

Brief to Vancouver City Council

from TEAM

Re: "The Ward System"

First let ~~us~~ ^{ME SAY} admit that no electoral system can be perfect. The membership of T.E.A.M., however, believes that the present system can be improved by implementing a partial ward system. It is TEAM's contention that we should establish a balance between the system that elects all the members of council "at large" and the full ward system.

THE NEED

- Approximately 65% of Vancouver's population live~~s~~ East of Cambie Street yet elect~~s~~ only 4 residents to civic office of the possible 27 seats - 15% representation. This pattern is consistent. In the last 5 elections ~~residents~~ ^{ONLY 16 RESIDENTS} east of Cambie have¹ ~~been~~ ^{BEEN} elected ~~only 16 residents~~ of 135 civic offices - a representation of only 12%. In fact, more closely examined; 13 of the 16 seats were held by ~~only~~ 4 people!

The need for a partial ward system becomes more apparent when one considers:

- that electing some alderman from areas would recognize that differences do exist in the city and would ~~foster an interaction of those parts.~~
- the inability of a single alderman ^{to} ~~representing~~ objectively and impartially the issues that are created by the diversities that exist in our cosmopolitan community.
- that past political actions at all levels, such as area planning, freeway debates, community resources boards, N.I.P., etc. have created an appetite for political involvement.

- that the costs of^a city-wide campaign are too great for "every-man" to consider entering civic government. Local aldermanic seats would provide an avenue to both an easier access to civic politics and to the development of potential civic leaders.
- that however great the effort to the contrary, aldermen elected at large are seen by much of the public as being remote. Some ward aldermen would provide greater public access particularly to those who sense that their small problem would be an intrusion.
- that the general voting public cannot choose responsibly with the information at hand 10 aldermen from a list of 56 candidates
- that TEAM's proposal would in fact enlarge council which would not only spread the workload, but would also permit problem solving both specifically and generally.
- that we must create a balance between affecting civic policies by the wishes of the community and the imposition of total civic needs on those communities.

THE PLEBISCITE

T.E.A.M. supports a plebiscite during the 1978 civic elections for the following reasons:

- the interim census demonstrates that the city has changed since the 1973 plebisite.
- there was a low "turn-out" for the last plebiscite. Approximately 50% of a normal election cast ballots.
- the wording of that plebiscite has been disputed.
- there were an abnormally high number of rejected ballots (3 or 4 times the normal rejected ballots).
- 41% wanted a change from the "at large" system in 1973 and of those, 68% wanted a partial ward system.

It is, therefore, argued that the results of the 1973 plebiscite was, in fact, inconclusive. If, for no other reason, the air should be cleared by having a plebiscite that avoids the criticisms directed towards the last one.

PERCEPTION

It is argued that the best aldermen view the city as a whole while on the other hand some view the community as the sum of its parts. TEAM contends that both views have merit and that a balance can be struck by introducing a partially ward system. To return then, to the introduction, no electoral system is perfect. Certainly the partial ward system has weaknesses, but our membership believes that

the partial ward system is an effective compromise which would be supported by the electorate at this time.

~~For your information,~~ the TEAM members along with the partial ward system support:

- enlarging the size of council
- extending council's term of office to 3 years *THUS SAVING \$100,000 EVERY*
2 YEARS FROM THE ANNUAL BUDGET.
- the position of the candidates name on the ballot be determined by lot.

Respectfully submitted,

Ron Fenwick

(on behalf of TEAM members)

RVF/spw



File

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
CITY OF VANCOUVER - CANADA

REPLY ATTN. Ms. G. Barden

DOUGLAS H. LITTLE
CITY CLERK
ROBERT HENRY
DEPUTY CITY CLERK

August 30, 1978

Refer File: 641

Mr. George Taylor
President
TEAM
7226 Carrington Street
VANCOUVER B.C.
V6N 1T9

Dear Mr. Taylor:

Arrangements have now been made for delegations to appear before Council regarding the Ward System on Tuesday, September 12, 1978, beginning at 7:30 p.m.

A tentative time of 10:10 has been allotted to your delegation.

Numerous delegations will be appearing on this item and out of consideration for them it is imperative that you restrict your presentation to 5 minutes. Please bring with you 25 copies of a brief that can be presented within this time frame.

Would you please confirm these arrangements by telephoning Grace Barden at 873-7407.

*Row Fenwick
will present brief
rno. #14
placed Sept. 7th to confirm*

Yours truly,

R Henry
CITY CLERK