

## **JUNE 2013**

### **MPs debate Beef Cattle and Sheep (Carbon Footprint)**

Wed, 26 June 2013

#### **Mention**

Kerry McCarthy:

Raj Patel wrote in “Stuffed and Starved”: “The amount of grains fed to US livestock would be enough to feed 840 million people on a plant-based diet. The number of food-insecure people in the world in 2006 was, incidentally, 854 million”.

I also cited figures about the water footprint. It takes 100 times as much water to produce 1 kg of beef as it does to grow 1 kg of vegetables. It takes 2.2 calories of fossil fuel energy to produce a single calorie of plant protein. It takes almost 21 square metres of land to produce 1 kg of beef, if we factor in animal feed, compared with 0.3 square metres to produce 1 kg of vegetables; I could go on. That was a 2006 report, but more recently Professor Mark Sutton, the lead author of a UN environment programme study published in February, entitled “Our Nutrient World”, called for people to become what he called demitarians, and eat half as much meat as they do now. He said: “Unless action is taken increases in pollution and the per capita consumption of energy and animal products will exacerbate nutrient losses, pollution levels and land degradation, further threatening the quality of our water, air and soils, affecting climate and biodiversity”.

In 2009, a report was produced called “How Low Can We Go?”. It was co-authored by the World Wide Fund for Nature and the Food Climate Research Network set up by Dr Tara Garnett, who is now at the **university of Oxford**. It gave scenarios in which cuts in food system emissions would mean we could reduce the total UK carbon footprint by 20%—that is, make a 70% cut in the UK food carbon footprint, which is currently about 30% of the UK total. It concluded:

“A reduction in consumption of livestock products could play a significant role in any deep and long-term abatement strategy” to cut greenhouse gas emissions “from the UK’s food chain.”

### **MPs debate Careers Advice in Schools**

Mon, 24 June 2013 | Debate - Adjournment and General

#### **Mentions**

Gordon Birtwistle (Burnley) (LD): I want to share some examples with the House of the problems there are with our careers advice provision. I spoke to a young lady who went to college in Blackpool. When it came to choosing a career, she said she wanted to be an engineer. Her teachers and careers advisers said, “You’re far too clever to be an engineer. You should be a doctor or a lawyer.” She said, “Well, I can’t stand the sight of blood and the last thing I want to be is a lawyer.” She got a job as an apprentice at BAE Systems at Warton and last year was awarded the apprentice of the year award. BAE Systems sent her to university and she is now on a fast track to management within the company.

The second example is of a young gentleman who went to college in Chester. When he left Chester, he went to **Oxford**. He was at **Oxford university** for three months and hated it—he

thought it was a complete waste of time and that he was spending money for no return—so he left and got a job as an apprentice at Airbus. When he had served his time at Airbus, the company sent him to university, and he is now a section leader with Airbus. He was pleased to tell me that he had just bought a brand-new Mini and had been delighted to go around on a Friday night, pick up his **Oxford** friends and take them out for a drink. He had been earning while learning—that is our new apprentice slogan—and so could afford to buy a new Mini, while all his friends who went to **Oxford** were having problems, could not get a job and had debts coming out of their ears. He was happy to take them out for a drink in his brand-new car on a Friday night.

### Lords debate Social Mobility

Thu, 20 June 2013

#### **Mentions**

Baroness Tyler of Enfield:

My Lords, social mobility is part of a fair and just society. The belief that children from poorer families should have the same opportunity to succeed in life as children from wealthy families is something that rightly unites politicians across the political spectrum. Yet social mobility in this country is at least flat-lining and, although statistics in this area are always open to interpretation, many commentators believe that it has gone into reverse.

To illustrate this point, the first politician I am going to quote—and this may surprise your Lordships—is Michael Gove, who said recently:

“More than any other developed nation, ours is a country in which your parentage dictates your progress ... those who are born poor are more likely to stay poor and those who inherit privilege are more likely to pass on privilege. For those of us who believe in social justice this stratification and segregation are morally indefensible”.

For me, nothing demonstrates this more starkly than the fact that although just 7% of pupils are privately educated, they account for 59% of our Cabinet Ministers, 45% of our senior civil servants, 15 out of 17 of our Supreme Court judges and heads of Division, and 54% of our country’s leading journalists. While one in five children is on free school meals, this can be said of just one in 100 **Oxbridge** entrants.

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### Lords Second Reading - Energy Bill

Tue, 18 June 2013

#### **Mentions**

Lord Stern of Brentford: I will not dwell on the science—after all, I am an economist. This House has often heard on this issue from two former presidents of the Royal Society, the noble Lords, Lord May and Lord Rees. Noble Lords can also consult the current president of the Royal Society, Sir Paul Nurse, and Sir Brian Hoskins of Imperial College, who leads for the Royal Society on climate change. If any noble Lords have new results that can overturn 200 years of research, dating from the great French mathematician and physicist Joseph Fourier in the 1820s, and can contradict the 98% of peer-reviewed papers that identify anthropomorphic climate change, they should immediately publish them in one of the learned journals.

