

Win-win Democratic Structures

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Abstract

In theory, a democratic structure should be a win-win process, one which enables society to live as a collective unit. Sadly, in practice, most democracies have deteriorated into an adversarial win-or-lose process, in part because the procedures used were not adequately sophisticated and were, therefore, too easily manipulated. Today, however, in this computer age, every jurisdiction could adopt the more consensual voting procedures, which are an essential part of any win-win methodology. The main obstacles are the politicians themselves, who seek to maintain their power, and society in general, which allows them to use a form of mathematics which is both illogical and dangerous. Simple addition means long division. The majority vote, the most inaccurate measure of collective opinion ever invented, is a cause of war. Accordingly, having described the inadequacies of the two-option majority vote, this paper outlines a set of voting procedures which could be the basis of a more inclusive democracy: the modified Borda count (MBC) in decision making, the quota Borda system (QBS) in elections, and a QBS matrix vote for a power-sharing government.

ABBREVIATIONS

AV	alternative vote	BC	Borda count
GM	genetically modified	MBC	modified Borda count
QBS	quota Borda system	PR	proportional representation
STV	single transferable vote		

1. Introduction

Democracy is an archetype. In societies throughout the ages, men and sometimes women have sat together to resolve the issues of the day, sometimes only as an advisory circle to an absolute ruler, sometimes as the actual governing authority. These ancient societies often suffered at the hands of outside tyrants and so forth, but whenever more peaceful times allowed, democracy in one limited form or another soon returned.

It is also interesting to note that those societies which have the historical opportunity to, as it were, start from the beginning – countries, in our own time, such as those of Central and Eastern Europe – often produce structures of governance which are more democratic than those used in well established democracies.¹ Unfortunately, these new democracies often then deteriorate, and not least because of adopting many of the fault lines common to the older democracies.²

It was a similar story when the early citizens of the US – or rather, those of them who were white males – came to discuss their new constitution, for many sound ideas were on the table. These included the separation of powers, their choice of a win-win presidential electoral system,³ and their notion of a non-party system of governance.⁴ Fifty years later, it all fell apart, and their voting procedures now constitute one of the most primitive democratic structures on the planet.

The main fault-line, in decision-making everywhere, is the belief (a) that democracy is majority rule, and (b) that a majority opinion can be identified by a majority vote. A second weakness applies to the electoral system, and lots of countries have adopted an adversarial procedure such as either the first-past-the-post system or another form of single-preference voting, as in the more simple PR-list systems. And the third defect, related to the first, is the almost universal practice of *exclusive* governments in what are, nevertheless, *inclusive* (or supposedly inclusive) parliaments.

2. The Cause of Decline

Unless restricted by a well-constructed constitution or some such, those in power invariably seek to retain or even increase their power. Thus it is that in many European countries, or countries which base their democratic structures on European ideas, leaders have been able to use our collective obsession with majority rule to get away with murder.⁵

This is partly because, for reasons both religious–cum–psychological and not just political, many politicians like to treat any political question as a dichotomy. Indeed, many of them think this is the only way such questions can be regarded. After all, they say, things are either right or wrong, either true or false, either black or white, etc.; and they forget the fact that there are many pairs in which the two individual parts are not mutually exclusive opposites at all, but compliments to each other. The obvious couple is male and female, but another is black and white. Democracy is for everybody. It was never meant to be for just one part of society which could then dominate the other part, this party over that party, or *vice versa*.

Alas, it is all too easy for those in power to suggest that “Those who are not with me are against me,”⁶ so to imply that the subject in question is indeed dichotomous, that it is definitely either/or, and that it can only be resolved by a majority vote. This belief in majoritarianism actually means, in effect, that he/she who is in power is thus in control of the agenda and, if a majority is in favour, that then their policy is the democratic choice. Furthermore, in plural societies, it is all too easy for the unscrupulous nationalist to exploit such a belief for their own purposes, even at the risk of violence and war.

