

Foreword

This special edition of *Papers on Parliament* commemorates the career of Harry Evans who recently retired after 21 years as Clerk of the Senate. It contains a selection of his writings from the 1980s to the present day along with two tributes by Senator the Hon John Hogg, President of the Senate, in a statement to the Senate on 19 November 2009, and Cleaver Elliott, Clerk Assistant (Committees), on behalf of all staff, at a farewell function on 4 December 2009. Both pieces give some details of Harry's career and therefore provide context for the papers collected in this volume.

From the forensic dissection and analysis of the flaws in certain judgements of the NSW Supreme Court in the case of *R v Murphy* in 1985 and 1986 to his assessment of the impact of the Government majority in the Senate from 2005 to 2007, these pieces show Harry Evans' clarity of thought and penetrating evaluation at work. He also writes with great style and wit and draws on a vast store of knowledge. Aficionados of parliamentary traditions may find Harry's paper on 'The Traditional, the Quaint and the Useful: Pitfalls of Reforming Parliamentary Procedures' to be an uncomfortable read but they would be hard nuts indeed not to smile at his demolition of mystique for its own sake or nod in sympathy with his defence of rationality in parliamentary procedures. It is one of my favourite pieces, along with his papers on statutory secrecy provisions (and the underlying advices) and the Magna Carta. His scholarship and his deep interest in the work of the American founders are evident in the various pieces on the ideas behind our Constitution, and his international reputation as an expert in parliamentary privilege is effortlessly demonstrated in the various papers on that subject. His championship of the institution of the Senate is a thread that connects all these works.

I welcome the opportunity to make these papers available to a wider audience so that others, too, may enjoy 'vintage Evans'.

Rosemary Laing
Clerk of the Senate