

**Gavin Newlands (Paisley and Renfrewshire North) (SNP)**

If he will list his official engagements for Wednesday 9 June.

**The Prime Minister (Boris Johnson)**

I am delighted that the UK is hosting the leaders of the world's greatest democracies at the G7 summit in Cornwall this week. This is the first meeting between G7 leaders since the start of the pandemic. This week is Carers Week, and I am sure the whole House will wish to join me in thanking care workers and everyone caring for family, friends and loved ones. Their selflessness and devotion to helping others is an inspiration to us all. This morning I had meetings with ministerial colleagues and others. In addition to my duties in this House, I shall have further such meetings later today.

**Gavin Newlands**

I very much echo the comments of the Prime Minister on the lot of unpaid carers. After plenty of warm words for the victims of fire and rehire, including from the Prime Minister himself, the Government yesterday announced their legislative response to the ACAS report, which is to do absolutely nothing. They will do nothing for the hundreds of thousands already threatened or, as the ACAS report points out, for the many more who are anticipated to face fire and rehire when the furlough scheme ends. They should be thoroughly ashamed of themselves. It is increasingly clear that this Government will not protect workers, so will they devolve employment law to Holyrood so that the Scottish Government can?

**The Prime Minister**

Actually, this Government have been absolutely clear that it is unacceptable to use the threat of firing and rehiring as a negotiating tactic. We welcome the ACAS report, which finds that fire and rehire should be used only in limited circumstances, such as to prevent job losses, when other options have been exhausted. We have therefore asked ACAS to produce clearer guidance to help employers with other options.

**Ben Bradley (Mansfield) (Con)**

We are on a mission in the east midlands to create 84,000 jobs for local people. We are legislating for planning powers for our development corporation, which will work in tandem with our unique inland freeport. Decisions about HS2, and specifically the Toton hub, will have a huge impact on whether we can deliver on our vision for the east midlands. Will the Prime Minister meet me urgently, so that we can ensure we can deliver on that commitment to local people?

**The Prime Minister**

The east midlands could have no more fervent or effective a champion, and I congratulate my hon. Friend on his vision for the east midlands freeport and all the benefits that rail integration will bring. I know that he is about to have a meeting with ministerial colleagues to determine how the integrated rail plan can work with HS2 best to achieve his objectives.

**Keir Starmer (Holborn and St Pancras) (Lab)**

This is the first PMQs since the Prime Minister and Carrie got married, so may I offer my warm congratulations to the Prime Minister and his wife and wish them a happy life together? I have to say that I admire the way they managed to keep it secret. I join the Prime Minister in his comments about Carers Week. I also send our deepest sympathies to the four people killed in Sunday's terror attack in Canada. It was, as the Canadian Prime Minister said, an attack motivated by hatred and Islamophobia, and we must all unite against that at home and abroad. May I ask the Prime Minister to pass on our thoughts and condolences to the Canadian Prime Minister when he sees him later this week?

Why does the Prime Minister think that his now former education adviser, Kevan Collins, described the Government's education plan as a "half-hearted approach" that

"risks failing hundreds of thousands of pupils"

and that

"does not come close to meeting the scale"

of what is needed?

### **The Prime Minister**

First of all, I want to thank Kevan Collins for his work, but above all I want to thank pupils, parents and teachers for everything they have done throughout this pandemic. The struggle has been enormous and, in addition to the extra £14 billion we have committed—taking per pupil funding up to £4,000 in primary schools and up to £5,150 in secondary schools—we are now putting another £3 billion into educational catch-up with the biggest tutoring programme anywhere in the world, and it is based on the best evidence that we could find and that Sir Kevan could supply.

### **Keir Starmer**

Let me get this right. In February, the Prime Minister appoints an expert to come up with a catch-up plan for education—a highly respected expert, who consults widely and comes up with a plan—and the Treasury baulks at it and says, "We'll only provide 10%." Yes, one tenth of what is needed. The Prime Minister, whatever he says, rolled over and children lose out. So much for levelling up.

