Electoral Reform

While interested in I confess to not having participated in or followed closely the discussion of options for electoral reform. I do believe there are issues with the current first-past-the-post (FPTP) system but also believe each other options has its issues.

I believe a hybrid option often is superior to a singular approach and therefore recommend the following be considered.

Suggested approach, assuming no change in the number of ridings – currently 338

- number of ridings reduced to 75% of current level (284)
- members elected in the 284 ridings as per existing FPTP process
- remaining 25% of seats (84) allocated based on proportion of votes
- parties / leaders may choose Members Of Parliament At Large (MOPAL) from unsuccessful candidates
- parties with > 10% of popular vote must choose MOPALs only from candidates who placed 2nd

Following demonstrates how this approach would have varied from the actual outcome of the 2015 election

Commons seats – 2015 election								
		Seat allocation Current		Proposed				
Party	% of 2015 vote*	Seats	% of seats	Elected	Allocated**	Total	Change	% of seats
Liberal	39.8%	184	54.4%	138	33	171	-13	50.6%
Conservative	32.2%	99	29.3%	74	27	101	2	29.9%
NDP	19.9%	44	13.0%	33	17	50	6	14.8%
Bloc Quebecois	4.7%	10	3.0%	8	4	12	2	3.6%
Green	3.5%	1	0.3%	1	3	4	3	1.2%
Totals	100.0%	338	100.0%	254	84	338	0	100.0%

In my view such an approach will have the following benefits / advantages

- respects the traditional FPTP approach
- retains democratically chosen representative in each riding
- recognizes proportionality
- allows parties/leaders to retain excellent (but unsuccessful) candidates
- provides for regional representation for all major parties
- provides for additional representation for small parties that obtain a reasonable share of the overall vote yet are unable to successfully be FPTP
- 2nd place matters – provides an opportunity to be chosen as a MOPAL
- all votes impact the make-up of Parliament, not only those for the FPTP
- simple with only one vote required

As an example Liberals were elected in all seats in Atlantic Canada, leaving no representation of other parties. Under this approach the NDP could choose to appoint say Peter Stoffer and/or Megan Leslie as one or two of their 17 allocated members, thereby retaining individuals who I believe were perceived to be strong parliamentarians and provide the party with Atlantic Canada representation. Similar for the Conservatives.

Applying the same approach to the 2013 Nova Scotia election results in less significant adjustments but would have shifted two seats, and again allows the party/leader to choose 13 members from those who placed second in their riding.

Nova Scotia - 2013								
	% of 2015 vote*	Seat allocation Current		Proposed				% of seats
Party		Seats	% of seats	Elected	Allocated**	Total	Change	
Liberal	45.84%	33	64.7%	25	6	31	-2	60.8%
Conservative	26.39%	11	21.6%	8	3	11	0	21.6%
NDP	26.92%	7	13.7%	5	4	9	2	17.6%
Green	0.9%	0	0.0%	0	0	0	0	0.0%
Totals	100.0%	51	100.0%	38	13	51	0	100.0%

*   proportionally increase by Independent / Other votes to total 100%
** these numbers of Allocated seats is my suggestion, i.e. 75% direct FPTP; 25% allocated.
    Other relationships (80%; 20%; 66.7%; 33.3% etc.) can of course be considered.

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