It is also true to point out that there are some historical reasons, not least the writings of such as Locke and Bentham, who defined democracy as a means of ensuring the greater good of the greater number. In so doing, they implied that minority rule was wrong, which it is. It was unwise, however, to then conclude that, *ergo*, majority rule was right; democracy, after all, is for everybody, not just 50% and a bit. Secondly, it was even more illogical to think that a majority opinion can be identified by the mathematics of simple addition, based on the people’s or their representatives’ choice of only two alternatives.

The politician thinks, or simply assumes, that it can. The average journalist does not question this fact and even the political scientist is loathe to dissent. The mathematician, however, knows full well that the will of the people, or the will of parliament, or even the will *of a majority* of the people or their parliament, cannot be measured by a for-or-against vote on only two options. It may be a little better when the options are chosen by others not in power, as in a citizens’ initiative in society at large, or in a private members’ bill in parliament. It is far worse when decisions in parliament are based on a party whip system, via which those in power exercise huge amounts of political patronage. Little wonder, then, that in many instances, a majority vote in parliament means absolutely nothing at all... except that those in power thus get their way.

The more accurate methodology is to allow those involved to debate all possibilities (or at least, all policy options which comply with some agreed norm like the United Nations Charter on Human Rights), and then, in a free preference vote, to identify that option which gains the highest average preference. Such a rankings procedure or a modified Borda count would mean that the parliament was in control of the government, which is as it should be, of course. At the moment, at least in the UK, parliament is most definitely not sovereign!

3. Current Ills

There is, then, a lot which is wrong and somewhat undemocratic in our present democratic structures. Indeed, a short list of current ailments would suggest the patient is in a critical condition.

3.1 Most plebiscites on national sovereignty are based on a majority vote, thus virtually eliminating any hope that those involved may come to a compromise. This majority vote is the procedure implied in international law, in the “right of self-determination”, a right which begs two questions: what is a people? and can a people determine itself on the basis of only a majority of itself?⁷

3.2 Simple majority votes are also used in many national parliaments, while a few chambers along with some international assemblies such as the UN tend to favour weighted, qualified or consociational majority votes. Admittedly, the last named is a huge improvement on the simple majority vote, but all of these majoritarian votes nevertheless tend to hinder any pluralist discussion and instead encourage a dualist approach.

3.3 This binary procedure is used even in what would otherwise be a multi-option procedure, thus leaving the democratic process open to yet more manipulation.

3.4 Furthermore, such majoritarian procedures imply, not only that a majority may rule, but also that a minority may veto, a fact that has bugged many a peace process.

3.5 Parliaments work on a whipped system, so many politicians represent their party more than their constituents.

3.6 Parliaments do not *elect* their governments and instead, far too much power is given to one individual, usually the prime minister or premier, who then *selects* his/her cabinet.

3.7 As already noted, parliaments are not sovereign because in many instances the executive proposes the legislation and then whips the members of parliament to vote in favour.

And finally, the biggest fault line of all:

3.8 In the general election itself, people tend to vote from a selfish motivation (what's best for me?) rather than from a more altruistic one (what's best for society as a whole?) This, combined with a win-or-lose electoral system, tempts those in power to work on a short term time scale and to base their campaigns on the electorate's instincts of greed or fear. In this regard, we may note that in every US presidential election from 1945 to 1985, with the one exception of Jimmy Carter's in the wake of Vietnam, the contest was won by he who was the more belligerent and anti-Soviet. Thus the US two-party system was actually an exacerbating factor in the Cold War, and successive US governments very nearly helped to destroy that which they said they were trying to defend. To-day, post-Cold War, some politicians relate the fear element to the war on terror, but they also rely on the instinct of greed, and hence all those pre-election budgets and so forth. Perhaps we could be forgiven, therefore, for concluding that our collective reliance on the 'democratic mathematics' of simple addition is the greatest threat to the survival of our species. What we need, of course, is reform - "the cure for the ills of democracy is more democracy"⁸ - and the basis of this paper is to suggest an advance from our current adversarial political structures to a form which is more consensual.

