



2004 FEDERAL ELECTION CAMPAIGN LAUNCH

Toowoomba 19 September 2004

John Rivett – Federal President

I am delighted to launch our 2004 Federal Election Campaign in Toowoomba.

It's a homecoming for me. My Grandfather was once the Deputy Mayor and my father went to Prep and Toowoomba Grammar and started his career here as the Deputy Shire Engineer just after the War, and I was born here.

It is where the “City meets the Bush”. You come up the top of the range and the Road Trains, cattle smells and wide brimmed hats seem to take over the landscape.

The Bush has been battered in recent times. My fellow Senate candidate Mal McKenzie and I attended rallies in Gympie and Lismore last week where hundreds of primary producers were looking, talking and acting like kicked dogs when once they were the proud masters of their country. In six hours of speeches there were stories of hardship, frustration, financial ruin and personal tragedy but very few positive ideas. We have some.

Australia has been battered too - battered by the forces of globalisation, the foreign economic exploitation of our resources, our generosity and our naïve and happy go lucky nature developed from living in the “Lucky Country”.

“Lucky be damned” wrote our founder and Patron John Cumming. He was right you know. Australia has been sold out.

We're banging the cymbals in the world string orchestra -when we should be playing first or second violin.

We're carrying the drinks - when we should be strutting out to bat at number 3 or 4.

We're warming the benches - when we should be proudly running on at full forward, five-eight, flyhalf, striker or goal attack.

We've become the delivery boys and the floor sweepers in what used to be our own businesses – when we should be proud owners reaping the rewards of our forebears' enterprise.

Worse, we're dusting the boots of Uncle Sam - when we should be his free world partner, bravely counselling him on his many excesses.

There is a growing realisation of the sell out of our country which has led to the formation of The Great Australians. We are not great like Steve Waugh, Georgie Gregan or Ian Thorpe. We are not great because we have done great deeds.

We are great because our mission is to make Australia great – like it should be.

The politics of left and right and the ideological battle between capital and labour has been developed into a sick art form by the Labour Party and the Coalition. They have sold out the Bush and our Australian industries while engaged in their pathetic factional squabbling in Canberra.

When you sell out your sources of revenue and production, your ability to provide for adequate health, education and security go with them. The shallow debate so far in this election on these issues is a symptom of an underlying policy failure to provide for and nurture our rural and manufacturing industries. The bad policies of the major parties have led to the shortages of resources. Now they are fiddling at the edges to try to win back your votes.

The Great Australians will honestly attack the problems. We do have some policy solutions, but the overwhelming task for us is to educate ordinary Australians in what is really going on in this country so they can undergo a change in attitude. Our task is to inspire ordinary Australians to act to win back our nation.

The Great Australians owe nothing to any vested particular interests and we never will, but our carefully thought out policies will really help the people in the Bush.

We are non religious but will fight for your religious freedom.

We are non racist and we demand equal rights and opportunities for all the tribes of Australia.

All the tribes of Australia came here from somewhere else and our mission is to unite them to win back our nation.

We will –

- **Abolish Income Tax (and its derivatives) and GST and replace it with a 2% Spending Tax**
- **Force foreigners operating here to pay this tax by abolishing the Double Tax Conventions**
- **Establish the people owned “Australian Business Bank” to provide for infrastructure and business loans the commercial Banks won’t touch**
- **Legislate and negotiate Fair Trade not Free Trade. If countries try to subsidise food imports we will impose a tariff on them of an equivalent amount**
- **On the domestic front we will amend the Trade Practices act to allow for collective farm gate bargaining on price to restrain the power of the supermarket chains**
- **Promote and assist in establishing Regional Venture Capital funds to marshal some of the capital tied up in negatively geared residential property, superannuation funds and offshore investments to provide equity for new and existing businesses.**

The Spending Tax we propose is NOT a bank debit tax, but the model developed by Tax Reform and John McRobert in his book “Your future in your hands”. It takes a bit of getting your head around, but when the penny finally drops, you will see it is an absolute winner for Australia. I urge our members and supporters to make the effort to learn about and understand the Spending Tax and never give up trying to convince your neighbour.

You have my pledge that as long as my heart beats I will fight for it.

Most Australians have worked out that our cost of labour is too high when compared with that of our trading partners in Asia. However, most have not realised why or understand that there is a simple solution. One of the reasons why our cost of wages is too high is because of the high cost of tax on wages. The Spending Tax reduces the tax on labour and therefore the cost of labour, thus lowers the cost of production for all primary producers. Our exports much cheaper and more in demand.

In Gympie last week I heard the cries of the pork producers who can't compete with Canadian imports. The combination of the Spending Tax and our policy on imposing a tariff on subsidised foods will go a long way to solving that price differential.

The Spending Tax will return profits to the Bush and to all Australian businesses.

