

2<sup>nd</sup> May 2023

## 2023 Manning Clark Lecture

### **Australia's Third Act: Reconciled, Independent and Truly Multicultural**

The next few years promises to be the most transformative and inspiring of any of the past 235 since white settlement in Australia.

It's a moment of vast responsibility as Australians are called to make decisions that heal historical wounds, unite the different strands of our history and that envision the very best that Australia can be, without compromise.

To create the Constitutional framework and cultural signposts to ignite the incredibly powerful mixture of races, ethnicities, cultures, stories, and experiences through our shared values that can become a model for the world.

Before we discuss these challenges, let us open with the wise words of George Burarrwanga, former lead singer of the famous Warumpi Band, Aboriginal activist singers who foresaw these important steps many decades ago.

George's first and only solo release was called, '*Wake Up Australia*' and is a call for healing and unity between black and white through the next stage of our evolution into a Republic with an Australian Head of State.

'Wake up Australia, who's gonna save ya?

Not the King, or Queen..

Someone like you could be the President.

Someone like me could be the President.

We get together, look at what we've got..

We need a new election'<sup>1</sup>

Thankyou George. 'Wake Up Australia', indeed.

We can confidently say that an awakening *is* underway, one that is opening doorways to a boundless future.

We are at the beginning of a social movement that can finally enable us to inherit our 65,000 years of history on this Continent, based in truth, justice and equality and bring to life the beautiful panoply of our contemporary demography to demonstrate to future generations and the broader world the deep pride we possess in our multicultural nature.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://sonichits.com/video/George\\_Rurrambu/Wake\\_Up\\_Australia?track=1](https://sonichits.com/video/George_Rurrambu/Wake_Up_Australia?track=1).

It will take ambition, no small amount of courage, a vision of the next and final step in our decolonisation and trust in our fellow Australians.

To believe that we can reimagine the relationship between each of us based on equal rights and dignity and I happen to believe in my bones that we can take these steps and become the most complete version of ourselves.

A relatively small nation by population, just 0.037 percent of the world's population, our reputation as a country that wildly, massively outperforms on the world sporting stage can be matched by our protection and promotion of the rights of First Nations peoples, our absolute commitment to democratic principles in an age of increasing authoritarianism and the worrying reshaping of the world's governance systems by non-democratic countries.

There is perhaps one of the most important times since the Second World War to stand as a nation for people's rights, representative and participatory democracy and the international rules'-based system given the conflicts and realignments we see underway internationally.

This year, 2023, the Australian people are being asked to take the first step by First Nations peoples.

We are being invited to look back in history with new eyes and an open heart, to hear the truth about colonisation, the stealing of land, the lie at the heart of the nation that was exposed by *Mabo*<sup>2</sup> as recently as 1992 and to think through all that this tortured beginning of settlement after first contact has meant to First Nations and the still unequal relationship between us all.

We are being offered a profoundly important opportunity to begin to heal the wound within each of us that opened when shots were first aimed at Aboriginal Australians who resisted the unwelcome advance by Captain James Cook,<sup>3</sup> and to understand how this has inflicted Indigenous and non-Indigenous relations ever since.

It's deeply inspiring to believe, as I do and I hope you, that Australia is capable of walking this journey of truth because it takes courage to examine ourselves critically and have the collective will to want to be better, and do better.

This journey is not about forcing anyone to feel shame but about strengthening our commitment to truth and justice, the former automatically preceding the latter.

Of course, we want our history to reflect the complex reality of settlement which includes massacre<sup>4</sup> and oppression, racism, and dehumanisation because, through this, we can make amends and walk forward as one people.

Reconciliation, then, is a fundamental part of Australia's evolving identity based in truth and equality.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/resources/mabo-decision>.

<sup>3</sup> <https://australian.museum/learn/first-nations/james-cook/>.

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.newcastle.edu.au/newsroom/featured/new-evidence-reveals-aboriginal-massacres-committed-on-extensive-scale>.

