



14 May 2008

Mr Kai Swoboda
Inquiry Secretary
Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters
PO Box 6021
PARLIAMENT HOUSE
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Mr Swoboda,

Inquiry into the 2007 Federal election

The LDP wishes to offer some comments in relation to the above inquiry.

1. The conduct of the election and related matters

The nomination form for House and Senate candidates is highly misleading in respect of the reference to the registered abbreviation of the party name.

The nomination form states:

I request that printed on the ballot paper adjacent to the name of each candidate appears:

the registered abbreviation of the party name

Or

the registered party name

A normal reading would suggest that if the first box is ticked, the abbreviated name will appear adjacent to the candidate's name and the full name of the party will appear elsewhere on the ballot paper. That seems especially true in the case of the Senate ballot paper, where the party's name also appears above or beside the Group box.

However, that is not at all what it means. We found, by experience, that ticking the box means the abbreviated name is the ONLY identification of the party to appear ANYWHERE on the ballot paper, including places well removed from the name of the candidate.

Were this in commerce or trade, it would unquestionably be in breach of S52 of the Trade Practices Act.

We recommend the form be amended to either make it clear that ticking the box has this effect, or to make provision for both the abbreviated and full name of the party to appear on the ballot.

2. Donations, income and expenditure

We wish to remind the Committee that, as a minor party, we are entirely dependent on donations. While we have no objections to disclosure transparency, we would not welcome the imposition of limitations on potential sources of funds. Indeed, we would regard any constraints on our ability to accept donations as

inherently anti-democratic because of the advantage conferred on the larger, established parties. We would certainly make our views publicly known.

I may be contacted on 041 461 431 if you wish to contact me.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Leyonhjelm', followed by a long horizontal flourish line extending to the right.

David Leyonhjelm
Treasurer and Registered Officer