

**The Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia**

**The Senate**

**Committee of Privileges**

**Persons referred to in the Senate**

**Mr Ray Platt**

**Mr Peter Mulheron**

**68th Report**

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## REPORT

On 21 July and 7 August 1997, the President of the Senate, Senator the Honourable Margaret Reid, referred to the Committee of Privileges two letters, from Mr Peter Mulheron and Mr Ray Platt, respectively, requesting the incorporation of a response under Privilege Resolution 5 of 25 February 1988 relating to the protection of persons referred to in the Senate. Each letter referred to a statement made by Senator Ron Boswell during discussion on matters of public interest in the Senate on 18 June 1997. The President, having accepted these letters as submissions for the purposes of the resolution, referred them to the Committee of Privileges.

The Committee met in private session on 28 August and 4 September 1997 and, pursuant to paragraph (3) of the resolution, decided in principle to consider the submissions from Mr Platt and Mr Mulheron, subject to contact being made with both Mr Mulheron and Mr Platt to discuss the content of their responses, with particular emphasis in the case of Mr Mulheron on his indicating in what way he had personally been adversely reflected upon by Senator Boswell. Mr Mulheron has now satisfied the Committee that, under paragraph (1) of the resolution, he is a person who has been referred to in such a way as to be readily identified. The Committee did not consider it necessary to consult Senator Boswell on the matter.

The statements at Appendix 1 have been agreed to by Mr Platt, Mr Mulheron and the Committee in accordance with Resolution 5(7)(b).

The Committee **recommends:**

**That the responses by Mr Platt and Mr Mulheron, in the terms specified at Appendix 1, and agreed to by Mr Platt, Mr Mulheron and the Committee, be incorporated in *Hansard*.**

Robert Ray  
Chair

**RESPONSES BY MR RAY PLATT AND MR P J MULHERON  
AGREED TO BY MR PLATT AND MR MULHERON  
AND THE COMMITTEE OF PRIVILEGES  
PURSUANT TO RESOLUTION 5(7)(b) OF THE SENATE OF 28 FEBRUARY 1988**

**Response by Mr Platt**

Senator Boswell, on 18 June 1997, made a series of statements in a speech to the Senate which contained a number of errors. These errors in turn, have impugned myself, the publication of which I am the editor and both by name and association the good character of those who are contributing writers to *The Strategy*.

Over a period of some years the veracity of *The Strategy* has been proved by the subsequent reports, albeit often quite sometime later, by the major electronic and print media. *The Strategy* has an enviable reputation of reporting, precisely, interviews or comments made for publication, without selective quoting or distortion.

Senator Boswell stated:

Hanson and One Nation claim that they have nothing to do with extremist groups ... But the facts are that Pauline Hanson's One Nation not only harbours and promotes extremists as office bearers and potential candidates, but it advertises in the anti-semitic, racist and extremist rag, *The Strategy*.

Along with pages of glowing editorial, Ms Hanson's party has taken a half page ad soliciting for membership and donations. This was not done months ago when she was a naive politician. This advertisement appeared as recently as last month — May.

[A party official] was boasting to the national press about not having anything to do with extremists when his party had just done a deal with the country's most powerful extreme Right publication. *The Strategy* promotes many of Australia's leading extremists, ... and even uses stories from the La Rouchian news service.

The One Nation have never taken an 'ad' of any size or description in *The Strategy* nor have they solicited for any coverage of events. Any material appearing in this paper has been gained from media releases, which have been available to all publications, or from reports by someone attending meetings etc.

The La Rouchian news service, i.e. EIRNS, is, according to all reports, a White House accredited news service and has been singled out from time to time by the President to ask questions at press interviews.

Senator Boswell further stated:

The editor of *The Strategy*, Ray Platt, organised the visit to Australia of the US militia extremist, Jack McLamb. McLamb's business partner, Bo Gritz, had stood as a Vice-presidential nominee on the ticket of former Ku Klux klansman, David Duke.

Jack McLamb is one of Arizona's most decorated police officers (retired) and serves on more community based committees than room permits here to list. Bo Gritz is one of America's most decorated Vietnam war veterans and, it is said, was involved in the 'Special Services' operation that freed the American hostages from Iran back in the 80's. Both these men have been involved in helping to break (peacefully) various 'stand-off' situations.

Suffice to say — having met and spent two days with Jack McLamb — I have never met a finer or more Christian person.

What an honour for myself — to be linked with such distinguished gentlemen!

Mr Peter Archer, also referred to by Senator Boswell, has been a contributing writer to *The Strategy*. Mr Archer was not involved in organising the Jack McLamb tour; this was an inadvertent error on the part of the paper that connected Mr Archer to that tour. Mr Archer has only ever been a non-paid voluntary contributor of articles.

For the Senator to praise our paper as notorious (thesaurus: celebrated, distinguished, famed, renowned, well-known) would indeed be an honour coming from another.

The Inverell Forum 94 was also mentioned. It has to be said that this paper has had the privilege of sponsoring the Inverell Forum for a number of years. Over the years there have been a wide variety of 'notable' (in their field) speakers — doctors, authors, and lay people of many talents and persuasions including a NSW National Party politician and some highly respected university lecturers. For the senator to label such an event in this derogatory manner shows his lack of knowledge.

Ray Platt  
**Editor**

## Response by Mr Mulheron

I refer to statements made in the Senate by Senator Ronald Boswell (Qld) on 18 June 1997, and wish to refute the slanderous statements in the Senator's speech:

1. Senator Boswell: "But the facts are that Pauline Hanson's One Nation ... advertises in the anti-semitic, racist and extremist rag *The Strategy* ..."

Senator Boswell has made false reference to *The Strategy* as anti-semitic, racist and extremist, thus sufficiently identifying the newspaper's staff as 'anti-semitic and racist' as to injuriously affect their good reputation and impugn their good character.

Under the Magna Carta and Universal Declaration of Human Rights, I am not bound at law to divulge religious or political beliefs; however, Senator Boswell's anti-semitic slur gives sufficient cause to refute the allegation in defence of my good character, which has been called into question without genuine regard for protocol and manners, by false and misleading assertions.

2. Senator Boswell: "Not only does Ms Hanson sell her wares in the nation's most notorious far Right newspaper, but she recruits her organisers from its staff ..."

Senator Boswell has, again, asserted an unsavoury connotation in recruitment for political parties from the ranks of the staff of *The Strategy*. Nor is 'it' beholden to any so-called anti-semitic organisation.

Comment by Senator Boswell directed at staff members of *The Strategy* has served to discriminate, and vilify them as being anti-semitic, whereas several are of Judaeo-Christian ancestry but not Zionist-fundamentalists. The comments deeply offend me, and relatives and friends.

Reference to a 'deal being struck' between [a party official] and *The Strategy* is false and misleading. Similarly, the allegation that *The Strategy* placed the Independent member for Oxley's party advertisement is untrue. Ms Hanson's articles are mere press-releases, borne out by the fact that they bear a 'Net' reference, and were offered by me as news-worthy items to the Editor, Mr Ray Platt.

The Honourable Senator has made remarks, many of which are not substantiated in fact, but the product of his erroneous assertions, that have impugned the name and good character of an array of people.

I conclude now with the comment that I expect the Honourable Senator to apologise for vilification he has levelled at the current *Strategy* staff and myself, and that he will accord us the same civility when we (I) express our civil and political rights. The main-stream media had misreported much and misconstrued the context of Hanson speeches for sensationalism to sell many newspapers, whereas *The Strategy* strives for truth.

Peter J Mulheron  
*The Strategy*

