

AC PAPER NO. 4: EVIDENCE OF UNIVERSAL (BOTH SIDES) SUPPORT FOR CIVICS EDUCATION

- Also supported by 2 Senate reports

- **Her Excellency Ms Quentin Bryce AC, Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia** said:
I believe it is equally important to have a fundamental understanding of the Constitution and our democratic processes.
(Speech to ACM Luncheon, 30 August 2011.)
- **Major –General Michael Jeffery, AC CVO MC (Rtd), former Governor-General of the Commonwealth of Australia** wrote:
I firmly believe that all Australians, young and old, those born here and those who have come from other lands, should have a broad understanding of the system of government that has made our country one of the most successful democracies in the world. (Cefa 2005)
- (**M**) From a brochure of the **Australian Republican Movement**:
Aims of the Australian Republican Movement.....We are committed to.....encouraging greater understanding of Australia’s Constitution and the system of government.
- From a brochure of ACM’s **The Crowned Republic** (<http://www.crownedrepublic.com.au/>) initiative: *
In an attempt to fill this gap [in Australian Civics understanding], The Crowned Republic has been established to provide students, immigrants and all interested Australians an understanding of the Australian constitutional system.
- (**M**) The republican-instigated 2004 Report of **Senate’s Legal and Constitutional References Committee** *The Road to a Republic* recommendations inter alia on pp. 134-136 STRONGLY supporting Civics Education.
- (**M**) The republican-instigated 2008 Senate Inquiry **Plebiscite for an Australian Republic Bill 2008** No. 1 recommendation (6.5) was “*the establishment of an ongoing public awareness campaign on Australia’s constitutional system which engages as wide a range of the public as possible.*”
- “*I agree that an informed and educated public is of the utmost importance.*” (David Kirk, former CEO of Fairfax Media Ltd., Letter 16 May 2008)
- “*For a genuine democracy to be satisfied, the voter must be in a position to cast an informed vote.*” (John Hartigan (CEO of News Ltd.) *The Australian* 14-15 March, 2009)
- “*The key to restoring faith in our democracy is ensuring that Australians understand it.*” (Malcolm Turnbull *Fighting for the Republic* (Sydney: Hardie Grant, 1999; at p. ix.)
- (**M**) **Malcolm Turnbull**, former ARM Leader, in *Fighting the Republic* (Hardie Grant Books, 1999) wrote: on p. viii “*I believe that any money spent informing Australians about their Constitution and their system of government is money well spent*” and on p. 14 “*It is almost impossible to consider amending the Constitution if you do not understand how it currently works.*”
Meanwhile, in *The Reluctant Republic* (Sydney: William Heinemann, 1993), he wrote on p. 10 “*Australian governments, both state and federal and of all political complexions, have failed to provide proper instruction about our system of government, our Constitution and its history.*”
- (**M**) **Mr Greg Barns**, Former Chair of ARM
“*The fault lies with government that, over many years, have failed to educate Australians from an early age about how our system of government works.*”
- *The Australian*, 10 July 2000.
- (**M**) **Hon. Peter Garrett AM MP**
“*The National Schools’ Constitutional Convention seeks to promote understanding and informed discussion amongst young Australians about the Australian Constitution and system of government. Its ... aims are: - 1. To promote an opportunity for senior students to explore constitutional issues.*”
– 16th National Schools Constitutional Convention *Communique* (sponsored by Schools Minister Peter Garrett AM.)

- (**M**) From Australian Labor Party Draft Chapter 11 of Draft 2009 National Platform:

Respect for the Constitution:

Through citizenship education and lifelong learning, Labor is committed to empowering Australians to understand the operations of our system of government. (<http://www.alp.org.au/platform/chapter11.php>)

Update re above: “*... Independent academic standards could be at risk following a buried budget decision to cut funding [by \$18m - ed] for the Australian Learning and Teaching Council...*” – Stephen Matchett “*Standards at risk after budget cut*” *The Australian*, 19 May 2010.

*AC encourages full support of ACM’s *Crowned Republic* project, as it is the most extensive initiative for Australian Civics Education around..

M Seemingly “motherhood” words. ACM alone of the above is giving effect to them.