Legal issues from New Zealand’s 2014 election campaign

Tuesday 17 February 2015 1–2 pm

Professor Andrew Geddis University of Otago

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New Zealand’s 2014 general election produced a clear and undisputed set of winners and losers, out of which a stable government quickly formed. However, it also raised a number of interesting legal issues. These include questions around who may (and must) be allowed to participate in televised party leaders debates, the process of enrolment and casting special votes, the prohibition on prisoners voting, constraints on polling day electioneering and the regulation of ‘third party’ election speech. While none of these questions are of themselves significant enough to call the legitimacy of New Zealand’s election into question, they do illustrate how the field of electoral law is ceaselessly shifting.

Andrew Geddis completed his undergraduate work at the University of Otago, studying law and political studies. In 1996 he was awarded a Fulbright scholarship to Harvard Law School, where he completed his LLM degree. In 2000, he returned to Otago to take up a lecturing position. He was appointed an Associate Professor in 2007, and Professor in 2011. Andrew currently teaches Public Law at the 200 level, as well as the 300-400 level papers ‘Law and the Democratic Process’ and ‘Bills of Rights: Theory and Practice’. In addition, he is the coordinator for the second year course. His research interests lie in the field of public law, rights jurisprudence and democratic theory, with a particular focus on the legal regulation of elections. Andrew is a member of the Legislation Advisory Committee, and has provided advice on several occasions to parliament’s Justice and Electoral Committee and Privileges Committee. He is the author of *Electoral Law in New Zealand: Practice and Policy*. He is also a regular contributor to the opinion pages of the country’s newspapers.

The views expressed in this event are those of the presenter and do not necessarily represent the views of The Australian National University.

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