certain trust in those who are in charge of our affairs. It would be a mistake for us to rush up and down about the minutiae of each decision. I hope, therefore, that we will show a certain mastery of restraint as this action continues.

I wanted also to say a word about Syria. We all know why the Government's Motion does not include Syria, but I repeat a point that I have already made. It is hard to foresee the future—I agree with what the noble Lord who preceded me said about this—and we must not prevent the Government coming to this House and the other House with a case for action in Syria, if need be. I agree that it is hard to see how, when ISIS has abolished structures as far as it is concerned and is ranging across the whole region, we can confine our intervention to one part of the region.

Those are the two points that I wanted to make, but I do so in support of the Government. I think that they have taken the wise course and the safe course for this country.

12.38 pm

Lord Falconer of Thoroton (Lab): My Lords, I am delighted to follow the noble Lord, Lord Hurd, whose authority and insight were evident in his remarks, with which I wholeheartedly agree.

I support the Government's proposal to contribute to the air strikes within Iraq against ISIL in aid of the Iraqi Government's defence of Iraq and its citizens. The question of whether further intervention is required, including in Syria, is for another day. Nothing should be ruled out. We should stand up to ISIL by using force to help those who are in the front line against it. There is no other sensible or just option.

I would not support the use of force by Her Majesty's Government unless it was lawful under public international law. I have no doubt that it is and I will address this issue briefly. The use of force by one state in the

territory of another state is lawful if authorised by the UN under Article 42, or in self-defence, or pursuant to the responsibility of nations to protect the citizens of another country who are the subject of mass human rights abuses from which their own Government cannot or will not protect them, or also when there is an immediate humanitarian emergency that is likely to be averted by the use of force. The precise parameters of this last possible basis for the use of force under international law are uncertain, but it exists and was the basis for intervention by Her Majesty's Government in northern Iraq in 1991 and following, and in Kosovo in 1999. It does not require a UN resolution.

In this case, there is no Article 42 resolution. Self-defence requires no UN resolution. It includes collective self-defence. Where one country, at the request of another, comes to the aid of the requesting country in defending itself, the use of force by that other country—in this case our own—is lawful, provided that the force used is proportionate and is in response to an immediate threat to the country defending itself. Iraq has requested assistance, as the noble Baroness the Leader of the House has described. There is no doubt that there is a threat to the territorial integrity of Iraq and the lives of its citizens. That threat is real and immediate.

The force used in self-defence must be proportionate. That must be a judgment made on the ground, with which we should be extremely slow to interfere, as the noble Lord, Lord Hurd, indicated. We offer six Tornado aircraft, as well as continued surveillance, targeting ISIL's military capacity in Iraq. It seems extremely unlikely, in the light of that contribution, that issues of proportionality will arise.

Collective self-defence—a basis for the use of force expressly preserved by Article 51 of the UN charter—provides clear legal authority in this case. This legal justification is uncontroversial and while, no doubt, there will be some who will seek to controvert it, it is not significantly in doubt. As for the “responsibility to protect” doctrine, I can see a very strong case for it being invoked. There are many who think it cannot be invoked without a UN resolution. But Iraq, in seeking the support of other nations in self-defence, is responding appropriately to the threat to itself and its citizens.

The right of countries to intervene with force in another country, under the “responsibility to protect” doctrine, arises where that country's Government will not or cannot protect their own citizens. Where, as in this case, the Government genuinely seek the assistance of other countries to protect their citizens and the assistance obtained is likely to be a sufficient and proportionate response to the threat, and while the “responsibility to protect” doctrine may also justify intervention, the detail of that need not be examined because of the clear collective self-defence case. Similarly, that is also the case in respect of the immediate humanitarian emergency basis.

I have one final point. The constitutional course adopted by the Government in this case, in making and seeking Commons support for the decision, is right. The decision on whether to use force resides constitutionally with the Executive. There is, however, a constitutional convention that, under normal circumstances, the Government should seek the support

of the Commons in their decision to use force, in advance of its use. Where that support is not forthcoming, force should not be used. That convention is not formalised in the sense of appearing in legislation or standing orders. To reduce it into writing would reduce its flexibility. But it exists and it should be given effect to. I congratulate the Government on giving effect to it. It is right that we are also recalled to give our views, but it is not us who have to endorse the right to go to war: it is the other place.

12.43 pm

Lord Carlile of Berriew (LD): My Lords, I am privileged to follow the noble and learned Lord's reassurance on the international legal issues, with which I wholeheartedly agree. I, too, support the decision to obtain a parliamentary mandate for air strikes against ISIL in Iraq. The holocaust that ISIL has started has shocked the world.

What I want to say has not yet been said in this debate: it is incumbent on this House and the other place to support the service chiefs who will now have to conduct the military campaign. What has been started is a military campaign and they must be allowed to conduct it with the usual military control techniques and to the highest military standards.

In doing so, they and we are entitled to expect regional allies to put in ground troops, for aerial might alone can cause severe damage but will not totally destroy. For example, aerial strikes will not take survivors as prisoners to render them ineffective or bring war criminals to justice. That means that we must be prepared to train ground forces—those of Iraq and possibly other allied countries—and avoid the debacle of the weakness of the forces of Mr Maliki's discredited Government as they collapsed under the approach of ISIL. Somebody's boots on the ground will be a requirement for success and there will have to be boots in both Iraq and Syria.

However, in allying with other countries, we must be careful about some. The influence of Iran, particularly its Quds forces, on the Maliki Government has been extensive and has diminished the protection of minorities in Iraq. I suggest to the Minister that if we sup with Iran, there should be a long spoon at the table.

In addition to air power, can we be assured by the Government that we will also deploy our own Special Forces, who have skills beyond those of any other country in the world; that we will deploy our own intelligence services' formidable capability alongside those of, especially, the United States and France; and that the effective use of military command and control will be able to function with as little unnecessary political and juridical inhibition as possible? We must recognise, too—must we not?—that the borders between Iraq and Syria are long and, in many places, arbitrary and artificial. Hot pursuit should be recognised as an appropriate measure, whether from land or air. If there is a large-scale transfer of assets by ISIL from Iraq to Syria, we must be able to consider immediately whether today's decision should be varied. I have seen the limited legal advice issued by the Government this morning and I regret very much that it does not deal with or anticipate those issues.

[LORD CARLILE OF BERRIEW]

Finally, I turn very briefly to terrorism within the UK. It is self-evident that there is a real threat that a violent jihadist supporting ISIL, if he has safety and the means, will make as sophisticated an attack in the United Kingdom as he can muster and that, in the medium term at least, this threat will endure. The waging of an aerial war abroad will raise the potential for a terrorist reaction at home. I therefore urge the Government to listen to those of us who call for the public to be protected, in the short-term at least, by strengthened but proportionate counterterrorism measures. I also urge an increased focus on the Prevent strand of counterterrorism policy in terms of both funding and deployment. Partnership with Muslim communities to make Prevent more effective can make a substantial contribution to the safety of our citizens—including, of course, British Muslims.

12.47 pm

Lord Browne of Ladyton (Lab): My Lords, like the noble Lord whom I have the privilege of following, I, too, support the Motion that the Government has placed before Parliament, but I do so very much with my eyes wide open, as we have been encouraged to do. Last month in Istanbul, I was present when Hadi al-Bahra, the president of the Syrian opposition coalition, tried to persuade members of the US Congress to supply heavy weapons and equipment to the Free Syrian Army and to support US air strikes there. The humanitarian case was compelling, as indeed it is today, but the war-weary US politicians could see no vital US interests and were not persuaded by his answers to the famous question: what then? Today, there is a humanitarian imperative justifying intervention against the threat that ISIL poses to Iraq, and there is a sound legal basis, as we have heard, for intervention in Iraq.

However, the least persuasive argument is that if we do not deal with ISIL in the streets of Iraq, we will have to deal with it in the streets of the UK. The Prime Minister told the United Nations that the United Kingdom has exported 500 jihadists to fight in Syria and Iraq. This problem is already on our streets and, indeed, in our homes. Already we have a serious problem that cannot be dealt with by air strikes anywhere in the Middle East.

I am not given to counsels of despair, but air strikes in Iraq will play into the narrative of ISIL's propaganda. It will use it to recruit more of our young people to its cause, and air strikes will increase the risk of retaliatory action here. Civilian casualties are inevitable. There are significant downsides to air strikes, and we should agree to them only if we are convinced that they will be effective in achieving the strategic objectives of degrading and eventually destroying ISIL. Recent history of bombing does not suggest that such an objective can be achieved by military means alone, far less by air strikes. They must be part of a coherent political strategy. We must be able to answer the question: what then?

At the root of this problem is a challenge of political legitimacy in both Iraq and Syria. To all intents and purposes, these are two failed states. If we see this challenge

otherwise—for example, as only a counterterrorism operation—we will be at it indefinitely. Without legitimate Governments in both states, even if ISIL is killed and buried, it will not stay dead but will rise again. If Nouri al-Maliki was still Prime Minister in Iraq, we would not be having this debate today. It is only the prospect of an inclusive, legitimate Iraqi Government that permits consideration of any military intervention there at all. As long as the Assad regime exists, it will spawn jihadists and other criminals capable of the barbarism that ISIL perpetrates daily. If we have learnt anything from the past, it is surely that we cannot deal with an enemy on one side of a porous border while leaving a safe haven on the other.

As my noble friend Lord Reid said so eloquently, there must be a viable political, military and diplomatic coalition with sufficient traction on the ground to take advantage of any opportunities that we create. The necessary complementary element requires partners who are able and willing to put boots on the ground and who are given all the assistance they need—lethal, non-lethal and humanitarian—as necessary. If we really believe that we have a dog in this fight, we must ensure that that dog is on the winning side. We need to appreciate the long-term nature of our commitment and the requirement to ensure that the new Iraqi Government deliver, and that we have no prospect of success if Syria continues in a state of partition, with the Islamic State on one side and the Assad regime and its Iranian and Hezbollah allies dominating the other, and if we do not effectively lean on the funders of ISIL to cut off their financial support.

We should learn from the mistakes of the past, including the mistake of our intervention in Libya, which suggested that we had no responsibility for the consequences. We will own the consequences of our actions then and this time in Iraq, as we own the consequences of our previous interventions. This is my definition of keeping my eyes wide open.

12.51 pm

Lord Dannatt (CB): My Lords, I believe we all recognise that today we are somewhere that we would rather not be, but the situation that has presented itself in Iraq and Syria since June as a result of the barbaric atrocities and ambitions of the so-called Islamic State and ISIL fighters leaves no option but to take some action. I therefore join many Members of your Lordships' House and the other place in supporting the Prime Minister's proposed use of Royal Air Force aircraft in conducting offensive operations in Iraqi airspace.

After the bruising experience of the vote in August 2013, albeit on a related but totally different premise, I believe the Prime Minister has done the right thing in carefully building support for his proposed course of action, including securing proper legal cover and that invitation to act from the Iraqi Government. Moreover, the UK will be joining a coalition that includes many Arab, Muslim and Gulf states, and that is absolutely right.

However, we have come to this moment very late and today's vote authorising offensive action is just the beginning of something; it is definitely not the end. The Secretary of State for Defence's comments

that this matter could take years are realistic and right. But it is an issue not just of timescale but of intent, determination and open-mindedness. A few weeks ago, the President of the United States said that the US did not have a strategy, which, in the face of the ISIL onslaught, was a worrying omission. But a strategy has now emerged, at least in part due to the energy of the King of Jordan, whose country sits absolutely in the eye of this storm.

Any strategy involves first the identification of the grand strategic objective to be achieved: in this case, removal of the threat posed by ISIL and its Islamic State and caliphate ambitions. This removal will entail not just the containment or neutralisation of ISIL but almost certainly its destruction—perhaps not necessarily its complete physical destruction but its destruction in the minds of those who would otherwise have chosen to support its objectives; and they may be in Iraq, Syria, Lebanon or in London.

With a clearly identified strategic objective, we have to be open-minded about how to achieve that objective. It may be that joining an air campaign above Iraq will be enough. It may be that providing some support and training for the Iraqi Government and the Peshmerga will be enough. But if it is not enough, our schemes of manoeuvre to achieve our objective will have to be reviewed and revised.

There are three facts that we have to face. ISIL recognises no international borders. It wants to impose its self-determined caliphate. If our enemy does not recognise borders but we do, we are constraining our response. Attacking ISIL from the air just above Iraq is dealing with half a problem and not a whole problem. Of course, operating in Syrian airspace is a major problem—not a legal problem but a practical one. That is why last month I ventured to suggest that we might have to have some form of dialogue with the Assad regime to enable us to do that. However, if there is no appetite for that, air strikes in Syrian airspace may have to be confined to the use of unmanned aerial vehicles. The US has correctly concluded that carrying the fight against ISIL into Syrian airspace is right; we may yet come to the same conclusion.

Secondly, issues such as the ones that we are currently facing are ultimately settled on the ground. That is the environment in which we live: we live neither in the air nor on the sea. Therefore, within a proper political framework that addresses the legitimate needs of both the Iraqi and the Syrian people, ISIL must be defeated on the ground, albeit supported from the air. I have no wish to see British or American ground combat units committed to this operation but I am quite clear that ISIL must be defeated on the ground. For now, we must fully support those who are fighting on the ground: the Iraqi army, the Peshmerga and probably the Free Syrian Army—an opposition group in which we can now have greater confidence, given that ISIL has broken away and revealed its true colours. To do this, we may need to send more equipment and training teams to the region and possibly demonstrate our mutual support to threatened states such as Jordan while deploying units there for exercises or training, if invited.

Finally, time is not on our side in this conflict. We have been slow to take action; momentum is still with ISIL. On the diplomatic, political and military fronts, we must catch up and we must overtake, making it quite clear around the world that this kind of barbaric activity has no place in the 21st century, whether in the name of religion, politics or economic gain.

12.56 pm

The Marquess of Lothian (Con): My Lords, I have reservations about what is being proposed today. Of course, ISIS is the epitome of total evil and barbarity but the question today is whether the timing and nature of what is being proposed is right. The Prime Minister rightly tells us not to be “frozen with fear” by previous experiences in Iraq but there is a vast gulf between being frozen with fear and learning the “lessons of the past”. The main lesson is that this time the relevant questions must be answered before and not after action has commenced, and my reservations arise because I believe, with great respect to the Leader of the House, that many of the crucial questions have not yet adequately been answered.

The Prime Minister stressed the importance of a clear plan: a strategy to degrade and ultimately to destroy ISIS. Will bombing achieve this and will our involvement in that bombing enhance that strategy? Both past experience and senior military voices today suggest not. What, then, is our real objective? Is it containment? Possibly it is, but the lesson of past conflicts is that containment works only as long as the pressure is applied and, when that pressure is removed, the containment ends.

Can, in fact, ISIS be degraded and destroyed? Its armed capability probably can, but the Wahhabist philosophy behind it and from which it draws its inspiration and indeed much of its finance will persist. If bombing does not achieve that main strategic objective, what then? Will we admit failure and walk away? I doubt it. Or will we more likely apply more and more military pressure—the classic mission creep—ending up with British boots on the ground? How long will our involvement continue? The answer that we will be given is, “Until the job is done”. That is the same answer that was given in Afghanistan, in Iraq previously and in Libya, on each occasion with a studied failure to define what the job was.

Have we actually considered what we will leave behind? In the past, it has tended to be chaos and violence. Today, even if ISIS were successfully degraded, the fundamentalism would continue, as would the underlying conflict between Sunni and Shia. How would our intervention have affected these broader and potentially even more dangerous geopolitical issues and the very real terrorist threat that ISIS poses to us here in the United Kingdom through returning jihadis? What will be the effect of our involvement in bombing ISIS on potential jihadis here? We know already that so-called lone-wolf terrorists operate and pose a real and present threat in this country at this time. How much greater might that threat be if we are perceived as bombing fellow jihadis from a great height, and would the military degradation of ISIS in Iraq diminish the threat here? Again, I have to say that I doubt that.

[THE MARQUESS OF LOTHIAN]

These are some of the questions to which the lessons of the past effectively demand satisfactory answers before we embark on another military intervention in the Arab world. Until they are answered, we should at least hold our fire.

1 pm

Lord Goldsmith (Lab): My Lords, like so many of your Lordships who have spoken already, I support this proposed action on the basis that we cannot refuse the request that has been made to this country by the legitimate Government of Iraq. It has been put eloquently, including by the noble Lord, Lord Howard, with whom I entirely agree, and it is lawful. I put the lawfulness of this proposed action very simply. Any legitimate Government have the right to deal proportionately, but if necessary with force, with armed and murderous insurrectionists on their own territory. That is what Iraq seeks to do. It is entitled to turn to the international community to ask for support. So long as that support is also proportionate and complies with the laws of international humanitarian law, there is no need to go any further into the reasons for the legitimacy. The case for why it is lawful is clear.

There are two lacunae, both of which have been mentioned in the course of the debate, on which I will spend a moment or two. One of them was mentioned by the noble Baroness the Leader of the House when she opened this debate, when she referred to the other things that we need to do to deal with the threat to the British people. I support the need to deal with preachers of hate, and support what the noble Lord, Lord Carlile of Berriew, said about the need to look at our Prevent strategy. We will not protect people in this country simply by air strikes, even though they may be essential. We must not forget that, and I hope that this House will come back to those questions as the Government come back to them.

The second lacuna that has been mentioned is what will happen in Syria. It is inevitable that the Government at some stage—whichever Government that may be—will come back and say, “We need now to deal with ISIL in Syria because of the porous border, because it can simply retreat to its bases there”. Indeed, it is operating from its bases there. The legal basis for air strikes in Syria will be more difficult, but there may well be reasons and justifications for them which we need to study now. The first is the right of self-defence and collective self-defence, which is recognised under the United Nations charter. This House debated the extent of the right of self-defence in international law on 21 April 2004, when we had the privilege of setting out the then Government’s position, which included the statement:

“It must be right that states are able to act in self-defence in circumstances where there is evidence of further imminent attacks by terrorist groups, even if there is no specific evidence of where such an attack will take place or of the precise nature of the attack”.—[*Official Report*, 21/4/04; col. 370.]

It was because of that use of self-defence that we originally took action in Afghanistan. The second basis is the ability to take action to prevent humanitarian catastrophes. The evidence for that will need very carefully to be considered if the Government take the view that that is a justification in place.

These are not easy questions, whether they are murky or unclear, but they will need a very careful analysis. I hope too, as other noble Lords have said and as the Prime Minister has said, that we will not be paralysed by what has happened before or by fear of what will happen again and not take the right action. I say that with respect to the Government, and with respect to my own Front Bench and to those in the other place, so that they will also be prepared to take the action that is right for us and for the rest of the world.

1.04 pm

Lord Kirkwood of Kirkhope (LD): My Lords, I start by declaring an interest. I have been part of a project for the past five years that is financed by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Conflict Pool to assist with capacity building in the high council of representatives in the Iraqi Parliament in Baghdad. On the basis of that experience I will spend a few moments underscoring a point that was made by, I think, the noble Lord, Lord Browne of Ladyton, about the significance of the challenges faced by the new Administration in Iraq.

Before I turn to that, I should say that entirely support the recall. It is correct that Governments should test parliamentary opinion by recalling both Houses. Even if they lose occasionally, it is still the right thing to do. I also concur that it is right to support and join the coalition, military and otherwise, that has been created by President Obama and the Prime Minister. The work of that coalition should be continued not merely through the difficulties of a military campaign but on a wider basis as well.

I first remind the House, and I am sure that there are colleagues with more foreign affairs experience than I have, of the significance of the British influence in the region, thanks to our history and the quality of our diplomats. In particular, I cannot help but recognise and acknowledge the excellent work of Ambassador Simon Collis in representing Her Majesty’s Government in very difficult circumstances. The Arabist perspectives that the Foreign and Commonwealth Office has been able to promote are now paying dividends in using our influence to good effect. I hope that we will do that.

However, the international coalition needs to be quite clear—the noble Lord, Lord Reid of Cardowan, made this point earlier—that when you get down to it, for the communities that are subject to this insurgency it is as much about education, water and public utilities as it is about bombing with smart weapons from 10,000 feet. I absolutely subscribe to that. The new Prime Minister of Iraq is an excellent man—British trained, of course—who understands very well what his country is able to offer, and I am very pleased that our Prime Minister responded positively to his request for help.

The Iraqis face immense difficulties, domestically and politically. They have an embedded system of corruption, which they are trying to deal with. They are facing failures of public utility in water quality, desertification and electricity supply. In addition, they have an overall lack of capacity to deliver because those of the professional classes who have families and

have been able to leave have been under pressure since 2003 and have left. They are now in other countries. So even if the policy is right and the money is there, the capacity to implement change in a positive way to benefit the population is not always open to them. We can help with that.

I understand perfectly well why DfID does not consider Iraq a country in need of support because of the oil resource, but in these new circumstances, particularly when we are trying to support communities that are subject to this insurgency, DfID should be able to provide the expertise necessary to undermine the insurgency from within. I conclude by reminding the House of an apposite Arab proverb:

“My son and I against my cousin, my cousin and I against the stranger”.

We can help to undermine that insurgency through our unique relationship with the country and by deploying professional as well as military support. I hope that we will do so in tandem with the international coalition that has been put together as soon as we possibly can.

1.08 pm

Lord Hylton (CB): My Lords, I came back last night from an Inter-Parliamentary Union visit to the United Arab Emirates. I thank our hosts. I am glad that the Emirates have joined other Arab states to resist ISIL. We are all right to help Iraq, the Kurdish Regional Government and the Kurds of Syria to defend themselves. We should, however, beware unforeseen harm. Each civilian killed and each house destroyed will turn hearts and minds against the coalition for peace.

We should learn from the failures of Israel in its wars in Lebanon and in Gaza. Nearly all agree that it is right to rescue Iraq, the KRG, and the refugees and displaced people. The Syrian Kurds had attacked no one. They now face ISIL's heavier weapons. I have already argued that the Syrian Kurds should have arms for self-defence and our air support. Legal niceties should not stop their having real protection, as several noble Lords have already indicated.

Containment of ISIL is the first point and will almost certainly need support from the land forces of neighbour states. Armed might alone will not defeat ISIL. Better ideas will be far more important than bombs. Here I agree very strongly with the most reverend Primate the Archbishop of Canterbury. In the Emirates, my colleagues and I saw creative ideas being put into practice: ideas for what to do when oil stops polluting the world; plans for sustainable cities, using new and old technologies; ideas for training the unemployed youth of the Middle East.

Europe and America should use extreme care when speaking about Islam in general and about acts of terror in particular. ISIL must be defeated in people's imagination. In the Emirates we saw signs that the Arab world can regain its self-confidence. If these bear fruit, a new Arab civilisation could rise. Wahhabi ideology and Shia sectarian behaviour are both probably bankrupt. Personal dignity and human development for the common good are the kinds of ideas that will—

Baroness Stowell of Beeston: I beg the noble Lord's pardon, but it might be in everyone's interest if we were sure that the loudspeaker had stopped so that we can hear the noble Lord's contribution. I wonder whether it has stopped; I cannot hear it at moment. We are safe to continue.

Lord Hylton: Well, my Lords, I conclude by saying that positive ideas will be crucial during the containment phase to rebuild Iraq, Syria and Palestine anew. Corruption and old-style dictatorships have no answers to those problems.

1.13 pm

Lord Sterling of Plaistow (Con): My Lords, this debate is to decide whether to use hard power to destroy an utterly ruthless and evil regime, the like of which has hardly ever been known before. We cannot wait. Every day this evil grows and comes closer and becomes more threatening and ever stronger. It goes without saying that such an ideology will not be destroyed overnight, so containment must be the first objective. We must ensure that the United Nations' vote to restrain various forms of support for this evil regime does not sink back to being just a lot of hot air. Countries and organisations that renege on these undertakings must be heavily sanctioned and publicly shamed. We must be ruthless in how we handle such events.

ISIS is a spreading malignant cancer. Treating just part of the body may be the result of a politically acceptable compromise on strike options, tidily restricted to Iraq, but we should not forget how this will be viewed by our wider-thinking, stronger partner, the United States of America. Like cancer treatment, military options need to be militarily coherent, not globalised.

Once Parliament has made its decision, the Executive and our highly able Armed Forces must be allowed to get on with the job. We are most fortunate in having highly professional and enlightened commanders at the helm and a Secretary of State for Defence with a strong reputation for common sense and political courage. The public are ready to support action, although they must be prepared for civilian casualties. The people over there have no hesitation whatever to embed with civilians, and under air attacks I am afraid there will be many, many casualties.

Sadly, last year, and most recently over Scotland, the United Kingdom has lost some of its influence and standing on the international scene, but I believe that the Prime Minister is rapidly regaining that ground. It is essential that it is remembered that this country's history has always been about the creation and protection of world trade and the freedom that that brings. Our present long-term foreign policy is unchanged. In my view, an announcement by the Prime Minister that very substantial moneys a year will be made available to enhance our military fire power in defence of the realm will unquestionably make the strong international statement as to the long-term role of this country in playing its part towards peace.

1.16 pm

Lord Hutton of Furness (Lab): My Lords, I strongly support the actions that have been proposed by Her Majesty's Government to deal with the growing security crisis in Iraq, and I am delighted that my Front Bench has today issued its unequivocal support for that policy.

The growing crisis in Iraq certainly has a direct material effect on our own security here in the UK; it certainly affects the security of our regional friends and allies. In fact, it affects the security of our growing coalition of international partners who are mobilising to deal with this serious threat. Of course, the principal responsibility for restoring the territorial integrity of Iraq rests with the Iraqi Government, but we know that Iraqi ground forces and their allies the Kurds will take time to regroup and to regather their strength to push back the so-called Islamic State. If we are today considering simply the issue of air power, it is worth bearing in mind—and all of us should remember—that the Iraqis do not have an air force. If the key thing is now for us to find time to build that resilience to deal with Islamic State, the use of air power is a perfectly reasonable, proportionate and—above all else—legal response to the crisis that our friends and allies in the region face. I have absolutely no doubt about the legal basis for this action. I have heard my noble and learned friend Lord Goldsmith, and others, talk about this, and I am completely satisfied. I am also completely willing to trust the decisions that our military commanders will make in deploying the formidable weapon that the Tornado represents. I have seen at first hand, as have all my noble friends who have occupied the role of Defence Secretary, the care and diligence that our commanders exercise when identifying targets and deploying military force to deal with them.

We have had some great speeches today and I do not want to go over the points that many others have made. I just want to make two final points. First, our concern today has been with the use of air power. It is inevitable, however, that in future, concern will be about the ground campaign. If we succeed in pushing back ISIS—I very much hope that we will—it will be incredibly important that the space that will then be liberated is not occupied by the Shia battalions and Shia regiments that the Iraqi Government have been raising in Iraq. We have to find a way together to rebuild the relationship between the Sunni and Shia community in Iraq. Maliki recklessly and criminally squandered the enormous gains that the Sunni awakening created in 2006-07. He frittered that away in pursuit of a sectarian agenda in Iraq and we are rueing the consequences of that today. We must work with the Iraqis and all of those people of good will in the region to re-establish that broad base.

Secondly, it is inevitable if we take this action—I have no doubt that later today we will be involved—we will have to rethink our position on Syria. I say that with a lot of trepidation and concern. Operating in Syrian airspace presents a unique and dangerous hazard for coalition aircraft. We should never lose sight of the fact that the Syrian air defence system is manned and operated by Russians. It would mean coalition aircraft coming into direct conflict with Russian military forces

on the ground; we should not forget that. However, we should also do what we need to do to win this campaign. There is precious little point in starting this if we are not as a nation and as a coalition prepared to take whatever steps are necessary to win.

The so-called Islamic State presents a mortal hazard to our civilization, its values and humanity; so we should keep all the options open; that means all of the options. It is important that we go into this with our eyes open, as many have said, including my noble friend Lord Browne, who echoed the concerns. We should not rule out the deployment, if necessary, of UK ground forces to support our allies in the region. I hope that it does not come to that but it would be a great mistake to signal to our enemy in advance the limits that we are prepared to place now on the sort of support that we might be prepared to give to our allies in the region. We have to win this campaign and do whatever is necessary to destroy the evil that the so-called Islamic State represents.

1.21 pm

Lord Williams of Baglan (CB): My Lords, it was against a background of extraordinary danger and profound crisis in the Middle East that it was heartening to see one important diplomatic breakthrough this week: the meeting in New York on Wednesday in the margins of the UN between the Prime Minister David Cameron and President Rouhani of Iran—the first high-level meeting involving heads of government of our two countries since the revolution of 1979, some 35 years ago. The Prime Minister is to be applauded for that initiative. Any enduring solution to the conflicts in Syria and Iraq will be impossible without Iran's involvement. More urgently, we must explore what assistance Iran can lend in the battle ahead of us with ISIS, and in the long run in finding a solution to Syria's bitter civil war, now in its fourth year. I should be grateful if the Minister could shed any further light on the Prime Minister's meeting in New York. We need more diplomacy, not less diplomacy.

The Motion under debate in the other House—preparing for possible military action against ISIS—is certainly one that I can support. However, it specifically does not endorse air strikes in Syria, even though the threat from ISIS ignores national boundaries, and the United States and six Arab countries have already been engaged in military action in both Iraq and Syria for several days. Moreover, it is above all in Syria where ISIS poses the most immediate danger. It was in Syria that a British hostage, as well as two US hostages, were murdered.

Last Saturday, 20 September, some 67,000 Syrian Kurdish refugees fled Syria because of attacks from ISIS—in one day. By Monday, that number had reached 150,000. It is clear then that ISIS is carrying out the same ethnic cleansing in Syria that it undertook earlier in Iraq when it removed Christians and Yazidis from villages where they had been settled for centuries. It is also in Syria that the United States has publicly identified a new terrorist threat, which it has referred to as the Khorasan group. I would welcome a comment from the Minister on that.

In truth of course it is impossible to separate the actions of ISIS in Syria and Iraq. This debate is entitled, “The developments in Iraq”. In truth, it should be, “The developments with regard to ISIS”, wherever ISIS exists. While the actions of Gulf countries in supporting military action are to be commended, it is equally true, as President Obama suggested in his speech in New York on Wednesday, that the funding supporting ISIS needs to be cut off. Ironically, as he hinted, much of that funding is coming from the very same countries now involved in military action. Difficult though it is, they must be encouraged through very active diplomacy by the UK, the US and others to take drastic action if we are to eliminate ISIS.

We also need to recognise that much of the alienation of the Sunnis of Iraq stems from their treatment by the highly sectarian regime of Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki. I know that there is now a new Government but I think that Sunni Arabs are keeping a judgment on that Government. In Syria and Iraq, ruthless dictatorships have given way to a new tyranny which does not recognise national borders and which, through its active recruitment among some British Muslims, poses a direct threat to the security of this country. Given that this is unlikely to dissipate in the near future, can the Minister—here I echo the noble Lord, Lord Carlile—indicate where this leaves the Government’s Prevent strategy?

For today, the issue before us is military action with regard to Iraq, but for the future of the Middle East, and indeed our country, we must be looking more and more to diplomatic and political actions which will complement the military action that will be before us.

1.26 pm

Baroness Morris of Bolton (Con): My Lords, 392 days ago, following the vote not to intervene militarily in Syria, my right honourable friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer said in a BBC interview:

“I hope this doesn’t become a moment when we turn our back on all of the world’s problems”.

I think that Parliament was right in the decision it took in August last year, but taking that decision did not in any way negate our responsibility to play a full and constructive role in securing a more tolerant and peaceful world; nor did it mean that Britain had made the decision to turn her back and simply ignore what was happening elsewhere. So it is that we find ourselves recalled on another Friday to address a situation in the Middle East which is truly shocking in its proportion and horrifying in its brutality and from which no corner of our world is safe.

I declare my interests as set out in the register, especially as chairman of the Conservative Middle East Council, CMEC. Last week, a small CMEC delegation went to Erbil to analyse the realities on the ground. Its conclusion, published in a short pamphlet, *Towards a New Iraq?*, is that a political solution to Iraq’s current crisis must dictate the terms of any military engagement and that ISIS can be defeated in Iraq only by a local Sunni force. However, that force needs a clear incentive, otherwise it will fail. Such an incentive would include guarantees about the status of the Sunni population in Iraq and would likely involve

devolving powers to the Sunni areas along the same lines as Kurdish regional autonomy. It would also have to be fully implemented and agreed by Erbil and Baghdad.

The role of the Arab nations is crucial in the defeat of ISIS, and I applaud their resolution and commitment in doing so. While the West may have the world’s most overwhelming firepower, in this conflict it must lead from behind and allow Arab states to lead the region’s Islamic community in rejecting the grotesque perversions of the so-called Islamic State.

However, where the West should lead from the front, supported by the wealthier Arab states, is in shouldering the burden of humanitarian relief. The consequences of hundreds of thousands of refugees from this conflict and the troubles in Syria are in themselves a gravely destabilising factor in the neighbouring countries—I think in particular of Jordan—which so selflessly open their borders to the frightened and dispossessed.

We must also ensure that young Muslims in this country have no excuse to rally to the flag of the extremists because they perceive the West to have double standards. Our message has to be clear: this is not a war with Islam; this is a fight for the dignity, freedom and identity of Iraq and her people.

I had the pleasure of visiting Iraqi Kurdistan exactly two years ago. I found it to be a haven of tolerance and tranquillity in a region that was reeling from political turmoil. Before the bloody regime of Saddam Hussein smashed up Kurdish villages and slaughtered the inhabitants, there had peacefully coexisted in this region mosques, churches and synagogues. There are too few places in this troubled world of ours where people can feel comfortable with their own identity while accepting the differences of others. Those places, those people and those values are worth fighting for.

1.30 pm

Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean (Lab): My Lords, I, too, support the Government’s position. I do so, first, because I believe that there is a real threat to the United Kingdom, to our people here in this country, and to the many innocent British citizens overseas, as we have witnessed all too graphically in the hideously cruel murders that have been committed. Secondly, I support the Government because of the humanitarian threat that ISIS poses in the Middle East region. There is of course the direct threat to Muslims in the region who do not share the repellent views of ISIS, and we have evidence of that in the recent massacres of peaceful villagers in Iraq. We have also seen that evidence in the murders of Christians who are at risk in every area where this group operates. We have seen men and boys abducted and killed without any mercy, and we have seen women being sold as sex slaves, subject to rape and other forms of sexual violation, including mutilation. The attitude of this group towards women is breathtakingly brutal and degrading. Thirdly, I offer my support because we have been asked to do so by the democratic and legitimate Government of Iraq and because, as has been so clearly set out by my noble and learned friends Lord Falconer and Lord Goldsmith, such action is legal.

[BARONESS SYMONS OF VERNHAM DEAN]

But any Government seeking to take action to deploy our Armed Forces have the responsibility to do so where there is a reasonable chance of success, so we have a responsibility to ask ourselves this: will the proposed action work? First, will it work without ground troops? Yes, of course we can degrade ISIS to a certain extent, but as my noble friend Lord Reid asked, will bombing alone win us the peace? Secondly, will it work without engagement in Syria? Will not the murderous ISIS group in Iraq simply regroup in Syria, consolidate and carry on, as suggested by the noble Lord, Lord Williams of Baglan?

In opening this debate, the Leader of the House said that the House of Commons would meet again to discuss any proposed action in Syria, so will the noble and learned Lord, Lord Wallace of Tankerness, undertake to assure us that the House of Lords will also have the opportunity for such a debate before finalising any decision to intervene in Syria. Further, can he tell us what happened at the UN as regards forming a wider coalition? What is the position of China, India and Russia, and probably most crucially of all, what does he anticipate the position of Turkey will be? Turkey has the second largest military forces in NATO and has lengthy borders with Iraq and Syria. Its position on this issue is crucial.

I, too, will raise the question put by the noble Lord, Lord Williams of Baglan. ISIS has commanded huge resources. Yes, it certainly robbed banks in northern Iraq and diverted oil funding, and it also possibly secured funding from elsewhere. Can the noble and learned Lord, Lord Wallace, tell the House what the international community is doing to choke off any future funding for this group?

Finally, I wish we had a different way of referring to this group. ISIS is neither Islamic nor is it a state. By implication we justify its existence when using its own terminology, and I hope that we will find a different way to refer to this murderous group.

1.34 pm

Lord Avebury (LD): My Lords, I strongly support the Government's decision to join the air strikes against the IS in response to Iraq's request for military help and the logistical help that we are giving to the forces of the Kurdish Regional Government in northern Iraq. I would like to see that extended and expanded, particularly in view of the threat against the Kurdish Regional Government in the area bordering on Turkey, to which the noble Baroness has just referred. I also support the longer term objective of working closely with our allies to drive back, dismantle and, ultimately, destroy ISIL and "what it stands for", to quote the Prime Minister. If we do not eradicate ISIL, or the ISIL "cancer", as the noble Lord, Lord Sterling, described it, it will metastasize across the world. The fact that 500 young men are reported to have travelled from the UK alone to join the terrorists should be a wake-up call to those who believe that the problems can be solved by limited military action against the so-called caliphate.

ISIL is committed to extending its particular brand of 7th-century fundamentalism across the whole world. Its agenda is to eliminate the Shia and other varieties

of Islam, as well as the kafirs, or unbelievers, from the face of the earth. The Government need to spell out how they consider that the international community should fight this criminal ideology. Air strikes, as I think it is agreed by your Lordships, are not sufficient in themselves to remove a determined enemy from control of territory. Infantry and armour are needed to occupy the ground. In the case of Syria, that has to mean the Syrian Armed Forces, which are well equipped and trained by the Russians. Have there been any discussions with Russia about joining in the coalition against ISIL? Sergey Lavrov, the Russian Foreign Minister, has said that they have no intention of joining in the air strikes, but he also said that they had warned the West about terrorists and extremists in Syria—so perhaps they are prepared to take some other action in support of the coalition's work in eliminating ISIL from Syria itself.

It would also be useful to hear more about the discussion that the Prime Minister had with President Rouhani of Iran in New York earlier this month. Apparently, they agreed that ISIL posed a threat to the whole region and that more should be done to cut off support for the terrorists, but what specific role would Iran be prepared to play in eliminating ISIL? It is a rabidly Sunni organisation and, when it captured Mosul, it murdered 670 Shia prisoners, as well as hundreds of Shia Yazidis in Nineveh, according to the UN Human Rights Commissioner, Navi Pillay.

Turkey has a different reason for joining the coalition. If the ISIL forces take the city of Kobane, there might be an influx of several hundred thousand more Kurdish refugees into Turkey and, of course, a large extension of the frontier between Turkey and the terrorists. That would be an intolerable situation, allowing the terrorists access through Turkey to Europe, and it must be prevented.

1.38 pm

Lord Anderson of Swansea (Lab): My Lords, I follow the conclusions of the noble Lord, Lord Jay—to support the resolution but to do so with one's eyes open. I also try to follow the application of just war principles, spoken of by my noble friend Lord Hunt, to the problems before us, including adopting his position on just cause. Again, is military intervention the last resort when all other means have been exhausted? There is no doubt about the evil nature of ISIL. I submit that there is no doubt that there is no negotiating with them; they are so confident in their principles that they will not seriously negotiate. But not all their fighters are extremists—and here come the diplomatic means. Think of the success of the United States among the Sunni tribes in the "Anbar Awakening". Those same Sunni tribal leaders were marginalised by the al-Maliki leadership and turned into opponents. They must be won back. Thus, in my judgment, the test of last resort has been satisfied. Similarly, the coalition has sought to minimise civilian casualties and to use proportionate means. The problem is that ISIL has embedded itself among the civil population.

Is there a good chance of success? Everyone recognises that air power alone is insufficient; it can degrade the military and communication infrastructure but defeat

implies a winning of hearts and minds. Here we need to examine very carefully the wise words of the most reverend Primate the Archbishop of Canterbury: religion must be met with religion, and religious leaders should get together so that we can counter the young men with a cause who are ready to die for that cause and who also have much sympathy in the Arab world, as we saw in recent public opinion polls in Saudi Arabia and even Iraq. The question arises: what can we expect from regional players such as Saudi Arabia? Of course, those Wahhabist doctrines have inspired much of ISIL. How committed will Turkey become?

Finally, on the just war criteria, intervention must be based on international law. We have had the weighty opinions of my noble and learned friends Lord Falconer and Lord Goldsmith. There is no question about the legality of intervention in Iraq. Syria is a very different problem. I found the reasoning in yesterday's *Financial Times* editorial wholly unconvincing. It asserted that:

"The strong Arab presence confers a legitimacy on the operation".

It is surely absurd to argue that if a number of neighbours support intervention, that is sufficient legal justification. It is unrealistic to separate Syria from Iraq, as the noble Lord, Lord Williams, argued. After all, the jihadists have their bases in Syria; they have erased the frontiers. What about the responsibility to protect? That is a new doctrine, embryonic but worth examining.

In conclusion, my judgment is that, yes, we are in a very turbulent period. A year ago we were considering bombing Assad. Now, *cui bono*, we propose to bomb Assad's enemies and help him and, indeed, Iran. Turkey allowed jihadists through its long and porous frontier. Now it receives an increasing number of refugees from Syria. If ISIL is to be defeated, surely Iran cannot for long be excluded from the discussions.

Above all, the questions raised by the noble Lord, Lord Jay, argue for caution. But if we ask, "What if?", we should also ask, "What if not?". What if we do not join in the bombing? We would certainly lose credibility with our friends in the Gulf. We would certainly diminish ourselves in the eyes of our NATO allies and reduce our role in the world. But if the intervention escalates incrementally, will the Government give an assurance that at each stage both Houses of Parliament will be consulted?

1.43 pm

Lord Ramsbotham (CB): My Lords, 100 years ago those who responded to the appeal for help from Belgium did so quite rightly but embarked this country on a future with unknown global consequences. I feel that today, in quite rightly responding to the request from Iraq, the Government are again launching the country towards more or less unknown global consequences. But we can do something to condition those. I am very glad that the phrase "keeping your eyes open" has been used by so many people in their distinguished contributions to this debate. I particularly single out my noble friend Lord Williams of Baglan for his applause for the Prime Minister's meeting with the Iranian President.

Thinking around my general agreement with what is being proposed, I would just like to share two observations and one plea. I am one of those—as a

soldier, your Lordships would expect me to be—who are concerned about the automatic suggestion that air power is the answer to all these things. Air power is a means and not an end. We do not think of using air power, for example, to counter ISIL in England. We think of all the other organisations. I regret the use of the phrase "boots on the ground" because "boots" implies military boots. In fact, as the most reverend Primate mentioned, we need not just military but also ideological, diplomatic, educational, social, humanitarian and other boots on the ground if we are to counter anything like ISIS or ISIL or whatever it is called. In relation to where this combat is being fought, those who abolished the Iraqi army and police must be regretting their decision.

Secondly, like the noble Lord, Lord Reid, I appeal for a grand strategy. I hope that the Government will produce one in time to condition next year's strategic defence review, which must include the ability of our Armed Forces to continue not only whatever campaign is mounted against ISIL but also whatever is intended in the future if we are again to come to the help of our friends who ask for help.

My one plea relates to a body which I was very privileged to be invited to join by Kofi Annan, then the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping, in 1993. Following the first coalition in the first Iraq war, which consisted of Egypt, Syria, Pakistan and the mujaheddin from Afghanistan, among 51 others, he assembled a group of six force commanders from recent United Nations operations and an American general. We were asked to write down what improvements could be made to the management of chapter 7 peacekeeping operations under United Nations auspices. The first and obvious thing was that there must be a nominated force commander. Without a force commander who can determine such things as what intelligence is required, what forces are required, what programme of operations should be conducted, relationships with non-governmental organisations and so on, you do not get anywhere. While people talk about a coalition—I absolutely applaud the idea of that, particularly if it contains Arab countries—you cannot launch a military coalition to do anything like that without putting someone very firmly in its command.

1.47 pm

Lord Marlesford (Con): My Lords, I am glad that the Government are proposing to strengthen our homeland security. There is much that can be done. Indeed, I have been urging certain actions, which have become much more relevant now, on the Government for many years. Part of today's problem stems from western naivety to the Arab spring and, as has been mentioned, the longstanding hypocrisy to the cruel Wahhabi theocracy in Saudi Arabia. I believe that we have been on the wrong side over Syria from the start. A number of noble Lords have questioned whether it is sensible for the new military strategy—I can see why at the moment it has to be so—to be confined to Iraq.

Egypt, the largest Arab nation, is central to the problem we face and perhaps is a key to its resolution. In February and in June, I was part of two all-party groups to Egypt and we met President el-Sisi, as he

[LORD MARLESFORD]

now is, on both occasions. We met him for two and a half hours on the first occasion and for an hour and a half on the second. Two days ago, President el-Sisi, in a notable speech to the UN, said:

“Our aim is to build a ‘New Egypt’ ... A state that respects and enforces the rule of law, guarantees freedom of opinion for all and ensures freedom of belief and worship to its people. A state that is determined to achieve growth, prosperity, and a promising future that meets the aspirations of its people”.

That is a notable aim for a secular state with democratic characteristics—a noble aim, but one that is hard to achieve.

I understand that President el-Sisi had a productive meeting with Prime Minister Cameron in New York this week. We need to follow that up. I suggest that arrangements be made for President el-Sisi to visit London with some of his colleagues at an early date for detailed discussions with Prime Minister Cameron and other British leaders and experts on how the UK can help to build the new Egypt.

The Egyptian economy is crucial and it needs massive restructuring. Egypt needs technical help on how to do this, particularly on reducing the distorting subsidies and on producing an equitable tax system on which the Egyptian business community must support President el-Sisi. Egypt has shown that the first priority should be to replace theocracy with secular government. Let us hope that President el-Sisi turns out to be an Atatürk for his country. Theocracy is not only the antithesis of democracy but, when based on political Islam, can lead to the cruel and uncompromising dictatorship represented by ISIS.

1.51 pm

Baroness Ramsay of Cartvale (Lab): My Lords, it is with an enormous sense of *déjà-vu* that I speak yet again in this House about taking military action involving Iraq. Iraq first came into my life in 1990 with the invasion of Kuwait when I was in government service. It took over every waking moment of my life for more than a year. I learnt more about the horrific regime of Saddam than I ever wanted to know, before, during and after what has become known as the first Gulf War. I know, as did many others at the time, that we stopped at least 48 hours too early in that war. It was the soldiers’ decision of Colin Powell and Norman Schwarzkopf, which was left to them by George Bush senior; we did not need to go to Baghdad but just stay in the south and let the Shia, rising already at our encouragement, get rid of Saddam. Because of that, the agony and slaughter of the Shia and the Marsh Arabs that followed was awful and leaves us all with bloodstained hands. To this day, it is why the Shia of Iraq will never trust the British or the Americans.

Our next military intervention was in 1998. Yet again, we missed an opportunity to depose Saddam. Then came 2003. I said then, many times, that military action against Saddam was politically, legally and morally the right thing to do and I do not resile from one word that I said in this House and elsewhere. I will not rehearse the reasons for all of those things now because there is not time and they are all in *Hansard* anyway. But I want to make one point: ISIL is not a

result of anything that happened in 2003. It is the harvest that we are reaping for not having armed the secular rebels in Syria at the beginning of the troubles there.

I have two points to make about action against ISIL now. First, there is talk about needing to have a UN Security Council resolution if we expand our activities outside of Iraq. I say only this to the Government, as a lifelong supporter and enthusiast for the UN: please do not get too hung up on getting another UN Security Council resolution. They are not brought down a mountain like holy writ: there is nothing holy about the UN Security Council if you think about its composition.

No one now questions Tony Blair’s actions in Sierra Leone and in Kosovo, both of which were taken without a UN Security Council resolution. In 2003, we had 16 UN Security Council resolutions, all under Chapter VII, which enable you to use military force to achieve them, and then we could not get the 17th. Everyone screamed that it was bad to be illegal and then called the 17th the second, which confused everything.

If I sound less than enthusiastic about what the Government are proposing, that is because, I have to say, I am a bit underwhelmed: it is not as much as I would have wanted, it is later than I would have wanted and it does not have the scope I would have wanted. Having said that, it is better than nothing.

1.55 pm

Lord Alton of Liverpool (CB): My Lords, since March 2011 more than 150,000 people have died in Syria, 6.2 million people have been displaced and there are currently more than 1 million children who are refugees. Thanks to the depredations of ISIL, added to that number are 1.8 million people who have been displaced in Iraq. That clearly cannot be left unchecked. However, it would be hard to imagine that a campaign of aerial bombardment alone would make that dire situation any better. That is why this House is right to caution that we must proceed with our eyes wide open and that we need a comprehensive strategy.

We must be particularly wary of the law of unintended consequences, especially by providing cover for the Assad regime to consolidate its position. Only yesterday it boasted that it had seized back a number of villages, while our eyes were on ISIL. There can be little doubt, as we attack ISIL command centres, that its insurgents will hide in civilian settings. Every time a cruise or Brimstone missile hits the wrong target and kills non-combatants, yet more fighters will be radicalised and recruited to its cause.

However brave and better armed the Kurdish Peshmerga and Free Syrian Army may be—we had better hope, this time, the arms we provide do not fall into the hands of ISIL—endless airstrikes and drone warfare will not achieve our objectives. We must be wary of the danger of assuming that the old proverb, “The enemy of my enemy is my friend” is true, especially in the case of countries such as Iran.

By definition, military action cannot kill ideas or beliefs. As the most reverend Primate the Archbishop of Canterbury intimated in his remarks earlier, our

central task must be to convince Muslim-majority societies that their own interests demand toleration of minorities and the equality and freedom of people of other faiths.

In the immediate situation in which we find ourselves, we should recall the successful initiative of Sir John Major in 1991 of creating a United Nations safe haven and no-fly zone, which safeguarded the Kurds. We again need to protect them, the Yazidis, Christians and other minorities who now, as refugees, face another enemy: the fast-approaching winter. As the noble Baroness, Lady Symons, said, we must urgently dry up the sources of ISIL revenue, which, from the sale of oil, antiquities and hostage ransoms, has acquired reserves of more than \$1 billion—some of which, paradoxically, are derived from sources in Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

We must deal more effectively with those insurgents entering the region, hundreds of whom are from the United Kingdom. In the debate we had in February I mentioned the story of a young man who studied mechanical engineering at the University of Liverpool, went out to fight alongside jihadists and was killed in action there. Sadly, there are hundreds more like him who have gone to Syria. In that same debate, I asked that those leading and fighting for ISIL, and others committing crimes against humanity in the region, be referred to the International Criminal Court or a specially established regional court to hold to account all those charged with what the Prime Minister described on Wednesday as crimes “literally medieval in character”. I hope the noble and learned Lord, Lord Wallace of Tankerness, will address that point specifically in his reply.

Upholding the rule of law may not bring the dramatic results of aerial bombardment, but it is a surer way to demonstrate the nature of a civilised society. It was Einstein who defined insanity as doing the same thing over and over while expecting different results. In dealing with ISIL, we risk doing the same things all over again and getting the same chaotic results.

1.59 pm

Lord Morris of Aberavon (Lab): My Lords, this country has a long-standing tradition of support for the United Nations, which we helped to create in San Francisco in 1945. The only aberration was the Suez fiasco. Unfortunately, the founding fathers never contemplated that, because of the power of the veto, the charter could become unworkable. Article 2.4 prohibits the intentional use of force except for self-defence or with the authority of the UN Security Council. Self-defence is an elastic proposition, and we are told that the Attorney-General has given his opinion that the prohibition on the use of force by one state in the territory of another does not apply if the territorial state so requests or consents. That, in my view, is beyond argument.

Apart from the practical considerations of one country in the alliance carrying out attacks at the same time on another country—Syria, which has not consented—are there any limitations on the doctrine? How far do we go, and for how long? Is it to be the two or three years being contemplated by the Defence Secretary? Did the Attorney-General qualify his opinion at all? We have seen only a summary of his legal

opinion. Given that so much is at stake, there is in my view a case for breaking with precedent and being taken into the Government's confidence, particularly if the Attorney-General has indicated any limits to our actions.

In his article in the *Daily Telegraph*, the Prime Minister wrote that we should send our armies “to fight or occupy”. Perhaps I may say that they were not very well considered remarks, and neither was the reference to the use of all our resources, including “military prowess”, although he may well have rethought that one. I am glad that for now we are not considering Syria. The legal considerations might well be different. It would hardly be self-defence and would certainly not be an intervention at the invitation of a host country. It would more likely be intervention to avoid “an overwhelming humanitarian disaster”, or unless we obtain an appropriate UN Security Council resolution, which seems very unlikely.

At Attorney-General, I had the responsibility at the time of Kosovo to provide a legal basis for participation in bombing raids by NATO countries. For more than 60 days I ensured on a daily basis—or usually nightly—that on this country's part we had to consider and agree that each raid was carried out in accordance with the Geneva conventions. I hope very much that, in this present matter of attacks in Iraq, the Attorney-General will play an equally important and constant role to ensure that the Geneva conventions are adhered to. For our actions in Kosovo, which were to avert what I believed, and what was generally agreed by the United Nations, to be an overwhelming humanitarian disaster, I set out particularly detailed considerations. I shall summarise them. First, there was convincing evidence of need. Secondly, there was no practical alternative. Thirdly, it was necessary and proportionate, which means that it was the minimum necessary.

In his opinion on Syria last year, Mr Dominic Grieve QC MP agreed word for word with my particular considerations, and I am grateful. However, we did not see the whole opinion, we saw only the summary, and I wonder whether he suggested to the Cabinet that this particular doctrine was still developing and capable of challenge. I was challenged. I was taken to the International Court of Justice along with nine other countries, and I led for the United Kingdom. At the time Yugoslavia, which was suing, fortunately failed for other reasons. All I am saying is that this particular route would not be without difficulties, and very different considerations would apply to what we are now considering as regards Iraq.

2.04 pm

The Lord Bishop of Derby: My Lords, I invite us to think for a moment about the role of government in the wider strategy. A number of noble Lords have pointed out that this is not just a military issue; it is about religious and political matters. We might just note that some of us in a liberal society are in danger of separating religious and political issues. These are mixed up, but we need to look at them together.

With regard to ISIS, we have to be very careful about using wild language, as we have been reminded. Politicians in America talk about eradication as though

[THE LORD BISHOP OF DERBY]

it is some kind of disease that a scientific approach can get rid of. As my colleague the most reverend Primate the Archbishop of Canterbury said, it is a very complex international issue. It will not be eradicated; it is about a difference of views about what the good life is.

At least 20, probably more, people from Derby, where I work, are fighting in this conflict. However, your Lordships may or may not be aware that besides fighters, there is also an appeal from ISIS for medics, teachers and people to help build what they think is a good society that might challenge the decadence that they see in our society. Besides the current military need, we have to engage with the debate about what a good society is from the ingredients of politics and religion. We have to contribute to that together if we are to stem this tide and create a safer world to live in. That is why, as has already been said in this debate, the Prevent strategy is so limited. It is negative about chasing problems. We need to be much more proactive about facilitating a discussion about, and exploration of, the good life among people of different faiths and different political persuasions.

In Derby this weekend there is an event called Getting Our Minds Right. It is for young Muslims to explore what truth means within Islam. There will be conversations between faith leaders and between faith leaders and political leaders in our city. Of course we have to confront the aggression and probably use force to control it, but this is only the tip of the iceberg. As the most reverend Primate the Archbishop of Canterbury said so eloquently, the real question is: how are we going to engage with this debate between religions and between political perspectives about what a good life looks like? How can we explore that with people of different perspectives, and how can we give a message here and internationally through our contacts that that is not just possible but vital and not put all our eggs in the basket of military aggression?

2.07 pm

Lord Foulkes of Cumnock (Lab): My Lords, like almost all who have spoken today, apart from, I think, the noble Baroness, Lady Falkner, and the noble Marquess, Lord Lothian, I support the Government in this. However, I hope that I can be excused if I also say how glad I am that we embark upon this mission as a United Kingdom. I am sure I am not the only one here who is relieved that we can do this without the preoccupation and problems of breaking up this United Kingdom. Instead, we are proceeding together to tackle an ideology that threatens our common values and our way of life both north and south of the border.

I do, however, want to raise two specific concerns. First, while I absolutely accept the necessity of this action as part of our strategy, it is not sufficient, for at the heart of ISIS's recent success is the understandable anger of a Sunni population excluded for so long by a largely Shia Administration. Such oppression has helped ISIS both to hold the majority of the areas that it holds and to attract new recruits. As a result, our objective of defeating ISIS will be hampered by its ability to hide among, and in some instances have

the explicit backing of, a Sunni population that understandably feels little incentive to side with a Government whom it perceives as hostile, especially when the other option is to defy a group known for its brutal treatment of civilian populations. Therefore, it is clear that it is an essential complement to military action that the Iraqi Government work to regain this lost trust, as others have said.

That brings me to my second concern, which is the potential of our actions in Iraq inadvertently to strengthen al-Qaeda's Syrian branch, Jabhat al-Nusra. If ISIS is notably weakened, both money and recruits are likely to be diverted to al-Qaeda, one of the group's territorial rivals in Syria and of course its main rival in global jihad. This, in turn, will increase the threat posed to the UK by domestic terrorism, for the uncomfortable reality is that al-Qaeda is more able and more focused on attacking the West even than ISIS.

That brings me to my conclusion. Military action cannot be avoided, but, as so many other people have said, we go into this with our eyes open, and that should make us realise that escalation, if not inevitable, is pretty likely. The road ahead is difficult and very dangerous. We are putting young men and women once again in great danger, and it would be wrong if we as a House did not say that we wished them well and looked forward to their safe return.

2.11 pm

Baroness Browning (Con): My Lords, the decision of a Member of Parliament to support a government Motion to send those young men and women just mentioned by the noble Lord, Lord Foulkes, into harm's way is probably the most difficult decision that any Member of Parliament will ever make. I see people in the Chamber today who, like me, have had to make that decision and have had to vote accordingly. Although I have no doubt at all that today's vote in another place will support the government Motion, it is quite right that we not only explore the bare bones of what we are asking of our Armed Forces in the government Motion today but, as many noble Lords have mentioned, look into the future as to where that is leading us, what we hope to obtain from it and what the outcome is likely to be. So I very much support the views that have been clearly made today to the Front Bench and the Government that this is not just a discrete decision but the beginning of something that will clearly last much longer and become more complicated. It will almost certainly involve Syria, and I am sure that before too long the Government will return with another Motion that will involve Syria.

