

GREEN ISSUE

NEWSLETTER OF



NOVEMBER 1997

GREENING THE REPUBLIC

By Jo Vallentine & Robin Chapple

Very soon, Australians will have an historic opportunity to create the kind of country we want for the twenty first century.

You will be asked to vote for representatives to go to a Constitutional Convention to begin the process of making important decisions about a Republic, and hopefully a new Constitution for Australia.

This chance is not to be missed by people who want to see Australia shape its future towards social justice, particularly with genuine respect for Aboriginal people, plus care for the environment.

It is important that we exercise our choices in finding representatives who will strongly represent a Republican view, and a view about a just society, stated in a new Constitution.

In the 1890 s when Australia first seriously thought about independence from England, the Fathers of the Australian Federation (there were no women representatives in those days!) had a vision which reflected their social and political interests.

We now need to think about our vision for the future.

Becoming a Republic is about a lot more than a head of state. It is about making our belief in "a fair go" part of the legal framework of our nation, for all Australians, of all races, to enjoy.

It's also about making sure that we are truly independent of foreign powers, whilst being responsible global citizens.

This means looking after our environment. It means caring for all our people, especially taking into account the needs of women, children, the elderly and disadvantaged groups.

A green constitution would be a compassionate one, with justice for everyone.

We live in a relative democracy - it is important that we exercise our choice by voting for representatives who will strongly present the case for a Green Republic.



The Means or the Ends of Constitutional Change?

By Senator Dee Margetts

The Prime Minister clearly does not want a republic. He certainly is not keen on any debate about wider Constitutional reform. The Constitutional Convention has been set up to try to control and restrict debate - all the more reason to green the agenda!

When it comes to Constitutional change, even minimal Constitutional change, the means are at least as important as the ends, and that is why I voted against the flawed format and voluntary voting methods in the Senate.

This Constitutional Convention nevertheless represents an opportunity. Make the most of it. The Republic is inevitable but simply changing the Head of State without carefully considering the Constitutional context may advance us no further.

The Australian Constitution is a blueprint for how laws can be made. It is therefore more powerful than any particular legislation.

What is important for Australians heading into a new Century? Does the current structure of Australian Government meet the changing needs of the Australian community?

If we wish to live in a truly democratic society, we require a Constitution which guarantees self determination for indigenous Australians, ecological sustainability, basic human rights and community participation in decision making.

Now is the time to have your say.

The middle page of this newsletter can be detached and photocopied.

Please distribute.

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About Green Issue

Green Issue is the Newsletter of the Greens (WA) which is produced 8-12 times a year. This is a special Constitutional Convention issue and has been distributed free to Green supporters .

If you wish to receive Greens Issue, the annual subscription is \$20, please contact the office for details.

This edition was produced by Karl Haynes with the assistance of the Federal Election Campaign Working Group.

DISCLAIMER

The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the producer(s) of this newsletter or The Greens (WA)inc.

DEADLINE : GREEN ISSUE NOVEMBER 24th.

Submissions welcome. Contact

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Karl 9472 1913

submissions on disk appreciated

Remember WE'VE MOVED

Please note the contact details for new office.

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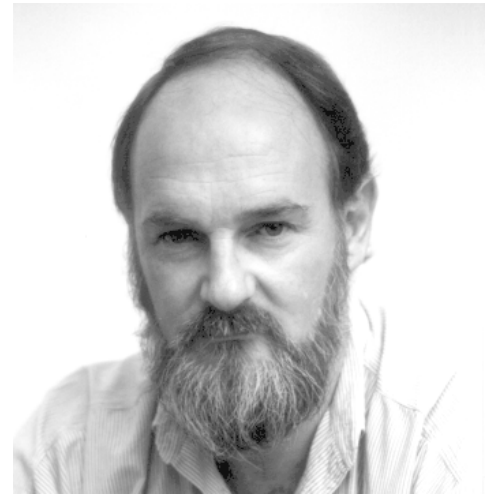
Our Parliamentarians' offices need a continuous supply of A4 white paper used on one side.

Electoral comment authorised by Karl Haynes, Carlisle, on behalf of the Federal Election Campaign Working Group, Printed ASAP, Victoria Park,

For a Green Republic Vote



Jo Vallentine



Robin Chapple

The Greens (WA) stand for a Republican Australia, independent of any foreign power. We promote a fresh Constitution which guarantees:

- **A Bill of Rights to protect the liberties of all Australians**
- **Self-determination for Indigenous Australians**
- **Care for the Earth**
- **Community involvement in decision making**
- **Respect for all Cultures**

The Greens believe that Australian people should decide the method of choosing the Head of State.

Our primary candidate, Jo Vallentine, is a former Greens Federal Senator and a long time community worker for social change.

Robin Chapple is an environmental consultant and an advocate for social justice and a sustainable future.

Make sure there are Green voices to represent your views at the Constitutional Convention in Canberra next February.

Vote for Vallentine & Chapple

*By postal ballot
Deadline December 9th*

POWER TO THE PEOPLE

FOR A GREEN REPUBLIC

The Greens (WA) is the only political party in Western Australia which has formally supported the proposal for an Australian Republic.

We believe that the Constitutional Convention should only BEGIN the process by which a decision is made on choosing a Head of State.

How this should be done is an issue which should go back to the community. We want to return the power to the people.

There should be a series of community meetings around the country for people to have their say. The Greens (W.A.) representatives will push for a properly funded, well advertised series of consultations to take place, in a set timetable, so that all interested Australians can be heard.

Such a model exists in the process used for the Commission on Government (COG) in W.A.

