

The Republican Movement of Aotearoa New Zealand

R e p u b l i c

newsletter
jan-feb 2002

Queen confronted by Monarchy Free Zone

THE Republican Movement's new Monarchy Free Zone message will be one of the memories Queen Elizabeth takes home from New Zealand.

The campaign to have Kiwis declare their homes and communities Monarchy Free will be launched on the Queen's arrival, on February 22.

Over the past two years the Republican Movement has consistently pushed for a republic and has provided a public information service.

President Dave Guerin said the time had come to get all New Zealanders into the debate.

"New Zealand was the first country in the world to declare itself a nuclear free zone, which made waves on the world stage. Now it's time to act locally and give a Kiwi the chance to gain the top job as our head of state," he said.

The Republican Movement will be making the logo available to all republican supporters through its web site at www.republic.org.nz, and will produce a range of branded materials.

"With all due respect to the Queen, we can probably assume that she will be the last monarch of New Zealand to set foot here. And this is a way we can all celebrate it," Guerin said.

"I'm one of the lucky few republicans who has been able to put across his views in public. Now all of my fellow republicans will have a chance to show where they stand, by declaring their space a Monarchy Free Zone.

"People can declare their home or their car to be a Monarchy Free Zone at first, but we look forward to local bodies establishing such zones in the future.

"This is a chance for Kiwis to stake out their own ground, not leave it up to others."



Republic on agenda after election

MOVING to a referendum on becoming a republic is understood to be one of the Government's priorities if re-elected this year.

The Labour-Alliance government of republican-minded prime minister Helen Clark has already abolished knighthoods, and has moved towards dispensing with appeals to the Privy Council in London.

And political analyst Colin James noted in the New Zealand Herald that examining the symbols that New Zealand projects as a nation is a second-term challenge for Clark.

"She has made nation-building a defining theme of her prime ministership, which is partly why she champions the arts, sporting achievement and innovation," he said.

"A door is opening. A bill to abolish appeals to the Privy Council is likely to reach Parliament this year, though it may not become law for a year or two ... Clark is wary of stirring the republican pot by touching other symbols. But if abolishing the Privy Council is her endpoint, her claim to be a nation-building prime minister will be unconvincing."

spoken

"The New Zealand monarchy ... is broken. It is broken in this important sense: that it is one of a raft of wrong symbols ... Why should foreigners take us seriously when we don't have our own name, head of state, flag and final court? How can we take ourselves seriously?"

¾political commentator Colin James

"It's not like the royal tour in 1963, when I remember being marched out of Epsom Girls Grammar to line Manakau Road ... It's not like that. The public interest isn't there."

¾Prime Minister Helen Clark

"Something made me suspect, early on, that I had republican inclinations. Perhaps it was the vicious pokes I got from the umbrellas of apoplectic old ladies when, in my rebellious student phase, I refused to stand for God Save the Queen at the movies."

¾NZ Herald columnist Diana Wichtel

"My own view is that the institutional base has often changed its form. Republicanism is just another change, and will not and cannot be allowed to affect the Treaty relationship."

¾public lawyer Moana Jackson

"I don't get that emotionally worked up over royal tours ... Quite keen, certainly."

¾Monarchist League chair Noel Cox

"There is no earthly reason why we should be linked to an outdated monarchy that is largely a figurehead and has no bearing on the progress of New Zealand. We are a nation in our own right."

¾YSL Beaute director Peter Fahey

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Treaty of Waitangi a critical part of republic

THERE is no conflict between the Treaty of Waitangi and becoming a republic, a high-profile Waitangi Day debate in Wellington resolved.

All seven expert speakers agreed that New Zealand can move to a republic while retaining or promoting the importance of the Treaty.

Nearly 400 people attended the public debate at Te Papa in Wellington, featuring Republican Movement president Dave Guerin.

Other speakers were Maori Land Court Chief Judge Joe Williams, Judge Carrie Wainwright, Maori Party leader Derek Fox, lawyer Donna Hall, former justice secretary Colin Keating and Te Papa historian Robyn Anderson.

All agreed that New Zealand needed

to put in some work to decide what formal role the Treaty would have in a republic.

Guerin said republicanism was about choosing the people who represent you.

"Becoming a republic is a bit like defrosting your freezer - most of us don't get around to it until we really have to. But the ice, like the monarchy, gradually makes the freezer less useful."

He argued that the Treaty was a living document, which would continue to have meaning and impact far beyond the more immediate change to a republic.

"To my mind, both parties to the Treaty have the right to determine their own decision-making structures, without reference to the other, as long as that does not have an impact on the Treaty,"

he said.

"That is why the Republican Movement emphasises in its principles that Treaty of Waitangi rights and obligations must be maintained."

He pointed to consistent polling results showing that most Maori favoured becoming a republic.

"Maori have every right to be conservative about changes that could impact on the Treaty. But once their concerns are responded to ... then there will be considerable Maori support for a republic.

"By becoming a republic you cannot dissolve your responsibilities. New Zealand will not abolish the Treaty upon becoming a republic, no more than it will default on its debts."

a royal wave, and off she goes

by Dave Guerin

WHEN the Queen comes to visit, she will not be stopping for a chat - but she will wave.

Yes, it is the first visit from our head of state for seven years, and all she will have time for is a few state dinners, and a five-minute walk-about in Auckland.

That will give a few hundred people the chance to engage in some harmless Anglophilia - they can wave their Union Jacks.

As for the rest of us, I don't think we'll be too disappointed to miss out on seeing her.

After all, there will be about 60,000 Kiwis attending Super 12 rugby games that weekend.

Another 20,000 will watch the cricket one-dayer with England.

A win over England there will mean more than the most winning airs from a visiting English aristocrat.

So we won't miss the royal wave. We'll be celebrating being New Zealanders with the Mexican wave down at the stadium.

West Coast, our newest republic

FIRST the Republic of Whangamomona, then the Okarito Free Republic. And now the West Coast has declared itself a republic.

The West Coast's free and independent spirit has been affirmed with the launch of "Republic of West Coast" numberplates.

Not that it is the greatest threat to the monarchy, with the region's local bodies describing the branding as

"purely an identity exercise" for the area.

"Saying the West Coast is a republic reminds us of our independent character and appeals to our rebellious nature, but does not challenge the Government or the monarchy," said Grey District mayor Kevin Brown.

In an unprecedented approach to republicanism, he said: "In fact, we'll be the only republic in the world with the Queen as its head of state."

Locke's republic bill heads for ballot

GREEN MP Keith Locke is preparing to put his republican referendum bill in the Parliamentary ballot.

Locke's bill would set in place a two-stage referendum - first on whether to replace the monarchy, and second on whether the new president should be directly elected or appointed or chosen by Parliament.

The bill would have to be chosen from a ballot of private members' bills before making it on to Parliament's order paper - but Locke has had a run of good luck with the ballot.

It was coincidence that the bill to end New Zealand "deference" would be completed as the Queen arrived.

"I think there is a majority of

republicans in the House," he said.

"Essentially it's a question of nationhood and the real issue is our confidence as a people, as a nation, to do things for ourselves and not be subservient or dependent on Britain."

Republican Movement president Dave Guerin said that Mr Locke's bill was a good one, and its time would come in the next few years.

"His proposal for a two-stage referendum, starting with the key decision on whether we want to be a republic, is certainly consistent with the model that we have been advocating.

Australia's republican referendum failed when voters were given the choice of monarchy or an appointed president.

