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Reforming federal election debates in Canada

Michelle Rogers
January 2010



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Introduction-2008, Debating the Debates

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, . &"?6LL\$%9,6\$)"\$8": (H%(' &),",&)"-&H; &),"6") (,6\$) (%\$-6)6\$)"-\$%L"6)", . &"%& (?C9-" , \$, . & &"&; ,6\$)" " (?)?"8&?&H(%89)?6)7" , . &"gH&&)L" F&H&". \$-&89% , . &B" F\$9%?"=&"6)P6,&?" , \$"?&=(, & L6); &" 46)"\$H?&H" , \$" &O; %9?&" q, . &' r" , . &"#)\$)L\$H,69' " F\$9%?" . (P&" , \$" =H&(I" F6, . "6,L" \$F)" -H&; &?&) , L@!^" X\$F&P&H"6)" +&- , &' =&H" , . &"#)\$)L\$H,69' "6LL9&?" (" -H&LL" H&%&(L&" L, (,6)7" , . (, , . &"Y&(?&H"\$8" , . &"gH&&)" : (H,B" F\$9%?")\$, "="6)P6,&?" , \$"?&=(, &/"

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Of Democratic Concern

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An Argument for No Debates

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,. &" 6?&(%"

X\$F", \$" =&L, "=(%()); &" () ?"6); \$H-\$H(, &, . &"6), &H&L, L"\$8" (%L, (1 &. \$%?&HL"6L", . &"7\$ (%\$8", . 6L"
-H\$j&; ,/ "V\$" ,. (, "&)?" ,. 6L" - (-&H"L, 9?6&L", . &" . 6L, \$HB"\$8"# () (?6()) ?&=(, &L" () ?" (LL&LL&L"
6), &H) (, 6\$) (%&0-&H6&); &/"T9H". \$-&"6L", . (, "#) (?6()) L"F6%?"&=(, &, . &"?&=(, &L"F&%%=&8\$H&
,. &") &0, "&%&; 6\$)" () ?", . (, "\$9H"H&8\$H' "(7&)?" (F6, . "6, L" -H\$-\$L(%L"8\$H"(' &)?' &), L", \$", . &
B6, 6)6%8\$5&+(, 2%T5&() ?", . &"Q/(6)562&+, 9%T5&"F6%=%&" - (LL&?"=B": (H%(' &), /"

f(H6\$9L"; \$), H6=9, \$HL" , \$", . &" Y\$H, 6&" [&-\$H, " (%L"\$H&; \$7)6]&?" ,. (, " . &H&" (H&" ; \$)e%; , 6) 7"

P6?&\$, (-&?"6)" (?P()); &/^{OD}" b. 6%& ", . &" ' &?6("8&%", . &" &P&), " F (L" =\$H6) 7" - \$%L" L. \$F&?" (" ' 6%?C-H&8&H&); &"8\$H", . &"8\$H' (, "=B", . &"-9=%; /^{OU}

+6' 6%(H%B"V\$)B"d9H' ()*8\$H' &H"#. (6H"\$8", . &")&,F\$HI "#\$)L\$H,69' *FH6,&L"4A"=%&%&P&"6,"6L"
,6' &"8\$H" #() (?6()LR,. H\$97. ",. &"#[V#` , \$" -9%" ,. &" -%97"\$)" ,. &")&,F\$HI L" ()?"&),H9L,"

United States

Institutionalized Debates

V. &">' &H6; ()"-H&L6?&),6(%?&=(,&L"(H&"L-\$)L\$H&?"()?"-H\$?9;&?"=B",. &"#\$' ' 6LL6\$)"\$)" : H&L6?&),6(% <&=(,&L" 0#: <3" NL,(=%L. &?"6)"! cSS"=B",. &" [&-9=%; ()" ()?" <&' \$;H(,6;" -(H,6&L" ()?" . &(?&?"=B"8\$H' &H" ;. (6HL" \$8",. &" E(,6\$)(% <&' \$;H(,6;"#\$' ' 6,,&&" ()?" ,. &" E(,6\$)(% [&-9=%; ()"#\$' ' 6,,&&"OMH() I"M(. H&) I \$-8"()?" : (9% ^6HI 3"" ,. &"#\$' ' 6LL6\$)"6L"(")\$) -H\$e6,")\$) - (H,6L()"" U2! 0; 30_3" ; \$H-\$H(,6\$)" V. &" #: <" \$H7()6]&?" ,. &" ! cSS"" ! cc1"" ! ccW"" 122D" ()?"122S" -H&L6?&),6(% ?&=(,&L"/A," F(L" -H&;&?&?"=B",. &" Y&(79&"\$8" b\$' &)" f\$,&HL""F. 6; . "L-\$)L\$H&?" ,. &"! cQW""! cS2"()?"! cSD"?&=(,&L/

A%%9L,H(,6P&"\$8",. &"&0,&),," \$"F. 6; . -(H,6&L",HB", \$" ; \$),H\$%,. &"?&=(,&L""6)"! cSQ",. &"Y&(79& F6,. ?H&F"8H\$' "?&=(,&L"L-\$)L\$HL. 6-"6)"-H\$,&L," (7(6)L",. &"6)e%9&); &"\$8",. &" - (H,6&L/"V. &" Y&(79&KL",H9L,&&L"PS,&?"9) ()6' \$9L%B", \$" -9%%\$9,"8H\$' ",. &"?&=(,&L" ()?"\$)"T; , \$=&H_H?" ! cSS",. &B"6LL9&?"("H(' (,6; -H&LL"H&%&(L&J

"#\$%Z\$691\$(3% (4\$, %/(&\$/2%2% +&#)/6' +, 9%2. (, 2(/2#+. %(3%#\$\$ /\$2+)\$, &+68%)\$; 6&\$2%

>"L-&;6(%>;"\$8#)\$7H&LL" F(L"H&i 96H&?"\$,"L&,"(L6?&" ,. &"&i 9(% ,6' &" -H\$P6L6\$)L" \$8" ,. &
#\$' ' 9)6; (,6\$)L">; ,/T, . &HF6L&"" ,. &"=H\$(?; (L,&HL"F\$9%?". (P&". (?,"\$"(L\$"-H\$P6?&"&i 9(%
,6' &,"\$,. &" ()B" 6)\$H"-(H,B"-H&L6?&),6(%; ()?6?(,&L" F. 6; . "F\$9%?". (P&"-H&;%9?&?" ,. &
?&=(,&L"8H\$' ". (-&)6)7! 2!

