



# ABALINX ENEWS LETTER 20

## EARLY PRE-SELECTIONS?



### GRASS ROOTS OPINION

#### EARLY FEDERAL PRE-SELECTIONS & SPECIAL STATE COUNCIL MEETING

The following outline of the early federal pre-selections, and the resultant requisitions for a Special State Council meeting, is provided to readers in the interests of setting the record straight.

This is particularly necessary following State President Robert Clark's disingenuous statement in his email to members of 8 February 2020, where he stated that "... many delegates who signed those requisitions have now withdrawn their support, leaving less than 50 signatures remaining. Accordingly, the requisitions have ceased to be valid and the reason for the (Special State Council) meeting has ceased".

The truth of the matter is, that the signatories to the requisitions determined to revoke the requisitions as the Administrative Committee (or more accurately a 10/19 majority, consisting of State President, Robert Clark; Vice Presidents, Holly Byrne, Ian Quick, Amy Johnson and Matthew Makin; Treasurer, Owen Guest; Cassandra Marr; Sean Armistead; Karen Egan and Russell Joseph), supported by the Constitution Committee, declared the critical motions to the Special State Council void, thereby making the Special State Council meeting virtually useless.

Specifically, the Administrative Committee, supported by the Constitution Committee, determined, that while a motion of no confidence in the Administrative Committee was valid, if carried, it would have no effect. Furthermore, they determined that a motion to spill the Administrative Committee was not valid, and similarly a motion to elect a new Administrative Committee was also not valid. In the event that a motion of no confidence was carried, the Administrative Committee (10/9) stated that they would continue in their current roles in contempt of State Council and Party Members.

The Constitution "11.10 Special Meeting provides that

- (a) The Administrative Committee shall on written requisition signed by not less than 50 members of State Council forthwith convene a meeting of State Council.
- (b) Such a requisition
- (i) shall state the objects of the meeting".

The Constitution does not however, provide for the Administrative Committee to void the requisition for a Special State Council meeting, let alone on spurious grounds.

It is clear that the ten members of the Administrative Committee, supported by the Constitution Committee, have acted in breach of the Constitution in respect to the requisitions for a Special State Council meeting.

**Early Pre-selections - A Quick Summary.** Federal pre-selections for Liberal held seats have generally been conducted in a timely manner to enable subsequent pre-selections to be conducted for target seats not held by the Liberal Party, and finally non-target seats.

While it is accurate to say that pre-selections for Liberal held federal seats were not held prior to the 2019 federal election, and that sitting members were endorsed by the Administrative Committee, there was good reason for this. The Victorian state election, held on 24 November 2018, made it very difficult to conduct the 14 pre-selections for Liberal held federal seats in a timely manner.

The State Council meeting of June 2019 adopted motions to open federal pre-selections for sitting Liberal federal members no later than 15 months after the last federal election, and complete federal pre-selections by 18 months after the last federal election. As the last federal election was held on 18 May 2019, pre-selections for Liberal held federal seats would not need to open until 18 August 2020, and need not be completed until 18 November 2020. Thus, the opening of pre-selections for Liberal held federal seats on 15 January 2020 was unnecessary.

### STOP PRESS

State Director capitulates to Grass Root pressure. Today a meeting conducted at Liberal Party Headquarters resolved a thorny issue. A member was reinstated as a delegate after it was proven he was eligible. Sad state of affairs by current State Director.



### ALLEGATIONS

The following allegations were provided by Liberal party members:

**Allegations of innocuous Constitutional manipulation being levied at early pre-selection procedures. This is certainly not a good sign at all.**

It is alleged that the State Director, Administrative Committee and the secretariat at 60 Collins Street is drowning in disputes and complaints. As the Party implodes under the leadership of Robert Clark and his circus clowns. It is further alleged that local disputes pile up and remain unacknowledged, unprocessed and unaddressed. A truly sad state of affairs.



An interesting message arrived mysteriously in our email box. Proof that ENewsletters is not the only grass root group to be fed-up with Robert Clark and his dysfunctional Administrative Committee.

A gentleman by the name of Andrew McNabb the current Federal Electorate Council Chairman for Latrobe has come out to voice his opinion publicly. This is his point of view and contribution.

The Administrative Committee, acting on a recommendation from the Federal Seats Committee, chaired by Administrative Committee member Russell Joseph, determined to open pre-selections for Liberal held federal seats just eight months following the federal election of May 18 2019. This has been described as extraordinarily early.

On announcing their intention to open pre-selections for Liberal held federal seats extraordinarily early, the Administrative Committee received numerous requests to review their decision. Requests to review the decision were received from all federal Liberal sitting members, including feedback from the Prime Minister, and many Party members. The Administrative Committee chose to arrogantly dismiss all the concerns raised and disregarded the many requests to review their decision outright.

