

**99 REASONS
TO VOTE
NO TO AV ...**

**... AS FIRST TOLD
BY YES TO AV
CAMPAIGNERS**

NO_{to}AV





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INTRODUCTION |

In May, the UK faces a £90 million referendum on the Alternative Vote; an electoral system that neither of the two political parties in Government campaigned for and about which few within Britain's electoral reform lobby had anything good to say before June last year.

The Yes to AV campaign and its supporters, ranging from the Liberal Democrat Party to organisations like Compass and Unlock Democracy, have tied themselves in knots trying to argue that AV is a "small change". But as the quotes laid out inside this booklet make clear, this tactic is little more than a con to paper over the campaign's tepid support for AV, and their activists' apathy.

This damascene conversion to AV might have something to do with the political considerations. The Electoral Reform Society (ERS), the principal backer of Yes to AV providing them with millions in funding along with staff support, potentially stands to benefit hugely from voter education and counting machines should there be a change in the electoral system. Similarly, David Laws, a leading Liberal Democrat and a key part of the Coalition negotiations last year, described AV as a "shield against" his party's rising unpopularity.

The justification from both the ERS and the Lib Dems is that they hope to move quickly on from AV to a better system. But there is little evidence that there will be an appetite for a second referendum on voting reform and, in the interim, they risk saddling Britain with a *miserable little compromise* that even its proponents don't want.

Ultimately, the Yes Campaign's words stand for themselves.

THE TOP TEN QUOTES FROM YES TO AV STAFF AND SUPPORTERS |

- 1** Nick Clegg MP, Deputy Prime Minister and leader of the Liberal Democrat Party:

“I am not going to settle for a miserable little compromise thrashed out by the Labour Party.”

(The Independent, ‘I want to push this all the way declares Clegg’, 22 Apr. 2010)

- 2** Electoral Reform Society, principal financial and logistical backer of the Yes to AV campaign:

“AV is not a proportional system, the Society does not regard it as suitable for the election of a representative body, e.g. a parliament.”

(ERS, ‘ERS policy on AV’, c.2002 - since redacted)

- 3** Pam Giddy, Chair of the Yes to AV Steering Committee:

“Settling for AV is a pure politicians’ fix. It suits those currently in Westminster as it preserves their power, it will do little to challenge the problems of fairness, it will encourage rather than challenge feelings of distrust and ultimately it will reinforce the fact that our political process belongs to parties and not to the people.”

(The Scotsman, ‘Campaigners get ready for electoral reform rally’, 14 May 2010)

- 4** Neal Lawson, Chair of Compass, Yes to AV Campaign Director and Steering Committee member:

“I’m sorry but I’m not a fan of AV. It can lead to even less fair outcomes than first-past-the-post and that to me is the critical point.”

(The Guardian, ‘Neal Lawson v. Sunder Katwala’, 4 Dec. 2009)

- 5** Ben Bradshaw MP, Director of Labour Yes to AV:

“If one of the reasons that we want reform is to rebuild public trust and confidence in politics, make MPs more accountable, give more power to people and establish a political and parliamentary system that more reflects the will of the public, then AV doesn’t deliver that.”

(The New Statesman, ‘It would be a missed opportunity not to have a referendum on Election Day’, 5 Nov. 2009)

- 6** Ben Bradshaw MP, Director of Labour Yes to AV:

“I’m not suddenly going to pretend that I’ve changed my mind, either on the system of electoral reform or on what I think should happen.”

(Ibid.)

- 7** Caroline Lucas, Leader of the English Green Party and on the board of Directors of Yes to AV:

“It is hugely disappointing that AV is the only alternative to first past the post in the Bill. As a result, the Bill fails to live up to the promise of genuine reform and of re-engaging people with the political process.”

(Hansard, Col. 280, 12 Oct. 2010)

- 8** Peter Facey, Director of Unlock Democracy and Yes to AV Steering Committee member:

[AV] “does nothing about parties having a monopoly of power and certainly does not tackle the adversarial nature of our political system that leaves many of our citizens cold (...) I see no reason to campaign for it.”