If you want to learn more, consult the Royal Society, the US National Academy of Sciences or the French, Australian or Chinese academies—whichever you choose to turn to. It is surely to the learned societies, scientific societies and the journals that we should go for serious science. Taking the long-term view, the world is warming and the only plausible explanation is human activity. We cannot predict the outcomes with certainty; this is about risk management, but it is surely clear that we are embarked on a reckless and potentially irreversible experiment with the only planet we have.

The risks are more severe and will come earlier to the poorest among us, but we all face them, whichever country we live in and however well-off we are. Contrary to what the noble Lord, Lord Lawson, has just claimed, the broad estimates of climate sensitivity are fairly stable. If he wants a discussion about those estimates, I again refer him to those who know about these issues and study them professionally. I have discussed them intensively with Professor Myles Allen, of **Oxford University**, who has already been referred to, with Sir Brian Hoskins, whom I mentioned and leads on climate for the Royal Society, or with Julia Slingo, the chief scientist at the Met Office. We are all confident that the IPCC report, looking across the whole waterfront of the evidence and reporting this autumn, will say exactly that—the estimates of climate sensitivity are broadly stable.

### **Public Bill Committee - Finance Bill (17th and 18th sittings)**

Tue, 18 June 2013

#### **Mentions**

Catherine McKinnell:

I am pleased that the hon. Lady is not.

As the Committee will know, the EU emission trading scheme was launched in 2005 to combat climate change and was heralded as a major pillar of EU climate policy. The scheme works on a cap and trade basis, so a cap or limit is set on the total greenhouse gas emissions allowed by all participants covered by the system. That cap is converted into tradable emissions allowances, which are allocated to participants in the market. Participants who are likely to emit more than their allocation can choose between taking measures to reduce their emissions or buying additional allowances either from the secondary market, such as companies who hold allowances they do not need, or from member state-held auctions. However, in April this year, attempts to deliver a vital reform to the scheme failed thanks to the votes of a majority of Conservative MEPs and one Liberal Democrat MEP in the European Parliament.

Rory Stewart (Penrith and The Border) (Con):

In the interests of proving that not everybody has their head in an electronic device, may I ask the hon. Lady to reflect a little on the fundamental principles underlying this form of carbon purchasing? Would she not agree with Professor Dieter Helm of **Oxford university** that it would be better to target taxation on the consumption rather than the production of carbon, and that the net effect of taxing the production of carbon in the European Union has simply been to drive carbon-emitting industries to places such as China, meaning that although our production is reduced, our consumption of carbon has significantly increased?

### **New EDM 273 - Top Universities Less Representative**

Tue, 18 June 2013 | House of Commons - Early Day Motion

### **Summary**

The following EDM was tabled on 18 June 2013.

### **Contents**

New EDM Tabled

273 TOP UNIVERSITIES LESS REPRESENTATIVE 18:6:13

Signed by 1 MPs

Mr George Galloway

That this House is deeply concerned about the report from the Social Mobility Commission that Britain's leading universities have become more socially exclusive; deplores the fact that the proportion of students from state schools in these Russell Group universities is lower than it was a decade ago; notes that the number of entrants from the most disadvantaged backgrounds has also fallen and is less than one-in-five; condemns the increasing focus on recruiting wealthy students from outside Europe; believes that the Russell Group universities' sponsoring of academies is effectively selective; further notes that Liverpool University has sponsored a failing private school to become an academy with a boarding wing and that non-EU students there will be guaranteed a degree course of their choice; and calls on the Government to ensure that **Oxford, Cambridge** and other top universities become socially representative rather than grotesquely skewed in favour of privately-educated students.

Galloway, George Respect Bradford West 18.06.2013

### **[House of Lords Economic Affairs Committee - Lancaster University, Durham Law School, British Tax Review - Corporate taxation](#)**

Wed, 12 June 2013

### **Summary**

#### **House of Lords Economic Affairs Committee**

The Committee heard evidence relating to the difficulties of establishing a harmonised international taxation system.

Numerous other topics were discussed including the impact of simplifying the tax system and instigating different tax regimes for small and larger businesses.

The Committee heard from:

- Professor Sol Picciotto, Emeritus Professor, Lancaster University
- Professor Rita de la Feria, Chair in Tax Law, Director of Marketing and Communications, Durham Law School
- Judith Freedman, Professor of Taxation Law; Director of Legal Research, **Oxford University** Centre for Business Taxation; Joint Editor, British Tax Review

### **[Higher Education: Brigg](#)**

Tue, 11 June 2013

### **Summary**

The following question was answered on 11 June 2013.

## Contents

Andrew Percy: To ask the Secretary of State for Education how many and what proportion of schools in Brigg and Goole constituency sent at least one pupil to the university of (a) Oxford and (b) Cambridge in each of the last 10 years.[159270]

Mr Laws: This information is not currently available at parliamentary constituency level.

