**PRESS RELEASE**

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**BREXIT: IF THERE’S NO MAJORITY FOR ANYTHING,**

**THERE SHOULD BE NO MAJORITY VOTES ON ANYTHING.**

Imagine a parliament of only 12 MPs. They discuss the options (as aired on BBC *Today,* Monday 12):

May’s ‘Chequers’ plan.

WTO or ‘no deal’.

The EU’s proposals.

‘remain’.

Assume no one option commands a majority. So, if put to a straight majority vote – “May’s, yes-or-no?” “‘no deal’, yes-or-no?” etc. – every option fails. Maybe they should take two options at a time, “May’s or ‘no deal’?” for example. Well assume that the dozen have the following preferences.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Preferences | The Voters | | |
| 5 | 4 | 3 |
| 1st | *May’s* | *no deal* | *remain* |
| 2nd | *no deal* | *remain* | *EU’s* |
| 3rd | *remain* | *EU’s* | *May’s* |
| 4th | *EU’s* | *May’s* | *no deal* |

(A pro-EU person might suggest) first question is “remain or ‘no deal’?” and ‘no deal’ wins by 9 to 3.

The next question is “May’s or ‘no deal’?” and May’s wins by 8 to 4.

So finally, it’s “EU’s or May’s?” which EU’s wins by 7 to 5. Brilliant: a majority of 58.3%.

But hang on! All twelve voters prefer ‘remain’ to EU’s, 100%! So the outcome of the vote is ‘fake’.

**IN ANY MULTI-OPTION DEBATE, IF NO ONE OPTION OR AMENDMENT COMMANDS AN ABSOLUTE MAJORITY,**

**MAJORITY VOTING WILL SOMETIMES GIVE THE WRONG ANSWER.**

In the above table, EU’s is more popular than May’s, which we write EU’s > May’s. But May’s > ‘no deal’, and ‘no deal’ > ‘remain’, and ‘remain > EU’s and EU’s > May’s … and it goes round and round, for ever! It is called the ‘paradox of [binary] voting’. Therefore, in this (and other) example(s), the outcome of any binary vote process depends, not on the MP’s preferences, but on the order of voting!

According to the dictionary: “Democracy is synonymous with majority rule…” but, “in votes among three or more [options]… the best interpretations of majority rule are the Borda and Condorcet [rules].” (*Oxford Concise Dictionary of Politics*, 2003, p 139.)

**ANY *MEANINGFUL* DEBATE ON BREXIT SHOULD THEREFORE BE MULTI-OPTIONAL,**

**AND ANY VOTE SHOULD BE PREFERENTIAL!**

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