



**Record of Proceedings
of the Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform
March 20-21, 2004**

Saturday, March 20, 2004 (AM Plenary Session)

In attendance: J. Blaney, Chair
 158 Assembly members
 8 staff
 13 facilitators
 40-45 observers
 3-4 media

Absent: A. McKinnon
 G. Mackinnon

Recording secretary: L. Perra

S. Todd led the Assembly in the singing of the National Anthem.

The Chair recognized several special guests:

Hon. Jacques Saada
Government of Canada, Minister Responsible for Democratic Reform

Roger Galloway, Parliamentary Secretary

Matthew Mendelsohn
Government of Ontario, Deputy Minister for Democratic Renewal

John Gastil, University of Washington

Linda Johnson, Deputy Chief Electoral Officer, Elections BC

Betty Stanger, mother of Assembly Member, Jerry Stanger

Caitlin Burke, granddaughter of Jack Blaney

Opening remarks

The Chair highlighted some of the results of the evaluations. The Chair advised that David Baxter, Executive Director of Urban Futures Institute, would speak to the Assembly Saturday evening. The Chair also noted that W. Bergerud and J. Young would be interviewed on CBC-Victoria on Monday, March 22, at 9:00 a.m.

Question Period

A comment was made regarding the need for gender balance in the legislature. There being no further questions, the Chair invited K. Carty to begin his presentation.

Presentation: Developing the Preliminary Statement - K. Carty

Following the presentation, questions on the following items were raised:

- What happened to the multi-member districts in BC?
- Concern was expressed over the enormous tasks to be accomplished
- Implementation of recommendation
- Concern was expressed about coming to conclusions on electoral systems
- Goal may be to better understand the issues and then attend the hearings

The presentation concluded and Assembly members moved into discussion groups.

PM Plenary Session

Following the conclusion of three discussion sessions, the Assembly met to report on the accomplishments of the discussions groups. After the 11th group had made their report, the 12th group questioned the wisdom of making any statements about favouring some systems and the elimination of some systems before the public hearings. Following debate, the Chair suggested that the draft Preliminary Statement be revised to include the values an electoral system should possess.

Presentation: British Columbia Demographics - D. Baxter

The session concluded about 8:20 pm.

Sunday, March 22, 2004 (AM Plenary Session)

The Chair called for comments on the revised Draft 2 of the Preliminary Statement. Most comments were supportive about the second draft. A couple of suggestions were given: (i) discuss about the selection process, and (ii) include a small glossary of key terms in the Preliminary Statement. The Chair indicated that these suggestions could be incorporated into sidebars in the final document.

Presentation: Moving Forward - J. Blaney

Following the presentation by the Chair, questions on the following items were raised:

- Availability of hearing summaries
- Circulation of hearing notices to universities, libraries, municipalities, etc.
- Translation of the Preliminary Statement
- Involvement of other university students

Presentation: Public Hearings - L. Perra

Following the presentation, the Assembly moved into discussion groups.

Plenary Roundup

The Assembly met to hear reports by each discussion group.

The Chair concluded the Learning Phase by recognizing the contributions of the members and the efforts of the staff.

The Assembly adjourned at 12:35 p.m.