

Appendix A – 2016 Corpus

The dialogues were handpicked from the official House of Commons proceedings transcript known as the online Hansard. The original transcripts are available at <https://hansard.parliament.uk/>

May 25, 2016

Dialogue 1

Patrick Grady (Glasgow North) (SNP): The House of Commons Library estimates that 4.9million UK citizens live or work in other countries, yet in my surgeries, week in, week out, I meet constituents from overseas who cannot obtain visas, residency or citizenship here. The whole of Scotland is outraged at the threat of deportation facing the Brain family. What, in the Chancellor's view, is the difference between an economic migrant and an expat?

Mr Osborne (Chancellor of the Exchequer) (Con): I think all the hon. Gentleman is demonstrating is that we do have border controls in this country, and that we do have immigration rules that need to be complied with. That is a very important aspect of the European Union's Schengen area agreement, which we are not part of, and I think that it is part of the special status that we have in the European Union.

Dialogue 2

Mrs Anne Main (St Albans) (Con): St Albans and many other areas in the south and east value their green belt. According to figures from the Office for National Statistics, 3 million people may come into this country if we remain in the European Union. Would the Chancellor like to suggest which bits of the green belt—about a quarter of a million acres—will be needed, and where they will be? We need to provide homes and infrastructure for those people.

Mr Osborne (Chancellor of the Exchequer) (Con): We have made a clear commitment to protecting the green belt, and the planning laws that we have introduced, and propose to introduce, meet that commitment.

My hon. Friend and I disagree on European Union membership—and I have seen no particular evidence from the leave campaigners that immigration would fall; indeed, they seem to be telling some communities that they would let more people in—but let us at least agree on this. We will have a referendum, and, in the end, it will not be up to my hon. Friend or me to decide. It will be up to the British people.

June 8, 2016

Dialogue 3

Richard Drax (South Dorset) (Con): The Prime Minister has repeatedly stated that he secured changes to reform the EU. Will he now confirm that, on 23 June, the voters are not guaranteed any treaty change in EU law as no treaty change was achieved despite a promise to deliver one, and that an international agreement cannot change EU law? Finally, will he stop denigrating our great country, because it is a sign, if any were needed, that he is losing the argument?

David Cameron (The Prime Minister): I know that my hon. Friend has very strong views on this issue, and I have very strong views on it, too. On the specific point that he raises, I am afraid that he is not correct. In the renegotiation, we secured two vital treaty changes: one on getting Britain out of ever-closer union; and the other on the protection for our currency. I do not accept for one minute that supporting Britain being a member of a reformed European Union is in any way doing our country

down. If you love your country, you want it to be strong in the world. If you love your country, you want opportunities for your young people. If you love your country, you do not want to act in a way that could lead to its break-up. That is why what I want to see is not Nigel Farage's little England, but a strong Britain in Europe.

Dialogue 4

Angus Robertson: This is not about world war three, but about the realities—the facts. There have been wars on the European continent, but outside the European Union; they have happened in the Balkans, in Ukraine and in the Caucasus. It is a fact that there has never been a single example of armed conflict between member states of the European Union. Will the Prime Minister, in the little time that is left ahead of the European referendum, take the time to stress the positive advantages of co-operation, peace and stability for us all, and not just of the single market or the rights we have as citizens? Peace and prosperity are an advantage to us all, and that is why we should remain in the European Union.

David Cameron (The Prime Minister): I very much take on what the right hon. Gentleman says. I think that the strongest argument for the Government's position of wanting us to stay is that we would be better off, and that that market of 500 million people is essential for our businesses. The argument that I was just making—that we will be stronger in the world, in terms of getting things done for Britain and for our citizens—is important, but the argument that we are safer and more secure because the European Union is a means for dialogue between countries that were previously adversaries is one that I never forget. However frustrating it can get around that table with 27 other Prime Ministers and Presidents, I never forget that these are countries that were previously in conflict. Now, we talk, we discuss, we argue and we decide, and that is a far better way of doing things.

