ANNOUNCING "PPR123+" ... PERFECT PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION--plus!

The inspiration that drove the invention of **PPR123** (**Perfect** Proportional Representation) was the definitive promise to *"Make Every Vote Count"*. Clearly, the *true* fulfillment of this ideal requires an electoral system that delivers 'perfect' PR. Also, this ideal would be rendered meaningless without an electoral system based on *honest* voting. Specifically, *true* Democracy needs a voting system that, by design, meets the following criteria:

1. **Empowers all Citizens to express their *true* 1st-choice** [i.e. without coercion, as under the First-Past-the-Post (**FPTP**) voting system, that pressures so many Citizens into the frustrating practice of *'strategic voting',* for a perceived 'lesser of evils'—against their *true* choice].
2. **Always elects the 'rightful' winner** [i.e. supported by a *majority* (50%+1) of voters] as the local representative.
3. **Always gives each party the parliamentary voting power corresponding to their total number of 1st-choice votes** (i.e. 'perfect' PR) —regardless whether their candidate(s) win or lose [i.e. NO *wasted* votes ... *'every vote counts—always'*].

   The conception and design of **PPR123** resulted directly from the above criteria:

   (1) Citizens are empowered to express their *true* 1st-choice—by also having a 2nd-choice [otherwise they'd be risking a *'wasted'* vote]. Making every 1st-choice an *'honest'* vote is the greatest merit of a preferential or rank-ordered ballot—as with Alternative Vote (**AV**).

   (2) AV also ensures that every elected representative has true *'democratic legitimacy'* [i.e. with the support of a *majority* of voters]. It uses an iterative process of elimination of the lowest candidate, with redistribution of those votes to each voter's next choice, until the winner is elected with a majority [i.e. just like the process used to elect all party leaders].

   (3) PR cannot arise spontaneously, under *any* electoral system, based simply on the composite results of independent local elections. Collectively, these results invariably represent some degree of *disproportionality*—that needs to be offset, under whichever type of PR, through the corrective process that it uses to produce proportional representation.

   As example, Mixed-Member Proportional (**MMP**), achieves PR by allocating about *one-third* of all seats to unelected regional representatives (drawn from 'party lists', sometimes pseudo-democratically), as so-called, *'top-up'* or *'compensatory'* seats, to offset the disproportional results from the local elections conducted under FPTP.

   By contrast, **PPR123** is a *hybrid* system based on two electoral components—**AV** to elect all local representatives—and **'proxy' voting** in Parliament, which produces perfect PR automatically (i.e. without the need for any 'top-up' seats), as follows:

   a. Every Citizen's *true* 1st-choice vote is entrusted to a representative of that party;
   b. Each party retains all votes for losing candidates, and reassigns them to an MP;
   c. Some accommodation is provided for votes for independent candidates and small parties with no elected representative;
   d. No Citizen's vote is every wasted;
   e. Every Citizen's vote is cast as a **'proxy'** vote—by an entrusted representative—with every vote in Parliament [i.e. perfect PR]!

Hence, as the original design of **PPR123** satisfied all criteria identified above, it was believed to be an ideal fulfillment of the challenge to *"Make Every Vote Count"*—by achieving perfect PR—as it does.

However, from closely following the ERRE Committee's testimonies and discussions, it's now apparent that those three criteria alone are insufficient to adequately evaluate electoral system alternatives. There are further goals that are also quite important in determining the *quality* of Democracy—which need to be considered. Specifically, the ideal **Parliament should not only *reflect* the *'Will of the People'* in its political balance of power** (i.e. PR)—but the **Parliament itself should also *be* a reflection of the People**—in all forms of demographic diversity. This is especially important in Canada—given its exceptional degree of diversity. In addition, the **People also want and expect Democracy to be 'true'** —and truly live up to its name. Hence, two further criteria are added to the above; the ideal electoral system should:

4. Produce **balanced representation** by party, by region, by gender and demographic diversity.
5. Embody and exemplify genuine **democratic integrity**—with the most truly democratic electoral system, processes and outcomes—and by eliminating the flaws of existing electoral systems.

