

PRESENTATION SUMMARY

NELSON PUBLIC HEARING
DATED 11 MAY 2004
AT THE PRESTIGE LAKESIDE RESORT

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.

Donald Scarlett

DESCRIPTION OF PRESENTATION

I wish to address social and equity issues of electoral reform. I will make an effort to avoid duplication of input already received by the Citizens' Assembly.

KEY THEMES

Mr. Scarlett expressed the need to change the current FPTP system as it results in wasted votes; the marginalization of minority and ethnic groups; manufactured and exaggerated majorities in the legislature; and executive dominance.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Mr. Scarlett recommended MMP in order to satisfy the spirit of the Canadian Charter of Rights. MMP was the preferred system of PR as it retained some familiar elements of the current system, such as local representation. In addition MMP increases the likelihood of minority or coalition government encouraging a consensual style of politics and reduces the proportion of strategic voting and/or negative voting as every vote will count and outcomes will be fair. Furthermore, MMP will serve to temper the wild swings in policy characteristic of the current system.

Quote: MMP, by restoring the public perception of electoral fairness and allowing citizens to vote effectively for their preferred parties, should renew the interest of many citizens in voting.

QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

- Q Under MMP is there anyway that we can separate out the individual we want for Premier?
- A I haven't tried to address that. I don't think that it is necessarily part of MMP, its thrust is different.