Dialogue 5

Neil Carmichael (Stroud) (Con): Speaking at many universities, colleges and schools across England, and at events organised by Universities UK, University Alliance and the Russell Group, I have been struck by young people's strong interest in remaining in the European Union. Does the Prime Minister agree that Britain should take a firm lead in the European Union to promote the interests of young people's careers and research, and their opportunities in the future more generally?

David Cameron (The Prime Minister): I think our universities have been pretty much unanimous in recommending that we vote to remain in the EU. I think that is partly because of the opportunities young people will have from being part of a single market of 500 million people, but also because our universities do very well out of research funding that helps to create the businesses and jobs of the future. We contribute about 11% of the EU research budget, but receive about 16% of the allocated funding. Staying in Europe is good for students' opportunities, good for young people's opportunities and good for our science base.

Dialogue 6

Mr John Baron (Basildon and Billericay) (Con): Will the Prime Minister address an issue that the remain camp has so far fudged? Our present immigration policy, in all truthfulness, cannot control numbers coming in from the EU to the benefit of our public services, and also actually discriminates against the rest of the world outside the EU.

David Cameron (The Prime Minister): Having spent my evening yesterday with Mr Farage—or Farridge, as I like to call him—I am confused about what the leave camp actually wants when it comes to immigration. I thought it wanted less immigration, but now it seems to want more immigration from outside the EU into our country. My view is that we should restrict welfare in the way that we have negotiated, so that people have to come and work here for four years before they get full access to our welfare system—no more “something for nothing”; people pay in before they

get out—and then we should focus on proper controls on migration from outside the EU, on which we have made some progress over recent years and can do some more. That is the right answer. As for the alternative of an Australian points system, if we look at Australia, it has twice as much immigration per head as we have here in the UK. That is not the right answer for Britain.

June 15, 2016

Dialogue 7

Jeremy Corbyn (Islington North) (Lab): Last week, the Prime Minister gave a welcome commitment to the closing of the loophole in the posting of workers directive. We will hold him to that, but we are concerned about the exploitation of migrant workers and the undercutting of wages in this country as a result. On that issue, will he today commit to outlawing the practice of agencies that only advertise abroad for jobs that are, in reality, jobs in this country?

David Cameron (The Prime Minister): First of all, the right hon. Gentleman and I absolutely agree about the evils of modern slavery. That is why this Government passed the Modern Slavery Act 2015, with all-party support. We have doubled the fines that can be put on companies for exploiting labour in this way. We have strengthened the Gangmasters Licensing Authority, which has commenced and carried out a number of prosecutions, including in the east of England, where I was yesterday. We will continue to take action on every level to make sure that people are paid the wages that they should be paid and that protections are there on the minimum wage, and now on the national living wage. All those measures are vitally important, and we will continue with all of them. I want people to get a fair day's pay for a fair day's work.

Jeremy Corbyn: My question was about outlawing the practice of advertising by agencies only in other countries. Tens of thousands of EU migrants work in our public services and do a fantastic job. Many people in Britain, also, are concerned about the impact of immigration on their local communities. Surely what communities need is practical solutions such as the migrant impact fund set up Gordon Brown when he was Prime Minister to deal with extra pressure on housing, schools, and hospitals. Will the Prime Minister now concede that it was a mistake to abolish that fund, and will he work with us to reinstate it as a matter of urgency to give support to those communities that are facing problems with school places and doctors' surgeries?

David Cameron (The Prime Minister): The right hon. Gentleman is absolutely right. In answer to the question about employment agencies that only advertise for overseas workers, we are looking at that to see—we have announced this already—if we can ban that practice, because we do not believe it is right. Of course, the answer to so many of these questions is to make sure that we are training, educating and employing British people and getting them the qualifications they need to take on the jobs that our economy is creating. Today's unemployment figures are another reminder of that. In terms of funds to help communities impacted by migration, we have a pledge in our manifesto that we are looking forward to bringing forward, which is a controlled migration fund to make sure that we put money into communities where there are pressures. Of course there are some pressures and we do need to address them, and I am happy that we will be able to work on a cross-party basis to do that. As I have said many times, there are good ways of controlling migration, and one of them is the important rules we are bringing in so that people do not get instant access to our welfare system, but there are bad ways of controlling immigration, and leaving the single market and wrecking our economy is certainly one of them.

