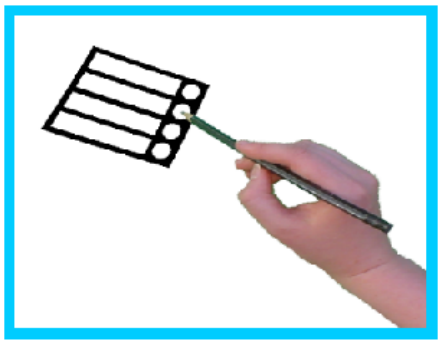
The Moderate Mixed System (MMS)

A fair, simple voting system for British Columbia



Presented by the

Committee for Voting Equity in BC

(Equity BC)

Abstract

Equity BC says surveys indicate full MMP or STV would be rejected at a referendum so they are proposing a "Moderate Mixed System", midway between our present system and full MMP, and submit that MMS is superior to full MMP or STV in several ways.

Summary

The Moderate Mixed System is all about voter appeal; appealing to the greatest number of voters, while offending the fewest. Under our present system, when results are released on election night about half of the voters are discouraged because their ballot did not help to elect anyone; but MMS would make it possible for people to feel good about having almost every ballot contribute to electing someone.

The submission begins by asking: What is the main issue at stake in electoral reform? Then leading contenders STV (including Preferential-Plus) and full MMP are reviewed, and MMS is proposed as a voting system. Computer projected election results are presented. The route between MMS, reduced voter frustration, and better government is described. Finally, the run-up to a referendum is discussed.

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Foreword

The Committee for Voting Equity in BC ("Equity BC") is a small non-partisan group with no professional involvement in politics. Equity BC's presentations to Citizens' Assembly hearings at Vancouver May 3rd and Langley May 20th, 2004, were considered the best presentations at those hearings (for the justification for claiming to be "best" please see page 42, Footnote 1).

The Moderate Mixed System (MMS) is a variation of the systems known as "Mixed Member Proportional" (MMP) in New Zealand and "Additional Member System" (AMS) in Germany. It could be said that MMS contains nothing new because it combines components from countries such as Australia, New Zealand, Scotland, Wales, and Germany. But that would be misleading, because the choice and balance of components is neither simple to construct nor of little importance. This is significant because, as Citizens' Assembly Chief Research Officer Dr. Ken Carty said January 25th, 2004, "The devil is in the details." There is little guidance for assembling a voting system; no consensus exists for weighting proportionality, local representation, choice, and so forth. No doubt every voter has slightly different priorities. We have tried to use common sense, and we will respectfully leave it to the members of the Citizens' Assembly to decide whether we have succeeded.

While MMS is a variant of MMP, we have chosen to give it a different name to highlight its unique balance of details. Its made-in-BC provisions for converting votes to seats (particularly its "compensation" and "minimum count" provisions, described later) are intended to create a moderate and sensible balance to overcome the objections that have been raised against new systems. We believe this is essential to maintaining media and public support in advance of a referendum.

On a technical note, some Internet links to glossaries with definitions of terms used in voting system jargon such as "Proportional Representation - PR" and "First Past The Post - FPTP" are listed at page 42, Footnote 2. To use, copy and paste into a browser.

In order to make this submission shorter for readers, much has been relegated to Appendix 3: Footnotes and References, pp 42 – 71 at the end of this document. If this is being read on a computer, referring to the footnotes will be easier if a duplicate copy of this document is opened for this purpose in a second window on-screen. Reading will be even easier if the document is first printed to paper. The numbered footnotes frequently contain lengthy discussions and not merely citations. For example, please see page 43, Footnote 3, if you wish to read "Choosing an electoral system – the beginning".

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Introduction

The topics in this submission are presented in a sequence to establish the background for the Moderate Mixed System (MMS). If you prefer to skip to the nuts and bolts, the illustrated Introduction to MMS starts on page 13, a brief text outline of the simple MMS system is given in the box on page 35, while an even briefer four-sentence description is given in the box on page 31.

Equity BC has been struggling with the process of how to simplify the evaluation of voting systems; covering not just expert opinions or theoretical reasoning about various criteria, but also as to what voters want; what voters will accept; and past experience of other electoral systems. Lengthy books have been written on electoral reform. Here we will try to focus on what is essential.

The members of the Citizens' Assembly have been working hard, studying electoral systems. They are the people well placed to judge which voting system would

best serve British Columbians. If the Citizens' Assembly does decide to recommend a new system then the final decision will be made by the general population at a referendum May 17th, 2005. This means the final decision will be made by people with a very simplified understanding of what is at stake. How will the endless complexities get boiled down to a simple yes/no, for/against, in the media and in voters' minds?

For anyone sincerely interested in our community, it is uncomfortable at the least, and quite possibly even offensive, to reduce all the complexities of the electoral system question down to one simple issue. But in practical terms there seems to be no avoiding it. Reluctantly, to take part in the simplified public debate which will soon ensue, we are pretty much forced to oversimplify the issues and ask: What is the main question?

It is probably the question of proportional representation, PR. (Others have eloquently made the case for PR, e.g. references in Footnote 3, so it will not be elaborated here; for discussions by members of Equity BC that counter myths against PR, please see "Appendix 2: Is PR a Good Thing?") The main debate pits PR against our present system, FPTP, with PR giving a very high likelihood of minority governments (over 80%) while FPTP gives a very high likelihood of majority governments (over 80%) (Footnote 3, Footnote 4a, Footnote 5a).

If we had a clear social consensus as to which is best, minority or majority governments, then the choice between PR and FPTP would be a "slam-dunk". Unfortunately, we do not. On the contrary, we have a great degree of division on this question, with the evidence suggesting a general preference somewhat towards majority governments. While the proper criteria for evaluating voting systems are very complex, the TV, radio, and print journalists tend to simplify any new voting system as "will bring in minority governments". This makes selling a new system an uphill battle if most British Columbians prefer majority governments. The average citizen is fed up with "government", and naturally is attracted to the dream of having a competent leader put a firm hand on the steering wheel (Footnote 6). Whether rightly or wrongly, the idea that bickering committees or coalitions would make better government decisions doesn't square with many people's experience. In short, they fear a PR system could make a bad situation worse.

Therefore, PR needs to be "sold" on a different basis. Namely, that PR will bring about more competition between parties, forcing them to try harder and be more responsive to the voters. In a campaign for voter approval, such an approach might be persuasive and successful, given careful management and luck. However, it is fraught with difficulties. For one thing, the Citizens' Assembly will be disbanded so there will be no organization and no Citizens' Assembly budget to promote any Citizens' Assembly-recommended system prior to a referendum. Publicity will be largely at the discretion of (a) the government (and any incumbent government has a natural antipathy to any new voting system) and (b) the mass media. The media, as mentioned above, are likely to reduce the referendum issue to a simple question of majority versus minority governments. In this case, the biggest danger will arise from the temporary political situation on May 17th, 2005: Will people be in the mood for a majority or minority

government? As illogical and inappropriate as this oversimplification may be, that is what it is likely to come down to.

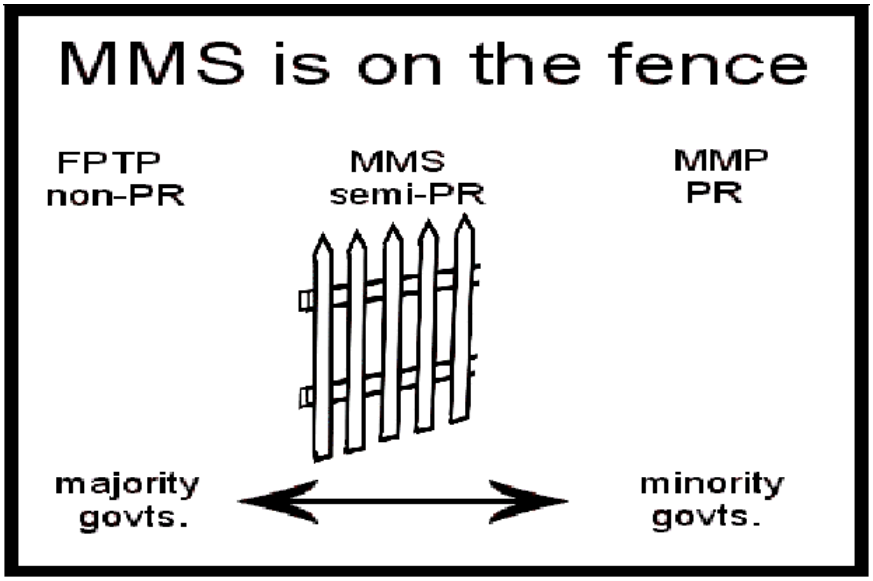
If PR versus FPTP is the main battle, what further implications are there for how we go about choosing a specific voting system? The answer depends on the type of voter:

For supporters of smaller parties, PR is an automatic winner, because it would give their parties more seats. They might prefer one system over another, but they may be counted upon to vote in favour of any new system that increases proportionality. If they were the only voters then we would only need to ask what is the best system, because their support would be guaranteed for whatever we came up with.

On the other hand, supporters of the leading party, who may well be in an absolute majority, stand to lose representation in Victoria. Their support of a new system is problematic. **For acceptability at a referendum, the key trait of a voting system is its appeal to these supporters of the leading party.** That's why the emphasis in this submission is on voter appeal, and only on the traditional academic concerns of proportionality, choice, local representation and stability from the point of view that they influence voter appeal.

As will be covered more fully in later sections, MMS attempts to minimize the two basic objections which were described above, namely fear of minority government and fear of losing seats to other parties, by taking a different approach to selling PR. Essentially, it proposes a variant of MMP in which the top-up seats are only half-compensating, so the leading party is not fully penalized. For the same reason, **under MMS neither majority nor minority governments are overwhelmingly favoured by the voting system itself.**

This is a key benefit, as it means voters can approve MMS with less regard of whether they favour majority or consensus government. It enables the electorate, if they wish to do so, to vote strategically over the course of several elections to tilt the balance towards majority or towards consensus governments. In other words, MMS actually frees the electorate to influence not only which candidates and parties win, but also to have a more practical means by which to influence whether we have minority or majority governments, through voters favouring smaller or larger parties. By contrast, full PR or FPTP systems give much less scope for such strategic voting to be effective because they more inherently and obstinately favour minority and majority governments respectively.



This is a cautious Canadian approach, directed toward passage by the required 60% at a referendum, regardless of whether people at that moment want a majority or consensus government.

We will return to these themes near the end of this submission, in "Promoting a New Electoral System", to discuss the implications for the campaign that will begin if the Citizens' Assembly approves a referendum.

Now, before the details of MMS are introduced, the leading contenders STV and MMP will first be examined because they lead in a natural way to the discussion of MMS. PR-Light will also be briefly and critically assessed as an example of an attempt to adapt MMP to a moderate form.

STV

Choice:

STV is a favourite of political scientists such as Dr. David Farrell, often because it theoretically offers voters the widest choices (Footnote 4b). And, STV would be a great system—if everyone were as interested in politics as political scientists! Unfortunately, they're not. For example, the Chairperson of Equity BC asked each of eight educated adults attending a dinner, for the name of their incumbent MLA: All but one admitted not knowing the answer, even though these people all lived in a riding with a moderately high profile cabinet minister. That's typical of our level of interest in, and knowledge of, BC provincial politics. Yet under STV we would be asked to choose and rank about 5 candidates out of a field of perhaps two or three dozen. That's easy enough to understand, but not easy to do properly (Footnote 7b). People care about good government, but it's

just too much to expect us to be familiar with dozens of candidates when we can't even remember the name of our incumbent. So, most of us would simply vote a party slate. In the Australian Senate STV elections, over 90% of voters do vote a party slate (Footnote 8). Likewise, an STV ballot would be similar in size to the ballot we have for Council in the City of Vancouver, which voters respond to by voting a party slate (Footnote 9). The fact that people simply vote a slate, means the choices offered by STV may be good but are of little practical significance to most people (Footnote 7a).

For those who believe strongly in selecting an electoral system on principle rather than on, say, crude popularity, the greatest advantage of STV is really that voters could, in theory, split their votes and be represented proportionally along policy lines rather than party lines. This would be an advance for democracy, but unfortunately it seems unachievable in practice: Party control by nomination, discipline and funding among other factors limits candidates' freedom, so realistically we are offered only party choices among serious contenders.

Local representation:

STV would be a system with ridings about five times bigger. That's unappealing to some of the people concerned about local representation, namely those who want an identifiable candidate responsible for an area about as small as presently (though in Ireland they usually seem to be able to divide up the constituency among themselves voluntarily, Footnote 10).

The multi-member nature of the STV constituencies would inherently encourage the successful candidates to keep competing with each other even after the elections are over. As in Ireland, this would likely be reflected in a high degree of attention to local constituency service.

Effective government:

The large riding size has serious implications for party power and MLAs' capacity for independent decision-making. The Citizens' Assembly heard in the Learning session about STV that "It has the potential to weaken party control of candidates.." and "The ability of parties to discipline their candidates is weakened" (discussed at Footnote 8). This would be popular with voters if it were correct. The history of rigid party discipline under Irish STV contradicts it (Footnote 11, Footnote 12). In most respects, the opposite of independent action by MLAs could be expected: With ridings about five times bigger than under FPTP, campaigning effectively would be much more expensive for each candidate than now. Consequently candidates would be even more beholden to their parties as a result of their increased dependency on their parties for campaign financing and other support. Such a system could not help but attract candidates even more willing to blindly obey party directives than at present. For many people this is the source of their **chief complaint about BC politicians, and STV would worsen it.**

This factor, of large multi-member constituencies contributing to party power at the expense of MLAs, also applies to party list candidates under MMP, but at least under MMP the local candidates are there to balance the tendency.

Proportionality:

Although multi-member STV can legitimately be called proportional and labelled "PR-STV", it is more accurate to describe it as semi-proportional. With five-seat districts it has an implied threshold of about 16% which is high and which contributes to its limited proportionality. Results presented in Footnote 13 confirm that it is only semi-proportional.

Popularity:

STV has been used in several places for a long time, so we have the assurance that it would not be disastrously unpopular if implemented. Tasmania in Australia has had STV since 1909, so they have had time to adjust to it. Over the last two decades the vote there has split about 50:30, with the remaining 20% being divided among minor parties (Footnote 14), so support has essentially coalesced on two dominant parties; the Australian Senate with STV similarly has two parties, and Ireland with STV, three main parties.

It must be admitted that STV is not always entirely unpopular: the Irish government tried twice to change from STV to a single member system, but this failed at referendum. On the other hand, Alberta and Manitoba (within Calgary, Edmonton and Winnipeg) dropped PR-STV and there was little clamor to resurrect it, which speaks poorly of its popularity.

Its unpopularity makes it unlikely it would be accepted at a BC referendum. On a 1992 plebiscite after extensive debate, New Zealand voters preferred MMP (70%) to STV (17%) (Footnote 15). Since full MMP would itself likely be barely defeated in B.C. (see next section, "Full MMP"), STV's relatively lower popularity would by inference cause it to be defeated by a wide margin. Similarly, a 2003 British poll found STV was the most disliked of systems surveyed (Footnote 16b). A careful mock-ballot British exercise in 1997 found less than half as many liked STV as liked MMP (Footnote 5c).

STV has been rejected by government mandated commissions in Canada (Footnote 17), Britain (Footnote 18), and New Zealand (Royal Commission on the Electoral System, 1986), and the PEI Electoral Commission of 2003 effectively set STV aside in favour of MMP (Footnote 19).

Made-in-BC STV: 'Preferential-Plus'

STV has been adapted to B.C. with former MLA Nick Loenen's 'Preferential-Plus' which he abbreviates 'PP', a rather unfortunate choice of acronyms (Footnote 20). He said "Applied to BC it will almost certainly, in a typical election, result in coalition government..". This is no doubt correct, since the prime example of an area with STV, Ireland, has had an uninterrupted string of non-majority governments for a quarter century. The Irish have successfully created a two-bloc system from the various parties (Footnote 5d). Nevertheless, PP may be less desirable than a system that the voters can more readily swing towards either majority or minority/coalition government as they see fit (discussed later, in section 'Advantages of MMS', sub-section 'Regional Vote'.)

PP uses PR-STV in most of the province, but only a preferential (alternative) vote in nine ridings. This may be offensive to some rural people (discussed later, in section 'Advantages of MMS', sub-section 'Beyond Hope, B.C. ─ two co-existing electoral systems?').

The PP proposal puts a great emphasis on reducing "wasted votes", defined as votes for losing candidates. Reducing "wasted" votes is indeed important because it will reduce the number of unhappy voters, which is good in itself, and it will encourage greater voter turnout. It is claimed that PP reduces wasted vote from 51% to less than 18.4% (Footnote 20b), but the "less than 18.4%" refers to PP in simulations based on the 2001 election data while the 51% refers to FPTP in "a typical BC election"; the more valid comparison would be to the FPTP wasted vote of the same year, 2001, which was 42.24%, not 51% (Footnote 21). Nit-picking aside, PP was greatly outshone in minimizing wasted votes by MMP (less than 8.4% wasted, contrary to Mr. Loenen's estimate of 10 to 12 percent) and MMS (less than 6.5%). (These MMP and MMS figures are from the following section, 'Election Results: Projections Based on Past Votes'.)

Though many people may want the political parties reined in, they will always be an important and necessary means of organizing people for political activities. Yet in 2000, Mr. Loenen said "Under STV parties have no formal role" (Footnote 22). In 2004, about PP (STV/AV), he said "Votes are for candidates, not for parties" (Footnote 23). It's not clear to what degree STV or PP would separate the electoral and party functions as suggested, nor how this separation, if it did occur, would benefit the darwinian political process; nor how such a separation "will resonate with voters at every point of the political spectrum" when most voters seem to prefer voting by party rather than by candidate (Footnote 24b).

Would PP work as planned? PP involves ranking seven candidates if a district has seven MLAs, and though a voter may do fewer, the seven ranks are required to retain maximum chance of influence during vote counting. Faced with this, most voters would vote a party slate. When asked the result of slate voting May 4th, 2004, Mr. Loenen said "It is terrible. It removes the choice from the people and gives it to the politicians. It transforms a preferential system into a party list system." (Footnote 25).

Made-in-BC STV: 'STV+Circuits'

Perhaps a better adaptation of STV to B.C. has been made with Dr. Julian West's "Circuit STV" (STV-C, Footnote 88). It uses a minimum district magnitude of 2 for sparsely inhabited areas. The STV-C proposal puts a great emphasis on "circuits," (single-member sub-divisions of the STV multi-member constituencies, that would be allocated to MLAs after elections, with the highest vote-getter having first choice), but in his words circuits "have no meaning on voting day" and "have no electoral meaning whatsoever". Their purpose is to give MLAs a smaller area to "represent", but since the MLAs would remain dependent on the whole multi-member constituency for re-election there would be less natural incentive to establish accountability for the specific circuits as opposed to the whole constituency. As mentioned earlier, something similar is done in Ireland; in New Zealand each party divides the country into areas, one area for each of their party's at-large MPs, and this is apparently useful (Footnote 5b). The STV-C proposal is limited by the general problems that all STV systems face, primarily their unpopularity.

Full MMP

The Mixed Member Proportional system with enough top-up seats to ensure almost complete proportionality is now being tried in a number of countries, and has been recommended for Prince Edward Island (Footnote 19). (It is here termed "full MMP" or simply "MMP", and is also called the Additional Member System or "AMS".) However, only a single country, Germany, has more than eight years' experience with MMP nationally, provincially, or at any other level (Footnote 26). This limited experience is worrisome, especially since this one country, Germany, has a very different culture than that of British Columbia and therefore may or may not be a suitable country to copy (Footnote 27).

Hundreds of submissions to the Citizens' Assembly have covered MMP, so only one aspect will be discussed here:

Popularity:

Popularity is key to any potential new electoral system because the Electoral Reform Referendum Act enacted May 20, 2004, requires that a Referendum on electoral reform must receive 60% of the provincial vote, including at least 50% support in 60% of the electoral districts, to be binding.

This is a difficult hurdle: After long and thorough consideration the people of New Zealand adopted an MMP voting system by referendum in 1993, but only by 53.9% (Footnote 4c). In Britain, a careful survey with mock ballots in 1997 found 48% support for FPTP to 52% for MMP (Footnote 28). That's less than the 60% needed in BC.

Some MMP supporters are encouraged by a survey in 2001 which reported that three out of four British Columbians (76%) favoured proportional representation (Footnote 29). Unfortunately, this means little because people know very little about voting systems, and tend to agree with anything a pollster proposes if it sounds reasonable. The problem is that similar but more extensive survey work has found such support shrinks as voters become more familiar with the issues: The Independent Commission on Proportional Representation (ICPR) has reported on a similar 2003 survey in the United Kingdom, which has the same first-past-the-post (FPTP) election system for their House of Commons as we use in British Columbia. The final version of their report was published March 29, 2004. Just the same as in the poll in B.C., they found three out of four voters (77%) favoured getting a proportional representation or "PR" system for their House of Commons; but after learning something about electoral systems the support fell to 57%, i.e. below the 60% threshold a B.C. referendum needs to pass. (Please see Footnote 16a which has analysis and discussion of the ICPR survey data.)

