CORRECTOR MODEL OF PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION

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Over the past 25 years I have been involved in Third Force politics. The First Force in politics are the political parties, the Second Force is the media and the Third Force are the people. In every general election the people stand in judgement of the first two and that is why we have changes in government. Politics is the art of the possible and I firmly believe it is possible to achieve Parliamentary support for the Corrector Model of Proportional Representation.

The Corrector Model of Proportional Representation:

The Corrector Model simply corrects for the imbalance between seats won by each party and each party's proportion of the popular vote in a General Election. It is therefore simple to understand and probably represents the least radical departure from the current election system.

It does so through an enlarged Parliament, which has two components:
1) the existing geographic ridings which elect one Member of Parliament (MP) in each geographic riding, and
2) an additional 20% of non-geographic seats that are available as a 'Corrector Pool' to correct for the imbalance between seats won and percentage of the popular vote.

It therefore builds on the strength of the current election system, one person one vote in each geographic riding, while correcting its major fault so that it more closely reflects voter preferences and makes every vote count through the 'Corrector Pool'. The current first-past-the-post system is a winner-take-all election system where many MPs are elected by a minority of voters in each riding. The votes of the majority who did not vote for the winner, but voted for other parties, are then ignored. With the 'Corrector Pool' of Member-at-Large seats every vote now counts.

How Does 'The Corrector Model' Work:

Here are four simple rules that make the Corrector Model work for all voters and all political parties:

• If a party elects a higher proportion of MPs in ridings than its percent of the national popular vote it is not penalized by taking away seats, instead it is not entitled to any Corrector Seats.

• A party must win at least one geographic riding to be eligible for any Corrector seats. [This ensures that a party has a broad base of support in at least one geographic riding and discounts those political parties that have support that is 'a mile wide but only an inch deep'. In short, a party must represent a broad cross section of the population in at least one geographic riding to be eligibile for any 'Corrector Seats'.]

- Parties that have a lower proportion of MPs elected in ridings than their percent of the national popular vote are entitled to consideration for Corrector Seats allocated to each party from the 'Corrector Pool' by the Chief Elections Officer. The additional 20% of seats in the 'Corrector Pool' are allocated to correct for the imbalance between seats won and percent of the popular vote.

- Each party selects, elects, appoints its Members-at-Large to fill its available Corrector Seats. Since these Members-at-Large were not elected in a geographic riding they have no constituency office budget and are not in competition with those who are geographically elected in each riding. Other than no constituency budget Members-at-Large have the same rights and responsibilities as all Members of Parliament.

The result is a new Parliament that more accurately reflects the will of the people as expressed through their actual votes in a General Election.

A Hypothetical Example of the 'Corrector Model':

Below is a hypothetical example of how the Corrector Model would work. It is hypothetical because it does not reflect the results of a particular national election and is not based on the current 338 federal riding seats.

The hypothetical election results for each political party are shown on the left side of the table below. There are 300 riding seats in this example. With an extra 20 percent of seats for the 'Corrector Pool' there would be up to 60 'Corrector Seats' available to bring each party's number of seats up to their percent of the popular vote in the election. The 'Corrector Seats' that would be used are shown on the right side of the table along with the resulting total seats for each party and the percent of the original 300 seats.

Party	Hypothetical Federal Election Results				Corrector Seats	Total Seats	% of 300
	Total Votes	(%)	Seats	(%)			
Party 'A'	3,200,000	24.7 %	65	21.7 %	+ 9	74	24.7 %
Party 'B'	1,300,000	10.1 %	38	12.7 %	0	38	12.7 %
Party 'C'	5,200,000	40.2 %	171	57.0 %	0	171	57.0 %
Party 'D'	1,100,000	8.5 %	13	4.3 %	+12	25	8.3 %
Party 'E'	1,500,000	11.6 %	12	4.0 %	+23	35	11.6 %
Party 'F'	350,000	2.7 %	1	0.3 %	+ 7	8	2.6 %
Other	290.000	2.2 %	0	0.0 %	0	0	0.0 %
TOTALS	12,940,000	100.0 %	300	100.0 %	+51	351	116.9 %

Parties 'B' and 'C' receive no Corrector Seats because each has a higher percent of election seats than their percent of the national popular vote. The 'Other' category receives no Corrector Seats because each did not win at least 1 geographic riding.