Dialogue 8

Angus Robertson (Moray) (SNP): On Orlando and on the deaths in France, we on the SNP Benches join in the condolences that have been expressed by the Prime Minister and the Leader of the Opposition. We are now only a week away from the biggest question that the UK has faced in a long time—continuing membership of the European Union. Exports of goods and services from the Scottish economy are massively important: hundreds of thousands of jobs depend on them. Meanwhile, our public services, including the NHS, are supported by many hard-working people from elsewhere in the European Union. Does the Prime Minister agree with me that if we want to protect jobs and if we want to protect our public services, we must vote to remain in the European Union?

The Prime Minister: I believe that the most important argument—there are many arguments people make, but this is the most important—is about the future of our economy. It seems obvious to me: you can listen to the experts, or you can just make a common-sense argument. Today, we have full access to a market of 500 million people. For an economy such as Scotland's, which is such a big exporting economy, there is no way we would get a better deal on the outside of the single market than we get on the inside, so if we left we would see our economy suffer, we would see jobs suffer and we would see people's livelihoods suffer. That is just plain common sense. I absolutely agree with the right hon. Gentleman that for jobs and for livelihoods, we should remain in. There is a consequence for the public finances, because if our economy is doing less well, our public finances would be doing less well, and that would have consequences for Scotland, too.

Dialogue 9

Mike Freer (Finchley and Golders Green) (Con): Since the terrorist attacks in Paris and Brussels, many of my constituents are worried that remaining in the EU increases the risk of terrorism, fears exacerbated by the disgraceful comments of people such as Nigel Farage. Does my right hon. Friend agree with me that our security services are helped, not hindered, by the EU?

The Prime Minister: I would say very directly to my hon. Friend that I have done this job for six years and, working with the Home Secretary, I have seen how closely our intelligence and security services work with other services around the world. Of course we keep ourselves safe by investing in anti-terrorism policing and of course we keep ourselves safe by the way we work with the Americans and the "Five Eyes" partnership, but I am in no doubt that the increasing extent of Poles, Spaniards and the rest of it—so if you stop 100 people in the street, only five will be EU nationals. It is just as the hon. Gentleman said. Look at our NHS—there are 50,000 EU nationals working as doctors, nurses and care assistants. Look at our care homes—there are 60,000 EU nationals helping to look after our elderly relatives with dementia and other conditions as they come towards the end of their lives. Yes, we need to make sure that people who come here work and make a contribution, but we should celebrate the contribution they make.

Dialogue 10

Mr David Nuttall (Bury North) (Con): Given the Government's recent enthusiasm for making forecasts and predictions, will the Prime Minister tell the House in which year we will meet our manifesto commitment to reduce immigration to the tens of thousands?

David Cameron (The Prime Minister): The last year for which EU migration was in balance—that is between the number of EU and British nationals leaving our shores to work in Europe and the number of EU nationals coming to live and work here—was as recently as 2008. Yes, we need to do more to control migration from outside the EU, and we are doing so, with the closure of bogus colleges and other measures. We are also doing more inside the EU, not least by saying that if people who come here do not get a job after six months, they have to leave, and that if they work, they have to contribute for four years before getting full access to the welfare system. Those are big changes. They are also sensible ways of controlling immigration. A non-sensible way would be pulling out of

the single market, damaging jobs and our economy, and so having to explain to our constituents why we have a self-imposed recession.

June 29, 2016

Dialogue 11

Sir Roger Gale (North Thanet) (Con): I know that all Kent's Members of Parliament will wish to be associated with my right hon. Friend's tribute to the memory of Paddy Mayhew. He was a scholar, a gentleman and a great friend to his younger colleagues. There are hundreds and thousands of expat United Kingdom citizens living around Europe who did not vote in the referendum. Many are elderly and frail and live on UK pensions and benefits. Will my right hon. Friend seek to ensure that his successor defends their interests?