Let me help the Prime Minister with the numbers. The funding he announced last week is about £50 per child per year. Even if you add in previous announcements, in England it is only £310 per child over four years. The US has a catch-up plan worth £1,600 per child, and in the Netherlands it is £2,500. So can the Prime Minister explain why, when he was told by the expert he appointed that only an ambitious, fully funded catch-up plan would do, he came up with something that, in the words of the same expert, is too small, too narrow and too slow?

### **The Prime Minister**

I think the right hon. and learned Gentleman needs to catch up on his mathematics because, in addition to the £14 billion I have already mentioned, there was already another £1.5 billion of catch-up funding. This is a £3 billion catch-up plan, just for starters, and it includes the biggest programme of tuition—one-to-one, one-to-two, one-to-three tutorials—anywhere in the world.

We all know there are schools and classrooms in this country where children are getting private tuition, thanks to the hard work of their parents. The right hon. and learned Gentleman asks about levelling up. What we want to do is to get on the side of all the kids who do not have access to that tuition and to support them. That is what I mean by levelling up.

### **Keir Starmer**

Who does the Prime Minister think he is kidding? He asked Kevan Collins to tell him what was necessary to catch up. Kevan Collins told him, and he said no. Who does he think he is kidding? The Chancellor's decision—I assume it was the Chancellor's decision; it always is—to hold back the investment that is needed is a completely false economy, as the long-term costs are likely to be at least £100 billion, and probably more. Who will be hardest hit? Kids from disadvantaged backgrounds.

If the Government do not change course, this will hold Britain back for a generation. Here is the difference between us and them: when Labour says education is our No. 1 priority, we mean it. That is why we published a bold £15 billion plan for every child to catch up on education, and we are putting it to a vote this afternoon. If the Prime Minister is really serious about this, he would back the motion. Will he do so?

**The Prime Minister**

Mr Speaker, I will tell you the difference between us and the party opposite: we put in the tough measures that are needed to give kids across the country a better education. When we rolled out the academies programme, which has driven up standards, who opposed it? They did. When we put in tough measures to ensure discipline in schools, they opposed it. At the last election, they even campaigned to get rid of Ofsted, which is so vital. [Interruption.] They did. He stood on a manifesto to get rid of Ofsted.

Will he now say that he supports not only our tuition programme but our radical programme to support teachers with better training? We are now putting in not only a starting salary for teachers of £30,000, which we have introduced, but another £400 million to support better training for teachers. That is what we are backing in our party. These are serious, costed reforms, based on evidence, unlike anything he is producing. [Interruption.]

**Mr Speaker**

Order. Can we have just a little less shouting? I remind the Prime Minister that this is Prime Minister's questions, and it is not about the agenda of the last general election. [Interruption.] Ofsted was not the question. I am not interested in what the Opposition put on the agenda; I am more interested in you answering the question.

**Keir Starmer**

Mr Speaker, let me take this very slowly for the Prime Minister. The Collins review, commissioned by the Government, was very clear: if the Collins proposed action is not taken, the attainment gap will rise by between 10% and 24%. That was on a slide shown to the Prime Minister last week. He talks about the various measures, so let us look at this more closely. Which part of our plan—the plan being voted on this afternoon—does he oppose? Is it breakfast clubs for every child? Does he oppose that? Is it quality mental health support in every school? Does he oppose that? Is it more tutoring for every child who needs it? Does he oppose that? Or is it additional investment for children who have suffered the most? Which part of our plan does the Prime Minister object to? If he does not object to it and he agrees with it, why does he not vote for it?

**The Prime Minister**

With great respect, Mr Speaker, I do think I am entitled to draw attention to what the Labour party stood on at the last election. They have not yet repudiated it; they did want to get rid of Ofsted. But I will tell the right hon. and learned Gentleman that if he is now saying that he supports our tutoring programme—that is what I understood from him just now—that is a good thing, because hitherto what has happened is that the kids of well-off parents, thanks to their hard work, have been able to rely on private tutoring. What the Government are now doing is coming in on the side of all the other kids who do not get access to that tutoring—6 million children will have access to tuition thanks to this programme. It is a fantastic thing; it is a revolution in education for this country. If he is now saying that he supports it, that is a good thing, although I have learnt in the course of the last year that his support can sometimes be evanescent.

