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Robert C. Sadler

The Research Director
I.C.A.R.C.
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane 4000

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LEGAL, CONSTITUTIONAL AND
ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEW
COMMITTEE

Submission No 10

For the attention of Mr Fenlon MIA.

3/10/2000

Dear Mr Fenlon,

Thankyou for your letter of 13 Sept. and the invitation to make a submission to your committee inquiry into preventing electoral fraud.

I have never been a member of a political party, but during the past ten years have been a scrutineer at most of the federal, state, and council elections in Queensland for several different candidates of different parties and independants.

During those occasions I have never been aware of problems with either the polling or subsequent vote counting, and have usually been requested by the the presiding officer to inspect ballot boxes before sealing and to witness breaking the seal before counting.

I have read with interest in my Hansard copies the debate following the motion by Mr Wellington. This debate, as is too often the case, resulted in trading of insults by both major party members, with the consequent requests for withdrawal resulting in ~~much~~ of parliament time being wasted. This lack of respect for each other has reached public notice, so that when I mentioned your investigation of electoral fraud to local friends I was often told it was to be expected of politicians. The members of parliament I have met seemed to be sincere and dedicated persons, so this public perception of our representatives is to be deplored.

Perhaps Mr Mickel's committee could investigate giving the house speaker power to eject members using insults, without exception, on each occasion.

To answer the questions posed on page 13, item 8 of the issues paper, I will use the paragraph numbers for comment identification.

1,2,3. As mentioned during the parliament debates, there are many ways to cause fraudulent election results, but perhaps not enough to warrant making the process of voting more difficult for the voters. Mention is made in the issues paper of using computer techniques, and since many poll stations are schools which now have computers, it may be time to consider using computers instead of the paper roll for voter checking, and after the ballot papers are given to the voter, a mark could be made against that person's name, with all computers at division poll stations on-line connected to receive that mark, thus eliminating multiple voting at different polling stations.

4,6,7,12,23. If computers are used to store voter eligibility, it should be fairly easy to do a computer comparison of voter names and adresses to find duplicate enrollments.

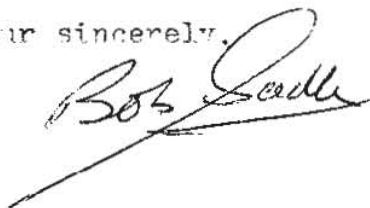
To eliminate "cemetery" voting, perhaps there could be a requirement on the death certificate to notify the AEC of a persons death to remove that person from the electoral roll.

Since most councils now have computer records for rate notices, the AEC could do comparisons of addresses to eliminate empty lots or false names. The use of computer verification via pension, tax, driver licence etc. is probably enevitable, in spite of George Orwell's warning of the consequences, and the committee should concern itself with the cost to the taxpayer for preventing what may be an insignificant amount of electoral fraud.

5. If roll integrity is important to preserve democracy, the a & b are yes.
8. Do I recall correctly that this has been addressed by you not long ago?
9. Persons seeking to do roll-stacking would probably do so regardless of closing dates
10. The general public would probably be unaware of such arrangements.
11. Cost could decide whether evidence of fraud warrants this.
- 13,14. What are federal or other state requirements?
15. (a) yes. (b) voting cards would be transferrable or duplicated thus defeating their purpose.
16. The best persons to answer such questions would be issuing officers, so use their experience.
17. per 1,2,3, above
18. Investigate the experience of electronic voting in other countries.
19. Perhaps an investigation of banks methods of identification would help?
20. An issue of the AEC scrutineers handbook to scrutineers when they register would increase their ability to detect problems. A press release prior to an election on what scrutineers do could encourage more to volunteer.
21. Perhaps candidates should be encouraged to enlist scrutineers to protect their rights?
22. Ask presiding officers.
23. Per 4 above.
24. 25. At our local council meeting after their election this year the failure to vote question was debated, and it was decided the fine would not cover costs. Perhaps increased fines would encourage non-voters?
26. A simple notice in each polling booth explaining where and how to complain may help?
27. As noted above.
28. One way to discourage electoral fraud, after proper legal investigation, would be to publish full details in all major newspapers to make voters aware of the sort of political party or candidate they voted for.
It may also help you to confer with other states committees on these problems, for it is unlikely that this is solely a Queensland problem.

Good luck on finding solutions.

Yours sincerely,



My apologies for typing errors.