



PARLIAMENT



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II. HOUSE OF LORDS

A. STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION

B. FUNCTIONS OF THE LORDS

C. WHY A HOUSE OF LORDS?

The House of Commons: Structure and Organization



- 650 Members of Parliament (MPs); elected to individual constituencies throughout UK
- Traits and work of MP's
- Majority party controls of legislative agenda, debate schedule, committees, etc.
- Party Discipline
- REACTIVE legislature
- Speaker of the House (neutral)
- 'Father of the House'

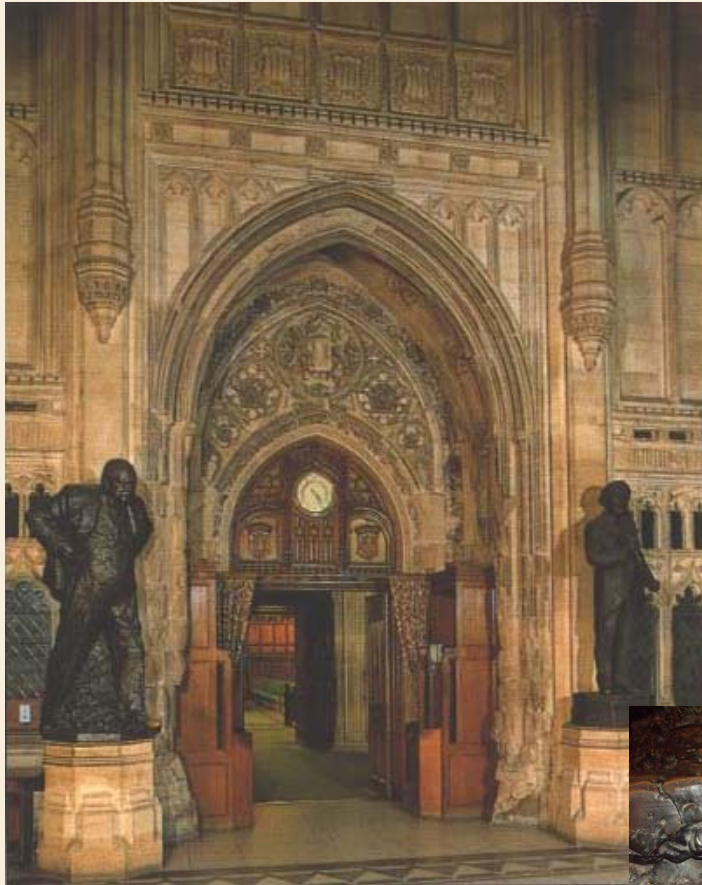
Speaker of the House
John Bercow



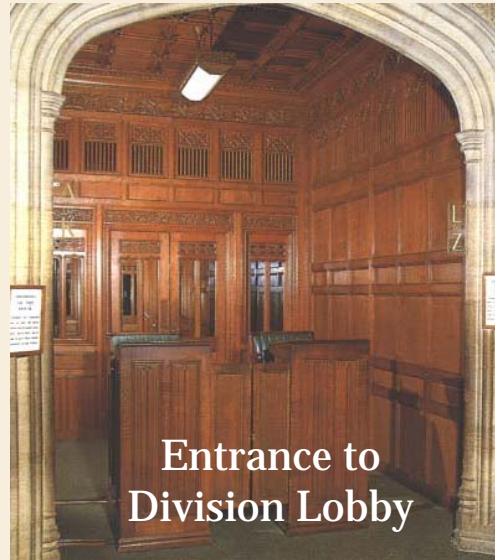
House of Commons Chamber



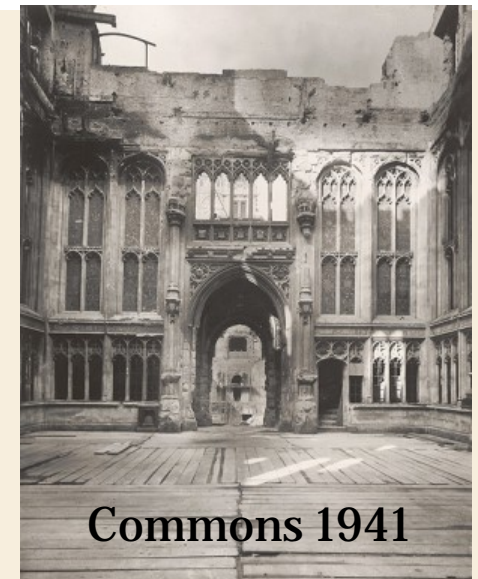
House of Commons



Entrance from Members Lobby
(and Churchill's rubbed toe)



