

Addendum to Spec. Com. on El. Ref. brief on Preferential Ridings Proportional system

What do you think on this question of 3 additional seats?

This change would result in significant awareness and perspective on Canada's North, but would result in only insignificant power change in Parliament.

Proposed Additional Seats for Preferential Ridings Proportional system

Only 3 additional proportional seats would be required for the Preferential Ridings Proportional (PRP) system to provide proportional representation in all provinces and territories in Canada. However, this proposal is to give those additional seats to an area already over represented population wise, but very under represented when geographical area is considered.

As you may know, Northern Canada is a very extensive and valuable part of Canada. Many Canadians living in southern Canada as well as international visitors place a high value on northern Canada. The three northern territories are presently 3 individual ridings, each having their own government, similar to the provinces. Together they make up 2/5 of Canada's land mass. If Northern Canada, (Nunavut, North West Territories and Yukon), were to be formed into an electoral area with its present 3 riding seats plus 3 additional proportional seats, Northern Canada could have representation of almost all votes and 3 or possibly 4 political parties connected to the people of this immense and valuable part of Canada. I believe that present communication systems could make this functional.

This proposal is based on a 1977 solution to a similar problem in the Yukon:

Before 1977, due to its low population, the Vuntut Gwitchin (VG) were in a riding with part of Dawson City whose population was larger than VG. The VG were the people closest to the large North Yukon land mass. The VG people knew the land and made their living on it. They had expressed their concern about not being represented in the Yukon Legislature over several years. In 1977, the Yukon Boundaries Commission established the VG riding as a separate entity on a trial basis, even though its population could not justify it. This inclusive change made such a positive difference, the Vuntut Gwitchin riding was established on a permanent basis. Following is a statement from the most recent Commission report.

The Commission recognizes Vuntut Gwitchin is the least populated electoral district in the Yukon. We propose that it remain a separate electoral district . . . "

Just as Vuntut Gwitchin's unique position in the Yukon meant it deserved a special voice, so does the unique situation of the territories within Canada also merit special consideration in the national electoral system.