4. To-day's Democracies

Before discussing a more democratic form of governance, we should pause to recall the tragedies which have occurred, partly as a result of our obsession with the majority vote:

* Firstly, the Balkans, where "... all the wars in the former Yugoslavia started with a referendum", a methodology which was insisted upon by the European Commission (European Union).⁹

* Secondly, the Indian sub-continent, where the three wars in Kashmir started with arguments about the referendum, as laid down in the UN resolution of 1947, and this supposedly either/or dispute, now thankfully the subject of peace talks, very nearly caused a nuclear conflagration.

* The violence in East Timor came with a referendum as well. Furthermore, it could be argued that the conflicts in Aceh, Ambon and Irian Jaya have also been prompted, or at least exacerbated, by the prospects of two-option majoritarian referendums.

* The worst incident in recent times was in Africa, where the genocide in Rwanda was caused, in part, by a belief in majoritarianism. Initially, in the 1930s, the Europeans issued ID cards, so turning a social distinction into a tribal one, thereby to perpetuate a system of *minority* rule. In the 1950s, they changed their minds and spoke of *majority* rule. So yesterday's losers could become tomorrow's winners. Little wonder, then, that the first sectarian murder in Rwanda took place in 1959, and the 1994 slaughter started with the slogan "*rubanda nyamwinshi*", "the majority people".¹⁰

And so it goes on. Northern Ireland, Quebec, Sudan etc.. Many conflict zones now have a peace process, yet nearly all of them are based on what is, short of war, the most unpeaceful process of problem solving (sic) ever invented: the simple majority vote. Indeed, in many instances, the very use of a two-option win-or-lose referendum merely exacerbates the problem. Despite this fact, the Belfast Agreement, for example, stipulates that there shall be a majority vote referendum, every seven years or so, to see if there is a majority (which may be only 50% + 1, of course) in favour of a united Ireland. Again, compromise is not even on the agenda. So no wonder the levels of sectarianism in Northern Ireland are just as bad as they ever were during "the troubles".¹¹

In nearly every peace process, the mediators try to establish a form of power-sharing, which implies, of course, that a majority government is inadequate; sadly, the mediators never stop to change their own government structures.

5. Majority Rule

The conclusion to all this is surely obvious: majoritarianism¹² is a cause of conflict. It is a win-or-lose voting procedure which tends to create or exacerbate division, if not indeed to tempt many to violence. But, as noted above, the majority vote is also the most inaccurate measure of collective opinion ever invented. The democratic process is meant to facilitate the identification of "the will of the people", not the will of only some of them. Furthermore, if majority voting was not used (so often) in the more established democracies, and if the latter did not insist upon its use when imposing their standards upon so many other countries in the world, then maybe there would not be so many conflicts everywhere.

So let us now consider a more accurate measure of collective opinion, a more peaceful polity, a more democratic system of governance. We will look at three aspects: collective decision-making, peaceful elections, and power-sharing governments.

6. Collective decision-making

The democratic process should not be a means by which only some may rule, albeit with certain minority rights guaranteed by law. Democracy is *not* majority rule. Rather, democracy is, or should be, the means by which all concerned, or the representatives of all concerned, come to a mutual accommodation. That is, they should identify either their unanimous viewpoint (if and when such exists), or their common consensus (after much debate, perhaps), or (on matters of great controversy), their collective best compromise.

In the case of a unanimous opinion, it does not matter which methodology is used; indeed, it will probably be obvious to all that no methodology is needed.

A common consensus, however, is usually arrived at after a long and even tortuous session, where any use of a majority vote might not be very helpful.

It is even more true to say that a collective best compromise *cannot* be identified by using a majority vote. If someone has been clever enough to identify such an option by some other means, then a majority vote could perhaps be used to *confirm* that all concerned were now in favour, but a compromise, almost by definition, is not a 1st preference, so the use of a majority vote might not even do this!

6.1 Conflict Resolution

In effect, what is needed in many political disputes is a form of conflict resolution, which if used early enough, might actually prevent any resort to violence. Now conflict resolution usually involves a team of mediators who first, in bilateral discussions with all the parties involved, identify what options are possible. Next, in a bit of shuttle diplomacy, they try to work out which options are most generally acceptable. And finally, in plenary perhaps and then with handshakes all round, they identify that option which is everybody's highest average preference.

