

# PRESENTATION SUMMARY

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COQUITLAM PUBLIC HEARING DATED  
1 JUNE 2004 AT THE EXECUTIVE PLAZA INN

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.

# Helmut Schmidt

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## DESCRIPTION OF PRESENTATION

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- 1) Set time period for election calling, rather than putting off until the party is popular.
  - 2) Breaking down of representative seats in parliament per party election percentage.
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## KEY THEMES

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Helmut Schmidt told that hearing that he is concerned that people in Canada seem to vote against a current government rather than for a new government. He argued that electoral system reform is necessary because under the current system majority governments have quickly forgotten that their role is to serve the province and the first step they have taken is to raise their own salaries and then forget their campaign promises. He proposed that minority governments would resolve these problems because governments would need to seek a consensus in order to govern. Mr Schmidt proposed that there be fixed elections held every four years in May. He recommended a proportional representation system where parties win the same percentage of seats as the percentage of votes they have won in the province. Mr Schmidt also suggested that a few seats be set aside for registered minority groups such as First Nations and Métis peoples, and to represent minor parties who have not had any candidates elected.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Helmut Schmidt recommended the introduction of a proportional representation electoral system and the reservation of a small number of seats for minority groups.

*Quote: "What we need is government by consensus in a minority government."*

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## QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PANEL

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One member of the panel sought clarification on elements of the presentation.

Q	Under your system, what percentage would be the cut-off point or threshold? There may be a lot of fringe parties who get 2 or 3 per cent
A	Then they should be represented. This would mean minorities would also be able to have a representative and governments would not be able to trample all over them.

**Comment from panel:** "I just wanted to thank you all for your presentations."

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**QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE**

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There were no questions or comments from the audience.

**SUBMISSION: NO**