

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Internet Party Denounces Election Meddling By Media; Releases Court Filings



As the New Zealand public now begins to receive their voting papers, many on social media are expressing surprise to find that there are registered parties listed as options to vote for, that they didn't even know were running in the election.

For New Zealand's largest television news program, TVNZ's One News, even the Internet Party, whose campaign events had trended #1 in New Zealand and achieved millions of social media impressions, were deemed beneath notice, and ignored. A disservice not only to the Party, but voters and democracy as a whole.

On Thursday 7th September, the Internet Party of New Zealand filed a Notice of Proceeding against Television New Zealand (TVNZ), in the High Court at Auckland.

Under advice and in conjunction with the Internet Party's own Notice of Proceeding, the Party also filed an Interlocutory Application to join The Opportunities Party's (TOP) attempt to obtain an interim injunction against TVNZ, compelling it to allow all minor parties to participate in its impending minor parties televised debate.

The practice of filing an Interlocutory Application is to show respect for the Court's time and resources by offering for it to hear a new case alongside an existing one. But because TOP's case was ultimately unsuccessful, the Internet Party's case subsequently was not heard. Yet the Internet Party's case was filed on its own merits, based on its own set of unique circumstances and its own associated evidence. To demonstrate this, the Internet Party is today publishing copies of its filing.

Internet Party Leader Suzie Dawson said: "Media has reported the Internet Party as having 'jumped on' TOP's bandwagon. This is simply untrue. While news of TOP's original filing did cause the Internet Party to look more closely into the case law and history of the exclusion of some minor parties from televised debates, we had in fact been publicly discussing whether or not we should take a case against media since August 26th, well before the announcement of TOP's filing."

Unlike TOP's case, the statement of claim and supporting affidavit from Internet Party was not based on the inclusion or exclusion of any other Party from the debates, but simply on the democratic principles involved; namely the public interest, the fundamental right to participation, and what the Party believes is the discriminatory nature of the conditions of participation imposed by TVNZ.

Two of TVNZ's three conditions for participation required a Party to already be in Parliament. The third, that a Party must have achieved 3% in TVNZ's polls is a near-impossible feat for any Party's campaign that had not been given any prior coverage by that network.

Ms. Dawson said "Democracy should be a level playing field. But New Zealand media, by excluding some registered parties from their election coverage, have created a vicious cycle. The lack of coverage produces muted poll results, which are then in turn used to justify the lack of coverage. This anti-democratic practice engineers a *fait accompli* situation that not only effectively sabotages the campaign in question but amounts to meddling in the electoral process itself, guaranteeing that Parties outside of Parliament can never meet the polling criteria to be invited to televised debates. The fact that some members of the public's first awareness of a registered Party's campaign is when they discover that Party's name listed on the ballot, is a complete disgrace and indicative of the deep failings of New Zealand media organisations who supposedly serve the public interest."

Accordingly, the Internet Party has provided popular New Zealand political blogsite The Daily Blog NZ with copies of its Statement of Claim, Affidavit and associated evidence relating to its High Court filings. Giving New Zealanders the opportunity to assess for themselves, the merits of their case.

Party Leader Suzie Dawson concludes: "Once again, the dinosaur-like mass media disappoints. In a real democracy, everyone should have a voice. Now it will fall to citizens to take matters into their own hands and provide for ourselves the critically important services to democracy which for too long we have relied upon conflicted corporate bodies to provide."

-ENDS-

Anyone can [Join the Internet Party](#) to help #UpdateNZ - and the world!

Media enquiries: please contact media@internet.org.nz or add your email address to our mailing list at <https://internet.org.nz/news>.

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