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Submission No 02  
Spec 28.1  
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A.C.N. 009 788 201

"Avon-Leigh", M.S. 599, Jandowae, Qld 4410

Telephone & Fax: (07) 4668 6131

**RECEIVED**

10 MAY 2000

LEGAL, CONSTITUTIONAL AND  
ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW  
COMMITTEE

7th May 2000.

The Research Director,  
Legal, Constitutional and Administrative  
Review Committee,  
Parliament House, George Street,  
Brisbane, Qld., 4000.

### Submission Re Four-Year Parliamentary Terms.

Dear Sir,

Whilst accepting there is some validity contained in the arguments presented in the case for a four-year term, one has to concede they are only valid if there were perceptible differences between the policies of the major party's. Sadly this is not so and only the figureheads change. The policies are generally designed to give more **power and money** to Government (which should read Parliament) at our expense and/or discomfort.

That this is so is extremely well illustrated on page 1 of your background paper. In item 2 at the foot of column 2 is the following quote:

***"One of the few provisions of the present State Constitution protected from alteration by an entrenched requirement for a referendum is the three-year term of the Legislative Assembly".***

(It should be noted there are other entrenched Laws, such as the Bill of Rights of 1688/9 enacted in Queensland and all other States, which is generally ignored or it's existence is denied outright, except of course, for the matter of **Parliamentary Privilege**).

However, in item 1, first column, third paragraph, is the statement in the last sentence that:

***"The Premier further indicated that Cabinet might make a decision on the four-year term issue before the committee brings down its report".***

So, just who do he and his Cabinet think they are? Does he mean the Cabinet will *'impartially'* debate the matter and decide they will institute the four-year term, (and of course quite co-incidentally secure themselves another year in office) without a referendum (quite illegally), or do they intend to run one referendum on that issue and a second one on the other changes in the Constitution, at even greater expense (ours of course), at a later date?

Either way it seems to be the height of arrogance, the very thing four-year terms tend to foster, which is why one suspects the matter was thrown out in the 1991 referendum. The fact of the matter is that more and more of the people distrust our Governments because time and time again they have been shown to arrogantly disregard the wishes of the people, unless of course they happen to be a vociferous minority group.

Cont:

Consequently they are resigned to accepting the disadvantages of the three-year term rather than risk appointing a Government that could do them untold harm in a four-year term with a three year guaranteed minimum. The fact that, in the long run, it makes little difference eludes them. The pain just takes longer to feel.

One has only to sit in the public gallery and watch and listen to the childish and sometimes appalling behaviour which passes for 'Democratic Government' in any of our Parliaments, to realise what a travesty of representation we have to put up with. This coupled with the biased reporting on television means we only see what the media wants us to see, seldom what we need to know.

It seems significant that the media are allowed access to Parliament and can then relay what they want us to know, but the public are banned from even tape recording the proceedings or in fact even making notes. Perhaps it is because of the aforementioned behavioural problems they do not want revealed to the people they are supposed to represent.

In paragraph 1 above, the point was made that "Government" should read "Parliament". The reason this was mentioned is because the ruling Party when in power has a habit of saying "The role of Government is to Govern". They might like to foster that perception but it is an illegal and incorrect one. Correctly, the phrase should read, "The role of Parliament is to enact Laws that are the Will of the People". However, the Party system causes confrontational participation of the People's so called 'Representatives' who no longer re-present their Will but the Parties and, as a consequence, so called Government becomes a battle between the major forces, or Parties, to stay in power at all costs.

For the most part this means buying our votes with our own money.

**On balance, it would seem better to retain the three-year term.**

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'C.E. Clark', written in black ink. The signature is positioned above a horizontal line that serves as a separator between the signature and the typed name below.

**C.E.Clark.**  
Managing Director.