

Special Committee on Electoral Reform

BRIEF

MANDATORY VOTING

REQUIREMENT TO VOTE WITH ONE'S FACE UNCOVERED

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1. Duty to vote

- **Why should the government make voting mandatory?**
 - 1. Because it already requires employers to give their employees a minimum of three hours to vote and requires them to pay their employees for those hours.**
 - 2. The requirement is therefore such that employers must release their employees early to give them three hours to go vote.**
 - 3. Consequently, the government is imposing a requirement on employers in an electoral context. This requirement must be transferable to the employees; otherwise, the government is allowing employees to steal from their employers.**
 - 4. Therefore, the government cannot allow this situation to occur.**

2. Duty

- 1. It is the duty of every citizen to choose his/her representative in the government because this representative has a representation mandate. One cannot represent a third party without having obtained this mandate from the general public, which includes the obligation that every citizen must vote.**
- 2. Under the law, employers must release their employees for a minimum of three consecutive hours to allow them to vote.**
- 3. In this example, it is clear that if the government requires employers to release their employees to allow them to go vote, then the employees have an obligation to vote.**

- 4. In the opposite case, the government causes harm by requiring employers to release their employees for a period of time to allow them to carry out their civic duty.**
- 5. The government cannot impose a requirement on one party (the EMPLOYER) and not take control measures relative to the employees to make sure that they fulfil their obligation.**
- 6. The government is already making it a requirement to fill out Census forms in order to be able to draw up and maintain voters' lists.**

Advantage

- 1. It is therefore legitimate to make voting mandatory in this context in order to ensure that everyone is able to choose his/her representative in the government.**
- 2. It is therefore clear that mandatory voting ensures the maximum participation of voters and is therefore more representative of the general population.**
- 3. Without such an obligation, nothing can guarantee that everyone can make their votes heard (e.g. a man who does not want his spouse to vote).**

Requirement to vote with one's face uncovered

- 1. In a democracy, transparency is an obligation.**
 - The electoral system is and must be as transparent as the justice system. To ensure this transparency, and in order to adhere to the principle of transparency, it is in my view essential that all people have their faces uncovered, without exception.**
 - Transparency should not apply solely to a few individuals appointed to ensure the proper functioning of elections. It should apply to all citizens participating in elections.**
 - An election is an essential activity for maintaining a healthy democracy and the transparency of that democracy, so that the democracy does not become an instrument of oppression of the people.**
 - The reason for voting with one's face uncovered is to show that one is not under any restrictions whatsoever.**
 - There must be equality between men and women, and they must have the same obligations. Therefore, in the same way that men are not allowed to vote with their faces covered, women are not allowed to vote with their faces covered either in the name of a religion. When the principle of the Canadian government is secularism, secularism is called into question if religious principles are allowed to be part of the electoral system.**
 - Considering that maintaining the neutrality of the state and eliminating religious interference in the electoral system are a primary concern.**

- **A total ban on religious symbols during elections and on gender-based discrimination based on religion means that all people responsible for checking the identities of people may do so, regardless of the gender of the persons concerned. This excludes all voting where faces are covered.**

It is therefore important to maintain this religious neutrality by prohibiting voting with faces covered for reasons of religious belief.

Thank you for taking note of the two points that I consider to be essential in a democracy and for this opportunity to submit this short brief.