Similarly, a British poll commissioned by another prestigious organization in 1998 found the same thing: Initial support for PR of 3-to-1 (72%) faded to 1:1 (52 to 56% among voters) as people became informed of the issues (please see Footnote 30). That's not good enough. While the general population is likely in favour of proportional

representation, those who actually bother to get out to vote tend to be those with stronger loyalties to an established party, and who can plainly see the danger of PR to their party.

Taken together then, the survey and referendum results from Canada, New Zealand and Britain indicate full PR (e.g. MMP) would be defeated at a B.C. referendum.

Why are people not more strongly in favour of PR? Consider MMP: Voters make two votes, one for local constituency seats and one for regional or province-wide party seats that are fully compensating for disproportionality in the local seats. This compensation mechanism means that party votes for the leading party are usually offset, or "wasted". In the last BC election, **a full MMP system would have worked against the expressed preferences of 57% of the voters**. For example, in Wilfred Day's MMP proposal (DAY-1203), Liberals would have received none of the 32 PR top-up seats from their 916,888 party votes. If they had been asked to approve a referendum proposing a full MMP system, would they have, knowing it would penalize their own party? For them, a vote for MMP would have amounted to a vote for the NDP and Greens, and not just for one election, but for all elections to come.

This analysis is confirmed by data from Britain, where being a member of the leading party makes one "almost twice as likely to be against changing the electoral system" (Footnote 16c).

Under full MMP systems, the supporters of the leading party will have their party votes entirely "wasted" unless there are more than enough list seats to compensate for disproportionality in the local campaigns, and even in the latter case their party votes are only counted toward the excess seats. That's not going to encourage them to vote in favour of such a system.

Here's another consideration. It is possible that two leading parties will be close to each other in the polls going into the next BC election, just as they have been for months now. In this situation supporters of both parties would be desperately hoping for their party to form a slim majority government. For a referendum on a new voting system this would be the worst possible scenario, because it would be asking about 80% of the voters to approve a system under which the chance of forming a majority government might slip from their grasp; and in this case a referendum might be soundly defeated. This is another reason why a moderate system that can appeal to all voters should be considered.

There are other reasons of prudence and caution to choose a semi-proportional system, but getting a referendum passed is the critical need. To have a system with broad appeal, one that doesn't risk antagonizing many of the voters who will have to approve a referendum, we suggest it is crucial to consider a semi-PR system.

British Columbians want electoral reform, but they are not very enthusiastic about it. For example, this year less than 4,000 people, in total, attended 50 public hearings held by the Citizens' Assembly around the province to determine our province's future, which

contrasts with the 400,000 who travelled to see a single fireworks show on a Vancouver beach. To take another example, the Free Your Vote organization had an "Initiative to Establish a Proportional Representation Electoral System" under BC's Recall and Initiative Act in 2002, and it failed to gain enough signatures. The lack of enthusiasm for radical measures, such as STV or full MMP, points to the need to consider a moderate system that will stir up less opposition, and that voters can comfortably accept even if they are somewhat disinterested.

We need a system the great majority of British Columbians can approve. Many submissions to the British Columbia Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform have recommended "New Zealand MMP". Although the people of New Zealand appear content with MMP at present (Footnote 16c), polls for years showed a majority of the people wanted to go back to FPTP (Footnote 4d), which reflects the weak popularity of their MMP. Encouragingly, the people of Scotland and Wales wish to keep their MMP systems rather than go back to FPTP, by a two to one margin (Footnote 16d). Hopefully we can find a popular system for B.C.

PR-Light

Ian McKinnon has suggested that possible unintended consequences of massive changes to our political system, such as the turmoil that occurred in New Zealand upon introduction of MMP, could be minimized by selecting a "Light" proportional representation system (Footnote 31). This line of thought parallels part of the rationale behind MMS, but the system suggested for consideration, Bryan Schwartz and Darla Rettie's PR-Light, is radically different from MMS.

PR-Light would be an MMP system with "about 20%" top-up seats (Footnote 32), and "Some mechanism would have to be found to fill the PR seats" (Footnote 33). To avoid making some voters "puzzled and confused" by a two-part ballot (Footnote 34), they chose a single vote, for the local constituency. But choosing a single vote for the local constituency then necessitates using closed lists on which the parties rank the list candidates, for the PR seats. However, they foresee that the choice of closed lists will in turn create patronage and accountability problems (Footnote 33), so to offset that they propose making rules that list MLAs would not be eligible for cabinet, and could only be elected to lists once (Footnote 33 and Footnote 34). Needless to say, such rules would create two classes of MLAs, making the acceptability of such a scheme doubtful. This series of choices demonstrates the difficulty of electoral engineering, because one choice leads to another.

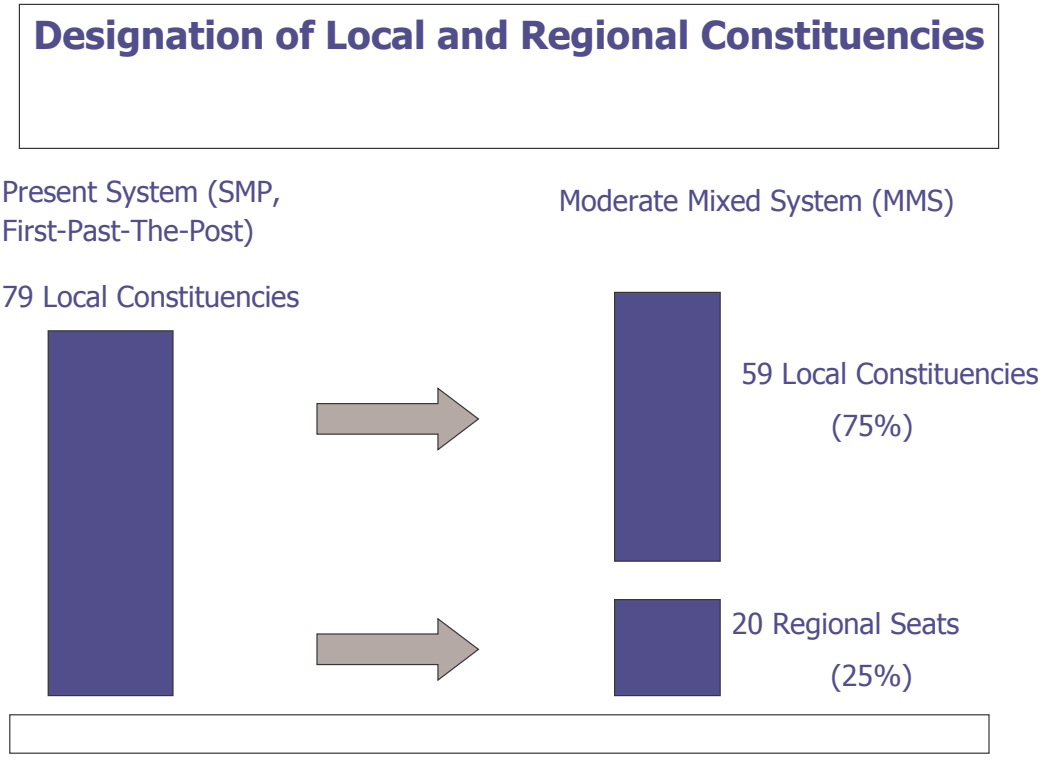
For Manitoba they propose using 12 PR seats divided among six regions (Footnote 34a). That would amount to only two PR seats per region. The authors do not acknowledge that such a small number would inherently create an extreme bias against small parties. They project that the seven Manitoban majority governments since 1969 would have been reduced to three under PR-Light.

Information for B.C. is not provided, and further details and evaluation of PR-Light are vague and confusing (Footnote 35). PR-Light illustrates the challenge of identifying a promising electoral system.

Here is Equity BC's suggestion for a semi-proportional system called the Moderate Mixed System, or MMS:

Introduction to MMS

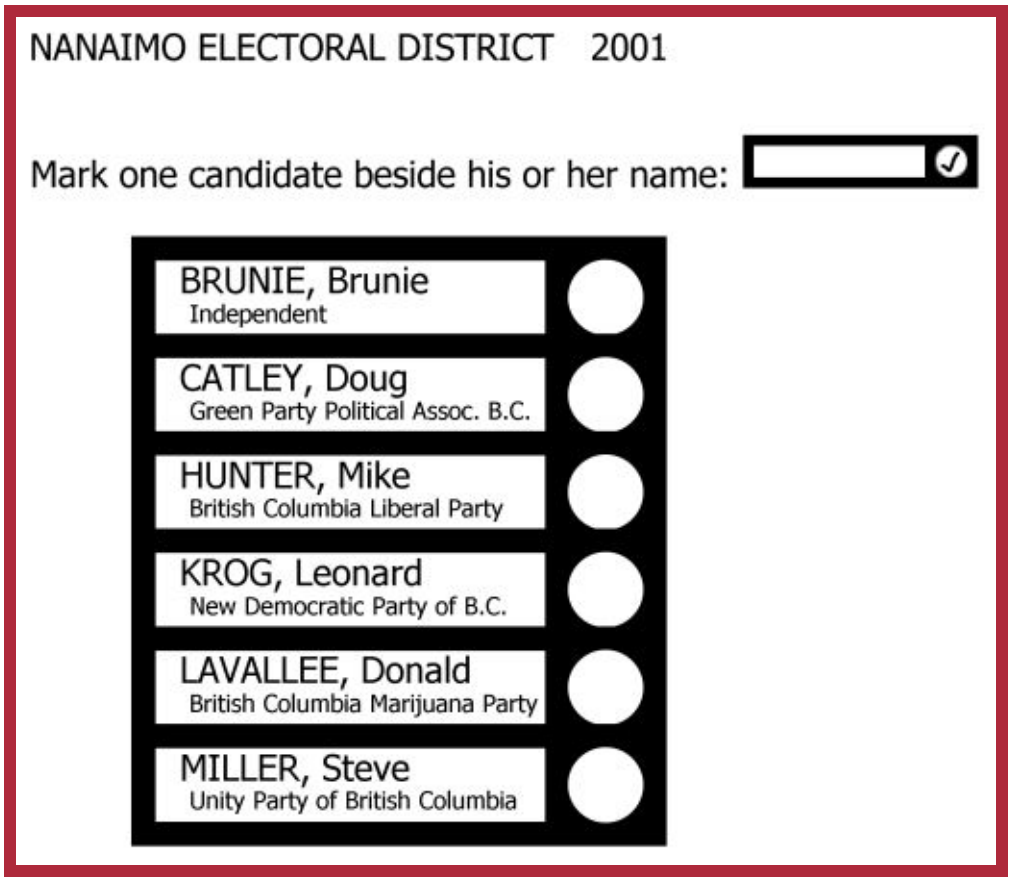
Equity BC has tried to make its proposed voting system as simple as possible so that no-one will be handicapped by a complicated new system (Footnote 36). Under our present system there are 79 MLAs in local constituencies. Under MMS the province would be divided into 59 local constituencies. The remaining 20 MLAs would be elected to "regional" seats:



The 20 regional seats would be distributed among three multi-member districts as follows:

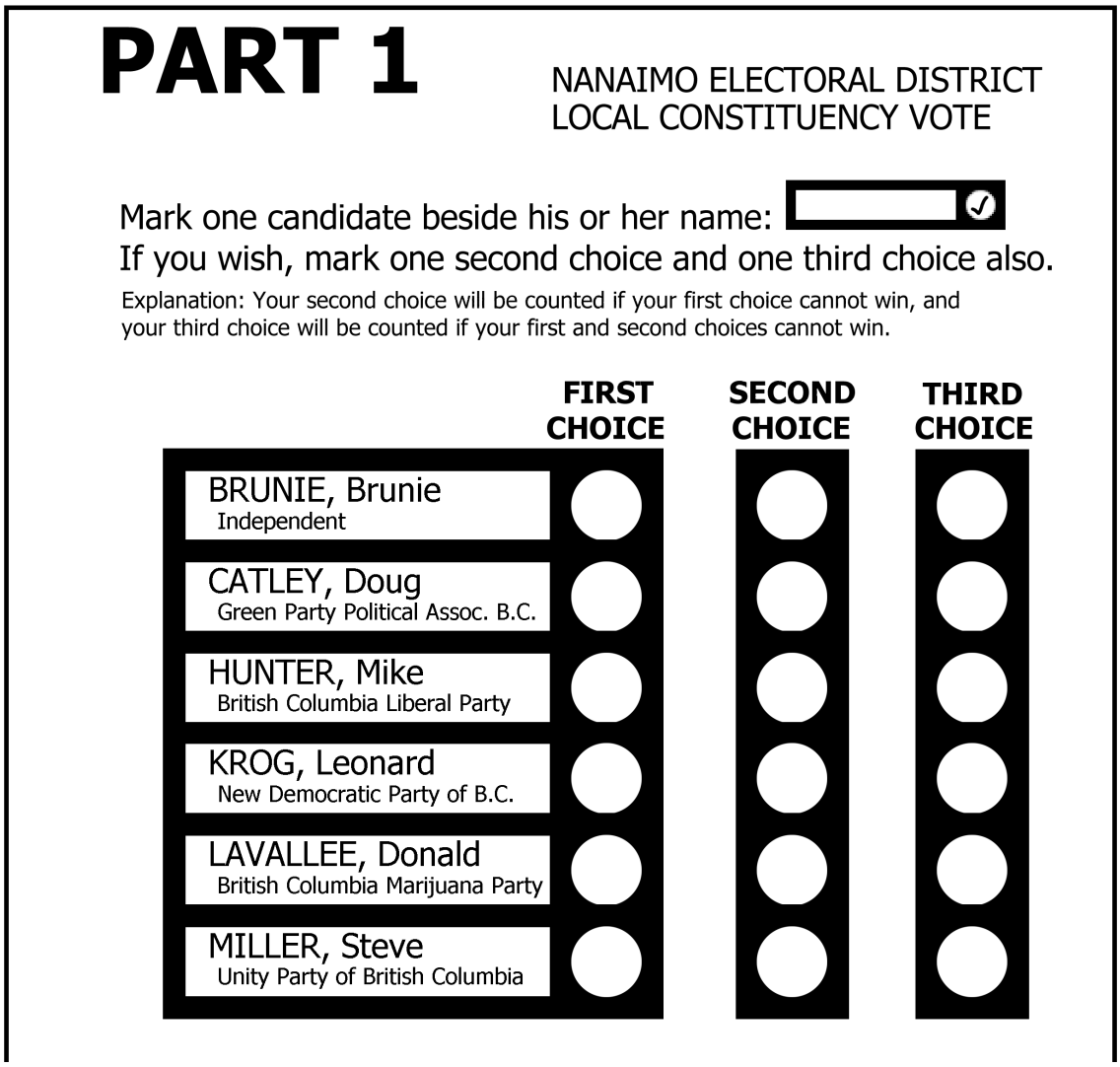
MAP

Under MMS, the first part of the ballot is for the election of a local candidate. Voters may, if they wish, vote in exactly the same way as in previous elections. If this is their preference, they need only use the following bits of the ballot:

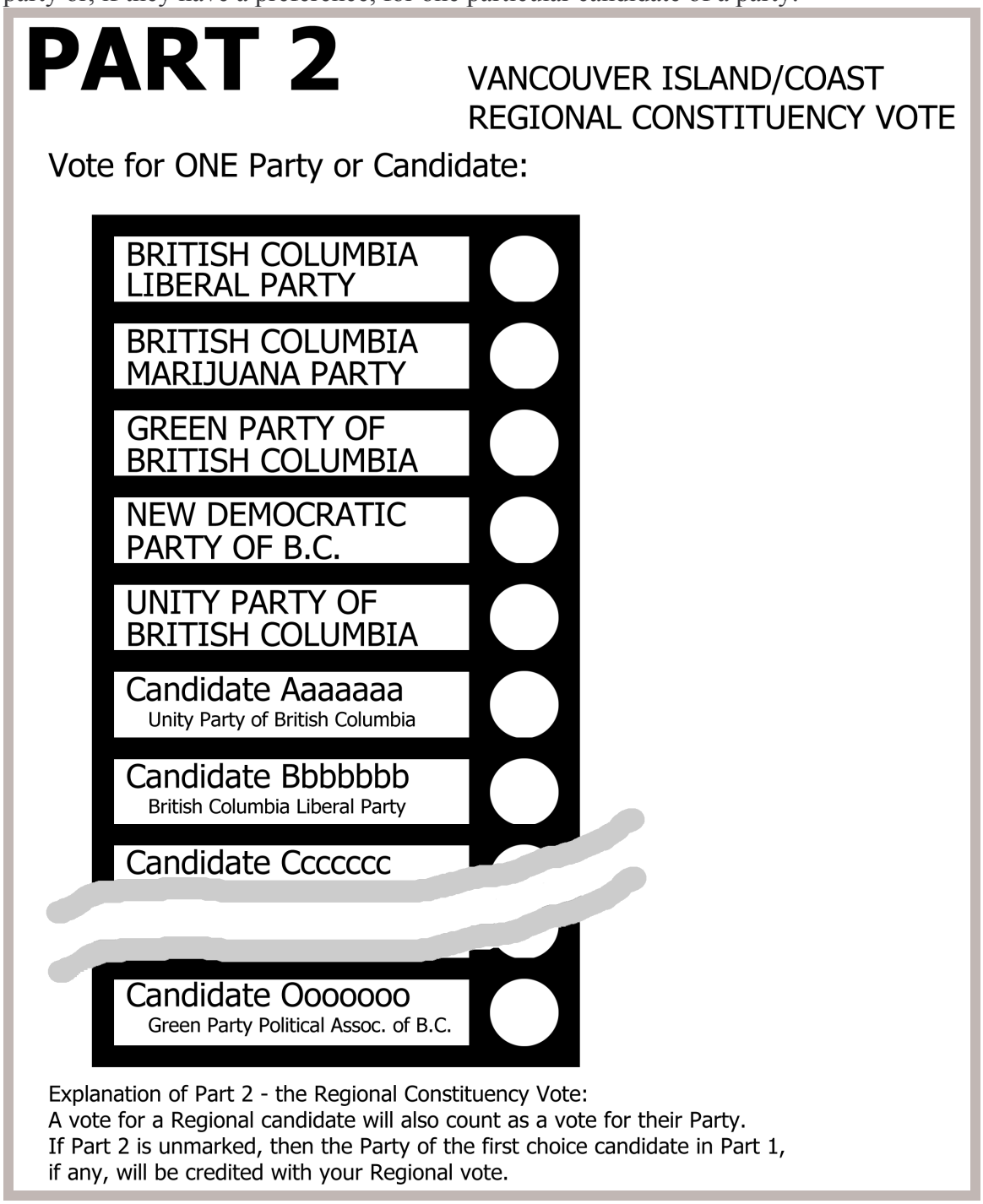


That's really all a voter would have to do. If they do not want to learn a new system nor take advantage of the extra choices available under MMS they can just mark one candidate. Their ballot would still carry the full traditional weight in the local constituency election.

Voters who wish to do more than simply choose one candidate would be able to indicate their first, second and third choices. To illustrate its simplicity, we have prepared a mock ballot:



Part 2 of the ballot is for the regional seats. A voter would vote for one political party or, if they have a preference, for one particular candidate of a party:



A voter who wishes to vote the old way can just mark beside their candidate on Part 1 and leave this second part of the ballot blank. In this case, their candidate's party would be credited with their regional vote as long as their candidate belonged to a political party competing in the regional election. In other words, even if they leave the second part of the ballot blank, their vote can still carry full weight in the regional constituency election.

