to Emlyn Hooson, 10 Dec. 1973; ibid., Richard Livsey to Hooson, 4 Dec. 1973.

8   Ibid., Livsey to Hooson, 23 Apr. 1974.

9   It would seem that the Pembrokeshire Liberal Association had already adopted Richard Livsey as its candidate long before candidate selection was considered by the constituency party in Brecon and Radnor.

10 NLW, Emlyn Hooson Papers, box 44, Emlyn Hooson to W. C. Philpin, chairman of the Pembrokeshire Liberal Association, 24 Nov. 1977 (copy).

11 NLW, Merfyn Jones Papers, file 83, press release issued by the Pembrokeshire Liberal Association, 21 Jan. 1978.

12 The Welsh referendum of 1979 was a post-legislative referendum held on 1 Mar. 1979 (St David's Day) to decide whether there was sufficient support for a Welsh Assembly among the Welsh electorate. The referendum was held under the terms of the Wales Act 1978 drawn up to implement proposals made by the Kilbrandon Report published in 1973.

13 NLW, Merfyn Jones Papers, file 83, press release issued by the Pembrokeshire Liberal Association, 21 Jan. 1978.

14 Deacon, 'Richard Livsey', p. 38.

15 Ibid., p. 39.

16 Compared with less than 3 per cent of the population of the United Kingdom.

17 NLW, Merfyn Jones Papers, file 83, election

leaflet of Richard Livsey, June 1983 general election.

18 See R. Deacon, *The Welsh Liberals: the History of the Liberal and Liberal Democratic Parties in Wales* (Cardiff, 2014), pp. 218–19.

19 See Richard Livsey's election address, June 1985.

20 George Hill, 'Looking for votes over hill and under dale', *The Times*, 15 Jun. 1985, p. 10.

21 Ibid.

22 NLW, Welsh Political Ephemera Collection, election leaflet in file BB/5, citing a recent column from the *Daily Mail*.

23 NLW, Gwyn Griffiths Papers, file 50, by-election leaflet of Richard Livsey, June 1985.

24 'Liberals provoke family feud', *The Guardian*, 25 Jun. 1985.

25 Ibid.

26 *Liberal News*, 12 Jul. 1985, pp. 6–7.

27 Dafydd Wigley, 'Ysgrif goffa: Richard Livsey (1935–2010)', *Barn*, no. 574 (Nov. 2010), p. 30.

28 'Winning style of friendly neighbourhood farmer', *The Times*, 6 Jul. 1985, p. 2.

29 'Marginal fight gives Brecon last laugh', *The Guardian*, 6 Jul. 1985.

30 Kirsty Williams, leader of the Liberal Democrats in Wales, in the *Western Mail*, 18 Sep. 2010.

31 David McKie, 'The new boy and the old lags', *The Guardian*, 10 Jul. 1985.

32 *Liberal News*, 21 Feb. 1986.

33 Deacon, *The Welsh Liberals*, p. 221.

34 NLW, Welsh Political Ephemera Collection, leaflet in file BA3/4 (general election 1987).

35 *Welsh Liberal Party Campaign Bulletin, no. 17*, Feb. 1987.

36 Baroness Celia Thomas, 'Tribute to Richard Livsey', 25 Feb. 2011, Lloyd George Society website, consulted 21 Dec. 2011.

37 The Liberal–SDP 'Alliance' in fact came to an end in 1988 when they merged into the Liberal Democratic Party which still exists today.

38 Deacon, 'Richard Livsey', p. 40.

39 Ibid.

40 Ibid.

41 Ibid.

42 Ibid.

43 Tactical voting frequently occurs in elections with more than two candidates, when a voter supports a candidate other than his or her *sincere preference* in order to prevent what he thinks may be an undesirable outcome.

44 Deacon, 'Richard Livsey', p. 40.

45 Wigley, 'Richard Livsey', p. 30.

46 Ibid.

47 *Western Mail*, 18 Sep. 2010.

48 Noted in Livsey's obituary in *The Guardian*, 19 Sep. 2010.

49 Website, 'A view from rural Wales: Welsh politics and countryside', consulted 20 Dec. 2011.

50 Cited in Deacon, *The Welsh Liberals*, p. 303.

Letters to the Editor

Reforming the Lords

Professor Robert Hazell's account of the coalition's failure to reform the House of Lords (*Journal of Liberal History* 92, autumn 2016) seems rather rough when he blames Nick Clegg's 'lack of detailed knowledge, aggravated by his failure to appoint any expert advisers' but is unwittingly endorsed when one of his inexpert advisers, Matthew Hanney, protests at the sentiment!

My complaint is that they also lacked knowledge of the history of the party on the subject. Mr Asquith promised a 'popular' chamber to replace the hereditary one. He appointed the Bryce Commission to come up with proposals and they suggested election by the House of Commons, but the First World War intervened.

In my first election as leader in 1979, our manifesto stated: 'The House of Lords should be replaced by a new, democratically chosen, second chamber which includes representatives of the nations and regions of the UK, and UK Members of the European Parliament'. And in the 1987 election, jointly with David Owen, our Alliance manifesto pledged: 'a reform of the second chamber linked with our devolution proposals so that it will include members elected from the nations and regions of Britain'.

These were both overlooked in favour of the simplistic 15-year general election which, as Hazell rightly points out, never had a chance of being approved by any House of Commons. (The Bryce Commission itself had 'forcibly argued

that a Chamber elected on the same franchise as the Commons would inevitably become a rival'.)

Setting aside the doomed coalition efforts the party should now, post-Brexit, be advocating our long-standing commitment to a federal UK, enabling not just the Commons but the other legislatures to elect a wholly new democratic senate as the federal chamber of our parliament.