The next part of the National journey will come to life from 2024 onwards and is particularly prominent this week as Australia's King, Charles III is crowned on Saturday, May 6.<sup>5</sup>

It is this anachronism that we are here to discuss.

The importance of the coronation, firstly, is to ensure that every Australian is aware that they have a foreign King as their Head of State since around thirty percent of Australians were not aware of this fact.

I say 'were', because this awareness was heavily assisted by the call of Charles in recent days for all Australians to make a vocal 'pledge of allegiance' to their King and his heirs and successors, would you believe, during the coronation ceremony.<sup>6</sup>

Nothing focuses the minds of Australians more quickly than asking us to bend a knee. We basically spend our whole lives proving that we never will, and now Charles expects us to 'cry out' at the splendid sight of his ascension.

I thought you might like to hear the pledge in full, since it is emblematic of the institution and very clear as to the expectations placed on you, me, and every other Australian:

*'I swear that I will pay true allegiance to Your Majesty, and to your heirs and successors according to law. So help me God.'*<sup>7</sup>

There is a lot to work with here, so let's break it down.

The first rule of a Republic built on democratic principles is that public officials are accountable to the people and pledge their loyalty to us, not the other way around. That Charles thinks it appropriate that Australians act as his subjects and servants and '*pay true allegiance*' perfectly encapsulates the outdated notion of royalty, a concept that is not reconcilable in an age of equality and certainly not in a country of egalitarians.

As to pledging anything towards Charles' heirs and successors, well, this is a line we needn't cross.

The British Royal family is nothing if not a representation of the truth of human equality since they remind us regularly that there really is no such thing as '*royalness*', '*royal or special blood*' or humans born to rule other humans.

There are just people, with or without titles.

And without wanting to denigrate or ridicule Charles or his family in any way, the reasons why we would not wish to pledge loyalty to his heirs or successors are patently obvious, and freely available.

Then there's the oath before God that every Australian is asked to make in a proudly secular country with multiple faiths and many Australians who practice none, no less.

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<sup>5</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-65342840>.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2023-05-01/king-charles-homage-of-the-people-public-swear-allegiance/102286052>.

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2023/apr/30/minister-defends-offensive-coronation-day-oath-to-king-charles>.

It is also very odd to see a person who is supposed to be ordained by God as part of a divine birthright and is head of the Anglican church and defender of that faith alone, request allegiance and loyalty to himself, rather than his God.

Seems quite remarkable to me.

Finally, it is difficult to imagine the appalling judgement of a monarch who says on one hand that he '*cannot express the depths of (his personal) sorrow at the suffering of so many*' as he continues to deepen his '*understanding of slavery's enduring impact*'<sup>8</sup> at last year's Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting in Rwanda, with asking First Nations Australians or descendants of slaves across the Commonwealth to 'cry out' their subservience.

It's truly stunning, but hardly surprising.

Queen Elizabeth is said to have adopted the mantra, 'never complain, never explain.'<sup>9</sup> She might have added, never say sorry.

Therefore, in a year where First Nations must hold the preponderance of public conversation with the looming referendum on the Voice to Parliament<sup>10</sup> and with the greatest sensitivity and respect to this important process, the coronation is an opportunity to think about our broader path forward and need for full and final independence.

For Australia to cut formal Constitutional ties with the old British empire as represented by their present royal family and select our own Head of State. As we at the Australian Republic Movement are fond of saying: one of us, by us, for us.<sup>11</sup>

An Australian who lives here, has no allegiance to anyone but us, represents the best of our values, is accountable to us and pledges loyalty to you, and I.

Charles is of course King of fifteen Commonwealth countries, known as 'realms,' essentially a part time role representing Australia.<sup>12</sup> At the Australian Republic Movement, we reckon it's not too much to ask that our future Head of State represents us full-time.

Making the transition to an Australian Republic will be one of the most important nation-defining, and nation-building exercises this country will ever undertake. Because we will finally be truly free, in control of our own destiny.

How do we get there?

Through consultation, deliberation and vesting sovereignty and ultimate decision making in the Australian people, is how.