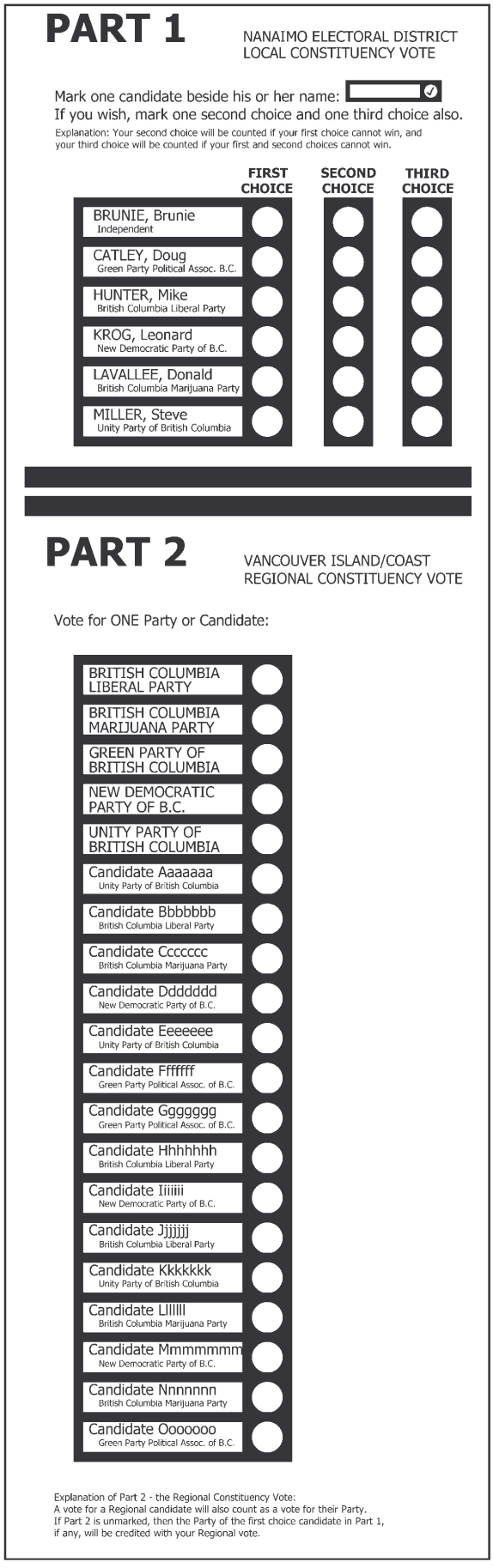
After polling closes, a special vote-counting procedure would be used as described in Appendix 1. Regional seats would be awarded preferentially to parties that have not received the same proportion of local seats as their share of the regional vote. The point of this is to make it closer to where if a party gets half the votes they get half the seats; three-quarters of the votes, three-quarters of the seats; or a quarter of the votes, a quarter of the seats. That seems fair to many people.

MMS is not fully compensating or fully proportional; it is only half-compensating. The Chief Electoral Officer would determine how many regional seats each party has won within each region according to the MMS formula, known as a modified Scottish formula. This formula, which is described in the next section and is given in full in Appendix 1, essentially ensures that the discrepancy between a party's share of the vote and its share of seats is reduced by about half compared to our present voting system. Within each party, the regional candidates with the most votes would be the first ones eligible to be elected. Consequently, the choice of regional candidates would be made by the public, not by backroom operatives putting together a "closed" list.

After the election, a voter would of course be represented in the Legislature by all MLAs, but particularly by the MLAs of their local and regional areas. Regional MLAs would serve at-large within their region. The 2003 PEI Electoral Reform Commission felt there would not be a problem of "class" distinction between the two types of MLAs in a mixed-member system (Footnote 19a).

The whole ballot would look something like this:

sample ballot



PART 1

NANAIMO ELECTORAL DISTRICT
LOCAL CONSTITUENCY VOTE

Mark one candidate beside his or her name:
If you wish, mark one second choice and one third choice also.

Explanation: Your second choice will be counted if your first choice cannot win, and your third choice will be counted if your first and second choices cannot win.

	FIRST CHOICE	SECOND CHOICE	THIRD CHOICE
BRUNIE, Brunie — Independent			
CATLEY, Doug — Green Party Political Assoc. B.C.			
HUNTER, Mike — British Columbia Liberal Party			
KROG, Leonard — New Democratic Party of B.C.			
LAVALLEE, Donald — British Columbia Marijuana Party			
MILLER, Steve — Unity Party of British Columbia			

PART 2

VANCOUVER ISLAND/COAST
REGIONAL CONSTITUENCY VOTE

Vote for ONE Party or Candidate:

BRITISH COLUMBIA LIBERAL PARTY	
BRITISH COLUMBIA MARIJUANA PARTY	
GREEN PARTY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA	
NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY OF B.C.	
UNITY PARTY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA	
Candidate Aaaaaaa — Unity Party of British Columbia	
Candidate Bbbbbbb — British Columbia Liberal Party	
Candidate Ccccccc — British Columbia Marijuana Party	
Candidate Ddddddd — New Democratic Party of B.C.	
Candidate Eeeeeee — Unity Party of British Columbia	
Candidate Fffffff — Green Party Political Assoc. of B.C.	
Candidate Ggggggg — Green Party Political Assoc. of B.C.	
Candidate Hhhhhhh — British Columbia Liberal Party	
Candidate Iiiiiii — New Democratic Party of B.C.	
Candidate Jjjjjjj — British Columbia Liberal Party	
Candidate Kkkkkkk — Unity Party of British Columbia	
Candidate Lllllll — British Columbia Marijuana Party	
Candidate Mmmmmmm — New Democratic Party of B.C.	
Candidate Nnnnnnn — British Columbia Marijuana Party	
Candidate Ooooooo — Green Party Political Assoc. of B.C.	

Explanation of Part 2 - the Regional Constituency Vote:
A vote for a Regional candidate will also count as a vote for their Party.
If Part 2 is unmarked, then the Party of the first choice candidate in Part 1, if any, will be credited with your Regional vote.

Details of MMS

MMS is the "Moderate Mixed System". The choice of a mixed system parallels the conclusions reached elsewhere in the world in attempts to strike a balance of qualities; a quarter of the world's people now use some form of mixed voting system. MMS is intermediate between the "Parallel" or MMM systems used in about 20 countries, and the PR systems used in approximately 75 countries (Footnote 37).

Division of B.C.'s 79 seats into 20 regional and 59 local seats means the local constituencies would be larger than at present. But not unreasonably so, since we had even fewer, only 52 local constituencies, as recently as October 1991 (Footnote 38). The 20 regional seats are fewer than the 26 to 39 list seats recommended by the Green Party (Footnote 39).

While the local constituencies would be somewhat larger than at present, a citizen would be able to go to either their local MLA or one of their regional MLAs, which would make up for the larger local constituencies. In some cases being able to refer to an alternate MLA would be a great advantage, particularly in those situations where the first MLA approached finds they are unable to assist with a specific problem for political or personal reasons; so local representation would actually be enhanced in this way.

The reasons for dividing the seats into 59 and 20, as opposed to other numbers, are given in Footnote 40.

The decision to divide the party seats among regions rather than having one province-wide district was made to help preserve a degree of local representation associated with the party or "regional" seats. Only three regions were used because dividing the seats into more than three regions would decrease the seats per region, which would seriously reduce their contribution to proportionality.

Sometimes a question is asked about a two-tier system such as MMS, as to whether it might create two classes of representatives. While there may be some tendency in this direction, it is arguably not a cause for concern (discussed at Footnote 41).

Local constituency elections:

The local constituency vote under MMS lets the voter rank up to three candidates, so it is a type of "preferential vote" but there are many other names for such a ballot arrangement (Footnote 2).

The voter's second choice would be counted if their first choice was dropped off as the bottom candidate during the vote tally. Similarly, their third choice would be counted if their first and second choices had already been eliminated (see Appendix 1).

Preferential voting seldom makes a difference in who gets elected (10 to 15% of the time in BC, Footnote 42; an estimated 6% of the time in Australian elections, Footnote 43). But preferential ballots are extremely popular because individual voters are freed to choose their true preference first, and still not waste their vote or worry about

vote splitting since their second or third choice will come into play if necessary. People like having preferential voting very much (Footnote 7, Footnote 44), as long as the number of choices is not overwhelming. Having three choices is perhaps ideal.

For example, a voter might choose to vote first for the best person, second for the best party's candidate, and third for a candidate of one of the two leading parties who has a serious chance of being elected. If one candidate seems to fit all three of these descriptions, our hypothetical voter may just put a checkmark for that one candidate. Or, if none of the local choices are appealing, the voter might leave the local constituency vote blank and go straight to part 2 of the ballot, the regional vote.

A preferential vote is used for most parliamentary elections in Fiji, Nauru, and Australia, and as a component of a multitude of other elections. It is the most widely advocated electoral reform in the USA (Footnote 45). There is widespread agreement that preferential voting has encouraged cooperative behaviour between parties in Australia (Footnote 43). The Green Party of BC also has recommended a preferential ballot be considered for election of local constituency MLAs (Footnote 39).

It is not being suggested that preferential voting would be suitable as an electoral system on its own. It is included as part of the single-member constituency votes. Preferential voting is sometimes unfairly criticized (discussed at Footnote 46). In theoretical terms, preferential voting is included in MMS as a means for the representation of *consensus* support; which is a natural balance and complement for PR's representation of the *diversity* of political support; making them a good combination to use within one electoral system. In addition, a benefit is derived from the associated reduction of 'wasted' votes.

Regional constituency elections:

The MMS regions were formed by combining the province's official Development Regions as necessary. It is hoped that the regional structure will encourage cooperation and activity by regional and local MLAs on issues pertinent to their respective economic development regions (Footnote 47).

The seats are shown distributed among the three regions in proportion to their projected population estimates at the time of the subsequent election May 12th, 2009 (Footnote 48). To have a reasonable contribution to proportionality each region must have a minimum of three MLAs, as in Region 1. Region 2 has 12 seats, which especially contributes toward the possibility of representation of minority interests among MLAs.

Open versus Closed Party Lists: Currently only 24% of B.C.'s legislators are women. While it is known that PR benefits women (discussed at Footnote 63), a serious concern in choosing a type of PR system is whether "open lists" or "closed lists" are better for women candidates. (With open lists only the voters choose among individuals, e.g. among regional candidates; with closed lists the parties decide the order of candidates in line for seats and the voters just choose among parties.)

Most recently, expert opinion is divided on this question (Footnote 49). Turning to objective information, a comparison of Latin American countries found the percentage

of women legislators in open list countries was 14% and that in closed list countries 13% (Footnote 49). A comparison in Japan gave 15% (open) and 17% (closed) (Footnote 50). In neither case was there a statistically significant difference between open and closed, and there does not appear to be a bias of either type of system with respect to women.

For lengthy discussions of open versus closed lists, please turn to Footnote 49, Footnote 50, Footnote 51 and Footnote 52. With closed lists, the New Zealand experience suggests a political party would even have the power to expel their list MLA from the Legislature if that MLA did not vote the party line (Footnote 53). This seems contrary to the desire among the public for more honest debate and a greater independence for backbenchers in the Legislature.

MMS uses "open" lists, that is, lets the public determine the ranking of party list candidates and therefore which ones get elected. Many submissions to the Citizens' Assembly, such as that by the Green Party of BC (Footnote 39), have suggested a version of MMP with closed lists (or "flexible" lists, which in practice act as closed lists), so that political parties could get worthy candidates elected whom voters would not otherwise choose. This reveals feelings of despair and cynicism about our political system with which many can sympathize. However, closed lists, which give the parties more power, are unpopular with the electorate (Footnote 5e, Footnote 16e), and would make a referendum that much less likely to get passed.

The reasons for giving each voter only one vote for their regional constituency, instead of multiple votes according to the number of seats at stake, are two-fold. Firstly, the voting and vote counting process are greatly simplified. There is relatively little loss of information since almost all voters would only want to choose one party on the regional vote in any case. Secondly, all those elected should be considered the best for the position by at least some voters; the option to choose one and only one particular candidate of a party provides this facility.

The MMS "Minimum Count Provision" detailed in Appendix 1 specifies that a party must receive some support in the local constituencies in order to receive regional seats. This prevents groups from running only regional candidates, which would defeat the proportionality function of the regional seats.

The MMS formula or "Compensation Provision" (Appendix 1) assists parties to get extra regional seats ("top-up" or adjustment-seats) to compensate them if they have fewer local seats than their vote share calls for. Unfortunately, because the total number of seats is constant, the other parties are necessarily deprived of one seat for every extra seat awarded. MMS awards only <u>one</u> extra regional seat for each <u>two</u> extra seats deserved. The reason for having this half-compensation instead of full compensation as in MMP, was discussed in the previous section "Full MMP". Using half-compensation means that parties which are successful at the local level need be penalized by no more than one regional seat for every two "excess seats" (local seats held in excess of their share of the popular vote). Put simply, MMS avoids full compensation because full compensation would normally entirely "waste" the regional votes of the leading party, causing the supporters of the leading party to reject such a voting system at a referendum.

Election Results:
Projections Based on Past Votes

The following tables present computer projections of the election results that would have ensued if people had voted the same way under various electoral systems (details at Footnote 13).

While such projections are imprecise, they provide part of the information needed to make an educated guess about what the best voting system would be.

The column "Deserved (PR)" shows the number of seats in the Legislature that each party would have won if seats were allocated in proportion to the votes received province-wide (Footnote 54). Its index of disproportionality would be zero, except for the effects of rounding to the nearest integers. "MMP" is the German Additional Member System. New Zealand's MMP system is extremely similar to the German MMP, though it has a slightly lower proportion of list seats, and the complication of having some seats set aside for Maori constituencies, which made the German MMP easier to simulate. Aboriginal seats in B.C. could be considered at a future time (Footnote 55).

ELECTION PROJECTIONS - 1991

SEATS				
	"Deserved" (PR)	Actual FPTP	MMS	MMP
B.C. Liberal Party	25	17	23	26
Green Party B.C.	1	0	0	0
NDP B.C.	31	51	39	31
Reform Party B.C.	0	0	0	0
Social Credit	18	7	13	18
Disproportionality (Gallagher's Index)	1	23	9	1

In 1991 MMP would have produced a minority or coalition government. MMS would have reduced the leading party from a large majority to a slim majority while slashing Gallagher's index of disproportionality (Footnote 56).

ELECTION PROJECTIONS - 1996

SEATS				
	"Deserved" (PR)	Actual FPTP	MMS	MMP
B.C. Liberal Party	31	33	34	33
Green Party B.C.	1	0	0	0
NDP B.C.	30	39	34	31
Progressive D. A.	4	1	2	4
Reform Party B.C.	7	2	5	7
Other	2	0	0	0
Disproportionality (Gallagher's Index)	1	11	6	3

In 1996 the party in second place in the popular vote nevertheless formed a majority government. In these computer simulated results, both MMP and MMS would have produced a minority or coalition government, and both would have decreased disproportionality to a very reasonable level.

ELECTION PROJECTIONS - 2001

SEATS					
	"Deserved" (PR)	Actual FPTP	MMS	PP (STV / AV)	MMP
B.C. Liberal Party	46	77	61	56	50
B.C. Marijuana P.	3	0	0	0	0
Green Party B.C.	10	0	5	7	11
NDP B.C.	17	2	12	16	18
Unity Party B.C.	3	0	1	0	0
Disproportionality (Gallagher's Index)	1	33	15	10	5
“Wasted votes”, %	2.0	42.2	<6.5	<18.4	<8.4

The seat numbers shown for Preferential Plus (PP), a mixed STV and AV (but mainly STV) system, are from a table published by Nick Loenen (Footnote 20), but Equity BC has concerns about their reproducibility (Footnote 13). An estimate for pure STV is given in Footnote 13.

Opposition and Geographical Representation:

Measured in terms of the small size of the opposition representation, 2001 was the most extreme year in British Columbia’s history (Footnote 57). All the potential electoral systems shown, namely MMP, MMS and PP, would have left the leading party with a strong majority government, and all would have improved significantly on our present FPTP system in providing for an effective size of Opposition to hold the government accountable. Geographical representation would have been improved under all systems too; **under MMS each of the three leading parties would have had a minimum of one MLA from each of the three MMS regions**.

Proportionality and Fairness to Voters:

One reader has asked, why are values for disproportionality shown in the tables when they make MMP look better than MMS? The answer is that proportionality is the measure of fairness to those voters who vote by party. It is essential to an honest evaluation, and we must look realistically at the trade-offs that must be made if the

disadvantages of full MMP are to be avoided. This report uses Gallagher's Index because it is the most reliable index of disproportionality (Footnote 56).

Having said that, MMS did do quite well: The extremely high disproportionality under FPTP was more than cut in half under MMS. Taken overall for 1991, 1996 and 2001 combined, MMS cut Gallagher's Index of disproportionality by 55%. **For ordinary years, MMS mirrored votes with seats just as well as full MMP has done in Scotland and Wales.** (MMS average disproportionality for 1991 and 1996, omitting the most extreme year in BC history of 2001, was 8%. This is well within the range of 5 to 9% experienced in Scotland and Wales, Footnote 58.)

"Wasted" Votes and Voter Frustration:

"Wasted" votes in 2001, in the sense of ballots for only losing candidates, were FPTP 42.2%, PP less than 18.4%, MMP less than 8.4% and MMS less than 6.5%, making **MMS clearly the best at satisfying almost every voter** in this respect, as it is designed to do (discussed at Footnote 59).

On average in BC, half the people feel

"My vote went to a losing candidate"

A main feature of MMS is a moderate way to make sure almost no-one feels their vote is "wasted".

Under MMS it is not known how many voters would take advantage of the opportunity to indicate their second or third preferences on the local vote, nor what preferences they would choose. Consequently, these were not taken into account in calculating the "wastage" figures quoted above. In actual practice the "wastage" would be even lower after taking account of these preferences. Reducing "wastage" to minimal levels is good, because every "wasted" ballot essentially represents a completely thwarted voter. On average, half the voters at BC elections (49.6%) are frustrated in this way (Footnote 60).

Thresholds and Small Party Competition:

The smaller the threshold, the easier it is for small parties to get elected. Many voting systems, such as MMP, typically have a specified threshold of 3% or 5% (the minimum proportion of the vote required to gain representation). All voting systems have an upper limit (which the threshold must be less than). For example, in a single-member district a party is guaranteed a seat if they get 50% + 1 vote. MMS does not have specified thresholds, but clearly a party would be guaranteed a regional MLA with 25.0% of the vote in Region 1 since it has 3 seats, 7.7% of the vote in Region 2 with 12 seats, and 16.7% of the vote in Region 3 with 5 seats.

Under FPTP there is no specified threshold, but the effective threshold must be less than 50%, as a candidate will commonly only need 30 or 40% to surpass the other candidates, depending on how the votes happen to split among the candidates. Similarly, under MMS the effective threshold for the regional seats will depend on how the vote happens to split among parties. For example, in 2001 MMS awarded the Unity Party of BC a seat in Region 2 because their vote of 3.1% in Region 2 met the effective threshold of 3% in that contest, while denying the BC Marijuana Party a seat because their vote was 2.9% in Region 2, less than the effective threshold.

The effective threshold under MMS, averaged over all regions, was 6.1% in 1991, 5.4% in 1996, and 5.5% in 2001 (Footnote 93).

The effect of electoral reform on the smallest parties is interesting. Only MMS gave the Unity Party (commonly considered middle-of-the-road) a toehold in 2001. **MMS encouraged the small parties** (those with less than 3 seats under FPTP), awarding them an average of 7 additional seats per election compared to FPTP. The MMP shown is essentially pure PR except for a 5% threshold, which in practice excluded the smallest parties from getting 1 seat in the 1991 projections, 1 seat in 1996, and 6 seats in 2001. Nevertheless, MMP was generally the best at giving the smaller parties a fair deal. While it is not possible to have a perfectly fair system, neither is it necessary. What *is* needed is a system under which the small parties can swim well enough to get their heads above water. Then they would have a chance to goad the major parties into cleaning up their acts, and also a chance to develop into mature, useful parties themselves.

Do we want the smallest parties to be excluded? Some take it for granted that these parties are a nuisance, unnecessary, sometimes include extremists, and can be excluded without any significant loss because they have so few supporters. However, the value of small parties as an incubator for new people and new ideas is illustrated by the fact that our leading party is itself of fairly recent vintage.

Majority or Non-Majority Government:

MMP was projected to produce a minority or coalition government in two of the three elections shown. This is consistent with the results in New Zealand, Wales and Scotland, in each of which the leading party lost its majority status upon the introduction of MMP.

A statistical analysis of the simulation results suggests that under MMS, a party would have about a 15% chance of forming a majority government with 40% of the vote. It would have roughly a 95% chance of forming a majority government with 46% of the vote. When a party is close to getting half the seats, every extra percent of the votes that it can attract results in it winning about two percent extra seats under MMS. (In a perfectly proportional system, a party would receive only one percent extra seats from one percent extra votes.)

Looking back over the last half century there were 14 B.C. general elections. FPTP produced 14 majority governments. For similar elections, MMS would have cast about four as minority or coalition governments (details at Footnote 92). However, if voters had shifted toward small parties in the same proportions as occurred in New Zealand upon introduction of MMP, the outcomes would have reversed: There would have been about 4 majority governments and 10 non-majority governments (Footnote 92). This confirms that **MMS is "on the fence", allowing voters to more readily swing toward majority or toward non-majority governments by how they choose to allot their votes,** as opposed to having it almost decreed by the electoral system.

In spite of the above computer projections, the history of other countries suggests no-one can really predict the unintended consequences of a new voting system in the long or even short term. This is another reason to consider the benefit of the presumably milder consequences of implementing an intermediate, moderate system.

Advantages of MMS

What each of us wants on voting day may be summarized in two key criteria:

(1) We want the best candidates and parties to choose from.
(2) We want to have confidence that we can vote for the best candidates and parties without having our votes "wasted".