This cannot be done by a majority vote! It can be done verbally, of course, although this tends to take time. Or it can be done votally, if a points or rankings system, a modified Borda count, is used.¹³

6.2 The Psychology and the Mathematics of the mbc Count

Decision-making involves much more than just a vote. First comes the debate, with a procedure for taking amendments, etc.. And it is true to say that the decision-making process to be used at the end of a debate will, in many instances, determine the nature of the debate itself. In a democracy, we ourselves determine what then determines us. If everyone knows it is going to be a two-option, for-or-against vote, the debate may well become acrimonious, people will take sides, the discussion will turn into a heated argument, and a range of options will boil down to just two supposedly diametric opposites.

If, however, a multi-option preference vote is to be used, a different atmosphere may prevail. If I know that the outcome of the vote is to be based on the winning option's average preference, and if I want my option to win, then I must try to persuade not only its supporters to give it a high preference, but also its erstwhile (majoritarian) opponents to give it something more than a bottom preference. So I should talk to *everybody*! And that is democracy.

Indeed, in a true democracy, the people would both talk *with* each other; and then vote, not (for-or)-against, but again *with* each other. Furthermore, if all respect all, the voters would give, not only lots of points to the options they support, but also at least 1 point to the option they do not like at all, if but to acknowledge that it is a valid aspiration of at least some of their fellow citizens, and that they will accept this outcome if it proves to be the general consensus.

The vote, of course, will be free, always. In an n -option ballot – {in most instances in parliament, $3 < n < 11$ and in regional/national referendums, $3 < n < 7$ } – voters may cast a 1st, a 2nd, a 3rd ... and an n^{th} preference. Then, in the count of a fully completed ballot paper, a 1st preference will get n points, a 2nd preference $n - 1$ points, a 3rd preference $n - 2$ points ... and an n^{th} preference 1 point.¹⁴ The option with the most points is the winner.

Now there may be some who do not wish to express all n preferences. Furthermore, in those societies where the vote is not compulsory, people should be allowed, either to cast their preferences for *all* the options listed, or to submit a partial vote by casting preferences for only m options, or again, to abstain altogether. In the modified Borda count, (MBC), she who votes for all n options exercises

Formula 6.2.1

$n, n - 1 \dots 2, 1$ points,

whereas he who votes for only m options exercises

Formula 6.2.2

$m, m-1 \dots 2, 1$ points.

Thus, in a 6-option ballot:

those who vote

for only 1 option give their favourite option only 1 pt;
for 2 options give their favourite option 2 pts and their 2nd choice 1 pt;
for 3 options give their favourite 3 pts, their 2nd choice 2 pts and their 3rd preference 1 pt;
and so on.

In this way, the MBC encourages the voters to state, not only their 1st preferences, but also their 2nd and subsequent preferences. In other words, each is asked to declare not only their favourite option but also their compromise position... and if each person states their individual compromise option, we can easily identify the collective compromise, i.e., the highest average preference. Which is exactly what the MBC is designed to do. It is, indeed, a win-win procedure.

6.3 The Debate

The procedure for debate is therefore as follows. When a dispute arises, all concerned may submit a proposal and, as long as it conforms to certain norms such as the UN Charter on Human Rights, it shall be accepted for discussion.

In debate, all may ask questions of and/or suggest amendments to any of the proposals on the table and computer screen, or suggest a new policy option (though obviously, each party may advocate only one policy). During the debate, a team of consensors will (a) decide whether or not any policy proposal is indeed in accordance with the laid down norms and (b) maintain a balanced list of all options, if need be by compositing any proposals which are similar to each other.

Now it may be that, as the debate proceeds, the number of options listed gets smaller and smaller and eventually finishes up as just one; in which case, that one option may be assumed to represent the *verbal* consensus of the participants, and the debate may be concluded.