BALANCED REPRESENTATION:

It must be understood that **'balanced representation', however that may be defined, could also never be expected as the spontaneous outcome under any voting system**. That said, gender or demographic balance could be designed into an electoral system that restricted candidate lists [and perhaps voters] in some number of local elections [e.g. half the ridings could be designated for each gender].

But a more acceptable and flexible way to achieve more balanced representation—*post-election*—would be to **create an appropriate number of *'At-Large'* seats** by party, on a regional basis, to be **filled by the 'best' defeated candidate of that party in that region**. It would be expected that **gender and demographic balance** should be predominant factors in determining the 'best' candidate.   [There is of course the example of MMP, with its extensive use of *'top-up'* or *'compensatory'* seats (that it requires to achieve PR)—which to some extent may also improve gender and demographic balance as collateral benefits.]

In its original conception, it was noted that **PPR123** would need to create **some number of *'At-Large'* seats to avoid wasting those votes for independent candidates and small parties** without elected representation. With **PPR123+**, it is noted that **this practice could be extended to provide balanced representation by party, by region, by gender and demographic diversity**—in compliance with democratic principles.

The unique advantage of **PPR123+** is its guarantee to *'Make Every Vote Count—Always'!* This is fulfilled by each party retaining all votes for their defeated candidates. This provides **an enormous reservoir of votes for reassignment** [e.g. about **8.9 million votes**, or **51.3%**, in the 2015 election]. These votes (*wasted* under FPTP) would be available to democratically provide equitable voting power in Parliament for **as many *'At-Large'* / *Regional* seats as needed to achieve balanced representation**—in a way that's absolutely fair to all Citizens, all parties and all candidates—with no complications, convoluted processes or unintended consequences [as arise from other PR systems].

This is not to suggest that a very large number of *'At-Large'* seats would be needed or appropriate. Rather, it is to highlight the flexibility of **PPR123+** to fully **accommodate whatever kind and degree of representational correctives** [i.e. to offset the disproportionate and demographically unrepresentative results of the local elections] as the Parliament and People would see as appropriate to fulfill their commitment to **balanced and inclusive representation**.

> *[This might be done immediately after each election, as hopefully a cooperative cross-party exercise in non-partisan Democracy and consensus building—with the focused objective of establishing* **the minimum number of 'At-Large / Regional' seats needed to offset electoral distortions and deficiencies in representation**—*and thereby to produce* **balanced and inclusive representation which is equitable to all parties, regions and voters**.
>
> *NB: Under* **PPR123+***, this would be accomplished with* **no impact on the parliamentary voting power** *of each party.]*

It is strongly recommended that the **first priority should be to provide balanced regional representation for all parties**, by creating the appropriate number (probably in the range 20-50) of *'At-Large'* / *Regional* seats. To qualify, a party without elected representation in a region would need to have a sufficient number of votes—possibly a specified threshold (e.g. 3%), or perhaps a flexible criterion such as having more votes within the region than the average number required to win a riding.

Using the latter standard, with a cursory review of provincial and rural-urban regions in the 2015 election, it has previously been indicated that approx. 22 *'At-Large'* / *Regional* seats could be justified to provide equitable representation for each party in regions where they were shut out, with the recommendation that these seats should be filled by their *'best' defeated candidate(s)* within each region, guided by the goals of gender and diversity balance. Even this modest level of additional seats (compared to MMP's *one-third* of all seats) would provide **significantly better and more equitable regional representation for <u>all</u> political parties that are under-represented in *any* region** [also, under **PPR123+**, this would facilitate more equitable reassignment of votes for defeated candidates], along with **considerable improvement in gender and diversity representation**.

A greater number of *'At-Large'* / *Regional* seats could be considered to further improve gender balance and diversity representation. Again, there is almost unlimited flexibility under **PPR123+** to do this in a way that is completely fair and democratic, without any negative consequences.

