



## RPA Campaign Bulletin #51 of March, 2022

### Collector's Edition

ARM Chairman **Peter FitzSimons's** [aka '**Fitzy**'] SMH/THE AGE colleague, **Chip Le Grand**, was given something of an 'Exclusive' early on in year 2021 as regards the Lobby Group's supposed 'New' model for an Australian Republic and it came out in the various national Nine Newspapers on Wednesday (yep, mid-week) 10 March under the attention-getting heading: 'REPUBLICANS FLAG NEW MODEL IN RENEWED PUSH TO SEVER ROYAL TIES'. But the *actual* launching of the 'News', per se, was not until Thursday, 13 January, 2022 – 10 months later!

Sure thing...the strictures pertaining to the Covid-19 'zombie apocalypse' would have interrupted the ARM's plans, but, as would be verily expected, when the proverbial dam broke the mainly critical responses came thick and fast from across the Aussie political spectrum. Therefollows a selection of commentary commencing with **Fitzy's** ARM predecessor, **Malcolm Turnbull** [aka '**The Turnbully**'] thus:

JANUARY 15-16, 2022 THE SYDNEY MORNING HERALD

News Review 33

# Republicans cannot be divided

**Malcolm Turnbull**

At the heart of the republic debate lies a paradox. An Australian president, almost all agree, should be a largely ceremonial figure like the Queen or the Governor-General. Such limited constitutional powers to be held by the president would be exercised in a scrupulously fair and apolitical manner.

And yet at the same time many Australians, perhaps most, would prefer that new Australian head of state to be directly elected by the people. Such an election would be a competitive and political contest. As Neville Wran wisely observed years ago: "If someone running for president wasn't a politician when they nominated, they would be by the time they won."

That is why, more than 20 years ago, the Australian Republic Movement supported the new president being appointed by a two-thirds majority of a joint sitting of Parliament – ensuring bipartisan support for the new head of state.

This model was narrowly rejected at the 1999 referendum largely due to a campaign by republicans who wanted to directly elect the president and joined with the monarchists to say no to what they called "the politicians' republic".

This week the ARM has produced a new model where the president would be directly elected out of a field of up to 11 nominees; one from each state and territory legislature and three from Federal Parliament. This approach to direct election is designed, so Peter FitzSimons has said, to ensure only the right sort of person can be nominated.

If this perfectly workable model were presented in a referendum I would certainly vote for it. But I don't think it is likely ever to be put to the people, let alone carry the day, if it were, because it will be seen by many to embody the weaknesses of direct election and

parliamentary appointment models but the strengths of neither.

If we are to have a directly elected president, then any citizen should be able to nominate. They shouldn't need the permission of a bunch of politicians to run. In order to ensure the ballot paper isn't unworkably huge, a minimum number of nominators could be required – 10,000 perhaps – but beyond that it should be open slather. And if the people want to elect Shane Warne or Clive Palmer, Paul Keating or John Howard then so be it. The reality is that politicians *will* run and a politician *will* win and one of them might run on a platform of "keeping those bastards in Parliament honest". In short, anything less than a presidential election open to all will be accused of being "just another politicians' republic".

During the republic campaign of the 1990s we invariably found that support for direct election was a mile wide and an inch deep. Many, sometimes most, supporters changed their mind when they realised that a highly competitive political contest would produce a partisan winner for what was meant to be a non-political role.

An Australian head of state, in our parliamentary system, is better chosen by a method that is calculated to deliver a non-partisan figure who can secure wide support across the political spectrum and not just 50 per cent plus one. That is why I have supported the parliamentary appointment model.

But a directly elected president can work. There would need to be more and more express amendments to the Constitution

spelling out the limited powers of the president. Legal scholar George Winterton and I drafted amendments to do that nearly 30 years ago and they would be a good place for today's drafters to start.

But what won't work is another referendum where the republicans are fighting on two fronts; against the supporters of the status quo and among themselves on which model is preferred. That is why I believe that the first step should be a national advisory plebiscite in which Australians are asked what mode of appointment they support. This debate over the models should be thrashed out and decided. The Australian people should own the model and they can do that by choosing it.

Once that is done, Parliament should prepare the legislation to incorporate that decision and put it to the people in a formal referendum to change the constitution.

Those are the only two votes that are needed. Some still argue for an advisory in-principle vote on whether Australia should be a republic. That would be smashed, with the no case arguing it was a blank cheque.

The next referendum should be after the end of the Queen's reign. When that occurs, whether by her death or abdication, it will be a historical watershed, a time for reflection on the past and, most importantly, on the future.