If, however, towards the end of the debate, there are still a number of options listed, the chair will ask all concerned to see if they are satisfied that their own proposal, either in composite or verbatim, is included on the final list of options. Then, if so be it, he/she will ask all to proceed to the vote, i.e., to exercise their preferences on (one, some or hopefully) all of the options listed, so to identify their *votal* consensus.

6.4 The Vote

In analysing the vote, the consensors will see which option(s), if any, gain a very high score. If one option is way out in front and above a certain threshold,¹⁵ it may be assumed to be the winner. And if, in a six-option ballot, the option which does get the highest average preference gains a very high score (of let us say between 1½ and 1), then it can be assumed that this option represents a near unanimous position. If the option with the highest average gets a score of about 2, this option can be said to represent the common consensus. And if the winning option has a score which is closer to 3, it is probably best described as the collective best compromise.

(In a 6-option ballot, the average score is 3.5 of course... if, that is, all concerned hand in a complete ballot. Obviously, one of the six options is bound to be seen as better, and some will be seen as worse, for the chances of a dead heat between all six options must surely be next to nil! So, if all agree to debate and vote, this methodology is always bound to produce an answer.)

Now if two options are clear leaders, the consensors may wish to composite the two into a final outcome. There again, taking a very different scenario, if no options get a sufficiently high average preference, it may be better to treat the vote as a straw poll, to identify those options which are worthy of further examination, and to resume the debate based on the latter.

The entire procedure may therefore involve three steps of compromise. Some of the participants in the debate may well accept a compromise, if and when the consensors choose to composite their particular proposal with someone else's. The voters may well express their own compromise, if they state not only their 1st but also their 2nd and subsequent preferences. And everybody may accept a compromise in the count, if two options are both very popular and mutually inclusive. Compromise, they say, is the art of politics. The MBC is the appropriate science.¹⁶

7. Peaceful Elections

In many conflict zones - in Bosnia and Northern Ireland, for example - when a form of closed list PR was used, the vote was little more than a sectarian headcount. Sadly, this methodology is still used in Kosovo. With a similar logic, it can easily be seen that any use of the Anglo-Saxon first-past-the-post electoral system in such situations - or in Iraq! - would again be most inappropriate.

So what would be better? Well, they say the democratic process is an integral part of the peace process. And most people play a direct role in the peace process when they go to the polls, either for a referendum on some matter of policy, or for an election. Accordingly, just as the decision-making process should offer the voter the opportunity to offer a compromise, so too the electoral system should allow the voter *who so wishes* to undergo, as it were, a process of reconciliation.

This would suggest the electoral system must be both proportional and preferential. Furthermore, it should allow the voter *who so wishes* to vote across-party, across gender, and even across the sectarian divide. In Northern Ireland, the voter should be (and is) allowed to vote for both a Protestant and for a Catholic. In Lebanon, a very different electoral system allows the voter to vote for a Druze and a Maronite and a Shia and a Sunni, depending on the constituency. While sadly, in Bosnia, they have progressed from the closed-list PR only to the open-list PR.¹⁷

There are disadvantages to both Northern Ireland's PR-STV and to Lebanon's rather unique form of PR. The former, as I say, *allows* the voter to cross the sectarian divide, but does not necessarily *encourage* him/her so to do.¹⁸ While the Lebanese system, a series of simultaneous first-past-the-post elections based on confessional lists of candidates, perpetuates the very labels which in turn determine the sectarian nature of Lebanese politics.

Of the other systems which allow the voter to vote for more than one candidate of more than one party, there are three: the particular forms of open-list PR used in Luxembourg and Switzerland; the rather special form of Borda count used in Nauru,¹⁹ (but theirs is a non-party system); and finally, the quota Borda system, (QBS), which is not used in any jurisdiction... yet.

By way of an example of QBS, let us consider a six-seater constituency in Bosnia, and a vote where the voters are asked to cast their preferences on a maximum of 6 candidates. Now, as the name implies, there are two parts in QBS, the quota element and the Borda count. With the quota element, an n^{th} preference is always an n^{th} preference and, in the first stage of the count, if a candidate gets a quota of 1st preferences, then he/she is elected. Also, if 2 candidates get 2 quotas,²⁰ both are elected, or if 3 candidates get 3 quotas, then all 3 are successful.

