

**Australians for Constitutional Monarchy – Toowoomba Branch**

**THE ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING**

**SUNDAY, 11<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2018**

**THE “ROSE COTTAGE” HALL  
Newtown Park, Holberton Street, Toowoomba  
1.00 p.m. for 1.30 p.m. sharp**

**Guest speaker: Sophie York from Sydney**

Ladies and Gentleman – and I will use that greeting whilst it is still lawful to do so. The Tube in London has sadly now abandoned using that greeting! Firstly, I want to say it is a pleasure to be here in Toowoomba speaking to you all, my first visit ever. It took John Standley 18 months’ worth of perseverance, and now I am here with you - and I am very grateful.

The topic for my talk is:

***“Australia - the Best Country on the Planet. How do we keep it that way?”***

It will be about 20 minutes. We could have questions after that.

If I have time I will then also talk briefly about the other topics I was asked to cover including:

- A. The Marriage Campaign in Australia and its impact. (10)
  - B. An ACM Update (5)
  - C. Finally end with Brexit and what next for the UK (10).
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1. Australia is the best country on earth. On measures such as prosperity, either in GDP or earnings per person – we fall into the top twenty richest nations on earth. The UN Human Development Index places us second only to Norway<sup>1</sup>. We have an enviable lack of disease, lack of civil conflict, and we have low crime rates compared to other countries. We have a good climate, where we can enjoy outdoor living, cafés and sport. We have myriad beaches with clear water and white sand. We have high-quality building codes, excellent transport and modern public infrastructure. We have medical services which are unrivalled. Compared to many nations, we have excellent social cohesion. These factors are the yield of our Judeo-Christian heritage, a heritage which acknowledges that each individual has individual dignity, is worthy of respect, is answerable for his or her own actions, *and may take risks and may excel*. This is a heritage which prizes individual freedom.
  2. It is the freedom we enjoy which sets us apart from many other countries – such as our freedom of speech, religion, and association. We have certain national character traits for which we are renowned, which include – 3 examples:

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<sup>1</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_countries\\_by\\_Human\\_Development\\_Index](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_countries_by_Human_Development_Index)

- a. “Mateship”, noted particularly in fires, floods, and on the battlefield,
- b. “A Fair Go” – based on Natural Law: that timeless, universal, superior to any man-made law, the Natural Law of the universe which transcends cultures & which acknowledges the equal human dignity of each person. It respects human life, the right to own private property, the right of a man & woman to marry and procreate, and the right of all to have freedom of thought, speech, belief, and association. This underlying consciousness of Natural Law arises in many debates in our society (abortion, euthanasia, same-sex marriage, and so forth). ‘Giving a hand’ is part of “A Fair Go” - Australian volunteerism is legendary, and is worth billions to our economy.<sup>2</sup> (14.5 billion dollars in unpaid labour was the 2015 estimate).

and thirdly

- c. “Having a go” – giving ideas and ventures a try and taking a risk, while also being laid back – letting things go through to the keeper – an endearing Australian cultural trait based on forgiveness.
3. These kind interactions are the priceless glue to the whole construction of our society, all of which jointly yield up our quality of life. And when you unpack them, they are directly the product of Christian principles of doing unto others, being loving and forgiving, doing our best with our talents, being trustworthy and loyal, and so on.

### Australian Heritage

- 4. Although we have formed our own national character traits, Australia’s heritage owes much to that which we gained from the British. Sir Arthur Phillip was a Christian believer (and a good Navy Man). One of the very first things he did when stepping ashore in Australia in 1788 was open the Bible and take an Oath. He believed that only a nation founded upon and governed by laws based on God’s laws would be successful. Despite what was acceptable practice in the era, Sir Arthur Phillip declared there would be no slavery, that anyone killing an indigenous person was liable to be hanged, and even when he himself was speared, ordered no retaliation. He was clearly aware that all humans, including Indigenous people, had individual dignity and a right to freedom.
- 5. Governor Lachlan Macquarie arriving in 1810 infused Christian virtues of kindness, a work ethic, and *temperance* into Colonial life and practice, and his wife Elizabeth took an interest in the welfare of women convicts and the Aboriginals<sup>3</sup> as well as agriculture and architecture. She and Elizabeth Macarthur reportedly pioneered hay-making in the colony. One only has to read accounts of this time, of the toughness of the voyages-to-get-here, how many died of illness on the way or afterwards, to realise that Australia’s forebears were made of formidable, admirable stuff.
- 6. Our law is based upon the British Common Law and in it our Tort law incorporates the concept of the Good Samaritan, Our Contract law is likewise based upon “Do Unto Others”.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.volunteeringaustralia.org/wp-content/uploads/VA-Key-statistics-about-Australian-volunteering-16-April-20151.pdf>

<sup>3</sup> Australian Dictionary of Biography <http://adb.anu.edu.au/biography/macquarie-elizabeth-henrietta-2418>

Our Criminal law accords due process and incorporates the idea of Habeas Corpus, derived from our British Heritage, {the} Magna Carta of 1215. Underpinning it, is that People have *equal human dignity* and cannot lose liberty on anyone's else's whim, allegation or vendetta. Our sentencing philosophy takes into account *not simply retribution*, but also *deterrence* and *rehabilitation*: Christian ideals of forgiveness & the hope of redemption.