(Unlock Democracy, ‘AV is an imperfect solution’, 25 Sept. 2007)

THE TOP TEN QUOTES FROM YES TO AV STAFF AND SUPPORTERS |

CONTINUED

9

Chris Huhne MP, former Deputy Leader of the Liberal Democrats and Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change:

(AV would) “be like an ill-fitting corset attempting to squeeze all the diverse strands of opinion in our society into an inappropriate and deeply uncomfortable shape.”

(The Guardian, ‘Alternative vote is not the solution’ 9 Feb. 2010)

10

Jonathan Bartley, Director of Ekklesia and Official Spokesman for Yes to AV:

“Why would it be right to give voters the choice over AV and not the choice of a proportional system?”

(Ekklesia, ‘The Tories have made a moral commitment to a referendum on PR’, 2010)

TWENTY REASONS FROM LIBERAL DEMOCRATS |

11 2010 Lib Dem General Election Manifesto:

“Our preferred Single Transferable Vote system gives people the choice between candidates as well as parties.”

12 Nick Clegg MP, Deputy Prime Minister and leader of the Liberal Democrat Party:

“It is no secret that the Government’s proposed reform is not the same as the policy my party and I campaigned on.”

(Lib Dem Press Release, The Hugo Young Memorial Lecture, 23 Nov.2010)

13 Nick Clegg MP:

“I’m the leader of a party that has long campaigned for a different variant of electoral reform.”

(House of Lords Constitutional Committee, Parliament Live, 13 Oct. 2010)

14 Nick Clegg MP:

(At the launch of the Yes Campaign) “I know AV may not be the favourite voting system of everyone here”

(Lib Dem press release, ‘Nick Clegg’s speech to the Yes! to Fair Votes rally’, 18 Sep. 2010)

15 Nick Clegg MP:

“AV is a baby step in the right direction.”

(The Independent, ‘I want to push this all the way declares Clegg’, 22 Apr. 2010)

TWENTY REASONS FROM LIBERAL DEMOCRATS |

CONTINUED

16 Chris Huhne MP, former Deputy Leader of the Liberal Democrats and Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change:

“The Alternative Vote is (...) not a proportional system and it does not give voters real power over both the party and the person elected as MP.”

(The Guardian, ‘Alternative vote is not the solution’ 9 Feb. 2010)

17 Chris Huhne MP:

“Only the Single Transferable Vote in multi-member seats would abolish MPs’ meal tickets for life.”

(Ibid)

18 Chris Huhne MP:

“Under AV (...) there would continue to be safe seats where the MP will effectively have a job for life”.

(Ibid)

19 Chris Huhne MP:

“The alternative vote (AV) is a small step in the right direction, but is the most minimal change a Labour government could devise.”

(Ibid)

20 Chris Huhne MP:

(AV is) “a deathbed conversion and a baby step towards proportional voting.”

(Guardian, ‘Brown promises to push through law before election to pave way for referendum on voting reform’, 2 Feb. 2010)

21 Roy Jenkins, former Chancellor, co-founder of the Social Democratic Party and leader of the Lib Dems in the Lords:

(AV) “offers little prospect of a move towards greater proportionality, and (...) it is even less proportional than FPTP.”

(Report of the Independent Commission on Voting Reform, Oct. 1998)

22 Roy Jenkins:

“Far from doing much to relieve disproportionality, it is capable of substantially adding to it.”

(Ibid)

23 Roy Jenkins:

“Its effects (on its own without any corrective mechanism) are disturbingly unpredictable.”

(Ibid)

24 Roy Jenkins:

(AV) “would (...) be unacceptably unfair.”

(Ibid)

25 Prof. Denis Mollison, author of the Lib Dems' STV amendment to the Constitutional Reform Bill:

“AV may be a small step in the right direction, as Chris Huhne described it, but because that small step largely benefits the Lib Dems, it makes any support they give it look self-serving.”

