

Contemporary Oz Republican History in the 21C

Writer: **Peter Consandine**, CEO of The Republican Party of Australia
(aka: The Australian Republicans or RPA)

From the Take-UP:

22 July, 2015...Inaugural Summit Meeting between **Tim Mayfield** and **Peter Consandine**, respectively the National Directors (CEOs) of the ARM and The RPA took place in CBD, Melbourne.

Between **Peter FitzSimons**'s (hereinafter '**Fitzy**') ascension to the Chairmanship of ARM in July, 2015 and end October, 2015 **Peter Consandine** made numerous efforts (8 at least) to set UP a meeting appointment with **Fitzy** to no avail – most e-mail overtures NOT being acknowledged; most e-mails UNanswered.

July, 2015...**Paddy Manning** published his UNauthorised biography of/on **Malcolm Turnbull** – on page 254 of which **Fitzys** ANTI-democratic, UNconstitutional, mini-minimalist model for the Oz Republic is spelt-out.

26 August...**Fitzy** addressed the National Press Club (NPC) in Canberra and, effectively, 'Re-Launched' the ARM.

Late August...**Peter Consandine**, in his role as Managing Editor of the annual Wattle Day Newsletter, published the 10th issue of the screed under the heading of 'ALL or NOTHING AT ALL!'...a **1946** mailer project. Magnificent!

1 September, 2015...The RPAs satellite events organisation viz. Wattle Day Events Inc staged the 10th Annual Wattle Day Luncheon at Parramatta Park (Old Government House) where renowned Social Researcher, **Hugh Mackay**, was the Guest Speaker.

20 September, 2015...The RPA commenced a fresh recruiting drive to bolster its numbers for the purpose of re-registration with the Australian Electoral Commission [AEC]. Essentially, in lieu of the street meeting method of the previous 24 years, The Party began a 'pastoral republican' drive with its CEO **Peter Consandine** going door-to-door ALL over the Eastern Seaboard re-signing/confirming *existing* Members + re-engaging lapsed Members + converting Members from its discontinued sister party list: Abolish State Governments! (The Community Republicans). This drive yielded instantaneous results – the objective, which was generally accepted, being that the overALL endeavour was not necessarily conducive to The Party's prospects with the (then) UPcoming 2016 federal election.

28 October, 2015...EGM #14 of The RPA held at Epping (Sydney)

November...**Peter Consandine** re-joined the ARM *in Solidarity* with **Tim Mayfield**'s efforts.

November...**Brian Buckley Clare**, Convenor of the Republican Patriots organisation, joined the ARM.

November...**Klaas Woldring**, Convenor of the Republic Now! organisation, joined the ARM.

7 December...The RPA renewed the lease on its Serviced Office at Bella Vista [NW Sydney] and, same day, took out a separate lease on a local repository to store The Party's ever-growing archives/records.

The 2016 Experience:

2 January...The Editorial in the Sydney Morning Herald (page 31) was headlined: 'A Happy 2016: The Year of the Republic'.

27 January...EGM #15 of The RPA held at Epping (Sydney).

February...The RPAs 'State of the Republican Nation Report #5' was published & disseminated/distributed. This report was redolent with the fierce criticism of 5 MEAA-accredited, self-declared republicans, journalists – **Paul Sheehan**, **Marcus Strom**, **Tim Blair**, **Miranda Devine** & **Paul Zanetti** – on just how fraudulent **Fitzys** model for the Oz Republic was and, therewith, how **Fitzys** style of "blokey" Chairmanship of the ARM was bringing Oz Republicanism into disrepute; that

opprobrium was unfortunately gaining momentum concurrent with wholesale new awareness on the issue in the body politic. In this same report, **Peter Consandine**, as the Primary Writer – under the aegis of a separate heading viz: ‘SO FAR, SO BAD’ – predicted an ancient Roman-style Plutocracy *if ever Fitzy’s* model for the Oz Republic got UP.

17 February...**Anne Twomey**, Professor of Constitutional Law at Sydney University gave a lecture on the topic of ‘REVIVING the REPUBLIC’ to the Anglo-Australian Lawyers Association in Sydney. Twomey was emphatic that Australia should NOT wait until the queen’s death to begin debate on models for advancing Australia’s constitutional re-arrangements.

25 February (reprinted on 11 October)...former active member of ARM in Canberra, **Mike Pepperday**, wrote and circularised his 22-page OPEN Letter to **Fitzy**. Pepperday’s (OPEN) letter was hypercritical of the ARM and a random few quotes are examples of his sincere, honest concerns: “The ARM has lost sight of its purpose” + “The ARM is fatally UNrepresentative” + “The ARM is UNinclusive and is no different today from the failed organisation of yesteryore” and “The ARM is generating a polarised atmosphere”. Moreover, Pepperday focused on the new Chairman, **Fitzy**, and laid the pointed charges that he [**Fitzy**] was deaf to criticism and blind to constructive suggestions; that he [**Fitzy**] personified the elite exclusiveness which perceptibly pervaded the ARM overALL and, in his ‘Conclusion’ remarks put it to **Fitzy** thus: “You [**Fitzy**] require a personal re-think and a drastic change of tactics”.

