



## THE HOUSE OF LORDS



**Lord Norton of Louth** writes:

Critics and supporters of the existing House of Lords tend to argue at cross purposes. Critics, who favour an elected House, focus on what is known as input legitimacy (the method of choosing members) and supporters of an appointed House on output legitimacy (what is actually done). Critics who argue that election is the 'democratic' option tend to go unchallenged. However, I contend that their argument can be contested. The House of Lords can be justified in terms of the method by which it is chosen as well as for what it does.

Central to a representative democracy is the concept of accountability. In our system, government is chosen and is accountable through elections to the House of Commons. There is one body – the party (or parties) in government – responsible for public policy and answerable to electors for that policy. The government can be swept from office at the next election. It cannot seek to blame others. The House

of Lords complements the elected chamber. It does not seek to challenge it and, as a result, does not undermine the core accountability that is at the heart of the political process.

Once a second chamber is elected, then one does start to undermine that core accountability. The second chamber may not only use its existing powers but also seek more: it may not demand to be co-equal with the first, but it can demand more powers than the existing House. The danger is that the outputs of public policy then come to be determined by deals done between the chambers, deals that have the potential (as in the USA) to favour special interests and parties. The electors get left out and cannot be sure who to hold to account.

Under our existing system, we get the benefit of core accountability and a second chamber that adds value to the political process. The House of Lords complements the Commons by fulfilling tasks that MPs may not have the time or the political will to undertake. The House concentrates on legislative scrutiny, primarily the detail of Bills. Each session, anything between a few hundred to a few thousand amendments to government bills are

*Under our existing system, we get the benefit of core accountability and a second chamber that adds value to the political process.*

secured in the House. It scrutinises public policy – including EU policy – and the administration of government.

It is able to add value through the fact that no one party has an overall majority and that members tend to be appointed because of their experience or expertise. As a result, ministers have to take the House seriously in advancing policy and can and do engage in a discourse with members. Scrutiny is facilitated by the fact that there are no programme motions, all amendments that are tabled are debated, and amendments can be taken at Third Reading.

There is no obvious benefit having an elected second chamber that would generally replicate the first. MPs are elected to represent the people. Our existing system maintains core accountability with a second chamber that adds value. It is a distinctive combination that we should fight to retain.



## WHERE ARE YOU NOW?

**Conal Gregory**, Conservative MP for York 1983 – 1992

To hold a wafer-thin majority of just 147 in my second Parliament was always going to be difficult, but the scale of multi-voting by students had not been anticipated. Without photo ID (unlike Northern Ireland) this affront to our democracy still continues.

So still in my 40s, I returned to two areas of professional life – personal finance journalism and the world of wine.

With the former, I write on all the major money subjects that affect everyday life. The variety is immense, from annuities and banking to pensions and weddings insurance.

It is a friendly challenge to explain sometimes complex matters like exchange traded funds in a non-technical way.

Researching the case studies for the features, notably in the *Yorkshire Post* and *The Scotsman*, is fascinating. It convinces me that personal finance should be taught in all schools.

I passed the Master of Wine examination four years before I came to Westminster. The qualification is held by under 300 worldwide and I am therefore in demand for consultancy, speaking and writing on the fermented grape. One of the most exciting roles is to blend a wine, sometimes taking up to 50 combinations based on different vines and vine ages, fields and barrels.

*From seeing the Northern Lights of the Arctic to penguins and whales in Antarctica, there has certainly been variety.*

Away from the parliamentary timetable, holidays can now be enjoyed at any time of year. My wife Helen, recently retired as a community physiotherapist, has taken on the role of vacation planner for us. From seeing the Northern Lights of the Arctic to penguins and whales in Antarctica, there has certainly been variety. The archeological sites in Libya and Syria proved to be spectacular and, with the current civil war, it is hoped that these amazing places are being protected for the enjoyment of future generations.

One of the things I most miss about being an MP is the ability to help individual constituents. The regular advice sessions always produced a myriad of problems, few of which you could ever predict. It was always satisfying to cut through the red tape and really help someone who might have been battling for years to have an injustice corrected.

