

## **View from the House**

Much hot air and irresponsible newspaper headlines have been generated by the High Court judgment on Article 50 which confirms the principle of parliamentary sovereignty.

Governments cannot bypass Parliament and use the Royal Prerogative to change or take away rights in British law, and by invoking Article 50 without reference to Parliament this government is trying to do just that.

Judges are not trying to overturn the referendum. We should be thankful we do have an independent judiciary. Independent judges stand between the people and government abuse of power. We have a very clear separation of powers: people are elected to parliament on their political views and ideas, therefore our judges must not be politicised and be independent of government.

The Judgement is not about the referendum result. It is about the relationship between Parliament, the Government and the rights of the British people enshrined in law.

Labour respects the decision of the British people to leave the European Union and will not frustrate the process of invoking Article 50 but it is right that Parliament and the public are able to debate and scrutinise the terms of Brexit.

As Shadow Leader of the House it was a delight to welcome the Youth Parliament to the House of Commons for their 8th visit. Young people aged 11-18 filled the Chamber and debated topics chosen through their Make your Mark ballot. Nearly one million young people had voted on topics to debate such as "Votes for 16 and 17 year olds" and "tackling racism and religious discrimination".

The MYPs debated a Better Kinder democracy – concerned about the intolerance that appeared to flow from the EU referendum vote. Debate was passionate and of a high quality. The result of the MYPs vote was that next year they will campaign on 'Votes for over 16s' and 'a Curriculum to prepare us for Life'.

Young elected representatives from across the UK are committing their time to take part in democracy. I encouraged them to continue to lobby for the issues they debated and affirmed MPs would work hard to make our country worthy of them all.

Remembrance Sunday ceremonies I participated in at Walsall Town Centre and Darlaston were well attended. The new Bishop of Lichfield echoed the Royal British Legion's 'Rethink Remembrance' by recognising the sacrifices made not just by those who lost their lives in the Great Wars but also by successive generations. We will remember them.

Valerie Vaz  
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