

University of York
Wednesday, 27th of May 2009

Dear all,

As you may know I was suspended from the Conservative Party for writing a column in an article which was published¹ in Nouse, a student newspaper at the University. I would like to apologise to the membership of the University of York Conservatives. The article was published in my role as Chairman rather than from my own personal perspective. I should have been more aware of that and for that I am sorry.

First and foremost I will not be joining UKIP. The Conservative Party still has my full support. While their decision to expel me has been described as harsh I fully understand it. They have to weigh up the long standing conservative principle of freedom of speech against the practicalities of running a political party. On this issue I am sure their judgement is more informed than mine.

However I do stand by my article. I would like to use this chance to clarify what I wrote and perhaps defend myself against some of the criticism I have received.

The conclusions I draw in the article are entirely dependent on the premise I set out in the first paragraph. I stated my belief that MEPs have very little real power and their elections do little other than send out a message. If you do not believe or accept this then you should, of course, ignore my conclusions.

What I hope this incident has not done is to discourage anyone from voting. When I was asked to write the article it was suggested it would be part of an anti-BNP piece. This is why I set out the options as I did. The best way to prevent the BNP from gaining a seat is to vote for any other to reduce their percentage. To this end (and especially as I am no longer bound to a party) I encourage you to vote for any other party on June 4th. I hope that this will be the Conservatives or UKIP but now, as then, the decision is up to you.

Ralph Buckle
Former Chairman

1. <http://www.nouse.co.uk/2009/05/12/vote-on-europe-the-parties-debate>