

ADRIAN WAITE

15th December 2019

Ms. Emily Atherton,
Editor,
Cumberland & Westmorland Herald,
14 King Street,
Penrith,
Cumbria.
CA11 7AH.

Sent by email to: emilya@cwherald.com

Dear Ms. Atherton,

General Election 2019

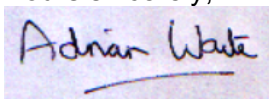
Last week's General Election was a flawed process because:

- Most constituencies are 'safe seats' meaning that whoever is nominated by the dominant party will be elected. Voters may be free to express a view about which candidate they prefer, but this has no effect on the outcome.
- Many voters did not vote for the candidate they preferred and instead voted for another candidate on the grounds that they were not as bad as their least preferred candidate.
- Many voters were not able to vote for the candidate that they preferred because their party had withdrawn them as part of an electoral deal.
- Many voters found that voting for the candidate they preferred had the effect of helping the election of a candidate they disapproved of.
- Many people who are entitled to vote were not registered to do so.
- While it is often said that there should be no taxation without representation, people aged between sixteen and eighteen can work, join the army and pay tax but are barred from voting.
- Elections are expensive which favours candidates with wealthy backers and, despite there being limits on election expenditure there is a lack of transparency about the funding of political parties.
- Political parties increasingly use social media to campaign but on social media there is an absence of safeguards about accuracy, balance and transparency.
- There are concerns about external interference. For example, Parliament's Intelligence and Security Committee has expressed concern about Russian interference in the 2016 Brexit referendum and 2017 general election.

The main question of this election was whether Boris Johnson should continue as Prime Minister. To this question 43% of the electorate answered 'Yes' and 57% answered 'No' but the system awarded Boris Johnson 56% of the seats. He will now go on to form a government with powers that the late Lord Hailsham (a former Conservative Lord Chancellor) described as an 'elected dictatorship' and will implement policies that do not have majority support.

Since 1945 no party has ever received most of the votes cast but, in almost all elections, a single party has received most of the seats in the House of Commons. Perhaps the biggest lie that we are told by politicians is that Britain is a democracy. Clearly it is not. To become a democracy, Britain needs significant constitutional and electoral reform including proportional representation.

Yours sincerely,



Adrian Waite