Entrance to
Division Lobby



Commons 1941

Committee Room
(Portcullis House)



House of Commons – Functions



- **Providing the Personnel of Government**
- **Legitimation**
 - The Legislative Process
 - Standing (Public Bill) Committees
- **Debate**
- **Scrutinizing and Influencing the Government**
 - Question Time(s)
 - Select Committees
 - Liaison Committee and PM
 - ‘Westminster Hall’ Debating Chamber
- **Role of the Opposition**

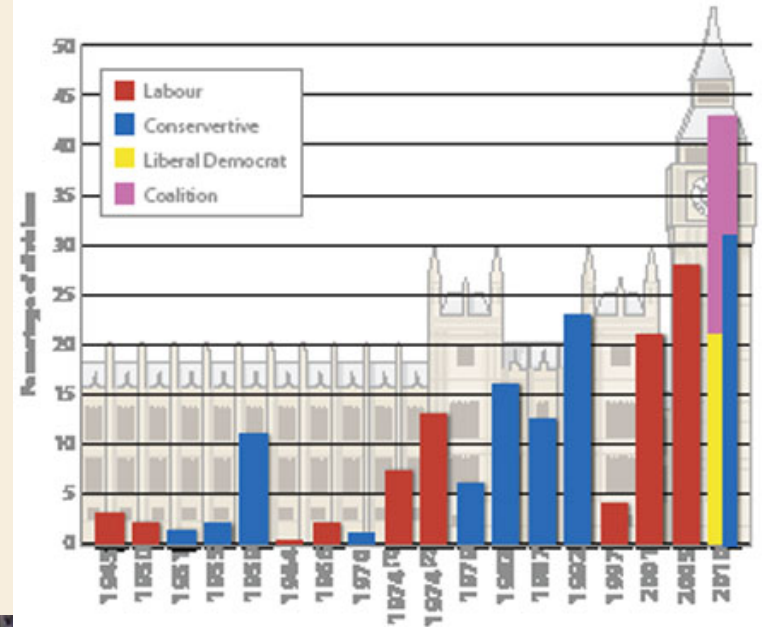


A More Assertive Commons?



- Party Whips
 - A 'Three-Line Whip'
- Backbenchers Role
 - Conservatives '1922 Committee'
 - Parliamentary Labour Party (PLP)
- Revolts in the Commons
- The Commons and the Executive

"We find the Commons increasingly revolting."



% of Rebellions
in First Sessions

House of Lords: Structure and Organization



- Originally body of *Lords Temporal* (Hereditary Peers – Duke, Marquis, Earl, Viscounts, and Baron) and *Lords Spiritual* (Bishops of Anglican Church)
- Life Peerages (since 1958)
 - EX: Lady Margaret Thatcher
- Labour (1999) stripped hereditary peers of voting power
 - except 75 plus 15 “office holders” (i.e., Deputy Speakers) and 2 “Royal Appointments” (92 total); Bishops remain
- 707 Lords total (as of April 2010)
- Lesser role of parties in the Lords
 - Crossbench Lords

Not you Grandfather's Lords:
Baroness Warsi, Minister without Portfolio

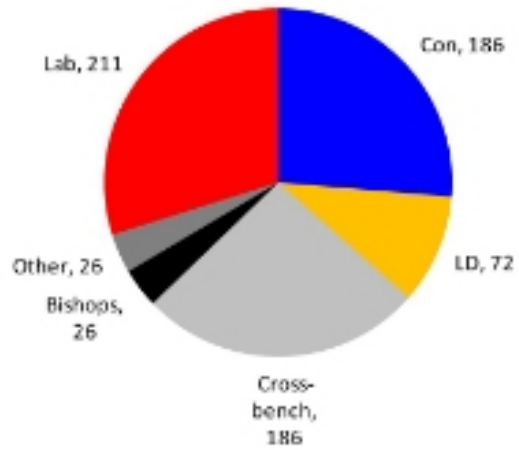


House of Lords Chamber

Life Peers dominate
House of Lords membership by peerage type,
April 2010



A hung chamber
House of Lords membership by party,
April 2010



House of Lords: Functions



- **The ‘People’s Budget’ and the Parliament Act of 1911**
 - Parliament Act of 1949
- **Functions of the Lords**
 - Provide (some) personnel of government
 - Scrutiny and influence
 - Forum for debate
- **Political limitations on Lords actions**
 - Salisbury Convention
- **The Lords as a REVISING chamber**



Why have a House of Lords?



- **Potential changes in the House of Lords**
 - Retain
 - Reform
 - Replace
 - Remove altogether
- **Benefits of the Lords**



An institution for
the 21st Century?