MMS is designed to fulfill both of those criteria:

(1) Through increased proportionality MMS would reinvigorate B.C. politics by encouraging small parties, thereby increasing competition and spurring the major parties to improve themselves.
(2) Through the preferential vote and proportionality, MMS would ensure our votes will not be wasted.

MMS is intended to appeal to supporters of the most popular political parties. This is essential to getting a new voting system approved by the required 60% at a referendum on May 17th, 2005. The proposed MMS preserves constituency links and simplicity as in our present voting system, while increasing voter choice and fairness between political parties. It is hoped increased voter choice and fairness would make the political parties more effective and legitimately representative, reduce cynicism and attract increased voter turnout (Footnote 61), especially among young adults. For those voters who want a new system, MMS provides a way for them to fine-tune their vote.

What is MMS?
It's a complicated new "electoral system"; but you can still mark one "X" as before if you want.
DEAD SIMPLE

The choice of a voting system has important implications for the quality of MLAs nominated and elected. Getting a less problematic electoral system in B.C. would encourage better people to run and this would benefit all parties, even the leading parties.

If a minority or coalition government results from MMS, the politicians would be forced to be more cooperative and less confrontational. This improved atmosphere in Victoria would in turn attract a greater number of good candidates to be willing to offer to serve, expanding the overall choice of candidates, which on average would result in better candidates being elected. In this way MMS would increase the quality of MLAs and, hence, government (Footnote 62). It is especially hoped that a more consensual, proportional style of government would attract more women and minority candidates (Footnote 63).

What is MMS?
It's a voting system that ensures a viable Opposition.
BETTER GOVERNMENT

Further, if the true essence of political parties is to formulate sound policies, then a more cooperative style of politics associated with increased proportionality may well improve the parties' policy-making functionality through improved debate and openness to new people and ideas. Possible practical parallels between MMS and "the ideal form of government" are discussed in Footnote 64.

The Local Vote:

For the local constituencies MMS uses a preferential vote. This always makes some contribution to true proportionality (although an artifact of the process for estimating proportionality sometimes mistakenly suggests otherwise; see analysis at Footnote 65).

Contrary to what is sometimes said, the preferential vote gives some encouragement to small and medium sized parties (Footnote 66, Footnote 67). Consequently the big parties have to put more effort into monitoring the small parties' policies and co-opting them as necessary. This extra competition will presumably improve government.

The preferential vote also improves the democratic climate for debate by reducing negative campaigning (Footnote 24).

What is MMS?
It's a voting system that lets us mark our second and third choices of local candidate, so no worries about vote splitting or wasting our vote.
FREEDOM

A preferential ballot was used in B.C. in 1952 and 1953, and likely permitted the emergence of the subsequently highly successful Social Credit party into government in B.C. in 1952 (Footnote 68). The "instant runoff" nature of a preferential vote identifies and elects a consensus position. With a preferential ballot, the winner usually has a majority of votes by the final vote counting round and not merely a plurality (Footnote 69). This would increase the legitimacy and respect of government because the public

would be able to know that their representatives were elected with broad public support, and not by just a minority of voters.

The Regional Vote:

This brings about a substantial increase in true proportionality: It helps the Legislature mirror the voters' wishes immediately. It can also contribute to true proportionality indirectly, over the course of several elections, by giving small parties in tune with the voters a viable growth path in the vote share battles.

Although MMS, like multi-member STV, is only semi-proportional, it should not necessarily be viewed as inferior to MMP (Footnote 70). If someone believes it would be desirable to have an electoral system that the voters could more readily push towards either majority or non-majority government, rather than being at the mercy of a system strongly biased towards majority governments (FPTP) or strongly biased towards coalition/minority governments (MMP and Preferential-Plus), then arguably MMS is superior to FPTP, MMP and Preferential-Plus in this respect. MMS "sits on the fence", more or less evenly favouring majority or non-majority governments. In this view, MMS would be the best arrangement because it would allow voters, by their collective choice, to more easily shift the government toward a minority/coalition or a majority if that is important to them.

What is MMS?
It's a voting arrangement that lets us vote by candidate, by party, or both, whichever we prefer.
BETTER CHOICES

A practical advantage of "sitting on the fence" is that if MMS is offered at a referendum, supporters of MMP would be sure to vote for MMS, while many of those for whom MMP goes too far would yet be able to vote for MMS. Therefore, MMS would have greater support at a referendum, and a greater chance of passing into law.

Beyond Hope, B.C. ─ two co-existing electoral systems?

There is a common concern among people in rural B.C., as in other provinces, that they do not receive adequate influence in the Legislature. Unfortunately, there seems to be widespread confusion about the relationship between such influence and constituency size. The fact is that any changes in constituency size, as long as they are made evenly across the whole province, can not change the rural area's share of influence in Victoria relative to other areas.

The real concern is whether constituencies might grow too large for the corresponding MLAs to service and represent, and that is essentially a question of how many MLAs there are, which is outside the mandate of the Citizens' Assembly.

The press release from the Citizens' Assembly public hearing in Dawson Creek May 13th could be interpreted as implying that Northerners would not accept any increase in constituency size whatsoever (discussed at Footnote 71). This is unlikely to be

true, especially if a new voting system counterbalances a modest increase of local constituency size by means of additional MLAs representing the same general area, as many proposed new systems do, including MMS.

Some have suggested keeping FPTP for the Interior of B.C., in order to avoid increasing the already large constituency size there. This would amount to having two completely different voting systems in the province. There is something deeply worrying about establishing two classes of voters. Such a division of the province into FPTP and non-FPTP areas would exacerbate the existing feeling of rural people that they get second-class treatment in our province. There are reasons to believe that the presentations made to the Citizens' Assembly were not representative of the general population's abhorrence of establishing different voting systems for different classes of voters (discussed at Footnote 72).

What is MMS?
It's a system that gives us both a local MLA and a regional MLA to turn to for help.
BETTER REPRESENTATION

By contrast to such divisive proposals, under MMS the group of regional MLAs for the Interior (Region 3) would form the nucleus of a ready-made structure to encourage these MLAs and their corresponding local MLAs to work as a group on reducing regional problems such as high unemployment in the Interior (up to 70% in places). This is more inclusive of rural citizens than leaving them with the old voting system.

And, in addition, under MMS they would receive the same benefits described earlier in terms of having the extra choice of being able to approach either a Local or a Regional MLA for help with the government bureaucracy or other constituency matters. Or, as happens not infrequently, when they approach an MLA for help and frustratingly get no reply, they will be able to approach a second MLA responsible for their area. This can only increase competition among sitting MLAs, which should improve constituency service.

MMS may be briefly described as follows:
If MMS is adopted, we will be represented by both local and regional MLAs. Three quarters of the MLAs will be elected in local constituencies as at present, except that a preferential ballot will be used so that voters may indicate their first, second and third choices. One quarter of the MLAs will be chosen by voters in three large regional constituencies covering the province. Political parties will receive regional seats according to a special formula so that their standings in the Legislature will more closely follow the number of votes they receive. SEE: Map pg.14, Sample Ballot pg.19.

Under FPTP a party could come to power on the urban vote and have no representatives from vast swaths of the province. Under MMS, the regional votes almost guarantee that a governing party will include representatives from every area of the province. The regional benefits of MMS were confirmed above, where MMS assured each of the three leading parties representation in every region even with the extreme 2001 voting landslide. Thus, even though constituency sizes would increase somewhat, MMS would provide better protection of representation for non-urban areas than would FPTP, especially by the all-important governing party.

Disadvantages of MMS associated with increased choice:
►The ballot papers would increase in size and complexity (Footnote 89).
►Ballots would take about three times longer to count.
Disadvantages of MMS associated with increased proportionality:
►MMS has larger constituencies than FPTP and less proportionality than MMP.
►The outcome of the election would be more likely to be a minority or coalition government, which is an advantage or disadvantage depending on one's point of view.
►Judging from New Zealand, it might take BC politicians about five years to develop good habits of cooperation. Meanwhile, coalition governments might be hard to form.
►MMS would enhance the representation of minority interests, which may be viewed as a disadvantage by some in the majority.
►Some feel the most serious criticism is that voters will not in the least understand the seat allocation mechanism. However, this is the case with Scottish, Welsh and German MMP voters without any harmful effects (p.147 in Footnote 16, p.592 in Footnote 5); and in any case half of Canadians misunderstand FPTP too (Footnote 90).
►Some have expressed the fear that the legislature would get hindered by tiny upstart parties getting a seat (Footnote 81). No doubt some such parties will be undesirable─and presumably will wither. More fundamentally, it is important to recognize that having small nuisance parties is not merely a necessary cost of democracy; rather, it is sometimes the source of new inspiration. Many voters say they don't like any of the existing parties (Footnote 91). Where will replacements come from, if not from small upstart parties?
►Concerns that may be raised about most PR or semi-PR systems, not just about MMS, and that are mostly related to the nature of minority/coalition governments, are addressed at Appendix 2 (political deadlock, instability and lack of long-term planning), Footnote 3 (economic profligacy), Footnote 41 (MLA class distinctions), Footnote 52 (faulty election outcomes), Footnote 73 (decision-making quagmires), Footnote 80 (loss of accountability), and Footnote 81 (regional divisiveness).

To summarize all of the preceding:

MMS honours voters' intentions by giving parties seats more in line with their votes than is the case under our present system.
MMS prevents frustrating "wasted" votes and "vote splitting" through a preferential vote and a party vote, to encourage voter turnout and increase choice.
MMS improves local representation and accountability by giving citizens access to both local and regional MLAs.
MMS preserves the power of the voters to choose whether they want a majority or non-majority government in Victoria, by not unduly favouring either.
MMS enhances political parties by encouraging a cooperative style of politics, motivating them to work harder, and giving small parties a chance to mature.
MMS avoids the problems of other systems associated with the unpopularity of closed lists, high thresholds, and full penalization of the leading party.
MMS offers maximum simplicity by allowing voters, if they wish, to cast a single vote for one candidate as in the past.
MMS provides for more effective government by creating an effective Opposition to scrutinize the government's handling of schools, health care and other issues.

Promoting a New Electoral System

How should a new electoral system be promoted? This depends to some extent on which system the Citizens' Assembly chooses to recommend. To be realistic, any voting reform is likely to lead to fewer seats for the leading party. Promoting a new system will be made easier if it does not repel the supporters of the leading party so much that they reject the referendum outright. Accordingly, it would be best if a new system were weakly proportional (as with STV, for example), or awarded list seats to all parties, including the leading party (as with MMS, for example).

A new system should naturally be promoted by its key quality. What will its key quality be? The conflict between the needs for proportionality and local representation presents a challenge which cannot be perfectly resolved. It is not physically possible to maximize both these criteria simultaneously. No system, no matter how brilliant or carefully designed, could provide the smallest local constituency and at the same time give the highest level of proportionality. We are forced to accept that any system must be a compromise between competing criteria. The goal is to set a reasonable balance for B.C. The key quality of any new voting system is therefore that it be "well-balanced".

Since "well-balanced" is neither memorable nor exciting, it may be best to also emphasize the significant advantages of a new system in comparison to our present system. There is no need to attempt to convey to the general public all the complexities of why the proposed new system is the best of all the possible options. It is adequate that such an explanation be publicly available for those with interest in electoral reform.

Suggested Referendum Question

Do you approve of modifying our electoral system, as recommended by the British Columbia Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform, so that the number of MLAs each party gets in the Legislature matches more closely the number of votes each party gets?

YES ☐
NO ☐

In addition, the public will need to be reassured that a new system with increased proportionality will not create chaos. Rather, we are likely to get governments with a more cooperative or consultative style of politics (Footnote 16f). Also, the experience of other countries is that government stability is unlikely to change significantly (Footnote 16g). However, the public's response to a proposed new B.C. voting system may be coloured more by the current Canadian national political situation than by the experience of other countries, and this has implications for what sort of system could be successfully promoted in advance of a referendum (discussed at Footnote 73).

In a referendum campaign, promotion of a new voting system will lack any government support (discussion at Footnote 74). Rather, it will be up to the mass media, who will not be entirely positive either (Footnote 75). That is another reason why any proposed new system should be chosen partly on the basis of its natural popularity.

One "Suggested Referendum Question" is given in the box above. The choice of wording is a complicated issue (discussed at Footnote 76).

Conclusion

The fundamental purpose of government is to balance the needs of all citizens. Do we want to create that balance by imposing plurality wishes, as in our current system? Or by having proportionately selected representatives choose a consensus? Equity BC hopes the Citizens' Assembly will choose to recommend a new voting system for BC that will truly represent all British Columbians.

The biggest problem of the current political system in British Columbia is arguably that members of the Legislature have to hold their noses and vote the party line regardless of what they think is best for the province. This problem has two huge consequences. On the one hand, it tempts leaders to despotism and blundering decision-making; and on the other hand, it discourages those who would be top-quality candidates from letting their name stand for office.

No electoral system can directly solve such problems. We can, however, legitimately hope that moving to a fairer, more proportional system will help our province shift towards a healthier political culture. Empowering the voters by giving them wider choices, and encouraging idealistic young political parties by giving them a fair break, can unshackle us from apathy and cynicism, and release the energy, enthusiasm and cooperation that is the true Canadian spirit.

Thank you for reading this submission. Please consider discussing it with others. This is an historic time for British Columbia. The Citizens' Assembly has a unique opportunity to bring fairness to our system for turning votes into seats.

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Appendix 1:
Technical Description of MMS

MMS being proposed for BC has 79 MLAs, with 59 (75%) being elected in Local Constituencies and 20 (25%) being elected in Regional Constituencies. Once in office, MLAs elected in Regional Constituencies would not be different from those elected in Local Constituencies except that their constituencies would be larger.

MMS includes three Regional Constituencies formed from the province's economic development regions as indicated in the accompanying Map given in the "Introduction to MMS" section, page 14. Region 1 consists of the Vancouver Island/Coast Development Region, Region 2 the Mainland/Southwest Development Region, and Region 3 consists of the Thompson/Okanagan, Kootenay Cariboo, North Coast, Nechako, and Northeast Development Regions. The 20 regional seats are to be distributed by the Electoral Boundaries Commission among these three regions in proportion to population, which means they would have 3, 12, and 5 seats respectively (Footnote 48).

The Local Constituencies will have single members elected by a preferential ballot with room to indicate first, second and third choices. It is not mandatory to complete any part of the ballot for the remainder of the ballot to be valid.

Summary of Technical Description

The newly proposed "MMS" voting system includes 59 local MLA constituency seats, and three regions encompassing the province with 3 regional MLA seats in Region 1, 12 regional seats in Region 2, and 5 regional seats in Region 3. The number of regional seats in each region is proportional to the region's population. Every citizen would be represented in Victoria by one local MLA and a number of regional MLAs.

The first part of the MMS ballot is for a local seat, and the voter may, if they wish, also indicate their second and third preferences so that their local vote can be transferred to other candidates if their first choice does not win.

The second part of the MMS ballot is a vote for a regional seat, where the voter may vote for a political party, or, if they wish, for one particular candidate of a party.

Political parties who do moderately well in voting but nevertheless receive few or no local seats would be eligible for compensating regional seats according to a specific MMS formula used by the Chief Electoral Officer.

Under our present system a party might receive, for example, 20% or over 300,000 votes but win no seats at all. Under a perfectly "fair" system this party would receive 20% of the total 79 seats, that is, 16 seats. Under MMS, if a party received 20% of the vote both locally and regionally and won no local seats, they then would receive approximately 11% of the total 79 seats, in the form of 9 regional seats.

Parties may nominate candidates for regional seats up to the number of seats in each region. Not permitting more than this keeps the ballot size within reasonable limits. No candidate may accept a nomination to campaign for both a Regional and Local Constituency (Footnote 78).

...cont.

Each elector will have one Regional vote, by which they can choose a political party, or if they wish, the individual candidate for a party whom they consider best. In the latter case, the vote counts as a vote for the candidate's party. While it is anticipated that most voters will vote for a party on the regional vote, those who are familiar with individual candidates and vote for them will determine the order in which candidates are elected from within a party when the party is awarded regional seat(s), keeping the choice of candidate in the voters' hands rather than the party's, and following the philosophy that everyone elected should be considered to be the best person for the position by at least some of the voters.

Vote counting:

The Regional Constituency votes will be tallied at the Voting Places first: The votes for each party and each regional candidate will be separated into piles and each pile counted and recorded. Where neither a party nor regional candidate is indicated on a ballot, the vote will be tallied as being for the party of the voter's chosen local candidate if that party is registered for regional elections. Where a voter mistakenly places a checkmark for both a party and a regional candidate, the ballot will be considered a vote for that candidate if of the same party as marked, otherwise spoilt.

These results are then telephoned from the Voting Place to electoral headquarters where the totals for each candidate are recorded and a party's "Initial Total Regional Vote" for one specific region is calculated and recorded as the sum of votes cast for the party or one of the party's regional candidates at all Voting Places in that region.

The Local Constituency votes will then be tallied at the Voting Places by re-sorting the same ballot papers: (Counting of local votes will occur in one or more stages as described below. A Local Constituency candidate will be declared elected at the first counting stage at which one candidate has an absolute majority of the ballots being counted through-out the local constituency.) At each Voting Place, the ballots are first separated into piles by the first choices. The counts of these are telephoned to electoral headquarters in the traditional way, where each candidate's total votes for the local constituency are calculated. Whether there is a majority winner can usually be determined with certainty before all polls have reported, so the procedure is not normally delayed by slow counting at one polling place.

If headquarters finds there has been no majority winner after the first count, then headquarters determines which is the bottom candidate, that is, the candidate getting the lowest share of first choices. Then the Voting Places are instructed by headquarters to physically redistribute the pile of votes of the bottom candidate according to the second choices on them, then count the number in each pile of the remaining candidates, and phone the totals in. (If there are several candidates with miniscule first choice counts, under one percent, the Chief Electoral Officer is permitted to order them all to be redistributed on one phone call since they would have no humanly realistic chance of receiving everyone's second choice and eventually winning.)

This process of counting and redistribution of the votes of the bottom candidate is repeated until a Local Constituency winner is declared, except using a ballot's third choice if the ballot's second choice candidate has already been eliminated. A ballot where the voter mistakenly marks the same candidate for first, second and third choices is equivalent to one with just the first choice indicated.

In simple terms,

Under MMS the winning local candidate will be the one 'most voters are satisfied with'.

The vote counting, if done manually as described above, is expected to take about three times as long to complete as under FPTP (SMP).

The Local Constituency winner will normally have a majority and not merely a plurality of voter support. (Although this is not guaranteed—for example, if all voters declined to indicate their second and third choices then the winner would only have the same vote share as under FPTP. Footnote 69.)

MMS "Minimum Count Provision":

A party's Final Total Regional Vote for a specific region shall be the lesser of its Initial Total Regional Vote, or, two times the sum of First Choice votes received by its Local Constituency candidates within that region.

This provision effectively removes the possibility of parties or individuals launching campaigns directed at only regional seats without any corresponding local campaigns, which would be undesirable and undermine the proportionality function of the regional seats.

In addition this provision, by making regional candidates somewhat dependent on the success of their local counterparts, encourages cooperation between local and regional candidates of a party, who can otherwise have an incentive in MMP systems to hinder each other because of the compensating mechanism between regional and local seats.

The regional seats are party seats; if an independent candidate ran a regional campaign this provision would result in them being credited with zero votes.

This is a very lenient provision. There are three times as many local constituencies within a region as regional seats, and in addition the local votes are multiplied by two for this determination. Consequently, for example, this provision would not penalize a party getting 12% of the regional vote unless they had less than 2% of the local vote in the region.

MMS “Compensation Provision”:

The regional seats are awarded to the political parties in such a way as to partially compensate them with top-up seats if they did not win a share of local seats in proportion to their share of the votes within the region. This uses the formula described in the British Jenkins Report (Scottish formula/Jenkins formula, Footnote 18) except that local seats are counted as half seats and regional seats as whole seats, that is, the denominator used in the Jenkins formula of [one plus the number of local candidates elected by a party in each region] is replaced by [one plus half the number of such candidates].

This divisor method sounds complicated but is simple to calculate on a paper worksheet and only the Chief Electoral Officer needs to be crystal clear on the math. The essence of it is that the MMS compensating formula only subtracts half a regional seat for each local seat that is won in excess of the popular vote share. This avoids the severe problem inherent in other systems, to wit that the supporters of the leading party frequently have all their party votes “wasted” and would therefore consider rejecting a Referendum proposing such systems.

To be specific, once the vote counts are made as described above, the Regional seat determinations are made as follows.

MMS regional electoral formula made simple:

If, in a region, a party gets T regional votes (use 2 times its local votes instead, if less), there are 5 regional seats, and the party won L local seats, then calculate a score of (T divided by the sum of 1 and half of L). Repeat using 2, 3, 4, and 5 in place of 1. Calculate these scores for each of the parties. The five highest scores are each assigned a regional seat.