DEMOCRATIC INTEGRITY:

Democracy's disconnect with the People is wide and widening.

Democracy's direct-connect between political leaders/power-brokers and their 'dance partners'—the corporate lobbyists and financial interests—has become the predominant characteristic of how Power operates in its own interests, and in direct opposition to the Peoples' interests.

Everybody sees it. Of course the leaders publicly deny it—and most People are 'in denial' about the hollowness of modern Democracy. Some lip-service is periodically served up—which generally results in more cynicism, frustration and apathy.

People are very disillusioned. Public disgust, anger and impatience are rising.

This is the 21st Century—yet **the electoral process remains stuck in the 18th Century**. The Digital Age is rapidly transforming what's possible, everything possible, and how everything is done. Democracy cannot and should not be shielded from fundamental changes. The next generation wants, needs and expects much better—and they will demand much more.

This is a common syndrome and increasing problem for all of the world's nominal Democracies. It's time to get real. It's time to get honest. It's time to make Democracy *'honest'* and *'true'*.

It's time for the People to demand—and the political system to provide—Democratic Integrity!

The electoral system is just a very small part of the problem. It's not in itself a big issue with the People—their concerns are much more broad and less focused. But everybody knows that the *'system'* **is not working for the People**—and the **People want what is fair**.

A new and fundamentally better voting system—while it couldn't by itself resolve the larger problems of Democracy's disconnect—it could rectify important defects and deficiencies within the electoral side of the malaise. **Electoral reform should be adopted as part of a larger political commitment to greater equality and equitability.**

As already stated, the people want and expect Democracy to be '*true'* —and truly live up to its name. Sadly, our existing FPTP electoral system is inherently and in practice almost *anti-democratic*. And its primary alternative, MMP (with its own democratic defects) is essentially a 'political Band-Aid' applied on top of a malignancy (FPTP). As per the testimony of Prof. Kam [at ERRE meeting #32 in Vancouver], he explained that he had no preference between the existing electoral systems, stating *"I'm **choosing among flawed alternatives**. I think the trade-off between them is almost perfect. So what I get from one I lose from another"*.

There would be no need or justification for electoral reform if the existing system measured up to the needs and expectations of Citizens. Similarly, there would be no need for a *new* electoral alternative if any of the existing alternatives measured up to the needs and expectations of Citizens. Indeed, **a new electoral alternative would not be worth considering if it did not eliminate the flaws of existing systems**. Hence, those flaws form a relevant checklist for the comparative evaluation of alternative electoral systems with respect to their democratic integrity:

ELECTORAL REFORM CHECKLIST: Flaws of Existing systems to be resolved by a new Electoral System

- **'wasted votes'** [problem caused by FPTP]; votes for losing candidates are thrown away—People want their vote to count—always
    [**PPR123** eliminates this problem]

- **coerced voting** [problem caused by FPTP]; People want the freedom to vote for their *true* 1st-choice—without risking a *'wasted vote'*
    [**PPR123** eliminates this problem]

- **'strategic voting'** [problem caused by FPTP, and persists under MMP];
    the People don't want to be forced into voting for 'the lesser of evils'
    [**PPR123** eliminates this problem]

- **'vote-splitting'** [problem caused by FPTP]; where there are two similar parties, they (and those who support them) don't think it's fair
    when vote-splitting between them causes them both to lose
    [**PPR123** eliminates this problem]

- **'democratic legitimacy'** [problem with both FPTP, MMP];
    People question the fairness when an MP is elected with much less than a majority (e.g. 28%) of the votes
    or when 'top-up' members drawn from 'party lists' (as with MMP)
    [**PPR123** eliminates this problem]

- **'false' majority governments** [problem caused by FPTP];
    People question the fairness when a majority government is elected with much less than a majority (e.g. 39%)
    [**PPR123** eliminates this problem]

- **'wrongful' winners** [problem caused by FPTP];
    People think it's wrong when a Government has fewer votes than the Opposition
    [**PPR123** eliminates this problem]

