

Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform
2288-555 West Hastings Street
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RE: Use of the preferential Ballot

Since would expect that the Assembly will be considering the merits and demerits of the above, I thought you might be interested in an experience had with its use at a candidate selection meeting in a federal constituency here on Vancouver Island a few years ago. As constituency association president, it was my responsibility to see that the voting was carried out in the prescribed manner. There were four candidates, let us call them A,B,C and D. Nobody achieved 50% On the first count. A and B were close, followed by C at some distance, and D even further. So D dropped out, and all his ballots were examined to see who his supporters had chosen for second. These were then added to the ballots of the remaining candidates as named. That brought one of the top two to over 50%, and he was named the winner, went on to win in the Federal election, and remains as an MP today.

So where do I think an improvement can be made in the design of the preferential ballot? Firstly, I do not think the second choice of those who voted for the last placing candidate has the same value as the vote for first place for any other candidate. Sometimes there is a great space between the persons we chose first and second or third. The system above does not recognize this. As a result, I suggest that in using the preferential ballot system, every voter would be allowed 100 'CREDITS" which they could allocate on the ballot as they saw fit. I do not think this would confuse voters if publicity were given to the system well ahead of the election.

I support the preferential vote, but think it needs improving. My suggestion above is one way it might be done.

I am attempting to come up with a workable system for proportional representation, but find this challenging. If I can come up with something I think might have some value, I will pass it along.

In conclusion, I again wish to thank the Assembly for the time given to me in Victoria on May 15. While as indicated in my presentation, I did not specifically address the Mandate, I feel the points I raised, need considering in a future improved electoral system.

Sincerely

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