If there are still seats to be filled, we move to the second stage of the count in which only those candidates who have not so far been elected are taken into consideration. If a pair of candidates has gained a quota, the candidate with the higher MBC score is elected. Similarly, if a triplet of candidates gains a quota, the candidate with the highest MBC score is elected. And finally, in the third stage of the count, if there are still candidates to be elected, seats are awarded to those as yet unelected candidates with the highest MBC scores.

The quota element of the count works in the same way as it does in a PR-STV election, namely, it suggests to each party that it would be unwise to nominate more candidates than it expects to get elected. In such a situation, in say a constituency in Bosnia where the relative proportion of constituents is 30:30:30, we may expect either a three-cornered campaign between Catholic, Moslem and Orthodox candidates, or maybe a four-cornered contest with one or two non-sectarian candidates as well. Now on balance, no one grouping would be expected to win more than 2 seats. All things being equal, therefore, each religious group would be likely to nominate 3 or, at the most, 4 candidates, and maybe the non-sectarian parties would nominate 1 or 2 candidates.

Now admittedly, some voters might choose to give their preferences to just the 3 or 4 candidates of their own religious grouping. There again, if they are at all hopeful that the candidates concerned might get elected on the basis of their MBC scores, then these voters would be wise to vote for a full slate of 6 candidates. In this way, QBS actually *encourages* the voter to cross the sectarian divide, and all without any resort to sectarian or party labels.

Furthermore, if in the future, the voters consider another topic to be of over-riding importance - something like GM foods, for example - and if a quota of voters give their 1st preferences to anti-GM food candidates then, sure enough, an anti-GM representative will get elected. In this respect, QBS is like PR-STV, and these two systems' property of proportionality is based on what the *voters* decide is important, and not necessarily on any party-cum-sectarian labels.

In a word, therefore, QBS is ideally suited to the post-conflict society. It caters for a truly representative parliament. It allows the voter who so wishes to cross the party, gender and/or sectarian divides. And thirdly, and most importantly, it enables the society to evolve, so to let the issues on which the conflict was based fade into the past.

8. Power-sharing Governments

In a true democracy, not only should the parliament represent *all* the people but, in like fashion, the government should represent the *entire* parliament. Now obviously, if it has already been decided that the administration should be based on a form of power-sharing, we will need to devise a methodology by which (society as a whole or) parliament can elect its executive. The methodology should be proportional, of course, but one further question remains: how can a parliament elect a fixed number of persons to form a proportional, power-sharing executive, when all the positions in that executive require quite different talents?

The answer is the matrix vote, a tabular ballot in which each MP, in their order of preference, chooses not only those whom they wish to be in cabinet, but also the portfolios in which they want each nominee to serve. It is a ballot in which every MP is a candidate for every portfolio, unless, that is, they have already served, let us say, two terms, or unless they declare that they do not wish to stand for some or all ministerial posts. This, too, is a feature of a win-win electoral system, and Plato himself would agree, it is better for the modest to be asked to serve.

The appropriate ballot paper for an executive consisting of six persons - one premier, one deputy, and four ministers of **A**, **B**, **C** and **D** - would look like Table 1. If an MP wishes to submit a full ballot, his/her final ballot paper would contain one name in each column and one name in each row.

PORTFOLIOS	P R E F E R E N C E S					
	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th	6 th
PM						
Deputy PM						
Minister of A						
Minister of B						
Minister of C						
Minister of D						

Table 1 - A Matrix Vote Ballot Paper

The count consists of two stages. First, there is a QBS count to determine the six most popular MPs,²¹ and then there is a straight MBC tally to see which of the six successful candidates get which portfolios. Successful candidates are awarded, in sequence, according to who gets the highest MBC score for which ministry. In the event of a tie, priority is given, first, to the more popular candidate, and secondly, to the more important ministry.

The outcome is bound to be a proportional, broad-based, all-party, power-sharing government of national unity, to use an amalgam of all the phrases currently in the lexicon. Furthermore, it is definitely a win-win voting procedure, if only because the chances of any one leader winning everything are minimal!