At that point the republican cause has to enlist, and inspire, the confident spirit of Australia facing these remarkable times of change unprecedented in their scale and pace. Our nation's best years are ahead of us, but only if we believe in ourselves, our nation and our destiny.

Malcolm Turnbull is a former prime minister and former chairman of the Australian Republic Movement.



Doubling UP, as it were, in the same newspaper – on the same day – **Michael Koziol**, came out with some complementary coverage thus:



# By jingo, it's a republic push in the middle

**Michael Koziol**

It's brave to try to reignite debate about a republic while the nation is gripped by a pandemic. But the Australian Republic Movement believes there's no time like now to campaign for its new proposal for an Australian head of state: elected by the people from a shortlist provided by politicians.

It has released two video advertisements – which it intends to air on television after raising money – with new slogans: “We can take it from here” and “One of us, for us, by us”.

The ads have the jingoistic vibe of the annual Australia Day “We love our lamb” promotion or a Qantas campaign, and were created by agency Brand + Story, which produced Qantas’ lauded “Fly Away” TV commercial last year.



But marketing gurus were less enthused by the republic campaign, predicting it would struggle to attract attention in the middle of the COVID-19 crisis and dubbing the ads underwhelming.

Dan Gregory, founder of The Impossible Institute agency, said it was difficult for the campaign to align with

present needs, given all the change thrust upon us by the pandemic.

“I don’t think it’s terribly persuasive,” he said. “You need to win over the apathetic... which is no small ask. And I just don’t think this campaign quite has the power to influence that cohort.”

Mr Gregory also said the strategy was very obvious. “In the advertising world, people used to say of clumsy creative, ‘I think your briefs are showing.’ What the phrase meant was that the strategy was so overt that it came across as transparently manipulative. In other words: I can see what you’re trying to do because you lack nuance. I think that’s the case here.”

Adam Ferrier of creative agency Thinkerbell said the ads were “pretty straight” and the slogan appealed to Australians’ sense that the country had

**Part of the ARM's new advertising campaign for an Australian Republic.**

# of a pandemic

fares all right so far under a monarchy. “But I do think it’s a somewhat sophisticated and dry message,” he said. “We know that emotion in advertising works, and I’m pretty surprised at how straight and dry these pieces of communication are.”

“It is going to have some cut-through. But I don’t think it’s going to be particularly compelling for those who are not already involved in the movement.”

The republic model proposed by the movement involves a head of state chosen through a national election between 11 candidates nominated by parliaments – one from each state and territory and three from the Federal Parliament. It says this would prevent the electorate from putting forward “unsuitable candidates”, while also giving the Australian people a say.

**Republicans cannot be divided**  
MALCOLM TURNBULL  
**OPINION**  
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As could be expected, the Real Republic Australia organisation based in Brisbane telegraphed that they would be virtually opposing the ARM model – as clearly outlined in their media release thus

17/01/2022, 11:01



Wednesday 12 January 2022

#### MODEL FOR AN AUSTRALIAN REPUBLIC

The **Real Republic Australia** continues to support a model for choosing a Head of State of an Australian republic unfiltered by politicians, says chair David Muir.

Mr Muir said the model for Head of State released by the Australian Republic Movement carried echoes of the “politicians’ republic” rejected at the 1999 referendum.

“The model the ARM has devised appears to be a hybrid that essentially offers voters a pool of nominees chosen by state or federal politicians,” he said.

“In essence it would be a case of politicians telling Australian voters who they were allowed to vote for as their Head of State.

“We continue to support a model that as far as possible eliminates politicians from the process of filtering candidates for Head of State.”

Mr Muir said in coming months the Real Republic Australia would be releasing a discussion paper seeking public comment on its proposals for the nomination and election of candidates seeking to be the nation’s Head of State.

“Our discussion paper will also outline the powers, duties, and responsibilities of a Head of State in an Australian republic,” he said.

Mr Muir said the Real Republic Australia continued to advocate a model drawing elements from the system used in Ireland where a Westminster-style executive government led by a prime minister operates successfully with a Head of State elected directly by voters.

The Real Republic Australia was formed by the late Clem Jones, Brisbane’s longest serving Lord Mayor and an elected delegate, with Mr Muir, to the 1998 Constitutional Convention where they advocated a direct election model for Head of State.