The Corrector Seats are allocated to Parties 'A', 'D', 'E' and 'F' by the Chief Elections Officer using the following simple formula: the original total election seats multiplied by the party's percent of total votes, then minus seats won. As an example,

the calculation for Party 'A' is: 300 seats X 24.7% of national popular vote = 74.1 seats – 65 seats won = 9.1 corrector seats rounded down to 9 Corrector Seats (rounding up occurs after 0.5). The same calculation would then be made for Parties 'D', 'E' and 'F'.

In this example only 51 of the available 60 Corrector Seats are needed to bring each party's number of seats up to, or very close to, their percent of the popular vote in the election. This is shown by comparing percent of the vote (on the left side of the table) to the new percent of the original 300 seats (on the right side of the table). In the case of Party 'A' they received 24.7% of the national vote and now have 24.7% of the original 300 seats (65 seats + 9 Corrector Seats = 74 seats). The new total percent of the original 300 seats now totals 116.9% because parties that won a higher proportion of seats than their percent of the national vote were not penalized by taking away seats.

The increase in proportionality can also be calculated. As a rough calculation it is the total number of Corrector Seats allocated divided by the total number of original seats. In this hypothetical example it is 51 divided by 300 = 17%. More accurately it is the difference between the new % of total original seats (right column) and % of original seats won (4th column on the left side) for all parties that are eligible for, and receive, Corrector Seats. In this hypothetical example for Party 'A' it is 24.7% – 21.7% = 3.0%. When the same calculation is done for Parties 'D', 'E' and 'F' and the results added together, the overall increase in proportionality is a verifiable 16.9%.

The result is that the new Parliament more accurately reflects both the will of the people and voter intentions as expressed through actual votes in the General Election. Every vote now counts.

What was a majority government for Party 'C' becomes a strong minority government with Party 'C' only requiring the support of one other party (or 5 votes) to pass its legislation. Party 'C' would now be wise to consider and be more responsive to the will of the people.

While the 'Corrector Model' does not achieve absolute proportionality, it does go a significant distance in achieving proportionality that reflects voter preferences.

Actual Federal Election Results using the 'Corrector Model':

The calculations used in the above Hypothetical Example could be applied to the last 10 Federal Elections (or more) to determine the verifiable historical results of using the Corrector Model. These historical calculations would test the viability of an additional 20% of non-geographic seats available as a 'Corrector Pool' to correct for the imbalance between seats won and percent of the popular vote.

While I believe that a 'Corrector Pool' of an additional 20% of non-geographic seats is sufficient, there may be exceptions. If there are exceptions that require a larger size 'Corrector Pool" these could be dealt with by allowing the Chief Election Officer the discretion to temporarily increase the size of the 'Corrector Pool' for the applicable Federal Election where it is needed. This would obviously have to be done immediately after the Federal Election results are known. By-elections, which occur between Federal

Elections, would have no influence on the size of the 'Corrector Pool' or allocation of 'Corrector Seats'.

Significant Side Benefits of the 'Corrector Model':

There are several significant side benefits of the 'Corrector Model' including:

- Encourages more people to vote because every vote now counts. If the voter's Political Party does not win (or has no chance of winning) at the riding level, their vote still counts toward the number of 'Corrector Seats' based on the popular vote for that Party.

- Encourages the Political Parties to demand accurate and up-to-date voters' lists. If voters are left off the list, as they are now in large numbers, it diminishes each Parties chances of getting more of the popular vote, which would add to their seats.

