

We need proportional representation, now

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I posted this video on YouTube this morning. In it I argue that people in the UK like to think we live in a democracy. But we don't. Not really. When all elections result in just one of two parties winning, we live in a country where rigged elections are the norm, and most of us are not represented by people whose opinions we even vaguely share. It's overdue that we had proportional representation in UK elections. Even 80% of Labour members want it. But the leaderships of the two largest parties are conspiring against us to deny us what we need. That has to stop.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QOCVI9g5skw>

The transcript is as follows:

The UK likes to claim it's a democracy. If only, I say. I wish it was, but I don't believe it. We are a long way from being an effective democracy.

What do I mean? Look, when I come to the general election later this year, I know that there will be only one of two outcomes. Right now, we think there's only going to be one, but in any general election, we only think there's going to be one of two outcomes, and we've thought that for a century. We're either going to get a Labour government, sometimes, or a Conservative government, most of the time. Does that represent democracy when so many people support other parties in the UK?

In fact, there are more than 10 parties represented in Parliament. So why is it the case that we must only end up with a government from one of those two parties when lots of people support the Liberal Democrats, the Greens, the SNP, Plaid and the parties in Northern Ireland? Maybe others as well. Reform is obviously on the list at present, but who knows whether it will last longer than the Brexit party and UKIP that went before it.

My point is the same whichever parties want to contest an election and this is that we should have the right to choose who we think should best represent us with a good

chance that somebody from that party will end up in parliament if enough of us do decide to support the party in question.

But that doesn't happen right now. Throughout most of my life, I've lived in constituencies where, for better or worse, I have not been able to vote for somebody who goes to Parliament. My choices have not reflected that of the majority of the people in the communities in which I've lived, and therefore I've ended up with an MP who does not reflect my views.

If only we had proportional representation in this country, instead of the first-past-the-post electoral system, I would have got the chance to elect an MP in a bigger regional constituency, where multiple MPs would have gone to Parliament, and there was a good chance, if I supported one of the mainstream parties, then at least one member from that party would have ended up in Parliament. And I would, therefore, have ended up with an MP to represent me.

We would end up with a more diverse parliament.

We would end up with coalitions. But frankly, we've already done that in the last few years anyway. Did it end the world? No.

We would end up with people having to negotiate their positions openly and honestly with each other to make sure that we had accountable government, and that would be a benefit.

But most of all, people would believe that voting mattered and that government represented them.

And in a democracy, that is crucial. Right now, most people in the UK are, in my opinion, alienated from everything to do with politics. And I wholly understand why it's quite reasonable to feel that way when the two major parties that we have are, even in the opinion of the Financial Times, offering almost identical policies to us at the forthcoming general election.

So, we need a better system to choose parties that might break the terrible state that this country is in by putting forward new ideas, when neither of our major political parties are willing to do so. And we can't do that until we get proportional representation in this country.

We have to change our electoral system to represent the will of the people. And the absurd thing is, that Labour's membership voted for this by 80 percent at a recent Labour Party conference. But the Labour leadership is ignoring them. They are opposing that democracy that we need. It's time to hold them to account and demand what their members want, which is a fair electoral system for this country, which will deliver a true democracy for the people of the UK.