**Keir Starmer**

The Prime Minister pretends he is here for the other kids. The report says that the attainment gap will go up by between 10% and 24% if the action is not taken, and he has just rejected it. How can he be on the side of the other kids? Come off it! We have been here before: free school meals—U-turn; exams fiasco—U-turn; and now catch-up. The Prime Minister has been all over the place when it comes to education, and he is on the wrong side of it again.

I now want to turn to this week's G7, which will be the first major summit since the recovery. The UK needs to lead, not just to host. The priority must, of course, be a clear plan to vaccinate the world. As the delta variant shows, nobody is safe from this virus until everybody is safe. The Prime Minister has made big

promises on this, but it needs a truly global effort to make it happen, so will he take the lead at the G7 and do whatever is necessary to make global vaccinations a reality?

### **The Prime Minister**

Yes, indeed. What the people of this country also understand is that not only were we able to give one of the first authorisations for the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine, but, thanks to the deal the Government did between the Oxford scientists and AstraZeneca, we were able to ensure that one in three of the 1.5 billion doses that have been distributed around the world are the Oxford-AstraZeneca vaccine. That is global Britain in action, to say nothing of the billion vaccines that we hope to raise from the G7 this week.

### **Keir Starmer**

That would sound a lot better if the Prime Minister was not the only G7 leader cutting his aid budget. I hear what he says about vaccines, but we also need clear global agreement and global funding. Hundreds of former leaders, businesses and development groups have called for exactly that kind of leadership at the G7, and that is what we need to see from the Prime Minister this weekend. The G7, bilateral discussions with President Biden and the possibility of a new Government in Israel also provide a real chance to restart a meaningful middle east peace process. The appalling violence recently, which killed 63 children in Gaza and two children in Israel, shows just how urgent this is.

For too many people in Palestine, the promise of an end to the occupation and a recognised sovereign Palestinian state feels more distant than ever, so will the Prime Minister take the opportunity this weekend to press for renewed international agreement to finally recognise the state of Palestine, alongside a safe and secure Israel; to stop the expansion of illegal settlements; and to get a meaningful peace process back up and running?

### **The Prime Minister**

It has been a long-standing objective of this Government, and I think it is common ground across the House, that the solution for the middle east peace process is a two-state solution. We continue to press for that, and I have made that position plain in my conversations with both the Palestinian Authority and of course with Israel.

The right hon. and learned Gentleman attacked the Government for failing to be sufficiently ambitious in our overseas aid spending—I think I heard him say that in that compendious question. [Interruption.] He is gesturing at the Government Benches. Under this Government we have spent more and continue to spend more than Labour ever did under Blair and under Brown, and even when they were spending money on Brazilian dancers in Hackney—which is what they did—to raise consciousness of global poverty. We are spending £10 billion a year at a time of acute financial difficulty for this country, and I think the British people know that that is the right priority for this country. If Labour Members want a vote on that matter, I remind them that the people of this country had an opportunity last month to vote on the way the Government were handling things and the balance that we were striking, and they adjudicated firmly in favour of the Government. The Opposition pontificate and prevaricate and procrastinate—

### **Mr Speaker**

Felicity Kendal, come on! [Laughter.] Buchan even!

### **Felicity Buchan (Kensington) (Con)**

Thank you, Mr Speaker. You have made me slightly older. I am proud of my Government's record on the environment and the fact that we have cut emissions at the fastest rate of any G7 country. I welcome the fact that the Lancaster West estate in my constituency has benefited from a green grant of almost £20 million to decarbonise. Does my right hon. Friend agree that we need to build back better in a green way and in a way that levels up all parts of the United Kingdom?

**The Prime Minister**

Yes, I do—my hon. Friend is absolutely right. That is why we have committed a total of £3.8 billion to fund energy improvement in the performance of social rented homes in particular.

**Ian Blackford (Ross, Skye and Lochaber) (SNP)**

I am sure we are all looking forward to the European championships kicking off later this week. May I take this opportunity to wish all the best to our country, Scotland—to Steve Clarke and the team—and to remind the team that it is time for heroes?

