

**Gloria Patri, et Filio et Spiritvi Sancto**

{ Glory to The Father, Son and Holy Spirit }

**Roger E. Deshon F.D.**

**Retired Police Association  
International Police Association**

**GMT: 23:54 Hours**

**Monday, May 11, 2009**

**The Secretary,  
Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters  
Houses of Parliament  
CANBERRA ACT 2601**

*Dear Sir, Madam or Miss,*

*I received a letter from Senator Faulkner ad-vised that submissions could still be made on electoral matters and I have two matters that I believe seriously need attention in the interests of democratic process.*

*Firstly I believe that we should abandon the practice of having compulsory voting in Australia. In the two democracies of the United Kingdom and the United States the people have free choice as to whether they will vote on election days. We in Australia are compelled under duress to, one, register at age eighteen, two, attend on polling day and have our names crossed off to prove we attended and three, actually vote. If we choose to write anything other than what is allowed on the ballot paper or else leave it blank our vote is nullified.*

*This cannot be termed, by any reasoning, democratic process. These are actions done under compulsion.*

*Why not just allow us the right to abstain from the whole process should we choose so to do? As I see it should there be no candidate ideologically matching what I believe I should not have to choose second best. If I were, for example, a conservative voter and there was only a choice of leftist candidates I am compelled to choose someone in whom I have neither confidence nor ideological connection.*

*Therefore I move for the abolition of compulsory voting in Australia.*

*It has been argued that having compulsory voting favours one side of politics and not having it favours the other. This is fallacious. In both Britain and the US free choice for the voters has elected, at different times, governments of either conservative or leftist lean. Free choice in Britain may elect a Conservative government or Labour and in the USA the people, again with free choice, may elect a Republican or Democrat administration.*

*The second matter is preference voting. This is an appalling practice.*

*Again, using the US and Great Britain as examples, whether there are two or twenty two candidates for a seat the one with the highest individual count – not shorn up by others – wins the seat and the others lose.*

*Let us work on the example of 5 candidates, A to E and 100 voters. If every candidate received 20 then there would be an even distribution and thus no winner. Candidate A may, however, receive individually 40, leaving a possible 60 votes over the other 4 candidates – this equates to 15 each and no one individual can match A's 40. A has individually defeated B, C, D and E by 25 votes.*

*The case for preference voting is argued on the fact that 60 voters did not vote for A. Maybe they didn't but the fact stands that there was more than one candidate opposing A and A's opposition was not an individual person.*

*Had there been only A and B for the 100 votes and A received 40, that would leave 60 for B and B would be the clear winner. There were, however, 4 candidates opposing A and they individually did not receive as many votes as A.*

*Preference voting should be discarded – it is an option in Queensland state elections and a voter may. Should he choose, allocate preferences or just vote 1 only. The single vote and no 'second bite of the apple' should be the only option, this being a sure way of ensuring that voters think long and hard on their only possible choice.*

*May I submit an argument I believe to be valid? In The Melbourne Cup there may be twenty horses but only one will be in first place at the finish line. That rider and horse have not reached the line by being pushed by the rest of the field. This, however, is what happens with preference voting.*

*You may imagine the outcry if horse A was in front and nearing the finish line with horse B close behind. The punters see A is going to win. Suddenly all the rest of the riders put their weight behind horse B and push it past A and over the line. That's just what happens with preferences. Horse and rider B did not have the endurance to win by their own efforts but used the combined strength of horse B, C, D and so on. A deserved the win but was cheated of it by collusion.*

*Please consider my two points of concern.*

***Compulsory voting** has no place in a democratic voting process – it is, as I have said, compulsion and duress. In the two democracies with which we have most connection, the USA and Great Britain, perfectly workable governments are elected by voters having the freedom to vote or abstain from the process.*

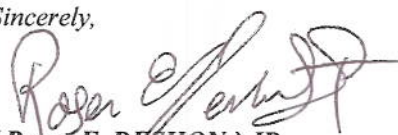
*Voters in Australia should have this freedom and then, by result, accept with maturity the result obtained. If I have the right to vote or abstain I can make the choice – I should then calmly accept the verdict should I decide to abstain on the day. Voters with free choice in America thought it important enough to remove the Republican administration and install a Democrat President. In due course voters, again with freedom of choice, may again elect a Republican government.*

*The same happens in Britain. The voters there, with free choice, elect in turn Conservative and Labour governments.*

***Preference voting** is un-democratic also and each candidate for a seat, whether there be 1 or 20, should stand or fall on the actual number of votes he or she receives. If 40 voters out of 100 vote for A then A should know clearly that exactly 40 people wanted him, no more and no less. B, C, D and E receive 15 each and they would likewise know that only 15 wanted them – none of these individuals should, however, receive the victor's palm for they have failed to individually match A's forty. B should not be declared the winner over A by the addition of C, D and E's 45 votes to his 15, thus giving B 60 votes.*

*The argument that the individuals B, C, D and E are 60 percent and therefore must prevail over A at 40 percent is duplicitous. The candidates are individual persons.*

Sincerely,

  
{ Roger E. DESHON } JP  
*Honouraire Clerk of the Peace*