



Monica Harding

Liberal Democrat Prospective
Parliamentary Candidate for Esher & Walton

Rt Hon Dominic Raab MP
Houses of Parliament
London
SW1A 0AA

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Dear Dominic

Today the Prime Minister has asked the Queen to prorogue Parliament in September ahead of a Queen's Speech on 14 October, which she has agreed to. This unprecedented move will suspend all Parliamentary business for five weeks and prevent MPs carrying out their democratic responsibility to debate the handling of Brexit ahead of the 31 October deadline. It has dragged the Queen into a political crisis of the Conservative party's own making: at a time when the country could not be more divided. This should be a matter of regret.

Given the disquiet over no deal - amongst not only opposition MPs but senior members of your own party, this act appears to be profoundly anti-democratic. It denies the people of this country - whether they voted Leave or Remain - to be represented by their MPs just at the moment that the UK's economic, political and international outlook is about to be altered forever. The Speaker of the House of Commons has today called it a "constitutional outrage".

On behalf of many of your constituents of Esher and Walton, I am writing to ask you for an explanation as to why you believe this move is justified. The idea of prorogation was first suggested by you. It was then roundly criticised by your colleagues during the Tory Leadership election. At the time, your leadership rivals said prorogation would "undermine Parliamentary democracy" (Matt Hancock) and "trash democracy" (Sajid Javid); Javid even went on to liken it to the actions of a dictator. Michael Gove said directly to you: "I will defend our democracy, Dom... And you cannot take Britain out of the European Union against the will of Parliament." Gove, Hancock and Javid all now hold senior Cabinet positions alongside you.

Esher and Walton is a progressive, outward-looking, thriving constituency that voted 60% to Remain in the EU. The 40% who voted to Leave did so on terms put forward by you and other Brexiters that made no mention of a No Deal, despite your recent attempt to claim otherwise. You were returned as MP in 2017 when the country had yet to witness the weakening of the economy, the pulling back by investors and the fall in the pound caused by Brexit. It was not clear then that the Union with Scotland and the peace in Northern Ireland would be threatened or that Brexit would mean crashing out of our current relationship with the world's largest trading bloc with nothing in its place. Did the minority of 40%, who voted Leave in Esher and Walton, also vote for such an anti-democratic and extraordinary unconstitutional act to deliver their wishes? Only the next General Election or another vote on Brexit can determine this. In the meantime, as the MP for Esher and Walton, you owe it to all your constituents, to explain why you think this divisive move is justified against a democratically elected parliament.

Whatever the intended benefits are assumed to be of Brexit, the constituents of Esher and Walton along with the rest of our country are at risk of losing so much more, not least our faith in the integrity of the parliamentary process.

I look forward to seeing your response to the constituents of Esher and Walton.

Yours sincerely

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