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It is essential that Canada change to a system of Proportional Representation (PR) as soon as possible, as our present system is undemocratic and unfair in a number of ways: -

- a) PR would result in more women being elected and this is needed for a better world.
- b) People feel voiceless so they don't vote.
- c) PR would persuade more young people to vote.
- d) Most countries have changed to PR - Canada should not be trailing the pack.

Signed

C. T. L.

PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION! WHY ?

**Because the present voting system "First Past The Post" (FPTP)
distorts elections, producing results that are un-democratic.**

In BC

In 1972: 60 % of the voters voted AGAINST the NDP; yet the system gave NDP 69% of the seats.

In 1996: The Liberals got a majority of votes, but the system awarded the NDP a MAJORITY government.

In 2001: The Liberals got 58% of the votes, but the system gave them 97% of the seats, skewing the results so badly that the NDP with 20% of the votes only got 3% of the seats.

Recent federal elections show even larger distortions:

In 1993: Bloc Quebecois got 54 seats from 14% of the votes, while PC got 2 seats from 16% of the votes.

In 1997: Reform and PC had the same percentage of votes (19%) but the system gave Reform 3 times as many seats (60) as the PC (20)

Something is clearly wrong with a system that can twist and distort elections to such a degree.

So how would PR work? Under PR, a party that gets 58% of the votes, gets 58% of the seats, not 97%.

There is now an opportunity for change.

In 2003, a 160 member British Columbia Citizen's Assembly on Election Reform was established, randomly picked, a woman and a man from each constituency. The Assembly has a mandate to make recommendations whether BC should stay with the present "First Past The Post" (FPTP) voting System, or change to a another system, and, if endorsing a change, recommend a specific alternative.

The Assembly has so far made detailed study of the various existing systems and is now in May and June asking for input from British Columbians. In the fall and winter the Assembly will arrive at a conclusion and write up the referendum question that will go directly to a "yes" or "no" vote at the May 17th 2005 election. If it passes it will be implemented for the 2009 election

Establishing a Proportional Representation Voting System (PR) in BC would be a first step towards true democracy.

If this happens in BC, it would encourage other provinces to follow, and this in turn would eventually force the federal government to consider the matter.

Should the initiative fail in BC, PR would likely be a dead issue across Canada for a very long time. Hence this matter is of extreme importance, and it is urgent that as many positive submissions as possible be made.

Please make a brief submission. The number of submissions in favor of PR will have an effect on the Assembly's decision.

Submissions may be made by either mail or email.

Mail: The Citizens' Assembly
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