

The Secretary,  
Finance & Public Administration Committee,  
Parliament House,  
Canberra, ACT 2600.  
1st February, 2009

Plebiscite for an Australian Republic Bill, 2008

In response to the invitation to make a submission on this bill, I wish to put the following to the Committee for their consideration:

- o There is only one way to change the constitution. This is a referendum. So why isn't it being used?

- o Details of the proposed republic are being kept secret. Surely we should know what is being planned before we vote.

- o The smaller states are not protected as in a referendum. For a referendum to pass, it must be approved by a national majority and also by a majority in at least four states. Some lawyers think a referendum on such a basic change would need to be approved in all states.

- o This plebiscite invites the people to reject the existing constitution without knowing what is to be put in its place.

- o If passed it will lead to a period of constitutional instability.

- o It will be costly, and add to the millions and millions already spent on various attempts to persuade the people to support a republic.

- o In 1999 every state and 72% of electorates said no to the republicans' preferred model.

- o Don't the republicans understand that No means No?

- o The agenda of many if not most republicans includes changing our flag.

I would be grateful if you would acknowledge receipt.

David S. Thomson, MA, LLB, FACE