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BC Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform

Dear members,

In agreement with your belief in proportionality and the importance of local representation I am in favour of MMP as practised in New Zealand.

I like the N.Z. practise of 'closed' party lists because I think that, for the most part, parties try to integrate their platforms into attractive cohesive packages. Surely their preferred candidate list would be commensurate.

Here is one variation which may be worth considering. It concerns the 'party' vote of the two votes in the MMP system. Within memory there were times when NO party offered an obviously integrated policy platform. This was especially evident when the acquiring of party power seemed the predominant objective. In such cases perhaps the voter should be given the opportunity of voting NO PARTY in the 'party' vote. It is simple to provide that choice. If, as a result, the NO PARTY votes in an electoral district predominated then the 'runner-up' candidates would be declared elected instead of a party list candidate. This achieves the following results:

- a) The opposition of the government is strengthened. Is this not what a weakly integrated policy platform deserves? It would tend to protect the broad public interest by increasing caution in governance.
- b) The local representation would be increased in that very electoral district where dissatisfaction with party platforms was prevalent. It would certainly not be wise to increase party strength in such a locale.
- c) Cooperation in governance would be immediate in the district that had the dichotomy of representation because the winner and runner-up represent two parties each of which sponsored popular candidates.
- d) The voter, liking no party, would not have been forced to vote 'the lesser of several evils'.

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