



18th November, 2002

Sir Daryl Dawson
Australian Competition & Consumer
Commission
PO Box 1199
DICKSON
ACT 2602

Dear Sir,

I read with interest the article "The Rule Changers" in the October 31st – November 6th edition of BRW and thought I should send you my thoughts on a change that I think is vital for the Trade Practices Act for the future of Australia.

The change I recommend is as a result of my observations and findings after talking with Professor Allan Fels regarding the Federal Election of 1993, when Dr. John Hewson was defeated by Paul Keating when he tried to introduce the GST for the first time.

On this occasion, Paul Keating blatantly lied and mislead the Australian people of voting age by misrepresenting the facts of the GST in order to win an election. These facts were not only spoken by him on television but were contained within media advertising implying that all food bought from supermarkets would incur the GST. This campaign was not only incorrect but also irresponsible as the politicians involved had complete disregard for the facts.

As a result, Dr. John Hewson's attempt to introduce the GST was defeated primarily because the public was misled by Paul Keating.

I subsequently asked Professor Fels at a luncheon at the Melbourne Hilton why was it that politicians could lie and mislead myself and my children when we vote for them to manage our country when, if this had been done by the leader, C.E.O. or manager of a corporation, he or she could be fined and/or imprisoned for an offence of the same magnitude.

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Professor Fels at that time simply replied, "The politicians are not liable for their conduct under the Trade Practices Act, as they make the laws."

I have since had occasions to highlight this fact to other media personalities, including Ita Buttrose and Peter Couchman and they were amazed and did not know at all that this was the case.

In view of the review of the Trade Practices Act which I totally agree with in proposing tougher sanctions against wayward directors and executives, I believe it is incumbent on the Committee to reflect on this gross anomaly by including politicians under the same law as it makes a mockery of the Trade Practices Act, weakens its credibility and laughs in the face of its goals if politicians are not also liable. As they are the leaders of our community and should be the role models for our future population, it would seem obvious to me that they should also be included under the Act.

I trust this submission is of help to you in your deliberations and look forward to your positive response.

Yours faithfully,



GEORGE D NORRIS
Corporate Coach.