>"?&=(,& . 6(,9L" \$8" L60,&&)"B&(HL" &)L9&?" F. 6%&" >' &H6; ()" - \$%,6; L" F&H&" ?6L,H(; ,&?"=B"
' (,&HL"L9; . "(L" ,. &"f6&,) (' "b(H" ()?" ,. &"b (,&H7(,&L; ()?(% "b . &)"?&=(,&L"H&,9H)&?"6)"
!cQW"#\$)7H&LL"H&89L&?"\$,"L&,"(L6?&" ,. &"#\$' ' 9)6; (,6\$)L">; , (L"6, . (?%6)"! cW2" , \$"(%%\$F"
8\$H" 9)&i 9(% ; \$P&H(7&" \$8" ,. & , F\$ "%(76)7" -H&L6?&),6(%; ()?6?(,&L! 21 " " V. &H&8\$H&"" ()"
\$9,L6?&L-\$)L\$H" F(L"L\$97. , "L\$" ,. (, , . &)"& , F\$HIL"; \$9%?"; \$P&H" ,. &"?&=(,& (L" ("0=\$) ("e6?&

0=6-(H,6L()K"H(, . &H", . () "b) \$) - (H,6L()K"X&"H&6,&H(, &?" . 6L"; . (H7&"(7(6)"6) "122D"(8,&H"=86) 7"
&0; %9?&?"8H\$' " , . \$L&"?&=(, &L! !D"m"

V. &"122S"?&=(, &L"=, F&&)"d(H(; I" T=(' (" () ?" I\$.) " 5; # (6) "6' -%&' &), &?" (" ' \$H&"8H&&
e%\$F6) 7"8\$H' (, , . () . (?="&&)"L&&)"6" -H&P6\$9L"B&(HL"V. &"#: <"4F () , &?"("H&(O&?"8\$H' (, ,
, . (, "6); %9?&?" , 6' &"8\$H"9) -H&?6; , (= &" i 9&L, 6\$) 6) 7" () ?"; . (%&) 7&L@! !U"VF\$" \$8" , . & , . H&&
-H&L6?&), 6(% ?&=(, &L" (%\$F&?") 6) &, BCL&; \$) ?" () LF&HL" , \$" i 9&L, 6\$) L" 8\$%\$F&?" =B" e6P&
' 6) 9, &L" \$8"\$-\$-&)"?6L; 9LL6\$) /" >" , . 6H?"?&=(, &," \$ \$1" , . &"8\$H" "\$8" (" , \$F)". (%&' &&, 6) 7" F6, . "
i 9&L, 6\$) L" =B" 9); \$' ' 6, &?" P\$, &HL" L(' -%&?" =B" , . &" g(%9- " TH7() 6] (, 6\$) /! !W" V. &" P6; &C
-H&L6?&), 6(% ?&=(, &L" . \$F&P&H" (? \$-\$, &?" (" ' \$H&"H676?"8\$H' (, " ?9&," \$" 5; # (6) KL"; \$); &H)"
(=\$9, " , . &"6) &O-&H&6); &"\$8" . 6L" P6; &C-H&L6?&), 6(% ; () ?6? (, &+ (H. " : (%&) ! !Q" () ?" (%\$F&?"
\$) %B", F\$ " 6) 9, &L" \$8"?6L; 9LL6\$) -&H" i 9&L, 6\$) /"

Challengers to the Commission on Presidential Debates

g. \$, % = \$; 6&\$2" (") \$) -H\$e6, ") \$) - (H,6L() "\$H7() 6] (, 6\$) " ; H6, 6; 6] &L" , . &" #: <" (L" =86) 7"
=6-(H,6L() "H(, . &H", . () ") \$) - (H,6L() " ; %\$L&?" , \$, . &"L977&L, 6\$) "\$8"8\$H' (, ; . () 7&() ?", . 6H?"
- (H, B"; () ?6? (, &L! !S" A, L" 8\$9) ?&H" g&\$H7&"M(H(. " FH6, &L" 6) . 6L" = \$ \$1" L (% = \$; 6&\$ [% \ (' %&# \$"
P\$. 1; 8+56, % ,) % = \$ 4 (5/6&+5%E6 / &+\$2%A5 / \$&87%B (, & / (8%# \$%E / \$2+) \$, &+68% = \$; 6&\$2" , . (, , . &"#: <"
6L" (" =6-(H,6L() "\$H7() 6] (, 6\$) " (; , 6) 7" , \$" 6) L9% (, & , . &" ' (j\$H" - (H,6&L" 8H\$' " ; . (%&) 7&() ?"
i 9&L, 6\$) /! !c"

A) "122D" , . &"dH&)) (" #&), &H"8\$H" I9L, 6; &"6)"; \$) j9); ; 6\$) " F6, . , &)" \$, . &H" -H\$C?&' \$; H(; B"
; 6P6; "7H\$9-L! 12"H&%&(L&?"("H&-\$H, ; % (6' 6) 7", . (, , . &"#: <"4' (Li 9&H(?&qLr" (L" (") \$) - (H,6L() "
L-\$) L\$H@ () ?" 4L&; H&, %B" L9=' 6, L" , \$" , . &" ?&' () ?L" \$8" , . &" [&-9=%; () () ?" <&' \$; H(, 6; "
; () ?6? (, &L@! !1" A, ; \$); %9?&?" J"

" # \$ % (, 2\$01\$, 5\$2%(3%215#%) \$5\$. &+-\$46f(/% 6/&7% (, & / (8%6/\$%) +2&/ \$22+, 9-%B6,) +) 6&\$2"
&% (&\$ / 2% 6, &% (%2\$ \$ % / \$ % (3&\$, %R581) \$) : %215#%62%P (22%E\$ / (&40221\$2%# \$ % T 4 \$ / +56, %
. \$ (. 8\$% 6, &% (%# \$ % / %; (1&% / \$ % (3&\$, %9, (/ \$) : %215#%62% / \$ % % / 6) \$ % 6,) % # +8) % (- / &7%
T,) % # \$ %) \$; 6&\$2#6-\$% \$ \$, % \$) 15\$) % (% 62\$ / + \$ 2% (3%98 (/ + \$) % +. 6 / & + 26, % \$ ' 2%
5 (, 3\$ / \$, 5\$2-% , % # + 5# % # \$ % P\$. 1; 8+56, % ,) % = \$ 4 (5/6&+5%6,) +) 6&\$2%R5#6, 9\$%
4 \$ 4 (/ + \$) % 2 (1,) % + & \$ 2 @ J J

>L" (" L\$%9, 6\$) " , . &" H&-\$H, " -H\$-\$L&?" , . &" #6, 6] &) KL" <&=(, &" # \$ ' ' 6LL6\$) " 0# < #3" (L" () "
(%&H) (, 6P&" -H&L6?&), 6(% ?&=(, &" L-\$) L\$H" #H&(, &?" 6) " I () 9 (HB" 122D" =B" g. \$, % = \$; 6&\$2" , . &"
< # (6' L" , \$" L-\$) L\$H" e6P&") 6) &, BC' 6) 9, &" -H&L6?&), 6(% ?&=(, &L" () ?" \$) &) 6) &, BC' 6) 9, &"