3 March...24th RPA Republican of the Year Dinner at The Hub Restaurant, Ashgrove (Brisbane) for Queensland ARM Convenor, **Glenn Davies**. At this gig, **Peter Consandine**, advantageously, conferred with fellow-Direct Electionists: **David Muir**, **Peter Johnstone** and **Paul Tully**.

7 March...Inaugural Launch of the State Republic of Queensland Campaign at the very same venue as the previous week’s Dinner at Ashgrove (Brisbane).

27 April...EGM #16 of The RPA held at Epping (Sydney).

5 May...**Peter Consandine** went to the Australian Museum to hear **Fitzy** speak and later field questions with the plan of action to approach **Fitzy** *directly and personally* for a meeting appointment which was, again, rejected ‘out-of-hand’. ***Fitzy** admitted to an UNimpressed audience that he is indeed selective about *where and when* he wears his red bandanna – owning UP to the fact that he wears said red bandanna to bed each night! * **Fitzy’s** speech topic was on Antarctic explorers.

14-15 May...**Peter Consandine** recommenced RPA community/street meetings with a two-day gig at Rosehill Gardens (Sydney). Consandine’s takings over the two-day gig were phenomenal.

21 May...30th AGM of The RPA and, therewith the 30th National Convention of The Australian Republicans at Bunbury (WA). *This was a f.i.f.o. gig in *every* respect – time *and* timing being of the essence.

25 May...EGM #17 of The RPA held at Epping (Sydney).

1 June...**Peter Consandine** commenced writing and disseminating blogs. *Consandine’s first effort was entitled: ‘Choosing **Peter FitzSimons** as the new Chairman of the ARM was a Monumental Mistake’.

13 June...**Peter Consandine** attended his first ARM Community Meeting at Balgowlah (Sydney) where **Fitzy** was speaking and got autograph signings in 3 of **Fitzy’s** books.

15 June...**Peter Consandine** attended his second ARM Community Meeting at Blacktown (Sydney) where, following **Fitzy’s** speech, **Peter Consandine** made a correction suggestion (specifically: the *actual* date of the November 1999 initial republican referendum – which was the 6th of that month, there and then) from the floor after which he approached **Fitzy** again about a meeting appointment. But, along with inflicting a violent, bodily assault on the person of **Peter Consandine**, **Fitzy** yet again, declined *very loudly* – so much so that security guards at the venue attended the scene in a hurry. *But the security guards may have been close to the scene of the UNfortunate incident because **Fitzy** ‘brp-brped’ in to the microphone he was holding and followed with the words “Call Security, Call Security” before Consandine had raised the ‘correction’ matter.

26 June...the last of an **868** RPA Foundation Membership Certificate completion drive since 3 January mailed out from RPA Headquarters at Castle Hill (NW Sydney) prior to the 2 July Double Dissolution federal election.

12 July...Second Summit Meeting between the ARM and RPA CEOs **Tim Mayfield** and **Peter Consandine** took place in CBD Melbourne.

20 July...**Peter Consandine** made a \$50 donation to the ARM Women's Network.

August...RPA 'State of the Republican Nation Report #6' was published & disseminated/distributed. *This edition appraised the qualitative opinion polls of the Essential Research, OmniPoll and Newspoll organisations apropos the Australian Public's attitudes to future Charles & Camilla and William & Kate monarchies. **ARM Deputy Chair, **Michelle Wood**, was quoted in the lead-UP to the Launch of the ARM Women's Network thus: "the ARM needed to engage and energise Australian Women" and ***some examples of **Prince Charles's** Foundation for Building Community's propensity to interfere in both UK and Australian State government's heritage projects.

August, also...**Peter Consandine** in his role as Managing Editor of the annual Wattle Day Newsletter, published the 11th edition of the screed under the heading of: 'UP is a GOOD PLACE To Be!' ...a **2204 postal** mailer project. UNbelievable!

15 August...**Peter Consandine** attended his third ARM Community Meeting at Chatswood (Sydney). This event amounted to a debate on 'Monarchy versus Republic' with 2 panels of 3 speakers for both sides of the argument.

1 September...The RPAs satellite events organisation viz Wattle Day Events Inc staged the 11th Annual Wattle Day Luncheon at Parramatta Park (Old Government House) where ex-Greens Senator for Tasmania and Greens Party Federal Parliamentary Leader, **Bob Brown**, was the Guest Speaker. Brown advocated 1st September for a legislated National Public Holiday which just happens to be RPA policy.

