



**LA TROBE**  
UNIVERSITY

# SIR JOHN QUICK LECTURE 2017

**BIGOTRY, REFERENDA,  
PLEBISCITES, POLLS AND  
CONSCRIPTION**

**THURSDAY  
OCTOBER**

**5**

## **SPEAKER**



**The Honorable Howard Nathan** was born in South Gippsland and educated at Wesley College, Melbourne University, and London School of Economics within the University of London. An adjunct professor at La Trobe University Law School, Howard was awarded an honorary doctorate of law from La Trobe University this year.

Admitted to the Victorian Bar in 1964, Justice Nathan was appointed Queen's Counsel in 1980 and became a Supreme Court Judge in 1983, serving on the Bench for the next twenty years. He was awarded the Centennial Medal of Australia in 1989.

Alongside an eventful career and his many professional achievements, he has continued to give his time and resources at both a local and international level, including significant support of the arts within Bendigo and regional Victoria.

## **ABSTRACT**

**October 2017 marks the centenary of one of the most horrendous times in Australian history.**

More young men were slaughtered at this time than ever since. The country was rent by the most bitter and bigoted conscription for military service campaign imaginable. Bendigo was the focus of much of this bigotry, not least because the Prime Minister at the time, W.M. Hughes aka Billy, was the local member and Archbishop Daniel Mannix lectured from the nearest proximate town within his diocese, Castlemaine, to confront him.

This lecture focuses on the constitutional issues arising from the conscription referenda, although they were in fact plebiscites, and passes comment upon the recent public opinion poll concerning marriage.

It concludes these surveys undermine our parliamentary representative system of government and have unintended consequences. The constitutional history and results of both plebiscites and referenda since Federation are outlined.

Returning to bigotry, Bendigo illustrated the vileness complicit in usurping the parliamentary process and abdicating it in favour of the transitory illusion of direct public participation. This community, and indeed the whole nation, was divided by their clergies between Protestants and Catholics. Fortunately most of their adherents ignored their imprecations and the 'no' vote on conscription increased in the time between the two referenda.



## Sir John Quick

**J**ohn Quick was born in Cornwall, England in 1852. In 1854 his family migrated to Australia; his father died shortly thereafter.

At age 10 he entered the workforce, undertaking various manual jobs in mines then progressed to journalism. His drive for self improvement led him to complete a law degree at the University of Melbourne (1874-77) and in 1882 he was awarded a Doctorate in Law.

At this time, Sir John Quick was in charge of the Age Parliamentary staff. He entered politics himself in 1880, winning the Legislative Assembly seat of Sandhurst (Bendigo), which he held until 1889.

Quick's public support for Australian Federation commenced with an 1882 speech to Parliament. As a delegate from the Bendigo A.N.A., he attended the 1893 Corowa Conference where he presented the famous resolution which took Federation's fate away from Parliaments, and gave it directly to the people via elections for representatives and a referendum on the draft Constitution. He wrote the Enabling Bill needed for these stages to occur and also wrote a booklet, *A Digest of Federal Constitution* (1896), to help educate the public.

Throughout the two referenda campaigns of 1898 and 1899, he addressed numerous public meetings.

Quick's work for Federation was recognised with the award of a knighthood in 1901.

He was elected unopposed as Bendigo's first Federal M.P., holding the seat until 1913.

The Sir John Quick Bendigo Lecture has been established to revive the memory of this self-made man who had the forethought and perseverance to promote Australia's union. Quick himself referred to his long devotion to Federation as a "public duty" he had to perform. Sir John Quick deserves to be recognised as a "Father" of Australian Federation.

*Written by Michele Matthews, MA Melb, DipEd LaT*

# Sir John Quick Lecture. October 5<sup>th</sup> 2017

The Hon Howard Nathan

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This year and this month of it marks the centenary of the most dreadful month of the most dreadful year in Australian history. In October 1917, 100 years ago, 6800 young and fit Australians were slaughtered, not killed or died, but slaughtered in France and Belgium. That is 220 per day or 9.2 per hour. For every man slaughtered, two were injured. 1917 was the year in which about a third of all those killed and almost two thirds of those injured (Source Ashley Elkins, Head of Military History Section AWM). A bitter irony is that the same month Bendigo became the domestic front of another battle. Namely the second referendum/plebiscite campaign about military conscription. I canvass, happily not exhaustively, the parts played therein by two Bendigonians and a neighbour. Sir John Quick, and Billie Hughes the Prime Minister, and federal member for Bendigo, on the one hand and Archbishop Mannix as the neighbour.

This lecture will be in three parts. First, a broad-brush canvas of Australia's constitutional powers relating to referenda, and then a more elevated examination of their sources, history and composition. Secondly, a narrative of Bendigo's close association with referenda and plebiscites born as a result of having W.M. Hughes P.M. as its local federal member, and John Quick as its former member and constitution progenitor. Emphasis on the Conscription plebiscites with particular Bendigonian attention is given. Thirdly, suggestions as to methods of improving the referenda procedure, within the parameters of respect for democratic process and political feasibility. My conclusions concerning past and future constitutional developments are detailed.

1.