P6; &"-H&L6?&),6(%?&=(, &"V. &"#<#"=\$HH\$F&?"8H\$' ",. &"

(LL&' =%&" ("?6P&HL&" - ()&%\$8" (; (?&' 6; *; 6P6; * (H,6L,6; *H&%76\$9L *' ' &?6("%(\$H" ()?"
=9L6)&LL"%&(?&HL", \$"(LI "i 9&L,6\$)L! 10

United Kingdom

V. \$97. "#() (?("6) . &H6,&?" ("-(H%(' &), (HB"LBL,&' "\$8"7\$P&H)' &), "8H\$' "N)7%()?"%&(?&HL"
?&=(, &L" (H&

A) "122U", . &"dd#" (6H&?" ,. &" -H\$7H(' "Y1\$2&+(, %''+4\$!"V. H&&" ; ()?6?(, &L" - (H,6; 6- (, &?"6)" (" L&H6&L" \$8" L-&; 6(% =H\$(?; (L, L" ?9H6) 7" F. 6; . "&(; . " ; ()?6?(, &" (%\$)&" \$)" L, (7&" () LF&H&?" i 9&L, 6\$) L" 8H\$' " ,. &" L, 9?6\$" (9?6&); &" ()?" (" ' \$?&H(, \$H" >77H&LL6P&" i 9&L, 6\$) 6) 7" =B" (9?6&); &" ' &' =&HL" F(L" (%\$F&?" ()?" ,. &" ' \$?&H(, \$H" -H&LL&?" ; ()?6?(, &L" , \$" () LF&H" F. &H&"6, "L&&' &?" ,. &B" F&H&"&P(?6) 7" i 9&L, 6\$) L/! -c"

¹-c"56)\$F"()?"Y(' (B"122S"SW/

>, ,. &"122D"?&=(, &"%& (?&HL" F&H&"i 9&L, 6\$) &?"=B" ("e6P&C' &' =&H" - ()&% "H&-H&L&), 6) 7"& (; . " \$8", . &"' (j\$H">9L, H(%()) "' &?6("7H\$9-L"6)L, &("?\$8"=B" ("L6) 7"&" \$?&H(, \$H"V. &"&P&), " F(L . \$L, &?"=B"#. ())&%E6)&"F6, . ">d#"(L", . &"\$)%B"\$, . &H")&, F\$HI", \$"(6H", . &"?&=(, &L"#. ())&% E6)&" (%L"\$ (6H&?"6, L"; 9L, \$' (HB"8\$%\$F"9-"-H\$7H(' "8&(, 9H6) 7", . &"oF\$H' K" "V. &"-H\$7H(' " Z6&\$8+, \$"0\$)">d#3"H&-\$H, &?" ,. (, "\$)%B"\$)&"6)", &)">9L, H(%())L" F(, ; . &?" ,. &"122D"?&=(, &" ()? ,. &B" F&H&" \$L, %B"\$P&H"D2"B&(HL"\$8"(7&' b. &)"T12&/68+6, 10) (8\$9, ?6?" ,. &"?&=(, &L"8\$H" P6&F&HL. 6-" ; H6, 6; L"=&7()", \$"; (%8\$H", . 6H?C-(H, B"\$H7()6] (, 6\$)"\$8", . &"?&=(, &L"! U2

V. &"122Q%"9-153(-122cm[(V. &)-31010. 11F)6"cu(\$H)97(-48-7Tm/Fq8i 4T]TJ11Tf[(")-90(\$9,)75

Conclusions

$T) \$4 (5/6 + 5/2 (5 + \$7\% \$\$) 2\%4 (/ \$\% \#6, \%128\%8\$5\&+, \%)\$; 6\&\$2\%\$ - \$/7\%\$' \%7\$6/2\<03\% \#\$2\$%$
 $) \$; 6\&\$2\% / \$\% (\% (1/+2\#\%5+-+5\%51881/\% \# \$7\%4 128\% \$\%4; \$)) \$)\% , \%6, \%\$ - \$/K) \$ - \$8 (. +, 9\%$

V. &"8\$H; &" \$8" -&HL\$) (%B" ' (, &HL"6)"?&=(, &L" =&; (9L&"6, " (I &L"6); H&?6=%&"L, (' 6) (")?"&7\$", \$"&)?9H&"F. ("6L"?&' ()?&?"\$8"-\$%6,6;6()L/

"#\$%E(8+&+5+6, 2[! " #\$\$+&4. &\$-. &/ +%\$\$'/O+1\$"#\$&2+'(. %6,)%&(%: \$%&6F\$, %2\$/+(1287%: 7%#\$\$, \$&' (/F2n%6,)%&(% +, <

! : \$%6,6; (% - (H,6&L"F () , ("L(8&"-%(; &"8\$H" , . &6H"; ()?6?(, &L" , \$" -H&L&) , , &' L&%P&L"6)"

6);%9?&". . &"L9=j&; " \$8"%&(?&HL"?&=(, &L" . . &"Y\$H,6&"#\$' ' 6LL6\$)" F(L"; \$)?9; ,&?")&(H%B" ,F&),B"B&(HL"(7\$!": 9=%;" \$9; ;HB"\$P&H" . . &"6)6,6(%?&; 6L6\$)" ,"\$&0; %9?&"N%](=, . . "5(B"8H\$' " ?&=(,6)7"6)" . . &"%(L," &%&; ,6\$)L"L977&L,L"6,"6L" . 67. " ,6' &" ,"\$, (I&" ("8H&L. "%\$! " (, . . &" F(B" ?&=(, &L"(H&"\$H7()6]&?"6)" . . 6L"; \$9) ,HB/""

V. &" -9=%;" ,6L&%B" (-&-(HL" H&(?"B" 8\$H" ; . ()7&L' >" H&; &)" - "\$%" -H&- (H&?" 8\$H" . . &" 59)I" <&=(, &L"=B"D, , (-6&+-\$%P\$2\$6/5#%S/(1."6)?6; (, &L" . . (,"Q! k "\$8"#() (?6()L"L9--\$H, ,9H)6)7" . . &" \$H7()6](,6\$)" \$8" . . &" ?&=(, &L" \$P&H" ,"\$ ()" 6)?&-&)?&)" , ()?")\$) - (H,6L() "?&=(, &L" ;\$' ' 6LL6\$)!^{UU}"E\$F" . . (,"#() (?(" . (L"?&=(, &?" . . &"F\$H, . "\$8"?&=(, &L"())?" ;H6,6;6]&?" . . &" L, (,9L"i 9\$" . . &" #+<" -H\$-\$L(%8\$H" . . &"H&8\$H" "\$8" . . &"#() (?6() ,&%&P6L&?"&(?&HL"?&=(, &L" L. \$9?"=&; \$)L6?&H&?"=B": (H%(' &)" ,=&8\$H& . . &)"&0, "&%&; ,6\$)!"