Later this week, the Prime Minister will walk into the G7 summit as the only leader who is cutting development aid to the world's poorest. At the very moment when global leadership is needed more than ever, this Tory Government are walking away from millions still struggling from the covid pandemic and a poverty pandemic. The Prime Minister has been hiding on this issue for months. This is a Government on the run from their own moral and legal responsibilities and on the run from their own Back Benchers. The Prime Minister cannot hide from this issue any longer and he cannot run from democracy in this House. Will he stand up today and commit to a straight vote in this House on his inhumane cuts, as demanded by the Speaker? Prime Minister, it is a very simple question: yes or no?

**The Prime Minister**

I wish all the very best to Scotland and England and all the home nations that may be playing—I do not know whether the right hon. Gentleman is going to reciprocate, Mr Speaker, but you never know. It was worth a shot, I thought.

**Ian Blackford**

indicated assent.

**The Prime Minister**

Oh, he did. Good—that's nice of him.

Anyway, the answer is clear: as I said to the right hon. and learned Member for Holborn and St Pancras (Keir Starmer), the people of this country were given a vote on this and many other matters very recently and they adjudicated very firmly in favour of the balance that the Government are striking. We are in very, very difficult financial times, but you should not believe the lefty propaganda, Mr Speaker, that you hear from those on the Opposition Benches. We are spending £10 billion overseas. We have actually increased—[Interruption.] All they want to do is run this country down when we have increased spending on girls' education alone to half a billion pounds—almost half a billion pounds. That is a fantastic sum of money to be spending in difficult times and we should be proud.

**Ian Blackford**

I have to say that I do not think I ever heard the previous Prime Minister, the right hon. Member for Maidenhead (Mrs May), call the left propagandists. The simple fact of the matter is that every single party, every single Member of this House, stood on a manifesto commitment of 0.7%. The Prime Minister has reneged on that, and Mr Speaker has indicated that the Government should allow a vote on it. It is pretty basic stuff. After a year dealing with the deadly virus, why cannot the Prime Minister get this? In a pandemic, no one is safe until everyone is safe. Now is the time to support each other, not to walk away from those in need. People are dying and they need our help. The Prime Minister has the nerve to brag about the Government's support for the vulnerable, and at the very same time he is slashing £4.5 billion from the world's poorest. In the week of the G7, what kind of world leader washes their hands of responsibility by cutting water and hygiene projects by more than 80% in the middle of a pandemic?

**The Prime Minister**

I may say that I think that the last contribution was absolutely disgraceful. The people of this country have gone through a very difficult time.

We have had to spend £407 billion supporting jobs, families and livelihoods throughout the country, and yet we are continuing to support international vaccination. This country has contributed £1.6 billion to Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance and I think £548 million to COVAX. Let me just remind the right hon. Gentleman of the statistic that I mentioned earlier. One in three of the vaccines being distributed around the world to the poorest and the neediest come from the Oxford-AstraZeneca supply, thanks to the deal that this Government did—or does the name “Oxford-AstraZeneca” continue to stick in his craw?

### **Scott Benton (Blackpool South) (Con)**

I welcome plans outlined by the Education Secretary last week that will oversee a tutoring revolution in this country—a proven way to help the most disadvantaged children to catch up. Will the Prime Minister confirm that this is just one part of our wider plan to ensure that no child misses out as a consequence of the disruption caused by this pandemic?

### **The Prime Minister**

Yes. I thank my hon. Friend, because the whole point of the tutoring programme is that it is evidence-based. Every tutoring programme—there are 6 million children who can benefit—is equivalent to three to five months of educational catch-up. We will also be looking at increasing time in schools. I hope that the loyal Opposition will use their influence with their paymasters in the teaching unions to encourage them in that objective.

### **Colum Eastwood (Foyle) (SDLP)**

The Prime Minister knows full well that the best way to reduce checks in the Irish sea is make do a Swiss-style sanitary and phytosanitary agreement with the European Union. So far, he has decided not to do that. Why is he prioritising cheap, dodgy beef from Australia over the concerns of the people of Northern Ireland and reducing checks in the Irish sea?

### **The Prime Minister**

No, what we are prioritising is the right and the ability of the people of Northern Ireland to have access—as they should, freely and uninterrupted—to goods and services from the whole of the UK, and we are working to ensure that we protect the territorial and economic integrity of our country. That is what matters.

