

## COMMENTS ON ELECTORAL REFORM

September 4, 2016

My initial concerns about Canada moving from a first-past-the-post electoral system to a proportional representation model was that it would saddle us with no political party getting a majority. If no political party obtains a majority, a coalition with at least one other party would be required to pass any parliamentary legislation. This is rare, and very difficult to achieve. Proportional representation could give us a government similar to that of Italy; which has seen fifty-two governments from 1945 to 1993. Each lasting less than a year.

Another consideration must be which type or variation of proportional representation is chosen for Canadian elections. Party List (Open Lists, Closed Lists, Local Lists); or Single Transferable Vote; or Mixed Member Proportional Representation and variations of all three methods are employed in most countries using this voting system. Some of the variations include aspects of the first-past-the-post electoral system.

[https://www.google.ca/webhp?source=search\\_app&qfe\\_rd=cr&ei=-MfJV5XyB6LP8geWkIXQBq#q=forms+of+proportional+representation](https://www.google.ca/webhp?source=search_app&qfe_rd=cr&ei=-MfJV5XyB6LP8geWkIXQBq#q=forms+of+proportional+representation)

It is stated that proportional representation requires multiple-member voting districts (super-districts). Academics recommend voting districts of three to seven members. Accomplishing this would probably require a great number of constituency border adjustments. Each of the three territories has a distinctly different population make-up, but a total of fewer than 100,000 voters. Yukon approx.: 75% Caucasian; 25% First Nations; -- NWT approx.: 75% First Nations; 25% other; -- Nunavut approx.: 75% Inuit; 25% other. No adjustment should occur here.

The Canadian Parliament has 338 members. Each of these members is estimated to cost Canadian taxpayers approximately \$500,000 each year. Serious consideration needs to be given to how many additional Members of Parliament would be required if a proportional representation model is adopted here.

Can Canadian taxpayers afford it? What benefits would be achieved and would they be worthwhile?

Each Canadian Federal Election costs approximately \$500,000,000. Whatever model or variation of proportional representation which may be adopted would be much more complex and possibly more expensive than the system presently in place. Consideration needs to be given to how much more expensive; and what benefits would accrue?

If a proportional representation electoral model is adopted, what impact would that have on the Senate? Would its members continue to be appointed? By whom? Would they become elected? Elected by what method? Would the Senate be abolished?

Changing our voting system is not a simple thing. It rivals the complexity of making Canadian Constitutional changes. It completely warrants a national education program on the types and variations of proportional representation. When this is accomplished, a national referendum should be held to poll all Canadians.

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