By the way, even David Cameron was moved in a press conference in Singapore – of all places – to acknowledge 'the passing of the Steel Bill' as at least enabling peers to retire and to expel crooks; pending fundamental reform, such minor steps are fully justified and will continue.

David Steel

The Liberal Democrats and *Spitzenkandidaten*

Issue 92 on the 2010–15 Coalition provided valuable analysis and primary source material in the shape of ministers' and their advisers' accounts.

Tim Oliver, in the article 'The coalition and Europe', says: 'no UK party had bought into the *Spitzenkandidaten* idea, including the Liberal Democrats'. This is not quite right.

I was present when the ALDE (Alliance of Liberals and Democrats in Europe) Party Council met in Pula, Croatia in May 2013. That Council decided that ALDE would select a candidate for Commission President. It was carried by a large majority and was supported by the UK Liberal Democrat delegation. As far as I know none of the party's officers, committees or Leader were opposed to it (if they were they never communicated so to the party's delegates).

In September 2013, the Liberal Democrat conference met in Glasgow and passed an important policy paper on Europe commissioned by the Federal Policy Committee. The paper (which is on the party's website) contained many steps to reform the EU and policies to be pursued in both Brussels and Westminster for British people to get and see greater benefits from EU membership. It was a shame that in the 2014 European Election campaign, and subsequently, the valuable content of this policy paper was largely undeployed. In the debate at Glasgow (which is memorable for a powerful speech by Charles Kennedy that can be found on Youtube) the leading candidate scheme was referred to positively by several speakers, without dissent.

I had been nominated in Autumn 2012 as number 2 candidate on the South East England list. In effect, I would take over from Sharon Bowles MEP if our vote held up. As prospective MEP I had numerous discussions with the serving MEPs about what our plans, aims and strategy would be if we were to serve, as we hoped we would, in the 2014–19 Parliament. I cannot remember a specific conversation about the leading candidate scheme, but I have a general recollection that it was understood that the nomination of the next Commission President according to who was the largest group in the Parliament was a given, and we supported the decision taken at Pula. UK Liberal Democrat MEPs had spoken for the motion at Pula.

My strong expectation, based on all the discussions I had, is that if a group of Liberal Democrat MEPs had been elected in 2014 that would have supported in Parliament the democratic concept of the Commission President being the candidate of the largest party in the Parliament.

So, my view is that it was settled by Autumn 2013 and thereafter that the Liberal Democrats supported the *Spitzenkandidaten* concept.

This faced a question mark briefly when ALDE Congress took place in November 2013 at Canary Wharf with the task of nominating a candidate. In the weeks prior to the Congress two candidates had emerged: Guy Verhofstadt MEP, the former Belgian Prime Minister and Leader of ALDE in the European Parliament, and a Scandinavian candidate who made little impression. By the time the Congress met the second candidate had withdrawn and Verhofstadt was nominated, as always looked likely.

The party leader evidently decided before the second candidate's withdrawal that Verhofstadt was a bad candidate and I am told of a meeting of the party leadership where pro-federalist quotes of his were read out. Staff from the Leader's Office contacted UK delegates to ALDE Congress to encourage us to support the other candidate. There was a colourful exchange of emails (copied to all delegates) between a peer urging against Verhofstadt and Andrew Duff MEP coming to his fellow-MEP's defence. Even after the second candidate's withdrawal we were asked to vote for him if (as was thought) his name was still to appear on the ballot paper. This was roundly rejected by most of the UK delegates to the Congress, especially by those who attended regularly or were not peers.

At no point in Pula, Canary Wharf or at any other time did I hear the party leader or his office express objection to the leading candidate scheme per se.

It may be that after the 2014 European Elections that Nick Clegg supported David Cameron's objection to Jean-Claude Juncker or to the leading candidate scheme per se – although I never heard that myself. However, I think it is historically inaccurate to say the Liberal Democrats did not support the leading candidate concept.

The German word '*Spitzenkandidaten*' was not (as far as I recall) used at any of the meetings mentioned. We used terms like 'candidate from each group',

'leading candidate' or 'candidate for Commission President'. I heard, in the UK, *Spitzenkandidaten* mainly used by our tabloids and Conservative politicians who wanted, one imagines, to attach to the idea an idea that it was foreign or being imposed by Germany or Angela Merkel whom by 2014 the *Mail, Express, Sun and Telegraph* had already decided to mis-represent as bossy or dictatorial.

In public debates in the 2014 campaign and 2016 referendum, when euro-sceptic speakers spoke of the Commission's alleged lack of accountability, I found it useful to point out that in the old days the Commission President was appointed behind closed doors, but that in 2014 things had changed: each party nominated a candidate and the candidate from the party who won most seats was elected President. I compared this to our own method for appointing Prime Ministers.

An important debating axis of the referendum (and the longer struggle to protect the UK's place in Europe) was the tendency of euro-sceptics to think of EU institutions and people as alien, and EU supporters to see familiarity and democracy.

Antony Hook

Liberal Clubs

The letters from David Steel and Peter Hellyer emphasising the role of the three working men's Liberal clubs in the Borders (*Journal of Liberal History* 91, summer 2016) argue for their role in Liberal victories from 1965 onwards. That role had deep foundations.

Roxburgh & Selkirk was one of only five constituencies in Great Britain where Labour never once overtook the Liberal vote. The other four (North Cornwall, North Dorset, Montgomery, Orkney & Zetland) were largely agricultural, and Labour's weakness is easily explained by the tiny size of an industrial working class vote. In the Borders, Liberal clubs held the loyalty of these three towns' working class Liberal voters, even though the Labour vote grew during that party's early years – Labour came closest to taking second place in Roxburgh & Selkirk in 1924. Nowhere else did Liberal Clubs play such a key role.

Michael Steed