17 October...**Peter Consandine** attended his fourth ARM Community Meeting at the Republic Hotel Roof Garden (Circular Quay district of Sydney) where **Tim Mayfield** introduced new professional officers of the Lobby Group namely **Sandy Biar** and **David McGregor** to a gathering of NSW-resident ARM Members. It was at this ARM function that **Tim Mayfield** informed the throng (re-iterating with emphasis later in his talk) that it was he [Mayfield] who first came UP with the 'stars aligning' line which was plagiarised by **Fitzy** for his NPC speech in August, 2015 soon after securing the ARM Chairmanship. Before the night was out, **Peter Consandine** made *another* \$50 donation – this time to the NSW Branch of ARM.

27 October...Second RPA State Republic of Victoria Campaign Committee Meeting took place at the Republic Cafe, South Yarra (Melbourne). *It was at this gathering that The RPAs *latest* livery was UNfurled: a green & gold banner with the new logo heralding **RPA: REPUBLIC!**

30 October...Inaugural RPA State Republic of South Australia Campaign Committee Meeting took place at the Rob Roy Hotel in CBD Adelaide.

31 October...**Fitzy** debated **David Flint** at NSW Parliament House Theatre in Macquarie Street, Sydney on the topic of republic versus monarchy and **Fitzy** gave the usual rote-learned spiel – laced with lavatory language – to a mostly UNimpressed ACM audience. *Give him his due though, **Fitzy** ascertained – by asking the audience two pointed questions – that Flint and company live for the day when (a) 'god save the queen' becomes Australia's national anthem again and (b) appeals to the queen's Privy Council are restored. From the video recording of the event – viewed some time after this event –**Fitzy** was palpably 'gobsmacked'.

1 November...Monash University's Research Professor **Jenny Hocking** got Australia-wide media coverage for the action she took in the Federal Court of Australia during October to have the National Archives release the so-called 'Palace Letters' – the late 1975 correspondence between the Monarch (**QE2**) and her Australian constitutional representative of the day, Governor-General **John Kerr**. *The RPA has been – for several years on its Community Street Meetings since 2005 – garnering petition signatures for an Australian Standard Embargo Prerogative on this very matter on the grounds that having to wait until the year 2035 is way too long a time.

14 November...**Peter Consandine** renewed his ARM membership for 2017.

November...**Peter Consandine** attempted to buy 3 tickets in the ARM annual fundraising raffle but his \$25 cheque, apparently, did NOT arrive in time at the Watson, Canberra post box of the ARM forcing a cancellation of the cheque with Westpac Bank.

November...In the spirit of utmost, collegiate co-operation, **Tim Mayfield** and the ARM made available to **Peter Consandine** and The RPA the full details on the outcome of the survey the Lobby Group did with ALL the Australian federal politicians [finally] determined at the 2 July federal Double Dissolution poll (i.e. ALL Senators and Members of the House of Representatives) – thus saving The Party from duplicate work and extra (valuable) outlays and costs. This survey tested the Australian federal politicians on their current (2016) inclinations towards (a) a second republican referendum and (b) their present leanings either way on the issue of republic versus monarchy. *What was significantly ‘missing’ was, apropos the republic itself: What model did the polities favour?

November...**Peter Consandine** of The RPA and his counterpart **Daniel White** of the Labor for an Australian Republic organisation both nominated *UNsuccessfully* for the National Committee of the ARM and **Sarah Brasch**, the Convenor of Women for an Australian Republic, reported to her rank & file membership, accordingly – adding, alarmingly, that a (Labor Party-style) ‘ticket of sorts’ operated for the first time and 8 of the 10 candidates *actually elected* were publicly supported by other candidates as part of a faction – prompting Brasch to sadly declare: “Most of those elected (and on the ticket) have close connections to the Labor Party either currently or in the recent past as advisers or (Labor) party officials”. Wow!

16 December...The RPA lodged its official 2017 Application for re-registration with the AEC coupled with its official new logo [**RPA: Republic!**] and the corresponding \$500 deposit.

19 December...The RPAs end-of-year fundraising raffle was drawn with the 3 prizewinners hailing from the Eastern Seaboard townships of Ermington, Eastwood and Castle Hill in suburban Sydney. The raffle yielded a \$720 net takings for The Party and the 3 prizes [Oz Rainsaver water diverters] were hand-delivered by **Peter Consandine** on 20 December.

Over the two dates – 5 November and 21 December – EGM #18 of The RPA was held in staggered fashion because of exigencies/UNforeseen circumstances [not to mention a grand agenda for a good part of the next 12-20 months] at, respectively, Five Dock (Sydney) and Drummoyne (Sydney). Amongst other things, The Party signed off on the 20-Plank Policy Platform* for the anticipated 2018/2019 federal election. The Party also – *and most significantly* – signed off on a Proposal of Joint Street Meeting Activity* with the ARM from the second half of March, 2017.

Over the consecutive three Wednesdays – on 1 June + 8 June + 15 June – **Peter Consandine** tried his hand at blogging and incurred the ire of **Fitzzy** with the first of these which dealt with the honest albeit harsh opinion of the Writer that the appointment of **Fitzzy** to the Chair of the ARM instead of a prominent Australian *female* republican activist was a capital ‘M’ Mistake/Lost Opportunity.

