Topic 2: Party Policies and Ideas

Minor parties:

England: Green Party

NI   - Sinn Fein   BNP
        - DUP - Democratic Unionist Party
        - UUP - Ulster Unionist Party
        - SDLP - Socio-Democratic Liberal Party

Wales - Plaid Cymru

Scotland - Scottish National Party

POLITICAL PARTIES

Functions of political parties.
- so that everyone is represented.
→ to guard against dictatorship.
- MPs.
- make politics more friendly?
- make polices; make social/economic/political change.
- help decision making - independent MPs = disagreement.
                      - so, gather in groups.
- represent ideological position.
          ⌐→ set of ideas
               ⌐→ anarchism, environmentalism ...
➝ unity = strength ≠ individual power → dictatorship.
- political training / career
- education / persuasion / class grouping
- social group
- candidate selection
- to gain political power
- ~~are a~~ organising body for elections
- reinforcing consent / organisation in Parliament.

<u>PROBLEMS</u>

- organised for Parliament = not free people — not open to everyone.
- Politicians' "hands tied" to parties or constituents?
- reduces independent /analytical / or countries.
  / evaluative contributions to the legislative process of by individual MPs.

- could be overly bureaucratic — "machine-like
                                              parties
- narrowing of political spectrum. (enables people to win
                                              elections)

- in trying to win elections, ideology + voters' (real) needs may be forgotten.
- at times of crisis ?   — overly quick decision
                          — focus on re-election, [not] what is "best" for — political expediency