**PRESS RELEASE**

**EMBARGOED: 0001am, Tuesday, 6th November, 2018.**

**BREXIT: A FAIR AND ‘MEANINGFUL’ DECISION?**

**Everything is ‘on the table’…**

**but if only two options are on the ballot paper…!?**

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Parliament has a choice of (at least) three options:

1. the ‘May/EU (perhaps)’ deal;
2. no deal;
3. a second referendum which includes ‘remain’.

Assume there’s no majority for anything; that 45% of the MPs want ***A***, that 30% want ***B*** and 25% want ***C.*** Assume further that the 45% have (1st, 2nd and 3rd) preferences of ***A-B-C***, that the 30% prefer ***B-C-A*** and the 25% ***C-A-B***. In which case, in a majority vote…

if it’s ***A v B, A*** could win by 70%;

if it’s ***B v C,*** it could be ***B*** by 75%;

if it’s ***C v A,*** it might be ***C*** on 55%.

It’s called ‘the paradox of voting’: in a multi-option debate, when no one option has an outright majority, the final outcome of any binary process will depend on the order of voting.

Theresa May will probably want “***A***, yes-or-no?” (or “***A*** v ***B***?”). In which case, the ***C*** supporters will have a dilemma. Do they abstain? Or vote tactically? And for what? Whatever the outcome of an “***A***, yes-or-no?” or “***A*** v ***B***?” vote, May or Rees-Mogg will say there is a majority – but if no one knows how the ***C*** supporters have voted, it may well be an artificial majority. Binary ballots can be blunt.

The final vote on Brexit can be “meaningful” only if the ballot is multi-optional. At best, the “will of parliament” is that option which is the highest *average* preference of *all* the MPs. Majority voting cannot measure an average; preferential points voting – a Modified Borda Count, MBC – can.

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**The undersigned regret the irresponsible yet almost total media silence on multi-option voting.**

**A two-option vote in a three- or more-option debate is illogical; the outcome is often ‘fake’.**

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