

Rod Leunig

SUBMISSION FOR CONDUCT AT POLLING PLACES

At the last Federal Election I stood as a candidate for the Country Alliance Party in the lower house seat of Bendigo.

On the election day at the Eaglehawk Booth a group come and set up a table with helpers and occupying a central position in front of the entrance and started to hand out leaflets. They had no identifiable signs to say they were a party or contestant in the election.

After perusing the leaflet I found that the activist organization “GET UP” was responsible. These leaflets contained the various parties’ positions on a number of issues. The format appeared to be a question and answer on various party policies of what I presume “GET UP” deemed to be important.

The content appeared to be hostile to the Coalition Policies and was no doubt a push polling effort.

As to my knowledge, this organization was not a registered party on the ballot papers, I took rejection at this and knowing of the strict guidelines at polling booths for candidates and helpers I decided to attempt to have them removed.

I raised the issue with the manager of the booth who decided it was beyond her position to decide, and contacted her superiors.

After some considerable wait the answer came back saying they were entitled to do what they were doing.

If they are entitled why not everyone else and I envisaged a scenario where we could have dozens of like activist organizations pushing their barrow at every polling booth with push polling attempts. This would lead to a situation that was to the disadvantage of all candidates and the quiet exercise of democracy.

Regards Rod Leunig