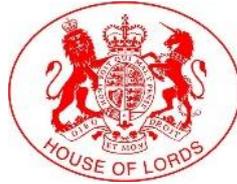


Lord Pearson of Rannoch

The Prime Minister
10 Downing Street
London, SW1A 2AA



11th August 2015

More UKIP Peers?

Thank you for your letter of 24th June. You say that the Government's policy is to ensure that the Lords continues to work well. I trust you agree that this includes sometimes asking the Commons and the Government of the day to think again, which we will do less and less if we become more and more of a rubber stamp for the latter?

That is why in our correspondence during the last Parliament I doubted the wisdom of *"getting the composition of the Lords to better reflect the votes cast in the previous General Election"*. Perhaps the Lords' greatest constitutional usefulness derives from the present position, whereby its composition does not reflect that of the Commons?

I see that you have changed this previous coalition policy into *"reflect the results of the previous General Election"*, which looks even less democratic and therefore more constitutionally dangerous than the previous policy? (And see my P.S. to this letter).

I have never asked you to fulfil the policy for UKIP Peers. When I wrote to you on 19th May 2010, I pointed out that it entitled us to 23 Peers, but I suggested 4, making 6 in all. You replied on 11th August, exactly 5 years ago, that you would keep the matter under review, but that while you would be able to make *"a limited number of recommendations to the Queen, recent speculation in the press vastly inflated the number of peerage nominations available"*. I think the media was speculating that you might have been going to make 60 recommendations; you went on to make 185, with none for UKIP.

I am now told that you are about to recommend some 30 new Conservative Peers, 10 for the Lib Dems, 8 for Labour, but still none for UKIP. I submit there are two reasons why this would be wrong, especially if you recommend any new Lib Dem Peers.

The first is that under their own coalition policy, to which I gather they still adhere, the Lib Dems are entitled to only 43 seats in the Lords, (from 7.9% of the votes cast in the recent Election), whereas they already have 102, or 59 more than they should. UKIP, on the other hand, would be entitled to 69 Peers (from 12.6% of the votes cast the last Election), whereas we have 3, or 66 less than we should. And under your new variation of this policy, to *"reflect the results of the previous General Election"*, I trust you will bear in mind that you would not have gained power without the UKIP vote, or so the pundits assure me!

The other more important reason is that the Lords is to have its Second Reading of the EU Referendum Bill on 13th October, and doubtless we will debate the pros and cons of our EU membership from then on to the referendum itself. Although the Lords can reflect the interest and will of the British people better than the Commons, the one area where it never does so is “Europe”. Indeed, of our 800 or so members, I can think of only about 8 who will volunteer publicly that the UK should leave the EU (1%). You may not agree with us – we await the results of your re-negotiation – but this makes the Lords massively unrepresentative of the people in this area, of whom 30%-40% now appear to favour leaving. A few UKIP peers would do something to address this constitutional imbalance.

Lords Hansard will show you that I have been ploughing an exceptionally lonely furrow over recent years in support of the “come out” position. Apart from David Stoddart, I have often been the only voice speaking in favour of leaving. Whatever your view of our EU membership, and I understand your mind will not be wholly made up until you complete your re-negotiation, you must surely accept that it is constitutionally wrong to go forward into this historic debate and decision with so few voices in the Upper House speaking in favour of leaving the EU.

So for both these reasons I must repeat our request for at least 12 new UKIP Peers, and look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely

Lord Pearson of Rannoch

P.S. In ruminating this issue, I have produced a table which makes one wonder whether our “first past the post” system, designed for 2 parties, is any longer fit for democratic purpose; i.e. the people electing and dismissing those who make their laws.

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