(NextLeft, ‘Fair votes are simple with STV’ 8 Feb. 2010)

TWENTY REASONS FROM LIBERAL DEMOCRATS |

CONTINUED

26

David Howarth, former Lib Dem MP for Cambridge and Justice Spokesman (2005-10):

“Voters deserve a real choice (...) The Alternative Vote system is a very small step in the right direction, but it is not proportional and it does not give voters enough power over the party and the person elected as MP.”

(Lib Dem press release, ‘Electoral Reform Bill must give voters real choice’, 07 Feb. 2010)

27

David Howarth:

“AV has a large number of disadvantages. It is not very proportionate. It can be less proportionate, but proportionality is, for us, an important measure.”

(Hansard, Col. 825, 9 Feb. 2010)

28

David Howarth:

“The AV system is not proportionate, it does not allow a choice of candidates between members of the same party, and it still allows safe seats. Those, for us, are major disadvantages.”

(Hansard, Col. 826, 9 Feb. 2010)

29 David Howarth:

“It is true that very few seats proportionally would have changed hands under AV at the last election.”

(Ibid)

30 Neil Stockley, former Director of Liberal Democrats’ Policy Department (1995-7):

“It’s not that I think that using AV would radically change UK governance for the better.”

(Personal blog, ‘Winning the AV referendum’, 7 July 2010)

TEN REASONS FROM LABOUR YES TO AV |

31 Ben Bradshaw MP, Director of Labour Yes to AV:

“The reason I've never supported AV is that it would have given us an even bigger majority in 1997, and it would have given the Tories an even bigger majority in 1983, and probably 1987 as well.”

(New Statesman, 'It would be a missed opportunity not to have a referendum on Election Day', 5 Nov. 2009)

32 Sadiq Khan MP, Spokesman for Labour Yes to AV:

“If you believe in true proportional representation, why have a referendum on AV when it's probably going to be lost? I think it'll be lost and it'll be Nick Clegg's fault.”

(The Guardian, 'Sadiq Khan: I was seen as a kind of troublemaker', 29 Nov. 2010)

33 Alan Johnson MP, Spokesman for Labour Yes to AV:

“I think it's weird that you have a referendum and don't tell the (British people) they're grown up enough to have a proportional alternative as well.”

(Fabian Review, 'Alan Johnson: The special relationship', Winter 2010)

34 Alan Johnson MP:

“I won't be heartbroken (if the Yes campaign lose). If it goes through, I'll support AV, but my heart won't be in it in the same way as if it was the proper thing.”

(Ibid)

35 Mark Lazarowicz MP, Spokesman for Labour Yes to AV:

“I support a move towards an AV system, because, bluntly (...) I believe that we will move in due course to a more genuinely proportional system, which I would welcome and would like to see introduced.”

(Hansard, 9 February 2010, col. 844)

36 Wayne David MP, Spokesman for Labour Yes to AV:

“I am convinced that first past the post is the most appropriate method of election in this country for all tiers of government”

(Hansard, 9 July 2002, col. 196)

37 Tom Watson MP, Spokesman for Labour Yes to AV:

“The debate on the Jenkins Commission clearly demonstrated the strength of feeling within all sections of the Party against changing to a system of elections which would ensure permanent coalition government.”

(Letter written as Campaign Co-ordinator for Trade Unionists for First Past the Post, 12 Oct. 1998)

38 Tom Watson MP, Spokesman for Labour Yes to AV:

“I enclose a copy of Raising the Standard by Stuart Bell MP. This is an important contribution to the campaign to keep Britain's existing electoral system.”

(Ibid)

39 Chris Mullin, former Labour MP and signatory to Labour Yes to AV letter:

“I understand why Liberals are so keen on it. They would be in government no matter which party won the election. After each election there would simply be a pause while the Liberal Party decided which of the main parties to appoint to government.”