### **Kevin Hollinrake (Thirsk and Malton) (Con)**

The Prime Minister's excellent First Homes policy will allow tens of thousands of key workers and local first-time buyers to buy a home every year at a discount of up to 50% on the market price. Will he consider turbocharging that policy by establishing a national land commission to assemble public sector land to facilitate the development of potentially hundreds of thousands of more half-price homes so that more people can see the benefits of home ownership?

### **The Prime Minister**

I thank my hon. Friend. Last year, in spite of the difficulties we faced, we delivered the highest number of new homes for over 30 years, but his point is an extremely good one. As all hon. Members know, we must find better, faster ways of releasing publicly owned land—brownfield sites—for development, and that is exactly why we are looking at the suggestion he makes.

### **Mr Barry Sheerman (Huddersfield) (Lab/Co-op)**

In his very first speech, the Prime Minister mentioned levelling up. My constituents want to know when it is going to start. I understand that he has lived a life of privilege and does not know much about the public, state sector; he knows a lot about the private sector in education. What are the markers for success? The fact

of the matter is that the head of his own Industrial Strategy Council says that his levelling up, with these resources and with this management team, will not work and will not be successful, and my local Kirklees Council says it is so complex that nothing is flowing down to the grassroots. When will we see the first signs of genuine levelling up in our country?

### **The Prime Minister**

What we are seeing across the country is people responding to massive investment—a £640 billion programme of investment in roads, in schools, in hospitals, in policing—that, bit by bit, is transforming people's lives, hopes and opportunities. That is fundamentally the difference between the hon. Gentleman's side of the argument and ours. We believe that there is talent, genius and flair around the whole country but opportunity is not evenly distributed. That is our ambition and that is what we are doing with our campaign for levelling up. If he is now saying, by the way, that he supports what we are doing on the tutoring revolution—because I know he is a great educational expert—then I am glad to hear it.

### **Brendan Clarke-Smith (Bassetlaw) (Con)**

My constituents in Bassetlaw have been the victims of illegal encampments, most recently at Farr Park in Worksop, where local taxpayers have been left with a clean-up bill running into thousands of pounds, and residents have been left feeling powerless following a sustained period of antisocial behaviour in the locality. Could the Prime Minister tell us what steps we are now taking to ensure that we stop this happening in the future and allow residents and local authorities to take back control of trespassing?

### **The Prime Minister**

The Police, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, my hon. Friend will be pleased to know, introduces a new criminal offence where a person who resides or intends to reside on land in a vehicle without permission and has caused or is likely to cause significant damage or distress can face new penalties. Guess who voted against that Bill on a three-line Whip? Does anybody know? It was the right hon. and learned Member for Holborn and St Pancras and his entire party.

### **Fabian Hamilton (Leeds North East) (Lab)**

A few years ago, one of my elderly constituents with late-stage dementia was married by a man who had befriended her. Upon her death, the man subsequently inherited the whole of her estate because under the law as it stands their marriage had revoked her previous will. Hundreds of people since then have contacted me citing similar experiences, but three Registrars General have refused to meet me to discuss it. So will the Prime Minister now act to bring this cruel exploitation to an end?

### **The Prime Minister**

I thank the hon. Gentleman for raising the concern that he has and the injustice that he mentions. I will make sure that he gets a meeting as soon as possible with the relevant Minister in the Justice Department.

### **Mr David Jones (Clwyd West) (Con)**

According to newspaper reports, the European Union is unhappy with the negotiating style of the right hon. Lord Frost. Does my right hon. Friend agree that in fact Lord Frost is doing a superb job negotiating in the national interest? Does he further agree with Lord Frost's assessment that the Northern Ireland protocol, as currently applied, is unsustainable and that matters would be considerably easier if the European Union were to adopt a more pragmatic approach rather than the purist approach it is adopting at the moment?

### **The Prime Minister**

I thank my right hon. Friend and I agree with him completely, because I think that David Frost—Lord Frost—is doing an outstanding job. I venture to say that he is the greatest Frost since the Great Frost of 1709 or whenever it was.

