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Consult the electorate, take away the power from swingers

Dear Editor,

Sint Maarten is about to get its 3rd government, based on the election results of less than three years ago. This does not feel right or "democratic." Core of the problem is that, on the one hand, none of the three political parties on the island can be blamed for having developed a political ideology that their members can relate to (opportunistic motives seem to be more predominant than anything else...), and that on the other hand, and even more important, in practice too much power lies with political "swingers".

Political swingers are parliamentarians who decide from one day to the next that they no longer support the party that gained them their seat, call themselves "independent", and suddenly decide to support other political parties or coalitions. Political ideology does not form an obstacle in doing so, as it is lacking, while it seems quite obvious that

the urge to jump ship is primarily based on opportunistic motives of these political swingers. Again, this does not feel very democratic, righteous, or proper.

To enhance the possibility that parties will develop a well-thought-through ideology, laws should be put in place to bring a halt to these political swingers. It would be good, if the laws would be changed and forbid political swinging. If a parliamentarian decides to no longer support his "own" party, he should be obligated to give up his seat and make place for the person of that party who, based on the election results, is next in line.

In other words: if a parliamentarian of the NA, DP, or UP elects to no longer support "his" party, he should not have the right to call himself an independent parliamentarian and support another party or coalition. As said, such a parliamentarian should instead make place for the next in line of respectively the NA, DP, or

UP party. The only exception that could be considered is for those persons, who got sufficient personal votes, to gain a seat by themselves.

Changing the law in this direction would definitely feel more democratic and just. After all, no one in his right mind can honestly state and defend that what is, and has been transpiring in our political arena, still represents the outcome of the elections that were held in September 2010, and thus is mandated by the electorate that voted back then. To that respect, it is incomprehensible that the present discussion about whether or not the Council of Ministers can dissolve Parliament is even being held, as any self-respecting parliamentarian and minister should at this point want to hear the opinion of the electorate in new elections.

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On October 10th, 2010, St. Maarten obtained the status of Country within the Kingdom. A lot has changed since then. Do you understand why some people are calling for new elections, while other people mention that there is a majority for a new Government?

If you are interested, please send us an e-mail at empowermentsxm@outlook.com and we will tell you about our plans to get you properly informed.