PRESS RELEASE

Immediate

**Should the SNP or DUP tail be able to wag the dog?**

**May 7th:**      Open and transparent election.

**May 8th:**      Opaque, closed-door meetings: {5 weeks in Germany (2013); 10 in Kenya (2008); 40 in Iraq (2010); and 80, 11/2 years, in Belgium (2010/11)}.

**Minority Administration, Majority Coalition, or an All-party Coalition?**

Majority rule is better than any form of minority rule, of course.  The former, however, hardly the apogee of democratic evolution, is based on decision-making by (simple or weighted) majority vote.  This binary voting is the most inaccurate measure of collective opinion ever invented, a "blunt" instrument, (Prof. Vernon Bogdanor), ancient, primitive and exclusive.

**Majoritarianism, Consociationalism, or a Consensual Polity?**

If non-majoritarian voting procedures were used in parliament, there would be little or no justification for majority rule.  Instead, just as the people elect the parliament, so too parliament could elect a government; and just as parliament should represent all the people, so too, as in Switzerland with their *Zauberformel* or *'magic formula*', the government should represent all the major parties in parliament.

**Will it Work?**

In a *plural* democracy, non-urgent decision-making should be based on a *plurality* of options.  Every party should be entitled to move a proposal; next, parliament debates; and then the MPs vote, in order of preference, on a (short) list of about 5 options.  At best, the option with the highest average preference is the winner; and an average, of course, involves every MP, not just a majority of them.  This Modified Borda Count, MBC, "is the soundest method of identifying the [option which] is most generally popular," (the late Prof. Sir Michael Dummett, until his death a long-serving patron of the de Borda Institute.)

**The GOAT, (Government of all the Talents), is a GNU, (Government of National Unity).**

Belfast

12.00 noon, Sat 7th March.