These pluses. This faith culture. We live off the capital of a Christian culture.

7. The British gave us an impressive legacy in Habeas Corpus, Due Process (Innocent Until proven guilty), the valuing of Human Life, Rule of Law, Independent Judiciary, Democracy and the Monarchy, Westminster Parliament, Capitalism, concepts such as Forgiveness and Redemption, Manners, Natural Law precepts earlier mentioned (eg freedom to be alive & not be harmed, to own private property and so forth...) engineering, farming, defence, building and construction techniques and standards... Not to mention roads, education, sanitation, parliament, medicine, the arts, philosophy, literature, music, science and high culture... just to name a few... on a more practical level for homes and society - flushing toilets and the printing press...
8. So Australia is the greatest nation on the planet. We all know how it happened!! But what is working against it – what are the Threats to Australia, our nation that we know and love?
9. In my view there are three main threats and these arise from those who adhere to collectivist ideologies which do not recognise our heritage, nor do they credit it with currently-held advantages, nor do they respect our boundaries. ***Their consequent over-reach is the greatest threat to all that we hold dear.***

Boundaries and over-reach are themes in this talk.

## Threats

10. The three [main] threats are:
  - a. Firstly: militant secularism; promoted by Marxist sympathisers. It was particularly on display domestically during the so-called 'Safe Schools' push, and in the same-sex Marriage Campaign. It promotes political correctness, it controls via "being offended", uses words like "Inclusive" and diversity", ironically, as it attempts to divide us along racial, sexuality and gender lines, whilst forcing groupthink, and tries to re-write our history and insert a new version, in the interests of changing all that is good in our country.
  - b. Secondly: Chinese Communism and
  - c. Thirdly: Extreme Islamism (or Jihadism). This last threat is not just to Australia, but unfortunately to the West, generally.
11. I doubt I will be able to adequately deal with all three threats today. So let me unpack militant secularism in detail, and maybe only note briefly the other two.
12. Despite the impressive legacy of our Australian Heritage, some surveys are showing that *some* young people in the West are rejecting capitalism and embracing socialism. <sup>4</sup> (A survey

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<sup>4</sup> A 2016 Harvard University survey, which polled young American adults between ages 18 and 29, found that 51 percent of respondents do not support capitalism. Just 42 percent said they support it. John Della Volpe, the polling director at Harvard who interviews some of the subjects said that "They're not rejecting the concept... The way in which capitalism is practiced today, in the minds of young people — that's what they're

taken in America by Harvard in 2016 of American young people, not Australian). And we also know here that there is agitation to move Australia Day, some attempted knocking down of commemorative statues of our historical heroes & alteration of plaques, and surprise surprise - there is also a removal of the study of British heritage from universities and schools. *These matters are all related.*

13. It doesn't make sense that young people in the West would reject capitalism if they know the *facts* – *for example*, that Socialism generally bankrupts countries, and that Communist countries take it even further: these regimes ruthlessly breach the human rights of their citizens, there is **no** free press, **no** independent judiciary, and religious freedoms are heavily curtailed or adherents actually persecuted. You don't need to look much further than Cuba, Venezuela, Zimbabwe, China - and so on. And if you know your world history you will know the horrendous suffering caused in Russia, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia... - the list goes on. And you would feel relieved and grateful that your heritage was British, if you knew your history.
14. And therein lies the problem. They don't know their history. When Churchill endorsed the view that "democracy is the worst form of government, except for all the others that have been tried", he no doubt assumed that people knew the facts about socialist regimes.
15. So why don't they know their history? Because it is either not being taught at all, or is being taught in a fashion that the achievements are being obliterated and a false version inserted. The fact that modern Australia has essentially evolved out of British institutions, culture, and language, is not something which is firmly within their consciousness, let alone their appreciation. And there is now a movement on campuses which calls for 'trigger warnings' to be given when discussing confronting material, and the provision of 'safe spaces' for people - to shield them from challenging ideas and *other people who might be different to them*. The 'Safe spaces' reference is a nod to the French Reign of Terror, post the Revolution, which had a 'Committee of Public Safety' which dictatorially suppressed "rebellion" and put to death those who challenged their ideas. Fortunately, we are nowhere near that savagery, but the concept that ideas must be muzzled, is ominous suppression of free thought - and the opposite of what students are meant to experience whilst at University. If you don't know the errors of history, you are doomed to repeat them.
16. The Institute of Public Affairs (IPA) analysed History programmes throughout Australia in 2014. Their report contains the results of a systematic review of 739 **history** subjects offered **across 34 Australian** tertiary institutions and found that Undergraduate history degrees fail to teach fundamental aspects of Australia's history and how Australian liberal democracy came to be. This is quite shocking. Only 15 subjects out of 739 subjects surveyed covered British history! And yet this is our historical heritage! If I could brag for one moment: Champion College in NSW scored well! I am proud to say that I am on its Board.
17. The bottom line is: If you don't know about something, you will not value it, and you will not care if it is displaced by something else. You must know **what** you treasure and **why**. Because only *then* will you want to defend it!
18. As insightful Canadian Professor Jordan Peterson wrote in his book "Maps of Meaning":

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rejecting." [https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/04/26/a-majority-of-millennials-now-reject-capitalism-poll-shows/?utm\\_term=.e17ff44b314d](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/wonk/wp/2016/04/26/a-majority-of-millennials-now-reject-capitalism-poll-shows/?utm_term=.e17ff44b314d)

“Something we cannot see protects us from something we do not understand. The thing we cannot see is culture, in its intrapsychic or internal manifestation. The thing we do not understand is the chaos that gave rise to culture. If the structure of culture is disrupted, unwittingly, chaos returns.”

