

# PRESENTATION SUMMARY

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SURREY PUBLIC HEARING  
DATED 31 MAY 2004  
AT THE SHERATON GUILDFORD HOTEL

THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS A BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE PRESENTATION TO THE CITIZENS' ASSEMBLY ON ELECTORAL REFORM. IT ATTEMPTS TO CAPTURE THE KEY ISSUES AND ARGUMENTS THAT WERE PRESENTED AND DISCUSSED DURING THE PUBLIC HEARING. IN SOME INSTANCES, THE PRESENTER HAS ALSO MADE A SUBMISSION TO THE ASSEMBLY AND THIS IS ACCESSIBLE VIA THE WEBSITE AT [WWW.CITIZENSASSEMBLY.BC.CA](http://WWW.CITIZENSASSEMBLY.BC.CA) BY CLICKING ON "GET INVOLVED". IF SUCH A SUBMISSION IS AVAILABLE, IT WILL BE NOTED AT THE END OF THIS REPORT.

# Graham Evan MacDonell

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## DESCRIPTION OF PRESENTATION

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A statistical analysis of the difference in votes and the popular vote percentage to the number of seats and percentage of seats attained in the Legislature for provincial general elections - 1871 to 2001.

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## KEY THEMES

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Mr. MacDonell presented an analysis of the difference between votes cast and seats won between 1871 and 2001. The presenter examined how right of centre, left of centre, and centralist political groups have fared under FPTP. Mr. MacDonell argued that in the late 1890s, votes cast were largely proportionate to seats won. This trend was displaced by 1909, however, with large disparities (both negative and positive) emerging between votes cast and seats won. A period of proportionate results again emerged in the late 1970's and early 1980's, however this was replaced by severely distorted results in the provincial election of 2001. Mr. MacDonell argued that this kind of representation is not fair and equitable for half a million people in the province of British Columbia.

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## QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PANEL

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- Q I understand that you are keen on some form of proportionality, what is your preference?
- A I do favour proportionality, but I am going to keep that to myself. This [presentation] is to tell you where you have been, don't go backwards, please go forwards.
- Q Where did you get this information and how accurate is it?
- A The information is extracted from the booklet put out by Elections BC, and there is a supplement covering the years 1986 to 2001. I just added up the numbers in those booklets.

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QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

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Q        You divided your parties into three groups (left, right, and centrist), what criteria did you use?

A        Most of it is from what I obtained from the Elections BC history booklet from 1871 to 1986, (which is also on the webpage) and information from policy platforms and items that I have read.