Should the debates be mandatory?

!j \$% \$\$)%(#688\$, 9\$%#\$\$ (8+568% 6/&+\$2%(% 6/&+5+. 6&\$%, %% \$(. 8\$H2%)\$; 6&\$%,)% 5/\$6&\$%6-\$, 1\$% #/\$%#\$\$ (8+568%/+2F%(/%86)\$/2%(%5#((2\$% (&%(% 6/&+5+. 6&\$%2 +, 5/\$62+, 9<?kC

A)"#() (?(" 76P&)" . . (,")"\$%&76L%(,6\$)" ; \$P&HL" &%&; ,6\$)" ?&=(, &L"?6H&; ,%B" - (H,6;6-(,6\$)"6L" (" P\$%9) , (HB"(88(6H"V. \$97. " . . &"\)6,&?"+, (, &L"9L&L" . . &"#\$' ' 6LL6\$)"\$): H&L6?&)" ,6(%<&=(, &L" (L" (")\$) - (H,6L() "\$H7()6]6)7" - (H,B" . . &" ?&=(, &L" (H&" (7(6)")\$," ' ()?(, \$HB" A)" ! cQ1" 8\$H&L&&6)7"E60\$)KL"H&89L(%," ?&=(, &"5; g\$P&H)" . . &"Q(56%P6&(, %L\$' 2"-H6) ,&?J

!j %2&/ (, 987%1/9\$%#\$\$5 (, 9/22%(% 622%2(4\$%8\$5&+(, %/\$3(/42%\$9+286&+(, %88(' +, 9% &#+2%7\$6/H2%L (-\$4; \$/%8\$5&+(, :% #+5#% (18)% , 581)\$% /(-+2+(, 2%46F+, 9%)\$; 6&\$2% 46,)6&(/7%, %81&1/\$% /\$2+) \$, &+68%/65\$2<?kM%

A)" \IH(6) &" &%&; ,6\$)"%(FL" H&i 96H&" . . (," . . &" ' &?6("\$H7()6]&" ()?" =H\$(?; (L," &%&; ,6\$)" ?&=(, &L"6)P\$%P6)7"(%H&76L, &H&?" ; ()?6?(, &L"8\$H"-H&L6?&)" ,6(% ()?" - (H%(' &)" , (HB"&%&; ,6\$)L" T/&+58\$% @h" (" . 9' ()" H67. ,L" \$H7()6](,6\$)" 8\$; 9L6)7" \$)" 8H&&?\$' " \$8" &0-H&LL6\$)" ()?" 6)8\$H' (,6\$)" . (L" ;(%&?" . . 6L" H&i 96H&' &)" , ()" &0; &LL6P&%B" \$)&H\$9L" \$=%7(,6\$)" 8\$H" . . &" ' &?6(" ()?" (H79&L" . . (," 6," ' (B)"\$," ; . 6&P&"6,L" (6' "\$8"6)8\$H' 6)7" . . &" &%&; , \$H, (& V. &" \$H7()6](,6\$)" \$-6)&L" . . (," 8H&&" (; &LL" ,"\$ (6H,6' &" 8\$H" - (H,6&L" ()?" ; ()?6?(, &L" 6L" ' \$L," &88&; ,6P&()?"H&; \$' ' &)"?L" . . &"H&i 96H&' &)" ,"\$8" ()?(, \$HB"?&=(, &L"=&(' &)"?&?!"

-(H,6;6-(, &" F\$9%"?"?"\$, \$" (" ; ()?6?(, &KL" ; (' - (67)!" E&P&H, . &%&LL" , . &" 122S" ?&=(, &L" ?"\$
L977&L, , . (, L9; . "H&-9, (, 6\$) (%H6LIL" (B") \$, "=&"; \$), H\$%6) 7` (L" , . &"#\$) L&HP(, 6P&" , . H&(,
)\$, " , \$" - (H, 6; 6-(, &"6)" , . &" ?&=(, &L" (I &L" ; %&(H" A) ?&&?" , . &H&"6L" ("H&(% - \$LL6=6%, B" , . (, (,
L\$' &"-\$6), "6)" , . &"89, 9H&" , . &" - (H, 6&L" () ?" , . &") &, F\$HIL" F6%8(6%, \$" H&(; . "(7H&&' &)" , "\$)"
, . &" , &H' L"\$8" , . &" ?&=(, &" () ?" , . &" &%&; , \$H(, &" F6% =&" H\$==&?"\$8" , . 6L"6' - \$H, () , "%&(H)6) 7"
\$--\$H, 9)6, B/

!P\$4\$4; \$/%#(' %6. +) %&%2% +&#(1&%) \$; 6&\$2-0%\$8%2(%2&/ (, 987% ; (1&%(/96, +>6&+(, 2%
6,)%2&/15&1/\$2% \$5612\$% #\$, %7(1%) (, H-\$%) \$; 6&\$:%7(1%)/646&+56887%, #6, 5\$%#%\$%
. (' \$/%(3%#%\$, 514; \$, &%6,)%&/\$4\$,) (1287%)+26)-6, &69\$%#%5#688\$, 9\$/21 ' #+5#%
)(\$2% (&%\$8. %) \$4(5/657<?kh

5\$H&\$P&H"6)"122S"6)"?&;6?6)7", \$" F. \$' " , \$"&0, &)"? , . &"6)P6, (, 6\$) , \$" ?&=(, &" , . &" E&, F\$HI "
#\$) L\$H, 69' "H&; &6P&?"8&&?=(; I"8H\$' " , . &" - (H, 6&L"; \$) ?&')6) 7" 5 (BKL"6); %9L6\$) /">; ; \$H?6) 7"
, \$" +L? \$--\$H, 9)6, B/

A) ", . &6H"; 9HH&), "L, (&"', . &"#() (?6() "?&=(, &L=&%\$) 7", \$", . &")&, F\$HIL" F. 6; . "" 9L, "; (&H", \$" , . &"-\$%, 6; 6()L", \$" &)L9H&" - (H, 6; 6- (, 6\$) /" #)\$)L6L, &), %B" (%(L-&; ,L"\$8", . &"?&; 6L6\$)C' (I 6) 7" -H\$; &LL&L" (H&"I &-,"L&; H&, "8H\$' " , . &"-9=%; "" ()?"', . &"?&; 6L6\$)L" (H&"(?". \$; ` 6/&"', . &H&". (P& =&&)"\$"; \$)L6L, &), "H9%&L", . (,"F\$9%?"(LL6L, "H()L-(H&); B"()?"(; ;\$9), (=6%, B"