I heard the noble Lord, Lord Ramsbotham, say that he does not like the term, "boots on the ground". I am not quite sure what term to use. But whether it is to involve the Army being deployed in a more traditional way or our special forces—and I must say to the Government that if it is to involve our special forces, I really do not want to read about it in the newspaper; it is bizarre that such stories appear—whatever is needed, the Government need to carry the confidence not only of Members of Parliament for future action but, of course, of the general public. The general public's mood seems to be very supportive of what is being

debated today. However, as a Member of Parliament I have seen that mood change. There will be casualties. One of the saddest events that I have attended is the funeral of a 19 year-old man killed in Iraq in the last war, buried with full military honours in a Devon cemetery. It concentrates the minds of Members of Parliament when they have to attend at those occasions. That is when they realise that it is their vote and their decision.

Although I agree that once the decision is made it is not for Members of Parliament to have a say in the minutiae—we do, of course, have to leave that in the Government's hands and those of the military—I want to give some wider thoughts to my noble friends on the Front Bench. I hope that we use all efforts at diplomacy to prepare for what is to come in future, not just what is before us today. There are countries with whom our relationships are more than strained, but that diplomacy has to reach out now to find out what the parameters of co-operation are. If that has to be with a long spoon, so be it. I refer particularly to countries such as Iran and Russia. I hope that that work is under way and will continue.

As for our security here at home, I hope that the Government will be robust. There is a very clear British interest to our homeland in what we are proposing today. Therefore it requires additional activity, particularly in the area of intelligence. I thoroughly support a review of Prevent and, I hope, the intelligence support that goes with it.

2.15 pm

Lord Desai (Lab): My Lords, in the previous three debates we have had on Middle Eastern issues, I have urged intervention every time. I also said that the question was not whether we should intervene but when, and that the more we delayed the decision the more difficult it would be when we did intervene. Here we are on the fourth go at the debate: we are going to intervene.

As many noble Lords have said, let us also be quite sure that what we are debating today is only the first step of a long process in getting there. There is absolutely no reason to expect a quick solution to such a difficult problem. Again, as we have discussed in the past, the Middle East has been in this crisis since roughly the middle of the 1970s—the past 40 years have been bloody in terms of wars between Iran and Iraq and various other conflicts. We were in Iraq in 1991 and again in 2003, and in the past three years Syria has exploded and all sorts of problems have happened.

Wars last a long time; they may have ebbs and flows. In the 17th century, wars of religion in Europe lasted 30 years. Our Civil War lasted for at least 25 years. Therefore, we should not expect a quick resolution but we should be clear that what we want to do in this particular phase of this war is to save Muslim lives. I very much want to say that there is a deep crisis in Muslim society as it is faced with modernity, and there has been for a long time. Right now, the most killing of Muslims by Muslims is taking place. Our first duty is humanitarian intervention to save those lives. Yes, there are dangers to us, and we are very much aware of them. However, we should convey

clearly that we are there to save Muslim lives. Unless we do that, we will be thought once again to be intervening from above and to be going away after our task is done. We should not do that. Let us have some patience this time. As the right reverend Prelate said, the young men and women who go over there from here are idealists. We have to remember that they go there because they feel that the life they have here does not satisfy their deeper urges. After all, young men and women went to fight in the Spanish Civil War; they were doing a similar thing.

We have to understand the dynamics of what these young men and women are doing and not just say immediately, “They are all terrorists and when they come back we will put them all in jail”. Let us understand where they come from and what they are trying to do. If we extend our understanding to both Muslim society at home and Muslim society in the Middle East, we shall be much more successful than we have been in the past.

2.18 pm

Baroness Hamwee (LD): My Lords, it seems to me that barbarism is not necessarily unsophisticated or uncalculated. Can we be sure that what so appals us is not in part calculated to provoke a response so that we can be accused of escalating the crisis? Our military intervention may be laser-like and surgical—like others, I am not wholly confident of this—but it may be that the brutality is both more sophisticated in its psychology and more carefully targeted than we have given it credit for.

My reason for speaking is, like others, to urge at least as much focus on something more positive, and to focus not just on the military response but on encouraging those who might be tempted to fight for idealistic reasons not to do so. I deliberately put that as a positive, not a negative, like the right reverend Prelate. I also urge that we should encourage those who have joined in jihadism back from that path, and welcome them back.

Of course, I am aware of the dangers in our own country. I am not, I hope, completely naive. I think I can confidently say that, since the Home Secretary on Wednesday attended a Making a Stand event with Muslim women. No one would suggest that she is naive. Idealism is indeed a powerful motivator. My parents had a friend who went to Spain and died there. However, there must be as many young men and women in the Middle East who are very much regretting their decision. I heard it put that many must be thinking, “Sod this for lark, I want to get back to uni and study botany”. I mention the laser-like application of air strikes—that is the aspiration—but some young Muslims complain of feeling targeted in a discriminatory way by the Prevent strategy. We cannot say too often that we know that “not in my name” applies to all but a very few Muslims. As they are very targeted indeed, I instinctively support the one-to-one programmes to challenge and mentor, which I understand the Channel strand of Prevent aims to do.

Perhaps I should mention, without expanding on it, the need to support Turkey, both for humanitarian reasons and for its own stability. It is not only a NATO partner but potentially an EU partner.

[BARONESS HAMWEE]

I come back to my theme. Air strikes in Iraq may be surgical but I hope that we can apply the healing aspects of surgery at home in the UK.

2.21 pm

Lord Bilimoria (CB): My Lords, a year ago we were recalled and virtually every one of us who spoke in the debate said that we should not intervene in Syria. Today it is exactly the opposite way around, in that just about everybody is saying that we should intervene this time, and we have had the legal justification.

The question that I ask is: why are we doing this so late? Why are we doing this half-cocked? Sixty nations are already there, including 10 Arab nations. Five Arab nations have already taken part in the air attacks, and we are late to the party. We have had one of our citizens—as have the Americans—brutally murdered by ISIL. The whole world has watched while the innocent Yazidis were terrorised and fleeing for their lives. Why have we taken so long? As we have heard time and again, why are we restricting this to Iraq? The polls from the public have overwhelmingly supported intervention in Iraq, but they also show that the public would support us if we intervened in Syria right now, as the Americans are doing. After all, ISIL has completely erased the Sykes-Picot line. Will the Minister assure us that as soon as is required—not, as one noble Lord said, in three years' time; I fear that it will be in a few months' time, or even a few weeks' time—we will consider intervening in Syria? We will probably need to.

Will the Government clarify that action will involve not just six Tornados from Cyprus but also the use of drones, ship-launched attacks, submarine-launched attacks and our best-of-the-best Special Forces? On the other hand, as I said last year, we have a Government who, in the 2010 SDSR, cut our defence capabilities. We still do not have aircraft carriers. We have a British Army that will not even fill Wembley Stadium. We are relying on reserves. Here we are, as we have been so many times since 2010, once again in a situation in which we need our brilliant Armed Forces—and we have been cutting them. Will the Minister confirm that the Government will stick to their commitment of a 2% of GDP spend on defence and nothing less, because we desperately need it?

The noble Lord, Lord Dannatt, and others spoke of the necessity to win this battle on the ground. Is it not sad that at the Battle of Mosul in June an Iraqi army of 20,000 was forced to flee by an ISIL force of 3,000? It was left to the Kurdish Peshmerga to hold the line. But we were there for so many years, supposedly training the Iraqi army. What went wrong? Did we not train it properly? My father was in the Indian army. I remember that when he was serving, the Indian army had a training team in Iraq for years, headed by a lieutenant-general. If we want to train, let us put our might behind training the Iraqis and the Peshmerga as well.

We need to invest in that capability because the ideology is dangerous. As the most reverend Primate said, it is deep. As His Holiness Pope Francis has said, we might be in the midst of a World War III. This is

not going to go away. This is very serious. If we are going to do this, we need to be with our allies. We need to be completely effective; we need to push forward, because we cannot rely on the UN. Once again, the UN has shown itself to be completely ineffective. Will the Government use this as another reason for a desperately needed reform of the UN?

In conclusion, we may have been late to the party but after today we will be at the table and we must go out there with full force, with a mission and very clear strategy to liberate the ISIL-controlled areas of Iraq and Syria from the evil of ISIL. I agree with the noble Baroness, Lady Symons, that ISIL is not Islamic; it is not a state. It is a group of medieval, barbaric monsters.

2.26 pm

Lord Hughes of Woodside (Lab): My Lords, I share the view of almost everyone in this House that we support the Government's resolution, which of course has the support of the Labour Opposition in the other place.

Some people have said in this debate that we must learn the lessons of the Iraq war of 2003. I agree. We have to make the correct analysis and provide the correct decisions. I am not at all ashamed to say that I supported the Iraq war of 2003. I thought it was right then and I still think it is right. The failure was not the intervention itself but the belief that once the yoke of Saddam had been lifted, the yearning for democracy would solve all the problems without any difficulty.

Of course, Iraq is not alone in this. With the collapse of the former Yugoslavia, the long-suppressed enmities suddenly erupted and people started to kill each other as though nothing had happened in the past. Of course, the same thing happened elsewhere, although perhaps not to such an extent. In Libya, where the West—if I can use the phrase “the West”—encouraged and, I might even say, connived in the downfall of Gaddafi, we were left with a fractured state. So it is not the interventions that cause the problem, it is the failure to decide what happens afterwards.

My noble friend Lord Reid of Cardowan asked a very important question: what is the strategy? I would pose two other questions: what will the strategy be and who will it involve? We all speak about Syria. Of course, defeating ISIL in Iraq is important. Defeating ISIL in Syria is important, but what will happen? Are we going in to support Assad? Thankfully, the rhetoric has mellowed, at least in this debate. You no longer hear the simple slogan in the gravelly voice of Mr Hague: “It is unacceptable that Assad remains head of Syria. Assad must go before there can be any solution”. We have to think beyond that. It is going to be very difficult because the ravenous media that we have want instant solutions. There needs to be a lot of thought on this. We do not want to repeat the mistake of defeating ISIL but what do we do then? Do we support a new rebel group against Assad? Will that lead to any greater peace? I think not.

These decisions are not easy to take. I am certainly not one who believes that military intervention by itself will solve anything. This has proved not to be the case. There has been a failure so far from the Government and elsewhere to say what happens next. I fear that

what will happen next is that boots will be required on the ground. Air strikes will not do. If the Americans decide they are going into Syria, will we go in there as well?

I accept that there are more questions than answers, but unless we ask the questions we will never get to the answers. We live in extremely dangerous times in which we cannot sit back and let ISIL and others commit the atrocities that they are committing and say, “It’s all right, it’s somebody else’s problem”.

2.30 pm

Lord Maginnis of Drumglass (Ind UU): My Lords, it has been interesting to listen to the voices of experience today after having listened to the speculation coming from the Government over the last two or three weeks. It really is pathetic that we are using terms—I go straight to the head of the Government—such as “no feet on the ground”, on which comment has been made already. If we go in and bomb these dreadful terrorists who will use civilians as cover, we will kill civilians. Whether it be in Afghanistan or anywhere else, when you bomb, the people you kill turn out to be civilians. That is the propaganda war lost for a start—lost at home and lost abroad. The one thing that I should like to see very clearly enunciated today is that, if we are going to do our duty, as we did not do in the past, we should do it fully with our military involved at every stage. You cannot have Special Forces without supply and resupply or Special Forces holding ground reinforcing the rule of law.

It has been hurtful for many of us to hear the problems that we left in Iraq. Let me be blunt: our Foreign Office did not do itself a great favour in terms of being able to monitor what was happening in Iraq that got us to the stage we are at today. What has it been doing in all those years? We have been supporting Nouri al-Maliki, who was unapologetically anti-Sunni and unapologetically enthralled to the Iranian regime. Of course, we are all enthralled partly to the Iranian regime now.

When in this House, again and again, I and others warned about what was happening and what Nouri al-Maliki was up to, we were ignored. It is only one year since his forces went into Camp Ashraf and slaughtered 52 unarmed refugees. What did our Government do? They made excuses and said, “It was not al-Maliki’s forces that did it”. I am afraid that we know different. If noble Lords will excuse any repetition, in terms of getting our terminology right, let us have a proper evaluation as to what we are going to do to restore law and order. We have managed to get rid of al-Maliki now. Even the Government admit that he was rubbish, to put it mildly.

However, it is too late. Have we got any guarantees from al-Abadi as we rearm him in terms of his attitude to the Sunni tribes? Have we looked as we rearm the Peshmerga? Have we looked at our relationship with Turkey? Let us remember that that is the erstwhile PKK. What are we doing internationally to ensure that our friends for many years—almost 100 years in Turkey’s case—are protected, are part of and are aware of what we are up to or is this going to be another flash in the pan? Is this going to be another

waste of young men’s lives? I hope not. I lived through 28 years of terrorism. I know what terrorism is. I know how our forces operate and how they should be supported. It has not happened in the past. Let us hope that we will have a guarantee today that it will happen in the future.

2.35 pm

Lord Lea of Crondall (Lab): My Lords, the basic question in my mind is exactly that posed by the most reverend Primate the Archbishop of Canterbury and the right reverend Prelate the Bishop of Derby. To summarise it, unless we are to have a war of all against all, as in Hobbes, what is the basis on which there can be a new paradigm between the religions? It is very difficult, but at the moment it could not be more startlingly obvious, with the Saudis playing it both ways as always, with Danegeld being distributed quite widely. I hope that the revolutionary idea of the caliphate, or Boko Haram, or what is going on in parts of Indonesia, and so on, is not one that we simply think can be dealt with in the way that we have, haplessly, to do now.

As the noble Baroness, Lady Browning, said, charity begins at home. I suspect that there is massive support for this in Britain because it involves British citizens and because of the absolutely medieval beheadings that are more or less on our TV sets. We have more urgently to look at why part of our youth feel so radicalised in a revolutionary way that they think that British society has nothing to do with them.

I was interested in the comment made by my noble friend Lord Desai about the comparison with the Spanish Civil War. Only two weeks ago, I had a conversation with two friends, who happen to be in the Labour Party. I said, “We really can’t have people going backwards and forwards to Iraq to carry out these atrocities”. The question came back to me: “Why did you think it was such a good idea that we allowed this in the Spanish Civil War?”. I did not give a very good answer at that time. The answer is to do with the legitimacy of the Spanish Republican Government and so on, but it is more to do with what you might call the tradition of western philosophy and all its offshoots, which meant that the Spanish Civil War was an issue that we could understand in our terms. The caliphate is not like that. It is different from the Spanish Civil War in legitimising people going there.

I have two questions. First, has Qatar, which is part of the alliance, changed its mind about financing ISIL? Otherwise, how on earth is it part of the alliance? Secondly, did I hear the noble Lord, Lord Dannatt, who is not now in his place, say that unmanned aerial vehicles in Syria are a different legal category from manned aerial vehicles? Am I the only one who has not heard that doctrine before? Is it accepted by international law?

In conclusion, we have to bear in mind the principle that has been hinted at by many noble Lords: we must not allow this to become a successful provocation. I am quite sure that the strategists, not of al-Qaeda but of ISIL, want this to be a successful provocation, but how do we prevent it from being to them a successful provocation?

2.39 pm

Lord Cormack (Con): My Lords, my noble friend Lord Hurd, in a very perceptive speech, contrasted today's debate with the one that we had in August last year, when both he and I, and almost every other Member of your Lordships' House, voiced grave concern at the prospect of going into Syria without a clearly defined objective or outcome. Today is very different. It is a sobering thought, incidentally, that had we decided differently last year, we might have boosted these wretched ISIL people into a position of even greater power in Syria.

We are now setting our hands to an extraordinary task. In the words of that great prayer by Sir Walter Raleigh, we have to see this thing "until it be thoroughly finished". This is not a case of sending just a few sorties; we are in for the long haul. Although I risk the rebuke of the noble Lord, Lord Ramsbotham, we will need boots on the ground, be they Arab boots or other military boots—

Lord Ramsbotham: Will the noble Lord give way?

Lord Cormack: No, I cannot give way in this short debate. We will need boots on the ground—military boots and, as the noble Lord rightly pointed out, other boots.

Briefly, if we are to win the hearts and minds of people in the Middle East, those who are suffering desperate privation and those who will be bereaved or maimed as a result of air strikes—that is bound to happen—we must have great emphasis on humanitarian aid. I point up a little contrast. Yesterday, I stood on the East Green of Lincoln Cathedral, where there was a dedication of a plot that, next year, is to bring forth a wonderful garden of bulbs to commemorate Operation Manna. At the end of the Second World War, the people of Holland were in desperate plight. They were starving. Queen Wilhelmina said, "We shall merely be liberating corpses if something is not done". Although we had to negotiate with the Germans—the war was still on—so that the low-flying aircraft were not shot down, the relief supplies were delivered and the people survived. Yesterday, in a very moving ceremony, we had the Netherlands ambassador paying tribute to the Germans in the presence of their military attaché, saying, "Even though then we were at war, those with whom we had nothing in common and who had inflicted terrible disaster upon us, at that particular point, held back".

I make that comment and give that illustration merely to point up a moral and to adorn a tale. I hold no brief for the Assad regime—I do not think that there can be any Member of your Lordships' House who does—but, without repeating the Arab proverb cited by the noble Lord, Lord Bilimoria, all I would say is that we must have unrestrained conflict against these barbarians if we are to bring them to heel and we must ensure that, as the wasteland is liberated, we help those who seek to survive on it as much as we conceivably can.

2.43 pm

Lord Judd (Lab): My Lords, the coalition is certainly not an unadulterated embodiment of good against evil. There are disturbing contradictions within it:

human rights abuses, torture, ruthless oppression, political prisoners, extrajudicial imprisonment and executions, and corruption. Against that background, we must ask: why does ISIS win new recruits? We must be open and honest about this and confront our partners in the coalition, whoever they are. The real battle, as the most reverend Primate the Archbishop suggested earlier, is about values, about ethics, decency, human rights and democracy. There are no short cuts. It is the battle for hearts and minds that should be central to it all. No matter what the new dangers and provocations, our consistency in that battle here in the UK is crucial to victory, and it is vital in the administration of justice and in every walk of life, not least in the operation or culture of our police and immigration services. It is a huge challenge, but we must not dodge it or be swayed from it.

This is an alliance of necessity to confront the absolute unacceptability of the conduct of ISIS and the terrifying nightmare of extremism, but it is not an untarnished crusade, and it will aid the recruiters of extremists if we drift into pretending that it is. How far is ISIS a product of the conduct of some of those practices that I have described in the coalition itself? The survival of oppressive feudalism and autocratic systems is not in the end viable, and nor should it be. Yes—emphatically yes—we cannot stand idly by, not least because of the contribution to instability that we may well have made by our own interventions in recent decades. But it is essential to be clear about key issues. Will not the so-called mission creep, action in Syria and our services in combat on the ground prove to be inevitable? Therefore, what preparations are the Government making for that? Are the essential hardware and resources being assembled? Do we have an exit strategy? How do we avoid disastrous collateral damage, with all its negative and dangerous consequences? People feel every bit as passionate about women and children being blown to pieces as we do about abhorrent beheadings. Collateral damage too easily plays into the hands of the extremist recruiters. How will we effectively distinguish between ISIS and other militant groups, which may still be winnable to a shared solution? How do we avoid driving those groups into the embrace of ISIS?

In the end, there has to be a political solution. Wide inclusiveness in the process will be essential, as indeed we discovered in our own experiences in Northern Ireland. As we commit ourselves to respond to the request from Iraq, are we certain that it is committed to such a political solution and has a convincing plan to move towards it? If it does not, we will be sucked into a black hole.

2.48 pm

Baroness O'Neill of Bengarve (CB): My Lords, the Minister and many other noble Lords have made a very compelling case for the just cause that would be represented by this intervention. The *jus ad bellum* criterion for this being an acceptable war has been fully satisfied in this debate and elsewhere. There is a strong case that it is both moral and lawful to intervene, but that is not a sufficient account of what it takes for a war to be just. The way in which one intervenes has

also to be just; one has to satisfy the *jus in bello* clause. Is this going to be just conduct in war? Well, I think that it will be proportionate; I think that we are well used to judging that.

The question then remains of whether it will be effective. As the debate has gone on, many noble Lords have concentrated on the likely effectiveness of this intervention. “Effective for what?” would be my question. “Effective where?” would be a second question, and “Effective with whom?” a third. We are told that it will be effective for the degradation of ISIL, which is taken to mean the degradation of its weapons, supplies and infrastructure at present in Iraq, and not beyond. However, ultimately, as many noble Lords have said, this is about hearts and minds. Bombing looks very different, depending on the position that one is in. My late brother, who served in the Parachute Regiment, once said to me that he thought there was a great difference between European and North American views of bombing, because when North Americans talked about bombing they were mainly thinking about being up there doing it, but when Europeans thought about bombing they were mainly thinking about being down here as it happened. That is a disjunction of perspectives that we need to take very seriously.

Bombing looks different depending on where you sit, and that has been acknowledged by many, but it is vanishingly unlikely that there will be no—as it is politely put—collateral damage. What effect does collateral damage have? Well, it is then open to interpretation by those who suffer, or who sympathise with the sufferers, as to whose fault it is. A couple of years ago I went to Kaliningrad, formerly Königsberg, on the Baltic, part of Russia but of course separated from the rest of it. In 1944, when the Red Army was advancing and the RAF gave air support, Königsberg was devastatingly damaged. When I was there in 2012, many people said, “Ah yes, the RAF destroyed the city and the Red Army liberated us”. History had forgotten that the RAF acted in support of the Red Army. They were on the same side, and it was the Nazi occupiers who were being attacked. We have to think very carefully about this perspective. Who will get the blame when hard things happen—as they will?

There is one note of hope. This country, and this coalition Government, have taken a very determined stand—I declare an interest as chair of the Equality and Human Rights Commission—on doing something about violence against women and girls. Let us note that ISIL has a real specialism in doing dire things to women and girls. Let us hope that the Government will think about mobilising the many different groups in civil society in our country which are committed to ending that so that they will add and extend that commitment to think about the women and girls in Iraq, Nigeria and elsewhere who are so often and disproportionately the victims of this war.

2.52 pm

Lord Trimble (Con): My Lords, I start by reinforcing the final point made by the noble Baroness; that is a hugely important issue, which I hope we will be able to follow up. One of the pleasures of speaking so late in a

debate is that so much has already been said that I can just tick off who I agree with, and I have a little list to go through in that respect.

I thank the Minister for her opening speech; it was cool and comprehensive, and I found myself completely in agreement with it. The only snag was that there was a little hole in the speech called Syria and what we do when inevitably the actions that are going to be taken in Iraq, if they have any success, involve having to go to the source of the problem, which, as far as ISIL or ISIS is concerned, is in Syria. Inevitably that issue will have to come.

On that point, I agree with what my noble friend Lord Hurd has said about House of Commons votes. It will be ridiculous if the tactical situation on the ground is that we are getting close to the Syrian border but we then have to stop in order to have a meeting of Parliament at which to pass a resolution on the matter. We are getting to the point where tactics, not strategy, may be interfered with by politicians, which is not a good idea—the noble Lord again made that point. We must trust the military and leave it to it. In that respect, we need to step back a bit.

I find myself also in complete agreement with the noble Lord, Lord Carlile, in his excellent speech. I particularly enjoyed his comment at the end about ensuring that, with regard to the operation of our forces, there is a limit to political and juridical interference. I thought that that struck a particular nail on the head. I wish that I had heard similar sentiments from other members of our coalition partners, but maybe towards the end of this debate something else sensible will come from the Benches to my right.

A lot of the discussion concerned who we will deal with, talk to and make alliances with. This issue and the related issue of what to do with bodies that are involved in terrorist activity are questions not of whether we should talk, but of what the context is in which we talk, and whether we talk as part of a coherent political strategy, with a cold eye as to what the possibilities are and what the characters of the people we are talking to are.

I heard people suggest that we should turn to Russia. What on earth makes people think that Russia under Putin, subject to the sanctions we manage to impose upon it, will suddenly come and help us? I do not think there is much prospect of that happening. Iran has at least two faces. Rouhani presents a slightly reasonable face and looks as though he might be helpful in some respects, but the Revolutionary Guard bears a heavy responsibility for the present situation. To say it largely controls the situation may be overstating it, but it certainly had a very strong influence over Maliki. Although Maliki has gone, the militia groups that the Revolutionary Guard runs are still there and will still be a huge problem. We need to be careful about that.

Regarding cosyng up to Assad, I noted what my noble friend Lord Howard said about what kind of a country we would be if we did not step up to the plate on this. What sort of country would we be if we started getting close to a person like that? We have to draw some limits.

[LORD TRIMBLE]

Finally, I will mention two things. Turkey and Egypt are hugely important, especially Turkey. I hope we can get a view from the Front Bench this evening as to what Turkey is likely to do: it cannot stay on the sidelines much longer. We should also remember, when we discuss what should or might happen in the future, that unfortunately the enemy also has a vote.

2.57 pm

Lord Haskel (Lab): My Lords, I am reluctant that we should join the air strikes over Iraq because history tells us that it is pointless in the medium term. It is pointless because, as one terrorist organisation is weakened or destroyed in the Middle East, another takes its place, often more radical than the last. After the PLO left Lebanon we got Hezbollah, al-Qaeda spawned ISIS, Gaddafi was replaced by a failed state. Perhaps it is better to try containment and not have ISIS replaced by something worse.

Promoting religion through violence is a terrifying and terrible phenomenon—and yes, we helped create the anarchy that enabled ISIS to commit its atrocities. Ignoring this would also be an atrocity. Perhaps that is the human reason why we should help. I agree with the Prime Minister that we should not be frozen by fear, but neither should we ignore recent history. Will bombing work? Recent history says it will not. Will the limited and clear objective of degrading ISIS, as laid out by the Leader of the House in her speech, prevent it from becoming something even more terrible? Recent history says that it will not. Only a few weeks ago we were tempted to put so-called moderate rebels in power in Syria.

Is it worth while putting our Armed Forces at risk? The threat is real, but it is coming not only from Iraq. ISIS has supporters throughout the Middle East, supporters who are shadowy and mobile. Some are our fellow citizens. It is no use bombing its communication centres; it shares ours. Its equipment is not stored in army camps; it is in civilian homes and institutions. Will bombing stop its funding and trading in oil? With its main bases outside Iraq, probably not, so it is easy to imagine another successor organisation taking over where ISIS leaves off. Thanks to its social and economic efforts, supplying food and medical care, paying salaries and generous pay to fighters, ISIS has dependent supporters. They are reluctant perhaps, but saying that we are coming to their rescue makes us sound a little like President Putin, and all this aid will have to be replaced when ISIS goes, as other noble Lords have said.

Again, as many noble Lords have said, success is not just military destruction; success is also creating the political will on the ground to confront ISIS—to dismantle it and to ensure that there is no successor by having a better story, as the most reverend Primate put it. Despite the Leader's assurances, I am not convinced that our mission can achieve this. Recent history tells us that, until now, it has been impossible to separate the military and the political objectives without being dragged in further and without creating an even worse successor. This is why I remain sceptical but resigned.

3.01 pm

Baroness Uddin (Non-Aff): My Lords, the strength of feeling across our nation in response to the kidnapping of, and murder threat to, aid worker Alan Henning and the brutal methods adopted by the ISIL militants have been nowhere more evident than in the actions of hundreds of imams and Muslim community leaders and ordinary British Muslim citizens over the last week, who have come together in print and on social networks to express their disgust and condemnation at the brutality of ISIL. The Not In Our Name campaign has pointedly denounced the horror and revulsion felt by most to the senseless murder of hostages, saying that the lunatics should not be allowed to hijack our faith. I share the view that the brutal actions of the zealots and fundamentalist militants within the so-called Islamic State, which has nothing to do with Islam or a state, must be condemned and resisted, but it has to be co-ordinated by universal consensus if we must take any action, especially given that military action is mandated. The drumbeat of war has been far too quickly accelerated over the last few weeks without thorough reference to the aftermath, made the more urgent due to concerns over the impending fate of hostages, including our own Alan Henning.

I should particularly like to caution my noble friends about the dangers of, as former MI6 chief Richard Barrett put it, over-exaggerating the threat, and, to echo the sentiments of the noble Lord, Lord Ashdown, the dangers of alienating swathes of the Muslim community within our country by the thoughtless use of jingoistic rhetoric promoting the defence of western values, combined with the proposed regressive introduction of knee-jerk counterterrorism legislation and raids. Before we adopt the “You're either with us or against us” rhetoric of the former US President, we should recognise that more often than not it is Muslim blood that is being spilt on the ground in this brutal field of conflict and that Muslims have as much as, if not more of, a stake in protecting the rich values of liberty, equality, fraternity and freedom, which some would like to argue are values exclusive to us here in the West. The values that we must protect are universal ones. We should not allow the fundamentalist zealots to divide us on either side of this debate.

I find it worrying that our Government are so easily able to find the harsh language of condemnation on this occasion and yet have felt unable to condemn the brutal killings that took place at the hands of the Israeli military only last month and which cost the lives of 2,000 Muslim women, children and men. The Government were unable to utter even the word “disproportionate” when describing the meaningless slaughter and devastation, despite unequivocal condemnation and accusations of war crimes from the United Nations. I am mindful of the heartfelt concerns expressed by the noble Baroness, Lady Warsi, as she took the bold step of resigning from the Government, stating that the Government's position on the crisis in Gaza was morally indefensible.

I was at a meeting with a number of my parliamentary colleagues yesterday with about 700, or maybe even 1,000, young men and women, mostly Muslim, who were there to encourage participation in public life. The overwhelming consensus, apart from three or four

individuals, was that the military strikes in Iraq are a rehash of failed tactics. Lest we forget, the result of the 2003 Iraq conflict was 500,000 mostly innocent lives lost. A country devastated and divided was the result of our decision to take action with the US and other allies of the time. No matter how much we choose to ignore these facts, the sectarianism and regional division now prevails is without doubt, at least in part, the result of our actions back then, which we pursued in spite of the opposition shown by millions of ordinary British citizens. The question therefore arises whether we are now making the same error of judgment, just as our troops have barely left the conflict area of Afghanistan.

I urge noble Lords and our Government to ensure that what we are about to embark upon includes a comprehensive package of engagement. A long-term commitment is required to protect our values, and that protection can come only if we commence dialogue with other parties and ensure that my noble friend Lord Reid's suggestions of a long-term grand plan of peace is enforced.

3.07 pm

Lord Howe of Aberavon (Con): My Lords, one feature emerges throughout today's debate: that nobody lightly entertains the prospect of going to war, especially in a potentially open-ended conflict of the sort that may now conceivably be before us. Nobody can be relaxed when the enemy is less a conventional state, whose dimensions and contours we know, than a complex, fast-moving and hydra-headed "network of death". President Obama described ISIS in those words at the UN General Assembly last week—operating, as ISIS does, in the deserts of the Middle East, far away from these shores.

Many in this country—and no fewer in the White House and throughout the West—have grown tired of the foreign wars and engagements. In the United States, President Obama was elected in part to disengage America and shift it away from a "perpetual war footing", as he put it. Now the White House has issued an unequivocal call to arms. How should we respond as a nation and as a still-united kingdom? How should we respond as a European nation, a Commonwealth nation, with our allies and partners on the continent?

Let us not, by the way, underestimate the importance of the referendum north of the border a few days ago, reaffirming decisively the United Kingdom for what it is: a reconciliation of the blue and white flag and the red and white flag, with the benevolence of the Welsh red dragon. The union jack represents the United Kingdom and has a wider representation around the world: it is to be found for example in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, British Columbia and Nova Scotia. I emphasise the importance of how we should respond as a nation—a still-united kingdom—but how should we respond as a European nation as well as a Commonwealth nation with our allies and partners on the continent?

Several of us on these Benches and in other parts of the House had serious reservations about the previous deployment of allied troops in Iraq to displace Saddam

Hussein and about whether it made sense to intervene in Syria last year. Now, however, the President of the United States, after a long period of reflection, has concluded that the collective interests of the West lie in confronting ISIS decisively and early on, and in seeking to build a broadly based coalition to do so, including partners in the region itself. I therefore have no difficulty in supporting the position both of the United States Administration and of Her Majesty's Government, while fully acknowledging the risk that this struggle will be neither easy nor short.

The extreme ambitions and actions of ISIS are clearly deeply hostile both to our interests and to the notions of democracy and the rule of law on which our systems are based. The ISIS philosophy also contradicts any reasonable understanding of Islam. It is designed to sharpen divisions and exacerbate conflicts, to eliminate moderation and to undermine all those working for mutual understanding between peoples and nations. The ISIS philosophy is an absolutist and expansionist creed that, unchallenged, breeds, first, tremendous regional instability, then regional chaos, and then leads possibly to regional domination. A much bigger confrontation might easily follow.

Perhaps I may refer back further for a moment. Rather like in the debates about appeasement in the 1930s, it is better to talk about the problem clearly and honestly now, and face up to some difficult questions and decisions while one can still do something about them, than to wait so long that the enemy concludes that we are weak, divided and unwilling to react. The President of the United States and our own Prime Minister have both countenanced the possibility of a generational struggle, one that will not only occupy this generation but shape the world of the next generation too. We should reflect on these words very carefully. It is therefore with very little joy but with strong conviction that I conclude that we should support the Government and their many allies in the difficult and important task that lies ahead.

3.12 pm

Viscount Hanworth (Lab): My Lords, 75 years ago, Britain faced up to an evil that was threatening to dominate Europe. Now we are facing an evil of a similar dimension that is afflicting the Middle East. We are reluctant to face up to it, but we must do so. I am sure that, together with our allies, we will have the power to defeat this evil. If it becomes necessary or even advantageous to commit troops to the region, I believe that we should not hesitate to do so. Our forces would need to engage the enemy wherever they might be found.

Seventy-five years ago, the threat was an external one. Those who had sympathised with the fascist ideology had been effectively sidelined and neutralised. Today, the circumstances are different. The jihadist movement has attracted a substantial number of British citizens. At least 500 have joined the movement in Syria and Iraq, and there may be three times that number. It is vital that we should understand the attractions of the ideology and that we should find ways of neutralising it. However, some of the measures that have been proposed of late would surely exacerbate the problem.

[VISCOUNT HANWORTH]

It has been proposed by the Prime Minister that British citizens who have travelled to Iraq and Syria to support the jihadist cause should be prevented from returning to this country and that their passports should be confiscated, thereby rendering them stateless. An obvious objection to such a measure is that it would conflict with international law. There are other objections that ought to be considered. There would be a danger of creating a body of stateless persons who would be bound to sustain themselves by acts of terrorism. They would become a global menace. There is also a domestic danger. Many of the jihadists have British relatives who strongly oppose their brutal and alien cause. Nevertheless, these people would also become alienated from our culture if their relatives were summarily deprived of their rights of citizenship.

What should be done to the returning jihadists? The answer is that we should handle them carefully and with discrimination. We should endeavour to distinguish between those who are dangerous to us and those who have been temporarily misled. To achieve that, we need to deploy adequate and appropriate resources within the border agency and elsewhere. The returning jihadists would be thoroughly vetted and debriefed. If they have been only weakly complicit in the activities of insurgents, they should be exonerated. However, if they have committed atrocities, they should be charged with war crimes. In short, they should be treated in much the same manner as the citizens of the defeated German nation were treated at the end of the Second World War.

3.15 pm

Lord Paddick (LD): My Lords, when I was the police spokesman following the bombings on 7 July 2005, I was asked by a journalist whether the attack was the result of “Islamic terrorism”. I had expected the question and had carefully considered what my answer would be. I said, “As far as I’m concerned, the term ‘Islamic terrorism’ is a contradiction in terms”. As the noble Baronesses, Lady Symons of Vernham Dean and Lady Uddin, have already commented, the term “Islamic State” in the context of the terrorist organisation that this nation, in a coalition of many other nations, is trying to combat is a dangerous term to use. It gives a wholly false impression of Islam.

Yes, action needs to be taken against so-called ISIL, but let us not be lulled into a false sense of security because we are contemplating only air strikes and not military “boots on the ground”. Our brave men and women in the armed services may be safer as a consequence, but the threat to the UK and its citizens from so-called ISIL as a result of the decision this Parliament will take today will vary little, whether the military boots are on the ground or the action is restricted to the air. As the noble Lord, Lord Bilimoria, and other noble Lords have said, this is a very serious issue with very serious consequences. As my noble friend Lord Alderdice said, there is a real danger of unintended negative consequences of military intervention, both in the Middle East and here in the UK. That we are not simply part of bilateral action with the Americans is reassuring, but we need to do more. We need to explain in the clearest possible terms that we would

engage with any barbaric, murderous regime of this nature, no matter what religion it hijacked and distorted in a perverted attempt to justify its actions.

In my professional experience as a police officer, the overwhelming majority of Muslims in this country are law-abiding and peace-loving. Britain is a better and safer place for having strong Muslim communities. The overwhelming majority of Muslims in this country want nothing more than to live in peace and harmony with those who do not share their faith, as well as with those who do. We must do everything we can to ensure that the barbaric actions of a foreign terrorist organisation, foreign to us and to Islam, do not taint the reputation of Muslims in this country. As my noble friends Lord Carlile of Berriew and Lady Hamwee have said, by supporting and working with the Muslim communities in this country we will prevent this barbaric organisation carrying out atrocities here.

3.19 pm

The Earl of Sandwich (CB): My Lords, I wonder whether we are inflating ISIS a little in this erudite debate. I suspect that most MPs today are voting in the dark, because the enemy remains obscure. On the published maps, ISIS is mainly represented in long lines and blotches rather than in territorial space. Its success reminds me more of the conjuror impressing an audience than of a power capable of covering wide frontiers. But I do not doubt that we are dealing with a murderous operation, which has to be confronted. There has to be an international response and we must welcome the unanimity of UNSC Resolution 2178 on violent extremism and prohibition on foreign fighters. Even so, we must all have some doubts about the effectiveness of an intervention in the long run. The noble Lord, Lord Browne, referred to owning the consequences.

Air strikes can have only limited impact—the one-off destruction of known enemy targets such as arms dumps and command centres. They have to be away from populations but there will always be civilian casualties. There will be a lot of civilians who, while unsympathetic to ISIS, will not see the US on any mercy mission either. Air strikes may contain and punish but, as has been said repeatedly, they cannot solve the problems of hearts and minds and will harden the feelings of many ordinary citizens. Here I warmly endorse the wise words of the right reverent Prelate the Bishop of Derby. In the long run, only troops from Iraq itself, Shia and Sunni and the hard-pressed Kurdish Peshmerga, reinforced by Arab or other neighbours, can influence their own people and push back the terrorists occupying their land.

We all remember the short-term success of allied strikes in Libya. We can all recall the excitement of air power over Kabul. But those days seem far behind us and we are still learning the lessons. We forget that so often we are dealing on the ground with family clans and tribal leaders, and so-called non-state actors, as well as with an often divided and ineffectual central government, such as we still have in Iraq. Bargains have to be made—in this case, with the Sunni leaders. Many of the Sunnis behind this present outrage surely must be remembering the dismantling of their world

by Mr Bush and our own Government a decade ago. I heard what the noble Baroness, Lady Ramsay, said, but we should admit that that was a strategic mistake for which we are all paying a price. There is no point now in just preaching the rule of law and democracy in a vacuum occupied by criminals and dressed up as Sharia. Islam condemns the so-called Islamic State and anyone associated with it.

I agree with the noble Lord, Lord Williams, that the UN could be doing more to attract international support on a wider front and it should provide a platform for other countries, such as Iran. We should not expect any thaw in US-Iranian relations, but there will be more opportunities for diplomatic dialogue and the UK may be better placed to take them up than the US. “Let the time mature” was the phrase used by President Rouhani on CBS this week. Syria is a different issue, but clearly President Assad has had a new smile on his face this week, anticipating some quiet understanding, if not practical co-operation, with the United States.

Finally, we must applaud again the hospitality shown by Turkey and others to the thousands of refugees still within their borders. We commend the aid agencies—Christian Aid and others—which are actively helping families. Like the late David Haines, the lives of many aid workers are also threatened by ISIS. Their courage must be applauded and rewarded where possible with proper protection. This will be another long campaign.

3.23 pm

Lord Rooker (Lab): My Lords, I support the Government. I have heard every speech in your Lordships’ House today and have had the advantage of listening to and watching the whole of the Prime Minister’s speech. I have to say that he has shown exemplary parliamentary and national leadership on this issue. Unlike in 2003, it is crystal clear for all to see that there is a problem that has to be dealt with by the use of force. We are right, even at a late stage, to join other nations, and the more the better.

It looks like a regional problem and these problems are best dealt with by regional nations, but in reality it is international. Because of that, force cannot be the only ingredient to a solution. Different nations have different agendas for the future, but the threat to all is so great that we should use our best endeavours to work together at this time. It seems to me crucial that Iran, and indeed Russia, should be welcomed to play a major role and not be shunted to the sidelines, as Secretary of State Kerry indicated a few weeks ago in the case of Iran. Yes, there is a need to talk to the Syrian Government. Some may not think that they are a legal Government, but they are still there.

The burden on the neighbouring countries of the millions of refugees cannot begin to be comprehended as we sit and watch events unfold from the comfort of our homes. The opportunities for IS of destabilising more nations grows daily as the refugee flow continues. This is in no nation’s interest.

There has to be an end plan. It is now clearer than ever that having no plan post 2003 was a major error of leadership and judgment by the then war leaders. I was a member of the Government at the time and I

supported the Government at the time. The Iraqi Army—where is it? Can we be convinced that it can be rebuilt again so that it is sustainable to defend the country?

I do not think that we have to defend existing borders at this time. This is about defending peoples. As such, if we are to reach a settlement, some boundaries may need to be redrawn by the nations themselves and we should support them. The Kurds are playing a very substantial role and it is the case—or I hope that it is the case—that Turkey, Iran and Iraq may see the benefit to themselves of having a more unified area for the Kurds.

There will, of course, be problems in this enterprise and very serious issues, especially relating to hostages, now and in the future. There is heavy weaponry in the hands of ISIS. It might down aircraft. We have to think about that. This brings me to my final point, where in some ways I part with the leadership on my side. It is never too late to avoid making a bad decision. I believe that we put our own pilots at greater risk in the efforts that they will be undertaking by stopping at the Iraq-Syrian border. There is legal opinion, and reference to that has been made in the House today, that a UN resolution is not required to go after ISIS in Syria. In any event, the veto will be used if it looks like a step too far. We should not, therefore, hide behind the Russian veto. Russia clearly feels badly let down about the misuse of the UN resolution in the case of Libya. Surely we can accommodate Russia on this issue. The governance positions of Iraq and Syria are different, but ISIS is in both countries.

I support the Government, as I said. I wish our service men and women every success as they enter battle and I ask those involved to think hard about the end plan, which unfortunately appears to exclude Syria.

3.27 pm

The Lord Bishop of Coventry: My Lords, the noble and learned Lord, Lord Howe of Aberavon, referred your Lordships’ House a few moments ago to the parallel in the 1930s and 1940s in Europe. I should like to draw on one figure from that period which I found helpful in thinking about the matters before us. Dietrich Bonhoeffer said that when a madman came down the street swinging an axe it was our duty to not just apply plasters to the injured but to stop the madman with whatever means were expedient.

The Government are seeking to join with others to stop the madman swinging the axe of cruelty, and we agree that stopped he must be. The question is: what are the expedient means for doing so? In facing that dilemma, I have four areas of questions for the Government, which reinforce some of those that have already been asked. First, is the Government’s objective of crushing and destroying ISIS and its ideology a reasonable one? Will we be any more successful in destroying ISIS than we have been in crushing al-Qaeda? Can an ideology ever be wiped out? I agree with the noble Lord, Lord Hylton, that we should seek a more achievable military objective. It should be focused on binding the madman’s arms so that his powers may be disarmed by dismantling the ideology by which he thrives and by the more powerful weapons of truth,

[THE LORD BISHOP OF COVENTRY]
justice and compassion, to which those more senior than me have referred. The noble Lord, Lord Alton, made it clear that one cannot bomb an ideology.

Secondly, as other noble Lords have noted—most clearly the noble Baroness, Lady Morris—one of the weapons that will degrade the ideology of ISIS is the building of an inclusive and functional Iraqi Government. As the United Nations Secretary-General said earlier this week:

“Missiles may kill terrorists, but good governance kills terrorism”.

What more can the Minister tell us about Her Majesty’s Government’s efforts to achieve that end?

Thirdly, if the Prime Minister is right that this is a generational struggle, how can we ensure that the mission does not creep beyond that which is right? In trying to stop the madman, how are we to stop ourselves from being caught up in the sort of escalation of violence that causes us to be seen, as we have been seen all too often in the past, as madmen swinging our own axes for our own ends rather than seeking to save lives, most of them Muslim, as the noble Lord, Lord Desai, said? How, in the heat of a long battle, will we assess whether our cause and intention remain justifiable, our objectives limited, and our means legal and proportionate, and that they do not destroy the lives of non-combatants? How do we ensure that we do not defeat cruelty with cruelty?

Fourthly, given the transnational character of ISIS, its stronghold in Syria and the complexities of military involvement in Syria, what is the Government’s assessment of the present convergence of interests against ISIS? Does the Minister agree that we may have a temporary window of opportunity to reinvigorate international efforts for a political resolution of the underlying crisis in Syria?

I end with a comment from Coventry’s history; a city that another madman slashed to the ground with terrifying force in 1940. A voice from the wilderness of Coventry’s devastated cathedral cried, “Father forgive!”—not just forgive them but forgive us all. It was a shocking confession of the complicity that we all bear in the history of the alienation and anger between peoples and nations that give the madman the energy that fuels his violence. If our Government believe that they are justified in using violence to stop violence, let them never, and let us never, put our trust in chariots and horses to resolve the deep problems that the world faces today. If they have a part to play, it is simply to position us to work for the things that make for peace.

3.32 pm

Baroness Neville-Jones (Con): My Lords, I agree with the cautionary words that we just heard.

I support the Government’s proposal that the UK should join other allies in taking direct military action from the air against the self-proclaimed Islamic State in Iraq. This is not a state in any accepted sense of the word, but a group of murderous thugs terrorising the area they control. They are enemies of the inhabitants of Iraq, a threat to the authority and stability of countries in the region and a terrorist threat to this country and many of our allies.

Today, we are not discussing the possible action in Syrian airspace. The presence in Iraq of ISIL, however, clearly demonstrates that the threat to Iraqi security from the uncontrolled situation in Syria, from whence these people come, is a factor in the situation. I do not think that there are serious legal obstacles in the way of legitimate military action in the air over Syria without a UN resolution. That is not necessary and I agree with those who argue that to compartmentalise our assistance to only part of the problem, and not reach its core, does not make total sense.

In our history in the UK, we have normally sought to respond to action against so clear a threat to our country. We have not outsourced the defence of our interests to third countries and we should not do so now. The urgent task is obviously to contain and then reduce the area to which the terrorists lay claim and then degrade their control over it so that local forces can retake the ground. We have the capability, both in aircraft and in Special Forces, that is needed to make the air campaign a success. We can assist, including with training and lethal weaponry, the local forces on the ground.

The legal base for action exists in the clear request of the Government in Baghdad for assistance. Their spokesmen have made clear that this includes the UK. I understand why the Government have not taken action until now but they should delay no longer. The strictly military risk to our Armed Forces looks acceptable. The potentially increased security risk to this country must be factored into the measures taken by the Government to protect us.

I welcome the increasingly clear and unambiguous rejection by the vast majority of British Muslims of the perverted ideology of ISIL. More effort and resource devoted to Prevent is part of what the Government should do, and they need to accompany this action with the strategy being pursued abroad. The noble Viscount, Lord Hanworth, who is no longer in his seat, made some important points about the management of jihadists when they attempt to return to this country. However, although removing passports is a sensible measure, it does not render people stateless.

It has been well pointed out that humanitarian action has to accompany the strategy, as does a proper political position on our part. It needs to be regional as well as related to Iraq. We are fully engaged in the humanitarian effort. As to the political situation, much hangs on the future inclusivity and performance of the Government in Baghdad. A political settlement between the people of that country is an indispensable component of success. Wider regional stability also depends on the willingness of countries such as Saudi Arabia to pursue policies that unambiguously increase rather than undermine the social and political stability of their neighbours. Western allies can help and I welcome the Prime Minister’s discussion with President Rouhani three days ago, which I hope will be a first step towards a successful strategic stability in the Middle East.

3.37 pm

Lord Stone of Blackheath (Lab): My Lords, in medicine, as the noble Lord, Lord Sterling, pointed out, removing a localised, potentially lethal growth

surgically will be good for the body only if, alongside that, the whole organism is nourished and cared for with love so that it recovers after the operation. We know from our own history that vicious tyranny in our own darker times was ended over a long period, not by interference from outside but the will of the people in the region.

My point is that surgical air strikes from outside alone will not work in the long term for the people we wish to help in the region. There needs to be, alongside the military strategy, a political, economic and social plan for the region, creating jobs and extending education, involving the key players and listening mindfully to all the people in that whole region. What do they want? By the whole region I mean both in the south, including north Africa and the Middle East, and all the way up to the north, including Syria and Iraq.

We know that within this region the kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Islamic Republic of Iran have huge influence and, were they each to play a positive role for the people there, this would make a huge difference. So here, in three minutes, I will suggest two grand initiatives, alongside the proposed intervention, to settle the whole region within a year. The first in the south is an example of what happens after air strikes. I have been privileged to be in discussions over these past few months while I have been in Israel, the Palestinian Territories and Egypt. They have been developing a regional plan to end the war there in talks involving Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, Palestine and Israel, whereby the first four of those—the local Arab countries—agree to demilitarise Gaza, with the promise of, say, \$50 billion from donors to reconstruct and heal the strip for the benefit of all the people there, and to link this with projects in the West Bank. Israel then feels safe, and Gaza is therefore able to have a sea port, airport and open access. Then the Arab peace initiative, first proposed by King Abdullah of Saudi Arabia, becomes a real basis for Israel to be recognised by 22 Arab countries, including Palestine; and for Israel to recognise Palestine.

Egypt is key in all this, as the noble Lord, Lord Marlesford, described so well. President el-Sisi's positive statement to the UN Security Council this week shows that it has an appetite to play a bigger role. Saudi Arabia is having a donor conference at which it hopes to raise \$100 billion for Egypt. If it can follow it through a safe and secure mechanism, perhaps the Middle East Centre for Civic Involvement, MECCI—which I have earlier described in your Lordships' House—could ensure that the funds for Egypt go into projects that will help its people. In the short and medium term, they could gain employment and training while, in the long term, they form institutions and infrastructure for the benefit of all Egyptian people.

The second project I suggest is focused on the north of the region and is about Iran. Yes, we must be firm with Iran on the nuclear question, but being firm does not mean ostracising it. America, France, Germany and others, at the same time as talking tough and negotiating hard, are now discussing and planning in Iran the type of constructive business and trade that could be done were Iran to comply with the requests made of its nuclear programme. Again, with the wise counsel of the noble Lord, Lord Alliance, together

with a senior Iranian Ayatollah, we are in discussions with great, skilful, innovative companies here in the UK, which could be doing business with Iran and helping its people to be involved in the long-term growth and development of their own country and the region. I propose that we at least make a scoping trade visit to Iran this year, and work with it as partners in trade so that it can also help resolve the ISIL issue.

On the first proposal, about Saudi Arabia and the regional solutions for the Middle East and north Africa, we should support the World Economic Forum and its MENA team, as we did with its Breaking the Impasse project on Israel and Palestine. They will be discussing this plan next month, and taking it forward in their annual event soon. On the second proposal, about Iran and trade, I am asking Her Majesty's Government to help facilitate, without breaking any sanctions, an exploratory trade visit to Iran this year.

3.41 pm

Lord Singh of Wimbledon (CB): My Lords, Sikhism teaches that we should resort to the use of arms only when there is no other option to stop the killing of the weak and innocent. This situation has now been reached and we must give military support to the Iraqi Government in their fight against the brutal behaviour of the Islamic State.

However, we must be clear about our objectives, both short and long-term, and, importantly, make these clear not just to the Government but to the people of Iraq and adjoining countries. Yes, there must be targeted air strikes, but air strikes alone are not enough. Parallel support for action on the ground will be needed to destroy ISIS.

However, at best this can only bring us back to the instability that followed the defeat of Saddam Hussein. The Middle East has for decades been one of the most unstable and fractured regions of the world, with national boundaries that split communities carved into countries by the West following the demise of the Ottoman Empire. For too long, initially Britain and France and more recently the United States and Russia, have propped up one dubious dictator after another, turning a blind eye to brutal repression in return for trade and political advantage. It was not too long ago that I was invited to a reception at No. 10 for President Assad, who was being heralded as a torchbearer for peace and religious freedom in the Middle East. Today, the situation has been made worse by new players such as China looking for trade and strategic interest before human rights.

A paradigm shift to new criteria is needed, which must be honoured by those seeking our military support. They must pledge themselves to uphold freedom of religion and belief, gender equality and protection of minorities as a condition of our support. These rights must trump all considerations of trade and supposed strategic advantage in the cradle of civilisation and in the rest of the world.

3.45 pm

Lord Pearson of Rannoch (UKIP): My Lords, I refer you to a short debate I held in Grand Committee on 19 November last, when I asked the Government to

[LORD PEARSON OF RANNOCH] justify the Prime Minister's Statement after the murder of Drummer Rigby that there is nothing in Islam which justifies acts of violence. I will not repeat what I said then, given our time constraint, but mention it as background to these few words.

We are now met to consider military action against the self-styled Islamic State, which has surfaced since that debate, and I support such action; but I fear that military action alone—and even victorious boots on the ground—will not be able to contain the resurgence of jihadist Islam on our planet. I suggest that we have to look deeper and accept that there are many verses in the later Koran and in the later actions and sayings of the Prophet Muhammad, which Muslims are instructed to follow, which justify acts of violence.

Islam has the problem of the Muslim tenet of abrogation, which holds that where there is contradiction in the Koran, the later texts outweigh the earlier. I cited two of those verses on 19 November but have time for only one today. Surat 9.29 reads like this:

“Fight those who do not believe in Allah or in the Last Day and who do not consider unlawful what Allah and His Messenger have made unlawful and who do not adopt the religion of truth from those who were given the Scripture—[fight] until they give the jizyah willingly while they are humbled”.

That means a tax on non-Muslims.

There are many other such verses which are being enforced by ISIS, the Taliban, al-Qaeda, al-Shabaab, Hamas, Hezbollah, Boko Haram, and wherever the sharia penal code is strictly enforced.

It does not help to point out that the Bible and other ancient religious texts have similarly violent passages. Jehovah did indeed smite the uncircumcised quite a bit in the Old Testament, but there is nothing of that in the New Testament, from which Christianity takes its inspiration. Jesus said:

“Love thy neighbour as thyself”,

and, “Do unto others as you would they should do unto you”. His instruction was universal. He was not talking just about relations between Christians, whereas I understand that the verses of peace in the Koran may refer largely to relations between Muslims. Of course, modern Jews do not act out the gruesome instructions of Leviticus and Exodus, so the comparison with the Old Testament does not help.

As I said on 19 November, Christianity has still been the volcano through which much evil has erupted over the centuries, but that is no longer happening. Today, it appears that the collective darkness of our humanity has moved largely into the violent end of Islam, where only peaceful Islam can resist it theologically and defeat it at its roots. As the noble Baroness the Lord Privy Seal said in her opening remarks, we must support our Muslim friends as they try to reclaim their religion—I would add, particularly in this country.

I repeat a question I put to the Government on 19 November, to which I did not get a reply: as our jihadists are such a tiny minority who misinterpret the Koran and the holy texts, why does the great majority of Muslims not do more to stand up against them? For instance, could not the Government encourage our Muslim leaders in this country to call a great council to issue a fatwa against our jihadists, casting

them out of Islam? Dozens of our imams wrote to the *Independent* newspaper on 17 September invoking Islam for the release of Alan Henning. Could they not form the nucleus of such a council? It would also need to address the violent verses in the Koran to which I have referred. One suggestion is that they should be declared to refer to the internal struggle between good and evil within each one of us, while true Islam flows only from the verses of peace.

Perhaps such a new explanation of Islam might also help to meet the point made by the most reverend Primate the Archbishop of Canterbury—that our young Muslims need a much better vision for their lives—with which, I am sure, all your Lordships agree.

I look forward to the Government's reply.

3.49 pm

Lord Howell of Guildford (Con): My Lords, I am not sure whether I am supposed to sum up the Tory view or just be tail-end Charlie; I suspect, the latter. It is fairly obvious that there is broad, cautious support in your Lordships' House—with reservations and one or two voices of dissent—for the Government's contribution to this challenge and for the efforts of President Obama, the Prime Minister and other leaders to build up a colossal coalition. I would add, right at the end, one additional thought, which has been echoed by some of your Lordships: it is essential that this operation should not be seen as yet another western intervention in the labyrinth and quagmire of the Middle East. The revolting and vile ISIL is in fact a challenge to all responsible states throughout the planet—certainly all the great Muslim states and states with big Muslim minorities.

My central plea would be that this is seen not just as western but as regional, obviously very much with the support of the Iraqis who have asked us in; the Kurds; Jordan; the Saudis, who have a major role to play, and perhaps should be more forward; the GCC states that are already involved, such as the UAE; and Turkey, which must decide how to develop its support. The Middle East is bristling with the best and most advanced weapons and vast manpower resources all around. Those countries are threatened even more directly than we are, and they should now show commitment. My noble friend Lord Marlesford also mentioned Egypt, with its colossal army—one-quarter of the entire Arab world. It should clearly play a part. Iran, as we know, is bound to be two-faced, but nevertheless it must reckon where its interests are, and if it has a part to play then it should play it.

Beyond that, the issue is not just regional. As I think the noble Lords, Lord Rooker and Lord Reid, both said, this is a global issue. The Prime Minister rightly said that all should be united, and all should mean all. What about the great states of the world that now claim to be leading as the centre of gravity shifts from west to east? What about India, with 2 million men under arms and the highest degree of equipment? What about the Chinese, who claim that they want to be a leading nation in the world? They have a responsibility; they have a huge Muslim minority and a direct interest in seeing that the doctrines, murders and mayhem of ISIL do not prevail. What about

Japan? Shinzo Abe says that he wants Japan to be a responsible nation, organising and supporting world stability. Where is its voice in this? The Japanese should come forward. How nice it would be if even Russia, which has plenty to lose with the dangers of ISIL, were involved, but obviously for the moment, until it comes to its senses on Ukraine, it cannot. Pakistan is already involved in defending Saudi Arabia's borders.

ISIL is a threat to all of us. It is a threat to the borders and the stability of the entire responsible world. Air strikes are of course limited, as noble Lords have rightly said, but there is a whole range of measures against communications, finances and oil that can all be devastating in crushing these murderous gangs. My plea would be: not just the West, with no more assumption that the West is the hegemony and the world's policeman. It is not any more, and the continued belief that it is will be very misguided and lead to much grief.