In more legalistic language, the Initial Total Regional Vote within a region "r" for a party "p" is called the “Initial Trp”. The “Final Total Regional Vote” or “Final Trp” is then the lesser of the Initial Trp, or two times the sum of First Choice votes received by its Local Constituency candidates within the region, as described above. Where the number of regional seats in a region is called “Nr” and the number of local constituency seats won by party “p” in region “r” is called “Lrp”, then party scores (“Srp”) for that region are the Final Trp/((Lrp/2)+i) for integers i from 1 to Nr and the winning seats are those of the parties with the Nr highest scores, which are assigned within party lists in order of the regional candidates' votes, the candidates with highest votes within each party being allocated that party’s winning seats first.

In simple terms,

Under MMS the winning regional candidates will be the most popular candidates of several popular parties.

Deaths, resignations or other vacancies occurring between elections would be filled through by-elections for Local constituencies. For Regional constituencies a replacement would be sought from those previous candidates still willing to accept the appointment, in the order that they ranked at the preceding election. A Party would not have any authority to force a regional MLA to resign should they leave the Party under which they were elected, and any similar private agreement between an MLA and their Party would be forbidden under the nomination papers signed by all candidates.

MMS is, technically, a semi-proportional system halfway between the parallel "MMM" and the fully PR "MMP". A system very similar to MMS would be created if MMM were used with transfers of 'unused' votes from the local constituency contests (Footnote 5f). MMS does not contain anything radically new except that it balances elements from countries such as Australia, New Zealand, Scotland, Wales and Germany for a moderate mixed system appropriate to B.C.

MMS has similarities to the system for Canada proposed by an independent federal law reform agency of Parliament, the Law Commission of Canada, March 31, 2004 (www.lcc.gc.ca), though it does not go as far. In line with the LCC recommendations, and similar proposals that have been made for Quebec and PEI, the possibility of setting aside one to three regional seats for Aboriginal representatives could be considered since Aboriginal people constitute 4% of the BC population but 0% of the MLAs. It is likely such a concept would have to be considered at a future date after determining the desires of ordinary Aboriginal people in BC (Footnote 55). A similar scheme has worked successfully in New Zealand.

Appendix 2:
Is PR a Good Thing?

Hundreds have made the case for proportional representation. For example, Professor David Farrell said studies have shown that electoral systems with some form of PR lead to governments with greater efficiency in making good governmental decisions (Rafe Mair show, CKBD, March 4 2004), and told the Citizens' Assembly March 6 that, on the whole, coalition governments have greater stability, better public policy output, and higher popularity. In no particular order, here are three additional comments:

(i) PR, Good Government, and Decision-Making

It is frequently alleged that PR-associated minority or coalition governments, because they may be more prone to bickering, are incapable of decision-making (Footnote 79). However, it is arguable that the reverse is the case:

In our present system all significant provincial government decisions are made by the premier. Since government is now exceedingly complex, this means many issues remain un-addressed because the premier is physically incapable of coping with them all in a thorough way. (This problem was important among those that spurred the formation of the Citizens' Assembly itself.)

In short...

While the specific role of an electoral system is literally to assign seats according to votes, we should not lose sight of the overall goal: to put good people into power over us. This is, apart from referenda, the only purpose of the voting system. In a nutshell, under FPTP we get one good person who wields all the power, the premier, who is stretched so thin they inevitably make serious blunders. Under PR we would likely have a coalition government with the checks and balances inherent in sharing power among several good people, with consequently fewer serious blunders.

Under PR, power tends to be dispersed more; to committees, to backbenchers, and among parties. Such a shift in the balance of power has, in fact, been what resulted after Scotland and Wales recently moved to MMP systems for their Assemblies (Footnote 16h). The resulting increased communication, debate and negotiation may well slow the decision-making process somewhat for specific issues, occasionally cause complete deadlock, and affect accountability by clouding the identification of who was responsible for decisions (discussed at Footnote 80). But on the whole, by bringing greater human resources to bear, rather than having everything decided by the premier, it is likely that a greater number of issues can be addressed including long-term planning.

The implication is that with PR we can hope that homelessness, addiction facilities, lack of trades training and other issues affecting only small proportions of the public directly but upsetting all of us, and which now seem to "fall between the cracks", will finally get the attention they deserve and the messes will be cleaned up.

(ii) Minority Governments, Instability and Long-term Planning

A myth is often proclaimed that minority governments resulting from proportional representation are shorter-lived and therefore incapable of long-term planning. They are indeed shorter-lived on average, and this tendency might apply to British Columbia depending on whether the parties choose to cooperate or not, but this does not mean they are less adept at long-term planning:

A long-term plan is invariably developed by permanently employed bureaucrats, and the politicians frequently only read the executive summary before deciding on it, so they do not need a longer term in office to study the matter. The results of a long-term plan will come to fruition long after a four year term, so the political motivation is the public's perception of future benefits rather than actual accomplishments in any case, and it matters practically not at all whether the politician is in office six months or three years. They will be judged on their performance, which includes putting long-term plans into action.

If the public want long-term planning, they will reward parties that launch such plans and punish parties that let these plans falter.

If this political mechanism does not work, it is not the fault of one voting system or another but rather is due to a lack of education and communication on the issues. Without expanded education and communication with the public, the politicians will continue to give as little attention to long-term planning as they do now, regardless of the length of their term of office.

Moreover, even though PR governments may be shorter-lived in terms of the crude measure of frequency of elections, they are really longer-lived in more meaningful measures: In a comparison of 23 countries, PR governments tended to be more stable than FPTP governments, for example in terms of the probability of an actual cabinet change following an election (data from Jack Vowles, New Zealand political scientist, Footnote 16g). This implies a greater capability for long-term thinking and implementation, though no doubt there will be a shortage of these under any system.

A risk scenario associated with choosing a semi-PR system for British Columbia, such as MMS, rather than a full PR system, is that years down the road we might find the political parties have continued trying to achieve majority government, rather than putting their energy into forming coalitions. That is, if full PR is chosen we may be sure the parties will recognize the necessity of consensus; but under semi-PR the dream of getting a majority is still very much alive, so governing parties will be more tempted to muddle along as minority governments, which could lead to frequent elections, instability in government management, and interference with long-term planning. Against this are the counter-arguments stated above and at Footnote 40. Evaluating this risk is a difficult and uncertain matter of judgment. At any rate, for every such negative scenario, a positive one can be envisaged. In the long term, security will come not from futile attempts to forestall every such eventuality, but rather from simply ensuring the voters have effective means of expressing their choices. That said, we and the politicians may have to learn by a long period of trial-and-error (Footnote 77).

(iii) Electoral Systems of the United Kingdom and Germany: A Case Study Comparison

This essay recommending proportional representation is available at: http://www.citizensassembly.bc.ca/public/get_involved/submission/A/ANDERSON-0038 The author notes that there has been a remarkable stability of government coalitions in Germany over the past half century.

Appendix 3:
Footnotes and References

This work would not have been possible without the assiduous efforts of countless others who generously toiled at analysis and published their work, and to them Equity BC expresses its profound gratitude. Any errors present are the responsibility of Equity BC. The following endnotes are not in academic citation form but in footnote form; a computer search (Edit-Find or Ctrl-F) may be used to locate major authors such as Farrell, Jenkins, Lijphart, Riddell and Butler (ICPR), Shugart and Wattenberg, or other subjects. Glossaries are listed at Footnote 2.

Footnote 1: The claim that the two Equity BC presentations, which took significantly different approaches to promoting MMS, were each the 'best' among those made at their respective hearings, is unproven. It is based subjectively on comments to that effect by several people attending each session, and is based objectively on the fact that the Equity BC presenter was approached by a greater number of interested citizens after each hearing than were any of the other presenters.

Footnote 2: Glossaries of voting system jargon may be obtained at the following web sites. Note, however, that electoral terminology usage is highly inconsistent among authors and there is no accepted standard glossary.
British Columbia: http://www.citizensassembly.bc.ca/public/learning_resources/glossary
United States: http://www.fairvote.org/glossary.htm and also:
http://www.mtholyoke.edu/acad/polit/damy/BeginnningReading/glossary_of_terms.htm
New Zealand: http://www.elections.org.nz/pandr/eglossary.html
Britain: http://www.electoral-reform.org.uk/election/glossary.htm
International: http://www.idea.int/publications/ace/electoral_glossary.htm

'Preferential voting': There are a variety of names used to denote a voting system in which one person is elected using a ballot on which the voter ranks the candidates, including preferential voting (used in this submission), alternative voting (AV), instant runoff voting (IRV), single-winner STV, ranked choice voting (RCV), and majority preference voting (MPV). All of these names can be used interchangeably and generically or to refer to a specific variation, so their meaning depends on the context. Note 'preferential voting' or 'preference voting' is given a different definition by some authors. If a transferable ballot only allows two choices, the system is called a Supplementary Vote.

Footnote 3:

Choosing an electoral system – the beginning

Right off the bat, one might expect the best way to choose an electoral system would be to ask the experts. It is important to note that electoral experts, i.e. political scientists, are generally socialists or closet-socialists, meaning they are constantly desirous of bigger and more complex government. This has significant implications for the work of the Citizens' Assembly, which has to rely on expert advice to some extent. If the Citizens' Assembly members were to throw up their hands and say, "it's too complicated, let's just go with the experts' consensus", we might end up with a proposal that the elite would uniformly applaud but the voters reject, as happened with the Charlottetown Accord referendum. Consequently, it is crucial for the Citizens' Assembly members to trust their own judgment.

The issues in electoral reform, as we have all now learnt, are exceedingly complex. That's not surprising, since politics affects nearly everything and therefore is inherently complex. This complexity creates a danger. As the old saying goes, we don't want to 'lose sight of the forest for all the trees'. For example, one person addressing the Assembly presented a list of electoral criteria, but failed to mention the main purpose of democracy: making choices. We have to be careful not to get too flummoxed by all the dozens of possible voting system criteria.

What is the chief criterion? To answer this, it is worthwhile to review the history of the Citizens' Assembly. Of course, there are countless people who contributed to getting to this point in the history of democracy in B.C., from the ancient Greeks on down. But a major share of the credit has certainly to go to the four former Members of the Legislature, of three political parties, who issued an ad hoc committee report in February 2001 calling for a Citizens' Assembly. (Gordon Gibson, Gary Lauk, Nick Loenen, Rafe Mair; Footnote 82).

It's probably fair to say their chief goal was to reinvigorate what is called "responsible government" in B.C. They alleged, based on their wide experience, that BC government had degenerated into an "elected dictatorship". They sought to bring about a Legislature with rational debate and decision-making according to the theoretical description of Canadian governments that we were all taught in elementary school. Put simply, this was a call to reduce the overarching power of the premier's office.

And what was the means of reducing the excessive power in the premier's office? Put simply, the bringing in of minority or coalition governments. So, of all the many important criteria for selecting a good electoral system, the key question is that simple. Do we want fewer majority governments or not? Once we've answered that question, everything else flows from that. But if we're not clear on whether we want majority governments or not, then all the rest of the discussion will be based on confusion.

How should the Assembly members, and later the public at large, decide whether we ought to have majority governments? There are two basic ways of deciding: to depend on the 'experts', or to depend on one's judgment. Perhaps the most extensive studies of majority versus non-majority governments around the world have been made by Arend Lijphart in comparing PR versus majoritarian democracy (Footnote 83). Based on over 100 elections each, PR governments give a greater than 80% chance of minority/coalition while plurality and majority systems give a greater than 80% chance of majority government (Footnote 83a). To greatly simplify his findings: He concluded that the two styles of government are about the same in effectiveness, with a slight advantage to the PR (typically coalition) governments if anything. Countries with PR governments tend to have better economic growth and less unemployment. In addition, the PR countries had a better record on "all of the measures of democratic quality". The advantage of proportionality is basically that policy issues might be addressed by coalitions, rather than remaining frozen on majority party lines, and this might more often result in government decisions aligning closer to the will of the citizens.

Are such conclusions fair? That is not certain; Dr. Lijphart has a clear preference for consensus-style government, and it is impossible to tell if this biased his complicated statistical study. (In analysing one set of data, page 134, he didn't believe a figure for Switzerland was appropriate so he arbitrarily assigned it a value that put it on the other end of the scale!) The same problem of subjectivity affects all realistically-detailed analyses. Moreover, the data is all of the chicken-and-egg variety: although he tried to adjust for correlated (confounding) factors, the differences among countries may have been caused by their differences in electoral systems, or the other way around.

As Dr. Lijphart says, however, we can safely assume from the results that in most cultures, PR (minority/coalition) governments are not disastrous. There isn't much experience to go on in Canadian politics. The Chair of Equity BC is old enough to recall a previous Canadian minority federal government and a minority provincial government (outside BC) and happens to think that even without formal coalitions they established productive arrangements in which the parties didn't compete to bankrupt the public treasury as some fear will happen under PR, but we will have to wait to evaluate the current minority federal government. Hopefully increased proportionality will spur BC political parties to compete, not in attacking all and sundry, but rather to compete to form cooperative arrangements with other parties.

The other way of answering the question of majority/non-majority governments is for the Citizens' Assembly members to use their imagination to foresee how MLAs would relate in a non-majority situation, and judge accordingly. This has no verifiable basis, but it seems the sensible thing to do. Former MLA Jim Nielsen characterized the Legislature as a step up from using "war" to settle matters. The fundamental question of electoral reform is whether we are now ready to move up another level. Should we move from adversarial politics to a cooperative, consensus style? If done well, this would be progress. But if our society is not yet ready for consensus, the result would reflect the

weakness by which numerous democracies have foundered in the past in obvious and serious ways. Whether we are ready is a judgment call; one for the Assembly to make.

Please see also, "Appendix 2: Is PR a Good Thing?"

Finally, in the unlikely event the Assembly members cannot agree on a major reform option, perhaps they could consider a referendum proposal converting a few constituency seats to at-large closed-list party seats to be elected by votes transferred from the losing candidates. At least that would be a first step, requiring virtually no new infrastructure, and in the end the Legislature would likely decide to use its authority to add the specified few seats (rather than subtracting them from the constituencies) to avoid enlarging the constituencies even a small amount, thereby avoiding any disturbance to voters whatsoever.

Footnote 4: Farrell, David: "Electoral systems: a comparative introduction" 2001. 241 pp. Note we (at Equity BC) have found the following numerical errors in this book:
Pgs. 93 and 94: the formulas for the "difference percentage" index of disproportionality "...subtracting the percentage of seats ...from the percentage of votes..." should read "subtracting the percentage of votes...from the percentage of seats...".
Pgs. 159 footnote (e) and 215 note 3: "The Laakso/Taagepera index of effective number of parliamentary parties...one divided by..." should read "...10,000 divided by...".
Footnote 4a: Page 20 in above source. **Footnote 4b:** Page 173. **Footnote 4c:** Page 38. **Footnote 4d:** Page 188. **Footnote 4e:** Page 166.

Footnote 5: Shugart, Matthew and Wattenberg, Martin, Eds. 2001 "Mixed-Member Electoral Systems: the Best of Both Worlds?" 656 pp. Oxford U. Press. There is only one copy of this, the bible of closed-list mixed-member systems, that can be obtained by public interlibrary loan in all of British Columbia; but no-one was reading it at time of last checking.
Footnote 5a: Page 504 in above source. **Footnote 5b:** Page 309. **Footnote 5c:** Page 541. **Footnote 5d:** Page 591. **Footnote 5e:** Page 593. **Footnote 5f:** Page 592. **Footnote 5g:** Page 307.

Footnote 6: A survey found 24% of Canadians even said it would be good to have "a strong leader who does not have to bother with parliament and elections"; quoted in Inglehart, Ronald 2003 How Solid is Mass Support for Democracy—And How Can We Measure It?
http://home.sandiego.edu/~mb5/inglehart.pdf

Footnote 7: Electoral Reform Society (ERS) 1998 "Towards a Fairer Vote"
www.electoral-reform.org.uk/publications/briefings/jenkins.htm
A thorough attempt by a respected organization to promote STV. It mentions that survey evidence indicates voters like preferential voting, though no source is given.
Footnote 7a: The choices under STV may even be worse than "of little practical significance": One theoretical issue not addressed is whether a new voting system which sufficiently challenged the electorate with choices, such as with ranking seven

candidates, could result in their votes becoming, on average, more randomly dispersed than they already are, with the consequence of decreasing the decision-making efficiency of elections compared to a system with fewer, simpler choices. This is not just a theoretical issue. Anyone who has sat in a large committee grappling with many options knows that choice-frustration can lead to superficial and peremptory decisions.
Footnote 7b: The ERS also provides an illustration that STV may indeed be too difficult for people to understand, or at least, to understand the consequences and proper usage of STV: Getting a broad cross-section of people elected through fair play is good, but in their "Submission to the British Columbia Citizens Assembly" of June 22, 2004, the ERS invites voters to use STV to choose between candidates on the basis of "gender, age and ethnicity". This astounding stance is rationalized by the most extreme perversion of egalitarianism: that if diverse people use the same basis for selecting their government, the government will be representative of the people according to these criteria; a scheme at once improbable and easily corrupted. This is to be condemned for what it is, elitism and idiocy at Olympian levels.

Footnote 8: The "over 90%" figure is from Adobe PDF version of PowerPoint on "Proportional Representation by the Single Transferable Vote (PR-STV)" page 23 presented to the British Columbia Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform Learning session February 22, 2004, at http://www.citizensassembly.bc.ca/resources/Weekend%20Session%20Readings/Weekend4Session2PPT.pdf

Some limitation on political parties' power does exist in Tasmanian STV elections, in that they are not allowed to advertise their preferences among their own candidates! That such a law even exists, illustrates the problem inherent in STV. But such a regulation would likely be held unconstitutional in Canada, leaving us with a candidate-centred electoral design being used as another party tool.

On another sub-topic, though independent candidates are rarely a serious consideration in BC, nonetheless it should be noted the statement made to the Assembly about STV that "It does not discriminate against independent candidates" is contradicted by the fact that their campaigns are much more hopeless due to the lack of party funding when the ridings are five times larger.

STV is inherently a big-party, big-money system. The expense for a candidate to effectively advertise through-out a BC constituency is almost prohibitive now, even without reaching the legal campaign financing limits. If the constituencies are enlarged to an average of five members as is typical with STV, the sheer size of the constituencies will mean those with big money behind them will be able to compete significantly better, and this inevitably means greater party control and more of the trained-seal mentality among those elected. Anecdotal evidence indicates most British Columbians believe we need less of that in Victoria. In theory, STV promotes independence of representatives, but in practice the opposite seems to be the case unfortunately (Footnote 11, Footnote 12).

Footnote 9: Berger, Thomas June 8 2004 "A City of Neighbourhoods: Report of the 2004 Vancouver Electoral Reform Commission" 158 pp. See: http://www.city.vancouver.bc.ca/erc/pdf/verc_report.pdf

PR-STV was used to elect provincial legislators in parts of Manitoba (Winnipeg 1920 to 1955) and parts of Alberta (Edmonton and Calgary 1924 to 1956) (page 91).

His report notes Vancouverites, in most recent referendums and polls, have favoured moving from an at-large system to a ward (single-member) system for electing city councillors because they dislike having to pick 10 candidates from a list of about 50 and consequently generally vote by party slate (page 5 etc.).

Footnote 10: 2002 The Reform of the Voting System in Québec http://www.assnat.qc.ca/eng/Publications/rapports/rapci1eng.htm

Footnote 11: It is apparently rare for an Irish representative to vote against their party. http://www.citizensassembly.bc.ca/public/get_involved/submission/MCCRORY-1231

Footnote 12: Gallagher, Michael 1997 Ireland: The Archetypal Single Transferable Vote System http://www.aceproject.org/main/english/es/esy_ie.htm

Footnote 13: Assumptions: These computer projections require various assumptions. The assumption that people would have voted the same way under a different system is a crude one: it is likely that voters would have shifted somewhat to the smaller parties under electoral systems other than FPTP, because they would have less fear of "wasting" their vote under these other systems. This effect could be estimated in at least two ways, but this is not done here for MMP, MMS, or STV as it is highly speculative. In addition, estimates are that the voter turnout would be 3 to 12 % higher, averaging perhaps 5%, and these voters would be less likely to vote for the leading party. (Though if people are more content under a PR government, turnout might soon go down instead of up.)

For the **MMS** projections, votes from each existing constituency were allocated to the corresponding MMS region for the regional vote, putting constituencies that overlap two regions into the one in which the bulk of their population probably falls. Regions 1, 2 and 3 had 9, 33 and 13 local seats in 1991 and 1996 and 10, 35 and 14 local seats in 2001. Local seats were assigned to each party in proportion to the share of seats it actually won within each region; this means no systematic pattern of second- and third-choice voting was incorporated because no objective information on what this pattern would be is available. Therefore, the three-choice preferential vote that is incorporated in MMS had no effect in these simulations. In reality, it is likely that at least one seat would have gone to a different party under the preferential local vote, if there is any validity in the widespread speculation that there was a Liberal/PDA/Reform/Socred/Unity cluster and a Green/NDP/Marijuana Party cluster of support.