After all, if we take by way of example the British parliament where 651 MPs get a government of 21 ministries, then in casting his/her 1st preference in a matrix vote, every MP has a choice of 651 x 21 different ways of voting. In casting their 2nd preference, they have a choice of 650 x 20; and so on. In all, in casting a full ballot, every MP has a choice of over 4 x 10⁷⁸ different ways of voting. It is called pluralism. And it is all a great advance on 2.

9. Conclusion

A power-sharing executive and a truly representative parliament will be able to operate, if and maybe only if, decisions on all non-urgent yet controversial business are taken in a verbal or votal consensus. A majority vote may still be used, but only in those situations where all concerned agree to abide by the outcome, i.e., when the topic is not contentious.

Parliament, of course, shall be sovereign, unless on some particular point the constitution allows the people to re-assert their sovereignty and hold a national poll. On all other occasions, parliament may decide to pass certain laws, and the executive should then execute these decisions. If certain members of the executive feel, for reasons of conscience or whatever, that they cannot execute these decisions, they should resign. In all other respects, the elected representatives should behave in no less a co-operative manner than the electorate of a multi-multi society is also expected to behave. When it comes to the next general election, those who have been involved in a multi-party administration may still compete against, or *with*, those of other parties. There is, of course, a collective responsibility in parliament, but that does not mean to say that parties and politicians cannot state that their individual 1st preference on some topic or other did not vary from the collective 1st preference of party or parliament. Indeed, such openness of government would become an integral part of any consensual democratic structure. It is long overdue.