Still living in York, I now have more opportunity to participate actively in many of the organizations which are an important part of the city. York Minster, known throughout the world, is undergoing a major restoration programme and it has been a pleasure to work on some of its fundraising projects.

As a "Friend" of such societies as York Art Gallery and Fairfax House, as well as being a supporter of the York Civic Trust, I now have the time to enjoy the many exciting exhibitions which take place close to home.

Boundary changes have altered the York for which I was elected. Julian Sturdy MP has now taken over part of my former constituency. He is a very worthy successor and I hope he enjoys his years at Westminster as much as I did.



In response to Vice-Chairman Elizabeth Peacock's question in a former edition of Order Order, **Peter Bruinvels** has sent the following letter:

**From: Canon Peter BRUINVELS FRSA  
Governor of The Church Commissioners**



 THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND  
CHURCH  
COMMISSIONERS

**Dear Sally**

I can re-assure Elizabeth that I am fine and remain a Governor of The Church Commissioners, serving also on its Board and Pastoral Committee. I am Deputy Chairman of its Nominations and Governance Committee and also of the General Synod Parliamentary Legislative Committee. I remain a Member of General Synod [since 1985]. I am a Canon of Guildford Cathedral and Vice President and Chairman of The House of Laity of Guildford Diocesan Synod since 2003.

I serve with Frank Field MP as a Commissioner on the Cathedral Fabrics Commission for England as well as The Legislative Committee. I am Chairman of Governors / Interim Executive Board of two Church Schools, including one just out of "Special Measures" and a Senior *Ofsted* Inspector of Anglican Schools. I am also Chairman of Whitelands College (Roehampton University) and a Council Member of Roehampton University, also chairing its Christian Ethos Committee.

I am Principal of Peter Bruinvels Associates - Media Management and Public Affairs Consultants, which I founded in 1982, as well as Managing Editor of Bruinvels News & Media.

Outside the Church and the world of Public Relations, I am County Field Officer (CEO) Surrey for The Royal British Legion handling the annual Poppy Appeal (£1,035m raised so far in 2010/11) and the Welfare of servicemen and ex-servicemen and women (455 men and women helped in 2010/11).

My Public Appointments have included or include being an Independent Lay Chairman - NHS Complaints Procedure Independent Review Board (SE) hearing complaints against Doctors, Nurses and Hospitals; Legal Advisory Member - Clergy Disciplinary Tribunal Set-up Group; Adjudicator - School Admissions; Member of the C of E Parliamentary Legislative and Ecclesiastical Committees. Member of Court - York St John University and Sussex University. Chairman - Guildford Diocesan Board of Education. From 1994 - 1999, I also served as a Legal Member / Adjudicator on both the Child Support (CSAT) and Social Security (SSAT) Appeals Tribunals.

My other Public Appointments apart from Church Appointments include being a Member of SE Veterans and War Pensions Committee since 2003 and an elected Member of the Surrey Assembly.

I am married to Alison and have two daughters - Alexandra (25) who has recently graduated from the College of Law and is now in her final year training as a Solicitor and Georgie (22) who having read Physiology and Anatomical Science at Bristol University, is now working for UK Anti-Doping in London. We still live in Dorking.

It goes without saying really - but I still miss Parliament.

With kind regards

Yours sincerely

*Peter Bruinvels.*



## LORD AND LADY JUDD'S GOLDEN WEDDING CELEBRATION

### Syd Rapson writes:

Life peer Frank Judd and his wife Christine celebrated 50 years of marriage in the Cholmondeley Room and Terrace on Friday 22nd July. The actual date of their Golden Anniversary was in August but they chose a date which was most convenient for all their guests.

Frank was elected for Portsmouth West in 1966 and re-elected for Portsmouth North, following boundary changes, holding the seat until 1979. Phyllis and I were sub-agents for Frank and we

have been friends of both Christine and Frank ever since our first meeting. We remember vividly when he was defeated. Frank said to me that night, "the fight back starts now and with you". Little did I know that 18 years later, in 1997, I would win back Portsmouth North for Labour.

The Golden Wedding lunch was a grand occasion with people from all over the UK, and some from the USA and France. The couple's family enjoyed every moment. Many people spoke lovingly of the happy couple, and Neil Kinnock replied on behalf of the guests.

