

Report of the Independent Commission on the Voting System: Volume 2

Submissions and correspondence from Members of Parliament

Tony Baldry MP



HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

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Dear Ray

Thank you very much for your letter of 17th June and for the invitation to meet members of the Commission on 30th June.

I think it is unlikely that within the space of an hour many colleagues are going to be able to make any real kind of contribution so it struck me as being more sensible if I were to write to you with my views.

Any change in the Voting system is almost certainly going to give greater powers to the party political machines. We have seen clear evidence of this in recent constitutional reforms with, for example, Labour candidates for the Scottish parliament and the Welsh Assembly being chosen centrally and with those members of the Party who don't conform to present orthodoxy being excluded from the official lists. Local involvement and local accountability has been minimised.

Clearly, the "first past the post" system is not perfect. But it does ensure a broad degree of political pluralism with a diversity of range of views within the House of Commons. I am not convinced, moreover, that there is any great appetite amongst electors for electoral reform. Indeed, I don't think that this is an issue that has been raised with me by a single constituent.

Tony

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