19. The disruption can occur in a number of ways: by neglected (or jaundiced) *education* about our heritage is only **one** of the ways. An ignorant press, unsupportive television or radio, ignorance unchallenged in social media, *and immigration at too high levels for the culture to handle*, also all undeniably have an impact.<sup>56</sup>
20. Many great philosophers throughout history have noted that culture can be eroded unless steps are taken to preserve it. *Christopher Dawson*, noted English scholar and historian, argued that the survival of any civilisation was vitally dependent on its educational tradition, which created a common world of thought with moral and intellectual ideals, and a common inheritance of knowledge. And as a number of scholars have concluded: all that stands between civilisation and barbarism is the education of one generation. And it is the case if a generation is not educated about what gives society its civility, or is falsely educated about its foundations, it is no wonder that its foundation is rejected. This conundrum is happening now in Australia, where school children are routinely taught that the British brought only dispossession, disease & death to Australia. That is such an unattractive heritage to have, that there is no wonder that there is some move to reject its legacy, and embrace other alternatives.
21. Fortunately, the attitude in Australia appears to not be not quite as forlorn as that of America's, if a recent Newspoll (Feb 2018) is any indication – notwithstanding everything, it found that **65 per cent of Australians want our national day to remain as it is** – a day of celebration and gratitude, on 26<sup>th</sup> Jan, despite the allegations by the ignorant that it was an invasion.
22. And while we're talking polls, in 2017 Core Data Research surveyed 1000 Australians over 50 and found that nine in 10 agree that political correctness is ruining society, and thought that younger generations were too worried about offending people. Political correctness is

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<sup>5</sup> Given our culture has a Judeo-Christian foundation, and this has produced a great society, built on successful immigration of good people with good characters, from backgrounds which enabled them to assimilate, and who possessed a strong work ethic, then ensuring that the immigration numbers are assessed at a sensible flow-rate makes sense. In practical terms, this is not only allows for house availability at realistic prices, decent wages, enough jobs, and infrastructure to be developed in time to cope, but most important of all, it allows the harmonious Australian culture to remain intact rather than diluted or dissolved altogether.

<sup>6</sup> {We are now noticing problems which those with more expertise in this area are examining right now, as the benefits in migration are sliding. As former Prime Minister Tony Abbott explained when he spoke at The Sydney Institute on Monday 20 th February, the figure for Net Overseas Migration (or the extra people looking for housing and jobs) that had averaged 110,000 a year in the decade to mid-2006 has doubled to 220,000 a year in the decade since rate has doubled from 110 000 each year to 220 000, all of which has had an impact upon housing availability and prices, on transport, especially roads and traffic, and social integration – he mentioned the development of ethnic gangs in Melbourne. Of more concern is how to retain our culture when it is being diluted at such a rapid rate, if indeed “Every five years we are increasing our population by about the size of the city of Adelaide.” So I can only suggest we slow the flow until our housing, infrastructure and job market catches up, at least to ensure that we retain our Australian character of low crime and social cohesion.}

another phrase for speaking in accord with tenets of Marxism, on the pretext that a third party will be offended, for example calling Fathers' Day "Special Person's Day".<sup>7</sup>

23. I believe we are at a crossroads in our society, we are coming to a point where we choose whether we will uphold the rights, responsibilities and freedoms of the individual vs the imposed values, thoughts, impositions and even the decreed terminology, of the collective ideologues, who use terms such as inclusivity and diversity, even as they divide us with falsehoods and cause friction by being unnecessarily prickly, to silence dissent.
24. The problem is, longstanding Australian principles and national character virtues are being eroded. I believe that without recognition of them, and without leadership to preserve them, these key Australian character traits - and freedoms – risk being lost. ***A new prickly society which removes the glue that keeps it happy and enjoyable, making us afraid to express our true selves and share truly diverse ideas, is being created instead.***
25. In past years the erosion of our Judeo-Christian heritage, gained from the British, (and appreciated and enriched over the years by migrants from Christian backgrounds), has been done 'on the quiet', say by the removal of crosses from hospital chapels, or bibles from bedside drawers, or the forbidding of school pupils to have Christmas pageants, or the use by some Australian academics of "BCE" – Before Common Era – rather than BC, "Before Christ", or the removal from university reading lists of the works of Christian or Catholic scholars, or the attempted chiselling-off of the words "Known Unto God" from the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, in the War Memorial in Canberra.
26. Since the issue of same-sex marriage emerged, the erosion of Judeo-Christian culture has been far more overt and concerning. The template for overseas is being adopted here. (Let me explain that further, today, when I give the Marriage update.)

