

PRESENTATION SUMMARY

VANCOUVER1 PUBLIC HEARING DATED
3 MAY 2004 AT MORRIS J. WOSK CENTRE
FOR DIALOGUE

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

Max Anderson

Committee for Voting Equity in BC

DESCRIPTION OF PRESENTATION

To overcome a number of problems in the current BC electoral system, the Committee for Voting Equity in BC proposes an arrangement called the Moderate Mixed System. “MMS combines elements from the voting systems of countries such as Australia New Zealand Scotland and Wales to create a made-in-BC solution that balances fairness voter choice local representation and simplicity.”

KEY THEMES

The presenter expressed the need for moderate reform of the electoral system in order to encourage voter turnout, enhance the representation of parties in the legislature, and prevent the casting of wasted votes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The presenter recommended a variant of MMP, termed a "moderate member system" (MMS). MMS would allocate list seats regionally to enable the representation of minority interests and use the alternative vote (AV) to elect constituency candidates. The system would result in a more reasonable distribution of seats as a consequence of a moderate approach designed to appeal to all voters.

QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND COMMENTS FROM THE PANEL

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| Q | What I believe you are proposing is essentially a MMP system with regional lists, but having insufficient list seats to make it fully proportional? |
| A | The number of seats required to make it proportional depends on the voting outcome, as little as 10-15 per cent list seats in some situations can give full proportionality. The reason that it is semi-proportional is that when a party gets more than its fair share of local seats these are not fully subtracted from its regional seats. They are only half subtracted. So when somebody votes for the leading party their votes still contribute, they're not completely wasted. |

- Q The most important thing you mentioned was getting this passed in a referendum, but you said a problem you had was with this systems complexity?
- A No, I find that people are in favour of PR, virtually everyone I have approached with this system have approved it but it might take two minutes or it might take two hours.

QUESTIONS, ANSWERS AND COMMENTS FROM THE AUDIENCE

- Q Those twelve seats that have been assigned how will they be returned by a primary system or by party hacks?
- A According to the ballot you can either vote for the party or the candidates within the party. So it depends on the voters who will be returned from the list.