(Personal blog, Speech – Restoring Democracy, 12 May 1995)



TEN REASONS FROM LABOUR YES TO AV |

CONTINUED

40

Roy Hattersley, former Deputy Leader of the Labour Party and signatory to Labour Yes to AV letter:

“(AV) Requires political parties to seek a mandate for pre-election promises and then, after the election is over, negotiate away its manifesto as they horse trade for places in the government.”

(The Guardian, Bring socialism in from the cold, 25 May 2009)



ELEVEN REASONS FROM THE ELECTORAL REFORM SOCIETY |

(THE REBRANDED PROPORTIONAL
REPRESENTATION SOCIETY)

41 The Electoral Reform Society, principal backer of Yes to AV providing them with millions in funding along with staff support:

“AV is thus not a proportional system, and can in fact be more disproportional than FPTP.”

(ERS website, ‘ERS policy on AV’ since redacted)

42 The Electoral Reform Society:

“It does very little to improve the voice of traditionally under-represented groups in parliament, strengthening the dominance of the ‘central’ viewpoint.”

(Ibid)

43 The Electoral Reform Society:

“There is no transfer of power from party authority to the voters.”

(Ibid)

44 The Electoral Reform Society:

(AV) “is prone to a certain amount of ‘Donkey voting’, where voters rank candidates randomly, not knowing enough about all of them to make an informed decision.”

(Ibid)

ELEVEN REASONS FROM THE ELECTORAL REFORM SOCIETY |

CONTINUED

45 The Electoral Reform Society:

“Under certain circumstances, a shrewd voter can get a better result by lying. If, for example, it is known that the contest will be fought between two strong candidates, supporters of one might rank third parties above the other, even if the other is technically their second choice”

(Ibid)

46 The Electoral Reform Society:

“AV would prove a very modest reform, with second preferences having minimal impact at this election.”

(ERS, 'STV & the Parliament that might have been', 10 May 2010)

47 The Electoral Reform Society:

“The Alternative Vote is a minimalist form of electoral reform (...) AV is not a proportional system (...) it could produce even more disproportional results than FPTP.”

(ERS, 'The UK General Election of 5 May 2005')

48 The Electoral Reform Society:

“AV is not a proportional system.”

(ERS, 'Towards a fairer vote' submission to the Jenkins Commission, Mar. 1998)

49 The Electoral Reform Society:

“AV does very little to enhance MP-constituency links.”

(Ibid)

50 The Electoral Reform Society:

“If AV had been used in recent British general elections it would have produced even more disproportional outcomes.”

(Ibid)

51 The Electoral Reform Society:

“(AV) can produce what may be a false and undemocratic stability produced by awarding a majority of seats to parties with a minority of votes (...) it can suffer from an instability of outcome.”

(Ibid)

FIVE REASONS FROM **KEN RITCHIE,** **FORMER CHIEF EXECUTIVE OF THE ELECTORAL REFORM SOCIETY |**

52 Ken Ritchie, former Chief Executive of the Electoral Reform Society:

“A straight shift to AV would be a hugely timid move, motivated more by self-preservation than the need to change our politics.”

(ERS Press Release, ‘Move to AV “negligence” says Society’, 10 Jun. 2009)

53 Ken Ritchie:

“Make no mistake, the Alternative Vote is not a big reform.”

(Ibid)

54 Ken Ritchie:

“At a time when our democratic institutions are in crisis a move to AV would be nothing short of negligence.”

(Ibid)

55 Ken Ritchie:

“People are looking for choice and accountability at elections, with a vote that might actually count. That simply won’t happen with AV.”

(Ibid)

56 Ken Ritchie:

“Last week we saw what happens when politicians are left to choose their own election system.”

(Ibid)

TEN REASONS FROM PAM GIDDY, CHAIR OF YES TO AV |

57 Pam Giddy:

“Don’t be fooled. AV may be a step in the right direction. But it is not a fair system and would not tie the number of seats held by a party to the share of the vote it received.”