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The indefatigable **David Flint**, President of the rival status quoist group, Australians for Constitutional Monarchy came out, of course, with ALL guns blazing thus

29/01/2022, 18:31

Australian Republic Movement's New Model – Australians for Constitutional Monarchy



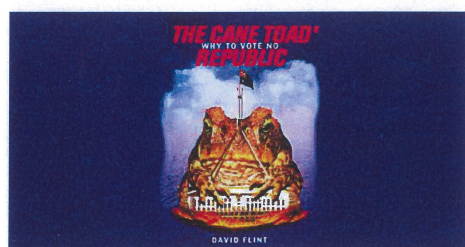
Australians for Constitutional Monarchy

No Republic

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## Australian Republic Movement's New Model

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[THE WEEKEND AUSTRALIAN 15 January 2020]

The Australian Republic Movement's latest republican model, the third in as many decades, is even more confusing and contradictory than the others. This includes the one defeated nationally, in every state and 72 per cent of electorates, by a campaign run on the smell of an oily rag against most politicians, the media and the vast wealth of the ARM.

The ARM offers only one reason for removing the one part of our constitutional system that works and works well, and is economical. This is the untruth that only under a politicians' republic can we have an Australian as head of state.

As long ago as 1907, a unanimous High Court of founders declared the governor-general is the "constitutional head of state".

And reflecting a 1926 Imperial Conference decision, whenever officially overseas, every government, Coalition or Labor, holds out to the world that the governor-general is head of state.

Just as a camel is supposedly a horse designed by committee, so this quintessentially politicians' republic is, frankly, unworkable.

While stripping the head of state of the crucial Westminster roles of constitutional guardian and of providing leadership beyond politics, it taints any president with preference deals, slick campaigning and a massive mandate for the winner. The election itself would be more appropriate to a guided democracy where the same cabal of powerbrokers that have captured our two-party system will determine the 11 candidates, with the smaller states, more often than not, subsequently outvoted.

In addition, the complication and confusion about dual citizenship is inexplicably added to the process. Woe betide any candidate of foreign, even New Zealand, parentage.

And if that is not enough, the ARM has given effect to its lately acquired obsession of revenging the lawful dismissal of Gough

To top that off, the model elevates the prime minister from being no more than first among equals to being something no Westminster PM should ever be, the constitutionally endowed head of government. This reverses the overwhelming decision at the 1891 Constitutional Convention against empowering an individual as an American-style executive. Nor is it explained how this can be resolved with the existing – to be unamended – provision that the executive power of the commonwealth, vested in the Crown, remains exercisable by the head of state.

To persuade conservative republicans to support an elected presidency, the draft purports to move real power even more to the politicians but takes away the present sanction for misbehaviour.

This is that the incumbent holds office at the pleasure of the Queen of Australia.

It is inevitable the elected president will at some stage be unable to resist playing the politician.

The only sanction is for both houses to resolve to remove him on the ground of undefined "proved misbehaviour or incapacity".

The High Court will obviously require there be a fair and therefore long process, but if the Senate agrees with the president, which is more than likely, a president playing politics will be unstoppable.

We can then say farewell to stable government.

Then there's the provision that in certain circumstances the "senior governor" is to take over. Having to change their constitutions too, some states might opt to elect a US-style executive governor. So we could wake up one morning with a Daniel Andrews acting as president.

There is little interest in the nation in changing our crowned republic into a costly politicians' republic. The fact is that when Australians say no in a federal referendum, they mean no – even when asked five times.

Polling indicates a constantly declining interest in a republic.

Last Australia Day, Ipsos found only 34 per cent think Australia should become a republic. But when shown a model – any model – a significant proportion invariably revert to our crowned republic.

There's a time bomb there for the ARM. Of those aged 18-26, only 26 per cent think Australia should become a republic. If you can't persuade the young on such an issue, you might as well give up.

Former Labor powerbroker Graham Richardson has said that if the republic is not dead it is comatose. For the sake of the nation, will no one put it out of its misery?


[David Flint, an emeritus professor of law, has been national convener of Australians for Constitutional Monarchy since 1998]




Two former prominent federal politicians' views were sought both before and after the ARM new model launch... the first of those being the former Liberal Federal Treasurer, **Peter Costello**, who in an interview published on New Year's Day with SMH journalist, **Stephanie Peatling**, surmised that "an Australian Republic is dead for at least another generation" predicting that "not even the end of the reign of **Queen Elizabeth 2<sup>nd</sup>** will re-ignite public support for a change to Australia's constitutional arrangements" adding on reflection that "people who thought they could afford to be really picky and really choosy [apropos the model on offer at the 6 November, 1999 first referendum] I think now sit back and say, 'well that was misguided'".

The second polly, former Labor Foreign Affairs Minister, **Bob Carr**, expressed in a Celebrity Luncheon interview with yet another SMH journalist, **Michael Ruffles**, his concerns with what he described the ARM's new 'hybrid' model 'this way: "I expressed to **Fitzy** in a debate on Radio National my reservations about his concept of a nationwide beauty pageant in an era of rampant right-wing populism...I would hate to think we were providing a laboratory for right-wing billionaires and Sky blowhards to strut their stuff".

