

Level playing field expected

Your comment in relation to Mr Craig's letter (7 October) demonstrates your clear lack of understanding of the issues.

By using quotation marks in candidate responses you have indicated that their responses are direct quotations. You have published their responses in the form of transcript, and not as journalistic interpretation, without any disclaimer to the effect that what you have published is not, necessarily, what the candidate actually said.

It leaves out the retakes, the ums and ahs, the silences when candidates were uneasy, the idiosyncrasies of language and the, seeming, references to notes by some. Television interviews are primarily about body language (hence the title "Hot Seat"); in omitting this you omit the fundamental quality of these interviews.

Your reference to Tim Shadbolt is hard to fathom. His messages have always been strongly reinforced by his body language, a combination which could not be described as "smooth talking" but which is, clearly, acceptable to electors where a similar "transcript" may not have been. Similarly David Lange and Robert Muldoon.

Some candidates have invested a considerable amount of time in understanding issues and in expressing themselves lucidly. They have a right to expect that they will be offered a level playing field to distinguish themselves from those who have not and who have dithered over their responses.

By publishing such "transcripts" as written quotation you omit the central quality provided by the medium that the interview was conducted in, misled readers and disadvantage those candidates who were forthright in their presentation.

WAYNE DEFMING
Maungakaramea

Boost school dental work

In his response to my report that the



READERS MISLED: By style of candidate responses, a reader claims.

PICTURE / FILE

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IS TO THE EDITOR