**PRESS RELEASE**– ***EMBARGOED* until 1201 pm on Thursday 1st December, 2016.**

**THE ITALIAN REFERENDUM ASKS THE WRONG QUESTION!**

**Just like brexit.**

**And a bit like Trump.**

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

**You cannot best identify “the will of the people” by a ‘yes-or-no’ majority vote**

**because, in many such ballots, you identify what some of the people *don’t* want.**

**.**

Is the Italian Parliament to be (a) as it is, bicameral etc.; or (b) as proposed, single chamber etc.?

So the question could be: “Do you want (a) or (b)?”

But the question asked is: “(b), yes or no?” So not just (a) supporters, but also anyone who doesn’t like the EU per se, or the Euro, or Matteo Renzi, or the Democratic Party etc., may also vote ‘no’.

Better still, the procedure could be like this:

i) After public hearings etc., an independent body (like New Zealand’s\* in 1992) drafts, say, a five-option ballot.

ii) The voters cast their preferences.

iii) The count identifies the option with the highest level of overall support, at best, the highest average preference. And an average involves *everybody*, the will of *all* the people, not just that of a majority.

**IF THE COUNTRIES OF THE EU CONTINUE TO USE MAJORITY VOTE REFERENDUMS ON THE EU, THE LATTER WILL PROBABLY FALL APART.**

**AND IF KASHMIR, XĪNJIĀNG OR A PART OF THE DRC DOES THE SAME ON ITS CONSTITUTIONAL STATUS, THE CONSEQUENCES COULD BE VIOLENT.**

**Politics is the art of compromise. Preference voting is its science.**

\* When debating electoral reform, NZ held a five-option referendum in a two-round system.

Peter Emerson

30.11.2016

Director, the de Borda Institute,

36 Ballysillan Road,

Belfast BT14 7QQ

02890711795

07837717979

pemerson@deborda.org

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