

Cross-Party MEP Statement on Electoral Commission Report on Vote Leave

The Electoral Commission report leaked yesterday morning found irregularities in the spending return filed by the official campaign for the EU referendum, Vote Leave, and determined that this campaign failed to comply with electoral law.

The comments from Matthew Elliott, CEO of Vote Leave, make clear that Vote Leave has cynically leaked the Electoral Commission report they were given in confidence allowing them to dominate the media and spin the story in their favour.

These allegations are very serious. Vote Leave are accused of colluding with the student campaign BeLeave by passing on a donation of £625,000 illegally during the campaign. They have also made inaccurate returns, failed to provide receipts, and ignored statutory notices.

The international treaty on democratic conduct, the Venice Commission, to which the UK is a signatory, has ruled that campaigning over-spends are adequate grounds for annulling an election result. However, given that we have no domestic remedy in the UK for this occurrence, but given the evidence of breaches of electoral law by both the main Leave campaigns, the mandate for Brexit is seriously undermined.

These new revelations, following on from allegations of social media manipulation, fatally undermine the legitimacy of the referendum result. We believe that there is a simple straightforward way to address this by supporting the call for a People's Vote on the Brexit deal. Those of us who respect the rule of Law have no need to cheat and have nothing to fear from the people's judgement.

As directly elected MEPs, with the requirement to act in the best interests of our country, we insist that any final decision to leave the EU is based on an unchallengeable mandate by the British voters.

5 July 2018

Molly Scott Cato
Charles Tannock
Catherine Bearder
Seb Dance
Julie Girling
Catherine Stihler
David Martin
Mary Honeyball
Jill Evans

Derek Vaughan
Jude Kirton-Darling
Theresa Griffin
Jean Lambert
Julie Ward
Keith Taylor