It reduces the cost of Government by taking the tax off labour and reducing the demand for social security by creating new jobs.

It frees up time for management and planning.

Consumers will benefit with cheaper goods and services.

Workers pay will be tax free which means you can save tax free, pay off the house tax free and pocket all your cash from your second job. This will give the incentive back for casual rural workers and backpackers to pick small crops – pickers are currently almost impossible to find. Why would you bother when the Government grabs 30% of your pay ?

On the national security front we believe all young people should be required to be trained in national service – military, environmental or aid work at their option – full time or part time at their option. Higher pay in the military will provide the incentive to choose the military option.

We believe home owners should be able to use reasonable force to protect their homes and families, and that home invaders should forfeit their rights to sue for damages. Under our policy, the only crime a home owner can be charged with is “using unreasonable force against a home invader” which would carry the same penalty as common assault- even if you happened to take the home invader out.

We welcome foreign investment but on our terms. Our terms include majority Australian owned.

On the environment, we are greener than the Greens without all the loopy baggage like freeing all caged budgies, making ecstasy free at nightclubs and restricting good farming practices.

We are common sense people from diverse backgrounds bound together by the passion for our country and the mission to win it back.

I am delighted to introduce our Candidates and particularly Noel Wieck running for the local seat of Groom. He truly represents the kind of reluctant politician we should all encourage. Canberra lacks a certain average goodness and Noel will take that with him. However he will also take a keen awareness of the issues facing the electorate and a work ethic second to none. I am sure you will join with me in wishing him the very best in his campaign. Three cheers for Noel.

Poor Fay will be left to milk the cows twice a day. I am sure she could do it.

These folk have the right attitude, but our policies and our country will fail if we as a nation do not change our attitudes of carefree idleness and servitude to globalisation, multi national companies and the new world order. The Great Australians see part of our mission is to do this. We must win a seat at the table, a foothold in the debate, and a voice in Canberra.

We must get someone in Canberra standing up to win back our country.

I urge the press to give us a fair go and report on our policies and our mission. The reporting of the political debate in this election so far has been dreadful. To be fair to them, maybe this is because the debate has been dreadful.

The press seem obsessed with the two parties. Last week, the Democrats leader had to do a bungy jump on the Gold Coast in his trademark purple t shirt to try to revive his career and make the front page of the dailies. Last weekend, the Greens leader Bob Brown had to be photographed on his bed with his live in male partner to make the front page leader of the middle section of the weekend press.

At the Senate draw on Friday, the media interviewed Pauline Hanson for nearly 15 minutes about her lady friend in jail. Not a question on her policies. All except for ABC radio simply refused to talk to me about the tax debate or the national economic mess we are in, saying they had run out of time.

On Friday, Dennis Atkins, the national affairs editor of the Courier Mail (a Murdoch paper), referred to the small parties contesting the Queensland Senate including the Great Australians as “slew of rats and mice”. I know how I feel about that. How do you all feel?

There is more to this campaign than the battle of the dodgy old bull Mr Howard and the young “ladder climbing, re-invented, children loving, book reading, taxi driver bashing, I came from a public housing estate” Mr Latham. Much more than whether Labour gives \$2.86 extra a week to single

unmarried mothers of three while The Libs take the high moral ground that \$1.97 is more than enough.

As a nation

- **we borrowed an extra \$120 billion from our foreign masters in the last three years for credit card debt,**
- **we tossed \$90 billion into the throats of poker machines last year yet we have no seed capital for good Aussie inventions so they nearly all go offshore,**
- **760,000 taxpayers claim negative gearing losses on property. That's taxpayers – not properties – some of these would have 100 properties. The result is that the substantial part of the post war wealth of our country is now tied up in over inflated negatively geared residential property and we have a tragic 12% of our workforce engaged in manufacturing – less than half the OECD average,**
- **House and unit prices are unaffordable. The average age of new home ownership is now 33, and good luck if you don't have parents to lend you the deposit,**
- **our private sector debt is nudging \$400 billion,**
- **90% of our industry is now foreign owned yet the foreigners pay one eightieth of the income tax that their workers pay,**
- **up to 30% of our fast food fattened kids in regional and outer suburban areas are on the dole, yet strawberry pickers are impossible to find in south East Queensland,**
- **we are importing canned pineapples, yet our own local co-operative, Golden Circle is struggling,**
- **we are importing risky bananas yet our growers can't get a decent price from Coles and Woollies,**
- **farm gate prices are dropping yet supermarket prices are rising,**
- **we have long delays in urgent surgery,**
- **we completely fail to educate our children in our nation's cultural heritage and how to manage their own finances.**

There is an urgent need for a fundamental change in the economics of how this country is run, how we collect taxes and how we allow our Government to spend them.

There is an urgent need for a change in our national attitude.

As a political leader, I urge the press to take up our challenge.

As a parent, I beg the people to listen to us.