The writer, with more space and time, could quote 'chapter & verse' numerous other commentators' thoughts but the matter of the 'Great Bloopers' in the colorful 8-page brochure printed and distributed far & wide by the ARM has NOT been given any 'coverage' whatsoever, to date. **The Writer** cites Page #5\* of said brochure which is reproduced below...



## THE AUSTRALIAN CHOICE MODEL



# A Head of State for an independent nation

As a former British colony, Australia has inherited many British traditions and institutions of government, including the British Monarchy. The Monarch continues to play a role in Australia's system of government (as our 'Head of State'), as they do in the United Kingdom.

An institution which grants inherited privilege and power to a particular family is at odds with Australia's modern democratic values. Just as our parliament, courts and governance in Australia have evolved towards greater independence and democratic participation, so too must the role of Head of State evolve to reflect our nation's development.

The role of 'Head of State'<sup>3</sup> is distinct from that of the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister is entrusted to govern the nation with the aid of ministers. The courts interpret laws and enforce them. The British monarch's representative, the Governor-General, is appointed by the King or Queen on the advice of the Prime Minister alone, who can remove them at any time.

On the first line on Page #5 it is so noted: "As a former British colony". Huh? Australia has *never* been a colony of Britain/Great Britain or the United Kingdom of Great Britain. Yes, the Poms established British colonies here in Terra Australis but they [ALL 6] federated under the Commonwealth of Australia constitution on 1 January, 1901, Yes, the British maintained Australia's Foreign Policy until the joint signing of the Statute of Westminster in the year 1931 but which wasn't ratified until 1942 – not overlooking the relevance of the Second Balfour Declaration announced at the 1926 Imperial Conference of British Dominion Prime Ministers. However, literally and absolutely, Australia has *never* been a colony of the British! \*Great Bloopers, indubitably. And, most UNfortunate.

In **The Writer's** totally honest appraisal, this ginormous mistake – which could truly be estimated as Misinformation with a Capital 'M' – has brought the whole Republican Push in to disrepute. The ever-swooping monarchists could have a 'Field Day' pointing out well and truly how misguided Oz Republicans are. It is a scandalous episode if not a scurrilous one!



## Serious Commentary Time – with some humour attaching albeit cruel ‘copy’ in the circumstances.

In **The Writer**’s Wattle Day Newsletter #16, he re-published his June 2016 infamous blog under the heading: ‘APPOINTMENT of PETER FITZSIMONS AS ARM CHAIR WAS A MISTAKE’. **The Writer** holds to the considered, long-term view that a prominent Australian female should – and for the *very first time* in ARM history – be appointed to advance The Cause. Indeed, he nominated two (2!) additional strong suggestions to replace two (2!) of the original nominees who had died. Five months have now elapsed since the launch of W.D.N. #16 last September and one (1!) more excellent candidate is now being proffered: that of **Meredith Doig**. At the most recent ARM National Committee election of Officers, Doig was recognised for her promotional talent by her peers and they elected her to the Cabal of ARM Decision-Makers!

From the cartoon on the last page of this tome **Fitzzy**’s (then) image is despicable, to say the least. Irrespective of it being some 8 years ago, in 2013 in fact, **Fitzzy** revealed in the Background & Acknowledgements section of his book **Ned Kelly: The Story of Australia’s Most Notorious Legend** the following, quote: “My wife, **Lisa Wilkinson**, had been telling me for years that Ned was the perfect subject for me – *big, boofy bloke with a beard and strange headwear writes about another big. boofy bloke with a beard and strange headwear*”. Give him his due, **Fitzzy** has “re-made” his image somewhat of late. Like, gone is the beard and gone too is the red bandanna from his head. But. Lawdy, Lawdy, Lawdy Miss Clawdy... just take stock of the Sum-Total of Ignominy over the approximate 7 years of **Fitzzy**’s stewardship of the ARM!

