



MAKE EVERY VOTE COUNT-ALWAYS!

PPR123 = 'Perfect Proportional Representation' + 'Instant Runoff Voting' = 'Voter Equality' + 'True' Democracy!

PPR123: DEMOCRACY'S DESTINY IN THE DIGITAL AGE!

The following excerpt [underlining added for emphasis] from the transcript of the Sept.28 ERRE meeting #32 in Vancouver, at which I presented **PPR123 (Perfect Proportional Representation)** [as a member of the second panel, which also included Prof. Kam of UBC], illustrates two important factors for consideration by the ERRE Committee—with direct relevance to their deliberation process which is now commencing.

<http://www.parl.gc.ca/HousePublications/Publication.aspx?Pub=committeemeetingevidence&Acronym=ERRE&Mee=32&Language=e&Mode=1&Parl=42&Ses=1>

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Mr. Nathan Cullen: Mr. Kam (Assoc. Professor, Political Science, UBC), just looking through your notes, I don't know if you land on a preferred type of voting system, if you go between the proportional or the current system at all. Do you express a preference?

Mr. Christopher Kam: No.

Mr. Nathan Cullen: You don't have one?

Mr. Christopher Kam: No, I'm choosing among flawed alternatives. I think the trade-offs between them is almost perfect. So what I get from one I lose from another and....

Mr. Nathan Cullen: Okay. So the mandate of this committee is to come up with something among these imperfections.

Here's my intuitive challenge. Mr. Jewell, I know you don't want to call it *weighted*, but it's the only way I can think of it. MPs who are casting their vote in the House based on your system would have a different impact, would have different significance on the outcome of any vote in Parliament. Is that correct?

Mr. Patrick Jewell: That is correct, but I would like to explain that. The party vote is exactly what it should be.

Mr. Nathan Cullen: Right. The final result is that if the Conservatives get 20% of the vote, they contribute to 20% of the vote.

Mr. Patrick Jewell: Let me retranslate my answer to your question. If your party is under-represented, your *weighted* vote will be greater than one, as it were. If your party is over-represented, it will be less than one, but it will rectify the distortion.

Mr. Nathan Cullen: I'll just give you my impressions of that. I imagine that voters represented by people who have a greater weight to their MP's casting ballot will feel empowered, yet voters who have an MP representing them who's at 0.7 of a vote will not feel as great. I know the goal you're aiming at. At an intuitive level, I could imagine people standing in the House of Commons and I could imagine voters saying, "You're my MP. I want you to vote this way." Elizabeth has 12 votes, I have 0.75 votes, and yet we're still members of Parliament. It feels odd, I guess.

Mr. Patrick Jewell: I'm glad you've challenged this aspect of it, but I'm pleased to respond to it, as well. The first point you made, two minutes ago, was that people living in a riding where the outcome is a known conclusion have no reason to vote. In this system, every vote counts equally, period, all the time. It solves that problem. As to what happens in Parliament, you vote one vote. The computer says that you have 1.5 votes, 0.8 votes, or whatever, but you don't see it. You don't need to think about it. The citizen doesn't need to see it or think about it. All they know is that their wishes, as they expressed them in the election through their honest first-place vote, will be honoured with every vote in Parliament.

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Mr. Kam's directness, that the current system (First-Past-the-Post) and the standard proportional systems [MMP, STV] are "*flawed alternatives*", and "*the trade-offs between them is almost perfect*", came as an apparently unexpected and shockingly candid opinion from an academic expert. However, the only logical conclusion from this should be that **ERRE ought to give careful and open-minded consideration to any new electoral alternative(s) that fairly and effectively address the defects and deficiencies of the existing electoral alternatives.**

Mr. Cullen's reply to Mr. Kam refocused onto the challenging mandate of ERRE. But I respectfully note that **PPR123** is indeed a new and much better alternative, solidly based on fundamental democratic principles, scrupulously fair to everyone [all voters, all parties and all candidates]. It's also a '*made in Canada*' solution that is the only electoral system that perfectly fulfills the visionary ideal that gave birth to the ERRE mandate, to "Make Every Vote Count"—which it does always—by design! So **ERRE is urged to not just restrict its vision to simply "come up with something among these imperfections"**. In PPR123, ERRE is unexpectedly presented with an almost unimaginably perfect alternative that truly serves the democratic needs and expectations of all Canadians and future generations.

Abraham Lincoln famously defined Democracy as “*Government of the people, by the people, and for the people*”—a very simple concept. Sadly, the ideals and promise of Democracy are egregiously compromised by most electoral systems. Ideally, an electoral system should elicit a true expression of the ‘Will of the People’—and faithfully translate that into the voting power of their parliamentary body of elected representatives. This is precisely what **PPR123** does, by design, with no distortion. By contrast, those existing voting systems frustrate Citizens to the point of perverting the expression of their true will—inducing so many to vote ‘strategically’ [e.g. for ‘the lesser of evils’ under FPTP or, under MMP, sometimes to ‘game’ the system by attempting to make both votes count] and then producing distorted parliamentary results that [under FPTP, which is still used under MMP] significantly misrepresent and sometimes overturn the expressed ‘Will of the People’.

