

24th January, 2009
The Secretary,
Finance & Public Administration Committee,
Parliament House
Canberra. ACT 2600
fpa.sen@aph.gov.au
Fax: 02 6277 5809

Dear Sir / Madam,

Re: Plebiscite for an Australian Republic Bill, 2008

Senator Brown has proposed to hold a plebiscite for an Australian republic at the next election. I believe that a committee report on the bill is planned for 15th June, 2009, and that submissions must be received by 6th February, 2009 (which, incidentally, is the 57th anniversary of the Accession of our Queen).

I am writing with regard to this. This is my submission which I wish to put to the Committee for their consideration.

At present, Australia (and the world) is having an 'economic crisis', or so everyone is telling us. A push for any type of republic at this stage is too much of a burden for the taxpayer. The cost will be in the millions of dollars. Please remember that the Rudd government has already spent most of the surplus gained by the past government. Any unnecessary expenditure, like this, will be seen as totally irresponsible.

The question to be in the plebesite, "Do you support Australia becoming a republic?", denies an intelligent person the right to know exactly what they are voting for. For example, if you were to ask me, "Would you like one person to have total world rule?". My answer, as a Christian, would be "Yes, for the Lord Jesus." but "No, for everyone else." What type of republic will I be voting for? What are its advantages, if any? This question is too vague to determine full meaning. (Most republics have not worked.)

Suppose some people do vote for the republic, and they later find that the one that is instituted is not the type of republic that they would have liked. Won't this cause more disharmony in an already fragile nation? In a country like ours, we need strategies that unite, not divide. We need to make sure that everyone is agreed on a model, BEFORE we vote to change from what we already have.

In 1999, every state of Australia and 72% of electorates said 'NO' to the republican's preferred model. This seems to suggest that most people don't want a republic, because this was the model deemed to be most acceptable at the time. It's only been 10 years since then! What part of the word 'NO', don't the governments understand?

If the republic is implemented, what other changes are on the agenda? Trying to change the nation's flag would have even more opposition than the 'NO' of the 1999 republican vote.

And WHY do we wish to change to a republic, when our monarch is a sensible, dignified, hard-working, always well-presented and kind lady? If she were a loose, frivolous, silly woman .. Well, then a republic might serve us. But, she isn't! Our Queen is one of the best monarchs ever. For this we are very fortunate. Long may she reign!

Obviously, I like the constitution as it is. I, and many others like me, need good evidence before we change our opinions.

Thank you for reading my comments. I would be grateful if you would acknowledge receipt of this letter.