

PRESENTATION SUMMARY

DUNCAN PUBLIC HEARING DATED
8 JUNE 2004 AT THE TRAVELODGE
SILVER BRIDGE

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 BY CLICKING ON "GET INVOLVED". IF SUCH A SUBMISSION IS AVAILABLE, IT WILL BE NOTED AT THE END OF THIS REPORT.

Keith Wyndlow

DESCRIPTION OF PRESENTATION

Better method for accountability and to avoid wild swings in government philosophy at elections. Need moderating influence of electorate between left and right wing governments.

KEY THEMES

Keith Wyndlow spoke in support of a mixed member proportional representation system, similar to the system currently used in New Zealand. He argued that MMP would limit the wild swings between governments with huge majorities and would increase the probability of minority government. He expressed concern about the 60 per cent threshold required for any alternative electoral system to pass at referendum, and told the hearing that he perceived this decision as an indication that the government is opposed to electoral reform and is deliberately trying to make reform difficult. Mr Wyndlow noted that the Law Commission of Canada has supported the introduction of MMP for federal elections in its recent report *Voting Counts: Electoral Reform for Canada*. He read out a number of sections of the report, which is available on-line at http://www.lcc.gc.ca/en/themes/gr/er/er_main.asp. Mr Wyndlow argued that the Law Commission's recommendations were equally applicable to the British Columbia's provincial electoral system. He also recommended that the assembly publish its report as quickly as possible so that there is as much time as possible between December report deadline and the election next year.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr Wyndlow recommended the introduction of MMP in British Columbia.

Quote: "MMP appears to have the desirable effect of limiting the wild swings of hugely majority governments that is disproportional to the vote for that government."

QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PANEL

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

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| Q | Do you recall the referendum threshold? |
| A | (Answered by facilitator) Sixty per cent overall support across the whole province, plus majorities in sixty per cent of the ridings. The government is obliged by legislation to consider the result of the referendum, but political effect will be very large independent of that threshold. |

Comment from panel:

“Your concerns about the chances of this passing at the referendum are also shared by us in the Assembly. That’s why I encourage everyone here to get involved to make sure that our report, whether it recommends change or staying with the current system, is not swept under the carpet.”

“If the Citizens’ Assembly does not recommend a change to the current electoral system there will not be a referendum.”

QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

Following this presentation a member of the audience had a question.

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| Q | If there is a referendum will we have a choice of one system or will we have a choice of two or three? |
| A | (Answered by panel member) There will only be one option presented and then you can vote yes or no. |

Comment:

“The Electoral Referendum Act requires a future government to initiate legislation to introduce a new electoral system should the referendum result meet its threshold.”

SUBMISSION: NO