So **PPR123** should be an easy choice—right?

Why would the People want **PPR123**?

- No more wasted votes. Every vote always counts [even a vote for a defeated candidate]—with every vote in Parliament!
- Honest voting—with no more coercion to vote ‘strategically’ for the ‘lesser of evils’—and against a voter’s true 1st-choice.
- No more ‘vote-splitting’—where two similar parties ensure that neither can be elected.
- No more ‘false majority’ governments with much less than 50% of votes, that often turn into *quasi-dictatorships* run by the PM or PMO.
- Perfect Proportional Representation—with true ‘democratic legitimacy’ of all elected members supported by a majority (i.e. >50%) of voters [and no unelected members drawn from ‘party lists’, as with MMP]
- More power to voters. Less control by political parties. Greater accountability of government and all elected representatives.
- More *positive* and less *negative* political campaigns.
- More *cooperative* and more *respectful* relationships between the parties, and between elected representatives.
- Designed to take advantage of the new features enabled by digital democracy [e.g. internet voting—once all controls are in place]!

Why and where might there be resistance to the adoption of **PPR123**? Who are the decision makers? Do some politicians (or backroom power-brokers) have partisan interests that might conflict with electoral reform—especially the most honest voting system (PPR123)?

- No more ‘false majority’ governments. No more *quasi-dictatorships* run by the PMO. Less control by party power-brokers.
- Perfectly proportional voting power of all parties in Parliament—but no *party-list* ‘free-seats’ for party insiders.
- Some amount of misunderstanding of the differentiated (i.e. ‘equalized’) Parliamentary voting power, mistakenly referred to by some as a so-called ‘weighted’ vote, reflecting some degree of Parliamentary ‘voting power envy’ between the parties [a political schoolyard manifestation of the ‘your vote is bigger than mine’ complex—being the flipside of the ‘my party is over-represented and yours is under-represented’ syndrome, the normal result of an imperfect voting system (without any moral angst about that)].
- Unwarranted faith that the electoral systems of previous centuries are the best alternative for the digital age. [Might there also be some lack of confidence in a ‘made in Canada’ alternative?]
- Over-cautiousness, and under-awareness of the potential of innovative possibilities based on digital technology.
- Some apparent prejudice against the Alternative Vote (AV), partly arising from partisan concerns—while failing to understand its great merits [i.e. it eliminates ‘strategic voting’, thereby liberating every voter to cast an ‘honest’ 1st-choice vote, while it also ensures that every elected representative has true ‘democratic legitimacy’ with the support of a majority of voters]—and also failing to recognize that **PPR123**, as a *hybrid* voting system, provides the precisely accurate corrective to ensure that the Parliamentary voting power of all parties is a perfect reflection of the expressed ‘Will of the People’ [being directly derived from the *honest* 1st-choice votes of *all* voters].

The question remains whether the differentiated Parliamentary voting power of each member under **PPR123** should be considered as a ‘weighted’ vote—or an ‘equalized’ vote? And the answer is that there’d be no differences in the voting powers of each member under **PPR123** if every party had the same number of votes per member; while such circumstances [i.e. no *over-representation* or *under-representation*] would be virtually impossible, would anyone think of it then as a ‘weighted’ vote [i.e. where each representative held and cast the same number of Citizens’ votes]? Whatever one may think, what’s clear is that it’s a *proxy* vote—in which every Citizen’s honest 1st-choice vote is held in trust by a representative of that party, and cast by proxy with every vote in Parliament! So maybe it should just be called the *Citizens’* vote! The bottom line is that every Citizen’s vote is always counted—and always equal!

It should also be noted that **PPR123** would work fine with FPTP [the unworthy electoral partner that underlies MMP]—but using FPTP wouldn’t enable ‘honest’ voting, or ensure the ‘democratic legitimacy’ of elected members.

The conclusion on **PPR123** is simply this: there’s absolutely no reason to doubt its concepts, principles or viability—even though it’s an original solution—because **PPR123** is a *hybrid* based on two thoroughly proven and fully accepted electoral models:

- **AV** is a well-established voting system that has been used in many countries over the past century. It’s well recognized as superior to FPTP. The iterative process of elimination that produces a majority winner is also the way all parties elect their leaders. If it’s seen as the best way to elect the party leaders, it’s also the best way to elect all representatives.
- **PPR123** is a hybrid system that combines AV with **proxy** voting. Proxy voting is the well-established and universally accepted practice that has always and everywhere been the basis of corporate shareholder democracy. Anyone who thinks that all those who cast proxy votes should only cast their own single vote [i.e. throw away all of the shareholders’ votes—just like our Parliamentary voting system does] should try to sell that great idea to the shareholders of any corporation. In a political democracy, every adult Citizen is a rightful owner of exactly one equal voting share—which should never be wasted, and always be counted.

