



RT HON JOHN BERCOW

Former Speaker of the House of Commons, and the first since World War II to keep order in front of four Prime Ministers.

Type

Keynote speaker

Inzetbaarheid

Keynote speaker

Talen

EN

Afkomstig van

United Kingdom

Biografie

John Bercow served as the 157th Speaker of the House of Commons, and the first since World War II to keep order in front of four Prime Ministers.

John entered Parliament in 1997 as Conservative MP for Buckingham. He was appointed Shadow Chief Treasury then Work and Pensions Secretary, but resigned to support the Labour Government's policy to allow unmarried gay and heterosexual couples to adopt. He was later asked by Ed Balls to lead a review of children and families affected by speech, language and communication needs - which resulted in millions of additional funding.

John took over from Speaker Martin with a mission to "strengthen the backbenches and recognise that Parliament is more than a rubber-stamping operation for the government of the day." He was re-elected three times. In a stream of tributes on his departure, even critics

admitted that he had delivered on the original promise.

Speaker Bercow built a reputation as a reformer. On one level he dispensed with knee breeches, silk stockings and buckled court shoes. More significantly he increased the use of 'Urgent Questions' requiring Ministers to make 685 statements on pressing issues, extended the time for PMQs, and replaced the shooting range with a nursery. He introduced Barack Obama to address both Houses of Parliament, but opposed an invitation to Donald Trump on grounds of racism and sexism.

He was also the first Speaker to allow the UK Youth Parliament to debate in the Commons chamber, and went on to chair the event for ten years.

After stepping down from Westminster John shares his insights on the future of our politics and the lessons he has learned about implementing change. He is also a seasoned raconteur with countless stories from the corridors of power.

John has received a string of awards from The Spectator's Backbencher to Watch to Stonewall's Politician of the Year. He lives in London and enjoys an abiding passion for football (Arsenal) and tennis. He was once Britain's No.1 junior player, but considered too short to turn professional.