!" () 6712% A) \$; 6&\$2%/\$%(/5#\$2&/6&\$) % 7%#\$\$' (% 6/&+\$2%1% (%, \$%9+-\$2%+. %2\$/-+5\$%& (%

V. &H&8\$H&™ (?\$-,6)7",. &" ;H6,&H6(" L977&L,&?"=B",. &" gH&&)" : (H,B" 1-.%) "/" ' &)" &#" #%' %)
1-/1)1-')&.3-1)1#)" /&1.6." /1').\$)' /6-)#7)1-')A\$34.%-)#&)1-')C&' \$6-) (' * /1' %)-#@4()
&' B@.&')1-/1)/6/\$ (. (/1')O' ' 1)1-&' ')#7)1-')7#44#: . \$3)7#@&)6&.1' &./0)

!/ =&(" " &' =&H"\$8"("-\$%,6; (%-(H,B" F6,. "(,%&(L,"U"-&H; &),"L9--\$H,"6") (,6\$) (%
\$-6)6\$)"-\$%L_n

1/ =&(" "L6,,6)7"5:

_/ =&(" " &' =&H"\$8"("8&?&H(%B"89)?&?"-(H,B_n

D/ =&(" " &' =&H"\$8"("8&?&H(%-(H,B",. (. (L("89%%H\$L,&H"\$8"; ()?6?(, &L"(; H\$LL",. &
) (,6\$)/

V. &"d%\$;™ 8\$H"&0(' -%&™ F\$9%?"i 9(%8B", \$"-(H,6;6-(,&"6)"=\$,.,. &"MH&);. "?&=(,&" ()?" ,. &"

' 67. , " . \$F&P&H" 7H(, & - (H, B"6) , &H&L, L" F. 6; . , &) ? " , \$" 8(P\$9H"; (' - (67)6) 7" , 6' & (8, &H" , . & ?&=(, &"6)"; (L&"\$8" - \$H" - &H8\$H' () ; &' > ; ; \$' ' \$?(, 6) 7" , . &L&" , F\$ - \$L6, 6\$) L" d&H)6&H" () ? 5\$)6uH&" (?P\$; (, & , F\$?&=(, &L` \$) & . &%?" (, , . &"\$) L& , "\$8" , . &"; (' - (67)" , \$ - 6i 9& - 9=%; 6) , &H&L, " () ? " (L& ; \$) ? . &%?" ("F&&I" = &8\$H&"&%&; , 6\$) "? (B' ^{OW}"

d&H)6&H" () ? 5\$)6uH&" L9 -- \$H, "L& - (H(, &"N) 7%L. " () ? "MH&); . "?&=(, &L"0(L" , . &B"; \$) L6?&H" , . & =6%) 79(% ?&=(, & &0 - &H6' &) , "\$8" ! cWS"9) L9; ; &LL89%3" =9, " ?\$) \$, " L - &; 68B" F. & , . &H" , . &B 6) , &) ? , . (, (" ?&=(, & = & . &%?"6) "&(; . "%() 79(7&=\$, . "(, , . & = &76)) 6) 7" () ? "(, , . &"&)" ? "\$8" , . & ; (' - (67) / " A) " () B" ; (L&" , . &B" ?\$ " L977&L, " , . (, " 8\$9H" ?&=(, &L" F\$9%?" = & , . &" ' (06' 9' " L9 -- \$H, &?" = B"P6&F&H"6) , &H&L, "0&(; . "F6, . ("H9)) 6) 7" , 6' &"\$8" , F\$. \$9HL3" V. &B" (%L\$) (?P6L& ?\$6) 7" (F(B" F6, . " L6) 7%&C6LL9&" ?&=(, &L" L(P&" F. &H&" (" - (H, 6; 9%(H" 6LL9&" ?\$' 6) (, &L" , . & ; (' - (67) / "

V. 6L" - (-&H" L9 -- \$H, L" V\$) B" d9H' () KL" 122W" ?&; 6L6\$) , "\$6) ; H&(L&" , . &)" 9' = &H" \$8" &%&; , 6\$) " ?&=(, &L" b&" - H\$ - \$L&" , . (, (" L&H6&L" \$8" &%&; , 6\$) " ?&=(, &L" = & . &%?" F&&I" B" , . HS97. \$9, " , . & ; (' - (67) / " V. & 6) ; %9L6\$) " \$8" ' \$H&" ?&=(, &L" F\$9%?" L\$%P&" L\$' &" \$8" , . & - H\$ = %&' L" 8\$H"

b&" ; \$); 9H" F6, . "#\$%' ()", . (, " 4?&=(, &" %&L" (, " ,. &" . &(H, " \$8" ?&' \$; H(; B@! S! " : 9=%; ?&%=&H(,6\$) "6L" ()&; &LL(HB"-H&; \$) ?6,6\$) ", \$"6)8\$H' &?" ; 6,6]&) "P\$,6) 7" TH7()6]&?"&%&; ,6\$) " ?&=(, &L"; ()" (1 &"("L67)6e6; () ; , \$), H6=9,6\$) ", \$"L9; . "?&%=&H(,6\$) /"V. &"&O6L,6) 7"LBL, &' "6) # () (?("F. 6%&; \$), H6=9,6) 7" \$, . 6L" -H\$; &LL"; ()" =&"7H&(, %B"6' -H\$P&?" /"V. 6L"L, 9?"B"\$88&HL" () (7&)?("=B"F. 6; . , . 6L"; ()" =&"(; . 6&P&?/