(The Scotsman, ‘Campaigners get ready for electoral reform rally’, 14 May 2010)

58 Pam Giddy:

“All the politicians need to understand that we demand more. AV is simply not enough – we want fair votes now.”

(Ibid)

59 Pam Giddy, former Director of the Power Commission, Chair of Power 2010, and Chair of the Yes to AV Steering Committee:

(AV is) “a system hand-picked by ministers which allows voters to rank candidates but would do nothing to end the unfairness in the current system. This is no way to rebuild trust.”

(The Independent, At least one party gets the urgency of political reform, 15 April 2010)

60 Pam Giddy:

“If the purpose of this announcement (a referendum on AV) is to help rebuild trust between the people and their elected representatives (...they) could not have chosen a worse way of doing it.”

(Progressives.org.uk, ‘Will it really happen this time?’ 3 Feb. 2010)

61 Pam Giddy:

(AV is a) “voting system which will not really offer more choice to voters or open up the political system”

(Ibid)

62 Pam Giddy:

(AV) “smack(s) of electioneering and smoky backrooms.”

(Labourlist.org, ‘Labour, power and democratic renewal’, 3 Feb. 2010)

63 Pam Giddy:

AV “encourages rather than remedies some of the most galling deficiencies of first past the post.”

(Make Votes Count, ‘How should we elect our MPs’, 2001)

64 Pam Giddy:

“AV does nothing to address the huge tracts of the country which are electoral deserts for major parties.”

(Ibid)

65 Pam Giddy:

“AV does nothing to remedy one of the most damaging aspects of our current system – it does not remedy problems of low turnouts in safe seats due to complacency.”

(Ibid)

66 Pam Giddy:

“There are those who argue that AV could be regarded as the first stage in the reform process (...) these people are misguided.”

(Ibid)

SEVEN REASONS FROM NEAL LAWSON, HEAD OF CAMPAIGNS FOR YES TO AV |

67 Neal Lawson, Director of Compass and Head of Campaigns for Yes to AV:

“Is AV enough? The answer is no.”

(Guardian, ‘Labour voting for AV would be a start’, 10 Sep. 2010)

68 Neal Lawson:

“Given the scale of the problem, is this rather minor reform worth bothering with?”

(Ibid)

69 Neal Lawson:

“With the offer of a better system than AV, there would have been the prospect of a new kind of politics.”

(Guardian, ‘Labour Conference: Wednesday’, 30 Sept. 2009)

70 Neal Lawson:

(on AV) “It’s the wrong system.”

(Guardian, ‘Neal Lawson v. Sunder Katwala’, 4 Dec. 2009)

71 Neal Lawson:

“With AV, politics stays pretty much as it is.”

(Ibid)

72 Neal Lawson:

“If everyone’s vote counts, which it still doesn’t under AV.”

(Ibid)

73 Neal Lawson:

“Change only happens with the active consent and participation of the public. PR encourages that culture to emerge; AV doesn’t.”

(Ibid)

SIX REASONS FROM PETER FACEY, YES TO AV STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBER |

74 Peter Facey, Director of Unlock Democracy and Yes to AV Steering Committee member:

“It speaks volumes about our political class that such a tiny change in the way we vote in general elections counts as controversial.”

(The Guardian, ‘Brown’s radical political reforms’, 4 Feb 2010)

75 Peter Facey:

“The commitment to holding a referendum on the Alternative Vote system is disappointing and we regret that.”

(Unlock Democracy, ‘Fight for fair votes will continue’, 12 May 2010)

76 Peter Facey:

“The alternative vote system (...) is not proportional at all.”

(The Guardian, ‘Electoral reform’, 21 Sept. 2009)

77 Peter Facey:

(Supporting AV instead of PR) “makes it look as if the Lib Dems’ support for electoral reform amounts to little more than narrow self-interest.”