The **MMP** system was assumed to use 39 local seats and 40 seats in one multi-member district for the province. For a description of the German MMP/AMS see for example http://www.wahlrecht.de/english/bundestag.htm For a description of the New Zealand MMP system see p.95 within source listed at Footnote 5. The 2001 MMP results are similar to the prediction of Liberal 51, NDP 19 and Green 10 that would have been about the results "under most systems that allocate seats to parties based on the popular vote" according to Fair Vote BC (http://www.fairvotingbc.com/Pages/News.html), although it should be noted their numbers add to 80 MLAs instead of the correct 79.

STV: It was estimated that in 2001 under STV with a Droop quota and 5-seat districts, the NDP would have gotten one seat in each of 14 multi-member districts and 2 seats in each of two districts, for a total of 18 seats, but slightly different outcomes are possible. It cannot be predicted how the electoral district boundaries would be re-drawn on the recommendation of the Electoral Boundaries Commission and this would have an effect on the predictions, especially for STV. The outcomes for the Green Party under STV in 2001 are particularly problematic, because their vote of 12.39% was tantalizingly close to the Droop quota of 16.67% for a 5-seat district. This means the estimate of Green seats is highly dependent on where the boundaries are drawn, and on what assumptions are made about how voters would have decided to distribute their second, third, etc. preferences, so our estimate of zero Green seats under a 5-seat STV system in 2001 may well be an underestimate. Our estimate of Gallagher's index of disproportionality for STV in 2001 was 17.

Preferential-Plus (STV/AV): As with pure STV mentioned above, the PP results are more dependent than those of other systems on which areas are combined to form the multimember constituencies. The PP results are also more speculative and difficult to estimate due to being strongly dependent on unknown rank preferences of up to 7 candidates.

The published estimates for PP are included in the 2001 table but Equity BC has been unable to reproduce them under the same assumptions used for MMP and MMS. They are certainly achievable if the assumption is made that Liberals would support the NDP and Green Party through second and subsequent preferences but not vice versa, but no such vote transfer pattern was specified with the PP results. Confirmation of the PP results will have to await some independent third party.

Footnote 14: see http://www.citizensassembly.bc.ca/resources/Weekend%20Session%20Readings/Weekend4Session2PPT.pdf

Footnote 15: Adriane Carr (http://www.greenparty.bc.ca/news/2004/06/78.php) has mentioned the New Zealand plebiscite in which voters favoured MMP (70.5%) to other systems such as STV (17.4%). This was perhaps not a fair comparison since MMP had already been designed and endorsed by their Royal Commission six years earlier, partly on the basis that it expected MMP to be more capable of securing popular support (Footnote 5, p.88,89,90); but, on the other hand, people often disregard Royal Commissions, and other voices did speak in favour of STV.

Footnote 16a: ICPR: "Changed Voting Changed Politics: Lessons of Britain's Experience of PR since 1997" Riddell, Peter; and Butler, David; Joint Chairs. Published March 29, 2004 by the Independent Commission on PR, available at http://www.prcommission.org/ as a pdf file, 169 pp.

ICPR is a private Commission but has political experts and members from all political parties, and is funded by the respected Nuffield Foundation and Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust. Their final report (a preliminary draft was issued in 2003)

reviews electoral reform issues and experience in Britain without attempting to choose one favoured system, and reports on their surveys of more than 2400 British adults.

If the British public is similar to British Columbia's, the ICPR report suggests it is very uncertain whether the public will give any proposed PR system the 60% approval required in B.C. The ICPR found public response to PR depends on education and on how the polling question is worded:

They reported 65% felt MMP (AMS) would be better than FPTP (using their data on p. 55 and removing undecideds, 100%*44/(44+24)=64.7%) but only 44% said they would like to vote in elections using MMP (AMS) (p 56, 100%*31/(31+39)=44.3%).

Their April 2003 survey [page 134] found only 52% of decided respondents favoured electoral reform (44% of all respondents were in favour, 41% opposed, and 15% didn't know or wouldn't say, so 100%*44%/(44+41%)=52% said "We should change the voting system for the House of Commons" was closer to their own view than "..we should keep it as it is").

Their May 2003 survey [page 140] found 77% favoured PR (100*(20+42)/(20+42+11+7)=77.5% agreed with "..the UK should introduce proportional representation so that the number of MPs each party gets in the House of Commons matches more closely the number of votes each party gets").

Their final July 2003 survey [page 145] found 57% would vote for a new system (100%*43/(43+33)=56.6% when asked "If a referendum were held today on the electoral system for the House of Commons, would you vote to retain first-past-the-post or would you vote to replace it with an alternative electoral system?") Note that these respondents had taken part in the three 2003 surveys, which included explanations of voting systems and completion of sample mock ballots, so they were informed voters. They had also had one or two opportunities to take part in actual PR elections for the European Union Parliament, London election, Scottish Parliament or the Welsh Assembly.

They concluded (p 22): "..surveys conducted in the summer of 2003. In general, respondents were split over whether they favoured PR systems or first-past-the-post, though in the end there was a small majority in favour of first-past-the-post" although it is not clear what data this statement is based on. The ICPR preliminary draft of 10 October 2003 said "Focus group work shows that when the defects of FPTP are pointed out, people gravitate towards PR systems. However, ICPR/YouGov survey show that a small majority of people plump for FPTP even after other systems are presented."

We can only speculate on why support for PR might vacillate or evaporate among those polled. However, there is a strong and well-known tendency of survey respondents to attempt to intuit and give answers they believe the pollster wants to hear. The reason for this is obvious–all of us have had many years in school of forming the habit of trying to find answers that will not embarrass us when we are asked a question by a teacher (someone other than a friend or relative). Consequently, when a pollster asks if we are in favour of 'a new system', we are strongly inclined to guess that if it is new and the subject of a poll, it must be considered better, and, not knowing anything about the subject, our best guess is that we should be in "favour" of it. Some people will admit to being in the "don't know" category, but most will try to avoid that embarrassing answer. Such support for a new proposal often disappears as more information becomes available and serious consideration is given to the question, and is most problematic inside the private confines of a voting booth.

The bottom line is that approval of a B.C. referendum by 60% is anything but certain. It is not here suggested that the best way to get a referendum passed would be to avoid publicizing the issue, although that might be effective. The point Equity BC wishes to make is that it is crucially important that a proposed voting system be not only a better system, but also a popular one as well.

Footnote 16b: See page 56 in the ICPR report above. **Footnote 16c:** See page 61 in ICPR. **Footnote 16d:** See page 141 in ICPR. **Footnote 16e:** See pp54, 151. **Footnote 16f:** See page 12. **Footnote 16g:** See page 19. **Footnote 16h:** See page 11.

Footnote 17: Law Commission of Canada March 31 2004 "Voting Counts: Electoral Reform For Canada" 232 pp. http://www.lcc.gc.ca and http://www.lcc.gc.ca/en/themes/gr/er/er_report/ER_Report.pdf

Footnote 18: For Britain see Lord Roy Jenkins' 1998 report "The Report of the Independent Commission on the Voting System" at http://www.archive.official-documents.co.uk/document/cm40/4090/4090.htm
It is one of the most insightful yet brief reviews of electoral reform ever written, though at the end it recommended a voting system with only one or two compensating "top-up" seats per district, a mechanism that would strongly reinforce a bias towards two-party domination. This mechanism was presumably chosen out of political necessity to attempt to encourage the dominant parties to pass legislation to send the proposed electoral system to referendum; Lord Jenkins (deceased 2003) would have felt a first step towards PR was better than no step at all.

Footnote 19: Carruthers, Norman "2003 Prince Edward Island Electoral Reform Commission Report" 123 pp. http://www.gov.pe.ca/photos/original/er_premier2003.pdf and http://www.gov.pe.ca/electoralreform/index.php3
Footnote 19a: page 91 in the above.

Footnote 20: Loenen, Nick December 5 2003 'Preferential Plus: A New, Made-in-BC voting System to Elect MLAs' Mr. Loenen has said of it: "There is no system like it anywhere in the world." (Sept. 11, 2004).
http://www.citizensassembly.bc.ca/public/get_involved/submission/L/LOENEN-0035
Footnote 20b: Page 3 in above source.

Footnote 21: The 42.24% was calculated by Equity BC. Christopher Billows (http://www.accidentaldesigns.com), one of the founders of Fair Vote Canada, has calculated 43.14%. The source of the discrepancy is unknown; there appears to be at least one error in the data posted on the Internet by Elections BC for 1996, so there may be a similar error for 2001.

Footnote 22: Loenen, Nick 2000 "Electoral Reform"
http://www.fairvotingbc.com/Pages/STV%20BC%20Const.%20revised%20April%202000.HTM

Footnote 23: Loenen, Nick July 16 2004
http://www.citizensassembly.bc.ca/public/get_involved/submission/L/LOENEN-875

Footnote 24a: Preferential voting will reduce negative campaigning by reducing the incentive to use it. For example, Party A will no longer be as able to scare supporters away from similar but smaller Party B by creating fear that their vote for B will split the A/B vote and thus help their mutual enemy Party C get elected. This is a common scenario in elections, but under preferential voting the tactic will not resonate because supporters of B will know they can vote for B first and A second, and be at least as certain of defeating C as if they voted first for A. Not only would there be less incentive, a party would actually look inept attempting to raise fears of vote splitting under a preferential voting system that prevents it, so such scare tactics will be used less.
See also: **Footnote 24b:**
http://www.citizensassembly.bc.ca/public/get_involved/submission/H/HALLSOR-223

Footnote 25: Loenen, Nick May 4 2004
http://www.citizensassembly.bc.ca/resources/richmond_presentations/Loenen.pdf
("Above the line" refers to a form of slate voting on the Australian ballot layout.)

Footnote 26: Shugart, Matthew Soberg: personal communication, 2004. Prof. Shugart, who was co-editor of the mixed-member 'bible' (Footnote 5), said "as far as I know MMP has not been used at any level outside Germany earlier than 1996." Prominent political scientists Arend Lijphart, Ken Carty and David Farrell echoed similar sentiments.

Footnote 27: The Chair of Equity BC says: "I am not an expert on Germany, though I studied the language briefly and happen to attend a German ethnic parish, but it is well known that the German political history and culture could scarcely be more different from Canada's, so the performance of MMP in Germany is of limited relevance to B.C."

Footnote 28: Reference Footnote 4 page 186: In the Patrick Dunleavy 1997 British study where MMP (AMS) got 44% support and FPTP (SMP) 41%, MMP support of decideds is therefore (44/(44+41))*100%=52% and FPTP of decideds 100*41/(44+41)=48%.

Footnote 29: Canada West Foundation: "Looking West - A Survey of Western Canadians" Berdahl, Loleen, Director of Research. Report 2001-06 published June 2001, available at http://www.cwf.ca , 3p. Based on 812 interviews in B.C., 75.9% agreed with "Canada should replace the present electoral system with an electoral system based on proportional representation - that is, a system that distributes seats to each party according to its share of the popular vote."

Footnote 30: Make Votes Count: "Electoral Reform" Greenberg, Stanley and Gould, Philip. Published by Make Votes Count 1 June 1998 at http://www.makevotescount.org.uk/poll98.shtml . This National Opinion Poll on Electoral Reform surveyed 1000 adults by telephone May 13 to 19, 1998. "Make Votes Count" is a coalition of ten British organizations campaigning for electoral reform.

They found 72 percent of the public said they would vote to replace their current first-past-the-post (FPTP) system with a PR system. However, after respondents heard the case for and against reform, support among those who stated a preference fell to 61% (using their data and removing undecideds, 100%*57/(57+36)=61.3%).

Further, support for PR among those expected to vote fell to 56% (100%*55/(55+43)=56.1%). Some 64% of solid opponents said they would definitely vote, but only 43% of supporters. Therefore, for those who say they would definitely vote on a referendum, support may be estimated as 100%*57*43/((57*43)+(36*64) = 51.55 = only 52%.

Encouragingly, they found that the public expected coalition governments to be more stable than one-party governments by a 2 to 1 margin.

They state "The strongest arguments for PR begin with the underlying discontent that keeps the reform impulse alive. A PR system will force the politicians and parties to compete harder to win over a majority of voters, which means they will feel more pressured to deliver better health services and schools. An impressive 77 percent of voters found this to be convincing....making this the strongest argument for PR".

Footnote 31: McKinnon, Ian 2004 'Considering Electoral Reform: Taking into Account Political Parties and Governance Issues' http://www.citizensassembly.bc.ca/public/get_involved/submission/MCKINNON-1323

Footnote 32: Schwartz, Bryan 2004 http://www.citizensassembly.bc.ca/public/get_involved/submission/S/SCHWARTZ-0051

Footnote 33: Schwartz, Bryan and Rettie, Darla 2003 Valuing Canadians: the options for voting system reform in Canada 103pp. See page 62. http://www.citizensassembly.bc.ca/resources/submissions/csharman-10_0401141624-955.pdf

Footnote 34: Schwartz, Bryan 2001 Proportional Representation for Canada pp133-154. http://www.citizensassembly.bc.ca/resources/submissions/csharman-10_0401141627-764.pdf See page 149. **Footnote 34a:** See source page 153.

Footnote 35: Schwartz and Rettie set out 14 numbered electoral system criteria (pp97-98 in Footnote 33), and claim that PR-Light is "the most appropriate choice for BC" (Footnote 32). However, the application of the criteria is inscrutable: For example, they claim only PR-Light and not MMP nor STV can "promote effective opposition" and "treating all parties equally" (p.69 in Footnote 33)! The authors say PR-Light was proposed by the Pepin-Robarts Commission for Canada in 1979 and by others including themselves (p.58 in Footnote 33). Yet the two presumably near-identical versions only have one out of fourteen 'identified criteria' in common, namely 'reflect relative party support' (pp83, 86), indicating their criteria classification method is arbitrary or unverifiable.

Footnote 36: Making an MMP system simple must be done carefully. For example, Robert Allington and Tom Morino proposed simplifying by awarding the top-up seats to

the best losers among local constituency candidates, which enabled their system to have only one vote required. But the voters who have to approve a referendum would likely be skeptical of using the losing candidates for the list MLAs.
http://www.citizensassembly.bc.ca/public/get_involved/submission/A/ALLINGTON-1250

Footnote 37: See for example data at www.aceproject.org

Footnote 38: There were 52 electoral districts including 17 two-member districts in the 1986 election and 75 districts in the October 17 1991 election. See www.elections.bc.ca

Footnote 39: Carr, Adriane 2004 (Green Party of BC submission to Citizens' Assembly)
http://www.citizensassembly.bc.ca/public/get_involved/submission/C/CARR-635

Footnote 40: Based on the 2001 voting results, MMS would work reasonably well in B.C. with between 15 and 25 regional seats: Having fewer, 14, would result in Region 1 having only 2 seats, which is inadequate for contributing to proportionality. Early simulations suggested that having more, 26, would have resulted in the projected election of a B.C. Marijuana Party MLA, which projection might make adoption of a new voting system more problematic. The proposed 20 is the midpoint of 15 and 25. Being 25% of the 79 seats, it is a reasonable percentage that does not require increasing the size of the local ridings excessively.

A more general consideration is that having a higher number of regional seats might increase proportionality too much. It seems to be widely accepted that we should work towards having an effective, consensual, coalition-style government. Yet jumping too far too fast in that direction might cause grievous injury or paralysis at this early stage in our democratic evolution. In business it is often found that management by committee is an ineffectual mess where no-one takes, or can take, full responsibility; while an individual manager, if good, will burn the midnight oil until the best practicable decisions are made. It will take time for BC politicians to adapt to the coalition style and make it work efficiently, rather than as an ineffective committee. The effort to put together a workable coalition will be minimized if we adopt only enough proportionality that a leading party needs one small partner to form a working majority. This would be a good start.

Footnote 41: Minor differences between list and local representatives have not been a serious concern in New Zealand (pp 308-309 in Footnote 5, Footnote 87). The PEI Commission felt differences would not be a concern (Footnote 19a). Some have expressed concerns about differences between regional and local representatives in Scotland and Wales, but that seems likely to be an unfortunate part of their pattern of usage of "closed" regional party lists, which are not used in MMS. Surveys in Germany have found small differences between local and regional representatives (Footnote 5 p. 292). In B.C., it is possible that the parties might nominate different proportions of cabinet ministers, star candidates, figureheads and others to compete in the two types of constituencies. However, each MLA already has a different and unique level of influence under our present system. We also have great differences among cabinet ministers, and

between cabinet ministers and backbenchers and opposition members. Any differences between the local and regional MLAs that may develop should be viewed as natural and not harmful.

Footnote 42: Karvonen, Lauri 2004 "Preferential Voting: Incidence and Effects" http://www.ingenta.com/isis/searching/Expand/ingenta?pub=infobike://sage/ips/2004/00000025/00000002/art00004
Karvonen notes preferential voting appears to have few effects.

However, it should be noted that surveys suffer from confounding effects and on the other hand there is usually no way to validly test her hypothesis directly -- to know how people would have voted without it. It is incorrect for comparison purposes to assume they would have voted under FPTP according to the first choice votes under a preferential vote as this is counterintuitive (under FPTP they would have switched to a tactical vote on the first and only vote, rather than doing so on a second choice as they do under preferential voting where people are more likely to choose their true preference first, since there is little or no incentive to vote strategically on the first preference). Moreover, assuming they would have voted in FPTP according to the first choice votes under preferential voting begs the bulk of the question as to the primary effect of the preferential vote.

Nevertheless, it is clear that where one party predominates, as is common, it is a middle-of-the-road party, and such a party naturally attracts the plurality of second choices, so that the vote transfers under a preferential vote usually merely confirm its success. That is, the second and third preferences occur in about the same ratios among parties as the first preferences, in which case they can have little effect.

BC used a preferential ballot in 1952 and 1953 (www.elections.bc.ca). In 1952 15% of candidates (7 of 48) were in second place on the first vote count but went on to win. In 1953 90% of elected MLAs were leading on the first preferences of a preferential ballot and went on to win their riding. The remaining 10% (5 of 48 candidates) placed second at the beginning and eventually won. But in all 5 cases they ended with less than 53% of the vote and their opponent with more than 47%, so being that close to a tie it is hard to accept that it would have been a serious departure from the voters' intentions if the original leader had been declared the winner as under FPTP. In no case did a candidate in third place go on to win. As noted above the first choices may well have been different under FPTP.

Footnote 43: Reilly, Ben 1997 "The Alternative Vote in Australia" http://www.aceproject.org/main/english/es/esy_au.htm

Footnote 44: Farrell, David and McAllister, David 2003 "Voter satisfaction and electoral systems: does preferential voting in candidate-centered systems make a difference" 32 pp. http://www.utas.edu.au/government/APSA/FarrellMcAllisterfinal.pdf
While these authors performed a sophisticated study, it is obvious that supporters of third-place and fourth-place parties will naturally tend to like preferential voting. Supporters of the two leading parties will also like it, particularly when they hold themselves to be in a riding where they are at a disadvantage.

Footnote 45: http://encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com/Instant-runoff%20voting (preferential voting is known more commonly as Instant-runoff voting, IRV, in the U.S.)

Footnote 46: There seems to be an incredible amount, not just of difference of opinion about voting systems, but of sheer misinformation or wilful blindness among politicians and some other partisans. In this respect the preferential vote seems to attract more confusion and illogical hostility than other systems, which is surprising because even its detractors typically consider it the least drastic and most innocuous of possible electoral reforms. Perhaps being infrequently (though by no means rarely) used, people feel freer to slag it willy-nilly with less fear there will happen to be someone at hand to take the defence?

The debate on electoral reforms proposed by the Jenkins Commission (Footnote 18) illustrates this. One example of many is the statement by the British MP Robert Syms in the House of Commons Nov. 5, 1998. He said, speaking about preferential voting, "The alternative vote...Under the proposed system, the least worthy candidates--the second, third and fourth preferences--outweigh the most worthy candidate, the first preference." which betrays a miscomprehension of the end point of the ballot counting process. http://www.parliament.the-stationery-office.co.uk/pa/cm199798/cmhansrd/vo981105/debtext/81105-22.htm

A common formulation of the criticism runs along the lines of 'why should extremist supporters of fringe parties get to count their votes multiple times through second and third preferences, and good folks voting for the leading party only count their first preference once?' This has a superficial logic to it, but a moment's reflection indicates that this type of thinking would mean, for example, that voters in the French presidential runoff elections ought to be disqualified from voting in the second round if they did not vote for one of the two top contenders in the first round. If such were somehow enacted, there would be no need for the second round as the results would already be known after the first. The key in preferential or 'instant runoff' voting is that first preferences for the top candidates are also, conceptually, re-counted in every round, and that the "second and third preferences" are really just first preferences of the realistic choices. Some of the criticisms of preferential voting (e.g. in Footnote 33) are a bit harder to unravel than others, but analysed methodically they essentially come down to holding that most of the voters are wrong to want the choices they want and the result of their being allowed to express their wishes would be a mistake (which undoubtedly is sometimes the case—but that is the nature of human nature and democracy, not the voting system).