Tim Mayfield persuaded **Peter Consandine** – because of the flare-UP with **Fitzzy** at Blacktown – not to attend the three *other* ARM events Consandine wanted to attend during the year viz: (a) the ARM inaugural Women’s Luncheon; (b) the 2016 AGM of the ARM at Surry Hills (Sydney) and (c) the 25th Anniversary ARM Dinner at Sydney University’s Great Hall – because **Fitzzy** was going to be in attendance at ALL three events.

17 December...UNsurprisingly, **The Turnbully**, in his speech to ‘The Faithful’ at Sydney University’s Great Hall on the prestigious occasion of the 25th Anniversary Dinner of the ARM, held to his previously well-enunciated line that he shall NOT lead a government initiative for a second republican referendum until the reigning monarch passes from this life. UNwittingly, **Smarmy Mal** gave the proverbial ‘Kiss of Death’ to *his* priority constitutional reform agenda item viz: First Australians’ (aborigines) recognition in the Preamble of the monarchical instrument.

18 December...**Peter Consandine** replied to the Prime Minister’s xmas card in a letter-card that he deemed the Red Hot Ticket social issue in the body politic, contemporaneously, as being Housing Affordability – proffering, briefly, a practicable and eminently implementable plan of instigating a genuine, socially equitable policy whereby public housing could be affordably provided for ALL in Australia who need basic shelter...such an historic but important plan, Consandine argued, could be phased in over, say, 5-7 years in tandem with a greatly-revised federal land value taxation regime as applied between 1910 and 1952. Consandine, further, bluntly warned the PM that unless he originated something humungous like this – *since the republic was a ‘No-No’* – then he might NOT be the incumbent Head of Government photographed in a red & white Santa’s cap wishing him a “merry xmas” this time next year.

***Peter Consandine**, over the entire year 2016, improved his relationships with key and influential ARM personnel: **Tim Mayfield** [as certainly expected] + **Geraldine Doogue** + **Allison Henry** + **Suellen Fitzgerald** + **Terry Fewtrell** + **Glenn Davies** + **Fred Carter** + **Geoff Lutz** + **Brian Buckley Clare** + **Daniel Fleming** + **Gary Mitchell** + **Steve Dametto** + **Ted O’Brien** + **John Bergin** + **Mike Pepperday**.

***Peter Consandine**, reluctantly but realistically, (has) abandoned ALL hope of a rapprochement with Fitzy – at least in the short-term – and, in fact, has UNsubscribed **Fitzy** from his broadcast e-mail list, pro tem, so as NOT to antagonise him, further. This stand-off cannot continue in to the long-term. Therefore, **Peter Consandine** informed **Tim Mayfield** – in writing – that he will neither boycott or UNavail himself from future ARM community meetings or happenings where it is known that Fitzy will be in attendance.

The 2017 Experience:

3 January...The AEC officially advised The RPA that it has validated its logo for appearance atop its endorsed candidates' groupings in ALL future Senate elections. *This AEC approval apparently extends to electoral blurbs/flyers The Party produces and distributes. ALL and Sundry were notified of this fortuitous news.

5 January...Treachery discovered in the WA branch of The RPA – and appropriately dealt with/put to rights. Moreover, a new Protocol was initiated to govern ALL RPA social media involvement henceforth – subject to ratification at the next EGM of The Party and, in turn, the next AGM of The Party. *A corollary of this wholly UNfortunate experience was that **Peter Consandine** was authorised to invest in a Social Media workshop and 'get in the swim'!

7 January...**Klaas Woldring**, the Convenor of the very minor Republic Now! organisation advised **Peter Consandine** that he was NOT renewing his ARM Membership for 2017. *Woldring expressed to Consandine his complete dissatisfaction with the way the ARM was conducting its affairs. Moreover, Woldring's quoted words were: "I have NO faith in the ARM under **Peter FitzSimons's** Chairmanship".

9 January...Australia's monarch, **Queen Elizabeth 2nd**, made her first public appearance in more than a month...
*90 year-old **Lilibet** had been suffering a head cold so bad she cancelled ALL listed engagements except for her *very private* church services over the entire UK festive season – same story for her 95 year-old consort, **Prince Philip**.

9 January...**Tim Mayfield** advised **Peter Consandine** that the proposal for running Joint Street Meetings with contiguous stalls was NOT going to be considered for 'Approval' [see EGM #18 Minutes for details].

9 January **Fitzy** revealed – in a 'Tell ALL' essay published in the Sydney Morning Herald – why he is such a grumpy gorilla. ***Fitzy** apparently holds an enormous grudge for being omitted from the Australian Rugby Wallabies team that sensationally won the prestigious Rugby Grand Slam so-called Home Nations tournament way back in 1984. **Fitzy** evidently has NOT forgiven the successful coach of that record-scoring series-event – **Alan Jones** – the contempt and 'bad blood' carrying over in to his very short on-air radio career [2006-2008] when, doubling with **Mike Carlton** on a morning breakfast program on commercial radio station 2UE, he never came close in the authentic radio ratings to his rival broadcaster on commercial radio station 2GB, one **Alan Jones**.