Summary of Recommendations

- 1) V&%&P6L&?"%&(?&HL" ?&=(, &L" L. \$9%?" =&" &) , H&) ; . &?"6) ", . &" B6, 6) 6% C8\$5&+(, 2% T5&%() ?" Q/(6) 562&+, 9% T5&<
- 2) M&?"&H(% - (H, B" 89) ?6) 7" 8\$H" &%&; ,6\$) " ; (' - (67) L" L. \$9%?" =&" ; \$) , 6) 7&) , " 9-\$) " 89%& - (H, 6; 6- (, 6\$) "6) "%&(?&HL" ?&=(, &L/
- 3) V. &" B6, 6) 6% C8\$5&+(, 2% T5&%&. \$9%?" ; H&(, & , . &" B6, 6) +6, %= \$; 6&\$2%B((. \$/6&+- \$%#< #3" , \$" \$H7() 6]& , . &" ?&=(, &L/""
- 4) <&=(, &L" L. \$9%?" =&" . &%?"6) " = \$, . "N) 7%L. " () ?" MH&) ; . n" , . \$97. " - (H, B" %&(?&HL" L. \$9%?" . (P& , \$" i 9(%8B"8\$H" &(; . "?&=(, &L/
- 5) : (H, B"6) ; %9L6\$) " ; H6, &H6("L. \$9%?" =&" , . H&&" \$8"8\$9HJ" 63" UK "L9-- \$H, "6) ") (, 6\$) (% - \$%&L" 663" ("L&(, "6) " : (H%(' &) , n" 6663" ("89%& H\$ L, &H" \$8" ; () ?6? (, &L" (; H\$LL" , . &) (, 6\$) n" 6P3" 8& ?&H(% 89) ?6) 7" "
- 6) >" L&H6&L" \$8" ?&=(, &L" L. \$9%?" , (1 &" -%(; & , . H\$97. \$9, " , . &" ; (' - (67) " =& , F&&) " - (H, B" H&-H&L&) , (, 6P&L" \$) ") (, 6\$) (% () ?" H&76\$) (% , . &' &L" () ?" , . &L&" L. \$9%?" =&" =H\$ (? ; (L, " \$) " ; \$' -%&' &) , (HB" L-& ; 6(% B" ; . ()) &%L/
- 7) A) , . &" e6) (% F&&I L" \$8" , . &" &%&; ,6\$) " ; (' - (67) " , F \$" %& (?&HL" ?&=(, &L" L. \$9%?" , (1 &" -%(; &n" , . &" e6HL, " \$) " 8&(, 9H6) 7" (% i 9(%8B6) 7" - (H, B" %& (?&HL" () ?" , . &" L& ; \$) ?" 8&(, 9H6) 7" , . &" : H6' &" 56) 6L, &H" () ?" , . &" - (H, B" %& (?&H"8H\$' " , . &" . 67. &L, " - \$%&) 7" \$ -- \$L6, 6\$) " - (H, B" "
- 8) N%&; ,6\$) " ?&=(, &" i 9&L, 6\$) L" L. \$9%?" =&" =H\$ (?&) &?" , \$" 6) ; %9?& (" F6?&H" 9) 6P&HL&" \$8" - (H, 6; 6- () , L" 0-&H. (-L" (L16) 7" 8\$H' &H" -H6' &" 6) 6L, &HL" , \$ - \$L&" i 9&L, 6\$) L" , \$, . &) &F" %& (?&HL3" %& (?&HL" L. \$9%?" =&" -&H' 6, , &?" , \$" i 9&L, 6\$) " &(; . "\$, . &H" "
- 9) V. &" 9L&" \$8" L\$; 6(%) & , F \$HI 6) 7" -%(, 8\$H' L" L. \$9%?" =&" &0-%\$6, &?" , \$" =H\$ (?&) , . &" H&(; . " () ?" (-- & (% \$8" &%&; ,6\$) " ?&=(, &L/

! S! "#\$%' () "122S" ! /

#6,6]&Kl"<&=(,&"#\$' ' 6LL6\$)l". ,,-JhhFFFF/;6,6]&)L?&=(,&/\$H7h
#%(HI ""I\$&/"4Y&,"N%](=,&,. "5(B"+-&(I@S8(: \$%6,)M6+8:%5(H; . "_!"122cI"
#%(HI &"X(H\$%?"<&8&)?(,"I()&"I&' L\$)"Y(FH&);&"Y&<9;"()?"I\$.)"X/": (' ' &,,/0! cc! 3! T; 2\$, &M6,)6&\$:%
D, &\$/. /\$&+, 9%B#6, 9\$%, %B6, 6)+6, %C8\$5&+(, 2:%A\$5(,)%C)++(, /"V\$H\$), \$J"g(7&l"
#\$\$&' () "+, &- . &)/0! ccQ3"4V&%&P6L&?"Y&(?&HLK"<&=(, &L">)"&P(%9(, 6\$)"()?"(-H\$-\$L(%#^6)7CX(%6: (-&H"
E\$_"V. &"X()L(H?"+\$; 6&, B"8\$H": (H%(' &), (HB"g\$P&H)' &), ""Y\$)?\$)/"
#\$\$&' () "+, &- . &)/0! ccS3"4V. &,"&%&P6L&?"Y&(?&HLK"?&=(, &6)"dH6, (6)J"8H\$' ", (%6)7". &(?L", \$". &(?%&LL"
; . 6; I &)L@E6/8+64\$, &6/7%T336+/2% S10! W3/

^&\$F)&""Y&L%&C>))&/"4^&&-6)7"9-"F6,. ". &"6' &LJ"# () (?6()L()?).. &6H")&FL" &?6("6&,lB6, 6)+6, %A(5+68%
"/\$,.)2%A&6&2&+52%B6, 6)6:B6&68(91\$%L (%@KUUb<

Y()\$9&""<(P6?"I/"0! cc! 3"4<=&(, &L"V. (,"5(, &H&?"J"F\$, &HLK"[&(, 6\$)", \$", .. &"! cSD"# () (?6() "Y&(?&HL. 6-"
<=&(, &L@""B6, 6)+6, % (1/, 68%(3%E(8+&+568%A5+\$, 5\$-F\$%"! S""E\$%"! ""U! CWU/

Y&<9; ""Y(FH&); &()"?)? [6; . (H?": H6; &/"0! cSU3"4gH&(, "<=&(, &L"V. &"V&%&P6L&?"Y&(?&HL. 6- "<=&(, &L"\$8"! cQC@""
B6, 6)+6, % (1/, 68%(3%E(8+&+568%A5+\$, 5\$-F\$%"! S""E\$%"! ""_UC! U_

Y&<9; ""Y(FH&); &/"0! cc23""4: (H,B"+,H(, &76&L"()?).. &"9L&"\$8", &%&P6L&?"; (' -(67)"?&=(, &L@^%F&H">; (?&' 6;"
: 9=%L. &HL""E&, . &H%() ?L"

Y&<9; ""Y(FH&); &/"0! ccW3/"4V. &"Y&(?&HL"<=&(, &L"#H6, 6; (%NP&), "\$H"E\$)CNP&), l@A)"" #B6, 6)+6, %\$\$, \$/68%
C8\$5&+(, %(3%hha""&?6, &?"=B">%("MH6]]&% "I\$.)"X": (' ' &,"()?">), . \$)B"b&L, &%%T, , (F(J"#(H&, \$)"
)6P&HL6, B": H&LL/