#### **CHINESE COMMUNISM update**

Briefly:

27. Australia has had a great trade relationship with China, we have also welcomed them as migrants and hosted them as tourists. Chinese people are our friends and colleagues. However the Chinese **government** (which is different to its **people**) is doing things which are complete over-reach, and then they are wondering why we are concerned! [See Map]
28. Broadly speaking, they have cemented over and militarised islands in the South China sea region where our trade shipping passes. This was found to be unlawful by the Permanent Court of Arbitration in the Hague.<sup>8</sup> Not only does it breach international law, and cause a breakdown in global civility, whoever has the power to disrupt this shipping has political and strategic leverage over us and our regional neighbours, even if they never actually use it. The fake islands are replete with missile launchers and military aircraft hangars, with battleships

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<sup>7</sup> <http://www.news.com.au/lifestyle/real-life/news-life/senior-australians-say-political-correctness-is-ruining-society/news-story/8ff5acdffd7cc85a73fa8a34d6a2855>

<sup>8</sup> PCA Case No 2013-19 In the Matter of the South China Sea Arbitration: The Republic of the Philippines and The People's Republic of China 12 July 2016  
<https://pca-cpa.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/175/2016/07/PH-CN-20160712-Award.pdf>

at the ready. *There has never been any adequate explanation given for these surprising, unnecessary, strangely-hostile constructions.*

29. President Xi Jinping has put in initiatives such as the One Belt One Road, and the Asia Development Bank. They are funding expensive road & port projects in many of the countries in our region, actions which are being interpreted as 'empire expansion' designed to switch loyalties from the US to China. He has also engineered to change the Chinese Constitution to allow himself to be Supreme ruler – of the Party, of the Chinese nation and Commander in Chief of the Military. In Australia, we know that there has been foreign influence in our schools and universities - via the Confucius Institutes, and that Chinese students in Australia are monitored, and we also know that it has infiltrated our political system (one example alone was when a Senator - Sam Dastyari – reportedly tipped off a Chinese operative who was being monitored by ASIO), and it has exercised influence via foreign political donations. The Federal Parliament is attempting to address this via legislation (hopefully though, without it disadvantaging genuine charities).
30. Australia's alliance with the United States is based on shared ideals and will continue to be the centrepiece of our defence policy.<sup>9</sup> On Tuesday this week (6<sup>th</sup> Mar) it was reported in the Australian that at the National People's Congress annual meeting this week, China outlined defence spending which takes their level to 225 Billion \$A.

I do recommend you read Clive Hamilton's new book "Silent Invasion".

#### **EXTREME ISLAMISM/JIHADISM**

Even more briefly:

31. To be clear: the everyday law-abiding Muslim is **not** the problem. Islamism itself, however, is a repressive and expansionist credo. This is also how it manifests in reality, being based on collectivism not individual freedom, which is why it is shielded by Left-wingers-who-are-also-collectivists - and why it poses a problem in Europe and increasingly in the UK, with the encroachment of Sharia Law practices and courts, forced dress for women & girls, forced female genital mutilation (FGM), polygamy, child-marriage, radicalisation in schools and prisons, and acts of terrorism. Australia has a number of these issues, issues which are not aired adequately. However, I am advised that the Halal Certification racket has been the subject of a Senate Enquiry last year (because industries were being boycotted if they didn't comply, and the money was apparently being sent to extremist activities overseas). If there is to be regulation of standards for food in Australia, it needs to be Australian standards, by a government regulatory body, set up under Australian law only. Again, **setting boundaries prevents over-reach**. Having one legal system only, in Australia, should surely be 'not negotiable'?
32. The collectivist puts the perceived good of the group over individual freedom, and so over-reaches constantly. **You need to know what it is about your own culture that you treasure - and what you will not compromise upon.**

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<sup>9</sup> Defence White Paper 2016 p44

## ACM Update

1. Am only in a position to give a very brief update as I am not able to meet with David Flint until later this month. (*I understand he did supply a message for this Morning's Memorial Service for Dellys Kelly?*)
2. I note that the Queen has appointed Charles as regent for CHOGM, and it looks like she might be doing a staged handover. The Queen's last Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting is in London in April.
3. According to Dennis Shanahan of the Australian newspaper, "The Queen, who turns 92 the day after the London meeting of 53 Commonwealth leaders and representatives ends, has been lobbying for years to have Charles succeed her as head of the Commonwealth but there are moves to have a democratic election [for that role]."
4. The passing of the leadership is seen as part of the Queen's plans to ensure Charles succeeds her as monarch and a "transition to a change of reign".
5. There is speculation within the Commonwealth "family" that **the Queen** is moving toward setting up a **regency for Charles** and retiring largely from public duties, as has Prince Philip.
6. It has been reported that Prince William is about to visit the Middle East in a good will trip – both Israel and Palestine.
7. In other news, he and the Duchess of Cambridge are expecting their third child, due in **April**.
8. Prince Harry is engaged to American actress Meghan Markle and their wedding is **19<sup>th</sup> May**.
9. Question: How best to promote the case for our present system of constitutional monarchy when a handful of pro-republicans gain so much media attention? I believe Malcolm Turnbull said the question should not be raised while Queen Elizabeth is alive, but am told a rumour that he is considering a plebiscite in 2 years' time.
10. As a general proposition, I do think that the inability to settle on an agreed model remains a major weakness in the Republican camp, and their inability to show a better Australia than the one we have already with all the benefits and stability - and resistance to power-ructions which are occurring in certain Republics around the world.
11. As an aside, having just visited Argentina (a Democratic Republic) am very conscious of how a prosperous country with a large middle-class and comparable to Australia in a number of ways, can be bankrupted and set backwards by a certain type of socialist government. They had a military junta between 1976 and 1983, as a result of a classic power-ruccion (not atypical of Republics), which can be exploited by the mighty and the powerful. In 2001, Argentina had 5 Presidents in 12 months, and there was a run on the banks which caused the deaths of 27 people. It has gone from being the wealthiest country in the world in 1913 to now around the 54<sup>th</sup>. This is not to say all republics are like this, it is just to point out that any model proposed for Australia has never yet been able to say how it would offer a better system than the one we have at present.