He was, as always, witty and generous in his praise.

Frank gave a very moving speech in which he rightly praised Christine and talked about their lifelong commitment to the poor and underprivileged. Their work for Africa is renowned and neither has lost their enthusiasm to do more. They have been a great team over 50 years of marriage. Very few couples could cope with such enormous political involvement without a deep rooted love for each other.

I am sure that all Frank's fellow Association Members send him and Chris sincere congratulations for their first 50 years of marriage and warm good wishes for the future.

## FROM THE PAST...

**We want your stories, reminiscences and anecdotes for a fun page. To set you off, what about this one from Association member John Marshall?**

Former well-known MP Harmor Nicholls represented Peterborough for many years, once with a majority of only 3. However, he did not always want to attend the Peterborough show and missed every second one. When he was not there he always arranged to be called so that there would be an announcement: "Would Mr Harmor Nicholls please report to the Secretary's tent to take a call from 10 Downing Street?". For weeks after constituents

would say "sorry I missed you at the Show as I know you were there!".

**Vice-Chairman Elizabeth Peacock offers this item from the House Diary in January 1987:**

Mr John Carlisle, Conservative MP for Luton North, had an uncomfortable experience when he visited his local shop the other Sunday morning to purchase some cans of beer for impending guests.

The shopkeeper confronted him in a less than obliging spirit, observing severely: "Sir, you above all others should know that I am forbidden to sell

you beer before mid-day on a Sunday. And since you were one of the MPs who voted down the Sunday shopping bill, sir, I would have expected you to be aware of the restrictions you have helped to perpetuate. What is more, sir if I may say so, largely because of your action, I am having inspectors round morning, noon and night to make sure I am sticking rigidly to the law."

Mr Carlisle stood there, shamed into silence, praying the floor would swallow him up. But this merciless purveyor of goods had still not finished with him.

His final withering thrust was "And how many cans was it sir?"

# ON PRIVATE MEMBERS' BILLS

**David Watkins**, MP for Consett 1966 – 1983 writes:

Any MP who enters the ballot for Private Members' Bills, stands more chance of getting a ticket for the Olympics than getting a bill on to the statute book. Even if lucky in the ballot, he or she faces an obstacle race which gets progressively more difficult.

I had the extraordinary good luck to come up twice in the ballot and I managed to get the bills through in each case.

In 1968 I came 26 out of 27 and decided to introduce a bill to make insurance compulsory for employers' liability. I had little hope of getting it into law, but saw it as a move to publicise the subject.

Second Reading was objected to twice, but on the third Friday a cue was missed and the bill was unexpectedly in line for the committee stage. Initially the government opposed it but the Lord Chancellor, Gerald Gardiner, said he was strongly in favour of it in principle. There was then a furious and protracted row over which department should handle it. Barbara Castle at Employment didn't want to know. There was a cunning plan to pass it to Social Security because it involved insurance but Dick Crossman objected. Harold Wilson, faced with two feuding cabinet ministers, ordered it should go to Dick and that Norman Pentland, a junior minister, should kill it in committee.

Norman said he would resign if forced to do so, and Dick, said that despite the PM's orders, his department would work on the bill if I agreed to adjourn the committee for a week.

Ron Brown was pursuing an insurance company over compensation for the deaths of 19 workers and he ferociously attacked the company chairman, a member of the House of Lords. However, the bill survived the Lords and became the Employer's Liability (Compulsory Insurance) Act 1969.

In 1975 I was astonished to come up again in the ballot, 6 out of 20. I introduced an industrial common ownership bill, to provide a proper legal definition and modest financial support for worker owned cooperatives. Private Members' Bills cannot include public expenditure, but we took a calculated gamble because the government had promised a cooperative development agency in its election manifesto.

Once again I faced an initially hostile government, although after much lobbying they did come round to lukewarm support. The Conservative Party were divided, but Norman Tebbit who led for them gave his support.



*I had the extraordinary good luck to come up twice in the ballot and I managed to get the bills through in each case.*

After three months of frantic negotiations, the government finally tabled the money resolution only two days before the committee was due to meet. There was uproar from the Opposition and an angry debate started half an hour after midnight, ten hours before the committee was due to sit.

