

## **The Best Possible Society?**

Sometime later this year, there will be a General Election. It is part of the process of

is rich enough to meet everyone's basic needs. You can't really have a fair society in a failing state. By definition, it would be unjust. The last thing we need to agree on is that some kind of co-operation between citizens is necessary to allow everyone to lead successful lives. If we are at perpetual war with each other, there can be no justice.

The just society we seek will be defined by its institutions: its politics, law, economy, social structure, etc. It is through these mechanisms that the people's needs will be met fairly.

In the thought experiment, you will need to agree the foundations of the best possible society with everyone else in the heavenly waiting room. I guess you are all going to agree with something that gives everyone their best chance. You are going to want to maximise everyone's access to the best things in life. Further, if everyone enjoys minimum basic liberties, then you are likely to have a co-operative society, where everyone helps each other. There is also likely to be more social harmony, as no-one would have a grievance that they are denied something.

Of course, once you leave the heavenly waiting room and are all born, you will discover that some have more talent in this area than that or enjoy a benefit that exceeds the minimum agreed for all. In those circumstances, it is not fair or just to remove that benefit, but it is right that those who are better off

I hope you will all have an influence on the society of the future. I hope you will lead,