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<sup>8</sup> <https://thecommonwealth.org/news/chogm-2022-opening-ceremony-speech-prince-wales>.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.newsweek.com/royal-family-prince-william-complain-explain-motto-queen-elizabeth-1692861>.

<sup>10</sup> <https://www.reconciliation.org.au/reconciliation/support-a-voice-to-parliament/>.

<sup>11</sup> <https://republic.org.au/>.

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.townandcountrymag.com/society/tradition/g41501895/what-countries-does-king-charles-iii-reign-over/>.

It is a wonderful opportunity to consult with every Australian in every corner of this beautiful continent as to how we see ourselves, what we consider our bedrock values to be and to commit to living these to the full.<sup>13</sup>

The question that the coronation asks, rather *demand*s us to answer, is ‘what *are* our national values?’

It’s a question answered by Governments from time to time as captured in citizenship statements and ceremonies, but given our rapid demographic and social change, isn’t it time that we all came together and decided, for ourselves?

Who are we? What do we believe in? How should we live together? What do we want our global contribution to be as a country?

If we truly value equality that dictates each of us must possess the same opportunity and rights, the meritocracy championed by convicts and settlers alike who either fought against or sought to escape the class system must be strengthened.

An Australian Head of State, accountable to the people is the only way.

And our deep love of multiculturalism and the social cohesion that we enjoy because of our commitment to pluralism and secularism where every religion is respected but none rule, means that the ‘defender of the (Anglican) faith’<sup>14</sup> to the exclusion of any other is untenable as the highest representative of the Nation.

The concept of ‘multiculturalism’ also underpins the vision of our Republic.

It means not just diversity, which Australia proudly has in abundance, but equality between us all, no matter what we look like, or our ancestry.

Genuine multiculturalism means both access and representation. A country where no community faces barriers by virtue of their race, ethnicity, or religion and where every one of us can rise to any and every position.

Just as First Nations are teaching us to listen in 2023, so too are our multicultural communities seeking a conversation about belonging, representation and togetherness that is long overdue.

Exactly fifty years since the end of the White Australia Policy,<sup>15</sup> it is time to re-evaluate the notion of equality and how we can manifest multiculturalism in every aspect of Australian life in a way that can become a model for a world with division and exclusion on the rise.

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<sup>13</sup> <https://www.aph.gov.au/constitution>.

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2022/sep/09/king-charles-to-be-defender-of-the-faith-but-also-a-defender-of-faiths#:~:text=Among%20King%20Charles's%20many%20titles,mother%20took%20these%20roles%20seriously>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/resources/end-of-white-australia-policy#:~:text=In%201973%20the%20Whitlam%20Labor,from%20nearly%20200%20different%20countries..>

Australians were deeply proud to see our most diverse Federal Parliament in 2022<sup>16</sup> and calls for greater representation in media, industry and the corporate world by Media Diversity Australia and the Diversity Council of Australia, for example, are part of this process.<sup>17</sup>

The final and most important practical and symbolic step is to open the highest office in the Nation, our Head of State, to every Australian of any background.

This is the ultimate demonstration of our commitment to each other. To say that every one of us is so valued, that our commitment to equality is so real, that any of us can represent all of us.

In contrast, the British monarchy by its very nature is exclusionary and can play no further formal role in a Nation that truly values its commitment to inclusion in all its forms.

The journey of reconciliation as brought to life by the Uluru Statement of ‘Voice, Treaty, Truth’<sup>18</sup> opens the path for Australia to join all other Commonwealth members<sup>19</sup> by walking with First Nations in agreement-making.

But this agreement, which is so long overdue, can only be made with those of us who belong to this ancient land.

It is *our* pact, *our* responsibility, *our* agreement to make and *our* relationship to remake and the Crown can play no part in this future pact between every Australian.

The Australian republic is the next step on the path to healing and growth and it is not possible to reconcile our journey in truth alongside First nations on one hand, while holding the Crown with the other.

