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EDITORIAL

So now we have MMP in New Zealand, this somewhat hybrid type of government which is neither a "First Past the Post" nor a full Proportional Representation system as we have it in Switzerland. But whatever it is, it should be an improvement on the past and a step into the right direction, so we hope.

But now that all the election hoo-ha has settled down, can anyone of you really remember what MMP actually stands for? What do these three letters actually mean?

To refresh your memory, your Editor has interviewed practically every Tom, Dick and Harry from North Cape to Stewart Island to find out what people really think what MMP is supposed to mean. So you Swiss people are the first in New Zealand to get the benefit of this vast investigation.

With the increase of the number of Representatives in Parliament to 120, the most logical explanation is that MMP must mean More Members in Parliament. That stands to reason.

However, your Editor is more inclined to believe that MMP stands for Mickey Mouse Parliament. With all the Goofies around and all those members talking gobbledegook like Donald Duck, this surely must be a pretty adequate description.

The very naive amongst us thought that MMP stood for More Money for People or Money Making Proposition or even Main Meal Provider. But of course, this is totally wrong because

MMP is more likely to mean Magical Monetary Prank or Money Market Playground or Monopoly Money Printing. That sounds much more like it.

People who believe that MMP applies specifically to the Representatives themselves rather than to the system itself, think along the lines of Merry Men of Parliament, More Money and Power, Ministers' Mighty Pay-off or Members' Monster Pension-scheme.

Then there are those of you who think that Members of Parliament have a great time. So for you MMP stands for Master Minds' Penthouse, Male Mannequin Parade, Money, Merriment and Perks, Marvellous Marathon Picnic or even Members' Massage Parlour.

Children are quite candid about it. For them MMP means Muppets and Marionettes Pantomime or Madcap Madhouse Party.

For the West-Coasters, who most of the time live apart from the rest of New Zealand, MMP can only mean one thing: Mighty Mitre Peak. Of course, what else?

On the other hand, farmers firmly believe that MMP means Milking Machine Patent and keen observers have found that MMP could actually stand for Muldoon's Mob Playboys or Mongrel Mob Precinct or for the most unlikely partnership of Mike Moore and Peters.

Those who feel that, like the USA, we should have a President rather than a Prime Minister reckon that MMP should mean Make Me President.

Feminists complain that MMP symbolises Mostly Men in Parliament, Maoris reckon it should mean More Maori Parliamentarians, for dreamers it spells Multiracial Make-believe Paradise and for anarchists it stands for Malevolent Minefield of Politics that must be avoided like a Malignant Medieval Plague.

Of course, the Parliamentarians themselves see MMP as to stand for the Magnificent Men of Parliament who created a Merrymen's Master Piece. They call their Parliament building the Megastars' Meeting Place and, although they are Massive Monetary Prizewinners, moving around in a Mighty Melting Pot, occasionally indulging in a Mystifying Musicalchair Pastime, most of them are still just Mixed-up Members of Parliament who have sometimes to enter into Messy Miscalculated Partnerships with one another which could land us all in a Major Monumental Panic.

So there you are. MMP means a lot of things to a lot of people. However, what was the original meaning of MMP (if there ever was one) apart from Micky Mouse Parliament? Was it the Modest Meat Pie or the Match Makers' Prank or perhaps the Modern Monument of Power. We really do not know anymore.

BASLE THE SATIRICAL CITY

The people of Basle have always been recognised as the most witty amongst the Swiss. This reputation has just been further enhanced after the Rorschach publishers Löpfe-Benz AG. have sold their ailing "Nebelspalter" to the Basle publishing firm Friedrich Reinhardt AG.

If anyone in Switzerland can save the "Nebelspalter", surely the people of Basle have the best chance to achieve that. If they fail too, then the Swiss risk to lose their last bit of good old sense of humour!

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