- Encourages structural change in the way Elections Canada compiles its 'permanent register of voters' so that all voters are on the voters' list as a fundamental democratic right. This would necessarily involve more enumeration of potential voters, so that groups that are systematically under-represented (eg. tenants who move more often) are now included.

Consequently, the 'Corrector Model' can be expected to drive-up voter turnout and enhance the legitimacy and inclusiveness of both elections and the governments they produce.

Under the current election system voter turnout has been reduced and now hovers around 60%. The result is governments that are less representative of the populations that they purport to represent. The 'Corrector Model' shifts this dynamic and actually encourages more voters to vote by making their voices heard in government.

A Made-In-Canada Solution:

The 'Corrector Model' is a Made-in-Canada solution to the problem of how to achieve proportional representation. It does not begin by importing a model from some other country or jurisdiction and then adapting it to the Canadian situation. Rather, it begins with the basics that are already in place, and builds on them.

Canada is a very large country in terms of its geographic size or land area with a relatively modest population. It is also a diverse federation of 10 provinces and 3 territories. Geographic ridings, which currently number 338 federal riding seats, represent both a defined area of the country and that area's population and therefore establish a 'local' link between representation and government. Increasing riding sizes is not an effective option in electoral reform and is unnecessary to achieve a better balance between voter preferences and each Party's representation in government.

The 'Corrector Model' is simple to understand. It makes every vote count and does not require a radical departure from our current election system but corrects its major fault and fundamental weakness. It does so by correcting the imbalance between proportion of the popular vote and riding seats won. The result is a more democratic and representative government that more closely reflects the will of the people.

The Committee's 5 Principles:

The 'Corrector Model' meets or exceeds the Committee's objective of advancing the following principles of election reform:

1) **Effectiveness and legitimacy:** The result is a new Parliament that more accurately reflects the will of the people as expressed through their actual votes in a General Election. Every vote now counts.

2) **Engagement:** The Corrector Model can be expected to drive-up voter turnout and enhance the legitimacy and inclusiveness of both elections and the governments they produce. It does so by changing the dynamics of elections.

3) **Accessibility and inclusiveness:** The Model simply corrects for the imbalance between seats won by each party and each party's proportion of the popular vote. It is therefore simple to understand and represents the least radical departure from the current election system. The voting process is unchanged.

4) **Integrity:** The results of applying the Model are verifiable and reliable and can be tested historically against actual Federal Elections. Furthermore, the Chief Election Officer allocates Corrector Seats through an objective process that is verifiable.

5) **Local representation:** Local representation through geographically based ridings is not changed. This ensures accountability and recognizes the value Canadians attach to community while ensuring that every vote counts. Members-at-Large who fill the Corrector Seats have no constituency office budget and are not in competition with those who are geographically elected, but are accountable to the electorate-at-large.

Conclusion:

All the 'Corrector Model' does is correct the imbalance between proportion of the popular vote and riding seats won. But in the process it does much more. Every vote now counts. If we really want to, we can reflect the will of the people as expressed through their actual votes in a General Election. We can achieve a Canadian compromise that respects the past and moves it forward into the future with verifiable results. We would still have geographically based local ridings while achieving a fairer and more equitable system where every vote counts. The side benefits are enormous: driving-up voter turnout and enhancing the legitimacy and inclusiveness of both elections and the governments they produce. These are the very reasons why it is possible to achieve Parliamentary support for the 'Corrector Model'.

I would like to thank both this government and this Special Committee for allowing me to make this submission. I have waited patiently over the past 25 years for this opportunity. I would also like to thank Gary Shaul, Robert MacDermid, Graham White and Joey Schwartz for sharing their files and opinions with me over the years.

Signed, certified and dated at Goderich, Ontario, Canada by Gord Garland, Strategic Directions Consulting. Submitted by fax and regular mail.

_____   Oct. 7, 2016
Gordon Garland   Date