3.53 pm

Lord Bach (Lab): My Lords, the contributions to this debate have done justice to the seriousness of the matters before the House today. On behalf of the Opposition, I thank all noble Lords on all sides who have spoken. The House has benefited very much from speeches reflecting the enormous experience and knowledge, and of course the concern, that noble Lords bring to this debate. If one were to count the number of former Defence Secretaries, Foreign Secretaries, Lords Chancellor, Attorneys-General, other senior Ministers, Permanent Secretaries, ambassadors and other experts, it would add up to a very large number indeed. Last, but certainly not least, to have heard from the most reverend Primate the Archbishop of Canterbury and his three colleagues on the Bishops' Benches has also helped us immeasurably.

Given the very limited time available, I am sure that the House will forgive me if I do not acknowledge individually the contributions that we have heard today. I start with a word about ISIL itself. I agree very much with my noble friend Lady Symons that the expression "Islamic State" is completely unsatisfactory; indeed, the Secretary-General of the United Nations rightly observed earlier this week that it should more fittingly be called "Un-Islamic Non-State". No religion on earth and no secular ideology can justify its barbarism.

We are not, and never will be, in conflict with Islam as a religion. Islam teaches peace and I know that many noble Lords feel proud, as I do, to live in a country where millions of our fellow British citizens of Muslim faith live their lives and play their part in our national life at all levels. We should never forget that there is a constant need to win hearts and minds. That has been a significant feature of this debate, which I am sure we will come back to. Comments have been made by many noble Lords about the Prevent programme. Indeed, to counter what the noble Lord, Lord Pearson of Rannoch, said just a few minutes ago, it is worth reminding the House what the British Muslim scholars and imams said about ISIL just a few days ago:

"They are perpetrating the worst crimes against humanity. This is not jihad—it is a war against all humanity".

Lord Pearson of Rannoch: My Lords, the noble Lord has misquoted me—

Lord Bach: No, I am not going to take the intervention.

ISIL's modus operandi has been to attack minority groups—Christians, Yazidis, Turkmens, Shias, Kurds—on either side of the Syrian-Iraqi frontier. We heard today about the Kurds in northern Syria close to the Turkish border who have been made refugees. These are minorities that clearly cannot defend themselves and are often faced with a choice that is actually no choice—convert or die. Just to say it shows how completely unacceptable ISIL's behaviour is and how it cannot remain unanswered.

However, even limited military intervention brings unforeseen and uncertain circumstances. If in a short while the other place supports the Motion before it, it will be supporting action to prevent at least the foreseeable and certain killings of Sunni, Shia, Kurdish, Christian and Yazidi Iraqis by ISIL, and this country will be supporting action that has broad support in the region and follows, as we have heard, a direct request from the democratically elected Government of Iraq.

I will repeat what the Opposition need to be satisfied of before supporting the Government's proposal in another place: just cause; proposed action is a last resort; proportionality; a reasonable prospect of success; a legal base, of course; and broad regional support. On all those bases, we are happy to support the Government today but of course it is a mark of our freedoms and our democracy that the Opposition can and will continue to question, probe and scrutinise. We believe the Government have a duty in these circumstances to act in the national interest and it is the duty of the Opposition to support them when they are acting in the national interest, as they are in this case. I hope that in the time ahead—and I am sure that the Minister will be able to agree to this—the Government will ensure that the House is brought up to date at all times and that debates will be held where and when necessary.

The House will be united in its wholehearted support for the men and women of the Armed Forces who will take part in the perilous action with skill, courage and their characteristic devotion to duty—and, of course, our hearts should be with the families who they leave behind. As for ground troops, our view is that the Government are right to resist putting substantial combat forces back into Iraq. There does not seem to be much public or parliamentary support for such action. But, as importantly, it would undermine an essential point that needs to be made again and again to the Iraqi Government and their Sunni Arab neighbours—that this has to be their fight, if it is to be successful.

The fight against ISIL is, at its core, a struggle for the future of the Sunni world, so it is crucial that Sunni Governments have not only offered support but are participating in the multilateral mission. ISIL is too entrenched, well equipped and wealthy to be defeated by air power alone, and it cannot be defeated on the ground with someone to replace it on the ground. Notwithstanding the very impressive capabilities of the Peshmerga, that will take time, given the current condition of the Iraqi army. Air strikes are essential to

[LORD BACH]

stem ISIL's advance and degrade and destroy its operations and, at the very least, to contain them. However, we should be clear that these objectives of containment and disrupting and weakening ISIL must be in the service of creating the conditions for the new form of governance in Sunni Iraq. There must be an underpinning by a clear political strategy. The ultimate answer lies in local politics, not in external intervention.

The commencement to military action should not be a signal that the time for diplomacy is over. We have a duty to devise a comprehensive and effective political and diplomatic strategy for eliminating the threat of ISIL throughout the Middle East. So while today we have a clear legal, moral and political mandate to act to help to defeat ISIL in Iraq, we must also acknowledge that this mission brings with it unforeseen consequences and acknowledge that military action alone will not defeat ISIL. That is why the international community's military response to the threat that ISIL poses is just one element of a long-term multinational political strategy in the region. As my noble friend Lord Foulkes said, it is necessary but not sufficient.

ISIL is a real and present danger, not just to the Middle East but to all of us. The world is too small for Britain to be able to just look the other way and say, "Well, this is really nothing to do with us". This appalling mixture of medieval barbarism and state-of-the-art modern technology and finance has to be stood up to. Britain has to play its part in that enterprise. Force is not enough but, without it, does anyone seriously believe that ISIL can be contained, let alone defeated?

4.03 pm

The Advocate-General for Scotland (Lord Wallace of Tankerness) (LD): My Lords, I start by associating myself with the noble Lord, Lord Bach, in thanking all noble Lords who have taken part in this important debate. There is probably nothing more serious than inviting Parliament and your Lordships' House to consider issues of substantial military action. The benefit of your Lordships' House is that a huge reservoir of expertise can be brought to bear in debates such as these, as well as political, military and diplomatic and a wide range of community and civic knowledge and experience. It has been a very serious debate, and I am very grateful to all those who have taken part. As my noble friend Lord Alderdice said at the beginning, while the other place will take the actual decision on a Motion, your Lordships' House can consider the wider questions and proffer constructive advice to Her Majesty's Government. That is very much what we have seen.

I welcome the fact that, with only a few exceptions, there has been widespread support for the proposal that the Government are putting in their Motion in the House of Commons. That is very welcome, particularly if it is passed on to those who will go into operation, so that they know they do so with widespread backing from Parliament.

I do not want to elaborate on the sheer abhorrence and barbarity of ISIL because that has been said by many who have contributed to the debate. While in no way minimising or detracting from other expressions

of that barbarity, important points were made by the noble Baronesses, Lady Symons of Vernham Dean and Lady O'Neill of Bengarve, about the particular venom and violence directed towards women. That puts very graphically the nature of those with whom we are dealing.

My noble friend Lord Alton asked about the International Criminal Court. My understanding is that any decision to refer those who perpetrate such barbarity to the International Criminal Court must be made on the basis of what would be the most effective means to bring the perpetrators of such atrocities to account. Iraq is not party to the ICC so any referral would need to be through the UN Security Council. However, I can assure the noble Lord that we will continue to look at every available option to ensure accountability and to work with our international partners on what can best be done to assist victims and bring those responsible to justice.

A number of noble Lords said that ISIL is not an enemy that can be negotiated with. While diplomacy has a major role to play in strengthening the regional alliances that are essential for the stability of the Middle East, no diplomatic deal can be done with ISIL. Left unchecked, it will continue its advances in the region and continue to intensify its fight against the West, including with attacks on European soil. We reach for military action not as the first port of call, but as a last resort. It is important to recognise, as the noble Lord, Lord Jay of Ewelme, said, that we do this with our eyes open. That was reflected by many who contributed to the debate. As the noble Lord, Lord Desai, said, this will take time. It would be very naive to assume, if there were to be air strikes this weekend, that it would all be finished by Christmas. We have to be realistic about this.

We also recognise that we are engaging in this not in isolation, but as part of a broader coalition, including the Arab states. It is a coalition that is in the service of the Iraqi Government. The targets of our air strikes will be carefully selected and with a clear aim: to help the legitimate authorities in Iraq to destroy ISIL. I cannot agree with the noble Lord, Lord Bilimoria, that we are somewhat late to the party. The United Kingdom Government have taken other actions. We have been very much at the fore of getting United Nations resolutions to try to cut off streams of funding to ISIL. During the recent NATO summit in Wales we were very much leading the discussions and considerations as to how we could build up coalitions.

The coalition is involved not only in military strikes, but in providing arms to Iraq and the KRG. It includes a wide range of countries—for time, I will not list them all. There are those that give other assistance, including humanitarian aid, or take action to tackle ISIL's financing and foreign fighters. It is a coalition of 60 nations. Looking very specifically at how this is working, I am advised by my noble friend Lord Astor that one of the planes the UAE contributed to the military strike in Syria earlier this week had a female pilot. It is interesting that there are things that might have been thought unthinkable in how different interests and countries bring what they can to bear against ISIL.

The noble Baroness, Lady Symons of Vernham Dean, asked about China. There was a UN Security Council resolution this week, which was not in any way opposed by China, that recognised the threat of terrorism from organisations, including ISIL.

The noble Lord, Lord Reid of Cardowan, was absolutely right when he said that we require a strategy that goes beyond military capability. If all we were bringing to the debate today was military action in the form of air strikes, I think we would be on weak ground. The noble Lord, Lord Hunt of Kings Heath, in opening for the Opposition, made a measured and constructive speech. He talked about the need not only for a military action but for one that is supported as part of a wider diplomatic and political humanitarian approach. That is very much what we believe is necessary here. The noble Lord, Lord Browne of Ladyton, said that military action must be part of a wider political strategy. And of course, as I have mentioned, diplomatic efforts are being made. I have already mentioned specifically what would be done in the United Nations to try to ensure that effective action will be taken to stem the financial flow to ISIL, but the political context in this case is very important as well.

A number of noble Lords mentioned the change of Government in Iraq from Mr al-Maliki's Administration to the one with Mr al-Abadi. It is important to recognise that the new Government include appointments from the country's main Shia, Sunni and Kurdish communities. My understanding is that when my right honourable friend the Prime Minister saw Mr al-Abadi in New York on Wednesday, he urged him to reach out to all communities, and notably to Iraqi Sunnis and Kurds. He has committed to reforms, including decentralising power, reforming and restructuring the security forces and improving relations with Iraq's neighbours. He has announced a series of measures to reach out to the Sunni communities, including reform of the judiciary and security forces, and has already brought back into government some who opposed Mr al-Maliki's divisiveness. That is an encouraging start, but I think everyone recognises that it is just that: a start. We must look to the new Iraqi Government as they deliver change and build trust so that they can unite against the threat they face. It would also be fair to say that no amount of military equipment or training can assist a military force that does not have political cohesion, a clear direction and a common purpose. I therefore believe strongly that a political settlement is a key part of the solution to this crisis.

Closely linked to that is a point that was expressed very well by my noble friend Lord Kirkwood of Kirkhope, who has experience, having been to the region. Part of this is building up an infrastructure. It is about water supplies, electricity supplies, health provision and education. It is important to recognise that the initial humanitarian response that was requested by the Iraqi Government earlier in the summer has resulted in an important contribution of life-saving aid being made. I take the point made by my noble friend about looking again at more specific humanitarian aid being directed towards Iraq, and I will ensure that it is brought to the attention of my right honourable friend the Secretary of State for International Development.

For the wider area and Syria, the United Kingdom Government have allocated £329 million to partners providing humanitarian assistance. We have provided support to Lebanon and Jordan. One of the specific initiatives that I would like to draw to noble Lords' attention is that more than 6.6 million children across Syria and the wider region are in need because more than half of them are out of school. There is a fear about a lost generation of Syrian children who have experienced trauma and displacement. We have seen the No Lost Generation initiative to increase support for education, psychosocial support and protection for Syrian children. The United Kingdom is supporting organisations in Syria and the region in this. That is the kind of initiative that is important and must be seen as part of the effort. None of this alone is the solution; it must be part of an overall diplomatic, political and humanitarian approach.

The question of Syria came up on a number of occasions. Perhaps I may reiterate what my noble friend the Leader of the House said in opening the debate. The Government's position is that we believe that there is a strong case for the United Kingdom to join in international action against ISIL in Syria, because ISIL must be defeated in both Iraq and Syria. We expressed our support for the air strikes conducted by the United States and five Arab nations against ISIL in Syria.

However, the proposal and Motion before the House of Commons today relates to the action that we as a country propose to take in Iraq. I reiterate that the Government will return to the House of Commons for a separate decision if we propose to take military action against ISIL and Syria. The noble Baroness, Lady Symons, and others, including the noble Lords, Lord Anderson and Lord Bach, asked about your Lordships' House. Having recently discussed this on the Bench with my noble friend, I think it is inconceivable that, after a decision of that magnitude has been taken in the House of Commons, this House would not also have an opportunity to express a view similar to the way that we have done today. However, as the noble Lord, Lord Bach, indicated, this is different inasmuch as we have been recalled, and I am sure that if there are events when we are sitting, there will be an opportunity for the Government to be held to account, as well as opportunities for the Government to keep the House informed of developments.

Some things have been said about co-operating with the Syrian authorities. As I think the noble Lord, Lord Hannay, said, President Assad is part of the problem and not part of the solution. His actions in Syria have driven many people into the arms of organisations such as ISIL. However, we believe that there is a role for us. The noble Lord, Lord Hannay, also asked about the Geneva initiative. We believe that an inclusive political settlement in Syria is very pressing to bring together all Syria's communities. A lasting political settlement has been our aim. The new United Nations special envoy, Staffan de Mistura, recently made his first visit to the region and we certainly support his efforts to bring about a political solution. We believe that the Geneva II talks failed because President Assad indicated that he was not willing to negotiate seriously with the Syrian opposition, but I

[LORD WALLACE OF TANKERNESS]

assure the House that we will give such support as we can to the efforts being made by the new UN special envoy.

I was asked about Iran. The statement that we issued after the Prime Minister met President Rouhani on Wednesday this week was that the Prime Minister and the President noted the threat posed to the whole region by ISIL and agreed that all states in the region must do more to cut off support for all terrorist groups, including financial support. The Prime Minister welcomes the support that the Iranian Government have given the new Government of Iraq and their efforts to promote more inclusive governance for all Iraqis. He argued that a similar approach was needed in Syria to promote a transition to a new Government capable of representing all Syrians.

With regard to Turkey, it is a great tribute to the Turkish authorities that 847,000 refugees have entered Turkey, including 130,000 in the last week alone. This Government very much welcome Turkey's generosity and the challenge it has taken on in hosting refugees, and we would certainly urge Turkey to keep its borders open.

Finally, one of your Lordships said that if we do not take action in the streets of Iraq, we will deal with the problem on the streets of the United Kingdom. My noble friend the Leader of the House indicated in her opening speech a number of the actions and initiatives that the Government are pursuing and intend to pursue to improve our homeland security. For example, we will obviously want to give serious consideration to observations, recommendations and advice from the independent reviewer of terrorism legislation, David Anderson QC. However, a number of those who contributed to the debate—not least the noble Lord, Lord Bach—drew attention to the fact that many Muslim people hold many positions in, and contribute widely to, our community and to what is strong and good in the United Kingdom. We must make sure that when we undertake any actions, we recognise that there are indeed many British Muslims who have spoken out against ISIL. That is exemplified by the Not In My Name initiative—a campaign which has been pursued very widely. As my noble friend Lord Paddick said, Islamic terrorism is a contradiction in terms.

These are very difficult times for the Muslim community in Britain. One can readily understand why people get angered and dismayed by the way in which their religion has been perverted by violent extremists and by the way the word “Islam” can be heard every night on the TV in the context of brutal atrocities. It would be unacceptable to see any rise in Islamophobia and anti-Semitism. However, that is what organisations such as al-Qaeda and ISIL want to foment. They are determined to engineer hatred and division between people of different faiths and none. Let us be very clear. Islam is a religion of peace, it is welcome in Britain, and it is entirely compatible with the British way of life and our values. It is important that we make that abundantly clear.

Finally, there is the question of ideas, which the most reverend Primate the Archbishop of Canterbury raised in his contribution, and which was echoed by other noble Lords in our debate such as the noble Lord, Lord Hylton, the right reverend Prelate the Bishop of Derby, and others. They said that we must have a competing vision to that offered by ISIL. That is not just a matter for government; it goes much wider than that, to the religious faiths and to our community at large, and we will not solve it in a four or five-hour debate on a Friday afternoon. However, it is fundamental that we offer something that is seen to be much more compelling, which people feel that they can adhere to and want to champion, rather than the barbarity and the distorted and depraved values that people are so regrettably going to Syria and Iraq to champion. That is a challenge to all of us.

Again, I thank all noble Lords who have contributed. I apologise that in a relatively short time I did not have the opportunity to pick up on every point. I will say in closing only that while it may be presumptuous to anticipate the result of the Division at the other end of our Palace in just over half an hour's time, the expectation is that the Motion before the House of Commons will be carried. With that in mind, we wish our service men and women, who will be acting in operations as a result of that, every success. They go with our best wishes.

Noble Lords: Hear, hear!

Motion agreed.

House adjourned at 4.22 pm.

Written Statements

*Statements received between Thursday 31 July 2014
and Monday 4 August 2014*

Correction to Lords Written Answer

Statement

The Minister of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills & Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Livingston of Parkhead) (Con): I wish to inform the House that the Answer I gave to the Countess of Mar on 22 July (Official Report: col. *WA 182*), copied below, requires clarification.

The Minister of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills & Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Livingston of Parkhead) (Con): Data showing the volume (kilograms) of UK imports of aspartame during 2000-2013 is given in Table 1 below. The figures are sourced from HMRC's Overseas Trade Statistics database.

Table 1: UK imports of aspartame (HS code 21069092)

<i>Year</i>	<i>Net mass (kgs)</i>
2013	76,393,895
2012	85,600,024
2011	63,298,987
2010	54,483,436
2009	51,466,542
2008	58,734,046
2007	50,538,317
2006	59,274,993
2005	56,112,033
2004	63,320,625
2003	61,259,916
2002	43,939,777
2001	40,554,490
2000	29,438,869

Source:

HMRC Overseas Trade Statistics database

Note:

HS 21069092 = Food preparations, n.e.s., not containing milkfats, sucrose, isoglucose starch or glucose or containing, by weight, < 1,5% milkfat, < 5% sucrose or isoglucose, < 5% glucose or < 5% starch" only.

HMRC have confirmed that UK import figures for aspartame are contained within HMRC Overseas Trade Statistics database code HS 21069092, which (as noted in the footnote above) captures a range of food preparations; we are unable to split the data to show the volume (kilograms) of UK imports of aspartame during 2000-2013 separately.

I am writing to the noble Countess and a copy of my letter will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

*Statements received between Tuesday 5 August 2014
and Monday 1 September 2014*

Armed Forces Pay Review Body: Appointments

Statement

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Defence (Lord Astor of Hever) (Con): My right honourable friend the Secretary of State for Defence (Mr Michael Fallon) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

I am pleased to announce that I have appointed Professor Kenneth Mayhew and Rear Admiral (Ret'd) Jonathan Westbrook as members of the Armed Forces' Pay Review Body. The appointments will last until 28 February 2018 and the process has been conducted in accordance with the guidance of the Office of the Commissioner for Public Appointments.

Guardianship of Property and Affairs of Missing Persons

Statement

The Minister of State, Ministry of Justice (Lord Faulks) (Con): My honourable friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Justice and Minister of State for the Courts and Legal Aid has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

On 8 April 2014 I made a Written Ministerial Statement reporting the Statement of the same date made by my Noble Friend, the Minister of State for Civil Justice and Legal Policy (Lord Faulks QC), announcing that the Ministry of Justice was continuing to prepare a consultation paper on the possible creation of a status of guardian of the property and affairs of missing persons and that it intended to publish the paper as soon as possible and in any event by the end of August [*Official Report* 08 April 2014, Column WS126].

I am pleased to announce that the consultation paper *Guardianship of the Property and Affairs of Missing Persons* was published on 27 August and that the consultation period will close on 18 November. The consultation paper is aimed at anyone with an interest in the property and affairs of those who go missing and I should like to encourage anyone with such an interest to respond.

The Government will decide whether to create a status of guardian of the property and affairs of missing persons once it has considered the responses to the consultation. My Noble Friend, Lord Faulks QC, will make a further statement at that time.

Interoperability of UK Criminal Records

Statement

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Bates) (Con): My honourable friend the Minister for Security and Immigration (James Brokenshire) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

Today we have completed work to connect Northern Ireland criminal records to those of the rest of the UK. For the first time, this will provide interoperability through an automated link between the Police Service Northern Ireland and all other UK police forces. This will allow the searching of all criminal records and associated fingerprints via a national system.

This will improve public protection, enhance counterterrorism capability, assist crime solving (including previously unsolved cases) and further strengthen the protection of the UK borders.

This work delivers against key recommendations made on criminality information management by Lord Bichard, Sir Ian Magee and Mrs Sunita Mason, CBE.

Transport Infrastructure: Network Rail

Statement

The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Baroness Kramer) (LD): My Right Honourable friend, the Secretary of State for Transport (Patrick McLoughlin), has made the following Ministerial Statement:

In December 2013, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) announced that, due to a change in European reporting rules, Network Rail Limited with all of its subsidiaries would be reclassified as a central government body¹. That decision takes effect today, and Network Rail is now a public sector arm's-length body of the Department for Transport.

The Government has approached its response to the ONS decision in partnership with Network Rail, with an emphasis firmly on the preservation of Network Rail's ability to continue to manage its business with appropriate commercial freedom, within effective regulatory and control frameworks appropriate for a company in the public sector.

Today, I am publishing a Framework Agreement between the Department for Transport and Network Rail which sets out how both bodies will interact in terms of corporate governance and financial management. By working closely with Network Rail, my department has delivered a framework that provides appropriate accountability to Parliament and the taxpayer while preserving Network Rail's operational independence. This both keeps clear Network Rail's accountability for its performance and maintains the regulatory process managed by ORR to give industry the confidence to plan for the long term.

Given that Network Rail is now part of the public sector and government's accounts, I will fulfil an enhanced role in overseeing the company. The Framework Agreement sets out how I and my officials will take on new responsibilities:

I will appoint future Chairs of Network Rail and approve or be consulted on other key governance changes.

I will approve Network Rail's remuneration policy and pay for Executive Directors.

These changes have been reflected in Network Rail's Articles of Association and agreed by Network Rail Members on 29th August 2014.

My department will also ensure that Network Rail complies with Parliamentary reporting requirements, Managing Public Money and other relevant public sector-wide rules.

I am also publishing a Memorandum of Understanding between the Department for Transport and the Scottish Ministers, setting out how they will be involved in future decisions on Network Rail's governance and financial management, and a Loan Facility Agreement entered into between me and Network Rail Infrastructure Limited.

Copies of both documents have been placed in the libraries of both Houses of Parliament.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/network-rail-reclassification-memorandum-of-understanding>

Statements received between Tuesday 2 September and Monday 8 September 2014

Children: Sexual Abuse

Statement

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Bates) (Con): My right honourable friend the Secretary of State for the Home Department (Theresa May) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

Further to my statement to the House on 7 July and my WMS of 9 July, I am pleased to announce that I have appointed Fiona Woolf CBE, JP to be the chairman of the independent inquiry panel of experts in the law and child protection, to consider whether public bodies – and other, non-state, institutions – have taken seriously their duty of care to protect children from sexual abuse.

Fiona Woolf has had a long and distinguished career holding high-profile and challenging positions, including President of the Law Society and Chairman of the Association of Women Solicitors (AWS), and is only the second woman since 1189 to hold the position of Lord Mayor of London. As a lawyer, and latterly partner, at CMS Cameron McKenna for over 20 years, Fiona Woolf has worked in over 40 jurisdictions. She has advised over 25 governments and multi-lateral agencies such as the World Bank. She has also served as a member of the Competition Commission for 8 years.

I am confident that Fiona Woolf has the skills and experience needed to set the strategic direction of the Inquiry, to lead the work of the Panel, and to challenge individuals and institutions without fear or favour to get to the bottom of this issue, and stop it happening again.

To help her in this role, and to ensure that the Inquiry delivers the thorough, robust and independent review that I have promised, she will be supported by a panel of distinguished experts, and will be able to call upon expert advisers as required.

It is vital that the panel has access to independent expert legal advice and I am pleased to be able to announce that Counsel to the Inquiry will be Ben Emmerson QC,

founder of Matrix Chambers and one of the UK's most distinguished lawyers in the field of national and international human rights law. I can also confirm two panel members: Graham Wilmer MBE, founder of the Lantern Project, which was established in 2003 to provide help and support for survivors of sexual abuse and Barbara Hearn OBE, former deputy Chief Executive of the National Children's Bureau. Each of them has a track record of giving a voice to vulnerable people and will bring important expertise and experience to the Inquiry.

I can also announce that Professor Alexis Jay has agreed to act as an expert adviser to the panel. Her recent report 'Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham (1997 – 2013)' exposed a terrible example of child sexual abuse and exploitation; and her experience and insight will, I am sure, be of benefit to the Inquiry.

The other panel members will be announced in due course once they have been appointed by the chairman.

Fiona Woolf will agree the terms of reference with the full panel, once they are appointed, to ensure that they are sufficient to deliver the robust Inquiry which is required. I will report back to the House on this as soon as possible.

Crime Reduction

Statement

The Minister of State, Ministry of Justice (Lord Faulks) (Con): My right honourable friend the Minister of State for Policing, Criminal Justice and Victims (Mike Penning) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

I will today publish the response to the Justice Committee's First Report of Session 2014-15: Crime Reduction Policies – a co-ordinated approach?

The Government is proud of its strong record at reducing crime. The most recent figures from the Crime Survey for England and Wales show that overall crime has fallen by 62% since its peak in 1995, and is now at the lowest level since the survey began in 1981.

The Government has put robust measures in place to ensure that crime continues to fall; offenders receive robust punishments; and that the unacceptably high rates of reoffending are driven down. We are also placing high quality education at the centre of youth custody to prevent future offending.

The public and victims deserve a fair and transparent justice system that effectively deters and punishes offenders, and tackles the stubbornly high rates of reoffending and this is the primary focus of our Transforming Rehabilitation reforms.

We are opening up the market to a diverse range of providers to ensure that we get the best out of the public, voluntary and private sectors, at the local as well as national level. Bids to run the Community Rehabilitation Companies were received at the end of June and we look to have a healthy competition in all Contract Package Areas, having received over 80 bids, with an average of four bidders per area. The new payment incentives we will introduce for market providers

will also ensure a relentless focus on reforming offenders, giving providers flexibility to do what works but only paying them in full for real reductions in reoffending.

Under our reforms for the first time in recent history virtually every offender released from custody will receive statutory supervision and rehabilitation in the community, to finally address the glaring gap that sees 50,000 short-term prisoners released onto the streets each year with little or no support, free to go back to their criminal ways.

We are also putting in place an unprecedented nationwide 'through the prison gate' resettlement service, meaning the majority of offenders will be given continuous support by one provider from custody into the community. We will support this by ensuring that most offenders are held in a prison designated to their area for at least three months prior to release.

Finally, we have created a new public sector National Probation Service, working to protect the public and building upon the expertise and professionalism which are already in place.

Copies of the paper will be available in the Vote Office and in the Printed Paper Office. The document will also be online at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/crime-reduction-policies-a-coordinated-approach-the-governments-response>.

Defence Procurement

Statement

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Defence (Lord Astor of Hever) (Con): My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence (Mr Michael Fallon) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

I am pleased to announce the successful contract award worth £3.5 billion (Ex VAT) to General Dynamics UK (GDUK) to deliver a minimum fleet of 589 Scout Specialist Vehicles (Scout SV) to the British Army. This will sustain a minimum of 1,300 jobs across the UK. Deliveries of the Scout SV are planned to commence in 2017. The training establishment and first squadron will be equipped by mid-2019 to allow conversion to begin with a brigade ready to deploy from the end of 2020.

Scout SV will transform the Army's combat capabilities and will introduce new and very advanced intelligence, surveillance, target acquisition and reconnaissance capabilities. These vehicles will be the eyes and ears of commanders on the battlefields of the future and will carry a revolutionary and highly effective cannon.

Vehicle development has drawn on the lessons of recent operations. Scout SV will be a modern, tough, well-protected, highly mobile and agile tracked vehicle, able to cope with the most difficult terrain anywhere in the world, 24 hours a day and able to hold its own against the threats we foresee. It will replace the Army's existing force of Combat Vehicle Reconnaissance (Tracked) vehicles which have given exemplary service for the past 40 years all over the world, most recently in Afghanistan.

Scout SV will fulfil nine different roles from six variants: a turreted variant mounting a 40-mm cannon fulfilling the Scout, Ground Based Surveillance and Joint Fire Control roles, a Protected Mobility Reconnaissance Support (PMRS) variant providing an armoured personnel carrier and Formation Reconnaissance Overwatch, Command and Control, Engineer Reconnaissance, Recovery and Repair variants.

Immigration Act 2014: Landlords *Statement*

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Bates) (Con): My honourable friend the Immigration and Security Minister (James Brokenshire) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

I am announcing today the location in which the measures relating to landlords as prescribed by sections 20-37 of the Immigration Act 2014 will first be implemented. The Immigration Act 2014 contains a range of measures to reform and streamline the immigration system and address illegal immigration. It introduces restrictions on illegal immigrants accessing rented housing. When these provisions come into force, landlords will be prohibited from letting residential accommodation to people who have been disqualified by virtue of their immigration status.

The Government has committed to a phased implementation of these provisions with the measures initially coming into force in one location, followed by an evaluation to inform decisions on further roll-out. I wish to inform the House that after careful consideration, the scheme is to be implemented first in Birmingham, Wolverhampton, Dudley, Walsall and Sandwell. The new measures will commence in this area from 1 December.

To assist and advise the implementation and evaluation of the measures, the Government is convening a Consultative Panel. The Panel consists of bodies that represent landlords, letting agents, housing and homeless charities and others with an informed interest in the matter, and will also include representatives from the local authorities in these areas. This will ensure that the first phase can be thoroughly evaluated and considered as part of the decision making process on further roll-out.

Iraq *Statement*

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Defence (Lord Astor of Hever) (Con): My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence (Mr Michael Fallon) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

I wish to provide an update to the House on military activity in Iraq.

The ambition to create an extremist caliphate in the heart of Iraq and Syria is a direct threat to our own security in the UK. The Government is committed to using its aid, diplomatic, political and military expertise to focus on three objectives: alleviating the humanitarian

suffering; to promoting an inclusive, sovereign and democratic Iraq; and working with the international community to tackle the broader threat the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) poses to the region and countries around the world, including the UK.

As the House will be aware, following the advances of ISIL and the threat it posed to the civilian population, we received requests for assistance from the Iraqi government and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG).

Working with international partners and other departments in Government, the Ministry of Defence has assisted in alleviating the immediate humanitarian situation, and in providing help so the Iraqi authorities can contain and push back ISIL and protect the civilian population.

Between 9 and 14 August, the UK delivered a total of 75 tonnes of humanitarian aid (provided by the Department for International Development) (DfID) over Mount Sinjar through seven successful C-130 aircraft sorties. This aid was delivered to help thousands of Iraqis who had been displaced by ISIL. These flights were fully integrated with the US and included participation from the Royal Australian Air Force. UK operations ceased when the operation was concluded by US Central Command. RAF Akrotiri hosted the air transport used to drop humanitarian aid, as well as four CH-47 Chinook helicopters which prepared for a potential evacuation of displaced people from the mountain.

Overnight on 30/31 August, two UK C-130s dropped 13.8 tonnes of DfID aid to the town of Amerli, near Kirkuk, which had been under siege from ISIL for several weeks. This was part of a coalition effort of US, French and Australian aircraft which provided enough water for Amerli for two days and enough food for four days.

The RAF have also carried out Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance missions to better understand the situation on the ground. Between 13 and 16 August, ten surveillance sorties were undertaken by UK Tornado GR4 aircraft. On 30/31 August, a further Tornado sortie flew a surveillance mission in support of the aid drops to Amerli. A UK Rivet Joint aircraft has also been deployed to improve our understanding. A Voyager aircraft has provided support to these operations through air-to-air refuelling.

In response to requests from the Iraqi government and the KRG we have also taken part in international efforts to help the Iraqi authorities contain and push back ISIL. UK C-17 and C-130 transport aircraft have delivered to the KRG ammunition and equipment from other nations, including small arms and rocket-propelled grenades with which the Kurdish security forces are already familiar. We are also gifting UK non-lethal equipment, including helmets and body armour, to the KRG. These flights transited through Baghdad for inspection and approval by the Iraqi government and the deliveries have been supported by a small Operational Liaison and Reconnaissance Team deployed to Erbil to support the move and transfer of the equipment. We have been joined in these supply flights by other countries, including the Canadians. The US is coordinating delivery of these supplies

through military and State Department personnel in Iraq, and we will continue to liaise with them and the KRG's Ministry of Peshmerga through our own military and Foreign and Commonwealth Office representatives in Erbil. Our support has not involved troops in a combat role on the ground.

Lt General Sir Simon Mayall, currently the Defence Senior Advisor for the Middle East, has also been appointed as the Government's Security Envoy to the Kurdistan Region of Iraq. His role will be to assess what other needs the Kurds have and where the UK can assist. He has spent the last week in Iraq, and has been coordinating closely with Iraqi authorities, holding meetings in Baghdad as well as Erbil.

As the situation develops I will continue to keep the House informed of Defence activities.

Office for Budget Responsibility: External Review

Statement

The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Deighton) (Con): My right honourable friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer (George Osborne) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

Today the first external review of the independent Office for Budget Responsibility (OBR) has been published and presented to Parliament. Formally reporting to the OBR non-executives, the review was led by Kevin Page, former Parliamentary Budget Officer in Canada. In commissioning this report, the OBR non-executives meet their legal requirement to ensure an external review is conducted at least every five years.

In its findings, this report overwhelmingly supports the high quality work and independent analysis produced by the OBR. The review therefore attests to the government's creation of the OBR in 2010 which has placed the UK at the forefront of fiscal institutional reform internationally. In giving the OBR a duty to produce official economic and fiscal forecasts, this government has ensured that for the first time we have a truly independent assessment of the state of the nation's finances.

The government welcomes the review's overall findings and recommendations. These aim to ensure the long-term sustainability of the organisation and include the recommendation that 'caution be exercised in considering any expansion to the OBR's mandate (e.g. costing certification of opposition manifestos).'

Alongside the OBR, the Treasury will consider the full recommendations and conclusions of the report in more detail. Building on the analysis and conclusions of this independent report, the government has already announced its intention to conduct its own review of the OBR at the start of the next Parliament.

The external review report was presented before Parliament earlier today and copies are available in the Vote Office and Printed Paper Office. Copies will also be made available to members of the public online.

Office of the Public Guardian

Statement

The Minister of State, Ministry of Justice (Lord Faulks) (Con): The Minister of State for Justice and Civil Liberties (Simon Hughes):

On 21 August, the Government published the response to the consultation paper Transforming the Services of the Office of the Public Guardian: Enabling Digital by Default which sought the views on the next phase of our proposals to transform the services provided by the Office of the Public Guardian (OPG). This reinforces our commitment to implementing the 'digital by default' approach in public services.

The response announced:

- The introduction of new simplified forms for Lasting Powers of Attorney which will make it easier for those customers wishing to use the paper-based service;
- An expansion of the range of resubmitted LPA cases where a reduced application fee applies, to include those whose current LPA could only be registered after an application has been made to the Court of Protection;
- Our thinking for the future supervision of deputies.

I would urge anyone with an interest in the Office of the Public Guardian to read the response.

I have deposited copies of the response paper in the Libraries of both Houses. Copies are also available in the Vote Office and Printed Paper Office. Copies are available on the internet at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/transforming-the-services-of-the-office-of-the-public-guardian-enabling-digital-by-default>.

Pensions

Statement

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions (Lord Freud) (Con): My right honourable friend the Minister for Pensions (Steve Webb MP) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

I am pleased to announce the Government intends to remove the annual contribution limit and transfer restrictions on NEST, to ensure all businesses can be confident that this low cost and easy to use scheme is among the options they can choose to enrol their workforce.

NEST was set up to support automatic enrolment. It was designed to provide a quality, low-cost pension scheme focused on a target market of low to moderate earners and smaller employers.

NEST currently has over 1.5 million scheme members and is working with over 8,900 employers. The scheme has a public service obligation to accept any worker automatically enrolled by their employer and in recognition of this, NEST receives State aid. To balance

any competitive advantage there are a number of constraints including an annual contribution limit and restrictions on transfers.

In its response to the call for evidence on the impact of the annual contribution limit and the transfer restrictions on NEST, (Cm 8668) published in July 2013, the Government confirmed its intention to lift these two constraints in April 2017. Since then, the European Commission has considered and approved the modifications to the State aid case for NEST. Full details of the Commission's decision are available here: http://ec.europa.eu/competition/state_aid/cases/251386/251386_1567249_105_2.pdf

Accordingly, we will commence a short technical consultation on draft legislation, this autumn, to remove the annual contribution limit and the bulk transfer restrictions on 1 April 2017. We also retain the option to remove the individual transfer restrictions, from 1 October 2015.

Publication of the Annual Tri-Service Recruit Trainee Survey 2013

Statement

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Defence (Lord Astor of Hever) (Con): My honourable friend the Minister for Reserves (Mr Julian Brazier) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

Today I am publishing the 2013 Recruit Trainee Survey Annual Report. All recruits and trainees passing through Phase 1 and 2 training are offered the opportunity to participate in the survey which is anonymous and administered independently on behalf of the Services by an external provider.

The Annual Report contains the views of recruits and trainees about topics such as the preparation for joining, their treatment during Phase 1 and 2 training, food, accommodation, access to instructional and welfare staff and complaints procedures. Overall the results are positive and importantly the findings are used by Service training headquarters and units to monitor the training environment and make improvements.

A version of the full Recruit Trainee Survey 2013 Annual Report has been placed in the Library of the House.

Railways: Franchises

Statement

The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Baroness Kramer) (LD): My Honourable Friend, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport (Claire Perry), has made the following Ministerial Statement:

The Department has concluded negotiations with South West Trains for a Deed of Amendment to their franchise which will deliver the additional capacity set out in the Government's Rail Investment Strategy.

The project is being managed by Stagecoach South Western Trains. In accordance with usual procurement practice, there is a standstill period of 10 days before

Stagecoach Southwest Trains will be in a position to enter into, and complete, the formal contractual documentation and make the award to the successful tenderers and enter into a Deed of Amendment to the current Franchise Agreement. The process is expected to be finalised in the coming week but we have jointly announced our intention to enter into a Deed of Amendment to their Franchise Agreement to deliver the additional capacity set out in the Rail Investment Strategy.

I am very aware of how crowded South West Trains' Suburban services are, particularly in the morning peak. The result of the Department's successful negotiation is 150 new vehicles – Thameslink variants – which will be used on the Windsor Lines, leading to an internal cascade which will deliver a full ten car suburban network, making use of platforms 1 to 4 at Waterloo which Network Rail are extending. The Windsor Line trains will use the platforms at Waterloo International, which are being brought back into full use in 2017. There are a number of additional works along the route and at stations which will deliver benefits for passengers.

In addition, this proposal will provide two more services on the Mainline, which will be the focus of our strategic planning for the next Control Period, which begins in 2019. The two additional services are expected to commence in May 2018 and would start from Woking and from Basingstoke. There would be four additional peak trains from Hounslow, also commencing in May 2018, providing additional capacity on the Suburban network.

Statements received between Tuesday 9 September and Monday 15 September 2014

Climate Change

Statement

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Energy and Climate Change (Baroness Verma) (Con): My right honourable friend the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change (Edward Davey MP) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

Climate change is almost universally recognised as a serious threat to global prosperity, security and well-being. We are already experiencing the impacts of climate change within the UK. Extreme weather events at home and abroad already cause significant costs and disruption to UK businesses, and we are predicted to experience increasingly frequent and severe flooding and are vulnerable to predicted rise in heat waves, storms and gales, as well as rising sea levels which will cause increased encroachment on our coastal areas.

The world is not asking if we need to tackle climate change, but how. Over 90 countries, covering 80% of global emissions, have already pledged to cut their emissions by 2020 under the Copenhagen Accord. But this is not nearly enough to prevent global temperatures exceeding the globally agreed target of 2°C and, as a consequence, the world is increasingly experiencing the worst impacts of climate change. Action is needed on a coordinated global scale from every country in the world.

All countries of the UNFCCC agreed in 2011 to negotiate a global legally binding agreement by 2015, to come into force by 2020. These negotiations are progressing, and will conclude at the 21st UNFCCC Conference of Parties in Paris in December 2015. The UK is at the forefront of helping to shape and deliver this agreement. Paris will not be the end of the road in terms of tackling climate change, but an ambitious agreement would be a huge step forward which we can then build on in the future.

That is why today, I am publishing the UK Government's view on why we need a global deal on climate change, why one is good for the UK and what such a deal needs to look like. 'Paris 2015: Securing our prosperity through a Global Climate Change Agreement' sets out:

- what the science says and what the direct and indirect climate impacts are for the UK and the world, some of which we are already seeing today;
- the benefits of low carbon action for our prosperity, security and well-being, and how many leading British businesses, including SMEs, are already realising the commercial gains from climate action;
- the scale of the challenge, the progress made so far and why we are better placed than we have been for a long time to reach a global agreement and;
- our vision for what a successful global agreement needs to include and the UK's role in helping to deliver that.

The Government is not alone in advocating action. Featuring support from businesses, NGOs and organisations, the publication demonstrates that we are united in our call for global action.

Copies of the publication will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Correction to Lords Written Answer

Statement

An error has been identified in the written answer (HL1757) given on 08 Sep 2014. The correct answer should have been:

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Energy and Climate Change (Baroness Verma) (Con): Energy suppliers provide direct bill support for low income households through the Government's Warm Home Discount scheme. The Warm Homes Discount will increase to give eligible low-income bill payers £140 money off their energy bills, helping over 2 million people including 1.4 million of Britain's most vulnerable pensioners.

There has been consideration of the role of differentiated tariffs as part of the Hills Review of Fuel Poverty, and in the development of Fuel Poverty: Framework for future action and Cutting the cost of keeping warm, the consultation to prepare for a new fuel poverty strategy.

We continue to monitor the impacts of the Ofgem's Retail Market Review and wider Government action to ensure consumers are treated fairly in the energy market and are better able to choose a deal that suits them. We expect to keep the case for further action under review as part of this.

Defence: Iraq Statement

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Defence (Lord Astor of Hever) (Con): My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence (Mr Michael Fallon) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

I am laying a departmental minute today concerning the gifting of military equipment to the Government of Iraq (GoI), including the Kurdish Regional Government. This is at the request of the GoI.

The UK is committed to assisting the GoI by: alleviating the humanitarian suffering of those Iraqis targeted by ISIL terrorists; promoting an inclusive, sovereign and democratic Iraq that can push back on ISIL advances and restore stability and security across the country; and working with the international community to tackle the broader threat that ISIL poses to the region and other countries around the world, including the UK. The Kurdish forces remain significantly less well equipped than ISIL and we are responding to help them defend themselves, protect citizens and push back ISIL advances

The initial gifting package is scheduled to arrive in Iraq on Wednesday 10 September and will consist of heavy machine guns and ammunition. The total cost is approximately £1.6 million plus an estimated £475,000 in transport costs.

ECOFIN Statement

The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Deighton) (Con): My right honourable friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer (George Osborne) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

An Informal meeting of the Economic and Financial Affairs Council will take place in Milan on 12-13 September 2014. This follows immediately after the 11th Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) of Finance Ministers, which will prepare input into the ASEM Summit in mid-October.

At ECOFIN the following working sessions will take place:

Working Session 1:

Ministers will discuss a strategy for the Finance for Growth agenda. The Government looks forward to an exchange of views on measures to improve the financing of the real economy.

Working Session 2:

There will be the usual discussion on the economic outlook and financial stability issue, which will likely consider the euro area's outlook, developments on inflation and growth and potentially issues relating to the ongoing situation in Ukraine.

In preparation of the G20 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors' meeting and the IMF-WB Annual Meetings, Council will be asked to endorse Terms of Reference.

The Commission will present to Council a note for discussion on international cooperation in financial services.

Working Session 3:

There will be an update on the Asset Quality Review and Stress Tests as part of the ECB's comprehensive assessment prior to its assumption of responsibility for banking supervision under the Single Supervisory Mechanism (SSM) in November 2014.

In addition the Commission will update on national arrangements and communication issues on backstops flowing from the comprehensive assessment.

Subsequently, a discussion will take place on the appointment, by Countries signed up the SSM, of members of the Mediation Panel of the ECB.

Finally, Council will be updated on work on the implementing legislation that will determine the contributions to be paid by banks to resolution funds established under the Directive on Bank Recovery and Resolution and the Regulation on the Single Resolution Mechanism.

Working Lunch:

Following discussions by Employment Ministers in July, Finance Ministers will hold an exchange of views on measures to enhance the resilience of the EU and stabilise the euro area economy, including the potential for a common unemployment insurance scheme.

Higher Education: Student Support

Statement

Baroness Williams of Trafford (Con): My Rt Hon Friend the Minister of State for Universities, Science and Cities (Greg Clark) has today made the following statement.

In a Written Ministerial Statement on 7 April 2014 the then Minister for Universities and Science announced proposed changes to Disabled Students' Allowances which are available to Higher Education students from England.

Disabled Students' Allowances are non-repayable grants that assist with the additional costs incurred by disabled students in relation to their study in higher education. Disabled Students' Allowances finance a range of support, including the purchase of computers and specialised equipment, assistance with travel costs and the provision of support workers where necessary. In 2011/12 Disabled Students' Allowances provided support of over £144 million to 61,000 students, funded from the Higher Education Budget. Disabled Students' Allowance continues to be available to support disabled students studying in higher education.

During the Summer I and the Minister of State for Disabled People have listened carefully to suggestions from representatives of disabled students. I have also listened to the views and concerns of representatives across the higher education and disability sectors, as well as receiving representations from Honourable Members.

We are determined to ensure that disabled students should be able to make use of and develop their talents through higher education and that there should be no cap on their aspirations.

There was widespread agreement that universities should discharge their duties under the Equality Act to make reasonable adjustments to accommodate disabled

students, as other organisations do. However, concern was conveyed that some universities may not be able to meet their obligations in full by the beginning of the 2015/16 academic year, given their need to invest in additional support for their students.

With students applying now for places at the beginning of that year it is important that any disabled student should be confident that an institution to which they are considering applying will be able to meet their needs satisfactorily.

Accordingly we have agreed to give Higher Education Institutions until the beginning of the 2016/17 academic year to develop appropriate mechanisms to fully deliver their statutory duty to provide reasonable adjustments, in particular non-medical help, and to improve the processes by which disabled students can appeal against a Higher Education Institution's decision that an adjustment would not be reasonable. We will explore how this might be supported in institutions' Access Agreements with the Office for Fair Access for 2016/17.

For the academic year 2015/16, we will continue to provide Disabled Students' Allowance funding to help with the additional cost of a computer and assistive software if needed solely because of the student's impairment. This will be subject to the student contributing the first £200 of the computer's cost – broadly equivalent to the cost of a basic computer. For future academic years we will explore a bulk purchasing scheme for such computers to keep costs down.

Additional items such as printers and consumables will not be automatically provided, with alternative provision in the form of university provided services such as printing services and books and journals in electronic format to be considered as alternatives.

Funding will remain available towards the additional costs of specialised accommodation for disabled students, other than where the accommodation is provided by the institution or an agent of the institution.

A number of commentators made proposals to streamline the assessment process for Disabled Students' Allowance to reduce the burden for students, universities and the taxpayer. The Minister of State for Disabled People and I will invite representatives to consider how that might be achieved.

The changes summarised in this Statement other than non-medical help changes will apply to all full-time, full-time distance learning, part-time and postgraduate students applying for Disabled Students' Allowances for the first time in respect of an academic year beginning on or after 1 September 2015. This provides sufficient time for us to work with institutions and stakeholders to ensure the changes are introduced effectively. All changes are subject to the ongoing Equality Analysis.

Continuing students already claiming Disabled Students' Allowances and students claiming for 2014/15 entry will remain on the current system of support for 2015/16.

We are grateful to universities, students and their representative bodies for their assistance in informing these changes.

Immigration Act 2014: Fees Statement

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Bates) (Con): My honourable friend the Immigration and Security Minister (James Brokenshire) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

I am today announcing some changes to fees for immigration and nationality applications made to the Home Office. The government reviews these fees on a regular basis and makes appropriate changes as necessary. The amended regulations are for fees set at or below the cost of processing the relevant applications.

We are making some targeted amendments to support the implementation of provisions in the Immigration Act 2014, including expanding the list of application routes required to pay a fee for the enrolment of biometrics. We are also taking the opportunity to amend one other fee to support economic growth.

Further details of the changes are provided in the Explanatory Memorandum for the regulations. The government intends to bring most of these amendments into force from 1 October, though some of the new fees will come into effect later in the year to align with changes to processes. An updated fees table can be found on the Home Office website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/visa-regulations-revised-table>

Full details on how to apply for all of the Home Office's products and services will be provided on the Home Office website:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/uk-visas-and-immigration>

Infrastructure: UK Guarantees Scheme Statement

The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Deighton) (Con): My right honourable friend the Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Danny Alexander) has today made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

The Infrastructure (Financial Assistance) Act 2012 requires the government to report any financial assistance given under the UK Guarantees scheme. The scheme provides a sovereign-backed guarantee to help infrastructure projects raise debt finance. A commercial fee is charged to the borrower for the guarantee, determined by the nature of the guarantee and the risk inherent in the project.

The Government can confirm it has approved guarantees under the UK Guarantees Scheme for Ineos Grangemouth Ethane Import and Storage Facilities (£230/€285million) and Speyside CHP Plant (£48.2million).

Ineos Grangemouth will be constructing new port facilities, a new ethane tank and associated modifications to the KG ethylene cracker. This will reduce dependency on feedstock from the North Sea through the import and storage of ethane from the US. The guarantee issued to Speyside will be used for the construction of a combined heat and power plant which will generate both electricity and heat.

Legislation: Recall of MPs Bill Statement

Lord Wallace of Saltaire (LD): My right honourable friend the Deputy Prime Minister (Nick Clegg) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

Today the Government is introducing the Recall of MPs Bill to the House of Commons, with explanatory notes and an impact assessment.

The Bill puts in place a recall mechanism for MPs which is transparent, robust and fair. It strikes a fair balance between holding to account those who do not maintain certain standards of conduct, while giving MPs the freedom to do their job and make difficult decisions where necessary.

The Bill takes account of a number of helpful recommendations from the Political and Constitutional Reform Committee's pre-legislative scrutiny report on the draft Bill which was published in 2011.

Under the Bill, there are two conditions for the opening of a recall petition; firstly that an MP is convicted in the UK of an offence and receives a custodial sentence of 12 months or less, or secondly that the House of Commons orders the suspension of the MP for at least 21 sitting days (or at least 28 calendar days if the motion is not expressed in terms of sitting days).

Where one of these triggers is met, an MP's constituents will have an opportunity to sign a recall petition, calling for a by-election. If 10% of parliamentary electors in the constituency sign the petition, the MP's seat will become vacant and a by-election will be held. The recall petition process does not prevent the unseated MP from standing in the by-election.

The Bill also sets out the framework for the regulation of campaign expenditure and donations at recall petitions.

A copy of the Bill and explanatory notes can be found on the website:

<http://services.parliament.uk/bills/>

Local Authorities: Public Health Funding Statement

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): My honourable friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State, Department of Health (Jane Ellison) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

Today I am announcing public health allocations for local authorities in England for 2015-16 and details of a new health premium incentive pilot scheme.

After the significant increases in 2013-14 and 2014-15, in real terms funding for local authorities will remain at £2.79 billion for 2015-16. This funding will remain ring-fenced for use exclusively on public health measures, and we are confident of local authorities' continuing ability to sustain and improve the quality of their services in the coming financial year.

Taken together over the period 2013-14 to 2015-16 we have increased public health spending by 4.7 per cent in real terms and over 10 per cent in cash terms. This represents a major investment in health and the prevention of illness.

We will also allocate an additional £5 million towards a new health premium incentive pilot scheme in 2014-15, meeting our commitment to introducing a health premium that will encourage local authorities to improve the health of their populations and will reduce health inequalities. Local authorities are invited to give us their views on this scheme.

Health Premium incentive scheme 2014-15 and public health allocations – a technical consultation, which contains details of the allocations and the incentive scheme, has been placed in the Library. Copies are available to hon Members from the Vote Office and to noble Lords from the Printed Paper Office.

Railways: Franchises

Statement

The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Baroness Kramer) (LD): My Honourable Friend, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Transport (Claire Perry), has made the following Ministerial Statement:

I can announce today (11th September 2014) the successful conclusion of negotiations for a new directly awarded franchise agreement with London & South Eastern Railway Limited (LSER, trading as Southeastern), a subsidiary of Govia. This agreement will see LSER continue to run passenger rail services on the South Eastern franchise for 3 years and 9 months until the start of the services on the next competed franchise, which is expected in the summer of 2018.

LSER will provide continuity of management and experience of the complexities of the routes during the major works at London Bridge, taking place as part of the Thameslink Programme between January 2015 and January 2018, which will affect services throughout the franchise period.

I recognise that LSER has not always met the expectations of passengers and so this agreement contains rigorous satisfaction and performance targets, with financial penalties if they are not met. I am determined that this contract will ensure an improvement for passengers on the franchise. To support this more customer facing staff, including over 100 new staff members, will be provided across the network that will be able to provide advice and assistance for passengers at stations where their presence will be much appreciated.

This agreement sees over £70 million invested by the operator in increased and improved staffing and other improvements for passengers across the franchise. This includes £5.7 million spent on a deep cleaning programme and general improvement works at stations. LSER will increase passenger capacity on the franchise with 95,000 new seats introduced on services, including 1,050 on High Speed trains. They will also strengthen train services and improve performance and reliability through the reduction in splitting and joining of services.

This new contract includes improvements for passengers and better train performance at a reduced subsidy to Government. I am confident that this will secure the long term value of the franchise and deliver real value for passengers and taxpayers.

Statutory Register of Lobbyists

Statement

Lord Wallace of Saltaire (LD): My honourable friend the Minister for the Constitution (Sam Gyimah MP) has made the following Written Ministerial Statement.

Part 1 of the Transparency of Lobbying, Non-party Campaigning and Trade Union Administration Act 2014 provides for a statutory register of consultant lobbyists, which the Government is committed to introducing in good time before the end of the Parliament. The statutory register of consultant lobbyists will increase transparency by requiring those who lobby on behalf of a third party to disclose the names of their clients on a publicly available register.

Today the Cabinet Office is publishing a consultation document on the draft regulations which will provide for certain practical aspects of the register.

The consultation seeks views on draft regulations on: limitations on the duty to supply information to the Registrar; the charging structure; the supply of VAT-registration information to the Registrar by HMRC; and the detail of the information that lobbyists will be required to submit in information returns. The Cabinet Office is also seeking information from lobbyists that will allow the level of the charge in the draft regulation to be set at an appropriate level in the first year.

I have placed copies of the consultation document in the Libraries of both Houses and online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/statutory-register-of-consultant-lobbyists>.

Written Answers

*Answers received between Thursday 31 July 2014
and Monday 4 August 2014*

Afghanistan

Question

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of the current security situation in Afghanistan; and what is their assessment of Taliban intentions. [HL1481]

The Senior Minister of State, Department for Communities and Local Government & Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Warsi) (Con): The security situation in Afghanistan is still challenging, however violence levels remain lower than at the same stage last year, with the exceptions of anticipated spikes in violence on both election polling days. Despite this, the Taliban appear committed to their military campaign and the prospects for an Afghan-led peace process remain difficult in the short-term. We continue to call for the Taliban to enter a peaceful political process with the Afghan government.

Alcoholic Drinks

Question

Asked by Lord Brooke of Alverthorpe

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have had any discussions with their partners in the Responsibility Deal about the recent introduction of vodka sorbet in supermarkets. [HL1508]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): The Department does not discuss individual products with producers or retailers. Alcohol units are clearly labelled on individual products so all consumers can make informed choices. We do have a commitment from over 30 companies to take a billion units of alcohol out of the market by the end of 2015, primarily through improving consumer choice of lower alcohol products.

Antibiotics

Question

Asked by Lord Empey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the risk to public health of the antibiotic-resistant bacteria recently discovered in riverbeds downstream from sewage works. [HL1455]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): Professor Wellington's paper was co-authored by Professor Peter Hawkey, one of Public Health England's (PHE) Lead Microbiologists. Investigating the presence of extended-spectrum β -lactamases (ESBLs) and other antimicrobial resistance genes in

the environment is part of PHE's antimicrobial resistance research programme. Few studies address the presence of ESBLs in the environment and assessing the level of public health risk is not easy.

PHE is assessing the occurrence of ESBL-producing *E. coli* from a variety of non-human sources, including sewage (but not river waters), to identify major reservoirs of the strains that cause human disease and to inform public health risk assessment. This Policy Research Programme-funded project will produce its final report in 2016.

Professor Wellington also reports the first carbapenem-resistant *E. coli* from a United Kingdom river. Carbapenem resistance is considered a critical resistance threat by PHE, the Chief Medical Officer, the Department and the World Health Organization. Although carbapenem resistance rates in the UK are low, the actual number of carbapenem-resistant bacteria seen by PHE from hospitals is increasing year on year. A member of PHE recently reviewed the small but growing number of reports from around the world of carbapenem-resistant strains from non-human sources in collaboration with colleagues from the Animal Health and Veterinary Laboratories Agency and the National Health Service.

The key public health message arising from the latest paper by Professor Wellington's team is that members of the public should always inform their general practice that they've been swimming in rivers/streams if they become ill (most likely with gastro symptoms).

Armed Forces: Officers

Questions

Asked by Lord Moonie

To ask Her Majesty's Government who are the serving officers at 4 star level; and what are their appointments and dates of appointment. [HL1328]

To ask Her Majesty's Government who are the serving officers at 3 star level; and what are their appointments and dates of appointment. [HL1329]

To ask Her Majesty's Government who are the highest-ranked women serving in each branch of HM Armed Forces; and what are their respective ranks. [HL1330]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Defence (Lord Astor of Hever) (Con): Information on 3 star and 4 star appointments and the highest ranking female officers in the Armed Forces are provided in the tables. While no women have yet reached 3 or 4 star the proportion of women in senior military posts is increasing and we are now seeing the best and brightest of our people recognised and promoted, irrespective of gender. We are working to address the under-representation of certain demographic groups, including women. The most tangible evidence of the progress that women have made in getting to the most senior ranks of the Armed Forces is the appointment in 2013 of Air Vice Marshals Elaine West and Sue Gray as the first female two-star officers in the RAF.

