

Comment by Michael C H Jones
29th July 2013

One of the fundamental mistakes made by all sides of whatever ideological and/or theological hue in Australian politics, certainly in my lifetime and running up to this years Federal Election, is not listening/reading carefully the views of other sides - there are so many factions and sub-factional groups today that the major parties are merely broad churches for all sorts of contradictory and conflicting ideas.

The broad Left for example failed to comprehend the Peacock/Howard debates of the 1980s - there were a plethora of books, my old debating team mate at Manly Boys High, Senator Chris Puplick, very early wrote one of them opposing Howard's ideas.

Chris Puplick and R.J. Southey, 1980, *Liberal Thinking*, Macmillan, Melbourne.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chris_Puplick

That failure meant that Howard was never really understood until it was too late and we got from 1996 12 years of him - PM Paul Keating, too smart by half, and everyone else under-estimated Howard who just hung in there. We shall see whether or not that is the case with Kevin Rudd, Gillard was terminated after a bitter three year struggle, Abbott may go down for the count in three months?

But the reason for this Comment is the David Flint Monarchists.

Now lets get the record straight which means owning up. I have always been a Republican - in the 1960s I never sang 'God Save the Queen' and seldom stood up in picture shows and the like for that so-called national anthem. My partner even horrified all by twice, not once, refusing to courtesy to the Queen at the NSW State Parliament, obviously completely embarrassing her State Minister husband - although he did storm the Britannica with his uninvited mother in tow for a Royal function. The royalty nonsense has never been for us, even though we readily admit that the best political operator in the world today is Her Royal Highness, the Queen of England, Australia and the rest.

So we were all appalled at the Malcolm Turnbull led, Neville Wran backed, Referendum shenanigans that caused over 60% of the Australian people who wanted a Republic to lose - that was a real triumph of progressive unity. In 1999 Prime Minister John Howard got about 15/20% of Republicans to support him in voting No.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Australian_republic_referendum,_1999

Now we again enter the political twilight zone. If Rudd wins the yet to be announced Federal Election later this year the legacy of Howard goes with Abbott and most likely there will be the return of the brilliant strategist Turnbull, the man who has made a career from politically losing. But if Abbott wins Turnbull and his 'libertarians' will be marginalised and the Man, with Pell and Santamaria bookends, will bring the David Flint Monarchists to center stage, so we had better understand their views. Hence the publication launched this month "Give us back our Country"

http://www.connorcourt.com/catalog1/index.php?main_page=product_info&cPath=7&products_id=254#.UfSznaw9Xag

I have been most interested in the reviews, particularly in last Saturday's 27th Sydney Telegraph Mirror where a full page gave a very good outline of its contents, direction and purpose. I was surprised and immediately sought to purchase a copy at my local lower North Shore bookshop - they had not heard of it and therefore did not stock it. I placed an order. Naturally I googled and was reassured about Right wing "thinkers' by this:

<http://candoaust.uservoice.com/forums/144621-campaign-suggestions/suggestions/4108495-candoers-support-the-marvellous-give-us-back-ou>

Yet from the reviews, and I agree this is dangerous territory, I was eerily conscious of debates and thinking during the 1970s about UN Commissions on Transnational Corporations, and Industrial Democracy in Sweden and Germany

<http://www.unhistory.org/briefing/17TNCs.pdf>

http://www.conservapedia.com/Industrial_Democracy

Indeed even the US military was thinking about the concepts of Industrial Democracy -

<http://www.airpower.au.af.mil/airchronicles/aureview/1977/sep-oct/broedling.html>

From my experience the Australian Trade Union Movement like their US brothers were dead against it. I sat for five years re 1966-71 on Sydney's NSW Labor's Left-wing Steering Committee - I can close my eyes and name the men and their unions - and Participatory Democracy re one element being Industrial Democracy was not on the agenda, and certainly not when Bob Hawke became ACTU President in late 1969. Allowing people to have a direct say in the decisions that affect their lives was definitely not co-sure.

Yet now we have the Conservatives, the Tories, the Monarchists talking about these things - yes different names and descriptions but still the same concepts and ingredients. Obviously they are all communists and no doubt secret files will one day be released showing that they were and are agents of the Soviet KGB and successor Russian intelligence organisations. Wilfred Burchett and Robert Manne where are you?

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/features/his-paymasters-voice-sets-record-straight-on-wilfred-burchett/story-e6frg6z6-1226686454618>

Peoples' self-serving abilities never cease to amaze me.

As my dad always said: "If you stand on the street corner longer enough the world will pass you by several times - times change, people don't".