Destination Measures were first published by the Department for Education in 2012, identifying 2008/09 students going into 2009/10 education destinations. They were published at national, local authority and institutional level and included the proportion of students who went to the universities of **Oxford or Cambridge**. The publication can be found at:

## MPs Debate Student Visas

Thu, 6 June 2013

Mr Andrew Smith (Oxford East) (Lab):

I would like to join in congratulating my hon. Friend the Member for West Bromwich West (Mr Bailey) and other colleagues on securing this important debate. He made some important points, as have all the subsequent speakers. It is good to see cross-party agreement emerging that we have to remove students from the immigration target in domestic policy.

**With two universities and numerous independent colleges in Oxford East**, my constituents are among the hardest hit by the ill-judged policies on student visas and immigration that the Government have brought in. They have inflicted serious damage on the reputation and attractiveness of the UK, and on the economic and cultural contribution that overseas students, and those who teach them, make to our country. The Government's policies amount to a perverse and stupid act of economic self-sabotage. They hit a part of our economy where Britain in general, and Oxford in particular, have a strong global strategic competitive advantage. There is a logical contradiction in the Government protesting that there is no cap on student numbers, while persisting in including student numbers in their overall target of reducing net immigration to tens rather than hundreds of thousands. They find it so difficult to control other areas of immigration, including illegal immigration, that there is continual downward pressure on student numbers.

We are fortunate in Oxford to have many high-quality institutions. It shows how ludicrous this policy is if we imagine it being applied to another area; for example, to our Mini plant—to manufacturing, as opposed to educational exports. Imagine a Government who have an overall limit on manufacturing exports because they do not want too many foreigners getting their hands on our goods. As the number of BMW Minis being exported falls because overseas dealers worry that they will not be able to fulfil orders, the Prime Minister flies out to the far east and attempts to reassure people that while he is determined to bring down net

manufacturing exports, there is no cap on the export of Minis! Such a policy would be barmy, way beyond swivel-eyed, and yet economically that is exactly what the cuts in overseas students amount to.

### **Higher Education: Staffordshire**

Thu, 6 June 2013

#### **Summary**

The following question was answered on 06 June 2013.

#### **Contents**

Mr Burley: To ask the Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills (1) how many people in (a) Cannock Chase constituency and (b) Staffordshire applied to study at (i) the universities of **Oxford or Cambridge** and (ii) all Russell Group universities in each of the last 10 admission cycles; [158205]

(2) how many people in Cannock Chase constituency (a) applied for and (b) were accepted for a university place in each of the last five years.[158207]

Mr Willetts: The information for these time periods and for this level of detail is not available centrally. Data on applications and acceptances are collected by the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) but they do not routinely publish figures at this level of detail. UCAS is an organisation independent from Government.

### **Environmental Audit Committee - Notice of evidence session on Progress on Carbon Budgets**

Thu, 6 June 2013

EVIDENCE SESSION: Progress on Carbon Budgets

The Environmental Audit Committee will hold its second public evidence hearing on its Progress on Carbon Budgets inquiry, at 2.10 pm on Wednesday 12 June in the Thatcher Room, Portcullis House.

This session will look at recent developments in climate change science to assess whether changes are needed to the objectives underpinning the Carbon Budgets regime:

- Aubrey Meyer will discuss the extent to which climate ‘feedbacks’ are incorporated into the modelling of emissions underpinning the Climate Change Act and Carbon Budgets.
- Professor Andrew Shepherd will discuss the latest Cryosat2 data on Arctic ice volume loss. Professor Myles Allen will discuss ‘climate sensitivity’ and the recent slowdown in global temperatures rises, and the implications of cumulative carbon emissions on the global carbon budget.

· Professor Julia Slingo and Dr Jason Lowe will discuss the above issues and provide an update on the Met Office's latest climate change research.

The Committee will hear from:

At c2.10 pm:

Aubrey Meyer, Global Commons Institute

At c2.45 pm

Professor Andrew Shepherd, University of Leeds

Professor Myles Allen, **University of Oxford**

### **MPs debate the Badger Cull**

Wed, 5 June 2013

#### **Mention**

Huw Irranca-Davies: Professor Bourne's data analysis on the deep and lasting infection in our cattle herds is comprehensive, utterly compelling and utterly stark. So what does the wider informed scientific community say about the cull? Eminent zoologist at **Oxford university**, president-elect of the British Science Association and, it is fair to say, expert on this subject, Lord Krebs, has criticised the Government for a misleading use of science in support of the cull. He has described the cull by shooting as a "crazy" idea. Thirty of Britain's finest animal disease scientists wrote in opposition to the cull, describing it as "mindless". Former Government chief scientific adviser Lord Robert May has said:

"It is very clear that the government's policy does not make sense."

Well, at least last October the Government were able to turn to their own chief scientist for support, and I urge hon. Members to listen carefully to what Professor Sir John Beddington said:

"I continue to engage with Defra on the evidence base concerning the development of bovine TB policy. I am content that the evidence base, including uncertainties and evidence gaps, has been communicated effectively to ministers."