12. I will take any feedback to Sydney about wanting info on what ACM is doing interstate and nationally, from the central office in Sydney, and offer my apologies for not having been able to attend the National Conference last year, unfortunately.

**13. Not sure I can take many questions on the ACM update - but am happy to try!**

**A. The Marriage Campaign in Australia, and its impact**

1. I was approached to be the National Spokeswoman for Marriage Alliance in 2015 and we launched on August 2. Our position was that Marriage in the history of the world came about as a sensible and remarkably natural arrangement for the survival of the human race. A man and a woman would bond together and form a family. It has been around in every culture, since time immemorial. Marriage makes sense biologically, philosophically and theologically. It was never a right bestowed by Parliament, although Parliament protected it as a public good, especially as often children resulted from the bond. People were allowed to hold these views about what marriage truly is.
2. Marriage Alliance joined ACL and 100 or so Marriage supporting groups, including many family associations and churches to form the **Coalition for Marriage**. We were all very concerned about the proposed changes to the Australian Marriage Act because we were aware of litigation overseas which had included cases such as:
  - a. **Trinity Western University**
  - b. **Asher's bakery**<sup>10</sup>
  - c. **Sweetcakes by Melissa**<sup>11</sup>,
  - d. **Asian photographer couple**<sup>12</sup>
  - e. Florist **Baronnelle Stutzman**
  - f. **Felix Ngole**, a UK social worker
  - g. UK magistrate **Richard Page**
  - h. Kentucky clerk **Kim Davis** - who was sentenced to gaol!
  - i. **Steve Tourloukis** - parental rights over own child's education
3. We were aware of all these cases and there were many others. Long story short, the Australian postal survey result was 61.6% "Yes" and 38.4% "No" to the simple question<sup>13</sup> **"Do you think the law should be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry?"** Voter participation was 79.5%.
4. During the campaign the Prime Minister had reassured voters that the sky had not fallen in elsewhere and that he cared more about religious freedom than same-sex marriage. The campaigners for same-sex marriage constantly reassured voters that there would be **no effect on anyone's freedoms**, just that gay people would be allowed to marry.
5. To the PM's credit, he established a Religious Freedom Review panel chaired by the Hon Philip Ruddock, former Federal Attorney General, and it comprises former Federal Court judge Annabelle Bennett <sup>14</sup>, Human Rights Commissioner Rosalind Croucher, Constitutional Law Professor Nicholas Aroney (UQ), and Jesuit priest and academic Fr Frank Brennan. So it is a high-powered panel and we are **hoping** for great understanding and good outcomes.

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<sup>10</sup> Gareth Lee v Ashers Baking Co Ltd and Colin McArthur and Karen McArthur 19/5/2015

<sup>11</sup> In the Matter of MELISSA and AARON KLEIN dba Sweetcakes by Melissa Case Nos. 44-14 & 45-14 Final Order of Commissioner Brad Avakian Issued July 3, 2015

<sup>12</sup> Chris & Nang Maj, URLoved Photography.com 2014 & Elane Photography case

<sup>13</sup> The survey returned 7,817,247 (61.6%) "Yes" responses and 4,873,987 (38.4%) "No" responses. An additional 36,686 (0.3%) responses were unclear and the total turnout was 12,727,920 (79.5%).

<sup>14</sup> (married to David Bennett, former Cth Solicitor-General and NSW Bar President)

Submissions were open over the Christmas break and closed on 14 Feb - Valentine's Day, and the Panel is now travelling around doing hearings. I spoke to them on 15<sup>th</sup> Feb at Notre Dame University in Sydney. **Our position is – in an absolute nutshell - basically that the people who voted 'No' are still entitled to have their religious freedom protected, as it is a human right, and that many people who voted 'Yes' did so in the belief that it would not curtail any of their rights and freedoms**, that the only change would be that same-sex couples could now get married. This is, after all, exactly what the Marriage Equality campaigners told the public during the campaign, and it was what was reassured to them by the Prime Minister. The Panel reports to government on 31 March 2018.

6. The work being done *now* by Marriage Alliance is to ensure we don't lose our freedoms. We (my team and I) included a few key recommendations, and these were based upon what we had experienced in Australia, and what we knew was happening overseas.
  - a. a Catholic Archbishop (Julian Porteous)
  - b. our MA meeting at the Mercure Hotel
  - c. Coopers' Brewery were boycotted
  - d. Tennis champion Margaret Court was harassed
  - e. GP Pansy Lai had her registration as a GP threatened
  - f. Mark Allaby, an IBM executive – pressured
  - g. Steven Chavura, a lecturer at Macquarie Uni - similarly pressured
  - h. ACL head office in Canberra, van full of exploding Gas bottles

There were other instances also.