Notes

- 1 In Russia's first post-*perestroika* elections in 1989, the pre-election campaigns often included public meetings in which all the competing candidates participated, each ready under an independent chair to answer whatever questions the public chose to raise. All just as it should be. It rarely happens here, in the UK.
- 2 The concentration of power currently enjoyed by Vladimir Putin, for example, is a cause of considerable concern, both in Russia and abroad.
- 3 The US constitution states that the winner should be the president and the runner-up should be vice-president. By the time Florida came round in 2000, I think most had forgotten about this.
- 4 In his farewell address of 1796, George Washington said, the British two-party system "has perpetuated the most horrid enormities [and] is itself a frightful abomination". He was, of course, a non-party president.
- 5 Those who came to power, or confirmed their position in power, by means of a 'democratic' vote, include (in reverse order of sequence) Pervez Musharraf, Saddam Hussein, Ruhollah Khomeini, Augusto Pinochet, Frances Duvalier, Ion Antonescu, Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini, Bernardo O'Higgins and Napoleon Bonaparte. Interestingly enough, Pinochet tried this tactic once too often and actually fell from power, or most of it, by a second dictatorial referendum. EMERSON, 2002.
- 6 These words of George W Bush were also used by János Kádás, the Hungarian Communist Party leader. And a similar turn of phrase may be found in St. Luke, Ch. 9 v 50 and Ch. 11 v 23. See EMERSON, 2002. It is all very European and, as was pointed out by one Dr. Ephraim Kanyarukiga at a conference in Kigali in March 2003, "very unAfrican".
- 7 In many instances, the use of a majority vote suggests that the majority should participate but that the minority should veto or boycott the poll, as did the Catholics in Northern Ireland (1973), the Orthodox in Croatia (1991), the Catholics in the *Krajina* (1991), the Orthodox in Bosnia (1992) etc., etc.. For a discussion on what is a people, see WOODWARD, 1995; for the use of the majority vote in plebiscites, see EMERSON, 2000.
- 8 FISHKIN, J. S. 1995, *The Voice of the People*, Yale University Press.
- 9 "... *su svi ratovi u bivšoj Jugoslaviji počeli nekim referendumom*". The quote, from *Oslobodjenje*, Sarajevo's now legendary newspaper, 7.2.1999, refers to the wars in Slovenia, Croatia and Bosnia. The prospect of a referendum contained in the original Rambouillet accords could just as equally mean it also applied to Kosovo. When that clause was included, Milošević refused to sign and the NATO bombing started. When eventually, at NATO's behest, Chernomyrdin negotiated its removal, the Yugoslav president did sign, and the war was over.
- 10 PRUNIER, G. 2002, *The Rwanda Crisis, History of a Genocide*, C Hurst and Co. London.
- 11 *The Belfast Agreement* refers to the principle of consent. Now this should be "the consent of the people" just as, both in real life and in the dictionary, the word applies to both or all parties. In the Agreement, however, it concerns only "the consent of the majority". But a majority vote, so many for and so many against, is actually a measure of dissent! The *Dayton Agreement*, in contrast, disallows any referendum. It does propose the use of majority voting in parliament, however, albeit with particular safeguards for "national interests".
- 12 Interestingly enough, the Russian word for "majoritarianism" is 'bolshevism'. And "by the accidental arithmetic of a single [vote]", some 24,000,000 people were sent to the gulags. DEUTSCHER, I. 1982, *Stalin*, Penguin Books, (1949, Oxford University Press) p 71.
- 13 In contrast, when debating five options for the House of Lords, the ancient British parliament chose to use the ancient majority vote, five times. As a result, they got five majorities against, and most commentators said there was a crisis. There wasn't! One of those five options was definitely more popular, or at least less unpopular, than the other four. The problem lay in the fact that the "proposed voting procedure [was] the daftest," to quote Lord Meghnad Desai, *Hansard*, 22.1.2003, for with such a decision-making process, no decision could be made! Instead, he suggested a "rankings" system which is, of course, a BC.
- 14 A BC is often based on the formula
$$n-1, n-2 \dots 1, 0$$
but there is a huge difference, psychologically, in casting 1 point for a particular option as opposed to casting 0 points. Accordingly, the de Borda Institute advocates the formula
$$n, n-1 \dots 2, 1$$
The outcome, of course, is the same, unless some voters submit only partial votes.
- 15 From experience gained in the field, it is suggested that, in a 6-option ballot, the minimum average preference required for a decision to be accepted is 2. Obviously, if some participants submit only a partial vote, the chances of achieving such a figure are much reduced. But equally obviously, in such circumstances, the topic in question is considered to be contentious.
- 16 Now no methodology is perfect, and a BC and/or MBC procedure is vulnerable to the irrelevant alternative. At the same time, a Condorcet count is subject to the paradox. For this reason, this Institute argues for a combined Borda/Condorcet count, just as others such as Rev. Dodgson have done. (EMERSON, 1998.) If the outcome for both counts is the same, all may assume that it does indeed represent the will of those voting. It should also be said that the more sophisticated the voting procedure, the less vulnerable it is to manipulation, either by those who draft the option(s) or by the voters. "Among other positive features of the Borda count... it is the unique method ... to minimise the likelihood that a small group can successfully manipulate the outcome." SAARI, 1995, p 14.
- 17 They also use AV in *Republika Srpska* for their presidential elections.
- 18 Another disadvantage of PR-STV relates to the fact that, while the voter may vote for both a Catholic *and* a Protestant, the count may rule that the vote is *transferred* – and hence the name, of course - in which case it's for a Catholic *or* a Protestant.

19 Instead of

$$n, n-1 \dots 2, 1$$

Nauru uses the formula

$$1, \frac{1}{2} \dots 1/(n-1), 1/n$$

which is brilliant.

- 20 Consider a 6-candidate ballot in which Messrs. *J, K, L*... are candidates. If a quota or more of voters vote '*J-1, ...*', then Ms. *J* will be elected. If two quotas or more vote either '*J-1, K-2, ...*' or '*K-1, J-2, ...*', then both Ms. *J* and Mr. *K* will be elected, even if less than a quota gave their 1st preferences to Mr. *K*. And if three quotas or more give their first three preferences exclusively to Messrs *J, K* and *L*, in whatever order, then all three will gain a seat.
- 21 Admittedly, this part of a matrix vote could be counted by any electoral system; it seems right, however, to use a win-win methodology such as QBS, given that the very essence of a matrix vote is its own win-win nature.

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