**Andrew Gwynne (Denton and Reddish) (Lab)**

The Prime Minister has seen his adviser on ethics and standards resign over his failure to uphold the ministerial code, he has seen the head of the Government Legal Department resign over his failure to uphold international law, and he has seen his adviser on education catch-up resign over his failure to provide proper funding for children. Why does the Prime Minister think this keeps happening to him?

**The Prime Minister**

I am indebted to everybody who serves the Government in whatever capacity. We have a lot of very tough decisions to make but we will continue to get on with delivering the people's priorities—and by the way, we will continue to ensure that we deliver value for money, that we do not waste taxpayers' money, and that Ministers follow the ministerial code.

**Mrs Theresa May (Maidenhead) (Con)**

In April 1989, 96 Liverpool fans were unlawfully killed at Hillsborough, yet nobody has been successfully prosecuted for their part in those unlawful killings. The most recent trial collapsed, because although it was accepted that police evidence had been altered, as it was evidence to a public inquiry, it did not constitute perversion of the course of justice. Will my right hon. Friend urgently look at the ramifications of that judgment for current and future public inquiries, and ensure that people are given the justice that has been so cruelly denied to the families of the Hillsborough 96?

**The Prime Minister**

I thank my right hon. Friend for her question. Of course, the families of the 96 who died in the Hillsborough disaster and those who were injured have shown tremendous courage and determination. My right hon. Friend raises a particular issue about the recent court case and asks for a review of the law. I can give her the reassurance that we will always consider opportunities to review the law and how it operates if necessary, and we will certainly be looking at the case she describes.

**Peter Grant (Glenrothes) (SNP) [V]**

In just over three years, the directors of Blackmore Bond plc took £46 million of other people's money and made it disappear. Around 2,800 small investors, whose money the directors promised would be secure, now face losing everything. Most of the money—around £26 million—was taken by Blackmore Bond after the Financial Conduct Authority had received compelling evidence from an expert witness who told them that he thought the company was breaking the law, but before the FCA took any decisive action. How many more scandals like that will it take before we have a regulatory environment that is fit for purpose and that offers our constituents proper protection against investment scams?

**The Prime Minister**

I thank the hon. Gentleman for raising that case. I am afraid I had no advance notice of the question and cannot comment on the case, save to say that if he will send me details, we will get back to him as soon as we can.

**Sir David Amess (Southend West) (Con)**

I am delighted that Southend-on-Sea has now been given the opportunity to become a city.

In the '50s, '60s and '70s, a million and a half ladies were forced to give up their babies for adoption. By any standards that was cruel, and the hurt is still felt by those ladies today. Does my right hon. Friend agree that an apology should be given, and that all those involved in the process should acknowledge that forced adoption was wrong?

**The Prime Minister**



I echo my hon. Friend's sentiments about Southend, but also what he says about those who have been affected by forced adoption. The practices that led to forced adoption cannot now occur because the law protects birth parents. He asks for an apology; I can tell him that the agencies involved in forced adoption in the past have apologised for their role—and quite right too.

### **Ian Lavery (Wansbeck) (Lab) [V]**

As eloquently highlighted by my right hon. and learned Friend the Leader of the Opposition, recent reports have revealed that during the pandemic the loss in learning has been absolutely catastrophic. The north-east is once again, sadly, trailing the field, with the loss in some subjects more than double that of other regions. The attainment gap, which has been mentioned, between the most and least affluent areas is potentially set to grow by between 10% and 24%. That is desperate, ye knaa—really desperate. The Government's catch-up funding is quite simply derisory, too small, too narrow, too slow—comments articulated by the former education recovery chief before his unfortunate resignation. Prime Minister, the parents in Wansbeck in my constituency are listening. You have a wonderfully privileged educational background. Can you use it to explain how 20p per day helps kids in my patch catch up?

### **The Prime Minister**

I can tell the hon. Gentleman that, again, I am afraid what he is saying is completely wrong. The sums that we are already investing in education are huge and we have announced a £3 billion additional package of catch-up, investing not just in teacher training—another £400 million to help teachers improve their qualifications as they go up the ladder—but in the biggest tuition programme in the history of this country: the biggest anywhere in the world. That will make a huge difference to young people in Wansbeck and across the country. Many kids are getting private tuition at the moment, but loads are not. We want to level up.

