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Letter: National Party deeply divided



Dave Stewart

In response to Lenore Craig's letter (Denying democratic rights, Beacon July 30), there is one glaring issue with this that seems to have been left out of this discussion.

David Seymour proudly announcing his voter suppression measures has to be one of the most interesting exchanges of the current government's term so far.

At present people are legally entitled to register to vote right up until election day. Mr Seymour doesn't like that because "dropkicks" might not vote for his policies.

What a bizarre admission from the deputy prime minister in a modern day social democracy.

We've all come to expect voter suppression from authoritarian regimes throughout history, but this is Aotearoa; we're not a banana republic yet.

But the absolute own goal for Mr Seymour has to be that he thinks the 94 percent of Kiwi voters who, according to him, are the dropkicks for not voting Act, have a collective memory problem.

But we don't.

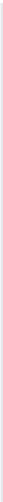
Mr Seymour is the member for an electorate called Epsom. And Epsom is an interesting electorate in the history of our post-MMP democracy.

We all know Act is the party that advocates individual responsibility and each of us must succeed or fail, on our merits.

We can't expect a sugar daddy to look after us.

Expect for one small problem.

Act couldn't win an electorate seat and didn't have the magic 5 percent of votes to get into parliament on its merits.



So instead of working harder and pulling its weight, it asked the National Party to tell the voters of the wealthiest electorate in Aotearoa not to vote for the National candidate and instead vote for someone from the Act Party.

Believers in MMP at the time must have wondered if the Epsom voters were actually dropkicks enough to obey and comply.

Well, the facts are National played along. They told their voters they'd rather they voted for a candidate who sadly wasn't that popular and if they did that might help them get a couple of extra seats they weren't capable of getting on their own merits.

And so the infamous Teapot Deal was hatched and Act got a leg up and won Epsom and then celebrated as if they'd earned it.

Roll on 2025 and the National Party are so deeply divided that the Prime Minister has a problematic caucus.

There are some members who wish they were in Act, some members who wish that Act was dead in the water and others who just want National to be like it used to be, a centre right democratic party that most people could tolerate and vote for.

But the voters aren't all dropkicks who will vote for who they're told to.

So the need to use voter suppression raises its ugly head and National play along, because now, the tail is wagging the dog.

With antics like this, it's a wonder someone hasn't been heard to blurt out under their breath in parliament about what an arrogant prick Mr Seymour is.

Dave Stewart

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