(Ibid)

78 Peter Facey:

(Moving to the Australian system) “would not lead to the transformation of our political culture that many supporters of electoral reform view as crucial”

(Unlock Democracy, ‘Unlocking Democracy: 20 years of Charter 88’, 2008)

79 Peter Facey:

**“AV... is not proportional and a mere baby step (...)
Parliament will remain as unrepresentative and
subsequently unresponsive as ever.”**

(BBC News, ‘Voting reform referendum pledged’, 29 Sept. 2009)

FIFTEEN REASONS FROM YES TO AV STAFF |

80 Paul Sinclair, Director of Communications for Yes to AV:

“Single Transferable Vote (or STV) it is widely recognised as the fairest electoral system.”

(The Daily Record, ‘Just do what it says on the tin’, 2003)

81 Caroline Lucas, Leader of the English Green Party and on the board of Directors of Yes to AV:

“AV is still slanted in favour of the bigger parties, and tends to exaggerate large swings. If we're really being democratic, we should be focusing on delivering what the voters want.”

(Green Party Press Release, Caroline Lucas – Voting Reform, Feb. 2010)

82 Andy May, Grassroots Co-ordinator for Yes to AV

“In my opinion there is little choice in the current political environment; get behind any referendum that moves away from the existing discredited system...I wish it wasn't true.”

(Liberal Conspiracy, ‘The campaign to stop voting reform is kicking off; we have to fight back’, 24 June 2010)

83

James Graham, Press Officer for Unlock Democracy, and Yes to AV Campaigns and Communications Manager

“Superficially (AV) sounds like a big deal, but in most elections it will probably only change the result in a handful of seats.”

(The Guardian, ‘Who will fight for electoral reform’, 3 Feb 2010)

84

James Graham:

“It is an open secret that the one party which is most likely to do well out of AV are the Liberal Democrats.”

(The Guardian, ‘Who will fight for electoral reform’, 3 Feb 2010)

85

James Graham:

“Very few people who think AV would be an improvement are actually passionate about it, so who will fight the campaign for a “yes” vote?”

(The Guardian, ‘Who will fight for electoral reform’, 3 Feb 2010)

86

James Graham:

“I just have to wonder why, when we are in such a position of strength, we are being seen backpedalling so enthusiastically away from real reform.”

(Quaequam blog, ‘AV+??!! Eleven year old reheated Westminster leftovers will do nothing to restore trust in politics’, 28 May 2009)

87

James Graham:

(Supporting AV) “is like saying Thatcher and Reagan should have called for a gentler, kinder form of communism just because Gorbachev said so.”

(Ibid)

FIFTEEN REASONS FROM YES TO AV STAFF |

CONTINUED

88 James Graham:

“I would summarise the push for AV as a call for a lot of pain in exchange for very little gain (...) even if the Lib Dem leadership were convinced of this strategy (which I doubt) a lot of the grassroots will be in uproar. It will mean convincing the potential activist base to... compromise on almost everything that they believe in... The whole thing reeks of stalemate and Whitehall farce.”

(OpenDemocracy, ‘AV: So much pain for so little gain’, 24 June 2008)

89 James Graham:

“A referendum on AV will be hard to mobilise support for (who really gets out of bed in the morning to campaign for something that would make such a marginal difference and could even lead to less fair votes?)”

(Ibid)

90 Stephen Glen, Yes to AV Northern Ireland coordinator

“I’m no great supporter of AV.”

(personal blog, ‘Conservatives seeking to conserve’ 6 Sept. 2010)

91 Stephen Glen:

“That is the result of coalitions, which if AV (...) were to come into Westminster would lead to more of the same”

(personal blog, ‘The dichotomy of devolved proportionality’, 23 July 2010)

92 Stephen Glen:

“Personally I’m not really geed up by AV... (It is) an appeasement to lure in Lib Dems”

(personal blog, ‘Crowded fifth of May next year’, 2 July 2010)

93 Stephen Glen:

“I don’t think it (AV) is radical enough, it doesn’t give the people a say over who really represents them, merely which party representative does. It maintains party politics above the ability to vote for party but reject objectionable individuals.”