3 star officers

<i>Name</i>	<i>Substantive Rank</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Date of appointment</i>
Alan Richards	Vice Admiral	Chief of Defence Intelligence	19/01/2012
Ian Corder	Vice Admiral	UK Military Representative to NATO	30/05/2013
Simon Lister	Vice Admiral	Chief of Materiel (Fleet) / Chief of Fleet Support	27/11/2013
Philip Jones	Vice Admiral	Fleet Commander and Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff	30/11/2012
David Steel	Vice Admiral	Second Sea Lord and Chief of Naval Personnel and Training	10/10/2012
Peter Hudson	Vice Admiral	Commander Maritime Command, NATO	14/02/2013
Simon Mayall	Lieutenant General	Defence Senior Adviser for the Middle East	09/05/2011
Nicholas Carter	Lieutenant General	Commander Land Forces	12/11/2013
Gerald Berragan	Lieutenant General	Adjutant General	20/08/2012
Christopher Deverell	Lieutenant General	Chief of Materiel (Land) and Quarter Master General	10/07/2012
Philip Jones	Lieutenant General	Chief of Staff Supreme Allied Command Transformation	04/10/2013
Timothy Evans	Lieutenant General	Commander Allied Rapid Reaction Corps.	30/08/2013
Jonathan Page	Lieutenant General	Force Development and Training Command	17/02/2012
Andrew Gregory	Lieutenant General	Chief of Defence Personnel	04/04/2013
John Lorimer	Lieutenant General	Commander Urgent Operations, -Training and Mobilisation	28/08/2014
James Everard	Lieutenant General	Commander Land Forces	07/08/2014
Mark Poffley	Lieutenant General	Commander Force Development and Capability	28/02/2014
Gordon Messenger	Lieutenant General	Deputy Chief of Defence Staff (Military Strategy and Operations)	07/07/2014
David Capewell	Lieutenant General	Chief of Joint Operations	01/12/2011
Edward Davis	Lieutenant General	Deputy Commander, NATO Land Command, Izmir	01/07/2014
Christopher Evans	Air Marshal	Surgeon General	22/12/2012

3 star officers

<i>Name</i>	<i>Substantive Rank</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Date of appointment</i>
Simon Bollom	Air Marshal	Chief of Materiel (Air) and Chief Engineer (RAF)	01/10/2012
Graham Stacey	Air Marshal	Deputy Commander Joint Force Command - Brunssum	15/01/2013
Christopher Harper	Air Marshal	Director General International Military Staff - NATO Brussels	24/07/2013
Richard Garwood	Air Marshal	Director General Military Aviation Authority.	01/05/2013
Stephen Hillier	Air Marshal	Deputy Chief of Defence Staff (Military Capability)	11/01/2012
Gregory Bagwell	Air Marshal	Deputy Commander Operations Air Command	16/04/2013
Barry North	Air Marshal	Deputy Commander Capability Air Command	03/05/2013

4 star officers

<i>Name</i>	<i>Substantive Rank</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Date of appointment</i>
Nicholas Houghton	General	Chief of Defence Staff	18/07/2013
Stuart Peach	Air Chief Marshal	Vice Chief of Defence Staff	10/05/2013
George Zambellas	Admiral	First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval staff	09/04/2013
Peter Wall	General	Chief of the General Staff	15/09/2010
Andrew Pulford	Air Chief Marshal	Chief of Air Staff	26/07/2013
Richard Barrons	General	Commander - Joint Forces Command	19/04/2013
Adrian Bradshaw	General	Deputy Supreme Allied Commander - Europe	28/03/2014
Richard Shirreff	General	Ex Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe - Pending Retirement	N/A

Highest ranking female officers

<i>Name</i>	<i>Substantive Rank</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Date of appointment</i>
Juliet Bartlett	Brigadier	Director - Operational Law	15/10/2013
Susan Ridge	Brigadier	Director -Legal Advisor	21/05/2012

Highest ranking female officers

<i>Name</i>	<i>Substantive Rank</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Date of appointment</i>
Elaine West	Air Vice Marshal	Director of Projects and Programme Delivery	01/08/2013
Susan Gray	Air Vice Marshal	Director Combat Air and DE&S	29/01/2014

Note: The highest ranking female officers in the Royal Navy are Captains (6) and Acting Captains (2). However, we do not disclose names of officers and civil servants below the rank of Commodore or Senior Civil Servant.

Arrest Warrants*Question*

Asked by Lord Stoddart of Swindon

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the new conditions for granting European Arrest Warrants will (1) require prima facie evidence to be produced, and (2) safeguard the right of habeas corpus.

[HL1114]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Taylor of Holbeach) (Con): It is not a requirement of the European Arrest Warrant Framework Decision that a State provide prima facie evidence when issuing a warrant. Prima facie evidence was similarly not required under the previous extradition arrangements for countries within the EU—the European Convention on Extradition of 1957. The Government has legislated to reform the operation of the EAW and increase the protections for British citizens and others who are wanted for extradition. These safeguards, contained in the Anti-Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, were commenced on 21 July 2014. These changes include the introduction of a proportionality bar. This requires a British judge to consider whether extradition would be disproportionate (and to discharge the person if it would be), taking into account the seriousness of the alleged conduct, the likely sentence the person would receive if convicted, and the possibility of the issuing State taking measures that would be less coercive than extradition.

We have also addressed the concerns that relate to pre-trial detention. Where there are reasonable grounds for believing that decisions to charge and try the person have not been made, the issuing State must now prove that they have been (unless the only reason for this is the person's absence from the issuing State), or the judge is required to discharge the person. This will help ensure people are not extradited only to spend length periods in pre-trial detention whilst the issuing State continues to investigate the offence. In addition, to help deal with concerns relating to length of pre-trial detention, it is now possible for an individual to be temporarily transferred to the issuing State or to speak with the authorities in that State by videoconference ahead of the extradition hearing in the UK, if the person consents. We have also made the Extradition Act 2003 clearer with regard to the existing requirement

for dual criminality, in particular setting out that in cases where all or part of the conduct occurred in the UK, and the conduct is not criminalised here, the European Arrest Warrant must be refused for that conduct. The Government has also introduced (by way of the Crime and Courts Act 2013) a forum bar, to ensure that the possibility of a domestic prosecution has been properly explored as part of the extradition proceedings. The Government is satisfied that the UK's transposition of the European Arrest Warrant Framework Decision complies fully with the concept of Habeas Corpus.

Asylum: Albania*Questions*

Asked by Lord Storey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what information and personal data are provided to the Albanian authorities on unaccompanied asylum-seeking children from Albania making asylum claims in the United Kingdom; and whether such children are informed or asked to consent to the transfer of such information and personal data before they are transferred.

[HL1515]

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in respect of how many Albanian asylum seekers claiming to be children, information was sought from the Albanian authorities leading to the identification of 23 individuals who were suspected of providing incorrect information about their age and the establishment of Operation Coldspell in December 2013.

[HL1516]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Taylor of Holbeach) (Con): The Government has a legal duty to endeavour to trace the families of unaccompanied asylum seeking children and to take into account their best interests. In response to safeguarding concerns arising from reports that Albanian adults were falsely claiming to be children, and in order to facilitate the family tracing process, the Home Office piloted a process in late 2013 whereby information relevant to family tracing and confirming identity was obtained from the Albanian authorities in respect of 215 individuals. In all of these cases, the asylum claims had been refused and the Albanian authorities had not been the alleged actor of persecution. The piloted process became business as usual with effect from 29 January 2014. Checks are only conducted under this process if such a step will not jeopardise the safety of the child and their family. The Albanian authorities are provided with the names, dates of birth, identity numbers, places of birth, addresses and contact numbers for the child and their parents. Published Home Office guidance stipulates that the child should be informed shortly after point of claim for asylum that the Home Office will take appropriate steps to endeavour to trace their families.

Borders: Personal Records

Question

Asked by *Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact universal exit checks at United Kingdom borders will have on (1) passenger and freight queuing times at ports and airports, and (2) United Kingdom trade and travel; and what additional resources they will provide to ensure that the introduction of such checks does not lead to (a) increased queuing, and (b) travel disruption for the travelling public. [HL1241]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Taylor of Holbeach) (Con): The Home Office is working with industry to identify a solution to implement exit checks at sea and airports and at international stations to minimise any impact on queuing times. We are also working with service operators to agree how passenger data can be used to reduce the level of additional checks made at the point of departure.

Burma

Questions

Asked by *Baroness Uddin*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of Preventing Sexual Violence (PSVI) summit earlier this year, what representation, if any, have they made to the government of Burma with regards to sexual violence and rape in that country to ensure perpetrators are held accountable and brought to justice. [HL1343]

The Senior Minister of State, Department for Communities and Local Government & Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Warsi) (Con): Baroness Warsi: We continue to raise our strong concerns about reports of rape and sexual violence in Burma with senior members of the Burmese Government and military. The Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right honourable friend the Member for East Devon (Mr Swire), met Deputy Foreign Minister U Thant Kyaw during the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict on 13 June 2014. He publicly stated that Burma's attendance at the summit was a signal of their support to the Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative (PSVI) and readiness to take action against perpetrators, including members of the military. We welcomed the Burmese Government's attendance at the summit and have made clear that concrete action is needed, including a credible action plan that involves the military. Our Ambassador in Burma has also raised this with U Thant Kyaw following the summit.

It is our view that the investigation of human rights abuses in Burma is the responsibility of the Burmese Government. We have made clear to the Burmese Government that all allegations of human rights abuses must be dealt with through clear, independent and transparent investigative and prosecutorial processes which meet international standards.

Asked by *Baroness Uddin*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of Preventing Sexual Violence (PSVI) summit earlier this year, what action they are taking to support the establishment of an international investigation to end sexual violence and rape in Burma. [HL1345]

Baroness Warsi: We continue to raise our strong concerns about reports of rape and sexual violence in Burma with senior members of the Burmese Government and military. The Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right honourable friend the Member for East Devon (Mr Swire), met Deputy Foreign Minister U Thant Kyaw during the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict on 13 June 2014. He publicly stated that Burma's attendance at the summit was a signal of their support to the Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative (PSVI) and readiness to take action against perpetrators, including members of the military. We welcomed the Burmese Government's attendance at the summit and have made clear that concrete action is needed, including a credible action plan that involves the military. Our Ambassador has also raised this with U Thant Kyaw following the summit.

It is our view that the investigation of human rights abuses in Burma is the responsibility of the Burmese Government. We have made clear to the Burmese government that all allegations of human rights abuses must be dealt with through clear, independent and transparent investigative and prosecutorial processes which meet international standards.

Asked by *Baroness Uddin*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of on-going allegations of rape against military officials in Burma, what conditions, if any, were agreed with the government of Burma on ending the use of rape as a weapon of war prior to any training provided by the British Armed Forces. [HL1346]

Baroness Warsi: To date, the UK has only provided one educational course to the Burmese military: "Managing Defence in a Wider Security Context", a non-combat, academic course delivered to 30 military officers and government officials in January 2014. The course covered the importance of good governance in defence and professionalism in a nation's Armed Forces, the observation of human rights obligations and preventing sexual violence. We did not make provision of this course conditional; such education and our exchanges with the Burmese military are themselves aimed at changing mindsets.

We regularly address the issue of sexual violence by the Burmese army with the Burmese Government and with the military. We continue to make clear that where serious crimes have been committed, those who have perpetrated them should be held accountable for their actions. We lobby on preventing sexual violence in conflict areas, on encouraging the Burmese military to step back from politics, and on action to tackle human rights issues such as the use of child soldiers.

The Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right honourable friend the Member for East Devon (Mr Swire), raised the issue of rape and sexual violence with the Burmese army's Commander-in-Chief and military northern commander during his visit to Burma in January. Mr Swire also urged the Burmese Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, who attended the Ending Sexual Violence in Conflict Summit in the UK in June 2014, to ensure a quick and credible action plan to implement the Declaration on Ending Sexual Violence.

Bus Services: Concessions

Question

Asked by **Lord Greaves**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what proportion of the full-fare cost of journeys undertaken by older people using free bus passes was reimbursed to bus operators by each local authority in 2005–6, 2009–10, and in each financial year since, including the current year. [HL1553]

The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Baroness Kramer) (LD): The Department for Transport publishes concessionary travel statistics for each local authority in England showing, for older and disabled people: the total reimbursement of bus operators; the average reimbursement per journey; the average reimbursement per pass.

These figures are obtained from bus operators through the annual Concessionary Travel Survey. They do not show reimbursement as a proportion of the full-fare cost of a journey and, as the figures include both older and disabled travellers, it is not possible to provide figures for older people only. In addition, if bus operators indicate that the information is commercially sensitive, it is not included in the final published table.

The available statistics cover the years 2010/11 to 2012/13 and can be found on the GOV.UK website at: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/265955/bus0832.xls

We do not hold these statistics at local authority level for 2005/06 or 2009/10.

Castes: Discrimination

Question

Asked by **Lord Avebury**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon on 6 May (WA 331–2) and the comments by Helen Grant, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Women and Equalities on 9 July (HC Deb, col. 140 WH), how they intend to establish baseline data that can be used to determine whether caste legislation is stopping unlawful discrimination given their acceptance of the Equalities and Human Rights Commission's statement that research for that purpose would not be possible; and what are the terms of reference of the feasibility study announced by Mrs Grant.

[HL1061]

Baroness Northover (LD): The Government has accepted that the Equality and Human Rights Commission will not be undertaking further research in the area outlined in the question. However, in their respective statements neither Lord Ahmad nor Helen Grant accepted that such research cannot be done, which is why we are commissioning the feasibility study to which the Noble Lord refers.

The key objectives for this study, which form its terms of reference, are to:

Identify and critically assess the key issues which affect the feasibility of quantifying the extent of caste discrimination in Britain, and measuring changes over time;

Identify specific methodological approaches for realistically and feasibly quantifying the scale of caste discrimination in Britain and measuring changes over time;

Appraise the costs and benefits associated with each methodological option.

Central African Republic

Question

Asked by **Lord Alton of Liverpool**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of reports of worsening humanitarian access to the Central African Republic. [HL1246]

Baroness Northover (LD): Conditions in CAR are extremely challenging for both humanitarian workers and local communities. The Office for Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has reported over 770 security incidents throughout CAR since January 2014. 67 of these incidents have directly targeted humanitarian personnel. DFID is working with agencies which have appropriate systems and a level of community acceptance to enable them to access some of the most vulnerable populations in CAR. In 2014 DFID has funded the ICRC, UN agencies and international NGOs to support communities who have suffered from the violence.

Clinical Commissioning Groups

Question

Asked by **Lord Grocott**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the answer by Earl Howe on 9 July (HL Deb, col. 216), how many managerial and clerical staff were appointed to each of the Clinical Commissioning Groups established by the Health and Social Care Act 2012.

[HL1472]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): Information concerning the number of clerical and administrative staff, managers, and senior managers in Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG) in England, as at 30 September 2013, has been placed in the Library.

Common Fisheries Policy

Question

Asked by **Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what they are doing to reform the European Union fisheries policy. [HL1443]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Lord De Mauley) (Con): The Government recently secured wide-ranging and progressive reforms to the EU Common Fishery Policy. Specific changes include the introduction of regionalised fisheries management, a phased landing obligation banning the discarding of fish and a legal commitment to setting fishing rates at sustainable levels. These wide ranging reforms will help deliver a prosperous fishing industry, healthy fish stocks and protect the marine environment.

Work to implement these measures is underway. A formal consultation on how to implement the landing obligation in pelagic fisheries in England recently closed. Regionally agreed Discard Plans for the North Sea and North West waters have been submitted to the Commission for adoption. Consultations with the fishing industry and other groups have started to develop a policy position for the introduction of the landing obligation in demersal fisheries.

Diesel Fuel

Question

Asked by **Lord Blencathra**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have received from environmental non-governmental organisations, over the past 20 years, on the subject of efforts to encourage motorists to switch to diesel fuel. [HL1686]

The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Baroness Kramer) (LD): The Government regularly receives correspondence from environmental non-governmental organisations on a range of issues which are relevant to our fuel policies. The information requested could only be provided at disproportionate cost. If my Noble Friend would like to write to me I am happy to investigate any specific concerns in this area he should wish to raise.

Entry Clearances

Question

Asked by **Baroness Smith of Basildon**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many (1) business visitor visas, (2) child visitor visas,

(3) family visitor visas, (4) general visitor visas, and (5) student visitor visas, were issued in 2013.

[HL1464]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Taylor of Holbeach) (Con): In 2013, 1,988,068 visit visas were issued to applicants in the following categories:

<i>Category of visitor</i>	<i>Total applications</i>
Business Visitor	353,445
Child Visitor visas (includes accompanied and unaccompanied Children)	322,030
Family Visitors	207,434
General Visitor (includes Chinese nationals issued under the Approved Destination Agreement)	1,027,559
Student Visitor (includes general students and English language Students)	77,601

EU: Parliamentary Scrutiny

Question

Asked by **Lord Boswell of Aynho**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, for each government department, from July to December 2013, (1) on how many occasions the scrutiny reserve resolution in the House of Lords was overridden, (2) on how many occasions the scrutiny reserve resolution in the House of Commons was overridden, and (3) in respect of how many documents an override occurred in (a) both Houses or (b) either House. [HL1471]

The Senior Minister of State, Department for Communities and Local Government & Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Warsi) (Con): The Government seeks to avoid breaching the Scrutiny Reserve Resolutions, continuing to account for overrides in writing to the Committees. The last EU Committee report recognises that engagement between the Committee's Secretariat and Departments helped the number of overrides fall, the largest category of override being on sensitive, fast-moving Common Foreign and Security Policy matters (16 of the 20 overrides across the two Houses) which cannot be publicised beforehand, making overrides difficult to avoid. During this period, 568 Explanatory Memoranda were submitted, the 20 overrides representing the lowest number since 2010.

The figures requested are in the Table.

Overrides July-December 2013

<i>Department</i>	<i>(1) House of Lords Override</i>	<i>(2) House of Commons override</i>	<i>(a) No. of overrides in both Houses</i>	<i>(b) Total no. of overrides</i>
Department for Business, Innovation and Skills	2	1	1	2

Overrides July-December 2013

<i>Department</i>	<i>(1) House of Lords Override</i>	<i>(2) House of Commons override</i>	<i>(a) No. of overrides in both Houses</i>	<i>(b) Total no. of overrides</i>
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs	1	1	1	1
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	15	17	15	17
TOTALS (with reference to questions)	18 (Q 1)	19 (Q 2)	17 (Q a)	20 (Q b)

Female Genital Mutilation*Question**Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are their long-term targets concerning the prevention and punishment of female genital mutilation (FGM), in the light of recent reforms and the creation of an FGM unit. [HL1382]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Taylor of Holbeach) (Con): Our longer term focus has not changed. Prevention remains at the heart of our work to tackle and eradicate Female Genital Mutilation in the UK. The new FGM unit is being set up to drive a step change in nationwide outreach on FGM with criminal justice partners, children's services, healthcare professionals and affected communities. The details of the new FGM unit are being developed across government and in consultation with interested parties.

Forests*Question**Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they intend to bring forward legislation to establish a new public body to hold the Public Forest Estate to account. [HL1506]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Lord De Mauley) (Con): The Government's policy on the future of the Public Forest Estate is set out in its Forestry and Woodlands Policy Statement of January 2013. The Government is committed to maintaining the Public Forest Estate in public ownership and to establishing a new operationally independent public body to manage the estate for the long-term benefit of people, nature and the economy.

There were many proposals competing for the limited space within the Fourth Session programme and the proposed forestry measures could not be accommodated. However, the Government stands by its commitment to establish the new public body as soon as parliamentary time allows.

Fuels: Tax Evasion*Questions**Asked by Lord Mawhinney*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the answer by Lord Newby on 15 July (HL Deb, col. 501), what specific legislative change was undertaken specifically to deal with the absence of custodial sentences for illegal production or smuggling of diesel in Northern Ireland; and on what date those legislative changes became effective. [HL1348]

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the answer by Lord Newby on 15 July (HL Deb, col. 501), for each of the 22 convictions referred to, what was the (1) date of conviction, (2) the charge on which the perpetrator was found guilty, (3) the other charges, if any, dealt with in the same trial, on which the convicted person was found not guilty, (4) the sentence passed, and (5) the court in which the hearing took place. [HL1349]

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the answer by Lord Newby on 15 July (HL Deb, col. 501), what is their estimate of how much of the diesel bought in the Republic of Ireland and brought into Northern Ireland, is illegally produced or smuggled into the province. [HL1351]

The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Deighton) (Con): Legislative change enacted in, The Criminal Justice Act 1988 (Review of Sentencing) Order (Northern Ireland) 2013 (SR 249/2013) allows the appeal of unduly lenient sentences for fuel fraud to the Court of Appeal. It came into force on 9 December 2013.

All 22 convictions related to offences prosecuted under Section 170(2)(a) of the Customs and Excise Management Act 1979 for fraudulent evasion of duty. Further details area as follows:

15 of the cases were prosecuted for two offences under this Act

12 of these convictions resulted in suspended sentences totalling 104 months, with each being suspended for a period of time between 12 and 36 months

One case resulted in the defendant being bound over

In nine cases fines of up to £4,000 were imposed - totalling £11,700; and in two of these the defendant was given a period of up to 26 weeks to pay the fine or an additional custodial sentence would be imposed

One conviction was converted into a time to pay agreement due to the ill health of the defendant

One Confiscation Order was made for £98,000

One Compensation Order was made for £500

It would not be prudent to provide the further detailed information requested as they could lead to identification of the individuals concerned and jeopardise the safety of the defendants and their immediate families.

No assessment has been made of how much of the diesel bought in the Republic of Ireland and brought into Northern Ireland is illegally produced or smuggled. However, tax gap figures estimate the market share for all illicit diesel in Northern Ireland at 12-13% in 2011-12 and negligible for petrol.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/measuring-tax-gaps-tables>

HMRC fights fraud on a wide range of fronts, from special units performing thousands of roadside checks to raiding laundering plants. The UK has recently announced, jointly with Ireland, an improved new marker for rebated fuel, which will make it much harder to launder marked fuel and sell it at a profit.

Gastrointestinal Cancer

Question

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures they are taking to ensure that primary carers and general practitioners receive sufficient training about paediatric, adolescent, wild-type and syndromic gastrointestinal stromal tumours in order to ensure better patient management and specialist treatment.

[HL1370]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): The content and standard of medical training is the responsibility of the General Medical Council (GMC), which is the competent authority for medical training in the United Kingdom. Its role is that of custodian of quality standards in medical education and practice. The GMC is an independent professional body. It has the general function of promoting high standards of medical education and co-ordinating all stages of medical education to ensure that students and newly qualified doctors are equipped with the knowledge, skills and attitudes essential for professional practice.

Medical Royal Colleges design the curricula for postgraduate medical education and in doing so they must ensure that teaching meets the standards of the GMC in order to be able to retain GMC recognition of their course.

Government Departments: Recruitment

Question

Asked by Lord Bradshaw

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether their recruitment of 10 positions to advise on the management and performance of the railways represents additional Department for Transport staff or is offset by staff reductions elsewhere. [HL1730]

The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Baroness Kramer) (LD): This recruitment is to fill existing vacancies within the Department for Transport's Rail Executive. This recruitment will not be offset by staff reductions elsewhere.

Health Visitors

Question

Asked by Lord Harrison

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many of the 4,200 extra health visitors they are seeking to recruit by 2015 they expect (1) to work in the National Health Service, and (2) to complete training on identifying the signs of postnatal depression.

[HL1386]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): The additional 4,200 health visitors will all be providing front line services to families. Health visitor services are currently commissioned by NHS England as part of Section 7A of the NHS Act 2006*. NHS England's Local Area Teams determine the most suitable local service provider. Currently, most provision is through a variety of National Health Service organisations, with a small proportion delivered by other organisations, including social enterprises. The trajectory for delivering growth of the health visitor workforce is not related to the type of provider. All services are based on a national model of health visiting and the NHS England service specification.

NHS England Area Teams and local authorities are working together in co-commissioning these services, prior to the lead commissioning role moving to local authorities in October 2015.

All health visitors, including the additional 4,200 being delivered by 2015, receive education and training on maternal mental health, so they can detect the early signs of postnatal depression and ensure all women get support during and after birth.

The NHS England 2014-15 service specification emphasises throughout, the role of the health visitor in promoting maternal mental health within clearly defined pathways. It makes clear that health visitors are expected to be trained and developed to be competent in delivering the evidence-based assessments and interventions set out in the Healthy Child Programme. In addition, NHS England is resourcing Area Teams to support delivery of the new model of health visiting which explicitly includes maternal mental health as a high impact area.

To supplement core training, health visitors are able to enhance their skills and knowledge in the context of their specific roles. The Department has earlier this year, commissioned the training of 375 perinatal mental health champions across England. The champions are cascading their training in local areas so as to facilitate the spread of knowledge and practice among colleagues. In addition to the champions' training, all health visitors are able to access perinatal mental health e-learning modules.

*Note: *As amended by the Health and Social Care Act 2012.*

Hilda Murrell

Question

Asked by **Lord Rooker**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Taylor of Holbeach on 9 April (WA 302–3), on what specific date in July 2014 they will make an application to the Lord Chancellor's Advisory Council to allow the file held on Hilda Murrell to be transferred to the National Archives; and at what location the file is held in the meantime. [HL938]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Taylor of Holbeach) (Con): I refer the noble Lord to the reply I gave on 9 April 2014, Official Report, columns WA 302-3. Following the cancellation of the July Lord Chancellor's Advisory Council, the one file referred to will be considered in September. Since my previous answer, a further six relevant files have been identified. Of these further files, five were submitted to TNA on 9 May 2014 for agreement of selection for permanent preservation in The National Archives. This series will be the subject of the Lord Chancellor's Committee on 13 November. The remaining file is from 1993 and is not due for review until 2017.

Israel

Question

Asked by **Lord Judd**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have had discussions with the directors of G4S about that company's adherence to the terms of the Fourth Geneva Convention as it applies to the detention of Palestinian prisoners inside Israel; and what was the outcome of any such discussions. [HL1271]

The Senior Minister of State, Department for Communities and Local Government & Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Warsi) (Con): The Government has made clear our concerns about Israel's treatment of Palestinian detainees in meetings with G4S. The UK also considers that Israel's detention of Palestinian prisoners within Israel is contrary to Article 76 of the Fourth Geneva Convention and has clearly stated this position to Israeli officials. International law does not impose direct obligations on corporations. However, the Government encourages British companies to show respect for human rights in their operations in the UK and internationally. On 21 April 2013, G4S publicly confirmed that they would not renew a number of security contracts in the West Bank "to ensure that G4S Israel business practices remain in line with our own business ethics policy". These include the servicing of security equipment at Ofer Military Prison, at West Bank checkpoints and at a police station in the contentious E-1 area of Jerusalem.

Jubilee Line

Question

Asked by **Lord Bradshaw**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Kramer on 28 July (WA 257–8), whether they have considered conducting a reassessment, 10 years after the last, of the benefit-cost ratio of the Jubilee Line extension; and whether they intend to carry out any similar assessments of other infrastructure projects. [HL1729]

The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Baroness Kramer) (LD): The Mayor and Transport for London (TfL) are responsible for the Jubilee line. TfL have no current plans to undertake a further evaluation of the benefit-cost ratio of the extension.

The Department for Transport takes a structured approach to understanding the benefits of projects once delivery of those projects has started. Actively managing the realisation of benefits will improve value for money and maximise the benefits for passengers.

Large Goods Vehicles: Safety

Question

Asked by **Baroness Gardner of Parkes**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have any plans to remove the exemption for skip lorries and concrete mixing lorries from the requirement to be fitted with a safety bar, and, if so when; and what assessment they have made of the efforts made by Cemex in that area. [HL1714]

The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Baroness Kramer) (LD): The Department for Transport will be consulting in the autumn to change the rules for side guards to be fitted to tippers, refuse vehicles and car transporters that were registered from 1 January 2010. Side guards will be required to be fitted to the majority of new vehicles from 29 October 2014.

There has been no specific assessment of the measures implemented by Cemex but the Government welcomes the initiatives taken by a number of companies to voluntarily fit additional safety equipment to protect pedestrian and vulnerable road users.

Large Goods Vehicles: Speed Limits

Questions

Asked by **Lord Berkeley**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Statement by Baroness Kramer on 24 July (WS 137), what tougher procedures and sanctions they propose for lorry drivers caught exceeding the new speed limits. [HL1698]

The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Baroness Kramer) (LD): In conjunction with the speed limit change, we are considering whether to adopt a new approach to the offence of exceeding a vehicle

specific speed limit. This would be to ensure that drivers receive a strong warning letter from the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency for a first offence, and are called to a driver conduct hearing for a subsequent offence, where the Traffic Commissioner will consider whether action should be taken against their licence. We could also consider in future taking this approach for all speeding offences in a large vehicle, though it would require changes to the way offences are recorded.

In addition police forces can refer vocational licence holders directly to driver conduct hearings at a first offence.

The Senior Traffic Commissioner publishes guidance and directions about driver conduct hearings. We anticipate consultation about revised guidance will begin later this year.

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Statement by Baroness Kramer on 24 July (WS 137), how the change to HGV speed limits will reinforce the credibility and importance of other safety-critical laws. [HL1699]

Baroness Kramer: We consider the change to the 40 mph HGV speed limit will remove an out-dated and poorly observed speed limit. We consider modernising that limit in itself reinforces the importance of other speed limits, particularly lower local speed limits. Other key safety-related laws, such as the ban on using hand-held mobile phones whilst driving, have similar penalties to those for speeding and their importance is likewise enhanced by the modernisation of the HGV speed limit itself. For mobile phone use whilst driving large vehicles the Government is already introducing and encouraging the greater use of vocational driver conduct hearings, where action can be taken against drivers' licence entitlements.

In addition having the current limit gives rise to an untenable position where motorists' expectations of relatively quick journeys on some rural roads are only being met because HGV drivers are routinely breaking their speed limit.

Having a law in place which we know to be widely disregarded can only increase the likelihood that drivers will consider other laws to be optional, and so the Government decided a change in the HGV speed limit to a more modern and credible 50 mph is necessary

Manchester-Burnley Railway Line

Questions

Asked by Lord Greaves

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the introduction of railway services between Manchester and East Lancashire via the Todmorden curve is still expected to take place by December 2014; and, if not, what are the reasons for the delay. [HL1644]

The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Baroness Kramer) (LD): Although the work to reinstate the track is now finished, Network Rail has yet to complete the signalling infrastructure works that will

allow trains to run through the full length of the curve in both directions. Once Network Rail has finished all the necessary infrastructure works, Northern will be able to begin driver route training.

Northern Rail, in consultation with Lancashire County Council, the project sponsor, have informed the Department for Transport that they are working towards implementing train services from the start of the May 2015 timetable change, subject to signing a formal funding agreement contract with Lancashire County Council. Northern will endeavour to introduce services as soon as is practicable, subject to agreement being reached over the local funding.

Asked by Lord Bradshaw

To ask Her Majesty's Government with whom responsibility lies for the acquisition of rolling stock to commence operating a direct train service from Manchester to Burnley now that the new infrastructure is in place. [HL1731]

Baroness Kramer: Although the work to reinstate the track is now finished, Network Rail has yet to complete the signalling infrastructure works that will allow trains to run through the full length of the curve in both directions. Once Network Rail has finished all the necessary infrastructure works, Northern will be able to begin driver route training.

The acquisition of rolling stock is a matter for the sponsor (Lancashire County Council) and the operator.

Middle East

Questions

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will use the calls of the families of those killed in Israel and Palestine for non-violence as a means to promote verified ceasefires and the adherence by all parties to the norms of international law. [HL1288]

The Senior Minister of State, Department for Communities and Local Government & Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Warsi) (Con): I refer the noble Lord to the Statement on Gaza of 21 July 2014 by the Prime Minister, my right hon. Friend the Member for Witney (Mr Cameron), repeated in the House of Lords by the Leader of the House and Lord Privy Seal (Baroness Stowell), Official Report, Column 979-982. We strongly endorse the call by the UN Security Council for an immediate ceasefire and for respect for international humanitarian law and the protection of civilians. We are open to the idea of appropriate mechanisms to verify and ensure a durable ceasefire.

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of Hamas' offer of a 10-year truce. [HL1338]

Baroness Warsi: The Government has not made any assessment of this offer. The UK's policy on Hamas is clear: Hamas must renounce violence, recognise

Israel and accept previously signed agreements. We continue to press for an urgent agreement on a ceasefire and for all sides to minimise civilian casualties. We would like to see a durable end to the current cycle of violence and a long term strategy to address the underlying causes of the conflict and transform the situation in Gaza.

Asked by The Marquess of Lothian

To ask Her Majesty's Government what recent representations they have made to the government of Israel about their ground incursion into Gaza. [HL1408]

Baroness Warsi: The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right hon. Friend the Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr Hammond), discussed the current crisis in Gaza with Israeli Prime Minister Binyamin Netanyahu, and Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman during his visit to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories between 23-24 July. He made clear that whilst Israel had a right to self-defence, any response must be proportionate and maximum efforts made to avoid civilian casualties. He urged progress towards a ceasefire.

Asked by Baroness Uddin

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of how civilians in Gaza can best be protected. [HL1520]

Baroness Warsi: The UK is deeply concerned by the high levels of civilian casualties. We have called on all those involved in the current crisis to avoid any action which risks civilian casualties in line with humanitarian law. The Government assesses that civilians can best be protected through the agreement of an immediate ceasefire that ends the current bloodshed, opens up humanitarian access, and allows displaced people to return to their homes. The British Government is working closely with international partners in order to secure this goal.

Muslim Brotherhood

Question

Asked by Lord Empey

To ask Her Majesty's Government what investigations have been or are being carried out into (1) The Cordoba Foundation, (2) The Emirates Centre for Human Rights, and (3) The Middle East Eye; and whether they consider those organisations to have any links to the Muslim Brotherhood.

[HL1452]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Taylor of Holbeach) (Con): The Prime Minister commissioned a review into the Muslim Brotherhood. We must not prejudice the review's findings, the purpose of which is to inform Government policy towards the Muslim Brotherhood. Its scope includes linked and affiliated organisations and individuals and the review will take account of evidence relating to

allegations of such links. The review is internal but we expect to say something publicly about its conclusions after the summer recess.

Orders and Regulations

Question

Asked by Lord Goodlad

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many statutory instruments from the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs have been laid this calendar year; of those, what percentage corrected errors in a previous instrument (including drafts of affirmative instruments that had to be superseded by correcting drafts); and what steps that Department is taking to reduce the need for correcting instruments. [HL1425]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Lord De Mauley)

(Con): Defra laid 33 Statutory Instruments this calendar year. Two of these, 6% of the total, corrected errors in other Statutory Instruments. They are the Marine Licensing (Application Fees) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 and the Veterinary Medicines (Amendment) Regulations 2014.

The Department and its legal team have standing procedures for checking Statutory Instruments. If a correction to a Defra Statutory Instrument is required, the reasons for the error are investigated and appropriate action taken.

Defra will be working with The Treasury Solicitor and First Parliamentary Counsel in the coming months to improve the quality of Statutory Instrument drafting

Pakistan

Questions

Asked by Lord Ahmed

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the total amount of Department for International Development money spent on education programmes in Pakistan; and how many school teachers have been trained using the Department for International Development money. [HL1388]

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much they have spent on education awareness programmes in Pakistan over the last three years. [HL1389]

Baroness Northover (LD): From 2011-12 to 2013-14 DFID has spent a total of £183 million on education in Pakistan, with £92 million spent during the last financial year. This support has helped get additional children into school, increase teacher attendance, improve school facilities and train teachers amongst other activities. During the last two years (2012-13 & 2013-14), DFID programmes have helped the Pakistani Government to train 150,000 teachers.

Asked by **Lord Ahmed**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are continuing to fund the Mir Khalil ur Rahman Foundation (MKRF) to provide education awareness programmes in Pakistan; and what was the total amount allocated to MKRF in the last 3 years.

[HL1390]

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to publish the proposal submitted by the Mir Khalil ur Rahman Foundation for the education awareness programme in Pakistan, any progress reports, or information on what they have accomplished so far through their media campaign in Pakistan.

[HL1391]

Baroness Northover: Funding to Mir Khalil Ur Rahman Foundation (MKRF) ended in January 2014. Over the period 2011 to 2014, £5.06 million was spent by MKRF as part of our larger Transforming Education in Pakistan (TEP) programme.

The department has published progress reports on our development tracker in line with our commitment to transparency. <http://devtracker.dfid.gov.uk/projects/GB-1-202491/>.

Palestinians

Questions

Asked by **Baroness Deech**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have made representations to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency concerning the storage of rockets in its facilities in Gaza, and its arrangements for their disposal.

[HL1334]

The Senior Minister of State, Department for Communities and Local Government & Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Warsi) (Con): The Government has not made any representations to the UN Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) over this issue. UNRWA issued a statement on 17 July strongly condemning the placement of rockets in its school. UNRWA responded rapidly to the discovery of the rockets, removing the weapons and launching an investigation into the circumstances surrounding this incident.

Asked by **Baroness Tonge**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the capability of hospitals in Gaza to cope with the numbers of injured. [HL1339]

Baroness Warsi: Longstanding movement and access restrictions have caused a deterioration in the quality of medical care available in Gaza. And some hospitals in Gaza have also been damaged in the current military operation. The UN has expressed concern that the Palestinian Ministry of Health is struggling to cope with the increased burden of medical emergencies on the health system, given the high levels of shortages of medicines, medical disposables and hospital fuel supplies, and rising health care debt. Some patients have been referred to hospitals outside Gaza for specialised and

life-saving medical treatments. The ongoing violence in Gaza has impeded others from reaching crossing points.

Asked by **Baroness Tonge**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the alleged delivery of medical equipment and drugs to hospitals in Gaza by the Israel Defence Forces; and whether the European Union will provide emergency medical staff to assist with the casualties in Gaza.

[HL1340]

Baroness Warsi: We are aware that the Israeli authorities are facilitating medical access and evacuations through the Erez crossing. The EU is supporting specialised and life-saving medical treatments and emergency healthcare in Gaza. The UK funds the UN Access Coordination Unit to work with Israel, the Palestinian Authorities, the World Health Organisation and aid agencies to facilitate the transfer of medical equipment and supplies in to Gaza. We are also bringing forward £3 million in funding to the International Committee of the Red Cross, much of which will provide emergency health care.

Parliamentary Information and Communications Technology Service

Question

Asked by **Lord McAvoy**

To ask the Chairman of Committees how many staff are employed by PICT in each senior pay band; and what has been the average yearly increase in salary for each band in each of the last five years.

[HL1618]

The Chairman of Committees (Lord Sewel): PICT employs 1 member of staff at senior pay band 2 and 4 at senior pay band 1.

Pay for senior staff in the House of Commons, under whose terms and conditions PICT staff are paid, has increased over the last 5 years as follows:

Financial year	Percentage increase
13/14	yet to be agreed
12/13	0%
11/12	0%
10/11	0%
09/10	2.3%
08/09	2.5%

Police: Vehicles

Question

Asked by **Lord Blencathra**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many 4x4s or SUVs or off-road vehicles each police force possesses, listed by make and model.

[HL1682]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Taylor of Holbeach) (Con): Data on the number of vehicles possessed by police forces is not collected by the Home Office.

Self-harm

Questions

Asked by **Baroness Kennedy of Cradley**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by Earl Howe on 14 July (WA 105–7), what are the figures for each NHS Trust in England for (1) the number of (a) girls, and (b) boys, aged under 18 years who received hospital treatment for self-harm each year since 2010, and (2) the number of (a) men, and (b) women, aged over 18 years who received hospital treatment for self-harm each year since 2010. [HL1446]

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by Earl Howe on 14 July (WA 105–7), what is the age breakdown of the figures in respect of the number of (1) girls, and (2) boys, aged under 18 years who received hospital treatment for self-harm each year since 2010. [HL1447]

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by Earl Howe on 14 July (WA 105–7), what is the ethnic breakdown of the figures in respect of the number of (1) girls and (2) boys aged under 18 years who received hospital treatment for self-harm each year since 2010. [HL1448]

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many (1) girls, and (2) boys aged under 18 years who received hospital treatment for self-harm each year since 2010 (a) were offered a comprehensive assessment of their physical, psychological and social needs in line with the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidelines, and (b) accepted that offer, broken down by each NHS Trust in England. [HL1449]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): Data for the number of girls, and boys, aged under 18 years who received hospital treatment for self-harm each year since 2010, and the number of men, and women, aged over 18 years who received hospital treatment for self-harm each year since 2010, broken down by National Health Service trust in England has been placed in the Library.

Data on the age breakdown of the figures in respect of the number of girls, and boys, aged under 18 years who received hospital treatment for self-harm each year since 2010 has been placed in the Library.

Data on the ethnic breakdown of the figures in respect of the number of girls and boys aged under 18 years who received hospital treatment for self-harm each year since 2010 has been placed in the Library.

For each question we have provided a count of finished admission episodes with a cause code of self harm and a count of accident and emergency attendances (excluding planned attendances) with a patient group of deliberate self-harm for 2010-11, 2011-12 and 2012-13.

Please note:

the same person may have been admitted on more than one occasion;

a patient may have attended Accident and Emergency (A&E) and then been admitted to hospital as a

single event, in this case the event would be included in both the A&E and hospital admission figures; and

it is not mandatory for data providers to submit data for "patient group".

The notes should be referred to when interpreting the data.

Data is not available on the number of girls, and boys aged under 18 years who received hospital treatment for self-harm each year since 2010 who were offered a comprehensive assessment of their physical, psychological and social needs in line with the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence guidelines, and accepted that offer, broken down by each NHS trust in England.

Sovereignty: Scotland

Question

Asked by **Lord Wigley**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the implications for Wales of the outcome of the referendum on Scottish independence. [HL1650]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Wales Office (Baroness Randerson) (LD): This Government has demonstrated a clear commitment to devolution in Wales and that will continue regardless of the outcome of the referendum on Scottish independence. The Wales Bill delivers on most of the Silk Commission's part one recommendations and the Government is currently considering the Commission's part two recommendations that do not require primary legislation.

Any further changes to the devolution settlement in Wales, including consideration of the recommendations in the Silk Commission's second report that do require primary legislation are matters for the next Parliament and should therefore inform party manifestoes for next year's General Election.

Speed Limits

Question

Asked by **Lord Berkeley**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Statement by Baroness Kramer on 24 July (WS 137), whether they intend to apply the reasoning that the "current speed limit just does not work—it is broken by about three quarters of HGV drivers at any particular time" in considering alterations to speed limits for other types of vehicle. [HL1697]

The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Baroness Kramer) (LD): The Government is not reviewing national speed limits for the other main vehicle classes (ie light goods vehicles, cars towing trailers and caravans and buses and coaches). The table below summarises the 2013 data the Department for Transport holds about speeds in free flow conditions (ie when they are not constrained by congestion) for the main vehicle types. However, the Department is considering the responses to a consultation about changing the speed restriction on agricultural tractors and trailers from 20 mph to 25 mph.

There are a variety of reasons why it is appropriate to change the national HGV speed limits on single and dual carriageways. One is that the low level of compliance with them is symptomatic of their being set at the wrong level compared to other limits. So on single

carriageways the non-compliance level for cars is 7% and buses and coaches 26%, compared to 73% for articulated lorries.

For the main categories of vehicles the percentage breaking the main speed limits in free flow conditions in 2013 are:

	Cars		Motorcycles		Cars Towing		Light Goods		Buses/ Coaches		Articulated HGV*	
	Limit	% > limit	Limit	% > limit	Limit	% > limit	Limit	% > limit	Limit	% > limit	Limit	% > limit
30 mph roads	30	46	30	47	30	42	30	50	30	25	30	44
40 mph roads	40	21	40	29	40	13	40	24	40	11	40	18
Single carriageways	60	7	60	21	50	19	60	9	50	26	40	73
Dual carriageways	70	39	70	45	60	28	70	41	60	45	50	82
Motorways	70	47	70	46	60	31	70	48	70**	17	60	0

* The speed limit for HGV rigid varies by size for some road types.

**60 mph for >12m coaches, figures based on 70 mph limit.

Transport: Capital Investment Question

Asked by *Lord Bradshaw*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are their typical requirements for a business case seeking investment in a transport-related investment scheme; whether those requirements are the same for each mode of transport; and by what means those requirements are measured. [HL1570]

The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Baroness Kramer) (LD): Transport investments are supported by a Transport Business Case, which, in line with HM Treasury guidance, considers the case for investment from five perspectives, showing whether schemes:

- are supported by a robust case for change that fits with wider public policy objectives – the 'strategic case';
- demonstrate value for money – the 'economic case';
- are commercially viable – the 'commercial case';
- are financially affordable – the 'financial case'; and
- are achievable – the 'management case'.

Further information and guidance on the Transport Business Case is available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transport-business-case>. This sets out what should be covered in each element of the business case; the questions likely to be asked by the relevant investment committee; how the level of detail should be developed as a scheme progresses; and provides tools and sources of further guidance to aid in the development of business cases. These requirements are the same, regardless of the mode of transport being considered for investment. The business case is considered using the questions set out in the above document. In addition, the economic case includes an

assessment of the value for money category and guidance on the value for money assessment process is also available at the link above.

Viral Haemorrhagic Disease Question

Asked by *Lord Blencathra*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to banning all flights from countries in Africa in which cases of the Ebola virus have occurred. [HL1683]

The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Baroness Kramer) (LD): All avenues to restrict the virus entering the UK are under constant review. UK Airlines are constantly reviewing the Foreign & Commonwealth Office's travel advice when planning their services and ensuring that measures they take are consistent with Public Health England guidance.

Currently, the Foreign & Commonwealth Office and the World Health Organisation are not recommending travel restrictions to countries in Africa with cases of Ebola. UK airlines are not planning to stop services to these countries. However, airlines and the UK Government are constantly reviewing the situation.

A ban on direct flights would not allow a country to avoid the spread of a virus altogether, as potentially infected passengers could travel via hubs in third countries.

Written Questions: Government Responses Question

Asked by *Lord Mawhinney*

To ask the Leader of the House, further to the Written Answer by Earl Howe on 17 July (WA 144–5), whether she will discourage ministers and spokespersons from answering Written Questions by reference to websites. [HL1283]

The Lord Privy Seal (Baroness Stowell of Beeston) (Con): I refer the noble Lord to the reply I gave to Lord Stoddart of Swindon on 29 July (WA 304).

Answers received between Tuesday 5 August and Monday 11 August 2014

Angola *Question*

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of Angola regarding food insecurity in that country; and whether they have encouraged that government to undertake an assessment of the situation. [HL1505]

Baroness Northover (LD): Poor seasonal rainfall early in 2014 in parts of Western Angola has affected the harvest and food availability there. However, throughout most of the country production is considered to be good and expected to be higher than normal. This has helped to maintain reasonable food prices for urban populations.

The Government has not had recent bilateral discussions with the Government of Angola regarding the food situation. The Government of Angola is leading the food assistance programme and is best placed to prepare for and lead such a response with the support of UN partners. The Government of Angola has set up an Inter-ministerial Commission to tackle the drought. The Government of Angola is also embarking on infrastructure projects, such as water supply projects, to mitigate drought impact in the future.

Armed Conflict: Females *Question*

Asked by Baroness Hodgson of Abinger

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following the commitment to a High-Level Review in United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 2122 and to women, peace and security financing at the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict, whether the United Kingdom will contribute funding to support the UN High-Level Review of the implementation of UNSCRs 1325 and 2122; and, if so, how much they will contribute. [HL1117]

The Senior Minister of State, Department for Communities and Local Government & Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Warsi) (Con): We look forward to the UN High-Level Review in 2015 which should help identify lessons learned and set priorities for further action on the Women, Peace and Security agenda. The UK published its third National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security on 16 June, House of Commons Hansard, Official Report, Column 72-47WS. No decisions have yet been taken on whether the UK will contribute funding to support the UN Review.

Army: Parachuting *Question*

Asked by Earl Attlee

To ask Her Majesty's Government when the British Army last inserted forces for combat operations by means of parachute drop at greater than platoon strength other than under the control of the Director of Special Forces. [HL1493]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Defence (Lord Astor of Hever) (Con): The last time the British Army inserted troops not under the control of the Director of Special Forces for combat operations, by parachute, was on 5 November 1956 during the Suez crisis.

BBC Debts.com *Question*

Asked by Lord Sharkey

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the Financial Conduct Authority's finding that it has been carrying out consumer credit activities without their permission or authorisation, why BBCDebts.com is still active in the United Kingdom. [HL1638]

The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Deighton) (Con): This question has been passed on to the FCA. The FCA will reply to the Noble Lord directly by letter. A copy of the response will be placed in the Library of the House.

Borders: Personal Records *Questions*

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that the introduction of exit checks at United Kingdom borders will not affect (1) freedom of movement, and (2) the efficiency of international transport operators; and what options the Home Office is considering, as part of the introduction of such checks, to increase automation of passport checks at (a) ports, (b) airports, and (c) vehicle borders. [HL1242]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Taylor of Holbeach) (Con): The Home Office is satisfied that exit checks will be entirely consistent with free movement rights. We are working with industry to integrate exit checks with the grain of existing carrier and port processes and with technology, to the extent that this is in place at sea ports, airports and international stations. Any operator proposal to introduce additional technology would need to support the effective delivery of exit checks and maintained the integrity and security of the border.

Asked by **Lord Marlesford**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Taylor of Holbeach on 15 July (WA 111), whether the comprehensive exit checks on passengers departing on scheduled commercial air, sea and rail routes which will apply from April 2015 will enable a check to be made on whether those who have been admitted to the United Kingdom on visas or permits for limited periods have complied with the required departure date; and what arrangements they propose for exit checks on those leaving by non-scheduled aircraft or by private boats. [HL1253]

Lord Taylor of Holbeach: Exit checks will improve our knowledge of who is leaving the UK so we are better able to respond appropriately. We will bring together entry and exit data with visa and immigration application records to help identify those who have failed to leave the UK when they should have done so. Currently there are no plans to use the Embarkation Checks powers in the 2014 Immigration Act for General Aviation and General Maritime operators. We are working separately with those sectors to improve our ability to control departures from the UK by non-scheduled aircraft and private boats.

Asked by **Lord Marlesford**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Taylor of Holbeach on 15 July (WA 111), whether in specifying the second generation of e-gates under the Border Systems Programme they took account of the border control systems in operation in the United States and Hong Kong. [HL1255]

Lord Taylor of Holbeach: When Border Systems drafted the requirements for the proposed next generation of ePassport gates, similar systems globally were reviewed and their merits were considered. This included those systems in the US (Global Entry and NEXUS/SENTRI) and Hong Kong (e-Channels). Border Systems works closely with its counterparts in the US and Hong Kong, and its representatives have visited both countries to assess and review the automation in operation. Reciprocal visits to the UK have also been made by those countries.

Broadband

Question

Asked by **Baroness Neville-Rolfe**:

To Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the proposal to deploy smart meters requiring wifi in homes, what progress has been made with the rollout of broadband. [HL965]

Lord Gardiner of Kimble (Con): There is no direct link between the smart meter programme and the superfast broadband rollout programme, because the smart meters programme will not be using fixed broadband connections (they will instead involve transfer of small amounts of data over wireless technologies).

However, I can confirm that the Government broadband programme is making good progress with over 600,000 new premises now having superfast broadband available for the first time as a result of the Government's investment and that will rise to over 1 million by the end of Summer 2014.

Brunei

Question

Asked by **Lord Patten**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of the freedom to worship of British Christian and Jewish visitors to Brunei. [HL1602]

Lord Popat (Con): British visitors can worship at Anglican and Catholic Churches in Brunei. The former Senior Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Rt Hon Baroness Warsi, attended an Easter Sunday service at St Andrew's Church on 20 April. There are no synagogues but private worship is permitted.

Brunei's constitution protects religious freedom. In practice though, restrictions are imposed by administrative regulations and laws, including under the phased implementation of the Sharia (Syariah) Penal Code Order 2013. For example, proselytism by faiths other than the officially sanctioned Shafi'i school of Islam is not permitted. We urged Brunei to protect their citizens' constitutional rights to freedom of religion or belief, and to not impose restrictions on minority faith groups at their Universal Periodic Review at the United Nations Human Rights Council in May.

Cardiovascular System: Diseases

Question

Asked by **Lord Black of Brentwood**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress has been made against each of the actions in their Cardiovascular Disease Outcomes Strategy.[HL1416]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): It is for NHS England, working with Public Health England (PHE) and other stakeholders, to implement the actions set out in the Cardiovascular Disease (CVD) Outcomes Strategy. NHS England has established a working group with PHE which meets quarterly to discuss progress on the strategy and is taking action on all the recommendations, some it has prioritised over others.

For example, on making benchmarked data on CVD risk factors available, PHE has established a CVD National Cardiovascular Intelligence Network and a Partnership Board. These bring together a variety of stakeholders which hold or have an interest in this type of data, including the leads of the existing clinical audits covering cardiovascular disease.

PHE also continues to raise awareness of the signs and symptoms of CVD by running campaigns such as Act FAST. This has been the Department's and PHE's most successful campaign and continues to help people

experiencing the signs and symptoms of a stroke get to hospital quicker. The campaign will be run again during 2014-15.

NHS England's National Clinical Director for Cardiac Disease established a Familial Hypercholesterolaemia (FH) advisory group which has identified some of the barriers to identifying more families with FH and will continue to develop and spread good practice in this field.

At a local level, clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) are being encouraged to implement the Strategy with the support of the twelve Strategic Clinical Networks. These networks are working with CCGs and other partners in the health and care system to identify local and regional priorities for cardiac and renal disease, diabetes and stroke.

All 152 local authorities are offering the NHS Health Check programme, which aims to prevent heart disease, stroke, diabetes and kidney disease. Local authorities have a legal duty to deliver the programme to all of their eligible population once every five years. In 2013-14 a total of 2.8 million people (18.5%) of the five years eligible population were offered an NHS Health Check while just fewer than 1.4 million received an NHS Health Check, equating to 49% of those offered. This is the greatest number of NHS Health Checks offered and received in one year since the programme began.

Charity Commission

Question

Asked by **Lord Patten**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to publish the responses to their consultation on extending the Charity Commission's powers to tackle abuse in charities; and if so, when. [HL1490]

Lord Wallace of Saltaire (LD): The Government has carefully considered the responses to the consultation on extending the Charity Commission's powers to tackle abuse in charities. The intention is to publish a summary of consultation feedback in the usual manner after the summer recess, followed by a draft bill for pre-legislative scrutiny.

Children: Day Care

Question

Asked by **Lord Sutherland of Houndwood**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Deighton on 28 July (WA 247) what specific estimates they have made of the expected "positive impact" of the childcare element of Universal Credit on work incentives for mothers and corresponding employment rates and tax receipts from mothers paying income tax and national insurance. [HL1680]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions (Lord Freud) (Con): The announced measures mean from April 2016 families with children

who have childcare costs below the defined limits will see an improved financial incentive to work and to work more hours.

Once Universal Credit is fully rolled out many working families will face an improved incentive to work, including 100,000 families who will get childcare support for the first time under Universal Credit. The precise improvement an individual faces will vary according to circumstance.

We have not made a specific estimate of how this feeds through into employment rates and tax receipts.

China

Question

Asked by **Lord Hylton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of China about China's obligations under Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, following the recent demolition of several churches and the removal of crosses from others. [HL1649]

Lord Popat (Con): We have concerns about all restrictions placed on freedom of religion and belief in China. This includes the destruction of churches and the removal of crosses from others. We believe that freedom of thought, conscience and religion is a fundamental human right, and continue to raise our concerns with Chinese counterparts.

We raised our particular concerns about religious buildings in China directly with Chinese authorities during the UK-China Human Rights Dialogue on 19-20 May. We also highlight our broad range of concerns publicly in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Annual Report on Human Rights and Democracy and in quarterly updates to it.

Codes of Practice

Question

Asked by **Lord Hennessy of Nympsfield**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to restore and update the Cabinet Office Precedent Book. [HL1518]

Lord Wallace of Saltaire (LD): The Cabinet Office Precedent Book has been largely superseded by the Cabinet Manual, the Ministerial Code, including Travel by Ministers and the Code of Conduct for Special Advisers, which are public documents.

Council of Ministers

Question

Asked by **Lord Pearson of Rannoch**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Warsi on 21 July (WA 156), how many times since 2008 the Council of the European Union has disagreed with items on its agenda previously agreed within Coreper and to be decided without discussion as A-items. [HL1657]

Lord Popat (Con): The Government does not record information on how many times the Council has chosen not to adopt an item as an "A" point following a preparatory meeting of The Committee of Permanent

Representatives (COREPER). Where an item is on the agenda for a meeting of the Council of the European Union, COREPER will prepare that item but will not itself take any decision: the decision is for the Council to take. If a matter is planned for agreement as an A point at a Council meeting and it appears that agreement is not possible, it would be either withdrawn from the agenda or made the subject of discussion at that meeting.

Debts Questions

Asked by *Lord Kennedy of Southwark*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effectiveness of regulation of debt management companies. [HL1609]

The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Deighton) (Con): The Government has fundamentally reformed regulation of the consumer credit market, including the debt management industry, by transferring regulation from the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) to the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) on 1 April 2014.

The Government welcomes the binding rules the FCA has placed on debt management firms, including new prudential and client money requirements to better protect consumers' money.

Under the new regime the FCA has robust powers to protect borrowers – there is no limit to the fines which the FCA can levy and it can require firms to provide redress to consumers.

The FCA will thoroughly assess every debt management firm's fitness to trade as part of the authorisation process. The debt management industry has been called forward first for authorisation, from this October.

Asked by *Lord Sharkey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the answers by Lord Newby on 28 July (HL Deb, cols. 1409–11), whether cold callers recruiting for debt management companies are required to advise of the existence of free debt management services; if so, who is responsible for enforcing that requirement; and how many infractions have been recognised. [HL1637]

Lord Deighton: Lead generators for debt management firms are not subject to regulation directly, but the FCA requires regulated debt management firms that accept leads from lead generators to satisfy themselves that the business has been procured fairly and in accordance with relevant legislation, including the requirements of the Data Protection Act and the Privacy and Electronic Communication Regulations. Debt management firms must ensure that lead generators calling on their behalf make clear the identity of the firm, and the purpose of the communication, so the consumer can decide whether to proceed. Additionally, at first contact with a customer, debt management firms must signpost consumers to the availability of

“free” debt advice. The FCA is able to impose sanctions on regulated debt management firms, such as imposing unlimited fines and ordering firms to pay money back to customers, where wrongdoing is found.

