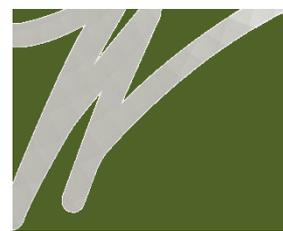


# Report on Meeting: Philip Norton, Baron Norton of Louth



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## Overview

The Lord Norton of Louth FRSA gave a talk in the college library from 1115 to 1215 on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2016. In attendance were students from various classes. The student council was represented by councillors Robin S. Taylor (Secretary) and Paige-Louise Jackson (Health & Safety).

## Details of the Speaker

Philip Norton has been director of the Centre for Legislative Studies since 1992 and a Conservative life peer since 1998. From 2002 to 2007 he was head of the Department of Politics and International Studies, where he is still a Professor of Government. In 2000 he became Chairman of the Conservative Academic Group. Since 2002 he has also chaired the Hansard Society and convened the Campaign for an Effective Second Chamber.

## Details of the Event

His lordship began by asking us all "What Is Politics?" and taking shows of hands from the audience on various contentious political issues. There were majorities in favour of same-sex marriage, assisted dying, and EVEL. Prison suffrage was rather less popular. That done, Norton moved on to explain the role of Parliament in making laws and regulating Her Majesty's Government. He told us of the work done by the House of Lords in reviewing legislation at great length and in fine detail which the Commons would not have had the capability to manage.

He also talked of the value brought to the chamber by the ennoblement of certain surgeons and medical professionals (he singled out The Lord Winston as an example he hoped we would recognize) and recounted the tale of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology debate in 2007, during which The Lord Brennan collapsed shortly after giving his speech. Norton said that this was the best time and place to do so, as there were numerous leading medical professionals (including the minister leading the debate, The Lord Darzi of Denham) able to rush to his aid.

Once the formal presentation had concluded, Professor Norton held a brief question and answer session. One student asked if it was a source of frustration to know that a measure not to his liking was going to pass through parliament. The peer replied that it was a natural part of a parliamentary career, but it at least was not as bad as in the Commons where a member not of the majority party is practically powerless in terms of major legislation.

He was then asked if, in light of the recent High Court ruling, he believed there was a strong chance of his noble friends and colleagues ultimately blocking Britain's exit from the European

Robin S. Taylor, Secretary  
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Union. He replied that although the house would certainly subject the decision to a heavy level of scrutiny and criticism, there was little chance of them blocking the move outright. The professor went so far as to suggest that the House of Commons might even resort to the use of the Parliament Acts to ensure that the result of the referendum was implemented.

## **Conclusion**

The peer was given a round of applause by the audience, then the meeting was disbanded and he made his departure.