7. What it signified to us is that *despite campaign assurances*, there would be no tolerance of difference of opinion or belief, and that protections would definitely be needed.
8. Our submission makes the point that religious freedom is a basic human right, one that is acknowledged in international covenants to which Australia is a party. We also noted that protecting this freedom by apologetic gestures ie only via exemptions in anti-discrimination law, was ***not good enough***. We made the following recommendations:
  - a. ***That Parliament enshrine even civil marriage celebrants' conscience rights as permanent and timeless.***
  - b. ***That Parliament enact legislation to recognise the right of parents to educate their children in accordance with their beliefs. (Btw, this is a right articulated in 18(4) of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights – the ICCPR – and Australia has ratified this Covenant)***
  - c. ***That Parliament enact legislation to uphold freedom of thought, conscience and religion (article 18), and the related freedoms of expression (article 19) and association (article 21).***
  - d. ***That Commonwealth legislation protecting freedom of thought, conscience and religion and belief cover the field so that state anti-discrimination laws do not violate these freedoms.***
  - e. ***Anti-detriment provisions be enacted to protect organisations from discriminatory government treatment, for example with respect to funding or charity status, due to their relevant marriage belief.***

9. We are very concerned about a number of things including the ability of religious institutions to ensure that their facilities are used in accordance with their beliefs;
  - a. The impact on the rights of religious institutions to set up and run faith-based charities, hospitals, schools and adoption agencies in accordance with their convictions;
  - b. The concern that charities which express a traditional view of marriage will lose their charitable status at law, as has occurred in other common law jurisdictions; and
  - c. The need for further legal reform arising as a result of what has happened elsewhere.
10. We also made the point that there are a number of activities which are permitted by law in Australia but which do not require condoning nor participation by others: Gambling, the consumption of alcohol and now, same-sex marriage, are examples.
11. It is a great worry that Freedom of religion, and freedom of speech, are *both* being gradually eroded in Australia.<sup>15</sup> And it is not all related to LGBTIQ matters, although that has provided another vehicle for it. The misguided have been falsely asserting “offence” as the reason for banning traditional Australian cultural practices such as nativity scenes in shopping centres and Christmas pageants in schools – *to remove these from public consciousness and children’s school memories* - of serious nature also, is the requirement (in Victoria) forcing doctors to refer healthy pregnant women with viable in-utero babies to abortionists - against the doctors’ consciences, and now of course in Victoria they have legalised euthanasia, as well as mandated the appalling ‘Safe Schools’ programme – which is causing gender-confusion problems and sexually-inappropriate behaviour amongst children already.
12. The next critical wave of encroachment on freedom is via the vehicle of transgenderism. Let me explain.
13. Words are powerful and “marriage” is a word which has a particular meaning. It has positive cachet built up over thousands of years. Marketers and linguistic scholars know the worth and power of words. Wittgenstein wrote about it. So did Stephen Poole, in his book ‘Unspeak’. So did Orwell. *He who controls language, controls people*. The reason LGBTIQ activists wanted the word, to apply to their coupling which is *different*, is because the word is *powerful and has gravitas*. But the word “marriage” is taken, it means a husband and wife, and they should have found another word. It is quite artificial, what has happened – politicians have legislated to redefine a longstanding, special word.
14. As the LGBTIQ activists stripped gender from marriage, **it is now “any two people”**, *they are also stripping it from all other aspects in civil life – language, birth certificates, school education, restrooms, hospital wards, prisons and sport*. And it is creating havoc overseas, with female sportswomen having to compete with men who either have surgery - or simply identify as women - and who, like Transgender Mixed Martial Arts Fallon Fox on Tamikka Brents, smash women so badly that they get, for example, a broken eye socket and concussion.

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<sup>15</sup> It is gratifying that some wins for freedom and tradition have occurred. Westfield permits the display of nativity scenes, after feedback from shoppers and retailers. I saw in Canberra last week that the poetic words of Rudyard Kipling “Known Unto God” have not in fact been chiselled off the tomb of the Unknown Soldier. A TV Channel which had substituted “Happy Holidays” returned “Merry Christmas”, when enough viewers contacted them in disgust.

15. The word mother, *the most evocative word in the world*, is being removed from birth certificates and official documents. Already in Australia, Mothers' Day (& Fathers' Day) at some schools is being substituted for "Special Persons' Day", as I mentioned earlier.
16. Religious leaders know that respect for other faiths and cultures does not mean eradicating them. *It allows space for them*. They are NOT offended by religious expression! John Millbank in his 'Ontology of Peace' points out that peace is achieved by not domination of one over the other, but by allowing space for each other, to live alongside each other.
17. And as the widow of a friend who died recently explained to me – it is not limited to religion, ***our language*** and ***our traditions*** are being trashed.
18. This is over-reach of the highest order.
19. We watch this space and hope & pray that the Freedom Panel will do the right thing by Australian society. They have received 16 800 submissions – which to put in context – the Banking Inquiry received 350.

QUESTIONS.