In light of the intransigence, even bloody mindedness, of the Administrative Committee, to proceed with extraordinarily early pre-selections for Liberal held federal seats, State Council delegates resolved to activate the only means available to them to address the situation, that being to requisition a Special State Council meeting, under Constitution clause 11.10 Special Meeting.

Over two months, three separate requisitions were completed and submitted to the State Director / Administrative Committee seeking a Special State Council meeting. The first two requisitions were dismissed by the Administrative Committee, supported by the Constitution Committee. The third and final requisition was allowed, however as mentioned above, the motions of any substance were disallowed, thus making the Special State Council meeting impotent. Hence, the responsible decision, by the signatories to the requisitions, to revoke the requisitions for a Special State Council meeting.

**Extraordinarily Early Pre-selections – Shortcomings.** A federal seats redistribution for Victoria will be completed by the AEC prior to the next federal election. This will result in a significant redrawing of federal electorate boundaries for Victoria due to population growth, and likely produce one additional federal seat for Victoria. Hence:

- Pre-selections based on the current boundaries are premature and may become redundant;
- the new rigorous vetting arrangements for applicants for preselection are a work in progress, and yet to be ratified by the Federal Division;
- some possible candidates for preselection may not apply so far out from the next federal election due to their employment arrangements and commitments;
- a distraction for the federal government very early in their term of office, and approximately two and a half years out from the next federal election;
- sitting federal members, some of whom are ministers or assistant ministers, who are not re-endorsed, will be sitting for up to two and a half years as “lame ducks”;
- the Federal Coalition Government currently holds a one seat majority. The loss of a sitting Liberal federal member’s preselection could jeopardise the government’s majority;
- a large number of Party members are opposed extraordinarily early pre-selections;
- all sitting Victorian Liberal federal members of parliament, including and particularly the Deputy Leader and Treasurer, the Hon Josh Frydenberg MP, together with the Prime Minister are opposed to extraordinarily early pre-selections

**The Constitution and the Constitution Committee.** The repeated blocking by the Administrative Committee, supported by the Constitution Committee, of members’ legitimate requisitions for a Special State Council meeting, has demonstrated serious inadequacies in the Constitution of the Victorian Division, including the Constitution Committee. Members have formed the view, that the Administrative Committee when seeking rulings from the Constitution Committee, has been able to orchestrate rulings to suit the factional agenda/purposes of the Administrative Committee. Members generally have lost confidence in the Constitution Committee. This is a particularly alarming situation. These are matters that need to be addressed as a matter of priority.

**Freedom of Expression and Democracy.** Freedom of expression and democracy are two key ideals of the Liberal Party. Alarmingly, the Administrative Committee and the Constitution Committee have not been true to these two important ideas regarding the requests by delegates/members for a Special State Council meeting. The Victorian Division is the poorer for the injustice that has been perpetrated by the Administrative Committee, supported by the Constitution Committee.

**Factions.** As is the case with the Victorian Division generally at this time, the matters of early pre-selections and in turn the requisitions for a Special State Council meeting, have been completely hijacked by factional feuding, particularly by the so-called “progressives” within the Party. The substance of the “debate” has been completely lost in the slipstream of factional activities.

Party Members look to the State President and the Administrative Committee to provide sound leadership of the Party at all times, and particularly during challenging times. Unfortunately, the leaders have been found to be seriously wanting throughout the entire early pre-selections “debate”, and particularly regarding the requisitions for a Special State Council meeting. The Victorian Division is the poorer for this abject failure.

**From: Andrew McNabb**  
**Date: 18 February 2020 at 6:07:39 pm AEDT**  
**To: undisclosed-recipients:**

**Subject: Federal Pre- Selection & Jean Hawkins Admin Committee Resignation**

Dear Liberal Party Members

I am the FEC Chair for the electorate of La Trobe. I among many other members have been concerned about the governance issues affecting our party in recent months.

The reason for my email is to share the important information that **just over a week ago, one of the Administrative Committee members resigned, in protest at the decisions being taken by the Committee** - who are as you know, the party’s equivalent to our board of directors.

The member of the Administrative Committee who resigned was Jean Hawkins, who is a long time member and supporter, first joining in 1974. **Her resignation letter speaks for itself, and I have attached it for your consideration.**

It’s unfortunate that someone like me has to be the one to ensure this news is shared - so far there has been silence from the administrative committee on Jean’s resignation, even though the resignation letter was shared with the press, link below.

**SENIOR LIBERAL LASHES OUT AT ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE**

I note that in addition to the concerns raised in Jean’s letter about the breakdown in trust between our the Administrative Committee and our federal MPs, and the mishandling by the Administrative Committee of the three Requisitions for a Special Meeting of State Council.