David Cameron (The Prime Minister): Let me add to my hon. Friend's comments about Sir Patrick Mayhew. He was a wonderful man and a great public servant, and I know he meant a lot to my hon. Friend and many others.

On the issue of British citizens living overseas, we should reassure people that until Britain leaves the EU, there will be absolutely no change in their status. In the coming weeks, this unit at the heart of Whitehall can go through these issues very methodically and work out what might need to change in all the different scenarios in order to give these people certainty about their future. It is obviously very important that we do that.

Dialogue 12

Mr Bernard Jenkin (Harwich and North Essex) (Con): May I take this opportunity to pay tribute to my right hon. Friend for his premiership and for the many achievements of his Government, of which we can be proud? I also commend his condemnation of the vile racist attacks that have been reported from all over the country. Will he take this opportunity to condemn the ridiculous and revolting behaviour of a certain MEP in the European Parliament yesterday and make it clear that that MEP does not represent this country and he does not represent—[Interruption.]

Mr Speaker: Order. We cannot have people adding their own take on these matters. [Interruption.] Order. The hon. Gentleman has the Floor—[Interruption.] Order. I do not need any help from the Scottish National party Benches; I am perfectly capable of discharging my responsibilities. The hon. Gentleman will be heard, and that is all there is to it.

Mr Jenkin: I am grateful, Mr Speaker. That MEP does not represent this country and he does not represent even the vast majority of patriotic and law-abiding people who voted leave in the referendum.

David Cameron (The Prime Minister): Let me thank my hon. Friend for his kind remarks and congratulate him on the role he played in the campaign. As for what MEPs and others have said, people should judge them by the remarks they make. I have made clear what I felt about Nigel Farage and that appalling poster in the campaign. I think the motive was absolutely clear and everyone can see what he was trying to do.

Dialogue 13

James Berry (Kingston and Surbiton) (Con): As well as Brits living abroad in the European Union, there are a number of EU nationals living in this country—including my constituency—who are working hard and paying their taxes, entirely legitimately. What reassurance can the Prime Minister give them that their position is secure? I know that a number of them are very concerned.

The Prime Minister: I think that the first thing we should do is appraise the contribution that those people make to our country. There are 50,000 EU nationals working in our NHS and 60,000 working

in our care sector, looking after our elderly as they approach the end of their lives. There are also many working in education.

As I said quite exhaustively on Monday, we can obviously say that all rights are guaranteed, as we are members of the European Union. In the future, we will have to make sure—and I have heard members of the leave campaign make this point—that people who are already here, people who are already studying or working, must have their rights and their access guaranteed. However, we cannot say that now; we will have to say it as part of the negotiation that will shortly take place.

July 6, 2016

Dialogue 14

Jeremy Corbyn: The problem is that if someone is on a zero-hours contract, the minimum wage does not add up to a living weekly wage; the Prime Minister must understand that. May I take him north-east of Shirebrook to the Lindsey oil refinery? In 2009, hundreds of oil workers there walked out on strike because agency workers from Italy and Portugal were brought in on lower wages to do the same job. Just down the road in Boston, low pay is endemic. The average hourly wage across the whole country is £13.33. In the east midlands, it is £12.26; in Boston, it is £9.13. Is it not time that the Government intervened to step up for those communities that feel they have been left behind in modern Britain?

David Cameron (The Prime Minister): We have intervened with the national living wage. We have intervened with more fines against companies which do not pay the minimum wage. We have intervened, and for the first time—this is something Labour never did—we are naming and shaming the companies involved. Those interventions help and can make a difference, but the real intervention that we need is an economy that is growing and encouraging investment, because we want the industries of the future. That is what can be seen in our country and that is why record numbers are in work—2.5 million more people have a job since I become Prime Minister—and why the British economy has been one of the strongest in the G7.