And on the subject of a NEW CONSTITUTION

There was a broad ranging Constitutional Review Commission several years ago, which came up with many good ideas. The recommendations need to be reviewed, to ensure that they reflect the spirit of the nineties.

Again, this matter should be put to the people, in a timetable suggested by the Constitutional Convention. Representatives for The Greens (W.A.) will recommend a BILL OF RIGHTS, which includes protecting the civil rights of all members of our community, and caring for all people with equity and compassion. Basic to our place in the world as a nation of fair-minded people, is our concern for real justice and self determination for Aboriginal Australians, which includes Native Title to land.

We want a fresh Constitution which states clearly that Australia should care for its environment, and which recognises our global obligations to co-operate with other nations in the struggle for clean air, clean waters and clean soil for future generations to enjoy.

YOUR CANDIDATES FOR A GREEN REPUBLIC

JO VALLENTINE

Jo has been an enthusiastic Republican since her school days. She has been a keen advocate for peace, social justice and care of the environment for many years.

Speaking out for what she passionately believes has been a strong feature of Jo Vallentine's community involvement, whether in groups working towards Aboriginal land rights, abolition of nuclear weapons, an Australia free of military ties with other countries, conservation of natural heritage, or facilitating empowerment workshops with prisoners.

Having been a founding member of The Greens (W.A.) and the first Green Senator in Australia, Jo has had experience in promoting progressive causes, which will be put to good use in the Constitutional Convention.

ROBIN CHAPPLE

In the early 60's Robin worked in the Stock Exchange of London. In the late 60's and early 70's he trained in automotive engineering with the NZ McClaren Racing team. He moved to Australia in the mid-seventies, working through the Northern Territory on various Aboriginal Communities, before moving to Western Australia.

Robin had the privilege of being a Port Hedland Town Councillor for seven years, retiring in May 1993. He served as a delegate to both the West Australian Municipal Association and the Country Shire Councils Association.

In 1988, Robin chaired the North West Games (established 1985), the largest regional games ever held in Australia encompassing 12 shires of the North West over an area of 1,036,000sq/km.

His business, "Chapple Research" was established in 1993 out of the need to provide to an impartial environmental/social impact consultancy to communities, local authorities and local industry.

The Constitutional Convention - What's it all about ?

The Constitutional Convention Election is for voters to elect 76 delegates Nationwide to attend the Constitutional Convention. It is to be held on the 2nd to the 6th of February 1998 to discuss issues relating to whether or not Australia should become a Republic.

In addition to the elected delegates, the Federal Government has also appointed a further 76 delegates, made up of 40 politicians from Federal, State and Territory Parliaments and 36 non-parliamentary representatives.

Between the 3rd and 14th of November voting material will be mailed to all eligible voters. This material will enable you to choose 9 delegates to represent your views on the Constitutional Convention. All Ballots must be returned by mail to the Australian Electoral Commission and received by 6pm on the 9th of December 1997.

The Convention will provide a forum for debate about:

- Whether the present Constitution should be changed so that Australia might become a republic with its own Head of State;
- What republican models should be put to the voters of Australia as elements of the choice between the present system and a new system;
- The timeframe and the appropriate circumstances for considering change.



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Funds urgently needed!

As you can imagine, running a campaign for a Green Republic is not a cheap exercise. Therefore, the Greens(WA) is appealing to all our supporters for donations to cover the costs of the campaign.

So if you can help with a donation, no matter how small, please complete the response section below.

I wish to donate \$.....to the Greens(WA) being for:-

- The Campaign for a Green Republic
- Federal Election Campaign Fund
- General Donation

Please find enclosed a cheque or money order or

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**Please send to the Greens(WA)
PO Box 737
Victoria Park
WA 6979**

Greens (WA) Special General Meeting & End of year party

3pm onwards

Saturday 29 November

at the "NEW" Greens(WA) Office

A ballot was held in August to obtain members' approval to alter our Constitution. The result was in the affirmative. There are two final stages to complete.

Approval from the Minister for Fair Trading is expected shortly. Secondly, we must (according to our Constitution) hold a Special General Meeting in order to finalise the approved Changes.

So Why not have a party as well! Party begins at 4:30pm

So numbers of people attending are known for catering reasons

RSVP by 24th November, call Catherine at the office.

We would like to hear your views on issues for the Federal election and beyond.

A federal election could be held at any time during 1998. Public confidence in the major parties and their policies is at an all-time low. The present system is failing the aspirations of people and communities. They are searching for new ideas.

Please send us your response to the questions below.

1. What do you see as the key issues:
a) in the community? b) for the Greens? c) for you personally?
2. What information or explanations do you want or need on policy issues?
3. In what way do you think the Greens can make a special contribution?
4. Have you any other comments or ideas?
5. Would you like to participate in workshops? Specify you main interest areas.

Try and keep your response to about one page, headed Policy Questionnaire. Forward to the Greens(WA) at:-

PO Box 737 Victoria Park WA 6979

Fax 08 9470 9537 or E-mail GreensWA@argo.net.au

Economic Policy Working Group

Policy Workshop

Greens on Tax Reform

Saturday 22 November 1997

10am to 3pm

Greens (WA) Office

4/439-441 Albany Hwy

Victoria Park

Major tax reform is inevitable following the High Court's decision that State excise taxes are unconstitutional.

- *A goods and services tax?*
- *What functions should each tier of government have?*
- *What taxing powers should the three tiers of government have?*
- *What is a Green Tax strategy?*

Background papers available from the Greens(WA) office from 7 November.

Phone 08 9470 9227

Fax 08 9470 9537

Bring your own lunch, tea and coffee provided

If undelivered please return to:
**THE GREENS (WA) PO Box 737,
VICTORIA PARK 6979**

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