

7 April 2024

Aftermath Part 2

The Election result.

The count has now been done, and the result of the election known. Liberals 14, Labor 10, Greens 5, JLN 3 and Independents 3.

	BRADDON	BASS	LYONS	FRANKLIN	CLARK	TOTALS
Liberal	3	3	3	3	2	14
Labor	2	2	2	2	2	10
Greens		1	1	1	2	5
JLN	1	1	1			3
Independent	1			1	1	3
	7	7	7	7	7	35

An election designed to clear the air and enable a majority government to govern has delivered a parliament which will now be more problematic than before. The government urged the people not to vote in a Labor-dominated ‘Coalition of Chaos’ but that is exactly what they have done. However, this coalition of chaos will be all about the Liberals.

The winners are:

- the Greens, who, receiving **no significant** additional level of support, increased their representation from 2 to 5
- the JLN, who gained three representatives, without declaring any policy
- the Independents, two of whom retained their seats and now joined by a further Independent from Braddon

The losers are:

- the Liberals, whose vote went down by 12.5%
- Labor, who gained almost no additional votes and no additional seats.

If the Premier thought dealing with two recalcitrant backbenchers was hard, it was nothing compared to what this is going to be.

It's going to be one helluva time.

What next?

It is obvious, based on numbers alone, that the cleanest coalition will be one involving the Liberals and the Greens. However, the chances of that happening are ZIP.

A more complex structure would involve Labor as the predominant party with the Greens and three others, but the chances of that happening – also ZIP.

Stability requires 18. And 18 cannot easily be found. Where does this leave things?

Well, pretty much up in the air, it would seem. The government could continue to govern with no deals in place (a scenario that was put forward in the last newsletter) and be beholden to the whims of the parliament on any one day.

It is probably going to be that anyway, even if a deal is done. For example, a deal could be done guaranteeing supply (which is all about funding government services when all is said and done), but not agreeing to any policy position.

The government will not be able to control the debate in the chamber, whether that be criticism of government ministers, the response to the Inquiry into Child Sexual Abuse or any one of a thousand separate one-off issues such as Marinus, the Stadium etc... The time will not be theirs to manage.

And governments which cannot control their own agenda will not last long - the frustrations will be overwhelming. If the Premier found it all too hard, and wanted to seek another early election, the Party itself might take a new approach with a new leader, or if that did not happen and the Premier provided the government with his resignation, the governor might call on the Labor leader to form a government.

Already, pressures are mounting within the Liberal Party. The electorate of Franklin is now a funderbox for them. Indeed we live in interesting times!

Hare Clark

Without question, Hare Clark is a very fair voting system. Its strength is that it allows for minority representation, and for the replacement of MPs without the need for a by-election.

It is also a system which allows your vote to continue to be processed until it lands on a continuing candidate, or alternatively, exhausts after you have only marked 7 or more candidates all unsuccessful (or during the preference flows, already elected).

The peculiarity of the system is this very point, concerning votes that exhaust.

Two examples:

In Braddon, with a quota of 8875, the countdown for the last seat was extremely close. Three candidates were left –

The Liberal candidate	6032
The Green candidate	5035
The Independent	5765

The Green candidate was the last of the 7 candidates put forward by the Greens and was next to be cut up.

The question was: Would the Green vote go beyond 7, or would they exhaust at 7. Because, if they exhausted, the Liberal candidate would win, but if they flowed through, then chances are they would not go the Liberal team. You can see it could go either way.

In the event, when the Greens candidate was eventually cut up, approximately 50% exhausted. Of the remaining 50%, approximately 40% went to the Independent, giving him 7,861 votes), and 10% to the Liberal candidate (with a total now of 6,481 votes). Which meant the Independent won the seat.

And that meant the Liberals won one less seat in Parliament than was expected,

Here is a further example:

Let's take 4 people vying for the last 3 positions.

Party A has two candidates (A1 and A2) with 1.6 quotas between them, while another two candidates (B and C) have 1.4 quotas between them. However, with A, the preference flows to this point have led to A1 having only a few votes to go to obtain a quota while A2 lags with almost 0.6 of a quota. With B and C, both candidates are edging up to the wire, level pegging at around 0.7 quotas each, both with a higher tally than A2.

The first of the four to be cut up will be A2 and it will in fact be the last distribution – A1 is elected and the two other candidates B and C could then be declared elected without either achieving a quota.

This is why the count at the end is so important, and can throw up wild cards.