

What has the Coronation to do with us?

An opinion piece penned by Australians for Constitutional Monarchy Toowoomba branch Patron, Mr Stan Klan

While our avowed Republican Prime Minister sat in Westminster Abbey swearing his allegiance to King Charles III [the hypocrisy is breath-taking], I – an avowed Constitutional Monarchist - stood in the drizzle with half a million others, watching the coach go by.

What relevance does it all have for Australians today?

Sadly, the Republican debate in Australia focusses on personalities: everybody loved the late Queen for her commitment to duty; Harry and Meaghan are on the nose.

Now that Her Late Majesty has gone to her heavenly reward, it's time for Australia to become a republic, say the inner city chattering classes over their decaffeinated *caffè macchiato*s.

No, it should not be about personalities; the debate must focus on "the system."

In the United States, Nancy Pelosi could honestly say, "the people elected us, the Democratic Party, to run the country by giving us a majority in the Congress." Donald Trump, on the other hand, could equally honestly say, "the people elected me, a member of the Republican Party, to run the country." A broken system, the Republic of the United States.

Last September, the United Kingdom had, within the one month, two monarchs and three Prime Ministers. The transition of power was smooth and without incident. Constitutional Monarchy. I cannot envisage that happening in many of the world's republics without civil war.

Constitutional monarchy works and it has delivered for the United Kingdom and for Australia.

We have a truly unique system of government where our Governor-General is appointed by the leader of the democratically elected government of the day, to be a referee above the party political system, with the task of supervising the smooth running of the democracy.

If there is a deadlock between the two houses of parliament, the Governor-General has the specific task, required of her / him in Article 57 of the Australian Constitution, to step in and resolve the deadlock by dissolving parliament and calling fresh elections. A duty as required by the Constitution.

Only once in the 122 year history of the Federation of Australia has this been required. In November 1975 the House of Representatives was controlled by one party, and the Senate by the other party. The Senate exercised its constitutional right to reject legislation passed by the House of Representatives.

There was a deadlock, so the Governor-General Sir John Kerr acted as required by the Constitution in such circumstances, and dissolved the parliament, calling fresh elections.

The Australian Republicans, and the Left generally, have despised and demonised Sir John Kerr ever since.

Articles 5 and 28 of the Australian Constitution also empower the Governor-General with the authority to prorogue parliament.

How might November 1975 have ended in the great republics of the world? In many of them civil war would have ensued. I am listing them in my head just now from A to Z - Afghanistan to Zimbabwe.

But we have somebody above politics, our referee, in Australia's constitutional monarchy.

But why do we need a "foreign head of state?" the Republicans ask. Out comes the same tired old xenophobic, racist lie. These are the same chattering classes who would castigate me for using the term 'foreigner' in our all welcoming, inclusive country.

Here's the point: the Australian constitution does not use the term 'head of state.' We don't have a Robert Mugabe or an Ayatollah Khomeini. We are happy to leave that nonsense to the republics.

Under our unique and precious Constitution our democratically elected parliaments appoint a referee to sort out problems should they arise. The Governor General is as close as we get to a head of state, in a system which we inherited from Britain along with our laws, our legal system, and our language.

Let's not tamper with it. God Save the King.

Mr Stan Klan May 2023