In the past decade, the process of decolonisation has accelerated and terms such as ‘*Invasion Day*,’ once seen as heretical or radical have rightly been normalised. This is a natural process of stepping away from the Crown and fully inheriting our own country, nowhere seen more clearly than at gatherings where we once sang ‘*God Save the Queen*’ and now conduct a ceremony that has deep meaning to every one of us, an acknowledgement of, or welcome to country.

To acknowledge the traditional owners of the land we are standing on, bathe our souls in a smoking ceremony, hear Indigenous language spoken, see dances performed, hear the ancient sounds of the didgeridoo are gifts that bind us all to this red earth and remind us of the history we have denied, and were denied.

We now accept the reality of the lie that was ‘*terra nullius*,’<sup>20</sup> understand the resistance of Pemulwuy<sup>21</sup> and many others that were the frontier wars, accept the more than 400 massacres of Indigenous peoples<sup>22</sup> and the attempt, sanctioned by the Crown, to wipe Aboriginals from

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<sup>16</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2022/jul/25/the-47th-parliament-is-the-most-diverse-ever-but-still-doesnt-reflect-australia>.

<sup>17</sup> <https://www.mediadiversityaustralia.org/>; <https://www.dca.org.au/>.

<sup>18</sup> [https://www.avi.org.au/reconciliation-2/?gclid=CjwKCAjwXr2iBhBJEiwAdXECw2PrpVQQapmhlZ3\\_s8A8ynAQhao8nEeqMZCPyA3up-CHD4PXpcGMXBoCjuoQAvD\\_BwE](https://www.avi.org.au/reconciliation-2/?gclid=CjwKCAjwXr2iBhBJEiwAdXECw2PrpVQQapmhlZ3_s8A8ynAQhao8nEeqMZCPyA3up-CHD4PXpcGMXBoCjuoQAvD_BwE).

<sup>19</sup> <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-australia-40024622>.

<sup>20</sup> <https://australian.museum/learn/first-nations/unsettled/recognising-invasions/terra-nullius/>.

<sup>21</sup> <https://www.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/resources/pemulwuy>.

<sup>22</sup> <https://www.newcastle.edu.au/newsroom/featured/new-evidence-reveals-aboriginal-massacres-committed-on-extensive-scale>.

Van Diemen's Land, now Tasmania in what is today acknowledged as attempted genocide, the intentional destruction of a people and their culture.<sup>23</sup>

These intergenerational legacies remain, and it is up to us to lead the healing process that we can only rightfully undertake as a country, alone.

There is little question that following the passing of Queen Elizabeth in September of last year, for whom many Australians had affection, space has opened for these important conversations to germinate, and their flowering is that of our evolving and emerging identity, as one people.

As a member of the Asian region, ties to a bygone era of imperialism that is distinguished by the lasting impacts of oppression and subjugation of so many of our neighbours no longer suits our conception as a nation with over 300 different cultural backgrounds or how we seek to be seen by the region and world.

This not a repudiation of history, but a positioning of the Crown in its proper historical context where Australians can accept the positive inheritances and openly lament the deeply damaging impacts.

An Australian Republic is our opportunity to finally rise above the denials, concealed history and deliberate falsifications and join in truth, a bridge between past, present and future.

It is a celebration of the different strands of our history, viewed with honesty and courage, in a very real way cleansing all our consciences, and a unifying step that lets all Australians of any cultural background walk forward together.

A moment when we emerge from more than 65,000 years into our whole selves, reconciled, independent and truly and proudly multicultural.

Truth will set us free, and the only true freedom is a Constitutionally independent Australia.

And although a Republic must be grounded in the twin pillars of truth and justice, let me be very clear to those Australians with affection for the Crown that we are with you, we respect your feelings and views, and no one should ever feel excluded.

A Republic is about carrying forward the best of Australia, and that means our British traditions and institutional inheritances which are an important part of our national story.

And while it is clear from recent polls that Australians feel no connection to the monarchy in 2023 and that Charles is seen as deeply unrepresentative,<sup>24</sup> a proposition against which it would be near impossible to argue, particularly after the past few days, neither are we interested in denigrating Charles or his family in any way.

