

The Tory commitment to democracy is decidedly limited

Published: January 13, 2026, 1:42 am

If the current UK government's attitude towards democracy needs explanation I think that can be found in [this FT report](#):

The UK government is "interested" in creating joint first ministers in Northern Ireland as part of a long-term strategy to improve the functioning of the devolved administration, according to officials.

Power-sharing between pro-UK unionist politicians and nationalists who want a united Ireland has been fraught for years and the May 5 elections to the Stormont assembly appear likely to strain them further.

Why this sudden "interest"? That might have something to do with the fact that Sinn Fein is 7% ahead in opinion polls in Northern Ireland elections, due in May, I think.

So, when the Unionists were ahead, and won, the UK government let them appoint the First Minister of Northern Ireland.

Now that Sinn Fein is in the lead for the first time ever, the UK government is "interested" in joint first ministers, leaving the Unionists in post when they will have lost the election.

If anyone can find any hint of a commitment to the democratic process in that suggestion I would be curious to know who they found it. To me this looks like just another example of the very blatant rigging of society in Northern Ireland in favour of Unionists that has resulted in the division there that has existed throughout my life.

As bad is the signal being sent about the Conservative commitment to democracy. We always knew that this was limited. Now that might be confirmed. It's not a good sign.