Debts: Advisory Services Question

Asked by *Lord Kennedy of Southwark*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what further plans they have to support charities and other organisations that seek to help people in financial difficulty. [HL1611]

Lord Wallace of Saltaire (LD): The Government is committing to supporting charities working with the vulnerable and disadvantaged, including those supporting people in financial difficulty.

For example, Cabinet Office has contributed over £32 million towards the Big Lottery Fund's Advice Service Transition Fund. This fund is supporting many not-for-profit advice providers working with individuals in financial difficulty. We have also convened an Affordable Lending Steering Group, working to address the barriers that limit community lenders' ability to provide services to those in need.

Diplomatic Relations Question

Asked by *The Marquess of Lothian*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what new initiatives they are taking to maximise the use of soft power in their international diplomacy. [HL1480]

Lord Popat (Con): The Government has taken a number of recent initiatives to maximise Britain's soft power, as detailed in our response to the House of Lords Select Committee on Soft Power and the UK's Influence Report of session 2013-14 (Command Paper Cm 8879 of June 2014).

We have increased the 2015-16 budget for the Chevening Scholarship Programme from £18.24m to £45m and trebled the number of places for applicants in developing countries. We are supporting the development of the Chevening Alumni Alliance, and my Rt Hon Friend the Member for East Devon (Mr Swire) held an event at Chevening on 9 July to celebrate the programme's thirtieth anniversary, with some of its best known alumni.

We have increased our funding for the GREAT Britain campaign for 2014-15 from £30m to £46.5m, with the aim of generating a further £1 billion of economic benefits for the UK. Already the GREAT Britain campaign has delivered an audited economic return of £580m to date.

We hosted the first Girl Summit with UNICEF on 22 July, aimed at mobilising domestic and international efforts to end female genital mutilation and child, early and forced marriage. This involved 650 participants from 50 countries. The former Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right Hon.

Friend the Member for Richmond (Yorks) (Mr Hague), also co-chaired the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict in June, involving 1,700 delegates and 129 country delegations.

Energy Companies Obligation

Question

Asked by *Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will extend the Green Deal Home Improvement Fund to provide householders with additional financial support via the Energy Company Obligation where they are replacing their central heating boiler and that boiler is reliant on off-grid supplies. [HL1251]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Energy and Climate Change (Baroness Verma) (Con): The Green Deal Home Improvement Fund closed to new applications on 24th July 2014 as the value of applications made to date had reached the available budget.

However, the Government has a range of other energy efficiency schemes which can help households who need assistance with energy efficiency measures, including for repairing and replacing 'non-gas' heating systems. These include Green Deal Finance, the Affordable Warmth element of the Energy Company Obligation and the Renewable Heat Incentive.

The Government has set up the Energy Saving Advice Service (0300 123 1234) which provides the public with independent advice about these and other energy efficiency schemes.

Entry Clearances

Question

Asked by *Lord Ashcroft*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether there are any citizens of foreign countries who require a visa to enter the United Kingdom but who do not require a visa to enter the Republic of Ireland.

[HL1352]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Taylor of Holbeach) (Con): Citizens of the following countries and territories require visas to visit the UK but not the Republic of Ireland: Bolivia, Fiji, Guyana, Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa, Swaziland and Taiwan.

Ethiopia

Question

Asked by *Baroness Quin*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they give, when allocating aid to Ethiopia, to the human rights situation in that country, particularly in relation to the Oromo population.

[HL1445]

Baroness Northover (LD): When allocating aid to Ethiopia, Her Majesty's Government assesses the commitment of the Ethiopian government to our 'Partnership Principles', one of which relates to 'Human Rights and International Obligations'. This assessment shapes how we work with the Government of Ethiopia in delivery of our aid.

We are concerned at recent events related to student protests in Oromia and have raised this issue at the highest levels of the Ethiopian government. We will continue to raise our concerns, press for an investigation into what happened, and for any members of the security forces who have used excessive force to be held to account.

EU Regional Policy

Question

Asked by *Baroness Quin*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are their priorities regarding the European Union cohesion policy. [HL1627]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (Baroness Neville-Rolfe) (Con): The budget and main regulations governing European Union cohesion policy for the 2014-20 programming period were agreed formally in December 2013. The focus now is on effective implementation.

Eurogroup

Question

Asked by *Lord Harrison*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the United Kingdom has ever been offered the opportunity to attend Eurogroup meetings; and if so, on how many occasions and what was their response.

[HL1494]

The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Deighton) (Con): In the context of the euro area sovereign debt crisis the Eurogroup has met in an extended format on occasion, including in May 2011 and January 2012. Chaired by the Eurogroup President, these meetings were attended by Ministers from non-euro area Member States including the United Kingdom.

European Union: Legislative Competence

Question

Asked by *Lord Kinnock*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following the statement of the Foreign Secretary on the Andrew Marr Show on 20 July, which powers of the European Union they consider must be repatriated to Member States; what they consider should be done at national level and what should be done at a European level, and how they propose to secure those changes.

[HL1586]

The Senior Minister of State, Department for Communities and Local Government & Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Warsi) (Con): The UK is working with partners to achieve a reformed European Union (EU), that is more competitive, flexible and democratically accountable. This includes ensuring that action is taken at a national level wherever possible and at EU level only where necessary.

We have already made progress over reforms such as bringing fish stock decisions from pan-EU to regional level and removing UK liability for any further Eurozone bailouts. We will continue with partners to make sure decisions are only made at EU level where they cannot be better made at national level.

Female Genital Mutilation

Question

Asked by *Baroness Tonge*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to governments in countries where female genital mutilation (FGM) is practised; and what steps they have taken to verify reports that ISIS is introducing compulsory FGM in areas they control. [HL1581]

Lord Popat (Con): The Government is playing a key role in supporting and strengthening the international movement to end female genital mutilation (FGM) worldwide, within a generation. Given that the vast majority of communities who practise FGM are found in 29 countries clustered in West Africa, Egypt, Sudan and the Horn of Africa and that change must come from within affected communities, we have sought to support the existing African-led movement to end FGM, and build upon the success of the Africa Group 2012 UN resolution that banned the practice.

It is in this spirit that the Prime Minister, my right honourable friend the Member for Witney (Mr Cameron), convened the first global summit on ending FGM and child, early and forced marriage (CEFM) on 22 July 2014. The Girl Summit brought together 650 participants from 50 affected countries. It resulted in 32 countries signing the Summit Charter and private and public financial pledges of \$88 million to end CEFM and \$7million for FGM. Ministers and senior officials worked with all countries affected by FGM, including countries where it is practised by diaspora communities, in advance of the Summit to encourage them to develop new commitments to end FGM. This is in addition to the UK's flagship programme of £35 million over 5 years to support African countries to end FGM, and an additional £12 million commitment in Sudan.

Reports that the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIS) is introducing compulsory FGM in areas they control remain unconfirmed. Staff at our Embassy in Iraq have spoken to the Head of UN Human Rights Office, the Head of UN Women, and the UN Assistance Mission for Iraq, all of whom were unable to confirm the reports. We also remain in contact with the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF). On balance, we conclude that the threat, while a serious matter, is not new. We continue to follow developments as closely as possible.

Financial Conduct Authority

Question

Asked by *Lord Sharkey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many visits there have been from April 2014 to the last month for which data are available to the page on the Financial Conduct Authority website listing unauthorised firms and individuals to avoid.

[HL1639]

The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Deighton) (Con): This Question has been passed on to the FCA. The FCA will reply to directly to the noble Lord directly by letter. A copy of the letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Food Supply Networks Review

Question

Asked by *Lord Rooker*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord De Mauley on 14 July (WA 94), on what date they received Professor Elliott's final report into the food chain; whether any amendments have subsequently been made; when it was ready for publication; and whether it will be published before 30 July. [HL1378]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Lord De Mauley) (Con): Professor Elliott submitted a first draft of his final report to Defra and Department of Health in June 2014. We received an amended draft on 4 July ahead of any final formatting and the correction of typing errors. The final print ready version was received on 18 July and will be published shortly.

Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation

Question

Asked by *Lord Avebury*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment has been made at the Girl Summit 2014 of the role played by the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunisation (GAVI) in safeguarding the health of women and girls, and in addressing gender-related barriers to accessing immunisation services; and what assessment they have made of the cost-effectiveness so far of the United Kingdom's contribution towards GAVI's programme, agreed in the Multilateral Aid Review of March 2011.

[HL1437]

Baroness Northover (LD): The focus of Girl Summit 2014 was on ending female genital mutilation and child, early and forced marriage. No specific assessment was made at the Summit on the role of the GAVI Alliance in safeguarding the health of women and girls or addressing gender-related barriers to accessing immunisation services. However, GAVI is rolling out

two vaccines that will directly benefit girls and women: rubella vaccine, which protects against a disease damaging to unborn children; and Human Papilloma Virus (HPV) vaccine, which helps prevent cervical cancer, one of the leading causes of death in young women in sub-Saharan Africa. GAVI will immunise over 30 million girls with HPV vaccines during 2013-2020 which will prevent over 150,000 women dying each year. GAVI is working to overcome the barriers to introducing the HPV vaccine in developing countries by reducing the high cost of the vaccine and tackling the challenges of immunising girls aged nine to thirteen years by integrating HPV immunisation with wider health interventions targeted at adolescent girls.

The UK's support to GAVI remains a highly cost-effective way to achieve childhood immunisation results at scale. The 2011 UK Multilateral Aid Review (MAR) ranked GAVI as being very good value for money. The 2013 MAR Update confirmed that GAVI is continuing to make reasonable progress. An example of this is that GAVI helped to secure a reduction in price of 35% between 2010-2012 of the three vaccines it spends the most money on.

Health Services and Social Services

Question

Asked by **Lord Warner**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the actual or estimated annual expenditure, stated in 2010 prices, in (1) 2013-14, and (2) 2009-10, on each of the following items of National Health Service and social care expenditure: (a) primary care, (b) community health services, (c) community mental health services, (d) continuing care, (e) public health, (f) social care (national), (g) social care (local government), and (h) social care (privately funded); and what was the total actual or estimated expenditure from public funds on health and social care for each of those years in 2010 prices. [HL1483]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): For some elements of the question, the information is not collected to the detail requested. There are discontinuities in all categories stipulated in the question and therefore any comparison between the two years would be invalid. Such information as is available is as follows.

In 2009-10, primary care trusts (PCTs) reported the following spending outturns relating to commissioning activity in their accounts returns:

	2009-10 £m
Primary Care	19,714
Community Health Services	7,966
Continuing Care	2,026

In this year, PCTs did not separately report spending to the detail requested on:

- community mental health services; and
- public health.

Spending on social care cannot be provided to the detail requested; however the Department for Communities and Local Government has reported total net spending on social care by local authorities of £20,963 million in 2009-10. This is a net figure and includes any income from service user charges and from Department of Health grants to local authorities.

Since 2009-10, there have been a number of changes to the way spending is categorised and recorded:

- primary care – spending is not comparable to the 2009-10 spending outturns. The 2013-14 spending outturn will exclude any public health spending, and other such functions that have now transferred elsewhere in the health and social care system, that would have been included in the 2009-10 spending outturn.

- community health services – spending is only recorded for services commissioned by clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) and excludes any direct commissioning undertaken by NHS England itself.

NHS England has reported the following spending outturns relating to commissioning activity in 2013-14:

	2013-14 Nominal £m	2013-14 in 2009-10 prices £m
Primary Care	20,156	18,683
Community Health Services (CCGs only)	6,443	5,972
Continuing Care	3,722	3,450
Public Health - section 7a	1,562	1,448

Public Health England has responsibility for the following additional public health related spending:

	2013-14 Nominal £m	2013-14 in 2009-10 prices £m
Public Health grants to Local Authorities	2,663	2,468
Other	675	626

The Department for Communities and Local Government has reported the following total net spending on social care by local authorities in 2013-14, net of any income from service user charges and grant funding provided by NHS England:

	2013-14 Nominal £m	2013-14 in 2009-10 prices £m
Local Authority - Social Care spending	21,286	19,729
Of which, funding provided by NHS England	859	796

These figures are indicative. Final figures spending figures and breakdowns will be available later this year.

The Department of Health's Total Departmental Expenditure Limit (TDEL) is used. This is the total Revenue and Capital DEL expenditure, excluding

depreciation, by those bodies within the Departmental Group. These are the standard spending controls against which the Department of Health is held accountable to Parliament.

This data is comparable across the two years. The following table summarises the TDEL outturn for both years:

	2009-10	2013-14	2013-14
	Nominal	Nominal	in 2009-10
	£m	£m	prices
			£m
Total DEL spending outturn	98,419	109,774	101,750

Higher and Further Education: Admissions

Question

Asked by **Lord Storey**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they intend to take to increase the number of students enrolling in further and higher education; and how they intend to fund any growth in student numbers in 2015–16, in the light of the announcement on 20 July that the student loan book will not be sold. [HL1512]

Lord Wallace of Saltaire (LD): Further and Higher Education Institutions are responsible for attracting students. The Government has implemented a reform programme enabling FE colleges to use their freedoms and flexibilities to provide the high quality skills their learners, local economy and businesses need. There is an increased drive for employer ownership of skills funding, a continuing growth, and reform of, the Apprenticeships programme and an opportunity for individuals aged 24 and over studying at Level 3 and 4 to have access to Loans to help meet up-front course fees. The Government will raise the cap on HE student numbers to fund up to 30,000 additional places in 2014/15 and remove this cap altogether in 2015/16, except for high risk providers. Funding for this expansion is already agreed with HMT over the Spending Review period. Student numbers are not contingent on the sale and all departments' budget provision beyond 2015-2016 will be agreed as part of the next Spending Review.

Higher Education: Ethnic Groups

Question

Asked by **Lord Storey**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to support universities to address the problems highlighted in the recent report published by the Nuffield Foundation and the London School of Economics entitled *Black and Minority Ethnic Access To Higher Education: A Reassessment*. [HL1514]

Lord Wallace of Saltaire (LD): The Government is committed to access to Higher Education (HE) based on talent and potential, irrespective of background. Promoting equal opportunities is taken very seriously

and we have put in place a strong legal framework which protects the rights of people not to be discriminated against, through the Equality Act 2010.

Whilst universities are independent and autonomous organisations, responsible for their own admissions decisions, the Equality Act places clear duties and responsibilities on them to ensure that students with protected characteristics do not face discrimination or less favourable treatment whilst applying to, and studying in, higher education.

Hong Kong

Question

Asked by **Lord Bourne of Aberystwyth**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how often, and with what result, they have raised breaches of Hong Kong's Basic Law with China in the last five years. [HL1441]

Lord Popat (Con): We monitor closely the implementation of One Country, Two Systems, as enshrined in the Sino-British Joint Declaration and the Basic Law.

We discuss issues relating to Hong Kong regularly at senior levels with the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) Government and with the Chinese authorities. As the former Foreign Secretary noted in the most recent Six Monthly Report to Parliament, Official Record 10 July Col 33WS, Hong Kong's unique constitutional framework has worked well. We have made clear that it is vital it continues to be respected, and is seen to be respected, by all sides.

Indonesia

Question

Asked by **Lord Patten**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of the freedom to worship of British Christian and Jewish visitors to Indonesia. [HL1601]

Lord Popat (Con): Indonesia has a strong tradition of religious diversity and tolerance and in general those of minority faiths in Indonesia, including any British visitors, are able to practise their religion. Various denominations of Christian churches are well represented across Indonesia. The Jewish community in Indonesia is very small, although there is at least one working synagogue. However, we are concerned that there has been a rise of localised instances of inter- and intra-religious conflict, and examples where the rights of religious minority groups have not been protected.

The former Senior Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the right honourable Baroness Warsi, convened meetings of international leaders, including with the Foreign Minister of Indonesia, to generate practical steps to promote freedom of religion or belief, and to fight religious intolerance within our societies. Our Ambassador in Jakarta has discussed these issues with Indonesian Ministers, civil society,

and religious leaders. We have supported projects to improve respect for freedom of religion or belief. We also raise freedom of religion and belief concerns at the annual EU-Indonesia Human Rights Dialogue. We continue to monitor the situation and raise any concerns with the Government of Indonesia.

Internet Question

Asked by *Lord Avebury*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what if any financial arrangements they have with the Internet Computer Bureau which allow the latter to make money from the sale of dependent territory domain names. [HL1060]

Lord Popat (Con): The British Government has no financial arrangement with the Internet Computer Bureau, which is the Domain Name Registrar or Network Information Centre for a number of domains including for some of the Overseas Territories.

Iraq Questions

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of Coventry*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the state of freedom of religion and belief in Iraq. [HL1590]

Lord Popat (Con): We are deeply concerned about the situation in Iraq including freedom of religion and belief. We condemn the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant's (ISIL) threats to ethnic and religious minorities in Iraq, including Christian, Yezidi and Turkomen and the desecration of mosques and churches by ISIL. The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my hon. Friend the member for Bournemouth East (Mr Ellwood), met Archbishop Athanasius of the Syriac Orthodox Church in London on 29 July and issued a statement strongly condemning the persecution of Christians and other minorities in Iraq. Our Ambassador in Baghdad has met religious representatives, including Chaldean Patriarch Luis Sako, and the Consul General in Erbil has met the Archbishop of Erbil and the Archbishop of Mosul to discuss the current situation, the needs of the Christian community, and UK humanitarian assistance to those displaced by fighting in Iraq. On Sunday 3 August, the British Chargé d'Affaires attended a service at St George's Anglican Church in Baghdad, joined by officials from our Embassy, to highlight the British Government's continued support to Christians and other minorities affected by recent violence in Iraq.

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of Coventry*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to respond to the humanitarian situation caused by the displacement of persons from ISIS-controlled areas of Iraq. [HL1592]

Baroness Northover (LD): We are deeply concerned by the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Iraq. DFID deployed an advisory team to Erbil in June 2014 to conduct a rapid humanitarian assessment and has committed £5 million of humanitarian aid to respond to the level of need in the north of Iraq. This will be distributed to those most in need through trusted and long-standing humanitarian partners.

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of Coventry*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to referring the alleged human rights abuses committed by ISIS to the International Criminal Court for further investigation and eventual prosecution. [HL1593]

Lord Popat: We condemn all human rights abuses in Iraq. However, Iraq is not a state party to the International Criminal Court and any referral would need to be through the UN Security Council. We have no plans for this at present but we will keep this under review. We are calling on the Government of Iraq to ensure that all crimes and human rights abuses committed in Iraq are properly documented to assist with the investigation, and bringing those responsible to account in the future.

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of Coventry*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to assist religious leaders in Iraq to respond collaboratively and in a non-sectarian manner to the human rights abuses allegedly committed in Iraq. [HL1594]

Lord Popat: We condemn the reported human rights abuses in Iraq and call for those responsible to be held to account. We meet representatives of Iraqi religious groups both in the UK and in Iraq, and fund a series of grass roots meetings with religious leaders of different faiths to combat sectarianism. We are encouraging influential religious leaders in Iraq to speak out publicly and condemn sectarian violence. The High Council of Religious Leaders in Iraq has issued a strong statement of solidarity with Christians and Muslims in Mosul and Ninevah, citing the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant's actions to be entirely un-Islamic.

Asked by *Lord Hylton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the Iraqi President, Speaker and acting Prime Minister about the early establishment of an inclusive government there. [HL1648]

Lord Popat: Our Ambassador in Baghdad has made representations to the Speaker and President to urge the early establishment of an inclusive government and we continue to raise this with Iraqi leaders at the highest levels. The former Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right Hon. Friend the Member for Richmond (Yorks) (Mr Hague), also discussed the issue with Prime Minister Maliki during his visit in June.

Israel Questions

Asked by **Lord Ahmed**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their estimate of the total number of dual national British–Israeli citizens serving in the Israeli Defence Force. [HL1353]

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their estimate of the number of British citizens engaged in operations against the Palestinian people in Gaza. [HL1354]

The Senior Minister of State, Department for Communities and Local Government & Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Warsi) (Con): The Government has made no assessment of the number of British and British-Israeli citizens serving in the Israeli Defence Force (IDF). Any UK national serving abroad in the armed forces of any state is bound by the laws of armed conflict and any local laws that apply.

Asked by **Lord Ahmed**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to take any action against those British citizens serving in the Israeli Defence Force. [HL1355]

Baroness Warsi: The Government has made no assessment of the number of British and British-Israeli citizens serving in the Israeli Defence Force (IDF). Any UK national serving abroad in the armed forces of any state is bound by the laws of armed conflict and any local laws that apply.

Asked by **Lord Ahmed**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have published any information for the British citizens travelling to Israel regarding the possibility of their involvement in operations in Gaza. [HL1356]

Baroness Warsi: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) publishes travel advice on its website for any British citizens planning to travel to Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories. The FCO currently advises against all travel to Gaza.

Lloyds Banking Group Question

Asked by **Lord Myners**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to take any action in connection with those who served on the board of Lloyds Banking Group when that company was involved in LIBOR fixing and manipulating the Bank of England's Special Liquidity Scheme. [HL1659]

The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Deighton) (Con): We support the proportionate enforcement action announced recently by the FCA

against Lloyds Banking Group (LBG) and are clear that such abuses are completely unacceptable. The action by the new, tougher Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) shows that the system is working, and we are committed to taking further action to dealing with abuses, tackling the unacceptable behaviour of the few and ensuring that markets are fair for the many who depend on them.

Enforcement action against individuals and/or firms with regard to financial conduct issues are a matter for the FCA and law enforcement institutions.

Malaysia Question

Asked by **Lord Avebury**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Warsi on 21 January (WA 136), what progress has been made in resuming the European Union–Malaysia Human Rights Dialogue; and whether they have asked the government of Malaysia how it reconciles the endorsement of the 2004 Amman Message (recognising the validity of all eight Islamic legal schools including Shia) with actions taken by the Malaysian authorities. [HL1624]

Lord Popat (Con): Discussions continue between the EU and Malaysia on the resumption of the EU-Malaysia Human Rights Dialogue. We are keen to have a Dialogue of substance. Bilaterally, we have regular conversations with the Malaysian government on human rights issues, including freedom of religion.

Marriage: Ceremonies Questions

Asked by **Lord Lester of Herne Hill**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will ensure that registered civil partners wishing to undergo a marriage ceremony with religious elements receive equal treatment as same sex couples who are not registered civil partners and wish to marry in the same way. [HL1313]

To ask Her Majesty's Government why the Marriage of Same Sex Couples (Conversion of Civil Partnership) Regulations 2014 bans the use of religious services at conversion. [HL1314]

Lord Wallace of Saltaire (LD): The Government is committed to ensuring that couples wishing to convert their civil partnership in to a marriage can do so from 10 December 2014.

The draft Marriage of Same Sex Couples (Conversion of Civil Partnership) Regulations 2014, which were laid in the House on 3rd July 2014, provide for a simple conversion process, which is not, and was never envisaged to be, a marriage ceremony. The draft regulations were prepared in accordance with the provision made by Section 9 of the Marriage (Same Sex Couples) Act

2013, in particular subsections (4) and (5), which was debated at length in both Houses of Parliament during the passage of the Bill.

The process was conceived in line with responses from those in civil partnerships to the public consultation in 2012, which called for a simple, straightforward and low cost way for couples to convert their civil partnership into a marriage. Stakeholders expressed a desire for a conversion process which would not undermine the significance of the original civil partnership and which would avoid creating undue new burdens or costs for couples. Accordingly the conversion process was not envisaged to be a process which would replicate a marriage ceremony, whether religious or secular, but was rather intended to be an easy administrative process by which couples converted their civil partnerships and had these recognised as marriages from the date the civil partnership was formed. Couples who did want to celebrate the conversion with family and friends could choose to hold some form of non-statutory celebratory ceremony following the conversion itself, if they so wished.

We continue to listen to the views expressed by stakeholders during the implementation of the Act. We have heard views articulated by stakeholders in recent weeks raising concerns with the conversion process as set out in the draft regulations as laid and in particular regarding the possibility of incorporating religious elements within conversions. We will consider these views and whether suitable options exist for addressing them within the legal framework established by the Act over the summer.

Mediation Question

Asked by **Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town**

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they will publish their response to their consultation on Alternative Dispute Resolution for consumers which began in March. [HL1599]

Lord Wallace of Saltaire (LD): The Government intends to publish the response to the consultation on Alternative Dispute Resolution for consumers in the autumn.

Middle East Questions

Asked by **Lord Warner**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the number of Israeli civilians who have been (1) killed, and (2) wounded, as a result of rockets fired at Israeli cities in the past fortnight; what assessment they have made of the number of Palestinian civilians living in Gaza who have been (1) killed, and (2) wounded, as a result of the latest military intervention by Israel in Gaza; and what proportion of those Palestinian casualties they estimate were children. [HL1393]

The Senior Minister of State, Department for Communities and Local Government & Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Warsi) (Con): As of 24 July, two Israeli civilians have been killed (one by mortar bomb, one by rocket fire). 11 Israeli civilians have been injured. The Palestinian Ministry of Health figures, as of afternoon of 24 July, records the number of Palestinian civilians killed as 738 and injured as 4620. As of the morning of 24 July, 170 Palestinian children have been killed and 1,213 children have been injured.

Asked by **Baroness Uddin**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their response to the statement by the United Nations High Commissioner of Human Rights that Israel's latest military offensive in Gaza "could amount to war crimes". [HL1522]

Lord Popat (Con): We have taken note of the statement by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. We have not responded directly but we have commented on a number of the issues she has raised. The UK is deeply concerned by the continuing bloodshed in Gaza. It is tragic that so many innocent civilians, including women and children, have been killed and injured. The UK has consistently made clear that Israel must act proportionately, exercise restraint, and take every step to minimise civilian casualties, in line with International Humanitarian Law. The urgent priority now is to stop the bloodshed, re-impose a cease-fire and work to find a longer term solution. All our efforts will be concentrated on that objective.

Asked by **Lord Hylton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Israel concerning the reported shooting of unarmed Palestinian civilians in the West Bank between 25 and 26 July by both the Israel Defence Forces and by settlers. [HL1543]

Lord Popat: Officials from our Embassy in Tel Aviv raised this issue with the Israeli Defence Forces and the Israeli Border Police on 25 July.

Our Ambassador to Tel Aviv raised the issue of violence in the West Bank with the Yesha Council (the main settler organisation) Foreign Envoy and the Israeli Director of External Affairs on 28 July.

Asked by **Lord Hylton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to assess the impact of prolonged attacks on Gaza on (1) the mental health of the population, and (2) water supplies. [HL1544]

Baroness Northover (LD): DFID works closely with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Human Affairs (OCHA), which manages the process of collecting, analysing and sharing information about

the humanitarian situation. According to OCHA's most recent assessment at least 373,000 children require direct and specialised psychosocial support and 1.5 million people not in shelters have no or extremely restricted access to water.

The UK will provide more than £15 million in emergency support for Gaza. DFID activated a £3 million Rapid Response Facility (RRF) which will mean that more than half a million people in Gaza will receive medical care, clean water and sanitation. Three of the NGOs funded under the RRF are providing psychosocial support and one will be providing advanced mental health care. DFID also brought forward £3 million in funding to the International Committee of the Red Cross to help them repair water infrastructure, deliver emergency medical services and protect the civilian population.

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel concerning the Palestinians reportedly killed and injured during West Bank protests against the Israeli offensive in Gaza. [HL1578]

Lord Popat: Our Ambassador to Tel Aviv raised the issue of violence in the West Bank with the Yesha Council (the main settler organisation) Foreign Envoy and the Israeli Director of External Affairs on 28 July.

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made as to whether the shelling of the Ash Shuja'iyeh district, the United Nations school compound and Al Shifa and Al Wafah hospitals should be investigated as possible war crimes. [HL1580]

Lord Popat: We have not made an assessment of whether the incidents you raise should be investigated as possible war crimes. However, the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right honourable friend the Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr Hammond), along with the Secretary of State for International Development, my right honourable friend the Member for Putney (Justine Greening), issued a statement expressing shock at the deaths at the UN school on 25 July. International Humanitarian Law is clear that all feasible precautions must be taken to avoid harm to civilians during a military attack.

Ministers Question

Asked by Lord Jopling

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Wallace of Saltaire on 22 July (WA 197), how many of the 13 ministers who are not in receipt of a ministerial salary are members of (1) the House of Commons, and (2) the House of Lords. [HL1458]

Lord Wallace of Saltaire (LD): There are currently three Ministers who are Members of the House of Commons and 10 Ministers who are Members of the House of Lords who are not in receipt of a ministerial salary.

Information on current government Ministers, including those who are unpaid, was published in July 2014. I will place a copy in the Library.

National Careers Service Question

Asked by Baroness Uddin

To ask Her Majesty's Government what level of training in autism awareness National Careers Service advisers are expected to have. [HL1523]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (Baroness Neville-Rolfe) (Con): National Careers Service contractors are required to have a well qualified and professional workforce to underpin the delivery of impartial careers information, advice and guidance (IAG) to young people and adults. In order to meet this requirement all advisers must hold qualifications which are appropriate to their role. For front line advisers this will include IAG qualifications at level 3 and above which includes assessments of an advisers ability to establish effective communication with all customers to help them make informed choices, including those individuals with conditions such as autism. Contractors are required to have workforce training and development plans in place to make sure staff are equipped to meet the needs of all customer groups, which will include awareness training about specific learning disabilities and difficulties.

Nigeria Questions

Asked by Baroness Kinnock of Holyhead

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that Royal Dutch Shell's subsidiary in Nigeria has failed to deal with oil pollution from its pipelines, as recommended by the United Nations Environment Programme. [HL1509]

Lord Popat (Con): We are aware of the UN Environment Programme report on pollution in the Niger Delta. Oil spills in the Niger Delta occur because of criminal activity as well as oil company operations. We continue to closely monitor the situation in the Delta and raise pollution both with the Nigerian government and the oil companies.

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my hon. Friend the Member for Boston and Skegness (Mr Simmonds), saw the environmental degradation in the Delta first hand during his visit to Nigeria in February 2014. On that visit he discussed these issues with President Jonathan and senior officials at Shell.

Asked by Baroness Kinnock of Holyhead

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effects of oil pollution on the Bodo community in Rivers State in Nigeria; and whether they have any plans to meet representatives of Royal Dutch Shell to ascertain a timetable for the clean up of the oil spills there. [HL1510]

Lord Popat: We are aware of the impact that oil pollution has had on the Bodo community and a number of other communities in Rivers State Nigeria. The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my hon. Friend the Member for Boston and Skegness (Mr Simmonds), discussed the area's environmental problems with Shell during his visit to the Delta in February 2014.

We maintain an ongoing dialogue with the Government of Nigeria and oil companies operating in the Delta, including Shell, through which we continue to press for environmental responsibility in the oil and gas sector.

Asked by Baroness Kinnock of Holyhead

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to request information from Royal Dutch Shell on any plans to ensure that its pipeline infrastructure in Nigeria is properly maintained to international standards. [HL1511]

Lord Popat: We maintain an ongoing dialogue with Shell and other oil companies operating in the Niger Delta and use such discussions to raise environmental concerns and stress the oil companies' corporate responsibility, including the maintenance of equipment.

Asked by Baroness Cox

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have made representations to the government of Nigeria concerning reports of abductions in North-Eastern Nigeria this year in addition to the recent kidnapping of girls in Chibok; and whether they have asked the government of Nigeria what steps are being taken by federal and state governments there to rescue those abducted and to provide protection for civilians from further abductions. [HL1552]

Lord Popat: The Government is playing a leading role in the international response to the threat posed by Boko Haram, including its despicable practice of abducting men, women and children in north-eastern Nigeria. On 12 June the former Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right honourable friend the Member for Richmond (Yorks) (Mr Hague), announced a substantial new package of UK military, intelligence and development to support Nigeria as it tackles terrorism.

We continue to engage with Nigerian officials at both federal and state level to discuss their efforts to secure the release of those abducted and to provide protection for their civilians from the terrorist threat.

North Korea

Question

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the reply by Baroness Warsi on 23 July (HL Deb, cols GC 460–4) on the Commission of Inquiry Report on human rights in North Korea, whether any projects to improve the substantive human rights of North Koreans, rather than cultural, economic or humanitarian initiatives, are to be implemented; and whether such projects are being considered for North Korean refugees outside the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. [HL1623]

Lord Popat (Con): It is not possible for the UK to carry out projects in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) without the cooperation of the DPRK authorities. This has an impact on the type of projects we are able to support, although we have successfully taken forward projects in some areas of human rights, such as disability rights. In the Financial Year 2014/15 the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's (FCO's) Human Rights and Democracy Programme is funding a project delivered by the Thomson Foundation titled 'Inside Out: Working in North Korea to connect its journalists to the Internet world', which aims to give North Korean journalists a greater understanding of freedom of expression by teaching them Internet skills. Our other engagement projects are about finding concrete ways to inform North Korean citizens about the UK and its values, so that in the long term they recognise the benefits of working with the outside world from which they are normally isolated.

Our Embassy in Seoul supports the North Korean refugee community through its "English for the Future" programme, which is funded with a mixture of FCO programme funds and corporate sponsorship. We also reserve one of our Chevening scholarships for this community. These programmes help new settlers tackle some of the barriers which can prevent their successful integration into South Korean society and improve their future prospects. The FCO's Human Rights and Democracy Programme has also previously funded projects with North Korean refugee groups in the Republic of Korea which are more directly related to human rights in the DPRK, such as documenting the effects of torture or producing a report on the rights of women. We remain open to funding similar projects in the future.

Orders and Regulations

Questions

Asked by Lord Goodlad

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many statutory instruments from the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills have been laid this calendar year; of those, what percentage corrected errors in a previous instrument (including drafts of affirmative instruments that had to be superseded by correcting drafts); and what steps that Department is taking to reduce the need for correcting instruments. [HL1420]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (Baroness Neville-Rolfe) (Con): The Department for Business, Innovation and Skills has laid 71 statutory instruments (SI's) in this year to date. The table below shows those that have been identified as correcting errors in previous SI's and the SI's corrected.

The legal advisers in the Department for Business have this year reviewed and refreshed both the processes for the checking of SI's and the training given to lawyers on drafting SI's. This should reduce the incidence of drafting errors.

The Copyright and Duration of Rights in Performances (Amendment) Regulations 2014 [2014/434]	Corrects an error in SI 2013/ 1782
The Patents (Amendment) Rules 2014 [2014/578]	Corrects an error in SI 2007/ 3291
The Employment Tribunals (Constitution and Rules of Procedure) (Amendment) (No 3) 2014 [2014/787]	Corrects an error in SI 2014/ 271
The Enterprise Act 2002 (Protection of Legitimate Interests) Order 2014 [2014/891]	Corrects an error in SI 2003/ 1592
The Copyright (Regulation of Relevant Licensing Bodies) Regulations 2014 [2014/898]	Supersedes draft Statutory Instrument of the same title laid before Parliament on 5 February and published on 10 February
The Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment and Restriction of the Use of Certain Hazardous Substances in Electrical and Electronic Equipment (Amendment) Regulations 2014 [2014/1771]	Corrects an error in SI 2013/ 3113
The European Union (Definition of Treaties) (Convention on Internal Interests in Mobile Equipment and Protocol thereto on matters specific to Aircraft Equipment) Order 2014 [2014/1885]	Supersedes draft Statutory Instrument of the same title laid before Parliament on 11 March and published on 13 March

The table does not include drafts of affirmative instruments which were superseded by a further draft in identical form by reason of affirmative resolutions not having been obtained before the end of the 2013-2014 Parliamentary session and the identical draft being laid in the 2014-2015 session.

Asked by Lord Goodlad

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many statutory instruments from the Ministry of Justice have been laid this calendar year; of those, what percentage corrected errors in a previous instrument (including drafts of affirmative instruments that had to be superseded by correcting drafts); and what steps that Department is taking to reduce the need for correcting instruments. [HL1427]

The Minister of State, Ministry of Justice (Lord Faulks) (Con): The Ministry of Justice laid 80 statutory instruments between the start of the calendar year and 25 July 2014. The Ministry of Justice does not keep records of which statutory instruments corrected errors in previous instruments. However, it estimates that

three instruments (less than 4% of the total) were expressed to be correcting errors made in, in consequence of a defect in, or in substitution of, a previous instrument and were as a result issued free of charge to known recipients of the original instrument.

The Ministry of Justice is strongly committed to improving the quality of statutory instrument drafting. In addition to providing training to relevant staff and adopting rigorous checking process (including a requirement that all instruments are subject to a second and third pair of eyes check by a lawyer who has not drafted the instrument), a new post of Statutory Instrument Co-ordinator has been established within the Legal Directorate to co-ordinate the sharing of best practice. The Ministry of Justice will also be participating in work being led by the Treasury Solicitor and First Parliamentary Counsel to enhance further the quality, consistency and effectiveness of statutory instruments across government.

Palestinians

Questions

Asked by Lord Ahmed

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have sent emergency aid for the children of Gaza including medical, food and shelter. [HL1357]

Lord Wallace of Saltaire (LD): We have released £10 million since the latest crisis began. We are giving the UN Relief and Works Agency £4 million in new funding to provide healthcare, clean water, blankets and cooking equipment to help tens of thousands of Palestinians affected by the violence in Gaza, and £3 million to the UN World Food Programme to provide food vouchers to vulnerable families. We are also bringing forward £3 million to support the work of the International Committee of the Red Cross in repairing water infrastructure and providing emergency medical support.

DfID is already spending almost £350 million from 2011-2015 to address a broad range of Palestinian development and humanitarian needs, of which approximately £30 million per annum is spent on Gaza.

Asked by Baroness Uddin

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to provide medical aid in Gaza, in particular to hospitals treating injured civilians. [HL1521]

Baroness Northover (LD): The UK is the third largest donor to UNRWA, the main provider of health services in Gaza, and we have announced a further £6 million to their Flash Appeal for this crisis. We have activated a £3 million Rapid Response Facility on Saturday, under which ten charities have been awarded a portion of £3 million to help them meet urgent needs. This will mean that more than half a million people in Gaza will receive medical care, clean water and sanitation.

We have also brought forward £3 million in funding to the International Committee of the Red Cross, which will be used to help them repair water infrastructure damaged by airstrikes and deliver emergency medical services. And we support the UN Access Coordination Unit to work with the World Health Organisation, Israel, the Palestinian Authority and aid agencies to facilitate the transfer of medical equipment and supplies and patient referrals in and out of Gaza.

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they will take to encourage a total lifting of the blockade of Gaza. [HL1577]

The Senior Minister of State, Department for Communities and Local Government & Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Warsi) (Con): In close co-ordination with our European Union partners and the Office of the Quartet Representation, the Government continues to press the Israeli government at ministerial and official level to ease access restrictions. Supporting legal trade for Gazans is firmly in Israel's long-term interests.

We have also encouraged the Egyptian authorities to ease the movement of bona fide travellers through Rafah, and to consider expanding Rafah to goods transit in the medium term, which will help to ease humanitarian pressures.

Pensions: Advisory Services

Question

Asked by Lord Lipsey

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of their consultation document Freedom and Choice in Pensions (CM 8901), on what they intend to spend the £20 million allocated in the budget for financial advice and guidance. [HL1459]

The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Deighton) (Con): At Budget the Government announced that it will be making available a development fund of £20 million, which will fund preparatory work to get the guidance guarantee up and running in good time for April 2015.

The Treasury has obtained approval for an advance of £10 million from the Contingencies Fund, to allow work on service design and implementation to proceed. I refer the noble Lord to the WMS of 21 July. The Treasury will be publishing a progress update on the service design and implementation strategy in the autumn.

Prisoners: Dependants

Question

Asked by Lord Touhig

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of the case for a statutory duty on courts to identify whether individuals sentenced to prison or held on remand have children or vulnerable adults dependent on them. [HL1045]

The Minister of State, Ministry of Justice (Lord Faulks) (Con): The Government has considered the case for a statutory duty on courts to inquire about the existence of dependants and satisfy themselves of the adequacy of care arrangements. The Government remains concerned, however, that the proposed statutory duty may be impractical for the courts to operate and not be effective in encouraging defendants and offenders to disclose, as early as possible, the existence of dependants. The Government is, however, examining alternative approaches to ensuring that information about dependants of those sent to custody is recorded.

Public Expenditure

Questions

Asked by Lord Barnett

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the recent calculations by the Taxpayers' Alliance that £120 billion of public funds was wasted last year; and what actions they are taking to ensure that public spending offers value for money. [HL1519]

The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Deighton) (Con): The Government is committed to maximising value for money in all areas of public spending, and has introduced a programme to drive efficiencies and reduce wasteful expenditure. By 2014-15, departments working with HM Treasury and the Efficiency and Reform Group in the Cabinet Office will be saving £20 billion a year compared to 2009-10. Spending Round 2013 identified over £5 billion additional efficiency savings in 2015-16.

The Government sets clear principles and guidance for the management of public resources, including achieving value for money, in *Managing Public Money*. Ensuring value for money is the personal responsibility of each Accounting Officer. The methods by which civil servants determine the long run value for money of programmes are set out in *The Green Book: Appraisal and Evaluation in Central Government*.

Asked by Lord Wigley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to review the Barnett formula, in the light of the referendum on Scottish independence. [HL1667]

Lord Deighton: The Government position has been consistent: our priority has been to reduce the deficit and ensure a secure economic future for the whole of the UK.

We have also been clear that no significant changes to the Barnett Formula are in prospect.

Public Expenditure: Wales

Question

Asked by Lord Wigley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with ministers of the Welsh Government during the last 12 months regarding replacing, or amending, the Barnett Formula as it applies to Wales. [HL1496]

The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Deighton) (Con): The Government is working closely with the Welsh Government to devolve new tax and borrowing powers through the Wales Bill. The devolution of tax powers requires an adjustment to the Welsh Government's block grant as it will instead retain certain tax revenues. The proposed block grant adjustment mechanisms are set out in the Wales Bill Command Paper.

The Government has not had any discussions with ministers of the Welsh Government during the last 12 months regarding replacing, or amending, the Barnett Formula as it applies to Wales.

The Government position is clear: our priority remains reducing the deficit and ensuring a secure economic future for the whole of the UK.

Religious Freedom

Question

Asked by **Lord Patten**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they place any restrictions on the freedom to worship of those of all faiths from Brunei, Indonesia or Turkey visiting the United Kingdom. [HL1603]

Lord Popat (Con): The UK does not place any restrictions on freedom to worship by those of all faiths from any country. Freedom of religion or belief and respect for religious diversity and pluralism are at the heart of British society.

Religious freedom is a valuable indicator of wider democratic principles and is often a test of other fundamental freedoms.

We stress that freedom of religion or belief and freedom of expression are interdependent, interrelated and mutually reinforcing.

Republic of Ireland

Question

Asked by **Lord Laird**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Randerson on 23 July (WA 221), whether they will publish on a weekly basis details of all issues of an economic and political importance discussed with the government of the Republic of Ireland. [HL1598]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Wales Office (Baroness Randerson) (LD): No. In accordance with the provisions of the Belfast Agreement, to which the Noble Lord's former party now subscribes, the Government maintains close relations with the Irish Government on matters of political and economic importance. As is the case with other Governments, it reports to Parliament at key stages.

Revenue and Customs

Questions

Asked by **Lord Tunncliffe**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are the identified savings from current and planned reorganisations of HM Revenue and Customs, including the potential numbers of reductions in headcount by region. [HL1432]

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are the consultation procedures with all HM Revenue and Customs staff in respect of current and planned reorganisations; and what are the criteria for decisions being made on future campus sites of HM Revenue and Customs offices. [HL1433]

To ask Her Majesty's Government what support will be made available to regions that lose HM Revenue and Customs offices. [HL1434]

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are the costings of any future relocation of HM Revenue and Customs offices regionally and nationally, including those of retraining staff, redundancy and any additional resources. [HL1435]

The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Deighton) (Con): HMRC is currently undertaking a programme of work to transform the services it provides to give its customers a modern, efficient service, delivered in a modern and flexible way that is convenient for them. To do this, HMRC needs to continue to become a smaller and more professional organisation that is able to maximise the revenues that pay for the UK's public services, while making sustainable cost reductions and improving their customer service.

Efficiencies required by the 2010 and 2013 Spending Reviews mean that HMRC's staffing levels in relation to these plans alone will reduce to 54,000 Full Time Equivalent posts (FTE) by 2015 and to 52,000 FTE by 2016. Reduced staffing levels mean a reduced need for accommodation and HMRC has recently closed consultation on the proposed closure of 12 offices between now and December 2015. The decisions will be announced in the autumn.

In addition to requiring efficiencies, the 2010 and 2013 Spending Reviews provide resources to increase revenue yield and to increase the department's capacity for digital business and online services. In consequence, the costs arising from the changes HMRC is making are not readily identified and need to be considered against the savings achieved through improved working methods, increased revenue yield, reduced running costs and overall greater efficiency in the service it provides. All redundancy costs are made against strict value for money criteria.

HMRC is still developing its plans for the future, including extensive discussions across the whole of the department through a series of events designed to start conversations with all staff about building the future of the organisation.

HMRC is consulting with its staff on the way forward through a nationwide series of face-to-face events known as "Building our Future", attended by

every individual within the department. “Building our Future” explains the changes being made, the background to them and includes group discussions at which individuals consider how they can contribute.

HMRC remains strongly committed to providing services to the regions. It has for example recently introduced a new Needs Enhanced Support service. This includes a mobile advisory service to ensure that accessible and tailored advice is available to the 1.5 million customers who need extra help.

Its longer-term strategy continues to look to bring people together into Regional Centres, providing flexibility, improved efficiency, greater cost-effectiveness and improved career development opportunities for its staff.

These will be drawn from its existing campus locations, where 80% cent of the department’s workforce is currently based. These centres will be supplemented by specialist sites, for location-specific work, and touchdown locations, where HMRC has a business need for a presence in a community.

Russia

Questions

Asked by *The Marquess of Lothian*

To ask Her Majesty’s Government what criteria they are using to assess the impact and effectiveness of current European Union sanctions on Russia.

[HL1476]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns): We judge the impact and effectiveness of sanctions based on a range of economic and political factors. Sanctions are designed to impose a cost for Russia’s actions in Ukraine, deter further escalation of this crisis, and support the wider diplomatic effort. EU measures already announced have exacerbated negative trends in Russia’s economy: capital flight in the first half of 2014 was greater than for the whole of 2013; and we have seen a significant reduction in expected growth. Russian access to western financial markets will be severely constrained as lenders consider the risks of Russian exposure in the current climate. The strengthening of sanctions should signal clearly to the Russian leadership that their policy of trying to destabilise Ukraine will have a cost for the Russian economy. The EU’s measures have in-built review mechanisms. The sanctions implemented on 31 July are in force for one year, with a review of implementation after three months.

Asked by *Lord Blencathra*

To ask Her Majesty’s Government what steps they will take to ensure that United Kingdom companies conducting business in or with the government of Russia in compliance with European Union sanctions will not be subject to any penalties applied by United States authorities which allege that sanctions have been breached on the basis of the United States’ system of sanctions. [HL1685]

The Minister of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills & Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Livingston of Parkhead) (Con): The European Union has co-ordinated very closely with the United States on sanctions against Russia. The European Union and the United States acting in a co-ordinated manner not only has the maximum possible effect on Russia’s policy calculations but also ensures that we reduce to an absolute minimum the likelihood that any UK companies that comply with the European Union legislation will nevertheless fall foul of United States’ sanctions legislation applying extraterritorially. At present we are not aware of any specific circumstances where this is likely to occur, but any company with concerns about United States sanctions should in the first instance consult United States lawyers or regulatory authorities to ensure that they comply with applicable United States legislation.

Schools

Question

Asked by *Lord Storey*

To ask Her Majesty’s Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Nash on 30 June (WA 226) stating that they “do not hold a central record of all new schools built by local authorities to provide these places since 2010”, why they do not hold such a record; and, of the academy schools created and converted since 2010, (1) how many, and (2) what proportion, were identified for creation or conversion by local authorities. [HL1691]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Schools (Lord Nash) (Con): Prior to 2010 the Department for Education’s central records of new establishments do not allow us to determine if schools are new provision or whether they replace existing schools (i.e. due to an amalgamation or move from three tier to two tier education).

Since then the number of schools that have applied to become academies is as follows:

<i>Academic Year</i>	<i>Number of Converter Academiesⁱ</i>
2010/11	796
2011/12	860
2012/13	684
2013/14 (to date)	522

ⁱ Schools which have converted to academy status are not identified for conversion by the local authority. It is up to individual schools to apply to convert to become academies unless they are underperforming, in which case the department will look to match them with a sponsor.

Between 2010 and 2012, local authorities held 41 competitions under section 7 of the Education and Inspections Act 2006, as amended by the Education Act 2011, to create new schools. The numbers opening per academic year are:

<i>Academic Year</i>	<i>Number of Academies</i>
2010/11	16
2011/12	7

<i>Academic Year</i>	<i>Number of Academies</i>
2012/13	12
2013/14	6

In addition, the department also records all new academies created under local authorities' duties to secure sufficient schools (section 14 of the Education Act 1996) since the academy presumption was established in February 2012. Ninety-two new academies have been created, or are in the process of being created, through this route (75 in agreement, 17 in the pipeline).

These are broken down into academic years as follows:

<i>Academic Year</i>	<i>Number of Academiesⁱⁱ</i>	<i>Number in pipeline (of the total number)</i>
2013/14	6	0
2014/15	23	0
2015/16	50	13
2016/17	10	4
2017/18	3	0

ⁱⁱ 40 of these new academies were funded through the Government's Targeted Basic Need Programme (8 due to open in September 2014, 32 due to open in September 2015).

Senior Civil Servants: Recruitment

Question

Asked by **Lord Butler of Brockwell**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether, in the light of the forthcoming General Election, they will consult the Opposition about the appointment of a Chief Executive of the Civil Service on a five year contract. [HL1507]

Lord Wallace of Saltaire (LD): As has been the case under successive administrations, external civil service appointments continue to be made in the usual way in accordance with the Civil Service Commission's recruitment principles, through fair and open competition.

Serious Fraud Office

Question

Asked by **Lord Morris of Aberavon**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how their supervision of the Serious Fraud Office is exercised; and what recent assessment they have made of the performance of the Office. [HL1677]

The Advocate-General for Scotland (Lord Wallace of Tankerness) (LD): The Government's supervision of the Serious Fraud Office (SFO) is exercised principally through the Attorney-General's superintendence of that department, and in accordance with the Protocol between the Attorney-General and the Prosecuting Departments of July 2009.

The Attorney-General meets regularly with the Director of the SFO and receives reports on the SFO's work. In addition HM Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate

(HMCPSI) has power to inspect the SFO under section 149 of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014, which came into force on 2 June 2014.

HMCPSI conducted an inspection of the SFO at the request of the Director SFO in 2012, and reported in November 2012. It has carried out a follow up inspection and is due to report on that later this year.

Students: Loans

Questions

Asked by **Baroness Deech**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have plans to initiate a review of the sustainability of the student loans system. [HL1377]

Lord Wallace of Saltaire (LD): There are no current plans to initiate a formal review of the student loans system in England. The costs of the loan system are based on projections of graduate repayments over the next 35 years. These projections were revised in 2013-14 following changes to the student loan repayments model but will continue to fluctuate due to numerous macroeconomic variables, and present no immediate pressure on the system. Funding for new student loans is secure for the remainder of the Spending Review period.

Asked by **Lord Taylor of Warwick**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have any plans to improve the student loan system, should it prove to be too inefficient in its current format. [HL1380]

Lord Wallace of Saltaire: There are no plans to initiate changes to the student loan system in England, but we continue to monitor the efficiency of the system in relation to government affordability.

Sugar

Question

Asked by **Lord Mawhinney**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Earl Howe on 17 July (WA 144-5), whether the Minister will now provide a substantive answer to the question. [HL1282]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): The Secretary of State met with Asda, Sainsbury's and Tesco on 7 October 2013 to discuss voluntary arrangements to help their customers' adopt a healthier diet, including action to reduce their sugar intake. Other major retailers were unable to attend.

In addition, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Public Health (Jane Ellison) visited a Tesco store on 13 March 2014, with regard in particular to diabetes.

Supermarkets: Conditions of Employment Question

Asked by *Lord Bradshaw*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of employment practices in the United Kingdom supermarket sector. [HL1495]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (Baroness Neville-Rolfe): We have not made any specific assessment of employment practices in this sector.

Tax Allowances Question

Asked by *Lord Barnett*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the answer by Lord Newby on 9 July (HL Deb, cols 209–11), whether they intend to continue to encourage investments in (1) the alternative investment market, (2) start-up businesses, and (3) forestry, in the light of the tax relief available for such investments. [HL1551]

The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Deighton) (Con): The government currently offers a range of tax reliefs to encourage investment. These form an important part of the government's growth strategy and its commitment to make the UK one of the best places to start, finance and grow a business in Europe.

To ensure the tax reliefs remain well-targeted, the reliefs are only available where certain conditions are met. The government keeps all these schemes under review to ensure that the reliefs continue to encourage investment in a well-targeted and effective manner.

Taxation: Immigrants Question

Asked by *Lord Jones of Cheltenham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of the amount of income tax, value added tax and company taxation paid by migrants to the United Kingdom and by companies set up by migrants in each year since 2010 for which figures are available. [HL1672]

The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Deighton) (Con): The information requested is not available.

Third Sector Questions

Asked by *Lord Mawson*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what they have learnt from promoting the Big Society. [HL1563]

To ask Her Majesty's Government what impact the promotion of the Big Society has had on competition between the social enterprise sector and local authorities; and what is the value of contracts transferred from the public sector to the independent sector since May 2010. [HL1564]

To ask Her Majesty's Government how the experience of promoting the Big Society will inform their future policy making. [HL1565]

To ask Her Majesty's Government how the delivery of Big Society initiatives will inform future pilot schemes to promote innovation in local communities. [HL1566]

To ask Her Majesty's Government what lessons for the localism agenda they have learnt from promoting the Big Society. [HL1567]

Lord Wallace of Saltaire (LD): Big Society hands people control in their local communities so that they can take action to shape where they live and help others. Volunteering is up 6% since 2010 and 80,000 young people have taken part in National Citizen Service since 2011, contributing over 2 million hours of social action to their local communities.

The Localism Act has resulted in over 1,200 assets of community value being listed and we have helped 150 organisations to acquire a community asset or obtain significant investment towards doing so. More than 900 neighbourhood planning areas have been designated, and all 28 plans which have reached referendum so far have passed with significant majorities in favour.

This Government is committed to opening up public services so that social enterprises and voluntary organisations can play an increased role in delivering local services. We are introducing legislation that will require the public sector to publish details on the value of new contracts awarded to VCSEs, as part of Lord Young's reforms to make public procurement more accessible to smaller businesses.

Turkey Question

Asked by *Lord Patten*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of the freedom to worship of British Christian and Jewish visitors to Turkey. [HL1600]

Lord Popat (Con): We regularly discuss issues concerning Freedom of Religion and Belief with the Turkish Government, religious leaders and non-governmental organisations in that country.

We are encouraged by positive steps taken by the Turkish Government to improve protections for all religious minorities in Turkey. However, we share the assessment of the EU that more needs to be done to safeguard freedom of religion in Turkey.

Freedom of religion is a fundamental freedom that all, including those visiting a country, are entitled to.

Turks and Caicos Islands

Question

Asked by *Lord Ashcroft*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by Baroness Northover on 23 June (WA 136) and 8 July (WA 40), why the request to place a document in the Library of the House was refused yet it was released under a Freedom of Information request. [HL1558]

Baroness Northover (LD): The Offering Memorandum sent by the Turks and Caicos Islands (TCI) Government for a bond issue guaranteed by DFID in 2011 is not a document owned by her Majesty's Government. It would therefore not have been appropriate for DFID to place a copy of it in the Library of the House, although my previous answer did make clear that the Noble Lord could obtain a copy of the document by requesting it from the TCI Government.

Freedom of Information requests cover documents held by Her Majesty's Government. DFID therefore sought the consent of the TCI Government before agreeing to release the TCI document.

UK Membership of EU

Question

Asked by *Lord Pearson of Rannoch*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Deighton on 28 July (WA 273), what is their estimate of the impact of European Union membership on United Kingdom employment. [HL1658]

The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Deighton) (Con): The Government has made no assessment of the impact of European Union membership on United Kingdom employment.

As I noted in my response dated 28 July (WA 273) to Lord Grocott, the Treasury estimate that 3.3 million jobs in the UK may be related to exports to other European Union countries. This figure is based on the assumption that the share of UK employment associated with UK exports to the EU is equal to the share of output that is exported to the EU, making allowance for the composition of the UK economy.

Ukraine

Question

Asked by *Lord Bradshaw*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what medical assistance they are providing to military hospitals in Ukraine. [HL1400]

Lord Wallace of Saltaire (LD): The UK Government is not providing direct medical assistance to military hospitals in Ukraine. Assistance to military hospitals cannot be recorded as Official Development Assistance (ODA), in line with Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development criteria.

UN Convention for Protection of Cultural Property in Event of Armed Conflict

Question

Asked by *Lord Renfrew of Kaimsthorn*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the answer by Lord Gardiner of Kimble on 12 May (HL Deb, col 1650), when they expect there to be parliamentary time to introduce legislation to ratify the 1954 Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict; and what assessment they have made of the damage to cultural property in the recent and continuing armed conflict in Syria and northern Iraq. [HL1360]

Lord Wallace of Saltaire (LD): The legislative priorities for this session were set out in the Queen's speech in June. The Government remains committed to protecting cultural heritage and we will seek to legislate on the 1954 Hague Convention and the subsequent protocols when parliamentary time allows. The 1954 convention already informs the Armed Forces' law of armed conflict doctrine and training policy, particularly with regard to respect for cultural property, precautions in attack and recognition of the protective emblem.

The Government is deeply concerned by reports of damage to cultural property in Syria and Northern Iraq, including recent attacks by Islamic State of Iraq and Levant against Mosques, Churches and other holy places. The reported destruction of the Tomb of Yonus (Jonah) in Mosul on 24 July by ISIL is further evidence of the groups barbarism and disregard for International Humanitarian Law. We are also concerned that Syria's cultural heritage is being plundered for private profit. That is why in December 2013 the UK and other EU nations amended the EU's sanctions regime to make clear that involvement in trade relating to artefacts illegally removed from Syria is prohibited. This will help safeguard Syria's cultural heritage for the future and we will continue to do all we can to bring an end to the conflict and restore stability in the region.