In fact, quite the contrary, my Co-Chair the legendary First Nations leader Nova Peris OAM and I, are inviting Charles to join us on this inspiring path and to eagerly welcome the final and natural evolutionary step of Australia.

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<sup>23</sup> <https://theconversation.com/explainer-the-evidence-for-the-tasmanian-genocide-86828>.

<sup>24</sup> <https://www.skynews.com.au/australia-news/australian-republican-movement-says-king-charles-coronation-should-make-the-nation-reconsider-its-ties-to-the-british-monarchy/news-story/4b2ddfcd95cb30f2f2c7444d4681de>.

It would seem ludicrous for Charles to want to cling on to his position as Head of State rather than allow an Australian to inherit the position in an orderly and respectful transition to complete the circle of history that has lasted 235 years.

A *yes* vote for a fully independent Australia is a *yes* to the truth of our history, and by accepting its historical responsibilities, the monarchy can walk with all of us in a relationship of equals.

Not one of subservience, or '*allegiance*', a term we last heard at the pledge of Australian Prime Minister, Anthony Albanese to Australia's monarch last September in a moment that was so jarring to see our democratically elected leader being forced to pledge fealty to a foreign King, but reinforcing that which every Australian already knows, that we are the equal of any.

I have little doubt he will have done so already, having announced his intention for a referendum on the Republic in a second term of Government, nevertheless we will be asking the Australian Prime Minister to seek the support of Charles for the step that should be carried out together as a celebration of the historical parts becoming a future whole.

Having made a fairly obvious case, we might engage in some myth busting and the reversion of diversions, if you like, by attacking some of the more common malfeasances against Australia's natural evolution into our third and final act.

You might hear that Australia's democracy is not in need of change.

Well, the five secret ministries of former Prime Minister, Scott Morrison are *Exhibit A, B, C, D and E* for those of us who beg to differ, a point made by Australia's Solicitor-General who stated that the secrecy, sponsored by the Governor-General 'fundamentally undermined' the principle of responsible Government.<sup>25</sup>

Under the Australian Constitution, Australia's Governor-General is the King's representative and bound to act in Charles' interests, not those of the Australian people.<sup>26</sup>

In any future Constitutional model, an Australian Head of State would be bound to uphold our democratic principles and conventions and no Prime Minister could so deceive the Australian people.

Looking further back in history for a moment, we now know through the excellent forensic work of Professor Jenny Hocking in her book, *The Palace Letters* that both the Queen and Charles were not only aware of the actions of then Governor-General, Sir John Kerr but were in fact supportive of his dismissal of a democratically elected Australian Government, led by Prime Minister, Gough Whitlam in 1975.<sup>27</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2022-11-25/key-takeaways-from-scott-morrison-secret-ministries-report/101699078>;  
<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2022/aug/23/scott-morrison-secret-ministries-minister-portfolios-fundamentally-undermined-responsible-government-advice-shows>.

<sup>26</sup>

[https://www.aph.gov.au/About\\_Parliament/House\\_of\\_Representatives/Powers\\_practice\\_and\\_procedure/Practice7/HTML/Chapter1/Powers\\_and\\_Functions\\_of\\_the\\_Governor-General](https://www.aph.gov.au/About_Parliament/House_of_Representatives/Powers_practice_and_procedure/Practice7/HTML/Chapter1/Powers_and_Functions_of_the_Governor-General).

<sup>27</sup> <https://www.whitlam.org/palace-letters>;



Following a conversation with Kerr, then *Prince* Charles was said by the Queen's private secretary, Sir Martin Charteris, to have advised the Queen of the possibility that Kerr may be dismissed by Whitlam '*with the object, presumably, of replacing you with someone more amenable to his wishes*' and that if such an approach was made, the Queen '*would take most unkindly to it.*'<sup>28</sup>

The Queen would take most unkindly to it.

The notion of impartiality of Australia's monarch exposed for all Australians to see as the Queen clearly placed her own interests above those of the Nation.