10 January...35th Anniversary of the founding at Flemington (in Sydney's Inner Suburban West) of The RPA.

25 January...**David Muir**, Chairman of The Real Republic organisation, had a cogent op.ed. article published in his home city newspaper, the Courier-Mail, headed: 'COME ON AUSTRALIA. WE SHOULD BE A REPUBLIC'. Muir emphasised that "more needs to be done to forge our national identity". *Inherent in Muir's thinking is that the right [DIRECT ELECTION of the Oz Presidency] republican model must be both instigated and championed vigorously.

25 January...The ARM launched a new television commercial which, putting it kindly, gave a big 'free kick' to the Status Quoists/Monarchists by virtue of the use/abuse of the former ('god save the queen') national anthem. The public reaction forced respected Brisbane-based Republican, **Sarrah Le Marquand**, to come on to the Channel 9 Network's 'TODAY' show to defend the indefensible – the UNfortunate *though indirect*, deplorable disparagement of **Her Maj** and her retinue.

February...**Peter Consandine** began writing UP what he initially titled 'The HISTORY of CONTINUING DEVELOPING LINKS BETWEEN The ARM, The RPA and other AUSTRALIAN REPUBLICAN GROUPS &/OR REPUBLICAN INDIVIDUALS'.

*Subsequently, Real Republic Ltd were given (due) place in the heading [see atop].

15 February...**Tim Mayfield** resigned as National Director of ARM – effective in a calendar month's time. **Peter Consandine**, quite astonishingly, was asked to consider standing for the Position Vacant by **Fitzy** himself, albeit it was a 'form' letter.

*Consandine conducted 'soundings' over the following few days and decided NOT to nominate.

19 February...new RPA rear windscreen promotional sticker *idea* formulated. *The Party believes in a message that reflects – accurately enough and embracing therewith the common vernacular – what it is about/why it is in the business of advocating for an Oz Republic. **This said *idea* markedly differentiates The RPAs program/agenda from the ARM. And, of course, the *idea* per se, was subject to ratification by the National Executive of The Party which approved the concept and the alternative bright colour scheme and authorised a 5000 print-run providing sponsorship is arranged.

20 February...**Peter Consandine** attended his fifth ARM Community Event – a joint endeavour with the NSW Parliamentary Friendship Group at which the Federal Shadow Attorney-General, **Mark Dreyfus** spoke – and revealed that he, lately, had become a convert to a ‘Direct Election’ model for the Australian Presidency. *Consandine thought he detected a general murmuring of dismay at *this* revelation. **Furthermore, Consandine sensed a general discomfort OR disconnect in the gathering when Dreyfus advanced the idea that Australian Republicans should get on board the campaign for ‘Indigenous Recognition’ in the Australian Constitution; get some positive referendum campaigning experience ‘under their belts’. ***Additionally, it was at this function that the ARMs new livery was displayed – an arrow-orientated logo in the national colours of green & gold – AND the new name for the ARM: Australian Republic Movement. Thus, very subtly, the suffix ‘an’ has been removed from the second word of the heading of the Lobby Group!

28 February...**Peter Consandine** and his counterpart at the ARM, **Tim Mayfield**, conferred at Essendon, Melbourne for the *last* time in their respective, official (CEO) capacities.

3 March...**Peter Consandine** had an audience with fellow-Direct Electionist, **Phil Cleary**, one of the Directors of the Real Republic organisation at his West Brunswick (Melbourne) home – in which conversation Cleary expressed his “NO Confidence” in **Fitzy** indubitably.

21 March...**Mike Pepperday** critiqued **Malcolm Turnbull**’s speech to the ARM faithful at the 25th Anniversary Dinner (somewhat belatedly) and, simultaneously, *re-wrote* his 2016 ‘Open Letter’ to **Fitzy** – both were *stinging* commentaries.

22 March...EGM #19 of The RPA held at Epping (Sydney).

24 March...Journalist **Troy Bramston** wrote an “EXCLUSIVE” article in The Australian headed: ‘Go-Ahead for New Republic Roadmap’ in which the ARM Chairman, **Fitzy**, and Acting National Director, **Sandy Biar**, spelt out the Lobby Group’s strategic plan for a plebiscite on the republic in 2020 and a referendum in 2022 – thus bringing forward the previously-stated (at the time of the Lobby Group’s Re-Launch in 2015) program by two years. *Reading between the lines, both FitzSimons and Biar expect the Labor Party to be the Winners of the Treasury Benches at the next Federal election – *by no means* a certainty. **Given that **Fitzy** is a columnist for Fairfax Media’s Sydney Morning Herald, it was comforting to see that **Rupert Murdoch** is staying faithful to his and News Limited’s 1999 commitment to assist wherever possible in advancing Australian Republicanism. Indeed, Murdoch’s sole remaining, reputable broadsheet apparently took on the “EXCLUSIVE” with relish! Albeit, it was a *Friday* publication which – deduced from audited newspaper circulation figures – only secured, at best, half a nationwide *Saturday* readership.