UN High Commissioner for Refugees

Question

Asked by *Earl Attlee*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what proportion of the budget of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is provided by the United Kingdom; and what percentage of the staff of the UNHCR are United Kingdom citizens. [HL1465]

Baroness Northover (LD): The UK provided 3% of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) budget in 2013. UNHCR records show that in April 2014 1.5% of UNHCR staff were UK citizens.

VAT Question

Asked by *The Earl of Clancarty*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are the current regulations with regard to the levying of value added tax on repairs and maintenance of old and listed buildings; and whether there are any plans to review or change such regulations.[HL1664]

The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Deighton) (Con): Section 1 of the Value Added Tax Act 1994 determines that value added tax should be charged on a supply of goods or services. Section 2 of the same Act sets the standard rate at 20%. Repairs and maintenance of all buildings fall into this standard rate.

The Chancellor keeps all taxes under review.

War Graves Question

Asked by *Lord Palmer of Childs Hill*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions the Ministry of Defence has held with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission about erecting a named headstone to mark the grave of Private Walter George Buckley (PLY/18155) of the Royal Marines Light Infantry at Tournai Communal Cemetery Allied Extension. [HL1550]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Defence (Lord Astor of Hever) (Con): Subject to a positive identification being made, it is anticipated that a named headstone marking the grave of Private Buckley could be erected by the summer of next year.

Youth Engagement Fund Question

Asked by *Baroness Whitaker*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the number of young people from the gypsy and traveller communities not in education, training or employment, what steps they are taking to ensure that the Youth Engagement Fund will benefit people from those communities. [HL1625]

Lord Wallace of Saltaire (LD): The £16m cross-government Youth Engagement Fund aims to support up to 18,000 of the most disadvantaged young people in England to improve their educational achievement, increase their employability and reduce their risk of offending. This includes young people from the gypsy and traveller communities. The Fund does not prescribe which particular groups of young people bidders should work with.

Answers received between Tuesday 12 August and Monday 18 August 2014

Albania

Question

Asked by *Lord Storey*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what agreements have been signed, to which the United Kingdom and Albania are both parties, for the period 1 March 2013 to the present; and whether they will place copies of any such agreements in the Library of the House and on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office database. [HL1690]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns) (Con): The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) treaty database records all bilateral and multilateral treaties involving the United Kingdom signed since 1834. The FCO does not maintain a comprehensive central record or hold copies of the texts of memoranda of understanding concluded between Government Departments and other states or organizations.

Legally-binding agreements to which both the UK and Albania have become parties since 1 March 2013 are as follows:

Bilateral:

1. The Agreement between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania for the Avoidance of Double Taxation and the Prevention of Fiscal Evasion with respect to Taxes on Income and on Capital was signed on 26 March 2014 and was published as UK Treaty Series No. 3, 2014.

Multilateral:

2. The Arms Trade Treaty was signed by Albania on 3 June 2013 and by the United Kingdom on 3 June 2013. This was published as UK Miscellaneous Series No. 3, 2013.

3. Protocol No.15 amending the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms [CETS No.213] was signed by Albania on 11 February 2014 and by the United Kingdom on 24 June 2014. The text to this treaty is published on the Council of Europe website.

All treaties, including those amending previous treaties, that are subject to ratification, accession, approval or completion of procedures are laid before both Houses of Parliament as a Command Paper for twenty-one sitting days in accordance with Part 2 of the Constitutional Reform and Governance Act 2010. Those treaties which enter into force on signature do not have to be laid before Parliament for twenty-one sitting days but are laid before both Houses of Parliament as a Command Paper in the UK Treaty Series once they have entered into force.

Association of British Insurers

Question

Asked by *Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will publish details of all meetings between ministers and the Association of British Insurers in the past 12 months. [HL1504]

The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Deighton) (Con): Treasury Ministers and officials have meetings and discussions with a wide variety of organisations as part of the process of policy development and delivery. Lists of ministerial meetings with external organisations are published on gov.uk^[1].

^[1] <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/hm-treasury/series/hmt-ministers-meetings-hospitality-gifts-and-overseas-travel>

Autism

Question

Asked by *Baroness Uddin*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many and what proportion of people in assessment and treatment units are known to have autism spectrum disorder; and of those, how many are children. [HL1575]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): The Learning Disabilities Census conducted by the Health and Social Care Information Centre (HSCIC) indicates that 3,250 learning disabilities services users were in hospital in England at midnight on 30 September 2013. This includes 1,087 (33.4%) with autistic spectrum disorder (including Asperger's Syndrome). Autistic spectrum disorder (including Asperger's Syndrome) was the main reason for the hospital admission of 321 (9.9%) learning disabilities service users.

The HSCIC has also reported that the Learning Disabilities Census 2013 indicated that 185 of those in hospital (representing 5.7% of all learning disabilities service users) were under 18 years of age. Of these, 88 have autistic spectrum disorder (including Asperger's Syndrome). Autistic spectrum disorder (including Asperger's Syndrome) was the main reason for the hospital admission of 28 people under the age of 18 years.

Borders: Personal Records

Question

Asked by *Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they expect to introduce universal exit checks at United Kingdom borders by the end of the current Parliament; and, if so, what the scheme will cost, how many additional members of staff will be required to perform the checks, and whether, operationally, United Kingdom infrastructure is suitably robust to meet the additional demand. [HL1240]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Taylor of Holbeach) (Con): The Home Office is on track to meet the Coalition Agreement commitment to introduce exit checks by April 2015 on those who leave the UK by scheduled commercial air, sea and rail services. We are working with service and port operators to minimise the impact of exit checks on port processes and infrastructure. The level of cost will be largely dependent on the technology and methodology adopted and the extent to which advanced passenger data is collected and used by individual carriers.

Bread: Pesticides

Question

Asked by *Lord Swinfen*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to reduce the amount of pesticides in bread. [HL1571]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Lord De Mauley) (Con): The regulatory framework for pesticides is supported by a substantial programme of testing for residues in food and drink. This is administered by the Health and Safety Executive's Chemicals Regulation Directorate and overseen by the independent expert scientific committee on Pesticide Residues in Food (PRiF). Bread is among the staple foods regularly checked.

Statutory Maximum Residue Levels (MRLs) for pesticides are set under European Union (EU) legislation. These MRLs reflect the highest amount of pesticide residue expected in food when pesticides are applied in accordance with authorised conditions of use. MRLs are always set below, usually far below, the safety limit.

Farmers, importers, distributors and retailers are responsible for ensuring marketed food complies with the statutory levels.

Although recent monitoring results indicate an increase in the incidence of pesticide residues being found in bread, this reflects that improvements in analytical methods mean that residues can be found at lower levels. The latest results obtained are all at levels below the statutory MRLs, and PriF have concluded that they do not raise any safety concerns.

The Food Standards Agency recognises that consumers want pesticide residues reduced further than the current safe levels. As part of the Agency's action plan to minimise pesticide residues in food, guides have been produced for five crops – including cereals – grown in the UK. The guides are intended for a broad audience within the food industry, from farmer to retailer. They aim to raise awareness of the issue of pesticide residues and to support the industry to deliver existing pesticide residue minimisation initiatives.

British Petroleum

Question

Asked by *Lord Blencathra*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to the judgments of courts in the United States which have recently awarded significant damages against BP; and what discussions they have had with the government of the United States about the issue. [HL1684]

Baroness Northover (LD): The British Government has taken a close interest in the regulatory and legal action in the US against BP following the Deepwater Horizon oil spill in 2010 and has discussed this issue with the US authorities on several occasions. It remains concerned that BP, like all British companies, should receive fair and equitable treatment at the same time as dealing fairly with the consequences of the spill. The Government's support for BP's activities in the US has included submitting an amicus brief before the Southern Texas District Court on 2 December 2013 in support of BP in its case regarding its disbarment from US government contracts by the US Environmental Protection Agency – a bar which has since been lifted.

Burma

Question

Asked by *Lord Alton of Liverpool*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the reply by Lord Wallace of Saltaire on 24 July (HL Deb, cols 1324–8) to the debate on Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, what representations they have made to the Burmese authorities about proposed new legislation to restrict religious conversions and inter-religious marriages there; and whether they will call on the United Nations Secretary-General to visit Burma to address religious intolerance and to encourage the creation of an international and independent inquiry into violence in Rakhine State, Kachin State and other parts of the country. [HL1695]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns) (Con): We have voiced our strong concerns over proposed legislation on inter-faith marriage and religious conversion to members of the Burmese government and parliamentarians. If enacted, these laws would harm religious tolerance and respect for diversity in Burma, and contravene international standards and treaties to which Burma is a signatory. Most recently, our Ambassador raised our concerns with Minister of the President's Office, U Soe Thein, in June.

The UN Secretary-General (UNSG) currently chairs the Partnership Group on Burma, which last met in April. The UNSG and his Special Representative to Burma, Vijay Nambiar, both play vital roles in raising the international community's human rights concerns with the Burmese government whilst providing encouragement for the wider reform process. We welcome

the recent visit by the newly appointed UN Special Rapporteur on the human rights situation in Burma, Ms Yanghee Lee, who rightly highlighted that the government needs to do more to stop the spread of hate speech and incitement to violence based on religious grounds and recommended the adoption of specific legislation to address this.

We remain deeply concerned by continued violence in Burma, particularly in Rakhine State and Kachin State. Our approach is to seek an end to all violations, and to prevent their further escalation, irrespective of whether these violations fit the definition of specific international crimes. Allegations of human rights abuses must be dealt with through a clear, independent and transparent investigative and prosecutorial process that meets international standards. We have made this clear to the Burmese government and will continue to do so. We continue to believe an independent investigation, supported by appropriate technical assistance, would make a significant contribution to accountability and reconciliation.

Cabinet

Question

Asked by *Lord Rogan*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following the meeting of the Cabinet in Aberdeen on 24 February, whether they have any plans to hold Cabinet meetings in Wales and Northern Ireland. [HL1663]

Baroness Northover (LD): It has been a long-standing practice of successive governments not to disclose in advance the location of Cabinet meetings. However the Noble Peer will recall that Cabinet was last held in Cardiff in July 2011.

Cancer

Questions

Asked by *Baroness Howe of Idlicote*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the results of the cancer patient experience survey will be used to hold Clinical Commissioning Groups to account for improvements in patient experience through the NHS Outcomes Framework. [HL1620]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): Holding clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) to account for delivering improved outcomes for patients is a core part of the CCG assurance process. NHS England is working with NHS Improving Quality to develop better ways of using the Cancer Patient Experience Survey (CPES) data within the National Health Service in order to maximise the impact of the survey, to be able to work with successful and struggling organisations to spread best practice for example. Their intention is that the learning from this can then be transferred across all surveys to understand what the barriers are to implementing change and to showcase best practice where real improvements can be demonstrated.

The CPES survey results are delivered to every organisation so each can see how they compare to other organisations. Currently, the action plans are taken into account as part of Peer Reviews. NHS England would expect that every trust board should know its own survey results and take account of them.

We have been working closely with NHS England on the review of the NHS Outcomes Framework, and will be engaging with stakeholders over the summer ahead of publication in the autumn.

Asked by Lord Judd

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of variations in cancer patient experiences. [HL1641]

Earl Howe: The latest Cancer Patient Experience Survey (CPES) results, from 2013, show that whilst variations between trusts still exist, the overall range of variation for many indicators has narrowed.

For example, in 2010 the proportion of patients saying that they had been given the name of a Clinical Nurse Specialist ranged from 92% in the highest performing trust to 59% in the poorest performing trust (33 points); by 2013 this had reduced to 97% to 76% (21 points).

NHS England is working with NHS Improving Quality to develop better ways of using CPES data within the National Health Service in order to maximise the impact of the survey, to be able to work with successful and struggling organisations to spread best practice for example. Their intention is that the learning from this can then be transferred across all surveys to understand what the barriers are to implementing change and to showcase best practice where real improvements can be demonstrated.

Chernobyl: Children

Question

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have assisted in any schemes offering holidays in the United Kingdom to children affected by the Chernobyl disaster; and if not, whether they have been asked to, or plan to. [HL1668]

Baroness Northover (LD): Up until 2013 children affected by the Chernobyl disaster travelling to the UK on recuperation visits under the auspices of a registered UK charity were granted gratis UK visas. The decision to discontinue the scheme was one of a number of difficult spending decisions across Government. The Visa Application Centre in Minsk will continue to offer a mobile service for some of the children travelling with Chernobyl charities spending a number of days accepting applications and collecting Biometric data in the regions at no additional cost.

Our Embassy in Minsk has funded other projects run by Chernobyl Children's charities in 2013 and 2014. These include projects to avoid such children being placed in institutional care and creating a better child protection system in Belarus.

Children: Day Care

Questions

Asked by Lord Sutherland of Houndwood

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Deighton on 28 July (WA 247), in addition to the "qualitative assessment of the economic impacts" of the Childcare Payments Bill provided in the impact assessment, what specific estimates they have made of the impact on the maternal labour supply and productivity. [HL1678]

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Deighton on 28 July (WA 247), in addition to the "qualitative assessment of the economic impacts" of the Childcare Payments Bill provided in the impact assessment, what specific estimates they have made of the impact on tax receipts from mothers paying income tax and national insurance. [HL1679]

The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Deighton) (Con): Details of the estimated economic effects from the introduction of Tax-Free Childcare can be found in the Childcare Payments Bill Impact Assessment.^[1]

^[1] https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/318698/document2014-06-10-104244-1.pdf

Clinical Commissioning Groups

Questions

Asked by Lord Greaves

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many contracts for the provision of services have been entered into by each of the Clinical Commissioning Groups in England since their formation; of those, how many have been contracted with (1) a National Health Service trust, (2) a commercial body, and (3) a charitable or other non-profit-making body; and what is the total commercial value for each of those categories. [HL1645]

To ask Her Majesty's Government what contracts have been entered into for the provision of services by the East Lancashire Clinical Commissioning Group, and in each case with which body; and what are the services to be provided and the value of each contract. [HL1646]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): The Department does not collect information on which providers have been awarded contracts at local level.

It is for local commissioners to decide how best to secure local services and take a decision on which are the most capable providers to deliver those services in the best interests of their patients. There is no requirement for commissioners to put all services out to competitive tender.

Whether NHS services are provided by the public, voluntary or private sector, they remain publicly funded and free at the point of delivery with access based on clinical need.

Compulsorily Detained Mental Patients

Question

Asked by **Baroness Uddin**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people were sectioned under the Mental Health Acts in each year of the last decade, disaggregated by racial profile; how many of those people had a co-occurring learning disability or autism spectrum disorder; and how many were children. [HL1676]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): We do not centrally hold the number of people with a learning disability or autism spectrum disorder who were formally detained under Mental Health Act 1983 in each year of the last decade, disaggregated by racial profile, including the numbers of which were children.

The information we do hold has been placed in the Library.

Dental Services: Children

Question

Asked by **Baroness Gardner of Parkes**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what has been the cost to the National Health Service in the last year of the number of children being hospitalised for the extensive extraction of deciduous teeth; and whether they will consider setting up day-care clinics that could carry out such work. [HL1713]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): The following table shows the estimated cost of tooth extractions for children aged 18 years and under for 2012-13. The data covers all tooth extractions, and does not distinguish between deciduous or adult teeth.

<i>Healthcare Resource Group description</i>	<i>Estimated total cost £ million</i>
Minor Extraction of Tooth, 18 years and under	3.1
Extraction of Multiple Teeth, 18 years and under	27.4

Source: Reference costs, Department of Health¹

Tooth extractions in children often involve general anaesthesia. Extractions involving general anaesthesia were restricted to the hospital setting following the recommendations of the 2000 report 'A conscious decision' that patients should have access to high quality critical care facilities when general anaesthesia is given. There are currently no plans to change this. Many extractions are carried out on a day case basis; whether the extraction is carried out as a day case or requires an overnight admission is a matter for the clinicians involved.

70% of five year olds now have no dental decay but we recognise that significant inequalities remain. Wider work is under way through dental contract reform and other prevention focussed initiatives to improve oral health.

Note:

¹www.gov.uk/government/publications/nhs-reference-costs-2012-to-2013

Derelict Land

Question

Asked by **Lord Patten**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to ensure there is clear and transparent information about the availability of brownfield land for development. [HL1489]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Communities and Local Government (Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon) (Con): The National Land Use Database is available online and provides statistical information for national and local authority trends in previously developed (brownfield) land.

The newly updated Local Government Transparency Code will require local authorities to publish details of all land and building assets annually, helping increase accountability over the use of council assets and the scope for disposing of surplus brownfield land for regeneration and new homes.

The Government is releasing for development its own surplus and redundant land and property. As part of this comprehensive programme, the Government Property Unit has recently launched a new application on Gov.uk, which can be accessed by the public and developers, which provides details of all government land and property assets.

To help meet the Government's ambitions to have planning permission for housing in place on 90% of suitable brownfield sites by 2020, we are currently considering how we can further improve the published information that is available on brownfield land suitable for housing. We will report on this in due course.

The associated website links are as follows:

National Land Use Database:

<http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/dissemination/datasetList.do?JSAllowed=true&Function=%24ph=60&CurrentPageId=60&step=1&CurrentTreeIndex=-2&searchString=land+use&datasetFamilyId=1235&Next.x=14&Next.y=2&njs=true&nsc=false&nsvg=false&nswid=1366>

Local Government Transparency Code:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/308185/Local_Government_Transparency_Code_2014_Final.pdf

Find government property:

<https://www.gov.uk/find-government-property>

Developing Countries: Education

Question

Asked by **Lord Verjee**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following the publication of the Ministry of Defence's Global Strategic Trends out to 2045, what consideration they have given to educational inequalities in the developing world; and how the United Kingdom can aid the closing of gender gaps in educational access and attainment. [HL1724]

Baroness Northover (LD): The UK is supporting disaggregation of data by sex and age in the Post 2015 development framework which will succeed the Millennium Development Goals. This will help ensure no-one is left behind, including girls in Education. The UK International Development Gender Equality Act which was passed in May 2014 now makes it law to consider, before providing development assistance, how the assistance will contribute to reducing gender inequality.

Supporting gender equality in education remains a key priority for the UK government and we are increasingly focussing on marginalised girls both in terms of access and attainment. For example, the Girls Education Challenge funded by UK aid is the largest donor funded education programme which aims to support up to one million marginalised girls to be in school and learning which will help to transform their lives.

Diego Garcia

Question

Asked by *Lord Ashcroft*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Warsi on 28 July (WA 249), whether they will now answer the question as tabled. [HL1689]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns) (Con): The United States is our most important bilateral ally and we have regular discussions on a range of sensitive issues. It is our longstanding position not to comment on discussions of that nature. With regard to Mr Belhaj allegedly stopping over in Diego Garcia, I refer the noble Lord to the response given by my noble friend, the former Senior Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Baroness Warsi), on 17 June 2014, Official Report, Column WA36, that, aside from the two cases of rendition through Diego Garcia (British Indian Ocean Territory) in 2002, there have been no other instances in which US intelligence flights landed in the UK, our Overseas Territories, or the Crown Dependencies, with a detainee on board since 11 September 2001.

Electoral Register

Question

Asked by *Lord Roberts of Llandudno*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what advice they give to electoral registration and returning officers regarding applications they receive from individuals who apply to register to vote but do not know, or have not been issued with, their National Insurance number and do not include such details as part of their application. [HL1636]

Lord Wallace of Saltaire (LD): Ministerial Guidance to Electoral Registration Officers (EROs) on this topic was published in September 2013 on the Cabinet Office website and in Electoral Commission guidance to EROs.

This information is available in the Library.

Applicants registering to vote who are unable to provide a National Insurance Number must state the reason on their submission. If they do not know their National Insurance Number they will be advised by EROs of locations, such as payslips, where they can find this information. Applicants who do not have a National Insurance Number must provide documentary evidence of their identity, such as a UK passport, before their request can be determined.

Employment Schemes: Learning Disability

Question

Asked by *Baroness Uddin*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to expand community-based support to accommodate people with learning disabilities placed in hospital in a way that supports skills and work readiness, and is overseen by trained professionals. [HL1574]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): We expect everyone in an inpatient setting to have a care plan, including, where appropriate, a discharge plan for them to move to community-based support. The assessment of people's needs should include their health and care needs as well as other issues including their ability to benefit from education, training and employment.

The Department of Health and the Department for Work and Pensions are working closely to ensure that everyone with a learning disability, including those in a hospital setting, get appropriate support to fulfil their potential. We have already held several seminars aimed at those with a lived experience of learning disability to understand both the barriers to work and what might help. A further seminar is being hosted by British Institute for Learning Disability in September. Outcomes from these seminars will contribute to the development of a plan to improve support towards employment.

Energy: Meters

Questions

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of St Albans*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact of the use of prepayment meters on the ability of lower income households to pay their energy bills. [HL1687]

Baroness Northover (LD): Since 2010, all major suppliers have voluntarily equalised tariffs between prepayment customers and standard credit customers but the price differential between customers using pre-payment meters (PPM) and those paying by direct debit can be more than £100 for a dual-fuel customer.

Whilst paying by PPM is more common among fuel poor than non-fuel poor households, a majority of fuel poor customer pay by other payment methods.

Of households who were fuel poor in England in 2012, around 27% paid for their electricity and 22% paid for their gas through PPM.

Asked by The Lord Bishop of St Albans

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to encourage the six major energy companies to adhere to the five principles on the use of prepayment meters which were agreed with Consumer Focus in March 2011. [HL1688]

Baroness Northover: In July 2012, Consumer Focus released a report, 'Making Progress' which found that suppliers have all made changes to their policies and processes following their agreement to the 5 Key Principles that Consumer Focus set out in March 2011.

We know that issues relating to prepayment meters (PPM) remain of broad concern for consumers. The roll out of smart metering should greatly improve the customer experience for prepayment customers. In April 2014, the Secretary of State wrote to suppliers challenging them to ensure that from the end of 2016 current 'normal' PPM are replaced only with Smart Meters and offer Smart Meters with 'pay as you go tariff' options to all PPM customers by the end of 2016. We will continue to work with suppliers and stakeholders to ensure that PPM customers can benefit from smart meter roll out as soon as possible.

Forced Labour

Questions

Asked by The Lord Bishop of Derby

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many audits of supply chains have been undertaken to ensure that public bodies and publicly-funded projects are not using forced labour through their supply chains. [HL1548]

To ask Her Majesty's Government what auditing steps they have taken since 2010 to ensure that public bodies and publicly-funded projects are not using forced or trafficked labour in their own supply chains. [HL1549]

Baroness Northover (LD): We do not hold central information on the number of audits commissioned or auditing steps taken regarding publically funded projects, as these would be a matter for individual contracting authorities to commission.

All suppliers are required to comply with UK law, including relevant human rights and employment rights law. Social, environmental and ethical issues are taken into account in the procurement process, where relevant and proportionate.

In particular, EU procurement rules require contracting authorities to exclude suppliers that have been convicted of certain offences, and allow authorities to exclude suppliers for grave professional misconduct. The new EU procurement Directives, which are currently being transposed into UK law, update the mandatory exclusion offences to explicitly include offences of "trafficking in human beings".

Gambling: Internet

Questions

Asked by Lord Mancroft

To ask Her Majesty's Government how a business is to determine whether its activity will be classed as "manufacture", "supply", "installation" or "adaption", pursuant to section 41 of the Gambling Act 2014, and therefore require a licence; and whether they have plans to supplement the guidance provided by the Gambling Commission on the matter. [HL1716]

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the meaning of "adaption" with regard to section 41 of the Gambling Act 2014 in respect of software licensing requirements. [HL1717]

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will encourage the Gambling Commission to give guidance in relation to its software licensing criteria within the Gambling Act 2014. [HL1718]

To ask Her Majesty's Government why, in the light of the requirements for licensing of software developers and suppliers under the gambling licensing regimes in other European Union member states, they have opted to increase the scope of businesses that require licensing in the United Kingdom. [HL1719]

To ask Her Majesty's Government why software developers and other companies involved in gambling software, working as sub-contractors for newly-licensed software suppliers, have to apply for their own licences; and what assessment they have made of the impact of that requirement on smaller businesses reliant on such short-term contracts. [HL1720]

Baroness Northover (LD): The Gambling Commission's publication 'What is gambling software?' (June 2014) provides advice to assist the industry in understanding who needs a gambling software licence. This covers what constitutes the activities of manufacturing, supplying, installing and adapting gambling software, considers circumstances where multiple parties are involved in the development process and who needs a licence. The guide can be found at the following link:

[http://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/pdf/What is gambling software - June 2014.pdf](http://www.gamblingcommission.gov.uk/pdf/What%20is%20gambling%20software%20-%20June%202014.pdf)

The requirement to obtain gambling software from Gambling Commission-licensed providers is an important provision both to ensure the integrity of gambling software and to keep crime out of gambling, and ensures a consistent approach for remote gambling operators based in Britain and overseas. This requirement is set out in the Commission's Licence Conditions and Codes of Practice and was subject to statutory consultation this year.

Asked by Lord Mancroft

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether live dealer studios holding current European Economic Area and White-list authorisation for the services they provide to those offering live dealer games in the British market will be eligible for a continuation licence under the provisions of the Gambling Act 2014. [HL1721]

Baroness Northover: Yes, subject to meeting the criteria set out in Statutory Instrument (2014 Nos. 1675 and 1641), live dealer studios in the European Economic Area and White-list states currently permitted to operate in Britain are eligible.

Gastrointestinal Cancer

Questions

Asked by **Lord Hunt of Kings Heath**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures they are taking to support research into paediatric, adolescent, wild-type and syndromic gastrointestinal stromal tumour cancer. [HL1651]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): The Department's National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) welcomes funding applications for research into any aspect of human health, including gastrointestinal stromal tumours (GIST). These applications are subject to peer review and judged in open competition, with awards being made on the basis of the importance of the topic to patients and the National Health Service, value for money and scientific quality.

NIHR research infrastructure including NIHR biomedical research centres and the NIHR Clinical Research Network are hosting studies in GIST including a phase I/II study of sunitinib in young patients with advanced GIST.

Asked by **Lord Hunt of Kings Heath**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures they are taking to improve diagnosis and treatment of paediatric, adolescent, wild-type and syndromic gastrointestinal stromal tumour cancer. [HL1652]

To ask Her Majesty's Government what progress has been made in giving paediatric, adolescent, wild-type and syndromic gastrointestinal stromal tumour cancer specialised commissioning status. [HL1653]

To ask Her Majesty's Government which National Clinical Director has responsibility for paediatric, adolescent, wild-type and syndromic gastrointestinal stromal tumour cancer patients. [HL1654]

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to establish a specialist paediatric, adolescent, wild-type and syndromic gastrointestinal stromal tumour cancer clinic in the United Kingdom. [HL1655]

Earl Howe: Measures to ensure early diagnosis of cancer, including rare cancers, are discussed monthly by the Public Awareness and Primary Care Steering Group. The group is chaired by Sean Duffy, NHS England's National Clinical Director for Cancer, and includes members representing Public Health England, Cancer Research UK, Macmillan Cancer Support and Departmental officials and other stakeholders.

As rare cancers, paediatric, adolescent, wild-type and syndromic gastrointestinal stromal tumours (PAWS GIST) are covered by the 2013-14 NHS standard contract for paediatric oncology which was developed

by the Specialised Service Children's Cancer Clinical Reference Group (CRG) and can be found at the following address:

www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2013/06/e04-paedi-oncol.pdf

NHS England has no plans to establish a specialist PAWS GIST clinic, as treatment is currently provided through paediatric oncology services.

GIST Support UK have in partnership with Addenbrookes Hospital in Cambridge, established a PAWS GIST clinic that is led by Dr Ramesh Bulusu working with a UK national alliance of doctors.

Dr Jacqueline Cornish, National Clinical Director for Children, Young People and Transition to Adulthood, NHS England has responsibility for PAWS GIST.

General Practitioners

Question

Asked by **Baroness Browning**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what categories of Quality and Outcomes Framework payments are available to general practitioner practices. [HL1665]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): The national Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) is a voluntary incentive scheme that provides additional reward to general practitioner (GP) practices for how well they care for patients based on performance against a number of agreed indicators. Each indicator is worth a maximum number of points and GP practices are then rewarded financially on the number of points they achieve. All GP practices can choose to take part in QOF and the majority choose to do so.

NHS Employers publish detailed guidance on the QOF. A copy of this guidance has been placed in the Library.

Golf: Females

Question

Asked by **Lord Moynihan**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to golf clubs which host national and international events in the United Kingdom about the continuing discrimination against women. [HL1631]

Baroness Northover (LD): Last year, the Secretary of State at the time did not attend the Open golf championship at Muirfield in Scotland to highlight their policy on not allowing women members. Prior to this, in 2011, the Minister for Sport at the time, spoke with the Royal and Ancient about the matter of hosting the tournament at clubs that do not allow women members and stressed that he thought that clubs with such rules need to change this policy.

The Open Championship does not receive any financial support from the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. Ultimately the decision of where to hold the Championship is one for the Royal and Ancient.

It is not unlawful for clubs to restrict membership to men or to women only. It is a matter for single-sex clubs to decide whether they wish to change the membership criteria to extend to men and women. There are, however, provisions in the Equality Act 2010 which mean that where private clubs, including golf or other sports clubs, allow both men and women to become members, they must treat them equally regardless of their sex.

Housing

Question

Asked by **Lord Patten**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of the amount of floor space provided in newly built houses and flats in relation to average household needs in the United Kingdom. [HL1604]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Communities and Local Government (Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon) (Con): The floor space in newly built homes varies by dwelling type. As part of the Impact Assessment supporting last year's Housing Standards Review consultation, EC Harris estimated that typical private newly built houses were of the following size;

2 bedroom apartment 67m²

2 bedroom house 72m²

3 bedroom house 92m²

4 bedroom house 117m²

The Government will be consulting shortly on more detailed proposals for a National Space Standard which will be available for local authorities to adopt in planning policies and this will be followed by an Impact Assessment including further analysis on the size of recently built homes.

Housing Benefit: Social Rented Housing

Question

Asked by **The Lord Bishop of Derby**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to increase the availability of suitable housing for housing benefit claimants eligible for the under-occupancy charge who are willing but unable to move to smaller accommodation due to a lack of social housing available. [HL1587]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Communities and Local Government (Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon) (Con): The 2015-18 Affordable Housing Programme encourages housing providers to build social homes of sizes that match local household needs. Of the successful bids so far, 77% have been for 1 and 2 bedroom homes. This will make more housing available for households in social housing who wish to downsize.

The Government has also taken steps to support mobility among tenants in the social rented sector. Our social housing reforms have given councils and social landlords much more flexibility in the allocation

of housing. Our statutory guidance on social housing allocations encourages local authorities to prioritise under-occupying tenants wishing to move, and to consider whether there are provisions in their allocation scheme that might make it difficult for under-occupiers to move. In February, we issued a guide to help landlords facilitate mutual exchanges; the guide highlights various steps landlords can take to make mutual exchange a more attractive and viable proposition for tenants. The introduction of the national *HomeSwap* Direct scheme has made it easier for tenants wanting to move to find a suitable property. Since its launch in October 2011, tenants have carried out over 18 million searches of the property data held on *HomeSwap* Direct. The Government has also made clear its intention to introduce a Right to Move for social tenants who need to move to take up a job or be closer to work – we intend to consult soon on proposals.

In addition, many social landlords (both housing associations and councils) are helping affected tenants to move to more suitable accommodation by holding “mutual exchange fairs” (where tenants who want to downsize can meet with tenants who want a larger property), running transfer incentive schemes, and repairing properties which are being swapped through mutual exchange.

Human Trafficking

Questions

Asked by **The Lord Bishop of Derby**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many individuals on domestic worker visas have sought assistance as victims of human trafficking through the National Referral Mechanism. [HL1546]

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many individuals on domestic worker visas have been identified as victims of human trafficking offences in each year since 2010. [HL1547]

Baroness Northover (LD): The Home Office does not collect the information that has been requested. However, domestic workers who are abused or exploited, regardless of their immigration status, can receive care and support in the UK.

Iraq

Questions

Asked by **Lord Alton of Liverpool**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the reply by Lord Wallace of Saltaire on 24 July (HL Deb, cols 1324–8) to the debate on Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, what assistance has been given to Christians who have been forced to leave their homes in Mosul; whether they have any plans to offer asylum to those affected; and what representations they have made to governments in the Gulf in respect of the funding of ISIS. [HL1694]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns) (Con): The UK condemns the human rights abuses reported in Iraq and has committed £5 million to the humanitarian effort to support people displaced by fighting there. All asylum claims made in the UK are carefully considered in accordance with the UK's obligations under the 1951 Refugee Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights. The Home Office, which is responsible for all asylum claims, closely monitors developments in Iraq and other countries of return and will take decisions on a case-by-case basis in the light of the latest available country information. We regularly discuss terrorist financing with governments in the Gulf including through the mechanisms of the Financial Action Task Force.

Asked by Baroness Berridge

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have met the administration of Kurdish-controlled Iraq since ISIS took control of other Iraqi regions; and in particular whether they have discussed the situation of Iraqi Christian refugees. [HL1708]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The former Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right hon. Friend the Member for Richmond (Yorks) (Mr Hague), met the President and Prime Minister of the Kurdistan Region in Iraq on 27 June, and our Consul General in Erbil regularly meets the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) and others to discuss the humanitarian crisis and assistance to displaced persons including Christians from Mosul. Most recently the Consul General met the Head of the KRG's Department for Foreign Relations on 6 August to discuss the specific needs of Christians and other minority groups including Yazidis fleeing from Sinjar. Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials meet regularly with the KRG representation to the UK, and have done so several times since the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant's (ISIL) attacks on Mosul and other parts of Iraq in mid June 2014.

Israel

Questions

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what was the value of United Kingdom arms sales to Israel in the last 12 months, including cryptographic equipment; and what assessment they have made of the use of such arms for internal repression or external aggression. [HL1576]

The Minister of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills & Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Lord Livingston of Parkhead) (Con): In general the Department holds information only about the value of goods licensed for export, not about the value of sales.

In 2013, the UK granted a total of 178 Standard Individual Export Licences (SIELs) for military-rated goods with a value of £10,011,169.

Cryptographic equipment and software are dual-use items and the vast majority are for civil end use – they are not arms. In 2013 we granted 88 SIELs for cryptographic equipment, software, and related components. The vast majority of the value of these related to one licence, for electronic components and circuit boards which are specifically designed for building mobile phone networks for public use. They do not meet military specifications and they are not suitable for building military communications equipment. The end-user is a commercial stockist and distributor of electronic components and equipment. Given the nature of the equipment and intended end-use we do not have any concerns that the goods might be diverted for military end-use.

All export licence applications are assessed on a case-by-case basis against the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria in light of the prevailing circumstances. The Government announced the findings of its review of licensed exports to Israel on 12 August.

Asked by Lord Warner

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will take action to place an arms embargo on Israel. [HL1711]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The UK aims to have one of the most rigorous and transparent export licence regimes in the world with strict criteria governing the provision of licences. On 11 August the British Government announced the findings of its review of licensed exports to Israel. It found that the vast majority of exports currently licensed for Israel are not for items that could be used by Israeli forces in operations in Gaza in response to attacks by Hamas.

However, twelve licences were identified for components which could be part of equipment used by the Israeli Defence Forces in Gaza. Currently there is a ceasefire in place and the Government continues to urge both sides to respect this and to secure a lasting end to hostilities through the negotiations taking place in Cairo. However, in the event of a resumption of significant hostilities, the Government is concerned that it would not be able to clarify if the export licence criteria were being met. It would therefore suspend these licences as a precautionary step.

Lasers

Question

Asked by Lord Brabazon of Tara

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they propose to take in respect of the import, mainly through the internet, of laser pointers above classes 1 and 2, in the light of the study "Toy Laser Macular Burns in Children", published in *Eye*, the scientific journal of the Royal College of Ophthalmologists, in January; and what assessment they have made of the impact of such lasers being pointed at aircraft pilots, train drivers and motorists. [HL1608]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): Public Health England (PHE) and its predecessor organisations first issued advice on these matters to the then Department for Trade and Industry in October 1997 suggesting that laser products on general sale to the public should be limited to Class 1 or Class 2. This advice is still relevant. Trading Standards Officers use existing powers under the General Product Safety Regulations to take enforcement action against traders in the United Kingdom supplying high-power laser products, which are usually Class 3B or Class 4.

Following the publication of the paper in the journal *Eye*, PHE organised a workshop on 20 June 2014. This brought together two of the authors of the paper and stakeholders from across Government, the police and experts on the health implications of exposure to laser beams. PHE agrees with the journal article that it is important parents are aware of the risks of laser products to their children. It was felt that the most appropriate course of action was a campaign to increase awareness of the risks associated with the use of these lasers, including the likelihood that the power in the laser beam could be significantly higher than stated. PHE is now preparing additional material to inform the public.

The ability to impair the vision of a pilot or a vehicle driver depends on the colour of the laser beam, the ambient light conditions and the task being undertaken. Although Class 1 or Class 2 lasers are unlikely to impair the vision of a pilot, under specific conditions, they can cause distraction, glare and afterimages to drivers targeted at close range. Therefore, any inappropriate use of a laser, irrespective of the laser classification, should be taken seriously.

Meat: Antibiotics

Question

Asked by Lord Swinfen

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to reduce the amount of antibiotics in meat and meat products. [HL1572]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Lord De Mauley) (Con): Any veterinary antibiotic authorised for use in the UK in a food producing species will have a withdrawal period set as part of the condition of use. This is the minimum length of time after treatment that must pass before produce from the treated animal can enter the food chain. The withdrawal period ensures that the concentration of any residue of the medicine falls below the maximum residue level – the statutory safety limit.

In addition, the use of antibiotics as growth promoters has been banned in Europe since 2006.

Using antibiotics responsibly is a requirement of the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons (RCVS) Code of Professional Conduct for Vets which states "Veterinary surgeons must be seen to ensure that when using antimicrobials they do so responsibly, and be accountable for the choices made in such use."

Mesothelioma

Questions

Asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much was spent on mesothelioma research in 2013 and 2014. [HL1532]

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much funding has been designated for mesothelioma research in 2014 and 2015. [HL1533]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): In 2013-14, the Medical Research Council (MRC) spent £1.7 million on mesothelioma research, and the National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) spent £0.4 million on this topic through its research programmes, research centres and units, and research fellowships. Total spend by the NIHR on mesothelioma research is higher than this because expenditure by the NIHR Clinical Research Network (CRN) on this topic cannot be disaggregated from total CRN expenditure.

The amount of funding designated for mesothelioma research in 2014 and 2015 is not available. The usual practice of the NIHR and MRC is not to ring-fence funds for expenditure on particular topics; research proposals in all areas can be considered for the funding available.

The NIHR welcomes funding applications for research into any aspect of human health, including mesothelioma. These applications are subject to peer review and judged in open competition, with awards being made on the basis of the importance of the topic to patients and health and care services, value for money and scientific quality. In all disease areas, the amount of NIHR funding depends on the volume and quality of scientific activity. The NIHR has highlighted to the research community that it wants to encourage research applications in mesothelioma and we hope this will lead to an increased level of research activity.

Middle East

Questions

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to initiate dialogues, whether under their own auspices or those of other neutral states, between Israelis and Palestinians, along the lines suggested by Mr David Grossman in the International New York Times of 29 July. [HL1647]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns) (Con): The Government currently supports a range of projects in Israel and the Occupied Palestinian Territories which involve both Israeli and Palestinian implementing partners. Whilst the projects currently being funded do not necessarily have a specific objective of bringing Israelis and Palestinians together, or constitute 'joint' projects as such, much of the work our implementers do involve Israelis and Palestinians working together.

Our Conflict Prevention programme includes a focus on supporting and strengthening constituencies for peace. This includes support to train Palestinian doctors in Israeli hospitals; fostering people-to-people relations between the two communities, promoting coexistence and confidence building, whilst building the capabilities of the Palestinian healthcare system.

Asked by Lord Jones of Cheltenham

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Israel about the bombardment of Gaza.[HL1673]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: Officials from our Embassy in Tel Aviv are holding regular discussions with the Government of Israel about the current Gaza crisis. On 29 July the Prime Minister, my right hon. Friend the Member for Witney (Mr Cameron), called for an unconditional, immediate, humanitarian ceasefire.

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of allegations that the Israeli Defence Force's Operation Protective Edge has deliberately targeted civilian infrastructure. [HL1696]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The Government has not made any assessment of the allegations that the Israeli Defence Forces have deliberately targeted civilian infrastructure. We have however made clear both in our public statements and diplomatic representations that whilst Israel had a right to self-defence, any response must be proportionate and maximum efforts made to avoid civilian casualties.

Asked by Lord Warner

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they will take to secure an independent international investigation of the level of civilian deaths and casualties in Gaza arising from Israel's military intervention in that territory to establish whether breaches of international law have occurred. [HL1709]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The Government has not made any plans to take action to secure an independent international investigation into the Gaza crisis. The time to carry out any actions on this issue is in the future, once the situation in Gaza has de-escalated.

Asked by Lord Warner

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they intend to take internationally to require Israel to lift the blockade of Gaza. [HL1710]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: In order to secure a lasting ceasefire, it will be vital to address the underlying causes of the conflict, including easing access restrictions to open up the economy of Gaza, whilst addressing Israel's legitimate security concerns. There cannot simply be a return to the status quo ante. The UK will work with international partners, including the EU and the UN, to support this goal.

Ministers: Conduct

Question

Asked by Lord Tebbit

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether it is their policy that ministers speaking from the despatch box in their capacity as ministers should not express personal opinions in conflict with Government policy; if so, how that policy is enforced; and, if not, whether they intend to introduce such a policy. [HL1666]

Baroness Northover (LD): The Ministerial Code provides guidance to Ministers on their accountability to Parliament.

Multiple Sclerosis

Questions

Asked by Baroness Gardner of Parkes

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether Cladribine is available for people with multiple sclerosis through the National Health Service; and, if not, what steps they are taking to make it available. [HL1628]

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of research in other countries into the use of Cladribine to treat multiple sclerosis; and what such research has been carried out in the United Kingdom for the National Health Service. [HL1629]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): Cladribine is not licensed for the treatment of multiple sclerosis.

Prescribers can prescribe a medicine "off label" for unlicensed indications if they consider it to be of benefit to the patient and on condition that they retain full clinical responsibility for that patient.

The National Institute for Health Research Horizon Scanning Centre published a report on cladribine for multiple sclerosis in 2008 and this is available at:

www.hsc.nihr.ac.uk/topics/cladribine-movectro-for-multiple-sclerosis-relapsi

We have made no assessment of research undertaken in other countries.

National Lottery

Question

Asked by Lord Moynihan

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much lottery money has been spent on sports and recreation each year since the establishment of the National Lottery; how much they anticipate will be spent in 2015, 2016, and 2017; and how much of that funding has been allocated for each Olympic and Paralympic sport. [HL1633]

Baroness Northover (LD): The amounts of National Lottery money drawn down by the Lottery sports distributors for spending on the sports good cause were as follows:

1994/95 -	£1.8 million
1995/96 -	£40.1 million
1996/97 -	£181.6 million
1997/98 -	£188.3 million
1998/99 -	£397.4 million
1999/00 -	£316.7 million
2000/01 -	£292.5 million
2001/02 -	£359.2 million
2002/03 -	£377.5 million
2003/04 -	£315.5 million
2004/05 -	£241.6 million
2005/06 -	£264.1 million
2006/07 -	£208.8 million
2007/08 -	£216.1 million
2008/09 -	£230.5 million
2009/10 -	£216.6 million
2010/11 -	£224.0 million
2011/12 -	£302.5 million
2012/13 -	£271.6 million
2013/14 -	£358.2 million

In addition, the Big Lottery Fund (and its predecessor bodies) spent approximately £1 billion on sports and recreation projects that had a social impact over that period.

The sports distributors estimate that they will drawing down approximately £450 million this financial year and in each of the next three financial years.

UK Sport invests in four-year cycles in line with the Olympic and Paralympic calendars. The breakdown of funding for each sport up to Pyeongchang 2018 can be found on the UK Sport website.

Neurofibromatosis

Questions

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government out of all known patients with neurofibromatosis Type 1, how many were treated in the last 12 months at the two designated national specialist care centres. [HL1538]

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many patients with neurofibromatosis Type 1 are waiting to be treated at the two designated national specialist care centres. [HL1539]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): Whilst the number of people with neurofibromatosis Type 1 (NF1) in England is estimated to number 11,267, the number of patients with a confirmed diagnosis is not collected.

In the following table we have provided the number of finished admission episodes (FAEs) for patients with a primary diagnosis of NF1 who were treated at the two national specialist centres in 2012-13, the most recent period for which data is available. An FAE is a continuous period of admitted patient care under one

consultant within one health care provider. It should be noted the figures do not represent a count of patients, as a person may have more than one episode of care within the same stay in hospital or in different stays in the same year.

FAEs in 2012-13 for patients with primary or secondary diagnosis of NF1 (non-malignant)

<i>Trust</i>	<i>Numbers</i>
Central Manchester University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	213
Guys and St. Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust	124

Source: Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Health and Social Care Information Centre

Information concerning the number of patients waiting to be treated at the two national centres is not available.

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what arrangements are being made to treat patients with neurofibromatosis Type 1 who do not meet the thresholds set at the two designated national specialist care centres. [HL1540]

To ask Her Majesty's Government what arrangements are being made to monitor the implementation of the service specification for treating patients with neurofibromatosis Type 1. [HL1541]

Earl Howe: NHS England's service specification for complex Type 1 neurofibromatosis (NF1) sets out what providers must have in place offer evidence-based, safe and effective care, ensuring equity of access to a nationally consistent, high quality service. The specification sets out a number of aims and objectives for the service which includes the operation of a rolling programme of clinical audit to test current practice and inform the evolution of care for patients with complex NF1.

The complex NF1 service is accessible to all patients with a suspected or confirmed diagnosis of NF1, subject to an appropriate referral. Those patients identified by the service as having non-complex NF1 will have their care transferred to the appropriate local team as required.

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they are taking to ensure early diagnosis of patients with neurofibromatosis type 1. [HL1656]

Earl Howe: Information for the public on the diagnosis and treatment of neurofibromatosis type 1 (NF1) can be found on the NHS Choices website, which sets out the key signs and symptoms of the condition, including: coffee colored patches on the skin, two or more neurofibromas (bumps on or under the skin); bone defects, such as bowing of the lower leg; and, a family history of NF1. The NF1 webpages can be viewed at the following link:

www.nhs.uk/conditions/Neurofibromatosis/Pages/Introduction.aspx

More detailed information for general practitioners and other health professionals can be found on the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence NHS Evidence website at:

www.evidence.nhs.uk

This provides free access to quality health and social care evidence and best practice.

NHS England commissions complex NF1 services as part of its remit to deliver specialised services and has published a service specification for NF1. Diagnostic services are a core element of this specification and can be accessed by all patients with a suspected or confirmed diagnosis on referral.

NHS

Questions

Asked by *Baroness Howe of Idlicote*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what opportunity the House of Lords and House of Commons will be given to scrutinise the NHS Mandate 2015–16 ahead of its publication. [HL1622]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): The Health and Social Care Act 2012 requires the Secretary of State to publish and lay before Parliament its Mandate to the NHS Commissioning Board (known as NHS England). Before specifying any objectives or requirements in the Mandate, the Secretary of State must consult NHS England, Healthwatch England and any other persons he considers appropriate.

I announced on 22 July 2014 in a Written Ministerial Statement (HL Deb, column WS124-5) that the Government proposes to uphold all of the existing objectives in the current Mandate and maintain a stable Mandate for 2015-16. This will enable the National Health Service to build on its achievements and make further progress on the ambitious agenda already set.

We have been working closely with NHS England on the approach to the Mandate and will be engaging with stakeholders over the summer, ahead of publishing and laying the final Mandate before Parliament in the autumn. The Mandate for 2015-16 will take effect from April 2015.

Asked by *Lord Judd*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the effectiveness of the National Health Service Mandate in holding the National Health Service accountable to government. [HL1642]

Earl Howe: The National Health Service Mandate, which is published annually, sets the Government's objectives for NHS England which NHS England must seek to deliver, and its business plan sets out how it will do so. Following this, NHS Planning Guidance sets out expectations on clinical commissioning groups (CCGs) for their role in delivering the mandate, which CCGs are then expected to reflect in their plans. As such, the mandate provides a basis for holding NHS England and, through them, CCGs, to account.

The Department holds the NHS formally to account for its progress on achieving the objectives in the mandate through bi-monthly Secretary of State accountability meetings, of which the minutes are published. In July, the first Annual Assessment of NHS England was laid before Parliament by the Secretary of State, which covers the extent to which NHS England met its mandate in 2013-14.

As the Annual Assessment acknowledged, NHS England and the wider system have recently undergone a complex transition process. This means it is difficult at this time to assess the effectiveness of the Mandate as an accountability mechanism. Nevertheless, we will keep this under review.

Asked by *Baroness Greengross*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Ministerial Statement by the Secretary of State for Health, Jeremy Hunt MP on 22 July (HC Deb, col 119WS), at what point the Department of Health decided on a "commitment to stability" for the NHS Mandate 2015–16 and whether this commitment will prevent changes to the Mandate ahead of its publication. [HL1675]

Earl Howe: The Secretary of State for Health, Jeremy Hunt MP, announced the Government's intention to maintain a stable Mandate for 2015-16 at the same time as publishing the first Annual Assessment of NHS England. The Annual Assessment, and NHS England's first Annual Report, describe an organisation that has established itself and made progress, but has more to do to deliver all of its objectives. The decision to propose a stable Mandate for 2015-16 was taken in view of the importance of continuity of purpose for NHS England in the final year of the current spending review cycle. The priorities for the National Health Service remain those described in the current Mandate for 2014-15, and the Government wants NHS England to make further progress still on the ambitious agenda already set.

As set out in my Written Ministerial Statement on 22 July (HL Deb, column WS124-5), the Department is engaging with key stakeholders on its proposed approach over the summer. The Government will consider views expressed before finalising the Mandate for publication in the autumn.

NHS: Obesity

Question

Asked by *Lord Blencathra*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what information they have on the numbers of National Health Service staff who are (1) obese grade I, (2) obese grade II (severe obesity), and (3) obese grade III (morbid obesity). [HL1681]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): The Department does not hold data on the number of National Health Service staff classified as obese.

NHS: Staff

Question

Asked by **Lord Grocott**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the answer by Earl Howe on 9 July (HL Deb, col 216) and Written Answer on 29 July (WA 286), how the figure of 19,300 fewer administrative staff was calculated. [HL1722]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): The source of the data is the *NHS Hospital & Community Health Service (HCHS) monthly workforce statistics - Provisional Statistics* published by the Health and Social Care Information Centre. This covers directly employed staff working in the National Health Service and excludes staff working in general practice.

The figure of 19,300 (rounded down to the nearest hundred) is the decrease in the full time equivalent number of 'infrastructure support' staff between May 2010 (204,695) and February 2014 (185,319). Infrastructure support includes staff that are coded as senior managers, managers, clerical and administrative staff in central functions and all staff in hotel, property and estates; it does not include administration staff that provide direct support to clinicians, such as medical secretaries and ward receptionists.

Based on the latest available data, for April 2014, the number of full time equivalent infrastructure support staff stands at 184,533 and the reduction since May 2010 at over 20,100 (20,161 – rounded down to the nearest whole number).

Nigeria

Question

Asked by **Baroness Tonge**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of Nigeria concerning a reported military attack on pro-Palestinian protesters at the annual Al Quds Day rally. [HL1579]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns) (Con): We are aware that a number of civilian deaths occurred during the annual 'Quds Day' rally in Zaria, Kaduna State on 25 July and understand that the Nigerian police have opened an investigation. Officials at our High Commission in Abuja are seeking more details.

North Korea

Questions

Asked by **Lord Alton of Liverpool**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the reply by Baroness Warsi on 23 July (HL Deb, cols GC 460–4) on the Commission of Inquiry Report on human rights in North Korea, how many of the Commission's recommendations that

pertain specifically to Her Majesty's Government have been implemented thus far; and whether there are any recommendations that they do not intend to implement. [HL1535]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns) (Con): The Commission of Inquiry made nineteen recommendations to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) (para 1220, (a) – (s)); six for China and other States in the context of trafficking and forced repatriation of refugees (para 1221 (a) – (f)); one relating to inter-Korean relations (para 1222); two directed at states, civil society organisations, foundations and business enterprises (1223 and 1224) and ten to the international community and the United Nations (1225 (a) – (j)).

The recommendations relating to trafficking and forced repatriation do not apply directly to the UK. However, we have been clear with the Chinese government and others that we believe that people who have escaped from the DPRK are entitled to protection and should be allowed safe passage to resettlement in third countries.

Para 1223 relates to people-to-people dialogue and contact in areas such as culture, science, sports, good governance and economic development. As one of the few countries with a presence on the ground in Pyongyang, the UK can play a particular role in implementing this recommendation. We already seek to expose North Koreans to the outside world through the British Council English language training programme and other engagement activities.

Para 1224 recommends that states and others should support the work of civil society organisations to improve the human rights situation in the DPRK, including efforts to document violations and to broadcast accessible information into each country. The UK has previously funded projects with South Korean non-governmental organisations related to documenting violations in the DPRK. We have also worked with international and domestic organisations within the DPRK to improve the treatment of disabled people. Our focus on direct engagement complements that of others, like the US, who support broadcasts into the DPRK.

With regard to the recommendations for the international community and the United Nations, my noble friend, the former Senior Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Baroness Warsi), set out in detail in her reply on 23 July (Official Report, column GC461) the UK's position on the recommendations for the UN Security Council (para 1225(a)) and our commitment to ensuring that the international community takes action in response to the Commission's report (para 1225(f)). The recommendations in para 1225 (b) and (c) have been taken forward through the UN Human Rights Council and those in (d), (e) and (g) are primarily for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and the UN Secretariat. We are currently exploring the prospects for taking forward para 1225(h), which recommends forming a human rights contact group. Para 1225(i) relates to provision of humanitarian assistance. The UK does not have a bilateral aid programme in the DPRK, but agrees fully with points made in this recommendation about how such assistance should be provided.

Para 1225(j) recommends the convening of a high-level political conference to consider a final peaceful settlement to the Korean War. A comprehensive resolution of the situation on the Korean peninsula will require the DPRK to address the international community's legitimate security concerns.

Asked by Lord Eames

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the reply by Baroness Warsi on 23 July (HL Deb, cols 460–4GC) to the debate on the Commission of Inquiry Report on human rights in North Korea, whether the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and British Embassy in Pyongyang use teaching programmes in North Korean universities and colleges and children's care homes to challenge the indoctrination of children that was documented in the Commission Report; and if so, how. [HL1703]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The primary focus of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and British Council funded teacher training programme in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea is on training teachers of English, although the programme also includes an element of direct teaching to university and middle school students. The programme uses a mixture of standard British Council English language materials and materials developed together with DPRK teachers specifically for the North Korean context. This includes, for example, a module on English for International Law, based on texts from the UN including the UN Charter. The DPRK would not agree to any programme that explicitly challenged their ideology, but through the programme North Korean teachers and students develop a better understanding of the UK and its values. They also experience an approach to learning based on questioning and reaching individual conclusions, rather than dictation and rote learning.

While our Embassy in Pyongyang has funded some projects aimed at improving nutrition in children's homes and childcare centres, we do not have any teaching programmes for these groups.

Asked by Lord Eames

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the reply by Baroness Warsi on 23 July (HL Deb, cols 460–4GC) to the debate on the Commission of Inquiry Report on human rights in North Korea, what bilateral steps have been taken by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office to end sexual violence in North Korea; whether experts from its Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative have entered into dialogue with the government of North Korea; and what assessment they have made of whether any projects explicitly designed to improve the rights of women in North Korean society have ever been implemented in North Korea. [HL1704]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: We have been clear with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) that we find its appalling human rights record unacceptable and have called on it to take action in response to all of the Commission of Inquiry's findings, including those relating to sexual and gender-based violence. We

have also worked with the South Korean based non-governmental organisation (NGO), Citizens Alliance (NKHR), to fund a project on North Korean refugees and women's rights in the DPRK and to increase the NGO's capability in this field. The report produced through this project was submitted to the Commission of Inquiry and formed part of the evidence for their report.

We do not have a full audit of projects undertaken by other Embassies, UN Agencies or NGOs. With regard to UK projects within the DPRK, it is only possible to undertake projects with a willing North Korean counterpart. We have not previously undertaken projects specifically designed to improve women's rights or sexual and gender-based violence. To date experts from the Preventing Sexual Violence Initiative have not held discussions with the Government of DPRK. The DPRK recently accepted a number of recommendations from its 2009 Universal Periodic Review, including some that related to equality and women's rights. This creates a potential opportunity for engagement. We are currently considering how we might exploit this most effectively.

Occupied Territories

Question

Asked by Lord Warner

To ask Her Majesty's Government what further action they plan to take internationally to ban the trade in goods and services from Israel's settlements in occupied Palestinian territories. [HL1712]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns) (Con): While the issue of settlement produce is a subject of active discussion with our EU partners, the Government has no plans to take this further internationally. We are working together to ensure continued, full and effective implementation of existing EU legislation and bilateral arrangements applicable to settlement products. This ongoing work includes measures to ensure that settlement produce does not enter the EU duty-free, under the EU-Israel Association Agreement, and steps to ensure that EU-wide guidelines are issued to make sure that settlement products are not incorrectly labelled as Israeli produce, in violation of EU consumer protection regulations.

Orders and Regulations

Question

Asked by Lord Goodlad

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written answer by Lord Wallace of Saltaire on 29 July (WA 297), what percentage of statutory instruments laid by the Cabinet Office this calendar year corrected errors in a previous instrument (including drafts of affirmative instruments that had to be superseded by correcting drafts); and what were the titles of the correcting instruments. [HL1702]

Baroness Northover (LD): In 2014 Cabinet Office has laid 22 statutory instruments, of which three corrected errors in a previous instrument (14%).

The instruments concerned are the European Parliamentary Elections (Amendment) Regulations 2014, the Local Authorities (Conduct of Referendums) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2014 and the Electoral Registration (Disclosure of Electoral Registers) (Amendment) Regulations 2014.

Pakistan

Question

Asked by **Lord Ahmed**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have provided military intelligence, logistic and material support to the army of Pakistan during its military operations against international terrorist networks in the Tribal Areas of Pakistan. [HL1197]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns) (Con): The Government has not provided any direct intelligence, logistic and material support to Pakistan relating to its military operations in Federally Administered Tribal Areas.