Further, the Queen in fact encouraged the dismissal as Charteris advised Kerr, on her behalf that, '*If you do, as you will, what the constitution dictates, you cannot possible [sic] do the Monarchy any avoidable harm. The chances are you will do it good.*'<sup>29</sup>

Stunning.

These letters were hidden from the Australian people for over fifty years for one reason only, to protect the British monarchy and deny Australians the untruth at the heart of our democracy, that we hold ultimate decision-making power over our own country.

One of the most important revelations of Professor Hocking's successful High Court challenge to the sealing of this fundamentally important correspondence is the letter written personally by Charles, now Australia's King, congratulating Kerr.

'*Please don't lose heart*', wrote Charles four months after the dismissal, '*What you did was the right and courageous thing to do.*'<sup>30</sup>

A colossal breach of the convention of neutrality of Australia's royal family and by Australia's new King.

Which leaves Australia's new Head of State in an invidious position, having made an extremely partisan intervention into the most tumultuous moment in Australian political history, rendering the notion of a benign monarch as Head of State a nullity, a lie.

Australians have a fundamental right to be democratically represented and the notion of a monarch putting the Crown's interests ahead of ours is a powerful incentive for change.

Sometimes we hear that the stability of Australia's political system, the Westminster Parliamentary system of government must be preserved and therefore Charles must remain, despite all that we have discovered tonight.

To these people, I say that we are *all* committed to maintaining Governmental stability and therefore we are all Republicans.

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<sup>28</sup> [https://www.smh.com.au/national/the-palace-letters-are-every-bit-the-bombshell-they-promised-to-be-20200713-p55bpx.html?fbclid=IwAR3edN13ci0plG-vuCoEK-NPyBaX0eTrJdKckZpbxyzQGjcxIPcG2D\\_mXTQ](https://www.smh.com.au/national/the-palace-letters-are-every-bit-the-bombshell-they-promised-to-be-20200713-p55bpx.html?fbclid=IwAR3edN13ci0plG-vuCoEK-NPyBaX0eTrJdKckZpbxyzQGjcxIPcG2D_mXTQ).

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> <https://www.skynews.com.au/world-news/historian-calls-for-king-charles-to-apologise-to-australians-over-his-utterly-improper-actions-amid-whitlam-sacking/news-story/32a550c34aa11271144731cde44dda90>.

If stability is your aim, then let us agree to embed the ceremonial nature of our own Head of State into the Constitution, codify the reserve powers that have already proven so dangerous and make a far stronger commitment to our democracy.

In fact, stability of governance is a powerful motivator to cut formal ties with the monarchy and place our sovereignty in the hands of every Australian.

Let's turn now to our future in the Commonwealth.

This will be unchanged, in fact strengthened since the overwhelming majority of the 56 Commonwealth Nations are already Republics and of the remaining 14 members outside of the UK with Charles as Head of State, the majority have expressed their wish to separate in the near term.<sup>31</sup>

The inexorable march of independence is unstoppable because it is so natural.

Charles' mother began her reign in 1952 as Head of State of 32 nations, and by her passing this number was just 15 with the latest to separate being Barbados in 2021.<sup>32</sup>

First Nation and other advocacy groups of these 14 non-UK members have repeatedly called for a formal apology for the Crown's involvement in, profiteering from and protection of transatlantic slavery, discussions regarding financial reparations for the stolen treasures and wealth of former colonies and the repatriation of cultural artefacts and ancestral remains of their Indigenous peoples.<sup>33</sup>

There are still over 32,000 First Nations artefacts and remains in UK museums and demands are rightly being made of Charles to return them to their true owners and ancestors here in Australia.

This is a central part of the process of decolonisation, returning dignity to oppressed peoples, admitting historical wrongs, and working to repair the damage and all these escalating conversations places the Crown in a very different context in the minds of Australians today.

It is fading further and further into the distance and the general shrug by Australians at the coronation is ample evidence of the now almost complete disconnect.

