



RPA Campaign Bulletin #49 of December, 2020

As if the Corona Virus pandemic wasn't a big enough collective demoraliser this topsy-turvy year I probably have to concede that my beloved Oz Republic has slipped backwards. When one reads an article by no less a prominent Australian Republican as **Paul Kelly**, the Editor-at-Large of The Australian newspaper, headed 'Anti-Monarchists Lose the Plot' published on the weekend of 16-17 July, one can only despair. Kelly, the 1995 RPA Republican of the Year, amongst other damaging things, alleged: "The sad decline of the Australian Republic Movement [the ARM] is on display in its angry and convoluted attacks on the **Queen**". The article pertained to the so-called 'Palace Letters' which SMH senior journalist **David Crowe** tipped in an 11 July article would "set off a new republic debate". **Fitzy** and **Jenny Hocking** couldn't contain their 'OTT' blaming of **Her Maj** for her "dishonesty and complicity" in **Gough Whitlam's** Dismissal in their mid-late July through end of September rants in the public domain prompting another respected (The) Australian columnist, **Jason Gagliardi**, to publish (on 17 July) an article headed 'I Was a Republican But Have Reverted to Being a Monarchist because of **Bandanna Man**'. Evidently, from the Letters pages of The Australian in subsequent weeks, countless other Australian Republicans have followed suit. Pas Bon/C'est La Vie.

On the matter of **Lilibet**, accredited Royal Biographer & Historian, **Andrew Morton**, surmised in an MSN International news item that "It's the end of the reign of **QE2** – 'cos of the Covid-19 pandemic restricting her from performing her duties" which was the case during the *first* UK lockdown phase. Meanwhile, a MoneyPop Report revealed that the **Monarch** was worth \$US550 million and along with celebrity **David Beckham** was equally the richest person in the UK. And, she didn't have to contribute any of her stash to the cost of the Buckingham Palace renovations that are presently going on.

More likely boosters for Oz Republicanism might flow from progressive developments in both Scotland and Ireland. In the case of the former, Scottish Nationalism [First Minister, **Nicola Sturgeon's**, popularity continues to soar] is gaining in support and in the latter, British Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic are becoming more 'indivisible' or apparently "united" because of the Brexit impasse. Watch this Space.

Of course, the Caribbean island of Barbados has decided – legislatively – to become a republic in the coming year of 2021 which might give the lead to other Commonwealth of Nations countries in the coming years.

Now, back in mid-April **Malcolm Turnbull's** latest book was launched. My own criticism of the book 'A BIGGER PICTURE' is that it is shy of hyphens, big time. **David Nolan** – quoted in a **David Astle** [Wordplay] article headed 'Chasing Clarity Amid Turmoil' in the SMH of 25 April – asserted that "hyphens count as much as Western Civilisation". Moving right along, **Alex Mitchell**, the 1992 RPA Republican of the Year in his Notebook of 5 May spoofed the former PM with a "Me, Myself and I" mocked-UP replacement cover and deemed the book a "fictional memoir"; whereas **Ross Fitzgerald** in his 'Speccie' column of 2 May commented that the book was "an exercise in self-justification" but more critically "this memoir is often narcissistic" and "it's especially hard to take Turnbull seriously on the subject of leaking because his whole book is an extended leak against his colleagues of conversations that were supposed to be private". Then we have **Jonathan Green** in a SMH review of the book on 9 May who alleged "much as it claims 'objective authority' it is constructed in a voice that is best described as 'first-person magnificent' essentially because he (i.e. **The Turnbully**) has unflinching faith in the rightness of his own prescriptions". **David Crowe** in a lead SMH Good Weekend article on 18 April – complete with many colour-photos – was forthcoming with the view: "so many people have been on the wrong side of a Turnbull deal...in this view, the man who did everything to achieve power was undone by his own arrogance". Lastly, **Paul Bongiorno**, who interviewed Turnbull for a single article in the Saturday Paper of 25 April managed to glean this quote from him: "the Liberal Party's worst fears would be if I decided to set up a new centrist party". More than interesting!

The Managing Director and Founder of the most successful ASX-listed accountancy business, Kelly+Partners, **Brett Kelly**, gave a bright and breezy talk to the Wattle Day Luncheon crowd gathered at the Le Coq Rotisserie, Rozelle 2039 on 1 September. Some quotable quotes from Kelly were: “authoritarianism doesn’t work”; “instability is normal” and “there are opportunities with dislocation”.

Seth Lukas Hynes made the most of the opportunity given to her to write a quite significant article in the September edition of the Australian Rationalist periodical headed ‘UNENLIGHTENED RULE’ supporting her belief that Australia must become a republic thus: “I oppose monarchism in general because it goes against the ‘Social Contract’ described by Locke & Rousseau. In the monarchy of the Commonwealth, *sovereignty* is essentially the effect of an exalted family’s inherited status. Therefore, the monarchy is largely a separate entity from the people’s collective will and the governing bodies this will support. Official sovereignty resides with The Crown when it should be the domain of the people”. Good One, Seth.

Meanwhile, **Fitz** keeps making perpetual mistakes in his Fitz File columns in the SMH and the Sun-Herald. Arch-Critic, **Tim Blair**, in his ‘Sweet & Light’ column in the July-August edition of the Quadrant periodical, wrote “bandanna poseur **Peter FitzSimons** the other day denounced the ‘Coca-Colonisation’ on Australian life, that pernicious influence of America on our language and culture that sees us sometimes look and sound like the 53rd state of the union” 53rd? The US has had the exact number of states (50) since 2 years before he was born”.

Constant, misinforming critic of anything and everything ‘republic’, **David Flint**, asserted in a ‘Speccie’ article of 25 July that the “republic movement in Australia is in disarray” which, more than likely, prompted the ARM to instigate an ‘Outreach Circle’ on 5 September. National Director, **Sandy Biar**, maintained that the OC would allow its members now to Rally Support via text message + Share social media posts + Join local events + Attend online meetings + Amplify voices and be heard. Very enterprising.

Because the ‘Oz Republic by Default’ campaign has been postponed indefinitely, The Party has decided to initiate a FaceBook campaign to champion the need for a Royal Commission in to the broken Australian Federation. **Colin Stephens** in Heathcote, Regional Victoria has been appointed both Convenor of the Victorian State Chapter and Co-Captain with The Writer for the two-State effort to get a formal petition UP and running.

Netflix has brought on stream Series #4 of the extraordinary doco-drama ‘The Crown’ which makes for riveting viewing. One imagines that hordes of Oz Republicans watch(ed) this memorable series with awe.

And what’s this? In an SMH News Review article on 7 November the former Governor-General, **Peter Cosgrove**, revealed he was pro-Republic but, UNfortunately, NOT a Republic where the Presidency was directly-elected. Cosgrove’s model, instead, would be one where an ‘Advisory Council’ – of presumably eminent persons – would appoint the Head-of-State. Too Bad.

It has come to this: a two A4-pager! ALL 48 RPA Campaign Bulletins prior to this issue were one A4-pagers. I must be getting more verbose! Anyhow and Anyway...I remain:

Yours Patriotically, **PETER CONSANDINE**
Managing Director & CEO of The RPA, Sydney