Palestinians

Questions

Asked by **Lord Hylton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to ask the government of Egypt to re-open the Rafah crossing for the evacuation of severely injured people from Gaza. [HL1542]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns) (Con): We welcome the repeated opening of the Rafah crossing for evacuation of the severely injured from Gaza that Egypt has facilitated throughout the current crisis, as well as the humanitarian aid packages it has supplied. We remain concerned about the fragile humanitarian situation in Gaza. We continue to encourage the Egyptian authorities to ease movement especially for humanitarian reasons through Rafah. The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right hon. Friend the Member for Runnymede and Weybridge (Mr Hammond), raised the Rafah crossing with the Egyptian President during his visit to Cairo on 24 July.

Asked by **Lord Alton of Liverpool**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of reports that Hamas militants are attempting to negotiate a new arms deal with North Korea for missiles and communications equipment. [HL1692]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: We are aware of recent reports that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (DPRK) is supplying missile technology to

Hamas militants. The DPRK supplies a wide range of conventional arms to customers worldwide, including Syria and Iran. Its sale of arms and related material to countries already in the grip of conflict exploits and increases regional instability. We urge all countries to exercise vigilance in the implementation of DPRK UN Security Council Resolutions.

Asked by **Lord Hylton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the practical and humanitarian consequences of the damage recently done to the large electricity plant in Gaza. [HL1700]

Baroness Northover (LD): According to the UN, Gaza's sole power plant remains shut down after being shelled on 29 July. The UN estimate that repairs may take months to complete, exacerbating the electricity crisis. The residents of Gaza are currently receiving on average 2 to 4 hours of electricity a day. This is affecting private households, companies and public services provision, including water, sanitation and health facilities as well as basic access to food.

The UK will provide more than £17 million in emergency support for Gaza. This includes £6 million for the UN Relief and Works Agency Appeal, which will fund basic shelter, blankets, hygiene kits, nappies and other vital help for tens of thousands of displaced people; £3million for the World Food Programme's appeal to provide emergency food vouchers for more than 300,000 people for one month; and £3million of support brought forward for the International Committee of the Red Cross. DFID has also activated the £3 million Rapid Response Facility which allows the UK to provide emergency support via pre-approved organisations that can rapidly deliver medical, water and sanitation assistance in response to a disaster or humanitarian crisis overseas. We are also matching donations to the Disasters Emergency Committee appeal for Gaza, up to a total of £2 million.

Palliative Care

Questions

Asked by **Baroness Howe of Idlicote**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what recent steps they have taken to improve the provision of palliative care services. [HL1621]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): The Department and NHS England are taking steps to improve palliative care services, including the development of a per-patient funding model for palliative care services that aims to improve access to specialist palliative care.

NHS England has established palliative care networks across England which are supporting improvements in palliative care services and sharing of good practice. NHS Improving Quality's (NHS IQ) Transforming End of Life Care (EoLC) in Acute Hospitals programme is also helping to drive improvements for people in hospitals, such as the wider implementation of electronic palliative care registers (EPaCCS). These can provide

instant access to key information about EoLC patients to all health professionals with a need to see it. NHS IQ has set an ambition to achieve a 70% roll out of EPaCCs by 2015.

On 1 July 2014, we announced a review of choice in EoLC led by Claire Henry, Chief Executive of the National Council for Palliative Care. The Programme Board leading this work consists of representatives from charities, people with personal experience of EoLC (including carers), clinicians and policy makers. The review will undertake extensive public consultation to define what people want in EoLC services, and will provide advice to the Government on the policy initiatives required to enable people's preferences to be met. This advice will be provided by early next year.

Asked by Baroness Greengross

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps have been taken to explore the feasibility of replicating the Liverpool STARS programme for people at the end of life elsewhere in England. [HL1674]

Earl Howe: There are currently no plans to explore the feasibility of replicating the Liverpool STARS programme for people at the end of life elsewhere in England. This is a local initiative and it is for commissioners in other localities to determine how best to improve the provision of end of life care services in their areas, based on the needs of their populations.

NHS England is responsible for improving end of life care services nationally and has established, and is supporting, palliative care networks across England. Through these networks and the work of NHS Improving Quality, NHS England is continuing to support improvements in palliative care services and sharing of good practice. The Transforming End of Life Care in Acute Hospitals programme is also helping to drive improvements for people in hospitals.

Palliative Care Funding Review

Question

Asked by Lord Judd

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the data collected by the Palliative Care Funding Review; and whether they have plans to introduce the provision of free social care at the end of life. [HL1640]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): The data collection exercise following the Palliative Care Funding Review concluded at the end of March 2014. These data are currently being analysed by NHS England, who intend to complete this analysis by the end of August.

Any decisions on the provision of free social care at the end of life will be based on a combination of the analysis of these data, other relevant data sources and wider policy and financial considerations.

Pharmacy: Colne

Question

Asked by Lord Greaves

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are the causes of the delay in the transfer of the pharmacy into the new Colne Health Centre from the old premises; and when it will happen. [HL1643]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): This is an operational matter for the National Health Service locally. We understand that NHS Property Services has reached an agreement with Colne Pharmacy to move into the new health centre.

Prisoners: Dependants

Questions

Asked by Lord Touhig

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the case for judges asking individuals whom they have remanded or sentenced to prison whether there are any children or vulnerable adults dependent upon them. [HL1263]

To ask Her Majesty's Government what provisions exist to ensure that appropriate care arrangements are in place for the dependants of individuals who are refused bail and held on remand. [HL1264]

The Minister of State, Ministry of Justice (Lord Faulks) (Con): The Government is examining practical measures to ensure that information about dependents of those sent to custody is identified and recorded. The Government has considered the case for a statutory duty on courts to inquire about the existence of dependents but remains concerned that such a duty would be impractical for the courts to operate and not be effective in encouraging defendants and offenders to disclose, as early as possible, the existence of dependents.

Asked by Lord Touhig

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimates have been made of the number of children or vulnerable adults dependent upon individuals who have been refused bail and held on remand in the last 12 months. [HL1265]

Lord Faulks: When deciding whether to refuse bail the court has a duty to take into account any relevant considerations, which can include those relating to the defendant's responsibilities for the care of children or other relatives. Whilst there are a number of estimates of the number of children affected by a parent being sent to custody there is no estimate of the number of children or vulnerable adults dependent on individuals remanded in custody.

Religious Freedom

Question

Asked by **Lord Alton of Liverpool**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the reply by Lord Wallace of Saltaire on 24 July (HL Deb, cols 1324–8) to the debate on Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, how many officials in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office are specifically focused on freedom of religion, and for what percentage of their time; and what resources are specifically allocated for the promotion of Article 18 through United Kingdom diplomatic services. [HL1693]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns) (Con): Within the Human Rights and Democracy Department (HRDD), the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has one full time Desk Officer wholly dedicated to Freedom of Religion or Belief (FoRB), who works closely with the Team Leader in the Equalities and Non-Discrimination Team, who themselves spend approximately 50% of their time on FoRB. Additionally, the Head and the Deputy Head of HRDD spend approximately 5% and 20% respectively of their time on FoRB issues; one Human Rights Advisor spends 5% and one HRDD Communications Officer approximately 10%.

As FoRB is one of only six thematic human rights priorities for the FCO, a considerable number of other FCO officials in London and overseas are engaged directly on FoRB as part of their wider human rights work. Given that violations of FoRB can be closely associated with other threats to UK interests around the world, I cannot provide a precise figure for the total number of FCO officials working on FoRB, though the number is high and rising.

This year, seven FoRB projects around the world were approved and received total funding of £307,835.

Revenue and Customs

Question

Asked by **Lord Lipsey**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the average call waiting time in each of the last five years of the HM Revenue and Customs helpline. [HL1316]

The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Deighton) (Con): The Government publishes monthly performance figures from 2011-12 onwards for the HMRC contact centre, including time waiting in a queue. The data is available at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/business-plan-indicators>.

Russia

Question

Asked by **Lord Hylton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they are analysing any evidence relating to the suggestion that Russia may be in breach of the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty; and, if so, when they expect to reach a conclusion. [HL1701]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns) (Con): The US briefed North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) Allies on 29 July on its conclusion that Russia is in violation of its obligations under the 1987 Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty. The UK and other NATO Allies are considering the detail of this briefing carefully. Although this is a bilateral Treaty to which the UK is not a party, the Government is clearly concerned at reports that Russia has breached its obligations under the Treaty, and is another example of Russia not adhering to international obligations and norms. The Government fully supports the statement made by the NATO Secretary General urging Russia to work constructively to return to full compliance in a verifiable manner.

Sexual Dysfunction

Question

Asked by **Lord Patel of Bradford**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the "overall policy objective" referred to at paragraph 21, page 9 of their consultation response Proposed changes to NHS availability of erectile dysfunction treatments—changing prescribing restrictions for generic sildenafil. [HL1605]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): On 25 June 2014, the Department published the Government's response to its consultation, Proposed changes to NHS availability of erectile dysfunction treatments: changing prescribing restrictions for sildenafil, a copy of which has been placed in the Library and which is available at:

www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/322464/ED_Cons_response.pdf

This explains the overall policy objective of amending Regulations governing National Health Service provision of some treatments for erectile dysfunction in a way that has benefits for patients, is affordable for the NHS and is consistent with European Union legislation.

Skin: Diseases

Question

Asked by **Baroness Healy of Primrose Hill**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the length of time that patients with chronic spontaneous urticaria wait between initial diagnosis and referral to a specialist in England. [HL1626]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): The information requested is not held centrally and no assessment has been made.

Sovereignty

Question

Asked by **Lord Laird**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their definition of a nation. [HL1660]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns) (Con): The normal criteria for recognition of a nation or state are set out in the Written Answer by the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on 16 November 1989, House of Commons Hansard Official Report, Column 494, noted below for ease of reference:

“The normal criteria that we apply for recognition as a state are that it should have, and seem likely to continue to have, a clearly defined territory with a population, a Government who are able of themselves to exercise effective control of that territory, and independence in their external relations. Other factors, including some United Nations resolutions, may also be relevant.”

Spinal Injuries

Questions

Asked by **Baroness Wilkins**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they are taking to reduce the waiting lists for admission to the eight specialist spinal injury units in England of newly injured spinal cord patients prior to the review of demand and capacity by the Spinal Cord Injury Clinical Reference Group. [HL1612]

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health, Jane Ellison MP on 21 July (HC Deb, col 1009W), what assessment they have made of NHS England's Spinal Cord Injury Service Specification of a minimum of 20 beds per unit against the criterion of providing a “safe and effective service”. [HL1613]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): The fluctuations of waiting times and the ability to discharge a patient to the next phase of their care are key factors in enabling the admission of new patients to a centre. NHS England, the eight specialist centres in England and the Spinal Injuries Association are working together to recommend changes to the continuing care process that would enable spinal cord injured patients to move to the next stage of their care as soon as clinically appropriate.

The overall bed complement for England is being reviewed through a demand and capacity project, led by the Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Clinical Reference Group (CRG). The CRG aims to produce a report in 2015-16.

NHS England's SCI service specification clearly sets out what providers must have in place to offer evidence-based, safe and effective services. It sets a core requirement that each specialised SCI Centre can demonstrate they have a minimum of 20 beds dedicated exclusively for the treatment and rehabilitation of SCI patients.

This requirement was developed by the SCI CRG and endorsed and was adopted by NHS England as the responsible commissioner.

Asked by **Baroness Wilkins**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that National Health Service wheelchair services do not delay discharge of patients at spinal injury units as a result of not assessing them for their wheelchair until two weeks before their due discharge date. [HL1614]

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the procedure whereby wheelchair centres repeat the assessment of a spinal centre's physiotherapist and seating consultant; and whether they are taking any steps to streamline the process. [HL1615]

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their estimate of the number of extra in-patient days that result from repetition by wheelchair centres of assessments carried out at spinal injury units. [HL1616]

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the impact on costs to the National Health Service of repetition by wheelchair centres of assessments carried out at spinal injury units as a result of (1) extra in-patient days as a result of delayed discharge, and (2) the organisation of the transport and nurse or therapist escort of the in-patient to the wheelchair centre. [HL1617]

Earl Howe: No estimate has been made of the levels of repetition of wheelchair assessment, the impact on bed availability and associated costs.

The supply and maintenance of wheelchairs which fall outside the scope of Specialised Complex Disability Equipment Services are the responsibility of local clinical commissioning groups. NHS England expects that assessment of patients and the subsequent supply and adjustment of wheelchairs is carried out within a suitable timeframe and to ensure the minimum of disruption.

Asked by **Lord Verjee**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the total bed capacity of the United Kingdom's spinal injury units; and how that figure compares to the current level of acute and long-term readmissions. [HL1726]

Earl Howe: In England, the current capacity recommendation for spinal cord injury (SCI) patients as set out in NHS England's specialised SCI service specification is a minimum of 20 beds at each of the eight specialised SCI centres. NHS England is responsible for commissioning SCI services and for reviewing capacity of SCI services in England.

NHS England has advised that over the next year the SCI Clinical Reference Group is due to undertake a demand and capacity review of SCI services in England. There are no routinely available figures about acute and long-term readmissions to these units.

Sports

Question

Asked by **Lord Moynihan**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how often, and when, the Cabinet Committee tasked with delivering an Olympic and Paralympic sports legacy has met since the London Games in 2012; what were the outcomes from each of the meetings for sport and recreation; and what has been the cost to the Exchequer for the Olympic and Paralympic Legacy Unit broken down according to activity.

[HL1707]

Baroness Northover (LD): As per the usual workings of a Cabinet Government, and in accordance with advice from the Cabinet Secretary, it is not Government policy to comment on the frequency or content of Cabinet Committee discussions.

The cost to the Exchequer of the Legacy Unit since its creation in 2012, in addition to staff costs of around 10 staff at its peak, has been:

Travel and subsistence – £4,000
 Communications activity - £8,000
 Stakeholder engagement - £1,000.

St Helena

Question

Asked by **Lord Jones of Cheltenham**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to ensure that direct flights from Europe which include a refuelling stop will be given full consideration in assessing which companies to invite to bid for the air service to the new airport on St Helena.

[HL1671]

Baroness Northover (LD): Potential Service Providers who meet the Pre-Qualification Questionnaire (PQQ) criteria will be asked to submit a tender to provide the St Helena Air Service; all tenders will be given full consideration.

Stabilisation Unit

Question

Asked by **Lord Chidgey**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the individual cost of preparing deployable civilian experts, civil servants and police officers for service abroad with the Stabilisation Unit broken down by (1) medical examinations, (2) security clearance, (3) Hostile Environment Acclimatisation Training, and (4) helmet, bullet proof jacket and first aid equipment.[HL1132]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns) (Con): The varied nature of Stabilisation Unit activity results in there being no uniform cost for deployment. The costs of Stabilisation Unit deployments are dependent upon the hostility of the location in which the work is to be undertaken, the duration of the task and the status of the individual being deployed. Costs also vary depending on whether those deploying have been trained previously, have travelled to similar destinations and possess relevant vaccinations. The Stabilisation Unit's contractual mechanisms are regularly reviewed to maximise value for money.

Taxation

Question

Asked by **Lord Warner**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the additional annual funding that would be raised by (1) each one per cent rise in income tax, (2) each one per cent rise in national insurance contributions, (3) abolishing the ceiling on national insurance contributions, (4) doubling the duty on (a) tobacco, (b) alcohol, and (c) gambling, and (5) for each one per cent increase in inheritance tax (with current exemption arrangements).

[HL1484]

The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Deighton) (Con): Information on the revenue effects of changes in income tax, national insurance contributions, tobacco, alcohol and inheritance tax is available and published in the table 'Direct effects of illustrative tax changes' published on the GOV.UK website^[1].

The table is a 'ready reckoner' showing estimates of the effects of various illustrative tax changes, on tax receipts in 2014-15 to 2016-17.

[1] https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/297451/20140318_DirectEffectofIllustrativechanges_Mar_v0.1.pdf

Telephone Preference Service

Question

Asked by **Lord Kennedy of Southwark**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to review the effectiveness of the Telephone Preference Service.

[HL1610]

Baroness Northover (LD): Whilst we have no such plans in place I am pleased to note that Ofcom and the Information Commissioner's Office published new consumer research on the effectiveness of the Telephone Preference Service (TPS) on 24 July 2014. This independent research showed that registering with the TPS reduced all types nuisance calls, including live sales calls, recorded messages and silent and abandoned calls by around a third. The full Ofcom report can be accessed at: <http://stakeholders.ofcom.org.uk/market-data-research/other/telecoms-research/tps-effectiveness/>

As noted in our Nuisance Calls Action Plan of March this year we are keen to improve the enforcement of the existing regulations as we believe this will further increase the effectiveness of the TPS.

Uganda

Question

Asked by *Lord Verjee*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what diplomatic initiatives they have undertaken following the passing of anti-homosexual legislation in Uganda; and to what extent are they supporting British non-governmental organisations in working towards a future of equality within the country. [HL1725]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns) (Con): The UK welcomes the decision of the Ugandan Constitutional Court on 1 August to annul the Anti-Homosexuality Act. We have consistently raised our concerns about the legislation with the Ugandan government. Most recently the Secretary of State for International Development, the right Hon. Member for Putney (Justine Greening), and the former Minister for Africa at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, my Hon. Friend the Member for Boston and Skegness (Mr Simmonds), raised the issue in separate meetings with President Museveni on 6 May.

The UK has worked closely with international partners to register our concerns, and to seek assurances about the protection of individuals. With our support, EU Heads of Mission in Kampala initiated strengthened political dialogue with Uganda under Article 8 of the Cotonou Agreement.

We engage closely with UK and other civil society groups working in Uganda, and are stepping up our support to organisations that protect minority rights.

War Crimes

Question

Asked by *Lord Laird*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their definition of a war crime. [HL1662]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns) (Con): The definition of a war crime is set out in the International Criminal Court Act 2001, section 50 and Schedule 8 (which sets out the terms of Article 8.2 of the Statute of the International Criminal Court).

World Bank

Questions

Asked by *Lord Avebury*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have held with the World Bank about the Bank's policies regarding safeguards for indigenous peoples. [HL1669]

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the decisions taken at the World Bank's Executive Board meeting on 30 July 2014.

[HL1670]

Baroness Northover (LD): We welcome the draft framework as an important step forward in updating the Bank's approach to safeguards and as a good basis for further consultation. We will continue to engage with World Bank management as the framework is developed further during the second consultation stage.

Answers received between Tuesday 19 August and Tuesday 26 August 2014

Affordable Housing: Greater London

Question

Asked by *Lord Verjee*

To ask Her Majesty's Government to what extent they are supporting the Greater London Authority in providing affordable accommodation for young professionals within the capital. [HL1728]

Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon (Con): The Government has delegated responsibility for housing in London to the Greater London Authority.

This Government has provided £1.1 billion of funding to the Greater London Authority that has unlocked further private investment to help meet the Mayor's target of delivering 55,000 new affordable homes by 2015, in fact almost 49,000 new affordable homes have already been delivered in London since 2010-11 based on current estimates. A further £1.25 billion of funding is being provided which, with the additional private investment this will unlock, will deliver a further 42,000 affordable homes in London by 2018.

We have launched Help to Buy: Equity Loan which enables people to fund the purchase of a new build home with a five per cent deposit and an equity loan of twenty per cent. By the end of June 2014 there had been 1,750 sales in London.

The £1 billion Build to Rent Fund is financing the construction of new homes specifically for private rent in London and across England. Three of the projects already in contract are together delivering over 500 new homes for private rent in London, including in Ealing, Brentford, West Drayton, Newham and Barnet.

We are creating new Housing Zones to support housing development on brownfield sites in London with £400 million funding from the government and the Mayor of London. The Mayor expects to create 50,000 new homes in twenty Housing Zones across London.

Joint Strike Fighter Aircraft

Question

Asked by **Lord Moonie**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by the Minister for Defence Equipment, Support and Technology, Phillip Dunne MP on 2 July (HC Deb, col 678W), what is "the composite share ratio"; and what proportion of the £999 million government contribution it represents. [HL1732]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Defence (Lord Astor of Hever) (Con): The Composite Share Ratio (CSR) is the financial contribution paid by each partner nation to common production, support and follow-on development activities for the collaborative partnership that jointly manages the international Joint Strike Fighter programme. This is a non-discretionary contribution which the UK committed to with other partner nations when signing the production, sustainment and follow-on Development Memorandum of Understanding in 2006. It buys joint assets such as production tooling and common technical services which enable the aircraft to be both manufactured and supported. CSR is calculated based on the total number of aircraft being procured by each nation.

At publication of the National Audit Office major Projects Report 2013, the CSR portion of the £999 million approved cost for the production of four aircraft, including initial spares provision, risk, concurrency, necessary programme and support arrangements and long lead items was £230.4 million. The last financial year of this CSR figure is based on an estimate which is subject to minor change and will be published in the National Audit Office Major Projects Report 2014. This CSR figure will be a reduction and not an increase.

Politics and Government: Females

Question

Asked by **Lord Verjee**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, following the publication of the Ministry of Defence's Global Strategic Trends out to 2045, what consideration they have given to its assessment that women at the highest levels of politics are likely to continue to be predominantly drawn from elite societal groups. [HL1723]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Defence (Lord Astor of Hever) (Con): The Ministry of Defence publication "Global Strategic Trends—Out to 2045" assessments of gender equality performance show an overall improvement. Women's participation in politics in both developing and developed countries has increased—a trend that has accelerated during the last decade. However, there are impediments to female participation as globally women often lack the resources to access politics. They find barriers at selection and campaigning stages as well as prejudicial attitudes

during elections. As a result, women at this highest level of politics are likely to continue to be predominantly drawn from elite societal groups. The Government's UK National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security is available on the gov.uk website at the following link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/319870/FCO643_NAP_Printing_final3.pdf

Answers received between Wednesday 27 August 2014 and Monday 1 September 2014

Claims Management Services

Question

Asked by **Lord Kennedy of Southwark**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the application of the Conduct of Authorised Persons Rules 2013. [HL1733]

The Minister of State, Ministry of Justice (Lord Faulks) (Con): The application of the Conduct of Authorised Persons Rules ("Rules") is under continuous review. The Rules were first introduced in 2007 and revised between April and July 2013 to strengthen existing action to drive out poor practices and better protect consumers. Most crucially verbal contracts were brought to an end and a ban was imposed on claims management companies ("CMCs") offering cash incentives or similar benefits to consumers to bring claims.

This year, in response to concerns raised by the financial services industry, the Financial Conduct Authority and the Financial Ombudsman Service regarding the poor practices of some CMCs presenting financial claims, the Department's Claims Management Regulator consulted on changes to the Conduct of Authorised Persons Rules 2013 and published the response in June 2014. The new Rules will come into effect in October 2014.

False Imprisonment

Question

Asked by **Lord Vinson**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Faulks on 24 June (WA 144), what was the overall cost for the last three years of legal aid claims in respect of false imprisonment; and into which categories they record such costs as falling. [HL1440]

The Minister of State, Ministry of Justice (Lord Faulks) (Con): The table below shows the total amounts claimed against closed false imprisonment matters from the 2011/12, 2012/13 and 2013/14 financial years. These matters cover domestic false imprisonment, and both legal and illegal immigration false imprisonment matters.

The claim values represent the total amounts paid against cases closing in the respective period, and as such, some of the expenditure against these cases may have been incurred in earlier periods. The costs are recorded as falling in the category Actions Against the Police.

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Claim Value</i>
2011-12	£191,556.33
2012-13	£134,999.82
2013-14	£517,980.45

The increase in claim value in 2013/14 compared to previous years is largely due to one case which started in 2002, for which a final bill was submitted in January 2014. This case, known as Austin and Saxby, was a test case on behalf of a much larger group of individuals relating to protests on May Day 2002. They claimed that they had been unlawfully subjected to the procedure known as kettling by the Metropolitan Police. The case went to the House of Lords (Supreme Court) where they lost and the law was eventually clarified.

Parking

Question

Asked by Lord Bradshaw

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that any changes in parking regulations do not affect bus routes. [HL1634]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Communities and Local Government (Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon) (Con): As noted in the answer to the noble Lord of 29 July 2014, *Official Report*, Column WA279, the Government will be banning the use of CCTV for municipal parking enforcement, subject to a very small number of exceptions that emerged following the public consultation; this includes parking in bus lanes.

Postal Service: Competition

Question

Asked by Lord Bradshaw

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether Ofcom has conducted any analysis of regulatory options to protect the universal postal service in the case of a material increase in end-to-end competition. [HL1277]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (Baroness Neville-Rolfe) (Con): The regulatory options for protecting the universal service are set out in the Postal Services Act 2011. Parliament has given Ofcom the primary statutory duty to secure the provision of the universal service and the powers and tools it needs to do so.

Ofcom has carried out a consultation on end-to-end competition in the postal services sector and published a Guidance paper on the use of its regulatory options and the circumstances under which it would intervene to protect the universal service from any serious threat from competition.

More information about this consultation on end-to-end competition and the Guidance ("Final Guidance on Ofcom's approach to assessing the impact on the universal service") can be found on Ofcom's website (www.ofcom.org.uk).

Postal Services: Competition

Question

Asked by Lord Bradshaw

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they expect Ofcom to undertake a review of the impact of end-to-end competitors on the universal postal service. [HL1276]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (Baroness Neville-Rolfe) (Con): Ofcom is committed to carrying out a full review on end-to-end competition next year. It has also made clear that it would carry out an earlier review if market developments dictated the need to do so.

Ofcom has set out its approach towards carrying out a full assessment of end-to-end competition in its Guidance published in March 2013 ("Final Guidance on Ofcom's approach to assessing the impact on the universal service").

Ofcom has in place a continuous monitoring regime and access to key confidential data from Royal Mail and other postal operators which would enable it to anticipate any potential threat to the universal service. They are keeping market developments under close monthly review and if this monitoring identified cause for concern Ofcom has said that they would be able to carry out a review very quickly.

Prison Sentences

Question

Asked by Lord Lloyd of Berwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many offenders were given tariffs of less than two years under section 225 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003 before the Act was amended in 2007; how many of those offenders are still in prison; how many of those still in prison were given tariffs of (1) less than 3 months, (2) between 3 and 6 months, (3) between 6 and 9 months, (4) between 9 and 12 months, (5) between 12 and 15 months, (6) between 15 and 18 months, and (7) between 18 months and 24 months; of what offences they were convicted, by offence group in each category; and how they are currently assessed in respect of (a) likelihood of reoffending, (b) risk of serious harm to themselves, and (c) serious harm to the public. [HL1236]

The Minister of State, Ministry of Justice (Lord Faulks) (Con): The data requested for offenders who received IPP sentences with tariffs of less than 2 years prior to the reforms introduced by the Criminal Justice and Immigration Act 2008 could be provided only at disproportionate cost. Interrogation of individual electronic records would be required to provide the requested detailed information for the offenders concerned.

*Answers received between Tuesday 2 September
and Monday 8 September 2014*

Energy: Prices

Question

Asked by **The Lord Bishop of St Albans**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to encouraging energy companies to use income-differentiated tariffs as a means of addressing fuel poverty. [HL1757]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Energy and Climate Change (Baroness Verma) (Con): Energy suppliers provide direct bill support for low income households through the Government's Warm Home Discount scheme. As the original impact assessment for the scheme made clear, the scheme grew in part out of a concern about affordability of energy bills and accessibility of appropriate tariffs for those on low incomes. The scheme is now hugely successful. This year the Warm Home Discount will give eligible low-income bill payers £140 money off their energy bills, helping over 2 million people including 1.4 million of Britain's most vulnerable pensioners.

There has been consideration of the role of differentiated tariffs as part of the Hills Review of Fuel Poverty, and in the development of *Fuel Poverty: Framework for future action and cutting the cost of keeping warm*, the consultation to prepare for a new fuel poverty strategy.

We continue to monitor the impacts of Ofgem's Retail Market Review and wider Government action to ensure that consumers are treated fairly in the energy market and are better able to choose a deal that suits them. We expect to keep the case for further action under review as part of this.

Prisoners: Self-harm

Question

Asked by **Baroness Stern**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they have taken in response to Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons' findings in respect of case management procedures to support those at risk of self-harm and the number of self-harm incidents. [HL1583]

The Minister of State, Ministry of Justice (Lord Faulks) (Con): The Government is committed to reducing self-harm in prisons. The Assessment, Care in Custody and Teamwork (ACCT) process provides a prisoner-centred, flexible case management system for prisoners identified as at risk of suicide or self-harm. Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons has made recommendations about improving the operation of the ACCT system in a number of prisons during the last year, and action is being taken to address these recommendations within those prisons. Dedicated resources and additional support are being provided to improve safer custody work in prisons, including improving the consistency of the application of the ACCT system.

Ranby Prison

Questions

Asked by **Baroness Stern**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what changes they plan to make to HMP Ranby in the light of the report of an unannounced inspection of HMP Ranby by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons published on 24 July 2014. [HL1582]

The Minister of State, Ministry of Justice (Lord Faulks) (Con): A comprehensive action plan incorporating essential improvements at HMP Ranby has been drawn up in response to the unannounced inspection by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons published on 24 July 2014. This plan includes a response to all recommendations made and gives specific time-bounded actions. The plan is monitored by NOMS.

Asked by **Baroness Stern**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they plan to take to increase the number of prisoners working, in the light of the findings of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons' report of an unannounced inspection of HMP Ranby, published on 24 July. [HL1584]

The Minister of State, Ministry of Justice: Since the unannounced inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons, activity spaces at HMP Ranby have increased by 95 places. Additional staff are being recruited to allow the workshops to employ further prisoners and further work has been secured.

Supermarkets: Competition

Question

Asked by **The Lord Bishop of St Albans**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they plan to lay before Parliament the statutory instrument recommended by the Groceries Code Adjudicator to the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills on the maximum level of fine that can be applied for a breach of the Code; and if so, when. [HL1759]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (Baroness Neville-Rolfe) (Con): The Government intends to bring legislation before Parliament this autumn to set the maximum level of fine that the Groceries Code Adjudicator may impose in respect of breaches of the Groceries Supply Code of Practice.

*Answers received between Tuesday 9 September
and Monday 15 September 2014*

A417: A436

Question

Asked by **Lord Tyler**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the timetable for the major improvement of the A417/A436 junction at the Air Balloon roundabout in Gloucestershire; and what immediate steps are planned to alleviate the traffic congestion in that area. [HL1799]

The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Baroness Kramer) (LD): The Highways Agency is preparing a Route Strategy for the Midlands to Wales and Gloucestershire. This includes the A417/A436 junction at the Air Balloon roundabout, which itself is part of the section of the A417 known as the 'Missing Link' and identified as a key issue on this route. The next stage will be to assess options, including major improvements, and to produce indicative business cases as the basis upon which to prioritise investment from 2015. Outcomes from the Route Strategies are expected to be announced in spring 2015. There are no other immediate plans to undertake any works on this route before the Route Strategy is concluded.

Amantadine

Question

Asked by **Baroness Gale**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many people in England with (1) Parkinson's, and (2) other conditions, have been prescribed Amantadine in each of the last five years. [HL1773]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): Information is not collected centrally on the number of people prescribed medicines or the medical condition being treated. However, information is available on the number of prescription items dispensed in the community in England.

The following table shows the number of prescription items dispensed for amantadine hydrochloride in the latest available five year period.

Number of prescription items for amantadine hydrochloride written in the United Kingdom and dispensed, in the community, in England

Year	Items (000s)
2009	95.4
2010	99.7
2011	105.5
2012	111.2
2013	113.4

Source: Prescription Cost Analysis provided by the Health and Social Care Information Centre

Antisemitism

Question

Asked by **Lord Patten**

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they last conducted an assessment of levels of anti-semitism in the United Kingdom; and what plans they have for future such assessments. [HL1784]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Communities and Local Government (Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon) (Con): The Association of Chief Police Officers' National Community Tension Team regularly produces a 'Community Impact Assessment' which contains an assessment on the state of community relations, this includes the level of antisemitism. This

material is not shared with the public, as it contains operational policing information. The National Community Tension Team liaises with the Community Security Trust at the national level on behalf of the police service. Police Forces with significant Jewish communities liaise closely at the local level.

The Association of Chief Police Officers' also publishes its recorded antisemitic crime data annually on the True Vision website at: http://www.report-it.org.uk/hate_crime_data1

Children: Personal Records

Question

Asked by **Lord Rooker**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Garden of Frogton on 8 January 2013 (HL4331), on what date Ministers received the report "Information sharing in the Foundation Years"; and what action has been taken to implement the recommended changes. [HL1809]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Schools (Lord Nash) (Con): The final report was submitted to Ministers in March 2013. On 21 November 2013, the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Health and the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Education and Childcare published a joint response welcoming the report, and setting out action underway to address the report's recommendations. The response is published online at:

www.gov.uk/government/publications/information-sharing-in-the-foundation-years-ministerial-letter

Children's Centres

Question

Asked by **The Earl of Listowel**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answers by Lord Nash on 30 July (HL1559-62), what assessment they have made of The Children's Society's report The Right Start in respect of the number of local authorities that do not routinely share live birth data with children's centres; and what plans they have to ensure that health services and local authorities share live birth data. [HL1762]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Schools (Lord Nash) (Con): My officials, and officials at the Department of Health, have reviewed the report and met representatives from The Children's Society to discuss the issues raised and the work that the Government is taking forward in this area.

The Department for Education's Sure Start children's centres statutory guidance says that health services and local authorities should share information (such as live birth data and data on families with children under five who have recently moved into the area) with children's centres on a regular basis.

The Department of Health is working with NHS England and partners, including the Health and Social Care Information Centre, to explore the practical issues involved in providing regular and timely updates of live birth data to local authorities.

Consumers: Protection

Question

Asked by **Baroness Hayter of Kentish Town**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the comments by the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, Jenny Willott, on 13 May (HC Deb, col 691), whether they will set out the additional guidance produced by the Trading Standards Institute in relation to the cited consumer regulations of December 2013.

[HL1741]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (Baroness Neville-Rolfe) (Con): Guidance on the Consumer Contracts (Information, Cancellation and Additional Charges) Regulations 2013 has been produced by the Trading Standards Institute, and is available at <http://www.businesscompanion.info/>. This guidance is updated regularly, and we have asked TSI to consider providing clarification on ticket sales as part of these updates.

Diesel Fuel

Question

Asked by **Lord Blencathra**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what incentives they have put in place over the past 20 years to encourage motorists to switch from petrol to diesel fuel.

[HL1735]

The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Baroness Kramer) (LD): The Government is committed to reducing carbon dioxide emissions from transport as part of targets set in the carbon budget. Successive governments have been hugely successful in this aim and consumers have benefited from more fuel efficient vehicles, including those with petrol engines.

At various points in time successive governments have put in place different treatments of petrol and diesel vehicles under transport related taxes such as Vehicle Excise Duty and Fuel Duty. Over this Parliament neither Vehicle Excise Duty nor Fuel Duty has distinguished between petrol and diesel vehicles.

Diesel cars and vans have become increasingly popular, reflecting good fuel efficiency and the improvements in engine technology. Diesel engines can produce more air pollution than petrol engines. Successively tighter European emission standards for new diesel vehicles has reduced particulate matter pollution and will address emissions of oxides of nitrogen.

Energy: Meters

Questions

Asked by **The Lord Bishop of St Albans**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to encouraging the six largest energy companies to develop and use their own vulnerability checklist as part of a comprehensive assessment process to help determine a household's circumstances before any new pre-payment meters are installed, in accordance with the voluntary code agreed with Consumer Focus in March 2011.

[HL1756]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Energy and Climate Change (Baroness Verma) (Con):

All the large suppliers have agreed to the 5 key principles set out by Consumer Focus in March 2011. This includes a check of whether a customer is vulnerable before installation of a prepayment meter and offering a different payment method if appropriate. In the 2012 report "Making Progress" Consumer Focus found that most large suppliers use a checklist to help staff identify the best approach. This report is available at this link:

<http://www.consumerfutures.org.uk/files/2013/07/Making-progress.pdf>

Government supports initiatives to ensure that vulnerable pre-payment customers are being treated fairly and receiving appropriate support and is considering areas where Government action could further improve the consumer experience of pre-payment customers.

Asked by **The Lord Bishop of St Albans**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they will work with energy companies to ensure that those using pre-payment meters pay the equivalent tariffs to those paying by direct debit, irrespective of whether smart meters are installed.

[HL1758]

Baroness Verma: Energy supplier licence conditions, set by Ofgem, allow suppliers to apply different charges to different payment methods providing the differentials reflect the costs to the supplier of the form of payment. This allowance is made in recognition of the fact that some payment methods are more expensive to administer than others. In May 2014, Ofgem published the results of analysis on this issue which showed that across the market the price on different payment methods reflects the varying costs suppliers face in providing them. This is available at the following link:

<https://www.ofgem.gov.uk/publications-and-updates/price-differences-between-payment-methods-%E2%80%93-open-letter>

Floods: Somerset

Question

Asked by **Lord Patten**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of the readiness to deal with possible flooding on the Somerset Levels in the winter of 2014–15.

[HL1787]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Lord De Mauley) (Con): Repairs to damaged assets in Somerset form part of the large national programme for preparedness ahead of the coming winter. This programme is progressing on time. All of the flood risk assets damaged last winter will either be fully repaired before the coming winter or, for a small number of assets, will have temporary repairs to ensure communities are protected, with permanent works to follow or clear contingency plans in place.

In Somerset the Environment Agency has identified a total of 48 projects, including some improvement projects, which are new works as part of the Somerset Flood Action Plan. As of 3 September, 11 projects were completed, 25 were underway and 12 due to start. We expect all projects to be completed by 31 October.

Gambling: Internet

Questions

Asked by **Lord Mancroft**

To ask Her Majesty's Government when further guidance will be provided to online poker gambling companies and their software providers in respect of the latest licence conditions and codes of practice guidance relating to the Gambling (Licensing and Advertising) Act 2014, the sharing of information to prevent cheating, money laundering, crime and problem gambling, and the investigation of customer complaints. [HL1742]

Lord Newby (LD): The Gambling Commission has no immediate plans to add to the guidance already given, but will add answers to any specific questions or points that may emerge in the Commission's Frequently Asked Questions blog.

Asked by **Lord Mancroft**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will clarify which elements of the Remote Gambling and Software Technical Standards are considered mandatory; and whether they have received any communication from businesses about the clarity of the guidance relating to those Standards. [HL1743]

Lord Newby: The Remote Gambling and Software Technical Standards clearly differentiate between requirements which are mandatory and those provisions which are guidance. The Government has not received any communication from businesses about the guidance.

Asked by **Lord Mancroft**

To ask Her Majesty's Government why, in respect of the Remote Gambling and Software Technical Standards, concessions were granted on compliance times in relation to auto-play and clock display. [HL1744]

Lord Newby: The Gambling Commission has identified significant differences between its own auto-play requirements and those currently available to British

consumers from operators based in other jurisdictions where they can currently offer gambling to the British market. The Commission is currently consulting on improvements to auto-play requirements and wanted to avoid unnecessary investment by operators to change their auto-play functionality whilst this is underway. There has been no concession in relation to the technical standard on clock display.

Asked by **Lord Mancroft**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what work has been done to ensure that new compliance rules relating to the Gambling Act 2005 and the Remote Gambling and Software Technical Standards do not prevent any software businesses from providing services to the gambling industry. [HL1745]

Lord Newby: The Commission has held a number of meetings with software suppliers and users to discuss matters such as the length of time for suppliers to obtain the necessary licences. On current plans the requirement for licensed remote gambling operators to source their gambling software from Commission licensed gambling software businesses has been deferred until 30 January 2015. In addition, the Commission has published an advice note titled 'What is gambling software?'. The Commission has also demonstrated its awareness of the commercial implications of its requirements by its willingness to contemplate 'umbrella' licensing arrangements in some circumstances.

Asked by **Lord Mancroft**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether, in the light of the release in July 2014 of the Gambling Commission's consultation on amendments to its statement of principles for licensing and enforcement policy, with a closing date of September 2014, they have given consideration to delaying the deadline for applications for gambling software licences pursuant to the Gambling (Licensing and Advertising) Act 2014 until the second quarter of 2015. [HL1746]

Lord Newby: The consultation on minor updates and amendments to the Commission's statement of principles for licensing and compliance ending on 30 September 2014, does not affect the timetable for applications for gambling software licences.

Asked by **Lord Mancroft**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Gambling Commission will publish the reasoning behind each gambling software licence decision. [HL1747]

Lord Newby: The Gambling Commission does not publish the reasoning behind all licence decisions, only those where there is a public interest in doing so. There are no plans to change this process.

Gibraltar: Spain

Question

Asked by **Lord Patten**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Warsi on 30 July (HL1323), why they accept that the European Commission has a locus in the matter of the border between Spain and Gibraltar; and whether they consider that locus to apply to action by the European Commission concerning incursions into British Gibraltar territorial waters by Spanish vessels from Spanish territorial waters. [HL1789]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns) (Con): Gibraltar forms part of the EU and the EU provisions on the free movement of workers, capital and services apply to Gibraltar. Spain is entitled to establish checks at the border with Gibraltar, but these checks must be proportionate and non-discriminatory in order to remain in compliance with EU law. Pursuant to its role as guardian of the EU treaties the European Commission has an important role to play in assessing whether Spain has complied with these EU law obligations. We have made consistently clear to the Commission that we believe Spain has breached EU law in this area and the Commission recently agreed that the checks giving rise to waiting several hours to cross the border were disproportionate.

Incursions by Spanish state vessels into British Gibraltar Territorial Waters raise issues under the international law of the sea rather than under EU law. The UK robustly defends its sovereignty over British Gibraltar Territorial Waters by challenging all unlawful incursions and by making formal protests to the Spanish government.

Hearing Impairment: Health Services

Question

Asked by **Lord Elton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will publish their criteria for the award of contracts for the provision of audiology services to their agencies. [HL1780]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): There are no national criteria for awarding contracts for the provision of audiology services with the exception of a small number of specialised services which are commissioned nationally by NHS England. The specifications, setting out what providers must have in place to deliver specialised audiology services, can be found on the NHS England website at the following link:

www.england.nhs.uk/ourwork/commissioning/spec-services/npc-crg/group-d/d09

The national contract for the provision of hearing aids is managed through the NHS Supply Chain and provides for the assessment of patients by National Health Service audiology professionals, as well as the provision and fitting of digital hearing aids. This

contract ran from 2010 until 2014, and has subsequently been extended to July 2016. It is currently under review to determine the options for re-procurement after 2016. More information can be found at the NHS Supply Chain website at the following link:

www.supplychain.nhs.uk/product-news/contract-launch-briefs/2014/july/hearing-aids-and-accessories/

Hindley Young Offender Institution

Question

Asked by **Baroness Stern**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the report published on 15 August by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons on the lower site at Hindley Young Offenders Institution, which found that there were insufficient services for boys with brain injuries, learning disabilities or in need of speech and language therapy, whether they have any plans to improve the health services provided to boys in the lower site at Hindley Young Offenders Institution. [HL1806]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): NHS England and Young Offenders Institution (YOI) Hindley have not yet responded to the August 2014 report published by Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons. Currently, healthcare services commissioned for the population in YOI Hindley aged under 18 years include treatment for acquired or traumatic brain injury, learning disabilities and difficulties and speech, language and communication needs. These remain an important element of the overall service, which is based on needs identified in the health and wellbeing needs assessment for YOI Hindley.

In Vitro Fertilisation

Question

Asked by **Lord Alton of Liverpool**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Earl Howe on 24 July (HL1011), what is the proposed timetable of steps in deciding when mitochondrial donation should be offered in treatment; and what impact each of the separate experiments recommended by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority's Expert Panel will have on that timetable. [HL1761]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): The Government has decided to proceed with putting regulations before Parliament, subject to giving further consideration to the Expert Panel's recommendations, refining the draft regulations to take account of changes identified during the consultation, and discussion with the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority about an appropriate approval process. The Government will consider the timing of the regulations in the light of these actions. We aim to provide an update about this soon.

Iran Question

Asked by Lord Clarke of Hampstead

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to review their relationship with the government of Iran, including considering firmer sanctions.

[HL1791]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns) (Con): Since the election of President Rouhani in 2013, we have been working to improve the UK-Iran relationship for the benefit of both countries. We intend, following Iran's assurances that UK staff in Iran would be safe and able to carry out their functions, to reopen our Embassy in Tehran as soon as practical arrangements allow. A global diplomatic presence is a key component of UK foreign policy. Nevertheless, there will continue to be range of issues on which the UK and Iran disagree. Restored embassies will enable us to better understand these differences and to work more effectively to tackle them.

Along with our E3+3 partners, the UK remains committed to reaching a comprehensive nuclear agreement with Iran which ensures that their nuclear programme is exclusively peaceful. Failure to reach a settlement would lead to the re-imposition of sanctions suspended under the interim deal and consideration of further sanctions pressure.

Iraq: Iran Question

Asked by Lord Clarke of Hampstead

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of the latest situation in Camp Ashraf and Camp Liberty.

[HL1790]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns) (Con): We rely on the UN Mission in Iraq (UNAMI) for information about the situation at Camp Liberty, as they monitor the adherence by all parties to applicable human rights standards. On 31 August UNAMI reported that the provision of life support systems such as water, electricity and food continue to be well in excess of basic humanitarian standards.

There are no residents now at Camp Ashraf. The final group of residents were transferred to Camp Liberty on 11 September 2013.

Middle East Questions

Asked by Baroness Uddin

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the statement by the then United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, that "there seems to be a strong possibility that international law has been violated, in a manner that could amount to war crimes," by Israel in Gaza; and whether they have made any representations to the United Nations about that statement.

[HL1797]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns) (Con): The Government has taken note of the statement by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. We are clear that there must be meaningful investigations into possible violations of international humanitarian law by all sides, including those abuses committed by Hamas and other militant groups. We call on all parties to cooperate with the UN Commission of Inquiry, which must be balanced and impartial. We have not responded directly to the UN on this statement but we have commented publicly on a number of the issues raised in it. The UN Commission of Inquiry has yet to complete its work, so it would be wrong to pre-determine its findings.

Asked by Lord Warner

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many Palestinian civilians, at the time of the latest ceasefire, had been (1) killed, and (2) injured, as a result of Israel's military action in Gaza; how many of those casualties were children; and what were the comparable figures for Israeli civilian casualties from Palestinian military action in the same period.

[HL1814]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: According to UN figures, the number of Palestinian civilians killed as a result of Israel's military action in Gaza was, by the time of the 26 August ceasefire, 1,462. 495 of them were children. The UN does not provide exact figures for the number of injured Palestinian civilians. However, it estimates that over 5,000 women, children and elderly Palestinians were injured.

According to Israeli government statistics, seven civilians in Israel were killed by rocket/mortar fire from militant groups in Gaza. Six of these were Israeli (including one child) and one was a Thai national. 126 were injured. Further casualties from Hamas rockets were thought to have been prevented by the Israeli Iron Dome system.

Asked by Lord Warner

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Warsi on 30 July (HL1482), whether they now consider that the recent military action by Israel in Gaza is proportionate, as defined in the Joint Service Manual of the Law of Armed Conflict; and whether they will publish their assessment of the proportionality of that action.

[HL1815]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The Prime Minister, my right Hon. Friend the Member for Witney (Mr Cameron), has been clear on the UK's recognition of Israel's right to take proportionate action to defend itself and our condemnation of Hamas's rocket attacks. We have consistently urged Israel to do everything possible to avoid civilian casualties, to exercise restraint, and to help find ways to bring this situation to an end. There must now be meaningful, effective and independent investigations into possible violations of international human rights law and international humanitarian law by all sides, including those abuses committed by Hamas and other militant groups. Both sides should

cooperate with the Commission of Inquiry set up by the UN Human Rights Council, which must itself be independent and balanced in its approach.

Asked by Lord Warner

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Anelay of St Johns on 18 August (HL1710), whether they regard that the lifting of the Israeli blockade of Gaza is a requirement for avoiding "a return to the status quo ante" set out in that answer. [HL1818]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: A durable ceasefire agreement will have to address the underlying causes of the conflict to bring an end to the cycle of violence. Avoiding a return to the status quo ante will require an agreement which: addresses Israel's legitimate security concerns; allows the Palestinian Government under the leadership of President Abbas to resume control of Gaza to restore effective and accountable governance; and ensures the lifting of Israeli restrictions, to ease the suffering of ordinary Palestinians, and allows Gaza's economy to grow.

Monetary Policy

Question

Asked by Lord Myners

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have ruled out cancelling the gilt-edged securities bought by the Bank of England under the quantitative easing policy. [HL1802]

The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Deighton) (Con): The independent Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) of the Bank of England has operational independence for monetary policy. The MPC makes decisions on its policy tools, including quantitative easing (QE), in order to meet the 2% inflation target in the medium term.

The separation of fiscal and monetary policy is a key feature of the UK's economic policy framework. To use monetary policy tools to meet fiscal objectives, such as financing government borrowing, could conflict with the MPC's objective of price stability and undermine confidence in the monetary policy framework. Additionally, Government borrowing from the central bank is illegal under Article 123 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union.

National Child Measurement Programme

Question

Asked by Lord Hunt of Kings Heath

To ask Her Majesty's Government what estimate they have made of the cost of the National Child Measurement Programme. [HL1768]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): On 1 April 2013, Public Health England (PHE) took on responsibility for national oversight of the National Child Measurement Programme

(NCMP). The total cost of the programme to PHE for the 2013-14 and 2014-15 financial years are shown in the following table.

<i>Financial Year</i>	<i>Programme costs</i>	<i>Capital costs</i>	<i>Totals</i>
2013-14	£323,000.00	£1,089,419.00	£1,412,419.00
2014-15	£340,000.00	-	£340,000.00
			£1,752,419.00

There were exceptional costs in 2013-14 due to the need to develop a new NCMP IT system to enable local authorities to carry out their statutory duty of returning NCMP data to the Health and Social Care Information Centre.

NHS

Question

Asked by Lord Judd

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Ministerial Statement on the NHS Commissioning Board: Annual Assessment and Annual Report and Accounts by Earl Howe on 22 July (WS 124-5), what factors they considered when they decided on which date to make that statement; and what arrangements they have made for parliamentary scrutiny of the NHS mandate for 2015-16. [HL1760]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): We announced on 22 July 2014 in a Written Ministerial Statement on the NHS Commissioning Board: Annual Assessment and Annual Report and Accounts (WS 124-5) that the Government proposes to uphold all of the existing objectives in the current mandate and maintain a stable mandate for 2015-16. This announcement was made on 22 July so the annual assessment could be published before Parliamentary recess and alongside the annual report of the NHS Commissioning Board (known as NHS England). The timing of the publication of NHS England's Annual Report and Accounts was determined by the annual reporting cycle of the Department and its arm's-length bodies. The exact date of the Written Ministerial Statement was subject to other Government business.

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 requires the Secretary of State to publish and lay before Parliament its mandate to NHS England. Before specifying any objectives or requirements in the mandate, the Secretary of State must consult NHS England, Healthwatch England and any other persons he considers appropriate.

We have been working closely with NHS England on the approach to the mandate and have been engaging with stakeholders over the summer, ahead of publishing and laying the final mandate before Parliament in the autumn. The mandate for 2015-16 will take effect from April 2015.

Offences against Children: Rotherham

Question

Asked by Lord Blencathra

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they are giving to bringing criminal charges for conspiracy and misconduct in a public

office against any officials, social workers, councillors and police officers who failed to take action against child abusers and rapists, as outlined in the report by Professor Jay, Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham (1997 – 2013).

[HL1736]

The Advocate-General for Scotland (Lord Wallace of Tankerness) (LD): South Yorkshire Police is currently conducting a number of investigations which relate to the period covered by the report. As these are ongoing investigations it would be inappropriate to make further comment. The CPS will consider all potential offences referred to it by the police in accordance with the two-stage test set out in the Code for Crown Prosecutors.

Ophthalmic Services

Questions

Asked by **Lord Elton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that the optometry services provided under contract to their agencies operate in a market in which there are sufficient independent providers to maintain the stimulus of fair commercial competition.

[HL1776]

Asked by **Lord Elton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will publish their criteria for the award of contracts for the provision of optometry services to their agencies.

[HL1777]

Asked by **Lord Elton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether their policy for the award of contracts for the provision of optometry and other services to their agencies includes a requirement to assess and compare the net tax revenue that would be provided by each competing bidder; and, if not, why not.

[HL1778]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): All Government agencies are subject to European regulations covering both competition and awarding public contracts. Additionally, they apply the Government's principles of transparency in communicating commercial opportunities, which includes actions to stimulate and attract opportunities for small and medium enterprises.

Standard tender documentation for commercial contracts incorporates a pre-qualification questionnaire that requests information from bidders as part of the Government's policy, to check compliance with company tax laws. The information requested is proportionate with the value of the contract to be awarded.

In line with Government policy all new procurement tenders and contract awards are published via the Government's central record system known as 'Contracts Finder'. It would not be possible to quantify prospectively the net tax revenue likely to be generated by each competing bidder.

Asked by **Lord Elton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will publish the terms of the recently awarded contract to supply optometry services to the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency for a three-year period.

[HL1779]

The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Baroness Kramer) (LD): The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency published an advertisement relating to this contract in the Official Journal of the European Union. This document outlined to prospective bidders the duration of the contract and the categories required for service delivery. Due to the detail and length, I have placed copies of this advertisement as well as copies of the Contract Award Notice, the terms and conditions of the contract and the specifications of the contract in the Libraries of the House.

Palestinians

Question

Asked by **Baroness Deech**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Warsi on 29 July (HL1376), and in the light of the discovery of tunnels from Gaza into Israel, what assessment they have made of the measures put in place by the United Nations to avoid the diversion of materials imported into Gaza, in particular concrete, from humanitarian use.

[HL1771]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns) (Con): The discovery of a number of tunnels reaching Israel during Operation Protective Edge is deeply concerning. The UN implement a strict controls system with the Government of Israel for the import of construction materials for use in humanitarian projects in Gaza, in order to mitigate the risk of transfer of materials for use other than that intended. Given the recent conflict in Gaza which has left more than 108,000 people homeless, there is an urgent need for legitimate construction work in Gaza and we are talking to the UN and Israel to support a way forward that addresses Israel's security concerns whilst meeting the clear humanitarian need.

Parliament: Work Experience

Questions

Asked by **Lord Verjee**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they intend further to support young people from low-income families in accessing government internship and work experience opportunities within the Palace of Westminster.

[HL1748]

Asked by **Lord Verjee**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the administrations of the House of Commons and House of Lords about supporting young people from low-income families in accessing internship and work experience opportunities within the Palace of Westminster.

[HL1749]

Lord Wallace of Saltaire (LD): Placement schemes are a matter for the House authorities. I encourage the noble Lord to pursue this issue with the House authorities.

Pensions

Question

Asked by Lord Barnett

To ask Her Majesty's Government how they propose to maximise the availability of new pension freedoms. [HL1775]

The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Deighton) (Con): The Government response to the consultation "Freedom and Choice in Pensions", which was published in July, sets out how the new pension freedoms will be enacted. The Government estimates that up to 18 million people will be able to benefit from the reforms.

Pharmacy

Question

Asked by Lord Blencathra

To ask Her Majesty's Government on what basis the Department of Health reimburses small independent chemists for NHS prescription drugs; whether they reimburse the full wholesale amount to chemists; and, if the full cost is not reimbursed, on what basis the payment is made. [HL1738]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Health (Earl Howe) (Con): The National Health Service pays community pharmacies that provide NHS pharmaceutical services a combination of fees and allowances for services provided and reimbursement for the products supplied as laid out in the Drug Tariff. The Drug Tariff is a compilation of determinations made by the Secretary of State and NHS England.

The reimbursement prices for products supplied are set in a number of different ways depending, for example, on whether the product is prescribed as a brand or a generic. For example, reimbursement prices for the most commonly prescribed generic products are set out in Part VIIIA of the Drug Tariff and are placed in categories A, C and M. The reimbursement price is established differently depending on the category in which the product is placed. For example, Category M prices are set using volume and sales data from suppliers.

The total of the reimbursement prices of products supplied by a pharmacy is subjected to a deduction as set out in Part V of the Drug Tariff. The size of the deduction is dependent on the value of the total of the reimbursement prices for that pharmacy. The larger the total, the larger the deduction. Each pharmacy providing NHS services, whether independent or part of a larger company, is paid in this way.

Prisons: Race Relations

Question

Asked by Baroness Young of Hornsey

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many race relations posts at a senior level there are currently in prisons; and what were the numbers (1) five, and (2) ten years ago. [HL1798]

The Minister of State, Ministry of Justice (Lord Faulks) (Con): Data on the number of Race Relations posts is not collected centrally. In 1997, the Prison Service Order (PSO) 2800 The Race Relations Manual made it compulsory for all Governors to appoint a Race Relations Liaison Officer and recommended that this should be at the Principal Officer (middle manager) grade. In September 2006, a revised PSO 2800 mandated that Prison Governors would recruit a Race Equality Officer (REO) based on competence and the skills needed to perform the role.

In April 2011, Prison Service Instruction (PSI) 32/2011 Ensuring Equality was published, which removed all mandatory orders to have a specific post for race equality. It mandated that all prisons should have a senior manager with lead responsibility for coordinating work on all equality related issues.

Public Libraries

Question

Asked by Lord Rooker

To ask Her Majesty's Government what actions are being taken at national level to preserve and enhance a public library system which takes account of the uses and demands of new technology. [HL1813]

Lord Newby (LD): Library services are increasingly thinking of ways to serve the community in the 21st century and are constantly looking at ways they can provide a service to their users using available new technology. WiFi is available in various public libraries, with the number of locations offering this service continuing to increase. Many libraries already provide e-books for their users and the Government recently extended the Public Lending Right to e-books for on-site lending. Various libraries are being equipped with new equipment such as advanced reading technology to enable blind and partially sighted people access to digital and physical information. Libraries are also evolving their services - Exeter library now offers a Fab Lab which is a low-cost digital workshop equipped with laser-cutters, routers, 3D scanners, 3D milling machines, and programming tools, where you can "make almost anything".

Railways: Bridges

Question

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government who funded the footbridge at Stodham, near Petersfield, which was recently opened to provide an alternative to a level crossing. [HL1796]

The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Baroness Kramer) (LD): Network Rail is now an arm's-length public sector body and the funding of the footbridge at Stodham is an operational matter for the company.

Network Rail advises that it funded the footbridge at a cost of £350,000.

Railways: Electrification

Questions

Asked by **Lord Berkeley**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the current estimate of cost overrun on future rail electrification. [HL1794]

The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Baroness Kramer) (LD): The detailed cost estimates for future rail electrification are still being developed by Network Rail and will be evaluated using the Enhancement Cost Adjustment Mechanism set out in the Office Rail Regulation's Final Determination for Control Period 5. This process is not expected to conclude until early 2016.