The minister was Leslie Huckfield and he attempted to move it on the nod causing Norman Tebbit to make a long, truculent speech, leaving me to be called only ten minutes before the end of the debate. The money resolution was agreed without a vote and Norman didn't obstruct the further proceedings. In fairness, he generously congratulated me on the "well justified triumph" of seeing the bill reach the statute book.

Report and Third Reading were set for the 16 July 1976 and arriving at the House half an hour after start of business, I saw the Deputy Chief Whip, Walter Harrison, who came rushing out of the Chamber to tell me that the bill had gone through. The business had collapsed and Walter, a past master in procedure, had simply nodded it through.

As a postscript, the governments which had initially opposed both bills went on to claim credit for them in their manifestos in each of the General Elections that followed. But it didn't do them much good because they lost both!



# OBITUARIES



## BOB LITHERLAND

23 June 1930 to 13 May 2011

MP for Manchester Central 1979 – 1997

**I knew and worked with Bob in the late 70s and early 80s. In Manchester he was saluted as an exemplary politician and a proper**

**Mancunian, self deprecating and always rounding off a conversation with a quip or a joke.**

As a boy he had had trials for Manchester United Juniors and he would have enjoyed the long success achieved by that club. A former bookbinder, he joined Manchester City Council in 1970. One of his positions was as Chairman of the Direct Works Committee which helped provide Manchester with much needed council housing. He uncovered a cement company price fixing cartel which he saw as "the private sector at its worst".

Bob won the seat of Manchester Central in a by-election in September 1979, retiring in 1997. He was the epitome of a community politician who had not envisaged ending up at Westminster, but he was so highly respected and hard working on behalf of his constituents that he was selected from a very strong short list.

He was married for more than 60 years to Edna and they had two children, five grandchildren and three great grandchildren. His grand daughter was born on the day he was elected to parliament and he was pictured on the front page of the Manchester Evening News in the hospital still wearing his rosette.

Bob loved being at Westminster and was a loyal party member. The Bob Litherlands of this world carried the Labour torch through thick and thin. He is remembered as a good man.

*Ted Graham*



## LORD BOSTON

21 March 1930 to 23 July 2011

MP for Faversham 1964 – 1970

**Terry Boston had careers in broadcasting, the law and of course politics. He joined the Labour Party in 1946, and in 1950 he served on**

**the committee of the International Union of Socialist Youth.**

He did his National Service in the RAF then studied law at King's College. He joined the BBC's External Services in 1957, and by 1960 was a current affairs producer, most notably working on the programme "Law in Action". He was called to the Bar in 1960.

But his first love was politics and having fought and lost Wokingham in the 1959 election, in June 1964 he won the by-election in the marginal seat of Faversham, four months before the general election which saw Labour win under Harold Wilson. Terry comfortably retained his seat and was respected as a very conscientious MP, campaigning against a proposal to site London's third airport on the Isle of Sheppey.

He was appointed as the government's pairing whip in 1969. But he stayed in the Commons for just six years, losing his seat in 1970 when Ted Heath came to power.

Terry returned to the Bar, but then in 1974 he joined Wilson's "kitchen cabinet" and in 1976 was rewarded with a life peerage. In the Lords he was appointed as Minister of State at the Home Office, for just five months before the 1979 election.

So it was then back to broadcasting as Chairman of TVS, standing down in 1990 when politics again became a large part of his life. He was Deputy Speaker in the Lords from 1991 to 2008 and Chairman of Committees, responsible for the administration of the House from 1994 to 2000. He was a popular figure in the Lords and in 2006 stood in the election for the first Lord Speaker, being defeated by Helene Hayman.

