

<b>Barrie Examiner (Barrie, ON)</b>			Order/Commande <b>122359</b>
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# Media ignored election reform meeting

There was certainly disappointment and surprise in the small audience that none of the local media thought it necessary to cover the Thursday (Dec. 7) evening meeting in Barrie of The Citizens' Assembly on Electoral Reform.

It had escaped me that any local media attention had been given to what many believe to be a significant possibility for improvement.

Our present "First Past the Post" electoral system has been in place since 1792, and many feel it is out of step with the times. It certainly is in need of reconsideration of its relevance.

Canada and our provincial govern-

ments are among the very few democracies that cling to the single member plurality system.

When our provincial government set up the Citizens' Assembly Secretariat many cheered and did believe that reform was possible to a system we believed to be an outdated and unrepresentative system. The inherent disregard of the majority of votes has probably contributed to the widespread apathy among voters.

No reform is possible without citizen participation and that of course requires media attention.

Perhaps the media has already judged the process to be impossible because a 60 per cent approval by ref-

erendum has been set as a powerful inhibitor to change.

Perhaps there is media consensus that the government has only thrown a sop to the masses to satisfy an election promise.

There seems to have been a lack of media discussion, criticism or comment on that topic. The media has not been critical of government for not providing sufficient budget to the process. Nor has it provided any leadership in the discussion. Is the media wholly satisfied with the status quo?

**Neil Aberle  
Barrie**