Regarding the details of **PPR123** implementation, it was originally noted that “*some accommodation would be necessary to address the need for equitable representation of small parties and independent candidates*”. It was also noted that, under the principles of **PPR123**, there was considerable flexibility to provide creative solutions to better fulfill the goals of more balanced representation related to political parties, gender and diversity.

Upon further consideration of MMP’s use of top-up seats to improve demographic representation, especially gender balance, it has become clear that a similar approach would fit quite well with **PPR123**, and enable it to achieve significantly enhanced representation. Specifically, some number of ‘At-Large’ seats (perhaps in the range 20-50) should be created—not as needed under MMP for the purpose of achieving PR, which **PPR123** achieves perfectly and automatically—but rather for the purpose of providing more balanced representation by party, gender and demographic diversity. As with MMP, these ‘At-Large’ seats under **PPR123** would be distributed regionally—and equitably allocated to the parties according to their degree of under-representation.

PPR123 is uniquely flexible in its capacity to create such seats democratically and without any distortions—as its guaranteed **reassignment of all votes for losing candidates [i.e. 8.9 million or 51.3% in 2015]** provides plenty of Parliamentary voting power for equitable reassignment to any reasonable number of ‘At-Large’ and elected representatives. Further, it’s strongly suggested that most if not all ‘At-Large’ seats should be filled by female candidates, and that they should be assigned to the leading defeated candidate(s) of that party in that region. Opportunities to improve demographic balance should also be taken into account.

It is suggested that the first goal should be to improve the balance of **representation by party** by adding an ‘At-Large’ representative for each party in each region where it was unrepresented but obtained more votes than the average required for election in that region [alternatively a threshold limit might be used, e.g. 3%]. This would effectively guarantee representation in all regions for the major parties, while also considerably improving representation of the smaller parties.

[It is noted that Fair Vote Canada has models identified as MMP-8, MMP-12, and Rural-Urban PR—involving 42, 30 and 19 regions respectively. Since **PPR123** automatically produces perfect proportionality, the number of regions could be in that range, or whatever might be deemed appropriate to achieve the desired improvement in demographic balance.]

Based on a cursory examination of the 2015 election results by province, with limited rural-urban and regional data, it would appear to be easy to justify **22 ‘At-Large’ seats allocated as: NDP(8), Conservatives(7), Green(6), BQ(1).** Depending on the objectives and guidelines, and further examination of more detailed data, a more accurate picture and range of options could be developed.

Further Analysis:

- More study would be needed to establish the actual number and distribution of ‘At-Large’ seats, which would be determined by the particular goals and desired degree of representation rebalancing.
- As with any revision to the number and distribution of seats, it would need to be decided how many (if any) would be created as additional seats, and/or how many (if any) would be acquired by revising existing riding boundaries.
 - If the latter, the likelihood is that they should be obtained from the same region. If so, the average increase in the area of each riding would depend on the number of ridings in each region. In the example cited above, with the creation of 22 ‘At-Large’ regional seats, the average increase in riding size would be about 7%.
 - Alternatively, perhaps as part of broader redistricting to better match service levels to ease the burdens on representatives and Citizens in rural/remote areas, given that under **PPR123** there is no need to draw riding boundaries based on population [since every Citizen’s vote is always equal under **PPR123**], as previously noted, urban areas would be an abundant source for seat redistribution.
- Without redistricting [i.e. if all of the suggested 22 ‘At-Large’ were new seats], this would raise the total number of seats to 360. Based on the 2015 Election results, the revised (and existing) seat counts would be:
Liberal 184 (184); Conservative 106 (99); NDP 52 (44); Bloc Québécois 11 (10); Green 7 (1).
- With this example, the comparative [i.e. ‘equalized’] Parliamentary voting power of the members of each party—as a perfect corrective [i.e. based directly on all Citizens’ votes received by each party] to the over-representation [of the Liberals] and under-representation [of all others] would be:
Liberal (0.77); Conservative (1.08); NDP (1.36); Bloc Québécois (1.53); Green (1.77).

Please accept this input as my sincere effort to contribute to the improvement of Democracy in Canada, and the World.

Please also know that I have the highest respect for the ERRE Committee and the outstanding efforts made by all of its members and staff.

Please think hard—and do ‘right’ by Canada. **Please make Canada proud—by becoming leaders rather than followers!**

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 unique opportunities to achieve more effective representation, with little or no increase in the number of MPs, 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 every vote counted equally, removes the need for ridings to have similar populations.
- 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 *Perfect Proportional Representation*, voter equality and democratic legitimacy of all MPs).
- The recommendation is that there should be no riding changes for the 2019 election; 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.