

Dear Sir/Madam

INQUIRIES INTO POSSIBLE CHANGES TO QUEENSLAND PARLIAMENTARY TERMS

I write in support of this Inquiry.

As I see it good governance requires stability as well as attributes like integrity, honesty, competence and far-sightedness. A fixed four year term would take the edge off the perpetual campaign mentality that pollutes our political culture and creates continual eruptions to stable governance. Nevertheless a safety valve for ending an unacceptable and unpopular government may be necessary to preserve the democratic right to exercise “the will of the people”.

That said, a sustainable purchase in stability (and legislative wisdom) is much more probable if we introduce a form of proportional representation, since we have no upper house to review the legislations from the Executive of the day.

Proportional representation would better “reflect the will of the people” at the ballot box by a country mile. Such a system would have given us more considered legislation and executive decision-making under Newman and awarded the Opposition a higher number of MPs with which to exercise an effective Opposition, and in fact, as it turned out, to prepare for governance.

Going back a little further the Bjelke-Petersen reign would have been shorter and less damaging to our society. The shiny “white shoe brigade”, the corruption of the police to the very top, and the criminal gangs flourishing in our “Moonlight State” were just some of the social ills which a proportional representation system could have prevented or at the very least mitigated.

I therefore strongly urge this Inquiry to focus on the prime objective of stability and to take the bold and far-sighted decision to incorporate proportional representation in its deliberations. It is a condition which the increasingly better educated voters would demand sooner rather than later.

The near wipe-out of the Opposition in the Newman victory did not deliver a healthy outcome for our democracy or our society. We are still living through the consequences of that: re-visiting legislations hurried through; living with executive decisions made without due scrutiny; all now landed on the laps of a relatively inexperienced Cabinet because of the near wipe-out at Newman’s hands. All being equal, experience builds competence without compare.

In concluding: no amount of aesthetic tweaking to a heritage house will make it fit for purpose unless the time-wearied foundations of the structure are first attended to.

My best wishes, for the sake of the generations who come after us.

Yours sincerely

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