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JOHN KOTSOPOULOS, Balwyn

Hanson? The whole system is a fraud

It is laughable to charge Pauline Hanson with electoral fraud when the whole electoral system is based on fraud. Consider:

Fraud 1: "Voting is compulsory." Voting is *not* compulsory — attendance at a polling booth is. There is nothing to stop a person from placing their ballot slip in the ballot box unmarked.

Fraud 2: "Voters must allot

preferences on their ballot slip." Voters are encouraged to believe they must put an order of preference against all candidates. In this way, a voter may ultimately have his vote used to elect a candidate he does not want. Major parties depend on this method of acquiring votes to shoehorn their candidates into parliament.

You can prevent this fraud by placing the number 1 against the candidate of your choice and the number 2 opposite every other candidate. Such a vote is valid.

Fraud 3: Taxpayer funding of the major parties. Because citizens will not voluntarily donate enough to the major parties, the parties have voted themselves an income from taxpayers' funds of \$1.765 (indexed to CPI) for every primary vote cast in their favor. In the 1998 election, nearly \$34 million was diverted to political parties this way.

Isn't it lucky the money wasn't needed for anything important like health!

DAVID A. CORBETT, Albury, NSW

The Ansett machine purrs into action

The two most notable innovations on Ansett flights in the past year, in this order: 1) The seats on their fleet of B737s have been moved closer together to add an extra row, and 2) videos demonstrating how to avoid DVT. At least their PR machine seems to be working properly.

RICHARD LAWRENCE, Fitzroy

Vaudeville a welcome step up

Ah, politicians. Elected by the grace of our vote, once in they think they run the place. And the miserable choice! Mr Expedient Backflip (cringe) or Mr Decisively Obtuse.

Does Paul Keating need a gig on the levers? At least we'll get the switch from farce to vaudeville.

DAVID CRANE, Taggerty

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"I see it in the paper July 26, 2001"