

NEW ZEALAND



LIBERAL PARTY

Dr Helena Catt
Electoral Commission
(By email)

Your reference:
Our reference:

Date: 18 April 2008

Allocation of Broadcasting Time and Funds

We are please to submit our application for fair and reasonable broadcasting time and funds for the forthcoming General Election and trust in the Commissioners' judgement in deliberating on the arguments we have set out below.

The number of persons who voted at the immediately preceding general election for that party and for candidates belonging to that political party

None.

The number of persons who voted at any by-election held since the immediately preceding general election for any candidate belonging to that political party

None.

The number of members of Parliament who were members of that political party immediately before the dissolution or expiration of Parliament

None.

Any relationships that exist between a political party and any other political party

None.

Any other indications of public support for that political party such as the results of public opinion polls and the number of persons who are members of that political party

The Party has not conducted any opinion polls and we believe it is most unlikely any support of the Liberals has been identified in any public opinion polls to date.

The total number of members is given at Attachment C, which is confidential, the release of which under the Official Information Act 1986 would put at risk the Party providing any further information the Commission may require in the execution of its statutory duties

NEW ZEALAND LIBERAL PARTY INCORPORATED
2 Fleet Street, PO Box 32-264 Devonport, North Shore City, Auckland
Telephone: +64 (0)9 445 8660; Email: reception@liberals.org.nz
Website: www.liberals.org.nz

The need to provide a fair opportunity for each political party [that has registered its intention to contest the election] to convey its policies to the public by the broadcasting of election programmes on television.

1. The facts of the matter—
 - a. The New Zealand Liberal Party has only been formed since the beginning of this year.
 - b. We have published a 150 page First Draft of the Constitution of New Zealand a written codified constitution for the Nation, which contains significant amendments to the present constitutional arrangements. It is one of the principle policies of the Party to set in motion a process leading to a codified Constitution. The New Zealand Herald has run a series of articles concerning this issue. No other political party has to our knowledge produced a draft of a constitution or published a set of comprehensive polices of this matter.
 - c. We have just completed our own constitution as a set of rules required for corporatization under the Incorporated Societies Act 1908.
 - d. We are in the advanced stages of preparing a business plan that includes—
 - i. The formal launch of the Party:
 - ii. Selection of legal and financial advisors:
 - iii. Market research to confirm our current hypotheses on the Party's core segments of support and to provide guidance on the best means by which to promote our message.
 - iv. The recruitment and employment of a core Party executive and initial volunteers:
 - v. The development of Standing Orders, Operating Procedures and systems for the election campaign, including financial, privacy and other systems for compliance with the law:
 - vi. A membership recruitment campaign involving networking and advertising:
 - vii. A search, recruitment and nomination project for quality board members through the Institute of Directors and an executive-search firm, which will involve advertising and headhunting:
 - viii. A search, recruitment and nomination project for quality candidates for the General Election (not to include existing national politicians), involving the employment an executive-search firm, which will involve advertising and headhunting:
 - ix. A search, recruitment and nomination project for a quality patron of the Party who will endorse the Party, its purpose and objects, involving an executive-search firm, which will involve and headhunting:
 - x. The development and publication of the Party Manifesto, involving the expansion of the existing unpublished policies of the Party, involving nationwide advertised meetings for public consultation and submissions:
 - xi. A Special Convention of the Party Members to elect the officers and candidates of the Party and ratify the Parties Constitution and Manifesto:

- xii. A fundraising campaign, involving a national sales-force, advertising and direct marketing;
- xiii. A series of event-based public-relations projects to raise awareness of the Liberal Party, its philosophy, its policies and the quality of its team of candidates.
- xiv. The advertising campaign for the solicitation of votes during the run-up to the General Election.

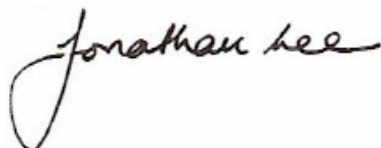
We currently have expressions of interest for seed-funding of this business plan subject to the Party obtaining broadcasting time and the completion of the business plan.

2. We believe—

- a. There is significant frustration leading to apathy with the main political parties that, while contesting the centre of the political spectrum, do not represent the interests of middle New Zealand. And none of present parties represent the philosophical tenets of liberal social democracy, which we assert best represents the interests of most New Zealanders and best preserves and promotes 'The New Zealand Dream'. See the Introduction to the Party's Constitution and the Charter of Beliefs under Article 1 for more details.
- b. The passage of the Electoral Finance Act 2007 was primarily designed to starve new and small political parties of funding, so further restricting the freedom of expression in New Zealand. We believe that the claim that 'Parliament is Sovereign' by both National and Labour government really means sovereignty is in the hands of the political party that forms the Government, the Cabinet and the Prime Minister, in reverse order of power. We believe this has led to a presidential form of government, with the Prime Minister able to exercise significantly more power than the President of the United State, relative to the size of country. We further believe that we must delimit the power of politicians and achieve a better balance and separation of powers through a written codified and protected constitution for the Nation. See the First Draft for more details:
- c. There has been significant encroachment of undue political influence in the machinery of government. We have collected evidence of what we believe is the corruption and collusion by and between the State Services Commissioner, the Acting Chief Ombudsman and Auditor General concerning the use of public monies for electioneering and deliberately misinterpreting the law to avoid official or Members of the Cabinet being held accountable. We further believe such practices have set a standard of corrupt practices throughout the Public and State Services. We believe that establishing a codified constitution such practices will be significantly reduced. We are willing to produce such evidence for the Commissioners, if they so desire, so long as it does not put at risk any subsequent investigation or court hearing.
- d. While the numbers of members and supporters of the Party are small now, we expect these to significantly grow as our business plan is put into effect. We have as our stretch-objective 10% of the vote and expect to meet the 5% threshold.
- e. We believe as a political party—
 - i. We have specific policies that the public has a right to be made aware of:

- ii. We will be in a position to field a credible quality team of candidates for the public to support at the forthcoming election: and
 - iii. We have a sound party constitution that will ensure our candidates that will hold accountable to the Party as well as the People for the performance of our candidates in the House of Representatives in relation to those policies.
3. We would like fair and reasonable time to convey the essential elements of our policies to the People as specified under the Broadcasting Act 1989—
 - a. With regard to 'fair', we believe it is difficult to restrict the time allocated to any one political party without effectively passing judgement to some degree on the policies of such a party. Placing undue weight on the past support for a political party would be a crude method of assessing the quality of an argument (position). It would be unnecessarily conservative, assuming as it would the electorate only wish to hear the arguments from parties they've supported in the past. We 'fair' in terms of equitable this case should mean equal:
 - b. With regard to 'reasonable', we believe there is a minimum time required to get a message across other than a slogan. If we are to treat the electorate as rational adults that want to exercise their vote such that the new Government has the legitimacy of the free, informed and prior consent of the People, there must be at least 10 minutes per party for opening and closing addresses. The total time TVNZ and RNZ would like to allocate should have little to do with this—otherwise it is putting a price on consensual government either through direct costs or the indirect costs of lost revenues.
 - c. We also believe the same fair and reasonable arguments apply to the costs of production and the allocation of funds.

Yours sincerely,



Jonathan Lee
Secretary and Party Convenor

Attachments:

- A. First Draft of the Constitution of New Zealand**
- B. Constitution of the New Zealand Liberal Party Incorporated**
- C. Number of Party Members**

[Neither Attachments A or B are confidential]