30 March...**Fitzy** announced that a bipartisan (Federal) Parliamentary Friendship Group [PFG] for an Australian Head of State had been formed (with Labor Senator **Katy Gallagher** and Liberal MHR for Mackellar, **Jason Falinski**, as Co-Convenors) and that it was a “campaign driven by the bottom UP not top DOWN”. **Brian Buckley Clare** immediately swooped on to *the big contradiction* in this move/set-UP and wrote to **Fitzy** accordingly. ***Peter Consandine** – for different reasons to those spelt out by Buckley Clare – is apprehensive about this asserted “strong step forward”...a PFG comprised of Labor and Liberal stripes can *almost be guaranteed* to collectively plump for a Parliamentary Appointment model for The Republic. Thus, even though the Parliamentary Appointment model the PFG arrives at would expectedly NOT be as basic (i.e. mini-minimalist) as **Fitzy**’s much-enunciated, preferred model, it will nonetheless be ‘Top DOWN’ and contrary to – if NOT deleterious – to the prospects for ‘Peoples’ Sovereignty’ once **Her Maj**’s reign ends. Moreover, the punters will readily detect crass elitism. Furthermore, they will be as susceptible as before to shunning a ‘politicians’ republic’, en masse.

26 April...**Katy Gallagher** in her ‘Katy’s Senate Update’ for this day gave her take on the PFG set-UP: “This group will be an important way to not only bind support for a republic amongst decision-makers at Parliament House but also to lead the important debate in the community”.

28 April...**Peter Consandine** – with his newly-acquired Apple I-Phone (Model 7S) – commenced text-messaging with his first communication being with **Delia Obst** in Adelaide.

30 April...**David Muir** released his latest item: 'AUSTRALIANS DESERVE A REAL CONVERSATION ON A NEW REPUBLIC MODEL' which was published in the Brisbane Times. *Muir has conflated important constitutional reforms with electoral and government system reforms which, though supportable in a separate policy manifesto, are *too maximal* for **Joe & Josephine Public** to get their heads around – **Peter Consandine** informed Muir of his concern that advancing such a comprehensive proposal as this was both (a) too expansive and (b) 'jumping the gun'. **Then again, with the monarch's consort, **Prince Philip's** announcement that he is standing down from ALL public duties from August this year and **Lilibet** herself announcing the cancelling of ALL future Order of the Garter ceremonies henceforth, Muir may well be gearing-UP in anticipation of a possible abdication in the next little while, say 3 years. *****Her Maj** is looking increasingly ill-at-ease and most grandmotherly of late and one would NOT be remiss in estimating that abdication may well be coming in to her considerations. It has been, after ALL is said and done, a looooooong reign!

5 May...**Fitzy** announced the near-future arrival of newly-appointed National Director of the ARM: one **Michael Cooney**. *A former speechwriter for Prime Minister **Juliar Gillard**, this bearded Left-winger – coming directly from the Labor think-tank, the Chifley Centre – should fit admirably in to the Elitist Cabal of the current ARM Leadership Group. *It will be the urgent priority of The RPAs **Peter Consandine** to make acquaintance with his new counterpart, Cooney, once he has settled in to the so-called 'Box Seat'.

27 May...**Peter Consandine** quoted in an informative article written under the heading: 'REPUBLIC MODEL IMPROVED' by Shepparton News journalist **Barclay White**. Consandine asserted that The RPA had devised a "correct" direct-election model for the Australian Presidency thus the article heading – chosen by the paper's editor **John Lewis**.

27 May...31st Annual Republican Convention held at Shepparton, Northern Victoria...*Delegates addressed a 13-point Agenda and signed off on at least 5 new (and additional) policies for the Republican Manifesto for the next federal election. ** It was an ALL-Day event conducted in the spirit of both patriotism and progressivity.

2 June...**Peter Consandine** conferred with **Daniel White**, Convenor of the Labor for an Australian Republic organisation, at Richmond (Melbourne). *White revealed his organisation has a maximal agenda for achieving an Australian Republic and Consandine warned White of the risks attendant conflating a host of *other* (domestic) issues with the governing priority of attaining an Australian Republic.

5 June (early evening)...3rd RPA State Republic of Victoria Campaign Committee Meeting took place at the Republic Cafe, South Yarra (Melbourne).

5 June (later in evening)...Dinner for 2016 Republican of the Year Awardee, **Natasha Stott Despoja**, was also held at the Republic Cafe.

7 June (in morning)...**Peter Consandine** attempted a conference with **Sarah Brasch**, National Convenor of Women for an Australian Republic at Weston Creek (Canberra) but was shunned.

