**PRESS RELEASE**

**IMMEDIATE – 16.6.2020**

**FORMING A GOVERNMENT**

**A MAJORITY? OR ONLY A MAJORITY OF A MAJORITY?**

**FOR THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN DUALISM**, a half of a half is a quarter, 51% of 51% = 26%, and a majority of a majority might be only a minority.

To get a majority, you need either 71% of 71%; or a bigger majority if you only have a small majority; or a smaller majority, if you already have a big majority.

FF + FG + GP combined have 85 TDs out of 160; that’s a small majority of just 53%. A majority in the Dáil requires 81 TDs. With only 85, the coalition will need not a simple 51% majority (as in a FF ratification), and not a 67% weighted majority (as with the Greens), but (81 of 85 = 95%) a massive 95%!

There again, believing as they do in majoritarianism, the three parties should be satisfied if only a majority of them – i.e., just two of them – ratify the agreement.

\* \* \* \* \*

**FOR THOSE WHO BELIEVE IN PLURALISM**, not only elections should be multi-candidate contests, (and only North Korea has regular “Candidate ***X***, yes-or-no?” elections), so too, in a plural democracy, controversial problems should be resolved in multi-option ballots. That is, decisions should never be based on “Option ***X***, yes-or-no?” questions, (like Brexit). Instead, with preference voting in the Dáil, the TDs could identify the option with their highest average preference; and an average would involve every td, not just a majority of them.

So, instead of the 2,500-year-old majority vote, it would be wiser to use the 250-year-old preferential vote – the modified Borda count mbc – or better still, its 25-year-old electronic version: [www.debordavote.org](http://www.debordavote.org)

The MBC is non-majoritarian. If it were the democratic norm, Ireland could always have a government of national unity GNU, with power-sharing, like Northern Ireland (sometimes) and Switzerland (always). And if every democracy had a GNU, the world would no longer be plagued with all-powerful singletons… like Bolsonaro, Johnson and Trump.

Peter Emerson

Director, the de Borda Institute

[www.deborda.org](http://www.deborda.org)

36 Ballysillan Road

Belfast BT14 7QQ

+44-(0)7837717979

{Currently in voluntary self-isolation on a farm in Co. Wicklow.}