The last Australian King to be crowned was George VI in 1936 at which time around 200,000 Sydneysiders took part in the Coronation review in Centennial Park and the Air Force display was said to be 'one of the most thrilling ever.'<sup>34</sup> Sixty thousand packed into Royal Park in Melbourne for a military review and a 'pageant of empire.' Similar celebrations occurred around the country.

This Saturday evening, most Australians will be watching sport and getting on with their lives, oblivious.

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<sup>31</sup> <https://www.timeout.com/news/which-countries-could-become-republics-now-that-the-queen-has-died-092022>.

<sup>32</sup> <https://www.timeout.com/news/which-countries-could-become-republics-now-that-the-queen-has-died-092022>.

<sup>33</sup> <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2023/apr/06/king-charles-signals-first-explicit-support-for-research-into-monarchys-slavery-ties>.

<sup>34</sup> <https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/70642638/6906364>.

I doubt many ovens will be troubled by a ‘coronation quiche’.<sup>35</sup> And I can assure you I’ll be chomping down on a ‘democracy sausage’.<sup>36</sup>

Finally, returning for a moment to 1999, let’s consider several lessons from the Republic referendum.

Naturally, the entire Republic movement which understandably has different views on the practical steps of change, now understands that there is but one opportunity to make this critically important change and compromise will be required of all of us. I have enjoyed these conversations with the various groups and am confident this will happen.

Secondly, Australians felt disconnected from the eventual model developed through the 1998 Constitutional Convention<sup>37</sup> and though overwhelmingly in favour of separation, were convinced that the model reflected a lack of democratic participation.<sup>38</sup>

The most important step forward is to demonstrate our commitment to citizen engagement and participation and consult across the entire country so that Australians can deliberate on the Head of State they wish to see.

The Republic stands for the ‘*people’s affairs*’,<sup>39</sup> and it is the people who will ultimately and rightly decide the form that our Head of State will take.

It follows that the Australian Republic is an historic opportunity to strengthen the participation of our citizens in the design of our shared future.

If we start with stability, commit to democratic principles and accountability to the people of Australia, we will come to know ourselves better, unify as a people and Nation, grow into our contemporary demography and empower a respectful future together.

From 65,000 years of First Nations culture to Federation and Constitutional monarchy, Australia’s third and final act will begin when we all stand proudly in front of the world as a fierce advocate for democracy, multiculturalism, equality, justice, and inclusion.

That version of Australia can be a shining beacon in an uncertain world.

I hope you will join us.

Craig Foster AM  
Co-Chair, Australian Republic Movement

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<sup>35</sup> [https://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/why-king-charles-coronation-quiche-has-caused-a-stir/iv5x7egmv/?cid=news:search:gg:en:nacadigital:dsa:prog&gclid=CjwKCAjwxr2iBhBJEiwAdXECwyVFLw5inMxsEKX-WCV4ZAYpfi\\_lj-7DH5SAFRItNNKyWoDPjwj44BoCWyoQAvD\\_BwE&gclid=aw.ds](https://www.sbs.com.au/news/article/why-king-charles-coronation-quiche-has-caused-a-stir/iv5x7egmv/?cid=news:search:gg:en:nacadigital:dsa:prog&gclid=CjwKCAjwxr2iBhBJEiwAdXECwyVFLw5inMxsEKX-WCV4ZAYpfi_lj-7DH5SAFRItNNKyWoDPjwj44BoCWyoQAvD_BwE&gclid=aw.ds).

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.afr.com/life-and-luxury/arts-and-culture/if-you-ve-ever-wondered-why-you-eat-democracy-sausages-read-on-20220516-p5alrs>.

<sup>37</sup> <https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-299324817/findingaid>.

<sup>38</sup> <chrome-extension://bdfcnmeidppjeaggnmidamkiddifkdib/viewer.html?file=https://australianelectionstudy.org/wp-content/uploads/Higley-McAllister-Elite-Division-2002.pdf>.

<sup>39</sup> <https://www.britannica.com/topic/res-publica>.