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Published on open Democracy News Analysis (<http://www.opendemocracy.net>)

## Second issue of Total Politics

By Anthony Barnett,

Created 2008-07-24 13:04

**Anthony Barnett (London, OK [1]):** The new issue of Total Politics [2] is out and well displayed in W H Smiths in Victoria (but not yet on its website). It has an exchange over whether there should be fixed term parliaments which includes a piece Iain Dale asked me to write some time ago - it is a very pleasant surprise to open a magazine and find you have written in it! The exchange is a bit awkward as I argue for the German system when a no-confidence motion can force an election which is otherwise fixed for every four years while my opponent thinks the Germans do not have a fixed term for that very reason. Oh well... Here is my last para:

We all know that it is undemocratic for the timing of elections to be decided by the person who holds power. This is an excellent reason for reform. But it is not the most important one. We need to emancipate ourselves from our childish subservience to arbitrary power; the cult of the personality, even if it is largely negative in our jaded culture; the 'will he? won't he?' dependency on Daddy's pronouncement; the rubbish about 'the most lonely decision a prime minister must take'. This is our country, these are our elections, for us to decide. They should be held at fixed points set out in advance independent of the will and whim of the Prime Minister.

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### Links:

[1] <http://ourkingdom.opendemocracy.net/>

[2] [http://www.totalpolitics.com/magazine/mag\\_home.php](http://www.totalpolitics.com/magazine/mag_home.php)