

22nd January 2009

The Standing Committee on Finance and Public Administration,  
The Senate, Parliament House, Canberra, ACT 2600.

Submission to Senate Committee regarding “Plebiscite for an Australian Republic Bill”.

We very strongly think that this bill should be rejected on several grounds.

1. Reading the constitution we find that in section 128 it states that any change to the Constitution must be by a referendum. In other words a majority vote of every voter in every state. The suggested ‘plebiscite’ would not give us that choice, therefore it would be going against the very fabric of the Constitutional process. Does not Bob Brown know this? He should ... if he does, he is inviting the people to reject the constitution without knowing what is to be put in its place.
2. A plebiscite is a non-binding simple question, asking for a simple 51% majority which makes individual states at a disadvantage. This is unconstitutional.
3. A plebiscite has never been put to the people on a constitutional question before, because section 128 protects us from changing the constitution without us knowing the finer details of the consequences.
4. It would be costly and a complete waste of taxpayers money.
5. No mention is made of what sort of republic he is proposing, this is why the people sensibly voted “NO” before.

Yours faithfully,

Doug and Jean Holmes.