## **Brexit Update**

I was in the UK in the lead-up to Brexit in about March or April of 2016 and had leaflets shoved at me every day as I walked around Richmond, pushing my newborn nephew around in his pram. I ended up stopping in at a charming bookshop and buying **Daniel Hannan**'s book "Why Vote Leave", to read whilst taking a break on one of the many wooden bench seats along the Thames, as I pushed the pram back and forth.

Daniel is a member of the European Parliament and was writing against his own interests. I had met him when he visited Australia a few years *earlier* to promote his superb book "How we Invented Freedom and Why it Matters" – which, by the way, is a great rebuttal to those who think the British colonialists gave the world nothing but disease and alcoholism.

### So what was Brexit all about?

World War II had seen the nations of Europe at each others' throats, with devastating consequences – lives decimated from bombings and starvation, families ripped apart, heritage buildings destroyed, millions of displaced people. The evil wrought by Hitler and his allies, contributed to the deaths of upwards of 50 million people.

The War was over in 1945, and by 1952 a European Court of Justice had been established... and in 1957, Belgium, France, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands and West Germany all signed the Treaty of Rome, which created the **European Economic Community (EEC)** and also established a 'Customs Union'.

The idea behind a European Communal body at all was to facilitate, throughout Europe, the *easy movement of people* seeking work or a different life experience – *easy*, due to common trade laws - to ensure free markets were maintained, and also to ensure respect for the Rule of Law and **democracy**. The sharing of common goals would *hopefully* provide a foundation for long-lasting peace.

The EU came into being firstly via The Maastricht Treaty of 1993, followed by the Lisbon Treaty of 2007. Interestingly, with its new name-change (from an "Economic Community" to a "Union"), it morphed from being an economic outfit to a political union. And with that came – you guessed it - **over-reach**. It went from being just concerned with commerce, to reaching into criminal justice, social policy, employment law, defence, foreign relations, culture, media and immigration<sup>16</sup>. It even influenced national leaders to go against their *own country's interests* for the sake of "Integration" and if they didn't kowtow, forces would move against them and lead to their ousting. Even the iron-lady Margaret Thatcher was not immune.<sup>17</sup> She described the EU in a private letter as "**contrary to British interests and damaging to our Parliamentary democracy**".<sup>18</sup> The leader of Labour's MEPs,

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<sup>16</sup> Hannan, Daniel What Next p19

<sup>17</sup> George Papandreou and Silvio Berlusconi were removed in civilian putsches, according to Hannan, because they "stood in the way of the European project"

<sup>18</sup> Letter to Sir Bill Cash MP <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/politics/margaret-thatcher/12151483/A-private-letter-written-by-Margaret-Thatcher-reveals-she-would-have-campaigned-for-Brexit-claims-Euro-sceptic-MP.html>

David Martin, declared: “Let’s stop defending, pretending and apologising. A socialist superstate is precisely what we want to create.”<sup>19</sup>

In 2002, euro banknotes and coins replaced national currencies and now the Eurozone encompasses 19 countries. The eurosceptic Tory MPs stopped the British pound from being scrapped for the Euro, which came to look rather a smart move as Portugal, Ireland, Italy, Greece and Spain - all EU member states - ***had debt crises*** and were unable to refinance their government debt – or bail out banks - and had lost the ability to manipulate their own currencies as a method of rescuing themselves.

The EU now has 28 member states (it will have 27, once the UK departs).

Members of the EU Parliament are voted upon. However, it was a controversial and ironic scenario, because despite the *requirement* for member states to be *democracies*, the edicts of the EU often *overrode* the democratic parliaments of the Member States, even though the subject-matter they were decreeing upon was *far beyond* the original reach and purpose of the EU. Various EU Court judgements have established EU's law superiority over national law, and this was affirmed in a declaration attached to the Treaty of Lisbon (and a proposed “European Constitution” would have fully enshrined this – but they did not get such a Constitution because it was rejected by Dutch and French voters).

### **So if the EU was such a good idea, why Leave? (Or Why “Brexit”, as it is called.)**

Let me give a summary from the Brexiteers’ perspective, which is essentially as follows:

The EU is a scam. It sucks up money. It is a bloated outfit full of overpaid public servants and MPs who were voted in with less than 40% of the voters participating. It is anti-democratic, it mostly bypasses the UK Parliament with ***directives*** even as to controlling what power maximum your *household appliances are allowed to be!* It forces the British to contribute enormous amounts of money, *some* of which comes back - for example to the Universities - but which largesse is then credited to the EU, rather than the British taxpayer.

The PM at the time, David Cameron, for a supporter of ‘Remain’ did a (strangely) woeful job of defending ‘Remain’, and reportedly *didn’t* strike any major bargains for the UK *if they remained*. He was beaten in both the conviction and charisma stakes by Nigel Farage of the Conservative fringe party UKIP, and Boris Johnson who supported ‘Brexit’.