7 June (in afternoon)...**Peter Consandine** conferred with **Zoe Bowman**, ARM Executive Officer, at Macquarie (Canberra). *Bowman guaranteed Consandine that she would (a) ensure his correct email address was restored to the ARM data base and (b) ensure he gets ALL future ARM broadcast emails – no matter from which Officer of the Movement. **Consandine gave Bowman the record of his 3 failed attempts, so far, to get her fellow ARM Executive Officers, namely **Sandy Biar** and **David McGregor**, to attend to the correction required in the ARM data base. [***Biar and McGregor are, respectively, the National Campaign Director and National Organiser of the ARM].

10 July...**Peter Consandine** wrote to his comparatively new ARM counterpart, **Michael Cooney**, requesting that (a) he exercise his authority and restore Consandine's name and e-mail address to the ARM data base and (b) he grant Consandine an audience when next he is in Greater Sydney.

13 July...Chairman of The Real Republic, **David Muir**, posted on general social media an opinion-piece which, amongst other things, surmised that the model which was the basis of the 'YES' case in the first and ONLY referendum for an Australian republic was "wrong" and subsequently failed by a ratio of 45%:55%...*this parliamentary-appointment model was prepared and written by no other than the Leader of the 'YES' coalition: **Malcolm Turnbull**.

14 July...**Michael Cooney** replied to **Peter Consandine's** (10 July) letter with a two-page diatribe which – on the one hand – did NOT at ALL deal with the serious matter of Consandine's summary removal from the Mailing List of the ARM and

– on the other hand – *outright* rejected the request for a meeting/summit conference ANY time soon. Cooney’s manner was plainly hostile and threatening and revealed a thin-skinned character and a heavy-handed approach to his position.

16 July...Shadow federal Attorney-General, **Mark Dreyfus**, criticised Prime Minister, **Malcolm Turnbull** for announcing to a Media Conference before entering Buckingham Palace to meet the queen that he, as an ‘Australian republican’ was an ‘elizabethan’ and was but one of many Oz republicans who were also ‘elizabethans’!

17 July...**Peter Consandine** echoed the criticism of Dreyfus (yesterday) in a blog piece in which he described “elizabethan republicans” as, unwitting propagators of the arch-monarchist **Tony Abbott** line: “we are already a republic – a *crowned* republic” which Consandine, furthermore, opined was a “contradiction in terms”. *Consandine warned – again and additionally – that “if Australians did NOT want or feel the need for a 10th monarch since European settlement in 1788 then steps had to be taken – sooner rather than later – to ensure that QE2 was **Queen Elizabeth the Last**”! [i.e. the 9th and Final foreign Head-of-State]!

28 July...**Gerard Henderson** in Edition #371 of his weekly Media Watchdog bulletin mentioned that **Fitzy** had been, since his ascension to the Chairmanship of the ARM, responsible for the removal of the suffix ‘an’ from the middle word in the ARM heading and hence the *re-naming* of the Lobby Group to Australian Republic Movement. Hendo’s last words on the subject were harshly cynical if not tongue-in-cheek: “With **the Red Bandannaed One** leading from the front with such decisive action – it can’t be long at all before Australia has an Australian head of state”. ***Murdoch Press journalists **Gerard Henderson** (Yep – the same Hendo) and **Tim Blair** are relentless in their declaiming of **Fitzy** as a joke; a “blokey joker” and a gorilla who selectively wears a red bandanna on his head! Whatever...a Chairman NOT to be taken seriously.

29 July...**Bill Shorten**, the Federal Labor Opposition Leader, delivered the annual ARM Lecture at the prestigious Exhibition Building in Melbourne headed: ‘The Pathway to a Republic’ in which he promised that within his first term of Office – presumably, coming to power at the next federal election – he will initiate a ‘vote’ [read: an indicative referendum] on the republic issue proffering a question viz: “Do you Support an Australian Republic with an Australian Head of State?” – inviting a YES/NO response. The MSN article giving coverage of the announcements pertinent to the delivering of the set speech – telegraphed well in advance per the ARM publicity material – pointedly mentioned that Shorten had already, very recently too, prioritised recognition of indigenous Australians in the [Australian] Constitution and floated the idea of establishing fixed four-year terms of [Federal] Parliament. *There were *other* conflation issues though; too much negativity e.g. the failure of the 1999 first republican referendum; too much mention of **QE2** and the Royal Family in-the-broad; too frequent the linking of British history to our own. And, for goodness sake, ‘god’ was given prominence in no less than two (2!) instances! **Shorten mooted a two-stage approach to getting the republic UP over two terms of a Labor gummint. And, in what was a mixed message, the process for a *more thorough* three-stage process was rent asunder. *** (Courtesy of the A-Pac television channel) Shorten, with glazing eyes and constantly waving his arms around in his lame, populist speech looked and sounded nothing like a statesman, let alone the next Prime Minister of this country. ****Shorten was, perhaps, somewhat UNcomfortable using a teleprompter for the first time in public. In any case: a most UNinspiring speech by a man who really needs speech therapy and enunciation skills training...a man who, indeed, needs a new Props Manager – especially if he is going to ‘pay Lip Service’ to the concept of inclusion and inclusiveness whilst perpetuating a populist approach to elitist ‘republicanising’ & republicanism.