Asked by **Lord Berkeley**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many Department for Transport and Office of Rail Regulation staff are investigating Network Rail's costs of electrification; and whether the Department for Transport is planning to take over the responsibility of the Office of Rail Regulation for monitoring Network Rail's costs. [HL1795]

Baroness Kramer (LD): The detailed cost estimates for future rail electrification are still being developed by Network Rail and will be evaluated using the Enhancement Cost Adjustment Mechanism set out in the Office of Rail Regulation's Final Determination for Control Period 5. This process is not expected to conclude until early 2016. There are no plans for changes to the responsibilities of the three organisations in relation to monitoring costs.

Rivers: Somerset

Question

Asked by **Lord Patten**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of the progress in setting up a rivers board better to manage water in the Somerset Levels. [HL1785]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Lord De Mauley) (Con): Local partners in Somerset are developing a plan for a new Somerset Rivers Board. Ministers and officials are in close contact with local partners about progress on the formation of the Board.

Turkey

Question

Asked by **Lord Patten**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Popat on 11 August (HL1600), whether their assessment is that British Christian and Jewish visitors to Turkey do or do not have freedom of worship in those countries. [HL1788]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns) (Con): It is our assessment that British Christian and Jewish visitors to Turkey do have freedom to worship there. The Turkish government is continuing to improve protections for all religious minorities in Turkey and we welcome this.

We and our EU partners assess however that more needs to be done to entrench freedom of religion for all in Turkey and we will continue to encourage the Turkish authorities to make further progress, as part of our wider human rights dialogue.

Answers received between Tuesday 16 September and Monday 22 September 2014

Academies and Free Schools

Questions

Asked by **Lord Grocott**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the reply by Lord Nash on 28 July (HL Deb, cols 1416–19), what proportion of the salary costs in free schools is spent on non-teaching staff. [HL1831]

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the reply by Lord Nash on 28 July (HL Deb, cols 1416–19), what proportion of the salary costs in academies is spent on non-teaching staff. [HL1832]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Schools (Lord Nash) (Con): The proportion of the salary costs in academies spent on non-teaching staff is 27.6%.

The proportion of the salary costs in free schools spent on non-teaching staff is 28.8%.

These figures are based on the last published data for academies' and free schools' expenditure, which covers the 2011-2012 financial year.

For comparison, the proportion of the salary costs in maintained schools spent on non-teaching staff is 33.1%.

Andy Coulson

Question

Asked by **Lord Trefgarne**

To ask Her Majesty's Government why Andy Coulson is being held in a top security prison. [HL1793]

The Minister of State, Ministry of Justice (Lord Faulks) (Con): Mr Coulson was initially located in the prison that served the court his case was being heard in. Belmarsh is a multi-functional prison; one of its roles is to hold all prisoners remanded or convicted from a number of courts.

Prisoners are assigned a security category once they have been sentenced. A prisoner cannot be allocated to a prison of the appropriate category until their risks and sentence management targets have been assessed. Once this assessment was completed Mr Coulson was allocated to a Category D prison. He was transferred to the Category D establishment on 2 September 2014.

Anjem Choudary

Questions

Asked by **Lord Blencathra**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether Home Office officials have had any discussions with Mr Anjem Choudary. [HL1860]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Bates) (Con): Home Office officials have not had any discussions with Mr Anjem Choudary.

Asked by **Lord Blencathra**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Home Office has, in the last 10 years, provided funding for any organisation supported, run or assisted by Mr Anjem Choudary. [HL1861]

Lord Newby (LD): Under this Government, the Home Office has not provided funding for any organisation with a known association with Anjem Choudary. The Home Office has in place strict monitoring to make sure that funding and other support cannot be provided to extremist organisations.

Ashya King

Question

Asked by **Lord Trefgarne**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the Attorney General was consulted about the European Arrest Warrant issued for the parents of Ashya King. [HL1829]

The Advocate-General for Scotland (Lord Wallace of Tankerness) (LD): Both the police and CPS are independent of Government and save in cases which require his consent to prosecute the Attorney General has no role to play in the decision to apply to a court for a European Arrest Warrant (EAW). The alleged offence in this case did not require Attorney General's consent and he was not, therefore, consulted prior to the application for a warrant.

After the EAW had been obtained, as superintending Minister for the CPS, the Attorney General did discuss the case with the CPS; but the decision to apply to withdraw the warrant remained entirely that of the CPS.

Asylum: Iraq

Questions

Asked by **The Lord Bishop of Coventry**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to resettling in the United Kingdom a proportion of those displaced from ISIS-controlled areas of Iraq. [HL1591]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Bates) (Con): There are no current plans to resettle those displaced from ISIS-controlled areas

of Iraq. However, we are proud of the UK's record of offering protection to those genuinely in need, and the Government will of course continue to consider asylum claims, including applications from Iraqi nationals suffering religious persecution, under our normal rules.

Asylum: Northern Ireland

Questions

Asked by **Lord Laird**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many asylum seekers were first registered in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years; how many of those were children; and what were the ten most frequent countries of origin and the number of asylum seekers from each of those countries in the last five years. [HL1781]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Bates) (Con): The Home Office does not centrally record information on the location of an asylum seekers point of claim. However we are able to provide the information that you have requested as it stands currently. This has been provided in the following tables.

In line with our data protection principles, data sets with a cohort of fewer than 10 people have been replaced with a *.

The number of cases where the claimant's latest address is in Northern Ireland by year of application is found in Table 1.

	Year of Claim						Total
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	
Total Number	137	157	208	250	224	113	1089

The number of these cases where the claimant was a minor, by year application is found in Table 2.

	Year of Claim					
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Total Number	*	*	*	*	*	*

The number of cases where the claimant's latest address is in Northern Ireland, sorted by year of application and by country of origin is found in Table 3.

Country of Origin	Year of Claim					
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
China	44	37	46	49	28	25
Somalia	11	17	53	66	43	13
Sudan	*	22	26	41	34	19
Zimbabwe	18	*	10	11	17	*
Nigeria	*	15	10	15	16	*
Iran	*	14	*	12	*	*
Pakistan	*	*	10	*	*	*

Country of Origin	Year of Claim					
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Syria Arab Republic	*	*	*	14	*	*
Bangladesh	*	*	*	*	*	*
Eritrea	*	*	*	*	*	*

The figures quoted relate to main claimants only and have been derived from management information and are therefore provisional and subject to change. This information has not been quality assured under National Statistics protocols, as such it should be treated as provisional and subject to change.

Asked by **Lord Laird**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many asylum seekers applied for asylum in Northern Ireland after having first sought and been registered for asylum in the Republic of Ireland in each of the last five years; how many of those applicants were children; and how many overall were returned.

[HL1782]

Lord Bates: The data requested is noted below. Figures for children are not recorded separately, and as such have been included in the data table.

The minimum age of those recorded in the data set is 14.

The figures quoted relate to main claimants only and have been derived from management information and are therefore provisional and subject to change. This information has not been quality assured under National Statistics protocols, as such it should be treated as provisional and subject to change. In line with our data protection principles, data sets with a cohort of fewer than 10 people have been replaced with a *.

	Year of Claim				
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Previously claimed in Republic of Ireland	15	21	28	32	34
Returned to Republic of Ireland under Dublin Regulations	11	15	15	11	*

Asked by **Lord Laird**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many asylum seekers are currently being housed in Northern Ireland; and how many were granted leave to remain in the United Kingdom in each of the last five years, and under which categories. [HL1783]

Lord Bates: The number of asylum seekers who currently reside in Northern Ireland is 545. The number of asylum seekers granted leave to remain whose latest address is in Northern Ireland is shown in the following table.

The figures quoted relate to main claimants only and have been derived from management information and are therefore provisional and subject to change.

This information has not been quality assured under National Statistics protocols, as such it should be treated as provisional and subject to change.

Type of Decision	Calendar Year					
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Granted Asylum	24	31	62	80	56	15
Other Grant	2	8	7	4	8	2
Total Number	26	39	69	84	64	17

Asylum: Syria Questions

Asked by **The Lord Bishop of Coventry**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what guidance is given to the Counter Terrorism Unit concerning its involvement in the reception and integration of Syrian refugees under the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme. [HL1595]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Bates) (Con): The safety and security of the UK are our priority. An essential part of delivering this is knowing who is coming to the UK and carrying out all necessary checks in advance of their arrival. We therefore ensure that the necessary checks are undertaken before those accepted on the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation scheme arrive in the UK. We have also been working with local partners, including local authorities, the police and healthcare sector, to ensure the safeguarding of individuals on the scheme when they arrive in the UK.

Asked by **Baroness Berridge**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many Syrian Refugees have arrived in the United Kingdom under the Vulnerable Persons Relocation scheme. [HL1606]

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will extend the Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme to include Iraqi Refugees fleeing religious persecution. [HL1607]

Lord Bates: The first beneficiaries of the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation (VPR) scheme arrived in March, and by the end of June 50 Syrians had been relocated to the UK. Groups of Syrians are now being brought to the UK on a regular basis under the scheme. We will be publishing the number of people arriving under the VPR scheme each quarter as part of the Home Office's official migration statistics.

The VPR scheme is a bespoke programme designed to help particularly vulnerable refugees displaced by the Syrian crisis who cannot be supported effectively in the region, particularly survivors of torture and violence, women and children at risk and those in need of medical care. We have no plans to extend the scheme to include Iraqi refugees fleeing religious persecution. However, the Government has already

brought a number of Iraqis into the UK under the Gateway Programme where they have been in a protracted refugee situation for five years or more, and who amongst other things are escaping religious persecution.

Furthermore, the Government will of course continue to consider asylum claims, including applications from Iraqi nationals suffering religious persecution, under our normal rules.

British Nationals Abroad: Armed Conflict

Question

Asked by *Lord Blencathra*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they intend to create a specific, indictable offence with a maximum penalty of life imprisonment, for British subjects offering support to, or participating in, any foreign army, organisation or military unit which is not a member of NATO. [HL1739]

Lord Newby (LD): British subjects who travel overseas to participate in armed conflict abroad can potentially be prosecuted under a wide range of terrorism and criminal law offences available under existing UK law. As such, a new offence of participation in foreign military organisations which are not members of NATO, is not currently under consideration.

The Prime Minister has just announced proposals to further strengthen our capability to deal with the increased threat from foreign fighters and British-born jihadists who seek to harm the UK.

Cooperatives

Questions

Asked by *Lord Myners*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they consider that the Financial Conduct Authority's responsibilities for the oversight of cooperative societies are sufficient to protect the interests of members and creditors. [HL1800]

To ask Her Majesty's Government when they last reviewed the responsibilities and authorities of the Financial Conduct Authority to regulate cooperative societies. [HL1801]

The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Deighton) (Con): The Financial Conduct Authority acts as the registrar for cooperative societies; it has no regulatory function in respect of cooperative societies where they are not authorised firms. The Government considers that this role is appropriate. The FCA was given additional powers in relation to this role in April 2014.

Cycleways: Greater London

Question

Asked by *Lord Berkeley*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is the current position in respect of the agreement of the Royal Parks to the Mayor of London's proposed east-west cycle superhighway; whether there has been any delay to that agreement; and if so, why.

[HL1828]

The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Baroness Kramer) (LD): Her Majesty's Government understands that Transport for London (TfL) is continuing to work with The Royal Parks to agree a suitable alignment for the East-West Cycle Superhighway through St James's Park.

TfL is also working with The Royal Parks to provide physically separated cycle routes on the roads in Hyde Park. Kerb-segregated cycle tracks are proposed for South Carriage Drive and West Carriage Drive to provide a continuous route for cyclists using the East-West Cycle Superhighway. TfL proposes to upgrade the junctions on these roads to make them safer and more convenient for pedestrians and cyclists. A kerb-segregated cycle track is also being considered for North Carriage Drive.

TfL plans to consult on the Hyde Park proposals later in 2014.

Detention Centres: Children

Question

Asked by *Lord Foulkes of Cumnock*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their response to the recommendations made by Barnardo's in its report of April 2014 on the treatment of children in the Cedars facility; which, if any, of the recommendations have been acted upon; and what actions have been taken. [HL1765]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Bates) (Con): The Home Office welcomed Barnardo's report which has been carefully considered. Of the five recommendations, family escort teams have been implemented. Of the remainder, what was recommended is largely current policy already including use of force which is subject to review. We are unable to accept the recommendation not to separate families as there will be occasions when this is unavoidable. Such decisions are scrutinised at senior level and by the Independent Family Returns Panel.

Entry Clearances

Questions

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of Chelmsford*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to review the criteria for giving visas to overseas church representatives in cases where all fares and expenses are guaranteed by a United Kingdom church body. [HL1763]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Bates) (Con): Applicants for visit visas are required to have adequate funds available to cover the cost of their travel to and stay in the UK, without taking employment or accessing public funds. Entry Clearance Officers take into account the individual's income and outgoings to see whether they have enough money to fund a trip to the UK as well as having suitable accommodation. Relatives and friends can offer this support by providing evidence to demonstrate

they have the financial means to support the applicant, as well as information on where the applicant will be staying in the UK.

Officials will be meeting colleagues from the Church of England soon to discuss the current process for visit visa applications for visitors. This should assist both applicants and United Kingdom church bodies when arranging visits to the UK as we want to ensure that genuine applicants who meet the requirements are able to demonstrate this sufficiently the first time.

Asked by Lord Ashcroft

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Taylor of Holbeach on 11 August (HL1352), whether the citizens of the countries referred to in the answer could enter the Republic of Ireland and then enter the United Kingdom without a visa by entering Northern Ireland. [HL1841]

Lord Bates: Citizens of Bolivia, Fiji, Guyana, Lesotho, Malawi, South Africa, Swaziland and Taiwan travelling to Northern Ireland, or any part of the UK, from the Republic of Ireland, require a UK visa.

In recognition of the land border between the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland, intelligence led operations are conducted to target potential abuse and identify those not in possession of the appropriate UK entry clearance.

Entry Clearances: Chernobyl

Question

Asked by Lord Roberts of Llandudno

To ask Her Majesty's Government what visa requirements, screening procedures and payments are necessary before an individual suffering from the after-effects of the Chernobyl nuclear disaster is permitted to enter the United Kingdom. [HL1635]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Bates) (Con): Visa applications are considered under the relevant immigration rules and on the individual merits of the case. A standard visit visa costs £83.

Equal Pay

Question

Asked by Lord Lester of Herne Hill

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they will ensure that public authorities in England and Scotland have equivalent duties in respect of gender pay differences to those required by the Equality Act 2010 (Statutory Duties) (Wales) Regulations 2011. [HL1848]

Lord Newby (LD): The public sector Equality Duty (PSED), at section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 (the Act), consists of a general duty which requires public bodies to consider the key aims of eliminating discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations when designing policies and delivering services. It commenced in April 2011 and applies equally across Great Britain.

The PSED is underpinned by specific duties which are set out in secondary legislation to provide a framework to help public bodies meet the general duty. England, Scotland and Wales have taken different approaches towards the specific duties. The Scottish and Welsh specific duties, which are determined by the Scottish and Welsh Governments respectively in accordance with section 153(2) and (3) of the Act, adopt a prescriptive approach that places particular requirements on public bodies in respect of equal pay. The English specific duties, which aim to increase transparency and accountability, enable more flexibility for public bodies depending on their size and functions. However, guidance issued by the Government on the English specific duties makes it clear that public bodies should consider any equal pay issues affecting their workforce when reporting on their compliance.

The Government has no current plans to change the specific duties. The Government appointed an independent Steering Group in 2012 to review how the PSED was operating. The Steering Group reported in September 2013 and concluded that it was too early to make a judgment on the overall impact of the PSED and the effectiveness of the specific duties. The Government accepted its recommendation that a further evaluation should be carried out in 2016 as more time is needed to let the legislation bed down.

European Fighter Aircraft

Question

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Astor of Hever on 29 July (HL1167), how many fully qualified Typhoon pilots there are in the Royal Air Force. [HL1750]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Defence (Lord Astor of Hever) (Con): I am withholding the information requested as its disclosure would, or would be likely to prejudice the capability, effectiveness or security of the Armed Forces.

Extradition

Question

Asked by Lord MacKenzie of Culkein

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Faulks on 29 July (WA 277), whether any working group or committee within Government is currently giving consideration to issues relating to extradition; and, if so, what matters are being considered. [HL1715]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Bates) (Con): Both the UK Government and Scottish Government have said that there can be no 'pre-negotiations' on independence in advance of the referendum. The question of potential future extradition issues for Scotland would be affected by Scottish independence, so cannot be answered now because it would depend on multiple negotiations that could only take place if people in Scotland vote to leave the UK in September's referendum.

Financial Services: Zimbabwe

Question

Asked by **Lord Blencathra**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to co-operating with the United States Justice Department and the Securities and Exchange Commission, as part of their investigation of the funding of President Mugabe in 2009 by Och-Ziff, BlackRock, GLC Partners and Credit Suisse, in order to establish whether any United Kingdom funding was involved. [HL1858]

The Commercial Secretary to the Treasury (Lord Deighton) (Con): UK regulators and law enforcement agencies cooperate closely with international partners, including those in the United States. Requests for assistance for investigations in the US and elsewhere are made to the UK Central Authority. Her Majesty's Government does not confirm or deny the existence of such requests and we are unable to comment on any ongoing investigations.

Food Supply Networks Review

Questions

Asked by **Lord Rooker**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many meetings have been held by Ministers with representatives of the food industry to discuss the subject matter of the Elliott Review into the Integrity and Assurance of the food supply networks since the final draft was received by departments in June; and who was present at such meetings. [HL1811]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Lord De Mauley) (Con): There have been no Ministerial meetings with representatives of the food industry called specifically to discuss the review into the Integrity and Assurance of Food Supply Networks since June 2014. However the action being taken by industry following the horsemeat fraud incident and the Elliott Review interim report will have been discussed in the regular meetings Ministers have held with the food industry during this time.

Professor Elliott submitted his final report to Government in July, and this was published on 4 September.

Asked by **Lord Rooker**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what has been the cost to date of the Elliott Review into the Integrity and Assurance of the food supply networks; and when the final report will be published. [HL1812]

Lord De Mauley: Professor Chris Elliott's Independent Review into the Integrity and Assurance of Food Supply Networks was published on 4 September.

The Review to date has cost £194,000 in payments to Queens University Belfast for Professor Elliott's time, his Subject Matter Experts, venue hire and associated costs of carrying out the Review.

A number of staff in Defra and on loan from the Department of Health and the Food Standards Agency provided secretariat to support the Review. These staff were already part of departments' existing administration budgets and the associated cost of these positions whilst working on the Review was £288,000, although some staff were also providing support to other areas of work.

Gambling

Questions

Asked by **Lord Mancroft**

To ask Her Majesty's Government which provisions of the Gambling (Licensing and Advertising) Act 2014 enable the sharing of information received by the Gambling Commission with overseas regulators, where such information is not required for an overseas criminal investigation or overseas criminal proceedings. [HL1825]

Lord Newby (LD): The Gambling (Licensing and Advertising) Act 2014 does not affect existing position in respect of the Gambling Commission's ability to share information with overseas regulators.

Asked by **Lord Mancroft**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what type of information the Gambling Commission intends to share with overseas regulators. [HL1826]

Lord Newby (LD): The type of information that the Gambling Commission may share with overseas regulators in the course of carrying out its licensing and regulatory functions will depend on the circumstances. Of course, all information is shared subject to generally applicable legal requirements such as those arising under data protection law.

Gambling: Internet

Questions

Asked by **Lord Mancroft**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether companies providing sound effects, graphics and language translation services for use in the creation of gambling products require a licence. [HL1821]

Lord Newby (LD): The Gambling Commission's advice note "What is gambling software?" explains that, "Where the third party is only providing part of a game, such as artwork, under the control and design specifications of Company Y, then this indicates Company Y is in control and is the entity to hold a gambling software licence whereas the third party does not" (para 4.13). This equally applies to those that provide other aspects of the overall game for example sound effects and language translation services.

Asked by **Lord Mancroft**

To ask Her Majesty's Government why intellectual property relating to gambling software, often owned by separate companies which in turn license that software, rather than by the direct software developers or gambling operators, remains a determinant of a gambling licence requirement. [HL1822]

To ask Her Majesty's Government why, in the light of the Gambling Commission's guidance, a software developer owning intellectual property in gambling software requires a licence if it amends the software, whereas a gambling operator owning the intellectual property in gambling software which sub-contracts the amendment of that software to another company does not. [HL1823]

Lord Newby (LD): Intellectual property relating to gambling software is only one of the factors that is relevant to understanding where control of the product sits. There are also other factors that are relevant when considering who needs a gambling software licence for example who is responsible for the design and functionality of the software and what the contract says in terms of responsibilities and liabilities. One relevant activity caught by Section 41 of the Gambling Act 2005 is adaptation, and so the person who actually undertakes that adaptation will need to be licensed.

Gambling: Licensing

Question

Asked by Lord Mancroft

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of the Gambling Commission's guidance on licensing; and in particular whether they consider that it is clear in respect of who will need a licence and which activities will need to be licensed. [HL1824]

Lord Newby (LD): The Gambling Commission is the expert body on gambling licensing and it is for the Commission to determine the best way to achieve the desired policy outcomes and what advice and guidance it is appropriate to offer the regulated industry.

Glen Parva Young Offender Institution

Questions

Asked by Baroness Stern

To ask Her Majesty's Government what changes have been made at Glen Parva Young Offenders Institution since the report by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons published on 6 August, which concluded that "Glen Parva was not safe." [HL1807]

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the report by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons published on 6 August on Glen Parva Young Offenders Institution, whether they have introduced measures to reduce the use of force, including full control and restraint. [HL1808]

The Minister of State, Ministry of Justice (Lord Faulks) (Con): As with all establishment inspection reports by HMIP, NOMS will produce an action plan responding to all the recommendations made in the report within six months of the date of publication.

HMYOI Glen Parva has already introduced an improvement plan to address the concerns raised. Safety is the Governor's top priority and the YOI is

now providing a safe and decent regime for all offenders. An external safer custody audit in June 2014 found that progress had been made since the inspection.

Hilda Murrell

Question

Asked by Lord Rooker

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether, following the Written Answer by Lord Taylor of Holbeach on 4 August (HL938), they will give the titles and dates of the five files relating to Hilda Murrell which will be referred to the Lord Chancellor's Advisory Council. [HL1810]

Lord Newby (LD): Further to the previous answer, the five additional files relating to Hilda Murrell which will be referred to the Lord Chancellor's Advisory Council, are as follows:

Death of Miss Murrell - 1985

Death of Miss Murrell - 1985-1994

Death of Miss Murrell - 1985

Death of Miss Murrell - 1985-1986

Murrell Hilda - Murder Enquiry (F4 papers) - 1984-1985.

Hindley Young Offender Institution

Questions

Asked by Baroness Stern

To ask Her Majesty's Government what action they have taken in response to the report published on 15 August by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons on the lower site at Hindley Young Offenders Institution, and the report's conclusion that the Institution "struggled to keep the vulnerable boys it held safe". [HL1803]

The Minister of State, Ministry of Justice (Lord Faulks) (Con): As with all establishment inspection reports by HMIP, NOMS will produce an action plan responding to all the recommendations made in the report within six months of the date of publication.

NOMS considers safety a top priority in all of its prisons. The prison will continue to build on its violence reduction strategy and safeguarding policy within the next 12 months to keep those in its care safe. HMYOI Hindley has also recently adopted Minimising and Managing Physical Restraint (MMPR) a new accredited restraint system developed specifically for use with young people (under 18). This provides staff with behaviour management techniques to recognise young people's behaviour and uses approaches that minimise the need to resort to the use of force.

Asked by Baroness Stern

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the report published on 15 August by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons on the lower site at Hindley Young Offenders Institution, which found that half the boys held on the lower site were sharing cells

designed for one and that many of the cells were dirty and lacked basic amenities, what plans they have to refurbish those cells. [HL1804]

Lord Faulks: NOMS is committed to ensuring that prison cells remain in a decent and habitable condition. Every prison cell, including at HMYOI Hindley, is subject to daily and weekly checks for damage. There are currently no plans to refurbish every cell at HMYOI Hindley. However, a number of cells will be upgraded to include new robust furniture, and new windows on a priority basis. A scheduled programme of wing and cell painting is also in place at the establishment, and work is ongoing to improve the toilet screens in a number of cells.

House of Lords: Computer Software

Question

Asked by *Baroness Finlay of Llandaff*

To ask the Chairman of Committees how many Members of the House of Lords have been unable to access features such as their emails and calendars since the switch to Office 365. [HL1766]

The Chairman of Committees (Lord Sewel): Between 14th July and 31st August, PICT logged cases from 237 Members which directly related to issues resulting from the migration of their mailboxes to Microsoft Office 365. The cases covered a wide variety of issues including reconfiguration of desktops, laptops and mobile devices; we do not know the number of Members who were unable to access their email or calendar.

PICT apologises for the problems that the implementation of Office 365 caused for some Members of the House of Lords.

Human Trafficking

Question

Asked by *The Lord Bishop of Derby*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many child victims of human trafficking were interviewed in 2013 by competent authority staff, as opposed to specialist interviewers. [HL1545]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Bates) (Con): "There were 450 potential victims of trafficking who were minors at the time of exploitation referred into the National Referral Mechanism in 2013. These referrals were considered by UK Visas and Immigration and the UK Human Trafficking Centre.

The UK Human Trafficking Centre (UKHTC) do not conduct interviews with potential victims of trafficking. Interviews may take place with other agencies, for example the Police or Social Services, however UKHTC does not keep a record of who conducts the interviews, or when the interviews take place.

UK Visas and Immigration do conduct interviews where appropriate. Information on the training received by the staff involved in interviewing is

not collated centrally and establishing this would incur disproportionate cost. However, all UKVI staff undertaking interviews with children must have undertaken specialist training. In addition, staff may also have received Competent Authority training which includes a two day specialist training course. All reasonable grounds and conclusive ground decisions are taken by trained Competent Authority staff."

Immigrants: Detainees

Question

Asked by *Lord Foulkes of Cumnock*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many children of illegal immigrants have been detained in the United Kingdom in each year since 2010. [HL1764]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Bates) (Con): The Home Office publishes periodic data on the numbers of children entering detention under Immigration Act Powers since 2010. This information is located on the GOV.UK website, accessible via the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/children-entering-detention-under-immigration-act-powers>

The Home Office does not routinely record the immigration status of the parents of those children entering detention under Immigration Act Powers. Whilst this information is held on Home Office systems, extracting the information would require an individual inspection of records, which it is considered would incur a disproportionate cost.

Immigration Controls: Bahrain

Question

Asked by *Lord Avebury*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether they have given any instructions to immigration officials on giving greater scrutiny or priority to Bahraini nationals in carrying out entry clearance, border control and removals functions under paragraph 17(4)(a) of Schedule 3 to the Equality Act 2010. [HL1774]

Lord Newby (LD): Immigration officials are authorised to give greater scrutiny or priority to specific nationalities when carrying out entry clearance, border control and removals functions on the basis of a risk assessment which indicates that those nationalities constitute a greater risk to immigration control. For national security reasons, the nationalities concerned are not disclosed.

Isabella Acevedo

Question

Asked by *Lord Beecham*

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many (1) immigration officers, and (2) police officers, effected the detention of Isabella Acevedo at Haringey Town Hall on 18 July; and what guidance exists as to the circumstances in which immigration officers may effect detentions and the number of officers to be deployed. [HL1300]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Bates) (Con): A team of seven immigration officers and one police officer were deployed on this operation. Decisions on the size of an Immigration Enforcement arrest team are made on a risk assessment and intelligence basis. On this occasion, consideration was given to the potential number of guests and indications that there were several subjects of interest who were believed to be unlawfully present.

In total there were two people arrested at the premises, one female and one male.

Islam

Question

Asked by *Lord Blencathra*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what criteria they apply in selecting members of the Muslim community to consult; and whether the Home Office has employed or consulted advisers who believe in the creation of an Islamic state in the United Kingdom by non-violent means. [HL1740]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Bates) (Con): As stated in the Prevent Strategy, and reinforced in the report of the Prime Minister's Extremism Task Force in December 2013, the Government will not engage with people, from any background, who engage in vocal or active opposition to fundamental British values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. By contrast, the Government does set great value to the wide range of people from many different British Muslim groups and mosques with whom we do work. Last year, for example, Prevent local coordinators in our 30 Prevent priority areas worked with over 250 mosques, 50 faith groups and 70 community groups as part of their work to help people recognise and challenge extremist propaganda and support those who may be vulnerable to being drawn into terrorism.

Israel

Questions

Asked by *Lord Hylton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Israel about the case of Ms Khalidah Jarrar, a member of the Palestinian Legislative Council; and what assessment they have made of the reasons why Israel seeks to expel her from Ramallah and exile her to Jericho. [HL1853]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns) (Con): Officials in our Embassy in Tel Aviv routinely raise the rights of Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails with the Israeli government. We have not raised this particular case, but understand that Khalidah Jarrar has been moved to Jericho under orders from an Israeli military court for security reasons.

Asked by *Lord Hylton*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the number of Palestinian Legislative Council members now imprisoned or detained in Israel; and whether they are making representations about the arrests of Mr Bassem al Za'areer from near Hebron on 22 August and of Mr Hisham Muhammad Abu Zgheib, Secretary-General of Fatah in Tulkarem refugee camp, on 27 August. [HL1854]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: The Government understands that there are 36 members of the Palestinian Legislative Council being detained by the Israeli authorities. While we have not raised the specific cases of Mr al Za'areer and Mr Abu Zgheib with the Israeli authorities, officials from our Embassy in Tel Aviv last raised the issue of Palestinian prisoners with the Israeli authorities on 7 September.

Max Clifford

Question

Asked by *Lord Trefgarne*

To ask Her Majesty's Government why Max Clifford was handcuffed to a prison officer when he attended his brother's funeral; and whether he remained so restrained throughout the service. [HL1792]

The Minister of State, Ministry of Justice (Lord Faulks) (Con): NOMS does not comment publicly on matters concerning a named individual's imprisonment.

Merlin Helicopters

Questions

Asked by *Lord West of Spithead*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Astor of Haver on 6 November 2013 (HL2992–5), on what day 846 Naval Air Squadron will stand up the first Royal Navy Merlin Mk3 helicopter squadron; and by what date they expect the transition of the Merlin Mk3 airframe to the Commando Helicopter Force to be complete. [HL1751]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Defence (Lord Astor of Haver) (Con): 846 Naval Air Squadron will stand up as the first Royal Navy Merlin Mk3 helicopter squadron on 30 September 2014. The transition of the Merlin Mk3 and Mk3a aircraft to the Commando Helicopter Force will be complete in 2016.

Asked by *Lord West of Spithead*

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Astor of Haver on 6 November 2013 (HL 2992–5), whether programme funding has been agreed for ship-optimisation of the Merlin Mk3 helicopter. [HL1752]

Lord Astor of Hever: The Merlin Life Sustainment Programme was approved and contracted in December 2013 with funding to update 25 Merlin MK3/3a helicopters with new avionic systems to overcome obsolescence issues as well as ship optimisation enhancements including the addition of a folding main rotor head and folding tail. The upgrade project will enable embarked operations from Royal Navy ships.

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Astor of Hever on 25 October 2013 (HL2640), whether Nimrod MRA4 ASW technology has now been incorporated into the Merlin Mk2. [HL1753]

Lord Astor of Hever: The Anti Submarine Warfare capability developed on Nimrod MR2 for the Nimrod MRA4, has been approved and funded and is in the process of being integrated onto the Merlin Mk2 aircraft. The capability is expected to be in service in 2016.

Military Aircraft Question

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government what differences are required in generic skills in (1) surveillance, (2) anti-submarine warfare, and (3) anti-surface warfare, in respect of aircrew of (a) Merlin Mk2 helicopters, and (b) maritime patrol aircraft. [HL1819]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Defence (Lord Astor of Hever) (Con): There are no differences in the generic surveillance skills required for surveillance, anti-submarine warfare, and anti-surface warfare, in respect of aircrew of Merlin Mk2 helicopters, and maritime patrol aircraft.

Navy Question

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Lord Astor of Hever on 25 October 2013 (HL2640), what programme of work the Royal Navy is undertaking to establish the best way to replace the maritime capability that was to be provided by the Nimrod MRA4; and whether that programme has included work at the maritime warfare training schools at HMS Collingwood. [HL1754]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Defence (Lord Astor of Hever) (Con): Staff from Navy Command, including from the Maritime Warfare Centre at HMS Collingwood, and Air Command are actively involved in studies on future wide area maritime surveillance, which are being led by the Joint Forces

Command. In particular, the Royal Navy is providing submarine, aviation, information superiority and warfare experts to inform the Air Information Superiority Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance (ISTAR) Optimisation Study (AIOS) and related work. The AIOS is considering a number of options for wide area surveillance, including the use of manned and unmanned aircraft and the use of space-based assets, primarily with a view to informing the forthcoming Strategic Defence and Security Review.

Navy: Military Aircraft Question

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many Royal Navy pilots are flying (1) F35 aircraft with the US military, (2) F18 aircraft with the US military, (3) Typhoon aircraft, (4) Hawk aircraft, or (5) any other type of fast jet with another nation's military. [HL1755]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Defence (Lord Astor of Hever) (Con): The information requested regarding the number of Royal Navy pilots flying the specific aircraft is as follows:

F35 aircraft with the United States (US) military	<5
F18 aircraft with the US military	12
Typhoon aircraft	<5
Hawk aircraft	12
Other types of fast jet with another nation's military	<10

Note: Figures have been rounded where appropriate in accordance with Departmental conventions.

Nimrod Aircraft Question

Asked by Lord West of Spithead

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether any Royal Air Force Nimrod aircrews have been funded since the cancellation of the Nimrod MRA4 programme in 2010; and if so, how many, and why. [HL1820]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Ministry of Defence (Lord Astor of Hever) (Con): No Nimrod aircrews have been funded since financial year 2010-11.

Offences against Children Question

Asked by Lord Blencathra

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether, in the light of the report by Professor Jay, Independent Inquiry into Child Sexual Exploitation in Rotherham (1997–2013), they will ask Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary to investigate police forces which have large Pakistani communities to establish whether any reports of child rape were systematically ignored or covered up. [HL1737]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Bates) (Con): The failings in Rotherham exposed by this inquiry are appalling and the Coalition Government is absolutely clear that the lessons of past failure must be learned.

Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) has a key role to ensure that identified weaknesses are addressed, and has several relevant inspection programmes underway. As part of their 2014/15 business plan, the Home Secretary commissioned HMIC to inspect forces to honour based violence and, in particular, how well forces establish and maintain relations with minority communities in a multi-cultural society, identify and assist vulnerable people and victims, and encourage increased reporting of crimes.

This work is scheduled to report in early 2015. Concurrently, HMIC are carrying out an audit of the quality of crime recording in every police force, which includes an examination of when forces are incorrectly 'no-criming' serious offences such as rape and sexual assault. HMIC's full report and conclusions will be published in October. Furthermore, HMIC intends to use its forthcoming all-force PEEL inspection programme to monitor how effective forces are at protecting those at greatest risk of harm, including children. HMIC are currently consulting on the methodology for this programme. There is no question of other sensitivities preventing steps from being taken to ensure both the proper protection of children and the prosecution of those responsible for the sexual abuse of children.

Palestinians

Questions

Asked by **Lord Warner**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the condition of the civilian population of Gaza in relation to hunger, shelter, clean water, sewage disposal, access to medicines and supply of electricity following Israeli military action in Gaza in recent months; and whether they will publish their assessment. [HL1816]

Lord Wallace of Saltaire (LD): We are gravely concerned by the humanitarian situation in Gaza where the damage sustained in the recent conflict has been unprecedented. More than 100,000 people have been left homeless, the UN estimates that only 10% of the population receives clean water daily, and many people face power cuts of up to 20 hours a day. DFID works closely with the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Human Affairs (OCHA), which manages the process of collecting, analysing and publishing information about the humanitarian situation in Gaza. The latest situation reports are published here: <http://www.ochaopt.org/>. DFID will continue to work with partners on the ground to monitor the situation and adapt our response accordingly.

Asked by **Lord Warner**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the level of humanitarian aid to Gaza from United Kingdom public funds has changed in the current financial year; and, if so, by how much. [HL1817]

Lord Wallace of Saltaire (LD): As part of our existing programme in support of Palestinian development, annual DFID funding to Gaza amounts to approximately £30 million year. In addition to this UK has been one of the biggest donors to the Gaza crisis, providing over £17 million in emergency assistance. We will continue to monitor the situation closely and keep our funding under review.

Parliamentary Information and Communications Technology Service

Question

Asked by **Baroness Finlay of Llandaff**

to ask the Chairman of Committees what is the mean and maximum time delay for PICT to answer telephone helpline calls from Members of the House of Lords. [HL1767]

The Chairman of Committees (Lord Sewel): The mean and maximum time for PICT to answer telephone calls to extension 2001 (the PICT Service Desk) is set out by month in the table below. These figures represent all calls to the Service Desk. Unfortunately, it is not possible to produce figures for specific customer groups.

Month	Mean wait (minutes: seconds)	Maximum time delay (minutes: seconds)
January 2014	01:52	24:14
February 2014	01:27	21:37
March 2014	01:42	17:45
April 2014	01:23	20:22
May 2014	01:56	19:26
June 2014	02:41	35:00
July 2014	03:29	29:41
August 2014	02:55	27:26

PICT aims to answer 80% of calls in 20 seconds or less and 90% of calls in 60 seconds or less.

Pitcairn Islands

Questions

Asked by **Lord Ashcroft**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to encourage immigration to Pitcairn; what are the targets for immigration to Pitcairn; and what they consider to be the obstacles to such immigration. [HL1839]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns) (Con): Her Majesty's Government (HMG) fully supports the economic development of the Pitcairn Islands. The Government of Pitcairn has recently worked up a new Strategic Development Plan and immigration policy, which HMG is currently considering. In 2013, the Government of Pitcairn and HMG commissioned two independent expert reports into attitudes to resettlement amongst the Pitcairn diaspora community, and on the broader economic potential of the islands. Both reports recognised

that there are substantial obstacles to immigration to Pitcairn, including its relative isolation, the limited economic opportunities and the legacy of child safety issues. We will continue to work in partnership with the Government of Pitcairn to support the community in Pitcairn as we consider longer-term options for the island.

Asked by **Lord Ashcroft**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of whether the future population of Pitcairn will be large enough to maintain a sustainable community on the island. [HL1840]

Baroness Anelay of St Johns: In 2013, the Government of Pitcairn and Her Majesty's Government commissioned two independent pieces of analysis – into the appetite amongst the Pitcairn diaspora for return to the island, and on the broader economic potential of the island. Both reports recognised that unless the population of the island increases, it will be a challenge to maintain the longer-term viability of the community.

Police and Crime Commissioners

Questions

Asked by **Lord Hoyle**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what guidelines, if any, are given to police and crime commissioners upon taking up office. [HL1842]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Bates) (Con): Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs) are subject to statutory duties and are required to sign a Declaration of Acceptance of Office upon taking office. The respective Offices of the PCC, in conjunction with the Association of PCCs, coordinate individual inductions for newly elected PCCs. The Home Office does not issue guidelines to PCCs upon them taking office.

Asked by **Lord Hoyle**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what has been the total cost of police and crime commissioners, including salaries and expenses, for each year since they were established. [HL1843]

Lord Bates: The Home Office does not collect data on salaries and expenses claimed by Police and Crime Commissioners (PCCs). However we have been clear that all Police and Crime Commissioners must be as transparent as possible.

Under paragraph 1(c) and (d) respectively of Schedule one of the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Specified Information) Order 2011, PCCs are obliged to publish “the salary of each relevant office holder” and “the allowance paid to each relevant office holder in respect of expenses incurred by the office holder in the exercise of the body's functions”.

Article 1(2) of the Elected Local Policing Bodies (Specified Information) Order 2011 defines “relevant office holder” as, where the elected local policing body

is a police and crime commissioner, the commissioner and deputy police and crime commissioner appointed by the commissioner.

Ragwort Control Act 2003

Question

Asked by **Lord Tebbit**

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether there are any control orders made under the Ragwort Control Act 2003 currently in force; and whether there are any plans to make any such control orders. [HL1856]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Lord De Mauley) (Con): The Ragwort Control Act 2003 makes no provision for control orders. The purpose of the Act is to provide for a code of practice to give guidance on how to prevent the spread of ragwort to be prepared. This resulted in the Code of Practice on How to Prevent the Spread of Ragwort which was published in 2004.

Natural England, the delegated authority for investigating complaints about injurious weeds, can issue enforcement notices under the Weeds Act 1959 where ragwort poses a high risk to grazing livestock or agricultural land.

The number of enforcement notices served under the Weeds Act 1959 in 2013, 2012 and 2011 is as follows:

Year	Enforcement notices served
2011	42
2012	36
2013	37

Enforcement is a last resort and where possible we encourage communications between landowners and complainants to try and resolve the issue. In the vast majority of cases this approach is successful.

Religious Freedom

Question

Asked by **Lord Hylton**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they are taking to ensure that a willingness to uphold, and to give due priority to, Article 18 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is one of the criteria for the selection of the next United Nations Secretary-General. [HL1849]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns) (Con): As the former Senior Minister of State Baroness Warsi said in the House on 22 July, Her Majesty's Government does not put forward criteria for candidates. However, we would want to see a proven leader, fully committed to the values of the UN, with sufficient political authority and expertise to lead and manage such a large and complex organisation. The ultimate

responsibility to uphold Article 18 lies with states, as it is states that have human rights obligations. However, as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is at the core of UN values we would expect any UN Secretary General to urge all states to uphold them.

Rivers: Somerset *Question*

Asked by Lord Patten

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their assessment of the progress of the work to dredge the Rivers Barrett and Tone in the Somerset Levels so far during 2014. [HL1786]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Lord De Mauley) (Con): The dredging is going well. The Environment Agency remains on target to complete the 8km dredge of the Rivers Parrett and Tone by 31 October 2014. As of 5 September, there is 3.2km of river left to dredge.

Roll-on Roll-off Ships: Safety *Question*

Asked by Lord Berkeley

To ask Her Majesty's Government what are the reasons for their proposal to remove the requirement for on-deck emergency equipment lockers on roll-on roll-off passenger ships, originally specified as a result of the inquiry into the Herald of Free Enterprise ferry disaster; and what is their assessment of the implications of that proposal for safety. [HL1827]

The Minister of State, Department for Transport (Baroness Kramer): These regulations, which only apply to UK roll-on roll-off passenger ships, were introduced following the HERALD OF FREE ENTERPRISE tragedy in 1987. The proposal to revoke these regulations, which are only applicable to UK ships, is based on a significantly higher level of safety on ships since the tragedy. This is due to the introduction of numerous internationally adopted safety standards such as the International Safety Management Code, SOLAS 90 – an international standard for passenger ship stability, the Stockholm agreement – an international agreement on stability requirements for Ro/Ro Passenger ships; and the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers. The safety equipment on board ships is more accessible under the current regime of international safety standards than previously under the regulations.

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency's (MCA) consultation on this proposal closed on 10 August. A decision on whether the regulations will be revoked will be made in light of a detailed consideration of all comments received during the consultation, but the MCA considers the proposal to remove the UK statutory requirement would have no significant impact.

UK ships would still carry equipment, similar to that found in the lockers, prescribed by the regulations in other parts of the ship. For example, equipment

such as axes and glass breaking hammers are held in the ship's firefighting lockers and first aid kits are part of the lifeboat inventory.

The equipment in the lockers prescribed by the regulation are only intended for use when the ship is lying on her side in shallow water, almost exactly level, in calm seas. The equipment in the lockers is of no additional benefit in other types of emergency situation, bearing in mind that similar equipment is contained elsewhere on board, and is easily accessible.

Russia *Question*

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they are making to the government of Russia about their returning to Estonia a border official recently detained by them. [HL1850]

Lord Newby (LD): The Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my right hon. Friend the Member for Aylesbury (Mr Lidington), met the Russian Ambassador to London on 11 September and expressed his strong concern about the illegal and unacceptable abduction of an Estonian official from Estonian territory by Russian Security Services on 5 September, and called for his immediate release.

Sexual Offences: Young People *Question*

Asked by Baroness Kennedy of Cradley

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many girls under the age of 18 have been the victim of gang-related sexual violence since 2010, broken down by police force areas in England and Wales. [HL1450]

Lord Wallace of Saltaire (LD): The Home Office does not hold this information.

There is currently little hard data on the number of women and girls involved in gang violence. However, we know that women and girls who come into contact with street gangs are at greater risk of violence, particularly sexual violence.

The Government report on 'Ending Gang and Youth Violence' (November 2011) recognised the importance of tackling gang-related violence on girls, and refers to research by Race on the Agenda (2010:11) which exposed the significant harm that girls associated with gangs can experience. Further research has been undertaken by the Office of the Children's Commissioner and Bedfordshire University. This was set out in their Interim Report (2012): "*I thought I was the only one. The only one in the world*" and the Final Report (2013): "*If only someone had listened*".

Steps taken to protect girls from becoming involved in gang-related crime are set out in the 'Ending Gang and Youth Violence Report: One Year On' (November 2012) and 'Ending Gang and Youth Violence Annual Report 2013' (December 2013) documents.

This includes dedicated funding of £1.2m over three years (April 2012 to March 2015) to improve services for girls under 18 at risk, or victims of, sexual violence and exploitation by gangs.

The reports are available on the GOV.UK website.

South Sudan

Questions

Asked by *The Earl of Sandwich*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what representations they have made to the government of South Sudan to ensure that the Voluntary and Non-Governmental Humanitarian Organizations Bill, currently before the South Sudan Parliament, will enable citizens and civil society organisations to engage in humanitarian activity, enjoy freedom of association and engage in monitoring and accountability systems in accordance with democratic principles. [HL1837]

Lord Wallace of Saltaire (LD): The British Embassy in Juba has, alongside national and international partners, actively lobbied the Government of South Sudan on the Voluntary and Non-Governmental Humanitarian Organizations Bill currently before the South Sudan parliament. The United Kingdom wants to see proportionate and well-designed legislation that provides a clear legal framework within which citizens and civil society organisations can engage in humanitarian activity, enjoy freedom of association and engage in monitoring and accountability systems in accordance with democratic principles. We continue to make clear to the government where the draft legislation might better achieve these aims.

Asked by *The Earl of Sandwich*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what assessment they have made of the peace and reconciliation initiatives launched by the Vice President of South Sudan, James Wani Igga, and of how those initiatives relate to the National Reconciliation Committee for Healing, Peace and Reconciliation, led by Archbishop Daniel Deng. [HL1838]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns) (Con): The National Platform for Peace and Reconciliation, launched on 5 April 2014 by Vice President Igga, includes the Committee for National Healing, Peace and Reconciliation led by Archbishop Daniel Deng.

The Government is clear that there needs to be a genuine process of reconciliation in South Sudan to help address the impact of the conflict. Lynne Featherstone, Parliamentary- Under Secretary of State for the Department for International Development made this point to the Government of South Sudan during her recent visit in September.

Sudan

Questions

Asked by *Lord Ashcroft*

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether anyone associated with the Liberation and Justice Movement of Sudan has been barred from entering the United Kingdom; and, if so, who and why. [HL1557]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Bates) (Con): The Home Office does not routinely comment on individual cases. This is because the Home Office has obligations in law to protect this information. The Liberation and Justice Movement of Sudan has not been proscribed by the UK. Individuals associated with the Liberation and Justice Movement would not necessarily be denied entry based solely on their association with it.

Asked by *Baroness Tonge*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of Sudan regarding (1) female genital mutilation not being a criminal offence in Sudan, and (2) UNICEF's 2013 estimate, included in their report Female Genital Mutilation/Cutting: A statistical overview and exploration of the dynamics of change, that 88 per cent of Sudanese women have undergone female genital mutilation. [HL1844]

Lord Wallace of Saltaire (LD): We regularly raise Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) with the Government of Sudan. We worked hard through the Government's National Council for Child Welfare (NCCW) to ensure that Sudan was represented at the Girl Summit which took place in London in July, and which had a particular focus on FGM and child and early forced marriage (CEFM). We welcome the Government's subsequent signature of the Girl Summit Charter, which includes a public commitment to ending FGM. We are now in discussion with the NCCW about an event to mark that signature, which would be attended by the Ministry of Social Welfare. On 22 October the Government will host a regional meeting on ending FGM, in which it will showcase its own achievements in changing attitudes.

Advocacy on the need for legislation on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) forms part of a programme supported by DFID and run by UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA). More broadly, the programme aims to end FGM by making it socially unacceptable, and supports the country-wide Saleema campaign which is led by the Government of Sudan.

DFID is also providing funding to UNICEF's Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), which will include data on the percentage of women who have undergone FGM, and will report by the end of 2014. The findings of that survey will inform our discussions with the Government of Sudan and our future programming.

Asked by *Baroness Tonge*

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of Sudan concerning the proportion of births there attended by skilled health personnel; and what discussions they have had regarding Sudan's maternal mortality ratio. [HL1845]

Lord Wallace of Saltaire (LD): While we do not have specific health programmes in Sudan, we are greatly concerned at the levels of maternal mortality in Sudan, and regularly discuss these issues with the

Government in the context of wider discussions about the delivery of basic services and poverty reduction. DFID is providing funding to UNICEF's Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), which will include data on the proportion of skilled health personnel who attend births, and on maternal mortality. The findings of that survey, which will report by the end of 2014, will inform our discussions with the Government of Sudan.

Asked by Baroness Tonge

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of Sudan regarding (1) Sudanese laws which allow girls to be married from 10 years old, and (2) the proportion of women in that country aged 20–24 who were married by the time they reached 18. [HL1846]

To ask Her Majesty's Government what discussions they have had with the government of Sudan about raising the legal age of marriage in that country from 10 to 18 in order to comply with international standards of child rights. [HL1847]

Lord Wallace of Saltaire (LD): There is a discrepancy between the Sudanese Child Act of 2010, under which anyone under the age of 18 is considered to be a child, and religious law, under which anyone under the age of 11 is considered to be a child. Along with the Sudanese National Council for Child Welfare (NCCW), we have lobbied the Government to ensure compliance with the Child Act and the removal of any discrepancies which lead to under-age children being married.

Broader work on child rights forms part of a programme supported by DFID, and run by UN Children's Fund (UNICEF), the World Health Organisation (WHO) and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA), which focuses on Female Genital Mutilation (FGM). This programme has included a workshop on reaching a national position on the legal age of marriage. DFID is also providing funding to UNICEF's Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS), which will include data on the percentage of women who were married by the time they reached 18. The findings of that survey, which will report by the end of 2014, will inform our discussions with the Government of Sudan.

DFID worked closely with the NCCW to ensure that the Government was represented at the Girl Summit which took place in London in July, and which had a particular focus on FGM and Child and Forced Marriage (CEFM). We welcome the Government of Sudan's subsequent signature of the Girl Summit Charter, which includes a public commitment to ending CEFM. We are actively following up with the Government of Sudan to ensure that they maintain momentum on these issues.

Syria Question

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government what measures they and their allies are taking to prevent the Syrian town of Mhardeh from falling to attacks by Islamist militants. [HL1851]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns) (Con): We are extremely concerned about the activities of Islamist extremists in Syria and the threat they pose to Christian communities in Mhardeh and elsewhere. Our response is to support the moderate opposition who are fighting both extremism and Assad's tyranny. We are acting in close coordination with our international allies. We are also pushing for an inclusive political process which is the only long term way to protect Syria's minority communities.

Terrorism Questions

Asked by Lord Taylor of Warwick

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their response to the assessment in David Anderson QC's annual report that the definition of terrorism is currently too broad. [HL1379]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Taylor of Holbeach) (Con): The Government welcomes Mr. David Anderson QC's fourth annual report on the operation of the Terrorism Acts in 2013, which was laid in Parliament on Tuesday 22nd.

We will consider his recommendations in detail and respond in due course.

Asked by Lord Laird

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their definition of a terrorist. [HL1596]

To ask Her Majesty's Government what is their definition of a terrorist group. [HL1597]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Bates) (Con): The UK definition of terrorism is set out in section one of the Terrorism Act 2000.

Any decision by the Secretary of State to proscribe an organisation under Section three of the Terrorism Act 2000 must be based on a belief that it is concerned in terrorism as defined in the Act, and it must be proportionate. Such decisions are subject to approval by Parliament.

Twitter Question

Asked by Baroness Deech

To ask Her Majesty's Government what steps they have taken to ensure the cooperation of the authorities in California with United Kingdom law enforcement agencies in securing information from Twitter in respect of alleged online offences. [HL1772]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Home Office (Lord Bates) (Con): HM Government works closely, and has regular discussions, with the US Government to help ensure that UK law enforcement agencies are able to secure the information they need in respect of alleged online offences.

Zimbabwe

Question

Asked by **Lord Blencathra**

To ask Her Majesty's Government what consideration they have given to presenting a case to the International Criminal Court to bring charges against President Mugabe for genocide and crimes against humanity. [HL1859]

The Minister of State, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Baroness Anelay of St Johns) (Con): Zimbabwe is not a party to the Rome Statute so the International Criminal Court (ICC) has no jurisdiction over events which have taken place in that country.

For the ICC's Prosecutor to be able to initiate an investigation in these circumstances either the Government of Zimbabwe would have to voluntarily accept the ICC's jurisdiction, or a referral from the UN Security Council would be required.

Under the Rome Statute the Security Council can only refer a situation to the ICC; it cannot refer the case of any specific individual.

Answers received between Tuesday 23 September and Friday 26 September 2014

Climate Change

Question

Asked by **Lord Tebbit**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how much they have spent on travel and accommodation in respect of Members of the House of Lords attending meetings on global climate change during the current financial year. [HL1855]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department of Energy and Climate Change (Baroness Verma) (Con): The Government has contributed £1,800 for travel and accommodation for Members of the House of Lords to attend meetings overseas specifically on climate change in the current financial year.

Hindley Young Offender Institution

Question

Asked by **Baroness Stern**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, in the light of the report published on 15 August by HM Chief Inspector of Prisons on the lower site at Hindley Young Offenders Institution, which found that "boys sometimes had less than 15 minutes a day to exercise in the open air", whether they have any plans to reconsider national policies on how long boys spend out of their cells. [HL1805]

The Minister of State, Ministry of Justice (Lord Faulks) (Con): Improving outcomes in under-18 Young Offenders Institutions (YOIs) is one of the key objectives of our plans to Transform Youth Custody. A new operating specification has been developed for under-18 YOIs. This requires that every young person has access to a minimum of ten hours out of their rooms which

includes a minimum of one hour in the open air each day. Our plans are to implement this revised regime across all under-18 YOIs during 2015.

We believe we need to do more than improve the existing estate which is why the Government intends to open a pathfinder Secure College, a new form of secure establishment which will put education at the heart of youth custody, in the East Midlands in 2017.

Ministers: Conduct

Question

Asked by **Lord Tebbit**

To ask Her Majesty's Government, further to the Written Answer by Baroness Northover on 18 August (HL 1666), which section of the Ministerial Code deals with the expression of personal views which are not government policy whilst answering questions at the Despatch Box. [HL1857]

Lord Wallace of Saltaire (LD): The Ministerial Code sets out the duties and responsibilities of Ministers. It is of course not unprecedented for Ministers to express personal views at the Despatch Box.

Orders and Regulations

Question

Asked by **Lord Goodlad**

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many statutory instruments from the Department for Communities and Local Government have been laid this calendar year; of those, what percentage corrected errors in a previous instrument (including drafts of affirmative instruments that had to be superseded by correcting drafts); and what steps that Department is taking to reduce the need for correcting instruments. [HL1422]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Communities and Local Government (Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon) (Con): A table has been placed in the Library of the House, it includes changes made to secondary legislation issued under the previous Administration.

From time to time, we make amendments in response to scrutiny by the Joint Committee on Statutory Instruments. We also undertake routine review of previous instruments to see if the drafting needs to be improved to ensure that the policy is properly delivered or minor errors corrected. Wherever possible, revisions are included with other substantive provision to minimise the number of statutory instruments made.

We take our responsibility to ensure the quality of all legislation emanating from the Department seriously and endeavour to keep to a minimum the need for correcting instruments. We have a system in place for appropriate 2nd and 3rd lawyer checks by senior lawyers; we provide regular legal awareness training and guidance for policy officials in making statutory instruments and actively engage with interested persons or groups, where possible, to test the quality of the draft legislation. We regularly review these processes to ensure that they continue to be effective and appropriate.

In addition, both the Treasury Solicitor and First Parliamentary Counsel are strongly committed to improving the quality of statutory instrument drafting across the Government Legal Service. In the coming months, the Treasury Solicitor's Department (which provides legal services to my Department) will be looking at ideas for better training, a more consistent approach to supervision, checking, planning and timetabling of statutory instruments, better sharing of good practice, and the possibility of a specialist statutory instrument drafting "hub", with experienced senior leadership.

Palestinians

Question

Asked by Lord Hylton

To ask Her Majesty's Government whether the official National Health Service medical team promised by the Prime Minister has yet reached Gaza; whether volunteer British doctors have been refused access to Gaza via Israel; and, if so, what action they are taking on the doctors' behalf. [HL1852]

Baroness Northover (LD): A team of medical staff from the UK visited Gaza and East Jerusalem in August to assess the need for specialist medical support. A team was given access to Gaza via Israel to access medical facilities in both locations to assess capacity and recommend future UK assistance.

Ranby Prison

Question

Asked by Baroness Stern

To ask Her Majesty's Government what plans they have to address the findings of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Prisons' report of an unannounced inspection of HMP Ranby, published on 24 July, in respect of the condition of the play area for the

children of those visiting prisoners, plans to develop services, the lack of a family support worker and the lack of a parenting course. [HL1585]

The Minister of State, Ministry of Justice (Lord Faulks) (Con): Funding has now been secured to replace and renew current toys and equipment and the list of appropriate items is being finalised. A local initiative has recently been set up whereby staff donate good quality toys and books, resulting in a significant improvement to toys and books available. Storybook dads is being delivered and extended to a larger percentage of the population. Surestart has been approached with a view to offering support during visits. A Parenting Course is being developed with a view to it being delivered by a voluntary sector organisation. Further opportunities are also being explored with voluntary sector organisations who can assist in developing the family and children pathway.

Welfare Assistance Schemes

Question

Asked by Lord Bassam of Brighton

To ask Her Majesty's Government how many of those who have received local welfare assistance, by region, (1) were registered disabled, (2) have learning difficulties, (3) suffer mental health issues, (4) are escaping domestic violence, and (5) are families with dependents. [HL1833]

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Work and Pensions (Lord Freud) (Con): Local authorities are not required to provide DWP with details of who has received Local Welfare Assistance. Consequently, we do not have information about the volumes of people of certain types receiving support.

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