5(B""N%) (=, . l"0122c3"Z(2+, 9%B(, *+)\$, 5\$[E(' \$/:% (8+&+52:%,)%#%5/+2+2%, %B6, 6)+6, %) \$4(5/657-%/SH\$), \$J"
5; #%&%%()?"p"+, &F(H,

56) \$F""E&F, \$)E"/()?"#H(67"Y/"Y(' (B"0122S3"/D, 2+) \$%#%E/\$2+)\$, &+68%=\$; 6&\$2""#. 6; (7\$J"\)6P&HL6, B"\$8"
#. 6; (7\$": H&LL/

56; . &%%>9L, 6)l"012223"4V. &"gH&(, "dH6, 6L. "NO; &- , 6\$)l@A)"" \$8\$-+2\$)%C8\$5&+(, %=\$; 6&\$2:0, &\$/, 6&+(, 68%
E\$/2. \$5&+- \$2"&?6, &?"=B"+, &- . &)"#%&' ()""! 2DC! 1! l"E&F"G\$HI J"+, "5(H, 6)KL": H&LL"A); /

5\$. (' ' (?""+9L()/"4T9H"Y&(?&HL"<=&(, &L"(H&"#\$), H\$%&?"=B", . &"V"F"E&, F\$HI LJ"AL"6, "V6' &"\$, \$": 9%, . &": %97a@""
4658\$6, 256""+&- , &' =&H"! U""122S/

E9' =&H! 27\$P/9l/"4b. (, ("H&": H6' &"56)6L, &HL"Z9&L, 6\$)La@l()9(HB"1! ""122D/

TKE&6%5(H7\$, /"4A' - (; "\$8"Y&(?&HL"<=&(, "Z9&L, 6\$) &?"@Z6&\$8+, \$""+&- , &' =&H"! _""122D/

T-&)"<=&(, &L""FFF/\$-&?&=(, &L/\$H7

: 9=%; "E\$, 6; &#[V"! cSSC! D1/"0! cSS3/"1"+&- , &' =&H

: 9=%; "E\$, 6; &#[V#"! ccUCDD/"0! ccU3/"! U"5(H; . /

[\$=&H, L\$)""I(' &L["""?)?+&=(L, 6()"+-())\$/"0122S3"4V. &"#() (?6() "N%&; , \$H(%+BL, &' l@Y6=H(HB"\$8": (H%(' &), ""
Y(F"()?"g\$P&H)' &), "<6P6L6\$)/

[\$B(%#\$' ' 6LL6\$)"\$) "N%&; , \$H(%[&8\$H' "())?": (H, B"M6) (); 6)7/"0! cc! q100-10792cmBT1000BT10-58.

! ""#\$%&'()*+,-#./0,1(-2#(0,3\$%-456#

Televised Election Debates in Canada: Reality TV or Useful Political Discourse?

V. &L&")\$,&L" -H&L&)," (" L9' ' (HB" \$8" ., &" -H&L&),(,6\$)L" ()?" ;\$' ' &),L" ' (?&" \$)" +&-,&' =&H"1U" 122c" (," (" -9=%;"H\$9)?,(=%%. \$L,&?"=B",. &"#<(" Z9&&)(L"\)6P&HL6,B"6)" H&L-\$)L&,\$",. &"?H(8,"\$8",. 6L"-(-&H"

Setting the Stage: Are Canadians tuning in or turned off?

, -#O/%)!;)EF: #&1-+

<8-/.&?)8' \$1&')7#&)1-')! 1@(+)#7)=' O#6&/6+>

y T9H"#&),H&". (L",. H&&" (6)"-9H-\$L&L"()?"(' \$)7",. &' "6L"("-(H,6;9%(H";\$' ' 6,' &)," \$&);\$9H(76)7";6,6]&)"&)7(7&' &),"()?"=H\$(?&H"L&)L&"\$8";6,6]&)L. 6-/

y >;(?&' &' ' 9L," ,HB" ,"\$ -H\$' \$,&' . 6L" -9=%;"?6L;\$9HL&"()?")&,F\$HIL" L. \$9%?" =&" 8(6H" 09)=6(L&?3"6)8\$H' (,6P&"()?" , (, (%]6)7"6)"?&%P&H6)7"'. &LL(7&L/

y V. ()I"B\$9",\$, . &"L-\$)L\$HL">9H&("M\$9)?(,6\$)/

G.6-' 44')H#3' &%

<E@1-#&) #7) ICJ,) = ' * /1' %K C /.&?)J\$7#&O/1.5') /\$() , /\$1/4.L.\$3D) H' 7#&O.\$3) 7' (' &/4) ' 4' 61.#\$)(' * /1' %).\$)8/\$/(/M>

y V. &"=(L6;" -H&' 6L&"\$8",. &" -(-&H"6L",. (," ,. &H&"(H&" ,. H&&" -\$L6,6\$)L" (," L,(I&"C" ' &?6(" -&%6,6()L",. &"-&\$-%&"C"()?"F&)"&&?" ,"\$ -9,"-&\$-%&"(," ,. &"8\$H&8H\$),/

y #H&?6,"8\$H",. &'6?&("=&. 6)?" ,. &" -(-&H"7\$&L",,\$5(HB"Y\$9"M6)?%(B/

y : (-&H"6);%9?&L"(" ;(L&"L,9?B"\$8"8\$9H";\$9),H6&LJ"#() (?(""\+""\^"">9L,H(%(` e6HL,"6),&H&L," 6L",. &"#() (?6()-&HL-& ;,6P&"0?68e6;9%," ,"\$H&L&(H; . 3/

y X67. &L,"-\$6)," \$8";\$),&),6\$)"6)"H&(;,6\$),"\$, . &" -(-&H"L&&' L",,\$"=&'6);%9L6\$)" ;H6,&H6(` F. 6; . "?\$&L)"\$,6);%9?&"d%\$;"Z9&=& ;\$6L"6)",. &"N)7%L. "?&=(, &/

y N)7%L. "Z9&=& ;&HL" P&HB";\$);&H)&?"F6, . ,. 6L"6?&(n")&&?" ,"\$ 9)?&HL,()?"6)" ,. &6H"\$F)" %()79(7&"F. (,"6L. (-&)6)7"F6,. 6)",. &6H"-H\$P6);&/

y V. &"g%\$=&"p" 5(6% 8&&" ,. (," . (P6)7" F&&I" %B" ?&=(, &L" F\$9%?"?6' 6)6L. "i 9(% ,B" ()?" ,. (," -&)(%]6)7" ;() ?6?(, &L" 8\$H")\$)C-(H,6;6-(,6\$)" F\$9%?" =&")\$)C?&' \$;H(,6;/' V. &B" (%L\$ FH\$,&," ,. (," ,. &'6?&("\$8"(!J!"?&=(, &F(L",. &"\$) %B"L977&L,6\$)"F6, . "" &H6,/

