

A Supplemental Submission to Citizens' Assembly on  
Electoral Reform

May 28, 2004

Recommendation that a Senate for British Columbia be instituted because the strong hand of custom has incorporated a political power structure whereby all regions of the Province, including their resources, are not truly included, represented or accountable in provincial government decision-making and at the same time the people of the Province are not being represented in inter-governmental and Federal dealings, it therefore in consequence necessitates that an elected, equal and effective senate must be in place in the Provincial Legislature.

The obvious concerns require a broad range of commitment for equality, fairness and local input such as the mad-cow disease, forest fires, floods, softwood lumber exports, wild salmon protection with adequate fish farm safeguards, mining, local education facilities availability, local health facilities, adequate protection and presence of Armed Forces for earthquake, fire and flood aid and in particular the unfair treatment of this Province in past dealings with the Federal Government.

No longer must any part of our Province be at the mercy of larger municipalities and/or Provincial authority so that a locale, part or point of our Province is used as a dumping ground for 'others' garbage, diseased animals, etc., etc.; overridden by commercial, labour or political interests and resources developed or not developed without local jurisdiction and representation.

A Senate for British Columbia must provide for equal representation from all areas of the Province with its members being elected and accountable. In addition to being a prime legislative body for the Province as a whole, the body would review appointments of deputy ministers, take part in the readings of bills (3/4 opposition to a bill originating in the Members part of the Legislature would be required to negate or amend a bill) and in particular the approval of the appointment of the Inter-Provincial Affairs Minister by the Premier would be within its purview.

The Senators would be elected for a 4 year term as for the M.L.A.'s and in number would be 2 for each Senatorial District to include Vancouver Island,

the Lower Mainland, Cariboo-Chilcotin, the Okanagan, the Kootenay's, the Peace River district and Prince Rupert-NW B.C.

For your consideration.

Gerald Rowsome