

## Supporting statements for Australian Christian Values Checklist

### SALT SHAKERS - 2007 Federal Election

#### ABOUT THE CHECKLIST

We do not simply ask the Parties or candidates to tell us what they will or will not do and give you their answers. We look at their policies and tell you how the Parties have behaved (voted) on a range of moral issues; and look behind the headline policy to the philosophy behind their worldview. Elections are always full of promises and all too often, even when made with the best of intentions, they are broken. Circumstances do change and so does what governments find they can do after they are elected. With many issues, such as taxation, welfare (the poor), overseas aid, immigration; issues rightly seen as important by most Christians - there is, in fact, little real difference between the major parties because they know there is a good possibility that they will have to act responsibly on those issues.

On the other hand minor parties can make all sorts of promises because they know that although they could, but rarely do, actually hold a balance of power, they won't be called on to actually implement policy. They can always blame the government for not doing what they want.

We need minor Parties, especially in the Senate, because it is supposed to be a House of Review. But the worldview underpinning their values must be very carefully evaluated as they will invariably push the boundaries knowing that by so doing they may just persuade the major parties to step a little in their direction.

In contrast to just repeating the mantra on popular issues, those relating to either the hip pocket or social justice, the Christian Values Checklist looks specifically at the issues the parties do not want to tell you about.

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The following material is a drastically edited version of a 14 page substantiating statement for the 2007 Australian Christian Values Checklist. Substantiating statements are taken from Party policy statements, public statements, media reports and, in some cases voting records over the past three years. The full 14 Page document (and the Checklist) can be accessed at: <http://www.saltshakers.org.au/html/P/8/B/435/> Party Policies can be accessed at:

**CDP:** [http://www.cdp.org.au/fed/policy\\_federal.asp](http://www.cdp.org.au/fed/policy_federal.asp)

**Family First:** <http://www.familyfirst.org.au/familyfirst.php#policies>

**Liberal:** <http://www.liberal.org.au/about/ourpoliciesplans.php>

**Nationals:** <http://www.nationals.org.au/About/Policies/default.asp>

**ALP:** Policies & Nat. Platform and Constitution 2007: <http://www.alp.org.au/policy/index.php>

**Democrats:** [http://www.democrats.org.au/campaigns/election\\_07\\_our\\_election\\_platform/](http://www.democrats.org.au/campaigns/election_07_our_election_platform/)

**Greens:** <http://greens.org.au/election/policy.php>

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#### 1. Prayers to open Parliament each day

CDP - Family First - Liberal/Nationals: All committed to retaining the opening of Parliament each day with the Lord's Prayer.

Labor: Kevin Rudd was asked prior to the last federal election, "If elected would Labor stop prayer in parliament?" Mr. Rudd responded, "You do not need to pray in parliament, you can do it at home".

When the Parliament was sworn in, in 2004, 50% of Labor MHRs failed to take an oath on the Bible.

Democrats - Greens: Senators Lyn Allison & Bob

Brown moved to abolish parliamentary prayers.

#### 2. Teach Australia's Christian heritage and history in all schools

Liberal/Nationals: The Government's new program on teaching history has references to teaching beliefs and values including Christianity. Supported by Family First and CDP.

Labor: No specific policy.

Democrats - Greens: No policy - see Q.1 for their views on Christianity.

#### 3. Promotion and support of marriage over de facto co-habitation

CDP - Family First: support programs that high

light the social utility of marriage

Liberal/Nationals - Labor: Whilst some support is given to the promotion of marriage, heterosexual de facto relationships are also supported.

Democrats - Greens: Support equal relationship recognition for same-sex and other couples.

#### 7. Support parents choice in education with educational vouchers

CDP - Family First: Support parents' rights to choose schooling that supports their family's values.

Liberal/Nationals - Labor: Support choice of schools but not a voucher system.

Democrats - Greens: No support for a voucher system. Support priority to public education.

#### 10. Oppose registration of same-sex relationships (State & Federal)

CDP - Family First - Liberal/Nationals: Do not support Relationship Registers or Civil Unions

Labor: Support State-based Relationship Registers.

Democrats - Greens: Support full relationship equality and same-sex marriage.

#### 11. Protect children - No overseas adoption by same-sex couples

CDP - Family First: Totally oppose the adoption of children by same-sex couples.

Liberal/National: Announced an intention to legislate against overseas adoption by same-sex 'couples'.

Labor: Did not support the proposal to stop overseas same-sex adoption.

Democrats - Greens: In favour of all adoption by same-sex couples.

#### 14. Life is precious - Oppose abortion.

CDP - Family First: totally opposed to abortion.

Liberal/Nationals: No policy. Conscience vote.

Labor: Pro-abortion Party Policy - Conscience vote.

Democrats - Greens: Support abortion on demand.

#### 15. Legislate to cease Medicare funding of abortion

CDP - Family First: would support legislation to end Medicare funding

Liberal/Nationals - Labor: No proposal to remove Medicare funding.

Democrats - Greens: Support abortion.

#### 17. Life is precious - Euthanasia to remain illegal

CDP - Family First: opposed to abortion.

Liberal/Nationals - Labor: No stated policy.

Democrats - Greens: Policy to support euthanasia.

#### 21. Preserve free speech: Oppose religious/sexuality vilification laws

CDP - Family First - Liberal/Nationals: Oppose vilification laws.

Labor: Platform Ch 13, No 12. "vilification... Labor... will provide an accessible and effective means for all people to protect themselves from such behaviour."

Democrats: "The Democrats believe that all Australians have a right to equality under the law... and should be protected from discrimination and vilification on the grounds of sexuality, transgender identity or intersex status."

Greens: Support sexuality vilification laws but do not support religious vilification laws,

#### 22. Keep our freedom - Oppose a Bill or Charter of Rights

CDP - Family First - Liberal/Nationals: Oppose a Bill or Charter of Rights.

Labor: "Labor will initiate a public inquiry" - general support for Bill of Rights.

Democrats: "We have long advocated the introduction of a Bill of Rights"

Greens: "enact an Australian Bill of Rights."

#### 24. Reject heroin trials and drug injecting rooms

CDP - Family First - Liberal/Nationals: Do not support heroin trials or injecting rooms.

Labor: The Platform states that the ALP program on drugs will include "state government initiatives, such as supervised injecting places".

Democrats: Will support medically supervised injection centres where needed". And "research into medical prescription of heroin in some circumstances".

Greens: "increase the availability of harm reduction programs, including... medically supervised injecting rooms, and implement a rigorous scientific trial of prescribed heroin to registered users.

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