Fortunately, ordinary persons can immediately and intuitively size up that they ought to get a choice between the two final contestants, and that a preferential ballot will provide this.

Footnote 47: Although a positive contribution from MMS via cooperation within the regions is hoped for as stated, the other side of this coin is inevitably divisive competition among regions for government development money and other resources, which would ideally be distributed on an economic basis rather than a political basis. Under FPTP the leading party is mathematically apt to gain more seats from a given quantity of votes if their support is spread evenly over the province, and this reality will bolster their

tendency to deliver economic development policies that are widely acceptable. By contrast, under FPTP the lesser parties gain more seats from concentrating their appeal in limited geographic areas, and this may naturally engender more divisive activities and policies on their part, in demanding local subsidies. It is not clear what the net effect of introducing PR would be on this, but one might expect a unifying influence from the incentive to appeal to a larger area than a local constituency. On the other hand, it is conceivable that small parties, enabled by PR, would spring up in small pockets of the province (discussed at Footnote 81). This would be unpleasant, but it is not clear whether it would be harmful or beneficial to democratic decision-making with respect to economic policies and other matters. In general, it may be too complex to determine.

Footnote 48: The "British Columbia Development Region Population Estimates and Projections 1986 – 2031" prepared by BC Stats and published August 2003 are available at http://www.bcstats.gov.bc.ca/data/pop/dr/drPROJ1.htm
These include estimates for 2009, the most probable BC election year following a referendum on a new voting system. The distribution of seats among regions under MMS was based on the projected populations for the election of May 12, 2009, since our real interest is in the future; nevertheless the results are virtually identical using the 1991 or later population figures.

Footnote 49: Schmidt, Gregory 2003 Unanticipated Successes 18 pp. http://www.google.ca/search?q=cache:BwN7Yok2By0J:www.quotaproject.org/CS/CS_Schmidt2.pdf

Authors who have commented on the subject of open versus closed lists are reviewed on page 2, and have differing views on which is better, but most of their writing amounts to unsubstantiated opinion.

Schmidt's comparison (pg.3) of four open list and eleven closed list Latin American countries found that, after women were put on the ballot in significant numbers, they did equally well on open lists (14.0% of elected representatives) as on closed lists (13.5% of elected representatives). The difference was not statistically significant. Cf. Footnote 51 and Footnote 50 below.

Footnote 50: Japan switched from a closed list PR to an open list PR system for its 2001 and subsequent Upper House elections (Sangi-in, House of Councillors), which therefore provides the opportunity to make a before-and-after comparison. Japan of course does have an extremely different culture from BC's, and it takes at least two elections to see the full effect of any change there because they elect only half the representatives at each election.

There was a furore when the electoral change was brought in. Under the Japanese conditions, campaigning costs rose greatly under the open system, and since in Japan women earn less than half of men's wages and are almost absent from the upper income brackets, the result was that the number of female candidates nominated dropped by half. However, the number subsequently actually elected did not fall measurably, so presumably adequate support was found for those who did run. The percentage of women representatives elected was 17% before the change, 15% after one election, and 15% after the most recent election; these numbers are not statistically significantly different. The

fact that there appeared to be no measurable effect of moving to an open system under the severe Japanese conditions suggests an effect under more moderate conditions for women, as in B.C., would be improbable.

In Europe, the percentage of women legislators varies threefold among countries with closed lists, and ranges just as widely among countries with open lists (percentage data at http://www.ipu.org/wmn-e/classif.htm, open and closed list countries listed at e.g. Footnote 86). This suggests the difference between having open and closed lists, if there is any effect at all of list type, pales in comparison to other more significant cultural factors.

Technical details: As of December 2000 (i.e. after the July 12 1998 election, the last with closed lists), there were 43 of 252 (17.1 %) women representatives according to: http://www.onlinewomeninpolitics.org/japan/japmain.htm. There were 14.6% (36 of 247 presumably) elected at the first election after the changeover July 29 2001 (for half the Upper House) according to Hiyama, Hiroshi July 7 2004 "Japan still lags behind in pushing female power into politics" at http://www.manilatimes.net/national/2004/jul/07/yehey/opinion/20040707opi6.html There were 36 of 245 (14.7%) after the July 11 2004 election for the remaining half of the Upper House: Data compiled by Equity BC from Japanese Politics Central "Results of the 2004 Upper House Election" at http://www.japanesepoliticians.com.

Footnote 51: Perhaps because there has been little actual data published on the question of open versus closed lists, there has been much theorizing. For example, some speculate that with a closed list, party insiders will tend to give disadvantaged women a boost onto party lists, while others hold that insiders tend to consider women more risky in attracting votes and unfairly push good women candidates toward the bottom of the lists; if true, these factors would tend to cancel each other out. Laying speculation aside and looking at the albeit limited data of Footnote 49 and Footnote 50, it appears there is no strong evidence to suggest either open or closed is highly better.

Open lists are sometimes criticized for what happened in Norway: women raised their representation on several city councils from 15 or 20% to majorities by voting on gender lines in 1971; unfortunately the backlash is apparently still hurting them even today (www.onlinewomeninpolitics.org). However, this was not the fault of the "open list" system (which would normally be called the "at-large" system at the city council level), but rather the product of how the men and women voters made their choices.

It is certain that closed lists could increase the participation of women if two laws are passed: a law requiring a quota of women on party lists (Footnote 84), and a law specifying a closed list on which men and women alternate ("zippered" or "sandwiched") so that women cannot be put at the bottom of the list and first to be eliminated. This has not been considered for B.C., perhaps partly because B.C. ranks fairly highly compared to other areas of the world through voluntary arrangements.

It is also clear that with open lists there would be more competition between candidates within a party. Some consider this would be a negative effect, but we should bear in mind party control of the nomination process and funding will always maintain a minimum of party cohesion and decorum. It seems clear that internal party arrangements are considerably dysfunctional—the crucial party nomination meetings to pick the 'best' candidate are not decided by debate but rather amount to little more than a means of

comparing the success of each candidate's membership drives; and sometimes the meetings are very sparsely attended. This suggests the need for a shake-up, which open lists might provide. As Canadians, we don't like things to be unseemly, but a little competition might stir the candidates to debate the controversial issues instead of reciting the party line, and that might re-awaken the public's interest. The situation would be similar to that during the nomination struggles, except extended a bit longer until election day, and with the public acting at the election just as the party members do at the nomination meetings.

A major advantage of closed lists is that a party may be able to attract top quality candidates who are not willing to leave their careers for months of campaigning with no assurance of victory, but who are quite willing to make the sacrifice of serving in public life if appointed. Moreover, most people will vote by party in a multi-member constituency and it can certainly be assumed these people would be just as happy with a closed list. Against this is the public's perception of closed lists as creating back-door MLAs, and the strong sense of frustration felt by that minority who would wish to vote for individual candidates. With a sufficiently large number of electable parties, closed lists would be fine because if voters didn't like one they could vote for another from a wide range of choices; but in practice we would have limited choices available, probably only 3 or 4 parties getting seats, and a set of closed lists would be irritating to some.

Open lists are used in numerous public elections from the municipal up to the national level. However, open lists have not been incorporated in current mixed-member systems (Footnote 5 p. 593), undoubtedly because they would not reserve power to the bosses, both public and backroom, of the parties that control electoral reform.

One of the most bitterly complained-about aspects of our B.C. and Canadian political systems is each party leader's control of nominations (constitutionally such a means of control can not be removed from a party, which is, after all, a voluntary association of people). "Closed lists" make this problem even worse by extending control from mere nomination, to probability of election. The problem is illustrated in recent Venezuelan politics, in which the extreme concentration of power created by a closed-list electoral system created a disastrously unresponsive political leadership and consequent public breakdown (Footnote 5 p. 49). An excessive concentration of power in the B.C. premier's office is arguably (Footnote 3) the chief origin of the need for electoral reform in British Columbia, and closed lists would make it worse, not better.

Footnote 52: One criticism of "open" lists, is that in any PR or partially PR system, an 'anomaly' or incongruity will become publicly known that some list candidates of smaller parties are likely to get elected even though on the balloting they have less personal popular support than some large-party list candidates who are defeated, for the reason that they get elected on the combination of party and personal votes, not personal votes alone, and, in addition, benefit from the compensation mechanism. In a way this is a trivial criticism, because an individual's low personal share of a party's votes might merely reflect that all the party's candidates are highly and equally liked. The insignificance of the anomaly becomes clear upon considering that if a runoff election between two successful list candidates were actually held, the outcome could not be predicted with certainty from the previous regional votes even if their popularity remained constant. At the same time, it must be admitted that some candidates who are

less popular in reality will be elected over some candidates who are, individually, more popular; and in practice this may be recognized by the public even though the ballot counts prove nothing.

This anomaly may seem undesirable, but it is not possible to create a system that could completely prevent this. All that can be done is to partially ameliorate it or obscure it, such as by not measuring their popular support (that is, by using "closed" lists). If we accept that politics is a group enterprise and not merely individual initiatives, and further that in the service of fairness we want to take steps to favour proportionality, then we simply have to accept the possibility of less popular candidates being our Legislature representatives as a necessary imperfection.

The selection inherent in open list voting will ensure that, while this anomaly may be awkward, the size of the anomaly will be smaller on average than if a closed list were used, although this consolation can not normally be measured.

Footnote 53: This would be enforced by a pledge made at nomination, but can also become law as under New Zealand's Electoral Integrity Act. See Footnote 87 and http://encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com/New%20Zealand%20Parliament and the discussion of freedom of speech at http://www.chenpalmer.com/article_350.asp Theoretically it might be possible to overcome this by a law under which the nomination papers filed with Elections BC included and required a sworn statement to the effect that the candidate had not and would not make an agreement with any party to resign their seat in the event of leaving their political party, but such a law would stand little chance of passage by the parties. The issue of preserving MLA loyalty to the public first and party second, rather than the other way around, seems insurmountable with closed lists.

Footnote 54: The percentage of the vote each party received is directly proportional to the "deserved" column, and happens to be within a percentage point of this number multiplied by 1.31; for the exact popular vote percentages see www.elections.bc.ca

Footnote 55: One would expect there to be three MLAs of First Nations' heritage, since First Nations are 4% of the BC population (0.04 x 79 = 3). To the best of our knowledge, only Mr. Frank Calder and Mr. Larry Guno have been First Nations MLAs in B.C. and there are none at present.

Designation of three seats for Aboriginal people would, for the first time, give a fair share of the Legislature seats to representatives of BC's native and métis people. This would help to ensure effective government concerning economic development and other difficult issues in the years to come. See also Footnote 19 regarding a similar suggestion in PEI. Also, the Commission de la Representation Electorale (1984, "Pour un mode de scrutin equitable") recommended one seat in Quebec be set aside for native peoples.

It must be frankly stated however, that Equity BC's strenuous efforts to engage First Nations leaders on this issue (a hundred hours writing to 72 leaders) have come to little. As far as we have been able to determine, ordinary First Nations people consider the concept positively, their leaders do not, and non-First Nations people have mixed feelings. Possibly neither those who want Aboriginal self-government, nor those who want integration, see designated Aboriginal seats as furthering their cause; while ordinary citizens see the pragmatic communication value of such a concept.

If it is decided to set aside special seats for Aboriginal constituencies, perhaps they should not be permanent. A condition that they be dismantled when average Aboriginal income levels reach a specified percentage of the provincial average could be considered, or a condition that they be dropped when Aboriginal people are elected in regular constituencies in approximate proportion to their numbers.

Footnote 56: A definition of the simple Michael Gallagher least squares index of disproportionality is available in Footnote 4 reference (pg. 214-215) or at: http://www.worldhistory.com/wiki/p/proportional-representation.htm
The Gallagher index is usually, though not always, considered to give a somewhat more reliable measure of the discrepancy between the parties' percentage shares of the vote and of seats (compared to other indices such as Loosemore and Hanby's) though parties lumped together as "other" or with less than 0.5% of the vote are usually omitted from the calculation. The different indices are highly correlated but Gallagher's index values should only be compared with Gallagher values. See "cbishoff.pdf" at http://130.225.138.19/politics/nyheder_og_begivenheder/

The slightly simpler Loosemore-Hanby index D ('DV', 'deviation from proportionality', or 'distortion factor') is calculated as half of the sum of the differences between percentage seats and percentage votes for each party (lumping those without seats together as party 'other', and ignoring the sign of the difference). D averages twice the Gallagher values, though less at high values and more at low values. "Total Distortion" is 2D, and therefore is on a scale of 0 to 200.

Footnote 57: While 2001 is the most extreme year in BC history in having only 2 opposition MLAs, almost as few opposition members were elected in 1909 when the Liberal and Socialist parties won only 4 seats (10% of the 42 seats) with 44.7% of the vote between them. In 1912, there were three opposition members (7% of 42 seats) with 13% of the vote between them, while the Liberals got zero percent of the seats with 25% of the vote. The requirement throughout the whole province, to state any party affiliation on the ballot, was passed in 1939; and the 2001 election was certainly the most extreme since the subsequent 1941 election according to any metric. Data available at: http://www.elections.bc.ca/elections/electoral_history/toc.html

Footnote 58: Jones, Richard Wyn and Scully, Roger 2004 Devolution and Electoral Politics in Wales. The Gallagher Index under MMP (AMS) was Scottish Parliament 1999 5.4%, 2003 5.6%; National Assembly for Wales 1999 7.6%, 2003 8.7%; overall average over the four 1999 and 2003 elections for Scotland and Wales is 6.8%. http://www.psa.ac.uk/cps/2004/Jones.pdf

Note that if 2001, the most extreme year in BC's history (Footnote 57), is excluded, then the MMS average Gallagher index of 7.6% puts it within the usual range of values for PR countries. Lijphart (p. 162 within Footnote 83 source) shows a fairly clear dividing line, between PR countries with Gallagher's index under 9, and non-PR over 9. And an MMS value of 7.6% corresponds, statistically, to an effective number of political parties of 3 (p. 169 within Footnote 83 source).

Footnote 59: In the absence of information to the contrary, the "wasted" vote figures for MMP and MMS assume party slate voting. In practice there might be, for example, 20% of voters who split their vote among parties, thus reducing the number of ballots which only contribute to losing candidates and are thus "wasted" according to the definition given, so the "wasted" percentages shown are upper limits and are therefore quoted as "less than".

The PP figure of 18.4% quoted is that published by Nick Loenen (Footnote 20). A crude (partially assuming evenly distributed seats and votes) estimate of "wasted" votes for PP assuming no vote splitting comes to 19.0% over the 79 seats, confirming that the 18.4% is (or is equivalent to) calculated assuming no vote splitting, and is therefore calculated on a comparable basis to the figures for MMP and MMS shown here.

In practice, vote splitting among parties would make all the PP, MMP and MMS figures somewhat less than these upper limits. The preferential vote on the 59 local ridings under MMS would have made a substantial further reduction in the figures for MMS in practice, and similarly though on a lesser scale for PP, under AV in 9 single-member constituencies. This means MMS would have been even better, relative to the others, than shown.

There are other meaningful ways to define "wasted" votes, such as by the number of excess votes not applied to a Droop quota, but the definition given by Mr. Loenen as ballots that only choose losing candidates is no doubt the most appropriate one from the voter's immediate viewpoint.

Note that vote 'wastage' is unrelated to proportionality in the usual sense. For example, in 1988 in Nova Scotia the Liberal party got 40% of the seats with 40% of the votes, but this still records as 53% 'wasted' Liberal votes (Billows, Christopher 2002 Polls, Parties and Power: Distortion and Waste in Canada's Elections 1980-2000 312pp. available within http://www.accidentaldesigns.com)

Footnote 60: Fair Vote Canada 2003 'Dubious Democracy Report: Canadian Provincial Elections 1980 - 2000' 7pp. Reports that 49.6% of votes were wasted in BC from 1980 to 2000. Data from: http://www.accidentaldesigns.com/polls_parties_and_power.html

Footnote 61: In New Zealand, the change from FPTP to MMP was accompanied by a 3% increase in voter turnout (Footnote 5, p.310).

Footnote 62: With the right people and motivation virtually any decision-making structure, including any type of legislature, can be made to work. Conversely, even the best-organized decision-making body will fail miserably if enough people want to sabotage it. Therefore, improvement of our government's functioning depends as much on attracting quality MLAs as on substantive political reforms including electoral reform. A 2003 survey in Britain found many people feel FPTP fails to produce a satisfactory quality of MP (p. 23 within Footnote 16 source), and the same likely applies in B.C. Hopefully a popular electoral system will make politics more attractive to potential candidates.

Footnote 63: From Footnote 4e: 17.7% (the percentage of women in legislatures of PR countries) minus 13.5% (non-PR) = 4.2% more women in legislatures of countries with

PR, on average. Similarly, Arend Lijphart (Footnote 83) estimated 5.8% higher women's parliamentary representation in PR than non-PR countries, and 6.7% higher in consensus democracies than majoritarian systems. Of course, this small difference, while real, may be partly due to a more enlightened attitude in PR countries rather than due to the effect of the electoral system. Currently BC has 24% women MLAs (19 of 79) and a 4% increase, if borne out, would mean another three.

In contrast to the above results using a sample of many countries, when smaller samples of countries with extremes of disproportionality are studied, it appears PR countries have the benefit of double the percentage of women as elected representatives, compared to e.g. FPTP areas (Footnote 84). However, it seems highly likely a good part of this difference results from a correlation with cultural factors, rather than being a direct result of the voting system.

An encouraging sign is that Wales, now that it has MMP, has 50% women in its Assembly and a majority in its Cabinet (Footnote 85). And, New Zealand went from 21.2% to 29.2% women in Parliament when it adopted MMP, for an 8 percentage point increase (Footnote 5g).

Footnote 64: Idealism: In deciding where we want to go with a new voting system, it is worth spending a moment to step back and ask:

What would be the ideal form of government? After all, that's the whole point of a voting system. How can we determine which voting system will bring us closest to our goal, if we don't know what the goal is?

The Chair of Equity BC answers this question as follows: "I've been involved in leadership in a wide variety of organizations. The problem with having all power concentrated in a single leader is that serious mistakes will be made, because each person has a few "blind spots". On the other hand, large committees make poor decisions because members each take less responsibility. What's the solution?

In my experience, the best and most efficient structure in which I ever participated was what could have been called a "triumvirate"—a group of three people, each having specific areas of responsibility, but having to decide as a group on any major decisions. The group was small enough that communication was quick and easy; the group decision-making kept us from making blunders of ignorance or oversight in our individual areas of responsibility; most decisions were easily reached by consensus; and when we disagreed then issues were decided by a vote of 2 to 1, the "2" typically including the person responsible for carrying out that decision plus one other person, so the essential commitment for implementation was guaranteed.

In terms of provincial politics, perhaps the nearest to this arrangement would be a political party that decided to have three co-leaders. The second nearest might be a legislature with three dominant party leaders, none of whom command majority support—and this is precisely what MMS is likely to bring about*. Of course, success would depend on whether they could learn to get along together."
*See Footnote 58.

Footnote 65: A preferential vote (PV) is not adequate by itself to sufficiently increase proportionality, hence the need for compensating top-up seats as in the regional MMS seats. Nevertheless, if measured properly, a preferential vote must necessarily increase

proportionality compared to FPTP because it is invariably closer to voters' overall preferences by definition. Common claims that PV (AV) did not increase proportionality, or decreased it, are an artifact of the crudeness of the estimation technique used. An example will illustrate this:

Consider a simple situation where every riding is identical (so the disproportionality calculation will come out the same for 79 ridings, 1 riding or any other number.) Assume one candidate, A, will raise taxes; two identical twins, B and C, will lower taxes; and there are no other campaign differences whatsoever. In the election, A gets 40% of the vote; B gets 30%; and C gets 29.99% due to an accidentally spoiled ballot. With FPTP, candidate A would win. Under PV, candidate B would win with 30% first choice votes plus 29.99% second choice votes from C for a final 59.99% support. Obviously, it is more appropriate and proportional to public support for B to win, since 60% of electors effectively voted for reduced taxes and since B would have attracted the same 59.99% support even under FPTP if C had merely declined to compete.

In this example, using Gallagher's Index (though any other would suffice to illustrate the point), disproportionality under PV would appear to come out to 60.8, worse than under FPTP at 52.0! This occurs, in spite of the fact that we can understand intuitively that PV produced a more proportional outcome in reality. To correct this artifact, we can combine identical twins B and C, and recalculate Gallagher's Index; then we find that disproportionality under FPTP is 60 while under PV is 40—PV has actually decreased disproportionality by a third, which is a good improvement.