July 13, 2016

Dialogue 15

Jeremy Corbyn: I would like the Prime Minister to address another issue that the House voted on last week. I have a question from Nina—[Interruption.] It is a question from somebody who deserves an answer. She says:

“I would like to know, if there is any possibility, that an EU citizen, that has lived in the UK for thirty years can have their right of permanent residence... revoked and deported, depending on the Brexit negotiations”.

There has been no clear answer to this question. It is one that worries a very large number of people, and it would be good if, in his last Question Time, the Prime Minister could at least offer some assurance to those people.

David Cameron (The Prime Minister): Let me reassure Nina that there is absolutely no chance of that happening to someone in those circumstances. We are working hard to do what we want, which is to give a guarantee to EU citizens that they will have their rights respected—all those who have come to this country. The only circumstance in which I could ever envisage a future Government trying to undo that guarantee would be if British citizens in other European countries did not have their rights respected. I think it is important to have reciprocity. The new Prime Minister will be working to give that guarantee as fast as we can. I am glad the right hon. [...]

July 20, 2016

Dialogue 16

Sir Edward Leigh (Gainsborough) (Con): I agree with the Prime Minister. [HON. MEMBERS: “Hear, hear!”] We are leaving the EU and we are going to make a success of it, so will she make my day special by saying that she is prepared to reject staying in the single regulated market and to offer instead to our friends in Europe a free trade deal that is very much in their interests? Let us take back control.

Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Theresa May (The Prime Minister): I am tempted to say that I probably ought to sit down and enjoy that for the rest of the day. My hon. Friend has made my day, and I hope that I can make his day by wishing him a very happy birthday. I assure him that as we look at the result of the referendum, I am very clear that Brexit does mean Brexit, and as he says, we will make a success of it. In negotiating the deal, we need to ensure that we listen to what people have said about the need for controls on free movement, and that we also negotiate the right and best deal for trade in goods and services for the British people.

Dialogue 17

Mr Barry Sheerman (Huddersfield) (Lab/Co-op): I congratulate the right hon. Lady on becoming Prime Minister, and gently remind her of the conversation we had a few weeks ago when I said she was going to come through the middle and trounce the men standing for that position. I was right. I also said I was going to put some money on her, but I never got round to it —unfortunately, because the odds were very good at the time.

May I ask the Prime Minister a serious question about the younger generation, the millennials? So many of them in our country believe that they are citizens of Europe who have the ability to travel, to work and to be true Europeans. Will she soon give them her vision of how that reality as European citizens can be delivered even in the present circumstances?

Theresa May (The Prime Minister): I thank the hon. Gentleman, and I do indeed remember the conversation in which he said that I would, as he put it, “trounce the men”. I have to say, however, that the Conservative party came up with an all-woman shortlist, without being required to do so. The hon. Gentleman raises an important point about the younger generation. This is what I would say to them today. As I said a little earlier in response to my hon. Friend the Member for Shrewsbury and Atcham (Daniel Kawczynski), we are leaving the European Union, but we are not leaving Europe. Over the coming weeks and months, we will be setting out our negotiating position on the relationship with the European Union when we leave. I would also say to the young people that the hon. Gentleman talks about that we should not limit their opportunities and their horizons by just looking at Europe. This country will make a success of Brexit, because we will be out there in the world as an outward-looking, expansive country, with opportunities around the globe.

Dialogue 18

Philip Davies (Shipley) (Con): May I warmly welcome the Prime Minister to her post? Unlike dithering Barry, I did place a bet on her becoming the next leader of our party. I apologise for the fact that my phone was obviously turned off when she was calling me to invite me to join her Government.

The reason the people of Yorkshire voted overwhelmingly to leave the European Union was largely to do with immigration control. Can the Prime Minister reassure them that when we finally do leave the European Union, she will insist on keeping her original promise to bring the immigration figures down to the tens of thousands?

Theresa May (The Prime Minister): The vote that took place on 23 June sent a very clear message about immigration. It sent the clear message that people want control of free movement from the European Union, and that is precisely what we will ensure that we get in the negotiations that we will undertake. I also remain absolutely firm in my belief that we need to bring net migration down to sustainable levels, and the Government believe that that means tens of thousands. It will take some time to get there, but now, of course, there is the added aspect of the controls that we can bring in relation to people moving from the European Union.