(Ibid)

94 Stephen Glen:

“AV is only marginally more proportional that first past the post... if you really want the people to decide the best system why not offer them the best system?”

(personal blog, ‘Has Dave blown it?’, 10 May 2010)

FIVE REASONS FROM ORGANISATIONS SUPPORTING YES TO AV |

95 Anthony Barnett, Co-founder, OpenDemocracy:

“They can’t ‘restore trust’ by spending millions on a referendum designed not to trust us.”

(The New Standard, ‘After we hung ‘em’ 19 May 2010)

96 Guy Aitchison, co-editor to OpenDemocracy:

“(Nick Clegg) confirmed that the referendum would be on the ‘Australian’ form of AV, rather than the Supplementary Vote system as used in London (the superior of the two).”

(OurKingdom.co.uk, ‘A power revolution’, 15 July 2010)

97 Unlock Democracy:

“AV is not a proportional system, and can be more disproportional than First Past the Post. Nor does it allow voters to choose between candidates as well as between different parties. So while it is a step forward, it’s a very small one.”

(Unlock Democracy, ‘A proportional, open electoral system’)

98 Unlock Democracy:

“The Alternative Vote (AV) system is not proportional - that is a debate for another time.”

(Unlock Democracy, ‘What’s good about the alternative vote’, Summer 2010)

TEN REASONS FROM ORGANISATIONS SUPPORTING YES TO AV |

CONTINUED

99 Unlock Democracy

“A number of senior Labour figures have called for the Alternative Vote (...) it is not a proportional voting system and can lead to an even less representative chamber.”

(Unlock Democracy, ‘Here are the keys, Gordon’, 24 July 2007)

AND 3 REASONS TO VOTE NO **IN** **THE WORDS OF** **NO TO AV...**

AV makes elections unfair. At the moment we all have one vote and the person who gets the most votes wins. Under AV, supporters of fringe parties can have their vote counted several times and the candidate who comes third can steal the election.

AV is a politicians' fix leading to more hung parliaments and more broken promises, like the Lib Dem tuition fees U-turn. Instead of the voters choosing the government, the politicians will decide who governs in shady backroom deals. Under AV, the only vote that really counts is Nick Clegg's.

AV is complicated and expensive requiring councils to dump our traditional ballot boxes in favour of costly electronic voting machines. That is why it's used by just three countries in the world - Australia, Fiji and Papua New Guinea. And Australia has compulsory voting to make sure people turn up.

**FIND OUT MORE OR GET INVOLVED WITH THE CAMPAIGN
VISIT www.no2av.org TODAY**



With so many wild claims flying around about the Alternative Vote, it's sometimes hard to know who to trust.

That's why it's important to know what AV's own cheerleaders had to say about it before they realised they'd have a personal, financial or organisational interest in making Britain only the fourth country in the world to start using the AV system for national elections.¹

If you're not sure how to vote in the referendum on the Alternative Vote in May, maybe this little book of reasons, conveniently provided by employees and supporters of the Yes to AV campaign, can help you make your mind up.

Includes all your favourite Yes to AV quotes about the Alternative Vote, such as...

"I am not going to settle for a miserable little compromise."

Nick Clegg, Leader of the Liberal Democrats, April 2010

"the Society does not regard it (AV) as suitable for the election of a representative body, e.g. a parliament."

The Electoral Reform Society (on their website – since redacted!)

"Settling for AV is a pure politicians' fix."

Pam Giddy, Chair of Yes to AV Steering Committee, May 2010

"With AV, politics stays pretty much as it is."

Neal Lawson, Chair of Compass & Yes to AV Campaign Director, Dec. 2009

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¹ The others being Fiji, Australia and Papua New Guinea.