

## *An open letter to all Members of Parliament.*

This letter is written by Tim Lough, Greg Mason, Andy Smith, Andrew Simmons, Neville Simmons, Phil Win and Doug Watt, and not on behalf of the Exclusive Brethren Church or members of that Church.

Both we, and our Church, have been subjected to repeated and relentless attacks by members of Parliament, both in the House and outside of the House. This follows the distribution of pamphlets produced by ourselves covering critical topics, prior to last year's election.

Much of what has been said about us is incorrect and very damaging. Accordingly, we state the correct position yet again:-

- 1) At all times we acted as a group of concerned individuals. Our campaign was not authorised or directed by the Exclusive Brethren Church, nor undertaken on behalf of the Church.
- 2) Funding was by the writers and their associates. It cost less than \$1 million. The Exclusive Brethren Church did not fund it in any way, nor was any congregation of the Church engaged in funding.
- 3) No political party has received any money from us.
- 4) No favours were asked for, nor were any offered. In return for our pamphlets. There was no suggestion whatsoever, at any time, of any financial benefit or reward, nor were any undertakings made to provide any benefit to us of any kind whatsoever.
- 5) Recommendations of the Chief Electoral Officer and senior legal counsel ensured our campaign fully complied with the Electoral Act.
- 6) No political parties had input into the content of our pamphlets.
- 7) All claims made in our pamphlets were researched from publicly available sources.

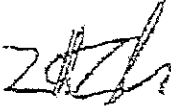
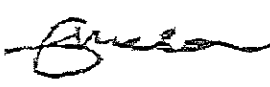
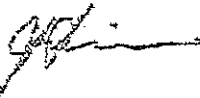
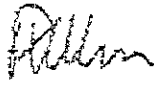
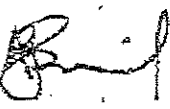
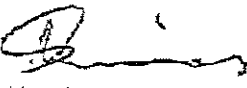

The recent and ongoing blatant attacks, involving a persistent and prolonged campaign, with snide, belittling remarks and mockery, seem clearly designed to promote public ridicule and to demean us and our beliefs in the eyes of the public.

We object to the repeated criticisms of our Church and our religion by members of Parliament, which we see as a vicious smear campaign against a minority religion for political purposes. This amounts to a serious violation of basic civil liberties, including freedom of assembly, freedom of religion, and freedom of speech.

We also object to the repeated allegations that we have breached the Electoral Act, noting the independent opinion in our favour published in the New Zealand Law Journal.

As belonging to a God fearing fundamental, albeit minority religious group we cannot emphasise enough the importance of refusing these attacks. The freedom and civil rights of all New Zealanders are at stake. No group of New Zealanders, regardless of their colour, race or religious affiliation can tolerate, nor should tolerate, the vilification we have been subjected to from senior members of the Government.

Yours faithfully,

			
Tim Lough - Wellington	Greg Mason - Auckland	Andrew Simmons - Auckland	Phil Win - Auckland
			
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