Brexit was voted for overwhelmingly by the British voters: the voter turnout was an impressive 72.2% of the voluntary-voting electorate, and 51.9% of those participating voters, voted to leave the EU. It was more than the British had ever voted on anything, ***ever!*** [*This is quite extraordinary and something that Harriet Harman, Former Deputy Leader of the British Labour Party who appeared on our ABC’s QandA on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> Feb this year should’ve – but didn’t - appreciate. She basically said the people got it wrong and what a shame we can’t override democracy! She also thought David Cameron was stupid to let the people have a say at all! Interestingly, many people voted Brexit because they were sick of pompous politicians.*]

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<sup>19</sup> Hannan p22

The UK is thus due to leave the EU on 29 March 2019!

David Cameron obviously looked down the barrel of the shemozzle that Brexit would bring, in the disentanglement process, and departed, leaving it all up to Theresa May, who had also been a 'Remain' supporter. But to her credit, she said 'Brexit means Brexit' and set about implementing Article 50 of the Treaty of the EU, which states: "Any Member State may decide to withdraw from the Union in accordance with its own constitutional requirements."

No member state has ever withdrawn from the EU before.

Am indebted for the Brexit update material to Matthew Elliott, my British associate whom I met in 2015 and who was closely involved in the Brexit process. He has a website called **BrexitCentral.com**.

His summary<sup>20</sup> is as follows: There is much to celebrate. Parliament voted to trigger Article 50 with a majority of 372 out of the 650 MPs, with the Bill surviving numerous attempts to attach amendments to it. The formal process of the UK leaving the European Union began on 29th March last year [2017], when Sir Tim Barrow delivered Theresa May's letter triggering Article 50 to **European Council President Donald Tusk**.

In June 2017's snap UK General Election, ***85 per cent of voters voted for parties pledging to respect the referendum result and leave the single market and Customs Union.***"

One Liberal Democrat even tried to get an amendment calling for a *second* referendum – this was defeated by 296 votes, with a mere 23 MPs voting in favour of it.

To my onlooker's view, this is the height of arrogance – the people have to keep voting until they yield a different result!?!

**Matthew Elliott** concludes: "...we can look back on 2017 as the year in which the UK officially announced its decision to regain its **full independence** and we successfully started out on the path towards *standing on our own two feet on the world stage once again.*"

My own final 'take' on Brexit is taken from **Daniel Hannan's new book "What Next"** which says basically that Brexit was about **more than** just too many immigrants, too much welfare, too high taxes, too many edicts, and haughty MPs, (*although these were all important factors* :), there were important benefits to be gained such as improved democracy, bilateral trade agreements with other countries such as India, Australia and China, and a return of self-rule.

He regarded three areas as being of key consideration:

1. Maintaining good relationships with the remaining 27 EU nations
2. Managing the relationship of the UK with the rest of the world
3. Domestic Reform – the threats to democracy in the UK which come from *lobbying and corporate control.*

The predictions were that the UK would go into recession (it hasn't) that there would be World War Three in Europe (this is not being seriously considered - in that region at least ;).

Hannan gives a number of recommendations for what should happen now, and the first one is that the UK should gain supremacy over its own laws.

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<sup>20</sup> <http://brexitcentral.com/ignore-naysayers-babble-bright-brexit-future-britain/>

By the way, I spoke to a few legal practitioners who are more involved and expert in the EU topic than I am, and I asked them what was the best reason “to Remain and their best argument was “for Britain to have a seat at the table”. Why Britain can’t still exert influence without all the downsides of being in the EU, escapes me. It seems that Britain was being **over-ridden**, whilst having “a seat at the table”!<sup>21</sup>

I also spoke with an academic who works in the EU, who put me onto a book by Victoria Martin de la Torre called: Europe, a Leap into the Unknown: A Journey Back in Time to Meet the Founders of the European Union, which travels back in time to its foundation and we learn why the EU was formed by discussions with the protagonists of the time.

It is interesting to see what the *hopes* were – in much the same way that *hopes were very high for the UN when it was formed*, the lead-up thinking for which is detailed in a “World Made New” by MaryAnn Glendon (& Glendon’s book I do recommend.) If I could give the thinking behind the EU, it was, according to the gist of Martin De La Torre’s book, about tearing down borders, and uniting people who had suffered in an horrific war. It was perceived that nationalism had led to war and atrocities, and the EU would dismantle nationalism. The book’s foreword credits the prosperity of Europe to the EU. The book does give important insights into the emotions and diverse personalities of the time. From this perspective, where people and their national leaders could justifiably feel intense feelings of grief, rage and even revenge about the recent war, the EU arguably represented a remarkable act of forgiveness and an optimistic look into the future.

The main fault became its over-reach and its undermining of sovereignty. Over-reach is where many relationships come unstuck.

In finishing the Brexit Update, I want to draw your attention to **Professor Robert Tombs** who is visiting Australia at present, as a guest of the Institute of Public Affairs and is speaking in Sydney on 22 March. Professor Tombs is a fellow of St John’s College at the University of Cambridge. He was one of very few historians in Cambridge who spoke out publicly in favour of Brexit. Professor Tombs co-founded an academic website, ***Briefings for Brexit.***

Thank you!

{QUESTIONS.}

***Sophie York’s views expressed in this address are her own and are not given in any representative capacity of any outfit.***

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<sup>21</sup> {Interestingly, the level of foreign direct investment in Australia from the UK is 67.9 billion, one of the highest and higher than China at 41 billion, according to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2016 figures), so there is clearly a healthy, happening relationship between our countries, despite it getting little media attention.}