

MARY MACLEOD MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS

LONDON SW1A 0AA

Mr Mark Carney
Governor
Bank of England
Threadneedle Street
London
EC2R 8AH

1st July 2013

Dear Mr Carney,

I am contacting you in relation to the Bank of England's decision to remove the only female historical figure from our currency.

As Chair of the All Party Parliamentary Group Women in Parliament and through my work with the Culture Secretary and Minister for Women and Equalities, Rt Hon. Maria Miller MP, I am, time and again, reminded about the vital role that women play in public life and in our economy. What irony it is that on the very notes that we earn and spend, we will now see no women at all. This is completely unrepresentative of the role that women have played and continue to play in our country's history.

Women of outstanding achievement such as Rosalind Franklin, who contributed to the discovery of DNA; Emmeline Pankhurst, the figurehead of female suffrage; and National Trust founder and campaigner against poverty Octavia Hill, are all surely more than worthy contenders.

This is not to say that the new face of the five pound note, Sir Winston Churchill, has no place on our currency. Few would argue with the fact that he is one of the greatest, if not the greatest, Briton to have ever lived and his legacy to the country and to the free world needs no justification.

I am nevertheless disappointed that we are to lose Elizabeth Fry from the five pound note. The symbolism of having no women on our bank notes leaves a chasm where there once was inspiration – and contributes to an undoing of some of the hard work I know this Government has done to remove barriers and support women in our country.

In light of this and in light of the huge importance of women in our economy, I would be grateful if you could detail what plans you have put in place to consider the representation of women on bank notes and when you will be reporting this to the general public.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mary Macleod'.

Mary Macleod MP

Member of Parliament for Chiswick, Brentford, Isleworth, Osterley and Hounslow

Parliamentary Private Secretary to the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport and Minister for Women and Equalities, Rt Hon. Maria Miller MP

Chair of the APPG Women in Parliament

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