Session 1: The Media Perspective

G/2)N@43@16-

y T) &"6?&(" F\$9%" =&" ,\$. (P&" L-&; 6(%B" ; . ())&% " L. \$F" 4, . &' &?@"?&=(, &L" &/7" . 6L, \$HB" ; . ())&% (6H6) 7"?&=(, &L"\$)"; 6,6]&)L. 6-"6)". 6L, \$HB"=9L6)&LL")&, F\$HI L"L. \$F6) 7"e6) (); 6(% ?&=(, &L"4dH(P\$@(")?%I &; . ())&% " L. \$F6) 7"?&=(, &L"\$) ,. &"(H, L/

y V. &"6); %9L6\$) "\$8" " \$H&"?&=(, &L"; \$9%?"L\$P&"L\$' &"\$8", . &"-H\$=%&' L"8\$H")&, F\$HI L"n"; \$9%?" -H\$P6?&(" %P&%&H"L&)L&"\$8"F. (, KL"7\$6) 7"\$) ,. ()H&-&, 6,6\$) (")?L, ()?(H?"L-&&; . /

y A, "6L" (" ,&&P6L6\$) "L. \$F" ()?" , \$, (I &)"&, F\$HI L"\$9, "\$8"?\$6) 7"VF"6L" , "\$H\$=" ,. &"?&=(, &L"\$8" (" L\$9H; &" \$8" &O-&H,6L&" 6)" (, H(; ,6) 7h-H\$' ,6,6) 7" (9?6&); &" ,. (, " F&" F () , &)" 7(7&?" 6)" ?&=(, &L/

y V. &"6?&(" ,. (, "-\$%,6; (% - (H,6&L" F6%" -H\$?9; &" =&, &Hh" \$H&" , () , (%]6) 7"?&=(, &L" (' []&L" ' &` - \$%,6; (% - (H,6&L" F () , ("L(8&"-%(; &"8\$H" ,. &6H" - (H,6&L/

y V. &"6?&(" , \$ [&79%(, &" - \$%,6; (% L-&&; . ()?" %&76L%(, &" ,. &"H9%&L" \$8" ?&=(, &L" L. \$9%?" =&" H&; \$)L6?&H&?

!1' 5') O/.2.\$

<E\$6-#&J)%" \$.#&)' (.1#), PX9%)I, -')E3' \$(/): .1-)!1' 5') O/.2.\$M;)E4%#)O# (' &/1' () 1-&' ') ' 4' 61.#\$) (' */1' %0) [\ \]) / \$ ([\ \ ^) 7' (' &/4) ' 4' 61.#\$%) / \$ () 1-') [\ \ _] X\$1/&.#) ' 4' 61.#\$>)

y A" (7H&&" F6, . " VH6) (" ,. (, "%&, ,6) 7" - \$%,6; 6()L"L&, ,. &"H9%&L" ?\$&L)K, " ' (I &"L&)L&" ()?" ,. (, ' (B=& ,. &" &?6(" (H&"6) (")9)8(6H" - \$L6,6\$) "6) 7&, ,6) 7" , "\$?&; 6?&"F. \$" - (H,6; 6- (, &L" ()?"6)" ; \$P&H6) 7" ,. &"H&L9%,L" 5 (B=&" F&" ?\$)K, ")&&?" () \$8e6; 6(% ; \$' ' 6LL6\$) "" =9, " ; \$9%?" . (P&" L\$' &, . 6) 7"%I &, . &"#+<"?&; 6?&"6, /

y V. &" &?6(" ; \$)L\$H,69' "?&; 6?&L" ,. &"-%(B&HL" ()?" (%L"\$4\$=j&; ,6P&%B@"?&; 6?&L" ,. &"; \$P&H(7&/

y A) ,. &" - (L, " !J! "?&=(, &L". (P&" F\$HI &?" =9, ,. &"-H\$=%&' "6) , \$?(BKL"; \$) , &O, "6L" ,. (, " ()B" P6&F&HL" F\$9%?)K, " F () , "\$ F (; . " ?&=(, &L" =&, F&&)" ; &H, (6) " -&\$-%&" F. \$" (H&") \$, ,. &" - (H, B"%&(?&HL" C" - &\$-%&" F () , "\$L&&" ,. &"L, H\$) 7" ' &' =&HL"?&=(, 6) 7/

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Follow-Up Comments and Questions

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Follow-Up Comments and Questions

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Appendix 2

From: *Éric Grenier*
Date: *Fri, 11 Sep 2009 11:19:56 -0400*
To: *Thomas Axworthy*
Subject: *Re: Debates*

Mr. Axworthy,

I appreciate your response. I've now gone through the paper, but I still have some concerns which I hope you will address.

First off, I agree that in theory it makes sense to have minimum requirements for inclusion in the debates. I also agree that they should be regulated and taken out of the hands of the media. However, while in theory your proposals make sense, they ignore our Canadian reality. The Bloc Québécois exists, and has existed now since the early 1990s. We know that the Bloc will not run outside of Quebec. So to put these requirement rules in place now would exclude the Bloc from English-language debates. Were these rules put into place before the Bloc Québécois came into existence, they would have far more merit. Instead, they appear to have the goal of excluding the Bloc, to change what has been a debate precedent since 1993.

The paper does not explain why excluding the Bloc would improve the debates. Is it to reduce the amount of people participating? True, most Canadians listening to the English-language debates cannot vote for the Bloc, but there are many English-speaking Canadians in Quebec who do have that opportunity. By putting these rules into place, the Bloc would be at a disadvantage in those anglophone ridings in Quebec.

On the other hand, having the Bloc in the English-speaking debates puts no one at a disadvantage, except perhaps that the Bloc leader takes up debate time that the other leaders could use. In that case, it would make more sense to limit the Bloc's time in the English-speaking debate to equal the proportion of Canadian anglophones who live in Quebec. That would at least give the Bloc leader time for an opening and closing statement and an opportunity to respond to questions concerning Quebec or challenges from the other party leaders concerning the Bloc.

In any case, many francophones do understand English. They will be more informed on their

So, to sum up, making changes like this would decrease the amount of information voters have before going to the polling booths. It would unfairly disadvantage the Bloc, a party that still earns more votes than the Greens and has, as recently as 2000, received more than even the NDP. In terms of national unity, it will only increase the misperceptions English Canadians have about Quebec and the sovereignty movement, and will certainly not make Quebecers feel more included in Canadian society.

While the proposals the CSD makes are, on the whole, very good, I fail to see how this particular proposal would benefit our Canadian democracy.

Regards,

Eric Grenier

