

Exclusive Brethren secret backers of Nat's

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Exclusive Brethren secret backers of Nat's campaign

Investigations by the Green Party have today confirmed that five of the people named in a smear campaign aimed at getting Don Brash and the National Party into power were members of the Exclusive Brethren church.

Stephen Myles Win, who authorised the 'Green Delusion' pamphlet and co-authored a Concerned Christians letter along with his wife Mary and Milton and Michelle How, and J Hawkins, authoriser of the anti-Labour health pamphlet are all listed in the Exclusive Brethren's confidential address book.

Green Party Co-Leader Jeanette Fitzsimons said she was shocked to hear that this secretive church had put its membership and its financial weight behind Don Brash and the National Party.

"This is very strange as I understood this church has a strict rule that it did not get involved in politics and that its members were not even allowed to vote," Ms Fitzsimons said.

"The Exclusive Brethren have the absolute right to campaign for the National Party, but not to tell outright lies and half truths about Green Policy in a bid to get their man to the top. I do find it strange that a group that claims to be Christian can so easily break one of the 10 commandments by telling such lies."

The research also showed that this church was revealed to have used the same underhanded tactics to support George Bush's re-election campaign in the United States.

Newspapers there reported in January that the Thanksgiving 2004 Committee, whose members were made up of Exclusive Brethren, spent more than US\$500,000 on newspaper advertisements last year supporting President Bush and U.S. Senate candidate Mel Martinez.

"I am disappointed that these same tactics are emerging here and hope now that their methods have been exposed they will be more honest and open about their political campaigns," Ms Fitzsimons said.

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