

Keeping our right to self government

The Opposition parties in Parliament would still like to surrender more powers of self government to the EU. Meanwhile there are three issues currently before Ministers which pose the same question, should we govern ourselves? Labour and Lib Dem MPs take no interest, or would like to see us give more power away in each case. I was able to highlight the view that the UK should be self governing on two of these issues on Tuesday when colleagues secured Urgent Questions to remind Ministers to avoid any ceding of power.

The first is the World Health Organisation draft Treaty. Ministers assured us they will not sacrifice our sovereignty, our power to respond to a health crisis and to run our own NHS. I urged them to publish the amendments they are seeking, because they rightly said the current Treaty takes power away from member states.

The second is the continuing influence of the courts over the government's wish to control UK borders. I and others pressed the government to put through urgent clarifying legislation given the decision of the Northern Ireland Court.

The third is Gibraltar. I have put to the Foreign and Defence Secretaries the need not to cede any power over the Gibraltar border or the RAF and naval bases. These sovereign bases are an important part of Gibraltar and of NATO defences. Foreign and Defence policy are not devolved to the Gibraltar government. I think it would be a good idea for Gibraltar to be represented by an MP in the UK Parliament to confirm the democratic structure.