- **'gaming' the system** [e.g. MMP's two votes]; the People want and expect equality, equitability and fair-play
    [**PPR123** eliminates this problem]

- **'party list' s**eats [MMP]; the People want true Democracy and accountability—not 'free passes' for party insiders
    [**PPR123+** eliminates this problem]

- **'safe seats'** [FPTP&MMP]; nobody's vote matters in a 'safe seat'; People want every vote to always count—with equal value
    [**PPR123** eliminates this problem]

- **Quasi-dictatorships** of the PM and/or PMO [FPTP];
    such concentration and abuse of power can arise from the limited capacity to hold majority governments
    accountable—the People want true Democracy and accountability [as with **PPR123**]

- **The political 'duopoly'** [problem caused by FPTP] i.e. the so-called 'Two-Party System'
    Anyone can run, but only two parties have any chance of winning.
    This is a byproduct of FPTP—through its coercive pressure on voters that distorts their voting—then compounds
    its distortion of their votes based on plurality winners [i.e. FPTP's 'double-barreled' distortions]
    [**PPR123** ensures no distortion of voting or results]

- **Unequal votes** [FPTP]; widely different outcomes from the same numbers of votes—depending where, and how they're distributed
    [**PPR123+** eliminates this problem]

- **Sweeps and shutouts** [FPTP]; usually due to FPTP's 'double-barreled' distortions, the Government or Opposition may be shut out
    in a province or region—even with a significant share of votes —exacerbating regional alienation
    [**PPR123+** eliminates this problem]

- **lack of accountability** of Government and elected members
    [**PPR123+** could potentially be used to address this problem]

- **Inadequacy of elections**—Citizens want more than one simplistic vote every four years
    [**PPR123+** could potentially be used to address this problem]

UNIQUE ADVANTAGES OF "PPR123+"... PERFECT PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION--plus!

- **Perfect Proportional Representation**
  - Parliamentary voting power of each party is derived directly from—and is exactly equal to—their total number of true 1st-choice 'honest' votes—for all winning and losing candidates!

- **Makes Every Vote Count—always!**
  - Everywhere—and with every vote in Parliament
  - No need to make ridings with similar populations; every vote counts equally—always—regardless where it's from
  - Provides a stronger reason for everyone to vote—even in 'safe seats' and polarized regions

- **No need to change riding boundaries, but …**
  - No need to make ridings with similar populations [every vote counts equally—always]
  - Could revise ridings to use more natural boundaries
  - Could reduce size of ridings in remote areas [to improve service and ease travel burdens on constituents and MPs]
  - Could probably 'free-up' many ridings in urban areas [i.e. with unnatural boundaries and small areas due to population density]

- **Minimal future need to change ridings**
  - Population changes are automatically reflected in the Parliamentary vote [every vote counts equally—always]

- **Provides representation for Small Parties and Independent candidates**
  - 'At-Large' representation provided for all parties that meet a defined threshold [e.g. 3% of vote]
  - 'At-Large' independent representation [e.g. a non-partisan Ombudsperson] for votes for independents and smaller parties

- **Unequalled flexibility to provide 'At-Large' / Regional representatives to achieve balanced and inclusive representation**
  - Potential to create **any number of 'At-Large' representatives as needed to provide balanced representation** by party, by province/region, by gender and demographic diversity—in compliance with democratic principles and commitment to balanced and inclusive representation, and without any impact on the voting power of each party in Parliament

- **Unequalled capabilities to produce a higher standard of Democratic Integrity**
  - Only **PPR123+** can resolve or eliminate all of the defects and deficiencies noted in the existing electoral alternatives

- **E-voting by MPs**
  - MPs would vote in Parliament using their cell phone or tablet computer; computers do the tabulating and record keeping
  - Potentially MPs could cast their votes remotely from any location via the Internet [with appropriate security].