30 July...In the immediate aftermath of **Bill Shorten**’s lecture, ARM National Campaign Manager, **Sandy Biar**, sent out an Executive mass-broadcast missive calling for Volunteers to assist the Lobby Group to “kick into overdrive” with its grassroots campaign.

30 July...Not to be UPstaged by his ARM National Executive fellow-member Biar, National Director **Michael Cooney** weighed in on the Lobby Group’s website under the heading ‘Republican Debate: A Classless Society cannot have a Crown’. Clearly convinced that the Labor Party will win the next Federal Election, Cooney UNashamedly employed the ‘politics of envy’ – perhaps UNwittingly; perhaps ON purpose – in asserting 3 ‘Big Deal’ remarkable achievements by Shorten in just the one speech: (a) transformation of the politics of patriotism; (b) going further [on the issue] than either or both his predecessors [**K-Rudd & Juliar Gillard**] and (c) creating a ‘shining opportunity’ for his opponent – Prime Minister, **Malcolm Turnbull**. ***Cooney has every right to believe in his own hyperbole but in (a) identifying Labor as ‘the party of the egalitarian spirit’ and, conversely, (b) the Liberal/National federal Coalition as ‘conservatives’ he, as a card-carrying member of the Labor Party, showed/displayed his UNadulterated bias. It may have been a ‘throwaway’ line but *he did say something* that was incontestable and eminently correct in his narrative: (that) “The Republic can never succeed if it is a

Labor cause". Never, truer words stated! Comments: 1. These very true words may come back to bite Cooney on his big fat arse! and 2. A very big worry attaches to that prominent term in his spiel – “a *classless* society”!! [The Writer’s italics].

30 July...Herald Sun journalist, master blogger and Sky News anchorman, **Andrew Bolt**, gave an indication of what is in store for an ARM-sponsored, so-called ‘*overdriven*’ grassroots republic campaign in his very widely-read weekend newspaper column today. Bolt, quote, said: “**Bill Shorten** gave a speech [on Saturday night] calling for a republic. He stood in front of just one flag – and it’s not the flag of Australia but of the Aboriginal ‘nation’. It was a clear sign that the move to a republic, to such people, is the first step in the disintegration of the nation”. And the heading to the article – in the boldest of 24pt black ink – was: ‘**SHORTEN the TRIBALIST!**’

31 July...**Michael Cooney** – now describing himself as the ARM’s CEO – wrote to members of the Lobby Group informing them of what the new ARM Plan amounts to: (a) hiring of a ‘Member Organiser’ to solely concentrate on ARM membership and related matters and (b) opening of a shop where one could – if one wanted to – buy t-shirts or aprons or shopping bags. Cooney went on to ‘announce’ that street meetings and telephone canvassings would be conducted “in every Australian Community” between the present time and the end of November. Naturally enough, Cooney would instil some questionable rhetoric in to his overture to members along the lines of, and to quote him: “The ARM’s opponents cannot compete with us when it comes to staging [‘big publicity-generating bashes’] events” e.g. **Malcolm Turnbull’s** & **Bill Shorten’s** speeches to the ARM faithful in Sydney last December and Melbourne last Saturday night, respectively. Comment: One such as Cooney can only maintain ‘bragging rights’ if what he boasts (a) gets results – and measurable, *greatly improved* results on the one hand and (b) covers the mass silent majority of the ACM and their one objective [NO REPUBLIC] on the other.

1 August...SBS presenter, **Mark Humphries**, prepared and showed a ‘spoof’ video on his home station which attempted to ‘defend’ PM **Malcolm Turnbull’s** ‘elizabethan’ stance on continuance with the existing situation. The characters – seemingly amateur actors – are ALL saying: “Wait Until the Queen Dies”. Comment: Repetitive and distasteful but ALL there is, pro tem, to “neutralise” **Bill Shorten’s** naked populism on the matter.

2 August...Former Liberal Prime Minister and activist Federal Member for Warringah, **Tony Abbott**, left no doubt what his reaction was to **Bill Shorten’s** speech on the republic. Abbott accused Shorten and his Labor Party acolytes of ‘Attacking the Australian Way of Life’ by way of a widely-reported press release. Comment: Abbott may be a discredited ‘Yesterday Man’ in many respects but the ACM will readily re-engage him to play a doggedly (re)determined oppositionist/supremely negative ‘Don’t Wanna Know’-style ANTI-Republic role when the Real Debate (re)commences. And let’s NOT forget the Old Grey Fox, **David Flint**, and ones like him who are sufficiently rested and “flint-hard” as pro-monarchy warriors/defenders.

***Fitzy** is an abbreviation of the ARM Chairman’s name. **Peter FitzSimons’s** *other* nickname is the “Red-Bandannaed One”.

****Peter Consandine** ‘pressed the proverbial Pause Button’ at this point because he decided that, indeed, a book is in the making with ALL of the above-mentioned and he has begun writing same because, quite literally, he is the only one who can.