In the real world, of course, we normally have no way of finding out how to do the appropriate correction, so mistaken estimates of the effect of PV on proportionality will continue to be published. Nevertheless, PV always improves proportionality in reality.

Footnote 66: A group of academics chaired by David Butler submitted a report to the Jenkins Commission in Britain in 1998 that estimated based on past data that a preferential vote (AV) in the UK would normally "have favoured weak parties in the centre" and "would have helped third parties". See www.official-documents.co.uk/ document/cm40/4090/volume-2/acdmcs01.PDF

Footnote 67: Under preferential voting, the smallest parties have a viable growth path. They benefit because voters can give such practically unelectable parties their 'first choice' support on the ballot without fear of wasting their vote, as long as they indicate an electable candidate for their second or third choice. This may seem to be merely moral support at first, but such support can coalesce over the course of several elections as voters recognize their mutual voting patterns and the party becomes increasingly viable, so that eventually such a party becomes electable in spite of the advantage the parties 'with a head start' have; whereas under FPTP such growth is stymied by people's natural reluctance to 'throw their vote away' while the party is still unelectable. Also, under the preferential vote better candidates are attracted to the small parties, because without the fear of wastage factor their 'votes received' will be less likely to be embarrassingly small.

Medium-sized parties also benefit. Occasionally, in a close two- or three-way race, the underdog will prove to be the favourite consensus party, and under a preferential vote could win where they would not under FPTP.

Footnote 68: The preferential or "alternative" ballot used in B.C. in 1952 and 1953 is also called an STV ballot but not a PR-STV ballot—electoral districts with more than one member were issued separate ballots for each seat, and candidates were divided among the ballots (see also Footnote 42). B.C. had multi-member districts until quite recently, starting with two districts having six members each at the first General Election in 1871. MMS has essentially three main elements: (i) single-member local and multi-member regional constituencies (ii) preferential ballot for the single-member constituencies (iii) compensating provisions for the multi-member constituencies. The first two elements have been used without problems in B.C. in the past, and the third element is currently being used successfully in one form or another in Wales, Scotland, New Zealand and Germany, as well as a number of other countries.

Footnote 69: The winner of a preferential MMS vote will always have the support of an absolute majority of the ballots being counted in the last round of counting (50% + 1 or more). However, there are several complicating factors to a preferential ballot with three choices: Not everyone votes, therefore the winner will not necessarily have the support of a majority of eligible voters. Votes transferred are second and third choices, and the winner is unlikely to have a majority of first choice support. Some ballots will not have second or third choices indicated; other ballots will not have one of the two leading contenders picked as one of the choices at all. Because of these factors, the final winner may not have majority support even among those who voted. But, it is expected the winner will usually have such support, and that the winner will usually be the same person who would win under FPTP (SMP).

Footnote 70: As to the possible merits of an intermediate level of PR, in being better than full PR, it is worth noting that it is not unknown for a country such as Italy to attempt to deliberately reduce PR, to get closer to Britain's FPTP two-party system, and this is not entirely a ploy by their largest parties to benefit themselves.

Footnote 71: The press release said: 'Although open to more proportionality in the province's electoral system, they would not accept reduced local accountability or diminished local representation. "Northerners like the idea of proportionality, but not if it costs anything in representation," concluded Assembly chair Jack Blaney.'

A similar press release was made from Fort Nelson: http://www.citizensassembly.bc.ca/public/news/2004/05/mjacobson-16_0405112311-424 However, setting up two completely different voting systems in the province would not only be undemocratic but would leave Northerners fuming about their lack of representation as hotly as they do now. See also Footnote 72.

Some authors from other jurisdictions have suggested the perceived importance of local (geographic) representation has been exaggerated in the past and is no longer very important to most people. A few people do consider it critical, but those people generally believe their area is not properly represented under our present system to begin with. The rest of us think it sounds reasonable, but generally we never approach our MLA for assistance ourselves, have received no help if we did seek it, and while local area representation sounds good, really we don't like to see areas squabbling with each other

for “pork barrelling” (‘politically motivated but economically unwarranted government hand-outs’, for those of us too young to remember barrels of pork), so perhaps the value of local representation is somewhat exaggerated.

Footnote 72: It is not clear how many rural people would support the concept of having a separate type of electoral system. It is, however, clear that the presenters at the British Columbia Citizens’ Assembly on Electoral Reform hearings are not a random sample of British Columbians, and therefore do not form a good measure on the question of whether rural people would want a separate voting system. In particular, those opposed to such a differentiation would be unlikely to appear and express such views at hearings because they would generally not be aware of any need to do so: The people who are satisfied to be treated like their fellow British Columbians see no reason to declare at hearings that they do not want to be treated differently. They just assume it until told otherwise. It’s only when they realize they face being treated differently that they will see the need and speak up about the issue. There are certainly unavoidable differences between rural and urban ridings in geographical size, and all the things that follow on from that. However, it would be desirable, if possible, to minimize the differences in electoral systems between areas of the province. Anything else seems inherently repugnant.

Footnote 73: Currently in Canada there seems to be great alarm among media pundits over the potential problems of minority governments, following the recent election of a minority federal government. The reality is that the advantages of PR appear to outweigh the disadvantages, based on the experience of modern countries. However, it may not be easy to convince the electorate of that, at least not sufficiently to get a PR system approved at a referendum. It is possible that the experience of British Columbians with federal politics in the months leading up to a B.C. referendum May 17, 2005, will give them a distaste for minority governments. This upcoming experience has the possibility of being unpleasant because of two factors: (1) The parties will take time, possibly years, to acquire new people and adopt a consensus style of operation in place of their old habits of unbending opposition to each other. (2) The happenstance policies and personalities of the current federal parties are widely believed to be a bad fit for consensus government, although this remains to be proven. If the feared difficulties of a decision-making quagmire materialize on the federal scene, the implication for B.C. is that it might be much easier to promote a new voting system if that system does not strongly favour minority governments; for example, MMS.

Footnote 74: After the Citizens’ Assembly dissolves in December 2004, how much effort will the government put into disseminating a positive vision of a new voting system? Judging by the number of MLAs who made submissions: none at all. Judging by the level of coverage of the Citizens’ Assembly in the provincial newsletters that MLAs send everyone: none at all. In other jurisdictions, legislators have joined in vigourously in debates on electoral reform; after all, they are relevant experts. But not in B.C.

No reform could be expected to improve the standings of a party that already has 77 of 79 seats as our leading party does, and it would be unfair to expect such a party to encourage any reform. It is likely that almost all the members of the Legislature will

prefer the electoral system that got them elected—the present system. It will be a struggle to get publicity for a new system when the Legislature is likely to be publicly opposed. Consequently, any new system should be overwhelmingly popular.

What will appeal to people? Equity BC does not endorse any particular survey, but four types of surveys related to politics shed light on this question: (a) those measuring public trust of various occupational groups including politicians; (b) those measuring public approval of current office-holders such as the premier; (c) those asking people specifically about their preferences among various electoral systems; and (d) the ultimate survey: election results, in which most incumbents regularly score less than a passing grade of 50%. These numerous surveys indicate:

Firstly, that many people want greater choices when they vote because they are disgusted with the present choices, while other people want to keep the present simple system with limited choice: MMS provides an answer for both these groups, because voters can choose to exercise the MMS ballot's flexibility or just mark one candidate as in the past.

Secondly, people don't want their votes to be "wasted" as usually happens with half the votes (Footnote 60) under the present system: MMS solves this problem for the great majority of people by giving them a preferential ballot and a party vote.

Thirdly, people want a government that handles money well, undistracted by mindless bickering and name-calling: No electoral system can ensure this, but the proportionality introduced by MMS will help keep politicians on their toes and push them toward a more cooperative workplace atmosphere. That's a win for BC.

Footnote 75: If the Citizens' Assembly recommends a referendum, it is tempting to optimistically foresee the proposed electoral system as a motherhood-and-apple-pie issue. But that is not the way it will develop. Already the media have been highly critical. That is because they make their living from controversy; without controversy their material is less interesting, less newsworthy, and less saleable. Consequently, they can be counted upon to interview every outspoken opponent to PR they can find, not just Jim Nielsen. The resulting fear, uncertainty and doubt will be a significant element in the run-up to a referendum.

Footnote 76: The issues behind the straightforward yes/no referendum question are obviously complex and subtle. It would not be possible to appropriately weigh and decide what is a very complex issue in a moment at a voting booth. Also, the pros and cons are too lengthy to place on a ballot. The ballot paper is not an appropriate place to give an abbreviated, hurried and superficial explanation of the present and proposed systems. It is reasonable to suppose that those who declare their wishes by voting in a referendum will have learnt about it and made their decision in advance of entering the booth. Anyone who has not informed themselves adequately in their own judgment should refrain from voting. Consequently, the referendum question to be asked can and ought to be worded very simply. The wording of Equity BC's suggested question is deliberately precise to lessen the frequency of ballots being cast due to unsubstantiated feelings based on nothing more than bias in the wording itself. It might be desirable to name the present and proposed systems in the question. But it might lead to a higher approval rating if the question was reduced to simply "Do you approve the Citizens' Assembly electoral

recommendation?" Unfortunately, the provincial government has reserved a veto to itself over the wording of a referendum question and confidential polling could be used ahead of time to select a wording that would be defeated, so it is uncertain whether the question on an actual referendum ballot would use any specific wording that may be proposed by the Citizens' Assembly.

Footnote 77: No system can immediately and completely cure the "win at all costs" adversarial attitudes of many political party adherents. However, if a minority or coalition government forms as a result of the public not awarding any party a majority of seats under a PR system, then the parties will have a significant incentive to become cooperative, concentrating more on the business of good government than on the business of mud-slinging, because their avoiding of a premature election will require it.

Footnote 78: This is a rare rule (at least at national level elections, p.594 in Footnote 5), but desirable in that it would avoid disrepute of the system and stigma of candidates rejected by the voters at one level being awarded a seat at the other level. If instead, running in both were to be permitted, then it would be necessary to have a rule by which the local outcome was decided first, either by the candidate's declaration of acceptance or decline of the local seat before knowing whether they could win the regional seat, or by a rule that such a candidate who won their local contest would have their regional votes automatically treated as only party votes. This is because of the impossibility of assigning regional seats until the outcomes of the local constituencies are known. For the same reason, local recounts could cause a change in seat allocation at the regional level.

Footnote 79: A common concern is that minority or coalition governments could be stymied by endless bickering, as contrasted with the perceived benefit of majority government essentially paralleling the business principle that any decision, even a wrong one, is better than endless discussion with no decision, because a wrong decision can be reversed to a correct one and thus move ahead, but "no decision" leads no-where except to certain stagnation.

Yet coalition governments can also recognize and decide to follow this principle; and no matter what kind of government we have, 50% + 1 can make a decision; that will not change.

Footnote 80: Under our present system, government accountability to the citizens is extremely crude; we can complain every day but we only get to approve or disapprove their performance about once every four years. When that four years comes up at election time, we tend to judge a majority government based on their overall results.

Under a coalition government, we wouldn't know as clearly which party to blame or credit for the results, so we would perhaps have to shift toward judging them on their voting records in the Legislature. Did each minor party vote for or against what we want? This, however, would be difficult, firstly because we are generally little aware of their voting records, and secondly because when they vote against a bill that we favour they defend themselves by saying they opposed it because they want an even better bill.

Similarly, it would be more difficult to keep track of who is responsible for mismanaging the supervision of each government department.

Therefore, some argue, accountability might be even worse under PR coalitions than under FPTP majorities. However, accountability is so problematic in either case that we should be looking to "other means" of augmenting it, rather than attempting to maximize it by our choice between PR and FPTP. Electoral design is limited in what it can accomplish. "Other means" would obviously entail launching some creditable monitoring, evaluation and communication structures akin to consumer watchdogs, to augment what we largely rely on the mass media to do at present in a rather superficial way. An example would be a generously publicly funded but independent organization to audit and advise on government health care provision.

Footnote 81: The concerns over the increase of parties in the Legislature arise from the experience of other countries. For example, consider New Zealand. (This example is not entirely applicable to B.C. because, not only is their Parliament a national government rather than a provincial one, but when their new MMP system came into usage with their 1996 election, they also increased the number of seats by a third, which is not an option for B.C.) They went from 4 parties with seats under FPTP before the change-over, to 6 parties in 1996, 7 parties in 1999, and currently 7 parties. A similar expansion of parties would be expected under most electoral systems in B.C., giving rise to two main fears.

First, that the new small parties might somehow interfere with the Legislature. This seems unlikely given the recent willingness of government to invoke "closure" in legislative debates, and the likelihood that in the case of there being no majority party, the minority parties would form a coalition with a working majority in the Legislature.

Secondly, that new small parties could give rise to divisiveness along regional or other lines. This is another potentially major drawback to going to a full PR system, in addition to the possible weakening of constituency links: The success of small parties in getting a few candidates elected could depend on their appealing to a small niche, and then when it comes time for re-election they might find it difficult to moderate their position as this would risk losing their special-interest supporters, and thus they could become inhibited from expanding beyond a narrow geographical, ethnic or policy limit. A large number of small parties acting like this might create a situation where they would all be stepping on each other's toes and none could make the leap to become a mainstream party. If this happened, the legislature could become mired in endless minority governments whose politicians spent more energy blaming each other and trying to patch together unstable alliances, than attending to the business of good government. This is perhaps the fear scenario imagined when people refer to the chaotic government histories of Italy or Israel. However, it is far-fetched for the BC culture and certainly could be avoided with a reasonable threshold or a semi-proportional system favouring middle-of-the-road parties such as STV, MMM or MMS.

Footnote 82: Gibson, Gordon 2003 Fixing Canadian Democracy 268 pp. http://collection.nlc-bnc.ca/100/200/300/fraser/fixing_canadian_democracy/fixing.pdf Appendix I is "A Report on the Need for Certain Constitutional Change in British Columbia, and a Mechanism for Developing Specific Proposals" by Gordon Gibson, Gary Lauk, Nick Loenen, and Rafe Mair. The report was released about February 5 2001, and then in about September 2002 the government, including Premier Gordon Campbell and Minister Responsible for Democratic Reform Geoff Plant, arranged for Gordon

Gibson to start work on formation of a Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform. The report is also available at http://www.fairvotingbc.com, click "Projects".

Footnote 83: Lijphart, Arend 1999 Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries. 351pp. The most widely referenced survey of proportionality and other aspects of modern democratic electoral systems up to 1996, though it has some unavoidable limitations (see Footnote 3).
Footnote 83a: Page 168 in above source.

The results are also conveniently summarized online in "Australian Democracy: Modifying Majoritarianism? The Westminster model and Westminster adapted" at http://www.aph.gov.au/Senate/pubs/pops/pop34/c04.htm

Compared to Lijphart, some later work by other authors evaluating PR in a much larger selection of countries has claimed less optimistic results with PR, namely that it is associated with an overburden of government; but taking such a wide sample probably just results in finding that countries which are modern have both "bigger government" and PR, while primitive countries tend to still have both smaller government (smaller as a component of the economy) and majoritarian systems; such a correlation does not reflect poorly on PR but rather the opposite if anything.

Footnote 84: Matland, Richard 2002 "Enhancing Women's Political Participation: Legislative Recruitment and Electoral Systems" 12pp.
http://www.onlinewomeninpolitics.org/beijing12/Chapter3_Matland.pdf

Footnote 85: Equal Opportunities Commission (British)
http://www.eoc.org.uk/cseng/abouteoc/who_runs_wales_press_release.asp

Footnote 86: Shugart, Matthew; Ellis, Melody and Souminen, Kati 2004 Information and the Personal Vote under Proportional Representation. Study of open and closed list countries at http://repositories.cdlib.org/csd/04-05 or
http://repositories.cdlib.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1035&context=csd
Pippa Norris (2004) is one source of open and closed list countries, p. 14 at :
http://ksghome.harvard.edu/~pnorris/Acrobat/Radical_Right/Chapter%205.pdf
Note there is some disagreement over the classification in the literature. For example, Denmark may be considered 'open-list' virtually (Footnote 4 p.214) but parties there can choose to contest national elections with open or closed lists.

Footnote 87: Gordon, Katherine 2004
http://www.citizensassembly.bc.ca/resources/nanaimo_presentations/Gordon.pdf and
http://www.citizensassembly.bc.ca/public/get_involved/submission/G/GORDON-234

Footnote 88: West, Julian 2004 'STV+Circuits: Voter Choice + A Voice for Communities'
http://www.citizensassembly.bc.ca/public/get_involved/submission/W/WEST-467

Footnote 89: The ballot could theoretically grow quite large. In the unlikely event that the 22 parties that nominated candidates in the 2001 general election each nominated a

full slate for a 12 seat region, then Part 2 of the MMS ballot would have to accommodate 286 entries. This would not be a problem for most voters who would simply choose one of the parties, which are easy to find at the top of the list. Those voters determined to vote for a particular regional candidate would have to use a little more effort to find them alphabetically, but this should not be insurmountable for anyone who has used a telephone directory.

In Australia they once had a ballot as big as a tablecloth, so it is possible to accommodate a large number of candidates if necessary. Although it is outside the scope of the Citizens' Assembly mandate, the Legislature might decide to keep the numbers of candidates within limits by raising the nomination requirements in terms of the number of signatures and fees. At the moment the nomination requirements are quite nominal, 25 nominators and $100 (www.elections.bc.ca).

Footnote 90: Bricker, Darrell and Redfern, Martin 2001 Canadian Perspectives on the Voting System. Their poll found 50% of Canadians misunderstand the federal FPTP system, believing falsely that MPs need a majority of votes to get elected. http://www.irpp.org/po/archive/jul01/bricker.pdf

Footnote 91: This is based on anecdotal evidence in B.C. But in an April 2004 poll (in advance of a Canadian federal election) over 80% of Canadians said "there is no one to vote for" (Yaffe, Barbara: Vancouver Sun A14 May 7 2004).

Footnote 92: The estimates for the whole group of 14 elections between 1953 and 2003 were made from a probabilistic point of view, not by means of detailed simulations as used individually for the 1991, 1996 and 2001 elections. By chance, the latter three elections provide a good range of election outcomes for MMS sampling purposes, since they represent the three possible types of elections, namely typical, close, and landslide elections, respectively. Curve fitting the parties' votes and seats for these three elections was used to determine that under MMS a party would need, on average, 42% of the vote to get a majority of seats.

In 5 of the 14 elections this 42% average requirement was not met by the leading party. However, the lower percentages happen to be clustered just below 42% making it likely one of them would have resulted in a majority; taking into account the probability distribution for each election individually, in order to be more precise, gives an estimate of 4 elections that would have produced a minority or coalition government, and 10 majority governments.

The question then arises, what would the outcomes have been if, as expected, voters shifted to smaller parties under a more proportional system? Undoubtedly many studies are available on this point, but since none were found, resort was taken to using New Zealand as a before-and-after comparison.

In New Zealand, the leading party has averaged 38.0% of the key party list vote in the three elections that have been held since that country switched to MMP. In the preceding three elections, the leading party under FPTP averaged 43.7% of the vote. (In each three year period, both the Labour and National parties had a turn being the leading party, so the percentages are not merely reflective of one particular party.) Presumably the percentage dropped with the change-over because under MMP other, smaller, parties

were able to compete more successfully, as confirmed by the fact that a greater number of parties actually got MPs elected to their parliament under MMP. This gives us an estimate that under MMP the leading party will be reduced to 38/43.7= 87% of the vote it would get under FPTP. Note this is a rough estimate, since the 43.7% and 38.0% are not even statistically significantly different, but it is the best estimate available. Labour, compared before-and-after when leading, was reduced to 83%; and National was reduced to 82% (these do not average to 87% as you might expect).

Applying the 87% to the leading party vote figures for the 14 elections, results in an outcome of 4 elections with the leading party over the average 42% requirement, and 10 under. Using probability estimates for each year individually is unnecessary as the values are scattered closely on both sides of 42% in this case, so we are left with an estimate of 4 majority and 10 minority or coalition governments. By coincidence, the postulated shift among voters to smaller parties has produced just the opposite ratio of majority to non-majority governments compared to the outcomes when no such shift occurs.

Of course, it is important to remember that the voters, and not the electoral system, will really decide how the votes are distributed in the future. These estimates are just estimates. Their important implication is to confirm what was predicted from the fundamental nature of the MMS half-compensating formula, namely that MMS is "on the fence" between majority and non-majority governments, giving voters the practical opportunity to swing one way or the other. Which they choose would be up to them.

Footnote 93: The averages quoted in the text for each year are weighted averages, that is, weighted by the number of seats per region. The effective threshold for Region 1 averaged over all three years was 13.0%; Region 2, 3.2%; Region 3, 7.1%; with a grand weighted average of 5.6% overall. In the terminology of Appendix 1, the effective threshold is the Nr-th highest Srp, divided by Trp.