- **No need for 'vote pairing' by MPs**
  - With voting based on the total Citizens' votes, a tie vote would be almost impossible
  - Proxy votes held by an absent MP could be temporarily reassigned by the party

- **Well suited to E-voting by constituents**
  - Citizens expect to be able to vote online
  - **PPR123** is uniquely well suited to new innovative voting capabilities for the Digital Age

- **Unprecedented opportunity for Canada to provide world leadership with Democracy designed for the Digital Age**
  - **PPR123** is a 'made-in-Canada' electoral system that Canada should hopefully be the first country to adopt—and show the world how Democracy should be done in the Digital Age

The Digital Age is transforming modern life and public expectations.

Democracy should become digitally empowered to better serve its Citizens.

PPR123 would be impossible without computers (which could explain why it wasn't invented in previous centuries). With computers, one can count millions of Citizens' votes, cast as proxy votes by MPs, with every vote in Parliament.

Here's how proxy voting in Parliament might be implemented:

- MPs might cast their vote via cellphone or tablet computer, recorded on a computer under the Speaker's control (probably replicated on authorized computers controlled by each party)
- the **PPR123** proxy votes of all MPs (with reassignment for absent MPs) would be tallied by the computer(s)
- the proxy vote totals could be converted by computer into proportionally equivalent numbers of seats
- the Parliamentary vote of record might remain expressed as numbers of seats
  - hence, some provinces could choose to vote under **PPR123** and others could use another voting system (i.e. with one-MP=one-vote), as might arise from referendum results or constitutional considerations

PPR123 could become the catalyst for the implementation of secure and verifiable online voting.

- As with online banking, online voting should be available to all Citizens via cell phone or personal computer. This would make voting much easier and more convenient, which should increase Citizen participation.
- For those who don't have a cell phone or PC, local voting centres (perhaps schools or libraries?) could provide online access (with technical assistance) via PC.
- The digital infrastructure for elections (databases, software, administrative controls) could also be used for Citizen engagement (e.g. public opinion polling or referenda).
- This digital infrastructure for federal elections could also be used for provincial elections.
- Citizens could review their voting records online at any time, ensuring public confidence and data validation.

PPR123 also provides <u>unique opportunities to achieve more effective representation, with little or no increase in the number of MPs</u>, specifically: to have smaller ridings in Canada's vast sparsely populated areas; and to design an electoral system that gives much more balanced representation in Canada's challenge of demographic diversity.

- Parties with fewer than 3 elected representatives that achieve a minimum threshold of votes (e.g. 3%) should have up to 3 'At-Large' appointed representatives (e.g. their candidates with the most votes).
- **PPR123**, with <u>every vote counted equally, removes the need for ridings to have similar populations</u>.
- Many seats in urban areas could be much more effectively used by being redistributed to improve regional and demographic representation (n.b. only **PPR123** could provide such benefits without increasing the number of MPs, and while fulfilling the highest democratic standards of <u>Perfect</u> Proportional Representation, voter equality and democratic legitimacy of all MPs).
- The recommendation is that there should be <u>no riding changes for the 2019 election</u>;
  but subject to Citizen approval of **PPR123** and proxy voting in Parliament, it is recommended that Elections Canada should undertake major redistricting for the following general election in 2023:
  - reduce riding sizes in sparsely populated remote areas
  - establish more natural boundaries
  - within urban areas, combine multiple ridings into electoral districts of two to seven seats, and designate equal numbers of seats to be contested only by male or female candidates, and one or more seats contested only by candidates representing demographic minorities.
  - under **PPR123** with online voting, Citizens within an urban electoral district could vote in whichever riding they chose; it wouldn't matter how many votes were in each riding as, under **PPR123**, every vote counts equally for the chosen party, and every MP would be elected under *majority rule* (AV).

PPR123 fulfills each of the essential qualities of true Democracy, both individually and collectively:
(1) every elected representative has true *'democratic legitimacy'* based on the criterion of *'Majority Rule'*;
(2) the body of elected representatives ensures that the *'Will of the People'* is served through *'Perfect Proportional Representation'* with every vote in Parliament.