

Mistakes and Rorts in Elections

PM offers legislative help to investigate electoral rorts

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The Prime Minister has written to the Queensland Premier offering to introduce legislation giving the Criminal Justice Commission (CJC) the power to investigate allegations of electoral rorting in the federal electorate of Fisher.

John Howard has also asked the Australian Federal Police to investigate claims of vote-rigging in the Queensland seat of Hinkler.

The legislation would authorise the CJC to conduct investigations into allegations of electoral fraud in the 1987 poll for the seat of Fisher, won at the time by former Labor minister Michael Lavarch.

Ted Mack MP complains

The Sydney Morning Herald

Editorial - October 3, 1998

The frustrating aspect for people concerned about the integrity of our voting system is that the anecdotal evidence of mistakes and rorts is invariably confirmed when these matters are investigated. A Joint Standing Committee on Electoral Matters, chaired by the Labor MP Michael Lee, inquiring into the conduct of the 1987 election, for instance, confirmed that about 325 votes in each seat were incorrectly ruled informal and not counted. Mr Lee argued that this level of mistakes was 'dangerous' and that there was no way of knowing which way the votes would have gone.

After the 1993 election, the Independent MP, Ted Mack wrote to the then Minister for Administrative Services, Senator Bob McMullan, detailing 'certain concerns' about the Electoral Commission's conduct in his electorate. One was the disappearance of 260 votes cast for Mr Mack.