

My Intervention in the Tata Steel: Port Talbot Ministerial Statement

John Redwood (Wokingham) (Con):

Have the Government ascertained that there is enough old steel and metal around for the recycling facility? Do their wider plans for steel in the United Kingdom include retaining capacity to produce new steel?

Ms Nusrat Ghani, Minister for Investment Security:

My right hon. Friend is always absolutely hot on these topics. There is enough steel, because we export so much of it and we can now use it on the site. Considering the age of the current furnaces, the reality is that electric arc furnaces are, within the timescale, the best way for us to transition. There is of course a supply chain in place that enabled Tata to put the business plan forward, for it to commit a substantial amount of money, and for us to support its plan.

Comment Others took up this issue in the exchanges. There is a need for the UK to retain capacity to make new steel, and not to be limited to just producing remelted old steel. The UK needs to have the capacities to make new steel and to be able to transform that steel with alloys into the specialist products needed for advanced manufacturing.

Comment. In a subsequent exchange the Minister accepted the need to keep blast furnace capacity somewhere in England. Others pressed the point that we will need some new steel as well as recycled. There are still issues about the supply of domestic scrap to Port Talbot when the arc furnaces are operating.