There are also issues of financial concern. In particular:

1. Has the party lost up to \$6 million from the 12 month delay in investing the proceeds of the \$37 million sale of 104 Exhibition Street, with the share market going up 20% (not including dividends) while the \$37m sat in a deposit at the bank?
2. Since May 2019 election, has the Administrative Committee been



## THE FORGOTTEN LIBERALS.

Time after time, we keep hearing of generational change and yet the current Administrative Committee is far too busy to pay tribute to the myriad of young liberals who year after year assist during campaigns. On the other hand we have the committed ageing Liberals who have been the bedrock of the Liberal Party year in and year out. In some cases they are cast aside, forgotten for the time and effort put in throughout the years. Who can remember The Lyn Jewels, Vi Hurley, the Harold Eather, the Rae Kennett, Eva Nagy, Mabs Thrupp, Tony Love, Joy Howley, Peter Katsambanis, Srinivasan Vasam, Margaret Kirby, Karen Synon, Helen Shardey, Jeannette Milnes and many, many others too numerous to remember.

The youth and the elderly are the only members keeping alive the spirit of what being a Liberal is all about. None of this rubbish we are being fed today. Today's hierarchy is too busy feathering its own nest, conducting inquisitions and with hunts that would make the Salem witch hunts and the Spanish inquisition pale in significance. The sooner the current crop of foolish people resign or depart from the Administrative Committee the better. I have never seen such a disgraceful crew of has been and wannabees at the helm. Some were not even born when I joined and others have been far less than I in the Liberal Party. They have become a joke. I would rather go down fighting than see such innocuous individuals remain at the helm.

## VOICES FROM OUR PARLIAMENTARY PARTY

**MICHAEL O'BRIEN TOLD THE MEDIA:** "How long did it take [Jenny Mikakos](#) to get out of the nightclub, get on a plane and get back to work?" A group of Labor MPs including a senior minister has been captured on film during a booze-fuelled Bali party. The party in late-December featured [Health Minister Jenny Mikakos](#), who was up the next day to tweet about emergency evacuations ordered for East Gippsland due to towns being threatened by bushfires, as well as about the dangers of heat stress.

**GEORGIE CROZIER TOLD THE MEDIA:** "Our hardworking doctors and nurses need to be able to go to work each day knowing they are safe, but instead the increase of violence in their workplace under Labor is a growing concern." Hospitals and health clinics across the state are under siege from soaring rates of violence and drug use. Police are called to two assaults a day in Victoria's hospitals, GP and dental clinics, and other health facilities. In the last year alone assaults soared 18 per cent to 725 — continuing a trend that has seen Victoria Police record a 70 per cent jump since 2015.

**DAVID SOUTHWICK TOLD THE MEDIA:** "Andrews has dropped the ball on tackling youth crime and it's now being left to retired police volunteers to pick up the pieces. With youth offences on the rise and a lack of respect for our police, we need to be looking at ways to educate and divert children away from a life of crime."

## ENEWS LETTER & POLITICAL ARTICLES – A NEW CONCEPT

Over the past few days, the contributors to ENews Letters have been busy reviewing material to ensure that new developments have been inserted and nothing out of the ordinary has been overlooked. It would appear that those few members who have been in the Liberal party less than ten years are attempting to change the way we communicate, to stifle robust debates and to stop any criticism of others who are failing to perform. History has demonstrated time and time again that such people come and go and only those committed to Liberal Party values remain.

With less than three months to go, the current regime led by Robert Clark has pushed the boundaries of the grass roots resilience and as such they are fighting back at those who presume that power and influence is indeed their right by inheritance. Everyone associated with such individuals should be asking themselves if that is what they want the Liberal party to be. A party where no one is allowed to question the wisdom of those sitting in the ivory tower located at 60 Collins Street. Think well and ask what of the future. **ENEWS LETTERS ARE HERE TO STAY.**

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running a \$500,000 operating deficit?

3. Has the Administrative Committee just endorsed an expensive 10 year lease for a premises in the (inaccessible) retail district of Collins Street, rather than purchasing a new home for the party as was promised after the sale of 104 Exhibition Street?

The above three points need to be clarified by the Administrative Committee.

I will let you read and draw your own conclusions from Jean's letter, who is comfortable to have it distributed.

In my view, our upcoming State Council meeting in May 2020 will be a critical moment to consider these governance challenges, and act appropriately.

Best regards,

Andrew McNabb



**DONKEY STATEMENTS**

Ian Quick says that the Victorian Division has never been in better shape. Is Mr. Quick delusional or just plain sensationalist.