Terry Boston was Patron of the African Prisons Project, "an international non-governmental organisation with a mission to bring dignity and hope to men, women and children in African prisons through health, education, justice and reintegration"



## LT COL JAMES ALLASON OBE

6 September 1912 to 16 June 2011

MP for Hemel Hempstead 1959 – 1974

**The oldest member of our Association, James Allason died in June aged 98. A comprehensive account of a life “full of incident and achievement” would**

**cover many pages but lack of space means this tribute remains brief.**

James Allason was born in 1912, the son of Brigadier General Walter Allason DSO & Bar. His mother died when he was a baby, having slipped and fallen on the stairs while carrying (and saving) him. He studied at the Imperial Service College and the Royal Military Academy, Woowich. He served as an officer in the British Army for 24 years from 1930 to 1954. He was a gifted mathematician and while serving in India he addressed the problem of using magnetic compasses with tanks, inventing a sun compass for use on that continent.

He retired from the army in 1953 and won the selection for the seat of Hemel Hempstead against, among others,

Margaret Thatcher. In 1960 he was appointed PPS to John Profumo. He believed that Profumo had acted honourably, and in 2007 after Profumo's death in 2006, James published his own account of events in his memoir “Ringside Seat”.

He was a front bench spokesman on housing and argued for the policy of enabling council house tenants to purchase their properties, a policy later adopted by Margaret Thatcher which many believe greatly contributed to her electoral success.

When Edward Heath called a snap election “Who Governs Britain” in February 1974, James Allason's majority was cut to just 187 by Robin Corbett, who had also run him close in 1966. The following October he lost the seat by just 485 votes.

James Allason was a very talented bridge player and a remarkable sportsman – an outstanding polo player, a skier, a motor racer, a yachtsman and swimmer. He continued skiing until the age of 86 and played bridge to the end.

**Memorial Service at St Margaret's Church, 12 noon, 2nd December.**



## JACK THOMPSON

27 August 1928 to 21 July 2011

MP for Wansbeck 1983 – 1997

**John Thompson, always known as Jack, was the Labour MP for Wansbeck for fourteen years, from 1983 to his retirement at the 1997 election. In 1990 Neil**

**Kinnock appointed him as Labour's Northern whip, a post he held for seven years.**

Jack was born in 1928, the son of a clerk, and lived in North Seaton, Ashington with his wife Margaret, working as an electrical engineer in local pits in Northumberland, before his political career. He had joined the Labour Party in 1960 and from 1965 was secretary/agent in his constituency.

He was a member of the Northumberland County Council from 1973 to 1985, and was its Leader from 1981 to 1983 before his election to parliament.

He was known as a thoroughly decent man, and was described as an “absolute gentleman” by a Conservative

opponent. He was a diligent constituency MP and is best remembered for his strong campaign against plans to build a nuclear power station at Druridge Bay, seeing it not only as an environmental threat, but also as a threat to the coal industry.

A mineworkers' union sponsored MP, in 1984 Jack joined with other MPs in a demonstration in the Commons, forcing suspension of the sitting, over deductions from supplementary benefit for striking miners' dependants. He also attacked Margaret Thatcher's government for the “absolute folly” of breaking up the electricity industry prior to privatisation.

During his time in parliament, Jack was a member of the Council of Europe and the Western European Union. He chaired the Council's Fisheries subcommittee and the Union's Rules and Privileges Committee. He was a member of the Education, Science and Arts Select Committee from 1985 to 1987.

Jack and Margaret Thompson were married in 1952. She survives him with their son and daughter

Special half price offer  
open to all members of  
the Association of Former  
Members of Parliament



Buy an annual subscription for **only £97.50** (RRP £195)

To take up this exclusive offer,  
please call Sarah Kinnane on **020 7091 7682**



NEXT ALL MEMBER MEETING:  
MONDAY 14th NOVEMBER, 4.00pm,  
GRAND COMMITTEE ROOM  
(off Westminster Hall).

A dinner has been arranged for that evening at the Union Jack Club. Please use the form below if you wish to attend.



I would like to attend the dinner at the Union Jack Club on Monday the 14th November, 6.30 for 7.00pm.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

I will be accompanied by my partner: \_\_\_\_\_

I enclose a cheque for £25/£50 in payment, made payable to the Association of Former MPs.

Please indicate if a vegetarian option is required:

Please return this form, together with your payment, by **1st November** to:

Sally Grocott, Association of Former MPs, House of Commons, Room G13, 1 Parliament St, London, SW1A 2NE