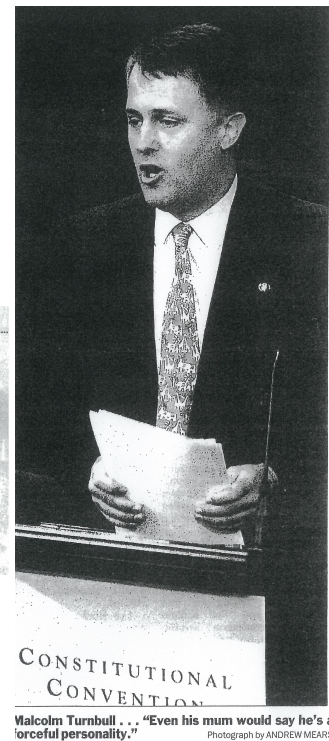
With the inevitability of **the Sovereign**’s death [OR abdication] becoming ever-closer, Australia’s 10<sup>th</sup> Monarch will be **The Queen**’s first son, **Chukka** (aka **Prince Charles, the Prince of Wales**). It is timely to ‘do soundings’ on what, indubitably, will be the ‘New Reality’ when **Lilibet** is no more. An extraordinarily good place to start is with the British Spike On-Line Moderator, **Brendan O’Neill** who, in a 22 February, 2022 Opinion piece headed: ‘A POLITICAL ROYAL: PRINCE CHARLES WOULD BE “BAD FOR DEMOCRACY”’ as KING’, let it rip. O’Neill bluntly expounds as follows: “Charles is not afraid about meddling in political discussion; he’s a very political royal; he is constantly raising the issue of ‘climate change’ alarmism and he kind of mixes with the Davos Set. So, we’re facing the prospect of something we haven’t had in this country for a very long time which is a political interventionist monarch – a monarch who would throw his weight around in certain political arenas and that would be bad for democracy. Inasmuch, he would promote some pretty political ideas”. O’Neill reminded viewers that **Chukka** was and is (still) knee-deep in the so-called ‘Cash for Honours’ scandal in the UK and is purported to be the Patron of a ‘Political Charity’. Watch this Space! Hey!!

Pertinent to the past paragraph is the salient section of **Alex Mitchell**’s latest book viz. **A COUP in CANBERRA: The Political Assassination of An Australian Prime Minister** – in the chapter headed ‘The Sinking of an Empire’ on page 45 – Mitchell refers to **Dr. David Wade**’s fairly recent reminder i.e. “No empire long endures, even if a few anticipate their demise...every kingdom is born to die...the 15<sup>th</sup> Century belonged to the Portuguese, the 16<sup>th</sup> to Spain, the 17<sup>th</sup> to the Dutch, France dominated the 18<sup>th</sup> and Britain the 19<sup>th</sup>. Bled white and left bankrupt by The Great War, the British maintained a presence of domination as late as 1935 when the empire reached its greatest geographical extent...by then, of course, the torch had long passed into the hands of America”. Dr. Wade, a Don of the University of British Columbia, was writing in 2020 and he strikes **The Writer** as being an academic historian who ‘knows his oats’.



## 2 Sydney Stagers for The Ages

Stager A...the Eastern Suburbs Millionaire Bonapartist and Would-Be FATHER of the Oz Politicians' Republic, **MALCOLM TURNBULL**, in the late 20<sup>th</sup> Century.



Stager B...the North Shore Millionaire Bombardist and Would-Be KING of the Oz 'Crowned Republic', **PETER FITZSIMONS**, in the Early 21<sup>st</sup> Century.



UPDATED Blog Post, Courtesy of Tim Blair

### Supreme Leader Celebrates Latest Heroic Victory

It's only natural that Australian republicans should follow the example of other republics. But did the Australian Republican Movement really have to pick North Korea?

The new ARM model for a proposed second referendum discussion cum debate has not, as yet, attracted much attention let alone become, once again, a Top 40 issue. But, quite evidently, there has been one significant media broadcaster from the Sky network, **Chris Kenny**, who has placed on the public record his “conversion” to republicanism. Notwithstanding, Kenny has expressed his innate concerns about the so-described ‘hybrid’ model which – in **The Writer**’s frank assessment – won’t ‘cut it’. And **Fitzy** won’t be able to ‘sell it’ either...Press enemies e.g. Daily Telegraph and Quadrant joint columnist, **Tim Blair**, will attack and disparage the ARM ‘hybrid’ model until Kingdom Come. As Instanced.

The task in the short-medium term for The RPA – as **The Writer** views it – will be, IF at all possible, to convince an incoming Labor Federal Attorney-General in **Mark Dreyfus** to give #1 Priority to kick-starting the second Republican Referendum Campaign before attempting a First Nations Constitutional Recognition Referendum Initiative. **The Writer** will, accordingly, seek authoritative ‘instructions’ from the assembled Delegates at the 28 May 34<sup>th</sup> Annual RPA Convention set down for the Capital City of the Blue Mountains, Katoomba, and, proverbially, ‘take it from there’.

Yours Patriotically, **PETER CONSANDINE** [aka **The Writer**]

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter C.' with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

**C.E.O. of The RPA, Sydney**

