

# PRESENTATION SUMMARY

---

NEW WESTMINSTER PUBLIC HEARING  
DATED 6 MAY 2004  
AT THE INN AT WESTMINSTER QUAY

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE PRESENTATION TO THE CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY ON ELECTORAL REFORM. IT ATTEMPTS TO CAPTURE THE KEY ISSUES AND ARGUMENTS THAT WERE PRESENTED AND DISCUSSED DURING THE PUBLIC HEARING. IN SOME INSTANCES, THE PRESENTER HAS ALSO MADE A SUBMISSION TO THE ASSEMBLY AND THIS IS ACCESSIBLE VIA THE WEBSITE AT [WWW.CITIZENSASSEMBLY.BC.CA](http://WWW.CITIZENSASSEMBLY.BC.CA) BY CLICKING ON "GET INVOLVED". IF SUCH A SUBMISSION IS AVAILABLE, IT WILL BE NOTED AT THE END OF THIS REPORT.

# Don DeMill

---

## DESCRIPTION OF PRESENTATION

---

Democratic dilemmas and solutions in the electoral process and representative democracy. The Athenian experience.

---

## KEY THEMES

---

The presenter felt that we have moved away from the true meaning of democracy. Mr DeMill discussed the introduction of a legislature modeled on the Athenian experience supported by modern technology.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr. DeMill recommended a move to an Athenian style of democracy; or alternatively a Citizens' Assembly style legislature in which members are replaced approximately every four years. The presenter also suggested that, as under Athenian practice, that the bureaucracy also be randomly selected and not allowed to stay too long. Further, Mr. DeMill suggested that Ministers should be selected via a process of merit, not on the basis of membership of the legislature and an office of accountability should be introduced to control and monitor the actions of politicians. The presenter also suggested the consideration of banning political parties.

---

## QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

---

Q You suggest that there shouldn't be parties, if the government is like the Citizens' Assembly who will be accountable?

A As I understand it the history in Greece was not perfect, it's not a perfect system. In this present system the representatives are accountable to the people but in the Citizens' Assembly the people are actually doing it. In this system the media would change, everything would change. But if we do this we have classic Greece and not rotten Rome which we base our system on today.

Q Can you ban political parties?

A I just wanted people to consider it. I was frustrated by my own membership in a political party. But I have no strong position on the abolition of political parties.