### **Nicola Richards (West Bromwich East) (Con)**

Recently, I met Giani Singh, who 25 years ago founded the Sikh Helpline UK, which is based on West Bromwich High Street. I went to hear about the fantastic work that it has done over the years, supporting the community with advice on issues such as hate crime, domestic violence, bullying, mental health, addiction and more. Will the Prime Minister join me in thanking Giani Ji and the team for their work and wish them the very best of luck with their 350-mile charity bike ride from Edinburgh to West Bromwich next month?

### **The Prime Minister**

I thank my hon. Friend for raising the important work of the Sikh Helpline UK. I am very happy to join her in wishing Giani Singh and the team the very best of luck for their charity bike ride.

### **Jonathan Edwards (Carmarthen East and Dinefwr) (Ind)**

Brexit is quickly turning into a story of betrayals. First, it was the Northern Irish Unionists, then it was the fishermen, and now our farmers face a skewed trade deal with Australia. The big question therefore is: who comes next? Considering that the Trade Remedies Authority wants to cut protections on half of the steel products previously protected by the EU, are our steel industry and the vast supply chain that it sustains next in line?

### **The Prime Minister**

No. I suggest to the hon. Gentleman that once again he is completely missing the dynamism and optimism of so many people I meet in the agricultural sector, who see opportunities for Welsh lamb and Welsh beef around the world. Why is he not thinking of this as an opportunity for exports, instead of cowering in this way? Welsh lamb, Welsh beef and Welsh farmers can do brilliantly from the deals that we are opening up around the world. He should be championing Welsh agriculture and Welsh produce.

### **Claire Coutinho (East Surrey) (Con)**

In East Surrey I have been working with brilliant parish councils in Smallfield, Burstow and Horne to ensure that we can get a better balance on heavy goods vehicle movements, allowing local businesses to thrive but ensuring that residents feel safe. I welcome the Government's work to clamp down on moving traffic offences, but would the Prime Minister also consider taking another look at the powers of the traffic commissioners to ensure that we can find a balance?

### **The Prime Minister**

I thank my hon. Friend for raising this point. Traffic enforcement outside London can only be undertaken by the police, but I will certainly look at the role of the traffic commissioners in the cases that she describes.

### **Mrs Emma Lewell-Buck (South Shields) (Lab)**

"Our greatest national asset"; "Best of this country"; "Record increase in funding"; "Saved my life—no question"; "My No.1 priority"—all things that the Prime Minister said about our NHS. Yet award-winning South Tyneside District Hospital has lost vital services and been told by his Government to make further cuts to remaining services. Later today, I am presenting a petition on behalf of more than 40,000 of my constituents who are against these cuts. Like me, they want him to help us save our hospital and ensure, for once, that he is able to match his rhetoric with some action. Will he?

### **The Prime Minister**

Yes, and all the changes that the hon. Lady mentions will be consulted on in the usual way. I note that Dr Shahid Wahid, the executive medical director of the trust, was recently quoted in the Shields Gazette as saying:

"This is about improving surgical services...It is not about downgrading anything".

The hon. Lady mentions cuts: this Government, this year alone, have given another £92 billion—£92 billion—to support our NHS, on top of the huge commitments that we have already made.

### **Jacob Young (Redcar) (Con)**

Yesterday we had the fantastic announcement of £25 million of investment into Redcar town centre, which will allow us to build a new water sports facility at Coatham, a new indoor activity centre on the Esplanade and give the town a much-needed lift. I am working with the council on other bids for Eston, a tier 6 area, but in the meantime may I invite the Prime Minister to come to the mighty Redcar and see our plans for levelling up our area—and I will even treat him to a lemon top?

### **The Prime Minister**

I thank my hon. Friend, who is a fantastic advocate for the people of Redcar. Thanks at least partly to his advocacy, we have announced a town deal to benefit Redcar and the levelling-up fund will help secure local investment in infrastructure and communities in Redcar. As and when my diary permits, I will be thrilled to join him for what I think he described as a lemon top.

### **Mr Speaker**

I am now suspending the House to enable the necessary arrangements to be made for the next business.