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The Export of Live Animals: The Government's Response to the Second Report of the House of Commons Select Committee on Welsh Affairs, Session 1994-95, Great Britain, Great Britain. Welsh Office, H.M. Stationery Office, 1995, 010129252X, 9780101292528, . .

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David Anthony Andrew Amess (born 26 March 1952) is a British Conservative Party politician. He has been a Member of Parliament (MP) since 1983, first for Basildon, and since 1997 for Southend West. He is married to Julia Amess and together they have one son and four daughters. His eldest daughter is British actress Katie Amess.

He was born in Plaistow, London to James and Maud Amess, and raised Roman Catholic. He attended St Anthony's Junior and Infant School, then St. Bonaventure Grammar School (now St Bonaventure's Catholic Comprehensive School) on Boleyn Road in Forest Gate and then Bournemouth College of Technology, where he earned a BSc degree with honours in Economics and Government.[3]

Amess continued to serve both as an MP and a local councillor until 1986, when he stood down from Redbridge Borough Council to concentrate on his Westminster seat. He held his Basildon seat narrowly at the 1987 General Election, in part by developing a significant personal following. During the 1987 campaign, the constituency was visited by future Prime Minister John Major.

Following the election Amess was appointed a Parliamentary Private Secretary to Michael Portillo, a position he held for ten years throughout Portillo's ministerial career. Amess held his seat again at the 1992 General Election, which was the first but vital sign that the Conservatives would unexpectedly win the 1992 election; the Basildon constituency was viewed as the make-or-break milestone.[4]

In 1997, Amess moved to represent Southend West in Essex after the retirement of former Cabinet minister Paul Channon. Amess received the nomination and was returned to Westminster again, in the wake of the landslide Labour victory. The newly-redrawn constituency of Basildon was won by Labour candidate, Angela Smith.

He voted for the 2003 invasion of Iraq but has since been critical of the Labour government's failure to find the weapons of mass destruction with which they justified the action at the time. On foreign policy he is also a leading member of Conservative Friends of Israel. He is one of the few Conservative MPs to support the impeach Blair campaign and is strongly against Labour's proposed anti-terror laws and the erosion of civil liberties.

Amess is strongly anti-abortion.[6] In June 2005 Amess supported the Prohibition of Abortion

(England and Wales) Bill introduced by Laurence Robertson that sought to almost entirely ban abortion. However he is also in favour of a return to capital punishment.[6] Amess is a very active supporter and advocates for the People's Mujahedin of Iran.[7]

The Protection Against Cruel Tethering Act came about as a result of Amess's long-standing concern for animal welfare, supported by the National Farmers Union. Amess stated in the House of Commons that the Ten Minute Rule Bill was, "inspired by the Essex Horse and Pony Protection Society".[11] The bill stated:

The Act required the Secretary of State to "publish an implement a strategy for reducing fuel poverty".[13] This Act was widely credited with a significant change in both attitude and policy towards fuel poverty within the UK.[14] The scale of fuel poverty in England fell from 5.1 million households to 1.2 million households between 1996 and 2004, indicating the impact of the Act.[14]

Amess served on the Health Select Committee from 1998 until 2007. Due to his role on the Health Select Committee, Amess became one of the most prominent Conservative spokesmen on Health issues, becoming Chair of the Conservative Party Backbench Committee for Health in 1999.[15] He has campaigned on various health issues since.

Whilst a member of the committee, Amess played a prominent role holding an inquiry into the state of obesity in the UK, leading to the publication of a report in 2004.[16] The report found that two-thirds of the population of England are overweight or obese and went on to discuss the causes of obesity, as well as making various recommendations to combat the problem. To this day, Amess maintains an interest in the issue, most recently tabling a series of Parliamentary Questions in July 2013.[17]

Amess is also a member of the Panel of Chairs, which comprises the Chairman and two deputy Chairmen of Ways and Means, as well as ten Members nominated at the start of each session by the Speaker of the House of Commons.[18] Amess was appointed most recently on the 26th May 2010, but has been on the panel since 2001.[19]

In an article published in House Magazine, Amess stated that he initially put his name forward "with some trepidation", and was "somewhat cynical about the purpose of the committee and its powers".[20] He goes on to state that he has been "proved quite wrong". Amess then outlines the power which the committee has "in that it has granted backbench debates which appear to have led to government "U turns" and also illustrates three things committee members look for when granting a debate: urgency, all-party support, and real debate.[20]

Amess finishes by reminding readers that he is a strong supporter of the Adjournment debates held at the end of each Parliamentary session, which are granted by the Backbench Business Committee; Amess is famous in Westminster for attempting to mention a large number of topics in a short space of time during Adjournment Debates.[20]

Amess faced criticism from voters in his Southend West constituency after his expense claims were revealed. Amess claimed £400 a week for food, and money for a second home in London despite his constituency being in commutable distance. He has since failed to answer calls from his local newspaper the Evening Echo, after he was confronted on his expenses whilst out canvassing, seeking refuge in a local hairdressers while avoiding the press.[25]

Amess infamously appeared in the "Drugs" episode of the spoof current affairs television programme Brass Eye, and was fooled into filming an elaborate warning against the dangers of a fictional Eastern European drug called "cake".[26] He went as far as to ask a question about "cake" in Parliament, alongside real substances Khat and GHB.