September 7, 2016

Dialogue 19

Angus Robertson (Moray) (SNP): I join the Prime Minister and the leader of the Labour party in praising all Olympians. This is the first day of the Paralympics, and I wish all Paralympians from all parts of these islands well. They are an inspiration to us all. There is real concern and worry about the prospects for Brexit, especially in Scotland, where the majority of people voted to remain within the European Union. The UK Government have had all summer to come up with a plan and a strategy, but so far we have just had waffle. I want to ask the Prime Minister a simple but important question. Does she want the UK to remain fully within the European single market?

Theresa May (The Prime Minister): What I want for the UK is that we put into practice the vote that was taken by the people of the United Kingdom to leave the European Union, that we get the right deal for trade in goods and services with the European Union in the new relationship that we will be building with it, and that we introduce control over the movement of people from the European Union into the United Kingdom. I say to the right hon. Gentleman that we can approach the vote that took place on 23 June in two ways. We could try to row back on it, have a second referendum and say that we did not really believe it, but actually we are respecting the views of the British people. More than that, we will be seizing the opportunities that leaving the European Union now gives us to forge a new role for the United Kingdom in the world.

Angus Robertson: We on these Benches respect the views of the people of Scotland, who voted to remain in the European Union. The European single market— [Interruption.]

Mr Speaker: Order. The right hon. Gentleman must be heard, and he will be heard.

Angus Robertson: Thank you Mr Speaker. The European single market is the biggest market in the world and it really matters to our businesses and to our economy. I asked the Prime Minister a very simple question, to which there is either an in or an out answer. Let me ask it again. Does she want the United Kingdom to remain fully part of the European single market? Yes or no?

Theresa May (The Prime Minister): The right hon. Gentleman does not seem to quite understand what the vote on 23 June was about. The United Kingdom will leave the European Union and we will build a new relationship with the European Union. That new relationship will include control over the movement of people from the EU into the UK, and it will include the right deal for trade in goods and services. That is how to approach it. I also say to him that, in looking at the negotiations, it would not be right for me or this Government to give a running commentary on them—[Interruption.]

Mr Speaker: Order. Just as I said that the right hon. Gentleman must be heard, so must the Prime Minister's answer be heard, and it will be.

The Prime Minister: And it would not be right to prejudge those negotiations. We will be ensuring that we seize the opportunities for growth and prosperity across the whole of the United Kingdom, including growth and prosperity in Scotland. As we saw from the figures released this summer, what really gives growth and prosperity in Scotland is being a member of the United Kingdom.

September 14, 2016

Dialogue 20

Angus Robertson (Moray) (SNP): Last week, the Prime Minister was unwilling or unable to give any assurances about remaining in the single European market. Today, she has been unwilling or unable to give any assurances to the financial sector about protecting the passporting of financial services. Meanwhile, millions of people from across the United Kingdom depend on freedom of movement across the EU for business and for pleasure. They face the prospect of having to apply and possibly pay for visas. Is the Prime Minister in favour of protecting visa-free travel—yes, or no?

Theresa May (The Prime Minister): There was a very clear message from the British people at the time of the referendum vote on 23 June that they wanted to see an end to free movement as it operated and control of the movement of people from the European Union into the UK, and that is what we will deliver.

Dialogue 21

Mr John Baron (Basildon and Billericay) (Con): What assurance can my right hon. Friend give that, whatever criteria come to guide our immigration system, it will be fairer than the present system—it will no longer discriminate against peoples from outside the EU, as the present system does?

Theresa May (The Prime Minister): As I mentioned earlier in response to a question, one aspect of the vote on 23 June was that people want us to control movement from the European Union into the UK, and, of course, we are already able to control movement from outside the European Union into the United Kingdom. The details of the system we will introduce for EU citizens are currently being worked on, but I can assure my hon. Friend that we will have the ability to control movement from the EU and movement from outside the EU, and therefore bring that greater degree of fairness that I think people were looking for.