The Australian constitution is not the product of semi divine perspicacity, as Americans commonly believe theirs to be. Our founding fathers, no mothers attended at the birth, did not deliver any immaculately conceived document, and unlike its American forebear, it was delivered without the help of Freemasonry. It is the progeny of consummate compromisers. It emerged from the Conventions and colonial referenda, fully clothed in the deals, which had compromised the competing interests of the initial colonies, to the shared dissatisfaction of most participants, including the masterful Sir John Quick.

Sec 128 governs the referenda process to effect amendment, and Sec 51(xxi) marriage. Sec. 128 is one of the few Constitution provisions itself amended by referendum, that of 1977, which added Territorians as eligible voters. Distinction must be made between referenda and plebiscites. Referenda require a double majority that is a majority of votes in a majority of states. Since 1984 voting rather than attendance at a Polling Station is compulsory, but casting a valid vote is not. Blank or defaced voting papers do not attract a penalty. The position of Territorians is anomalous, they are not state voters but have the right as House of Representative electors to vote in referenda, but note the population of the territories now exceeds that of Tasmania, which must have, as a founding state, at least five House members. The Territories have four. The process is as follows. Both Houses must pass a Bill for a referendum. The bill must contain the terms of the proposed constitutional amendments. Special provisions relate to the circumstance should one house amend the Bill in ways which are unacceptable to the other. Those intricacies need not trouble us here. After

enactment the question framed in the initiating Bill for an Act, the bill is referred to Case Committees. These are comprised of a majority of members who voted Yes and No for the proposal. The committees are responsible for preparing the case information or arguments as to the merits or demerits of the proposed change(s). The next step is for the Governor-General to issue the Writ for the referendum, which must be held not before two months or after six months from the date of the Bill passing. The Electoral Commission then distributes the Case Committees printed arguments to all electors after which, and on a Saturday, the proposal must be put to a national vote. Voters must write Yes or No to each proposal, framed, as a question e.g. Are you in favour of. The answers, which achieve the required majorities, are then assented to by the Governor-General and become part of the formal constitution (most of the procedure is governed by the Referendum (Mechanical Provisions) Act, 1984.

Plebiscites are not referred to in the constitution at all. Australia has conducted three such polls of which much more lately. Plebiscites are questions on an issue of national concern which a government or parliament may adjudge should be tested in the public arena. Some states have conducted plebiscites for example about drinking hours, religion in schools, daylight saving or local government amalgamations. Enabling legislation empowers the Electoral Commission to conduct such nationwide polls. The results do not bind the state governments. Any such national plebiscites do not require the referenda majorities, the results do not bind the federal parliament to act.

We have recently been asked to voluntarily participate in the largest, most expensive taxpayer funded public opinion poll, not only in Australian history but my research indicates, in the world. The subject is about Marriage, clearly a Commonwealth power (Sec 51(palicta xxi) invested at Federation without dissent, in the national parliament. I cannot find another example where this device has been used in any democratic western country. Whatever the result of this Poll, it cannot bind the parliament to accept it. All the present government has said is that it will facilitate the introduction of a private members Bill to reflect any positive result. The whole poll process is indeterminate and novelty will not cure it.

Australia has endured; the word is more apt than any Quick would have chosen, 44 referenda, on 17 occasions, only 8 of which, on 4 occasions, have passed. We have more than endured; suffered would be a better word, 3 national plebiscites. Two, those in 1916 and 1917 about Conscription for overseas military service albeit commonly referred to as referenda, but were in fact, plebiscites. Another voluntary plebiscite was held in 1977 to choose from four options which song would become our national anthem. Advance Australia Fair topped the charts ahead of Waltzing Matilda.

There is no nutrition in attempting to distil consistency in referenda results. Only one achievement worth applause was the ballot of May 1967, which enabled the Commonwealth to enact laws for Aboriginal people by removing the restriction against counting them as part of the population. It was carried in all states and by a national Yes vote of over 90%. Note the question had both a positive and negative aspect. Positive in that enabled, and negative in that it removed a discriminatory provision. At the same time as the "Aboriginal" referendum a second question to increase the numbers in the House of Representatives without necessarily increase the numbers in the Senate, that is break the nexus of 2:1, was lost in all states except NSW by a margin of 6 to 4.

I canvass those referenda, which have passed. That of 1906 to hold elections for both Houses concurrently, carried in all states by 83% of voters. That of 1928, to change the system of Commonwealth funding to the states and restrict their right to borrow overseas without Loan Council approval, which was carried in all states by nearly three quarters of voters. That of 1946, to give the Commonwealth power to legislate over a wide range of social services, carried in all states by almost 55% of voters. At that same referendum, two further and allied questions about the marketing of primary products and conditions of industrial employment failed, albeit receiving just over 50% support but not in a majority of states. 1977 and because of the 1975 constitutional debacle, aka The Dismissal, three referenda questions were answered affirmatively. The first dealt with filling casual vacancies in the Senate with a person of the same party as the vacating one, the second allowing Territorians to vote in referenda, the third to set retiring ages for Federal judges, previously appointed for life, the no more McTiernans provision. Majorities of 73 to 80% carried these in all states.

To avoid tedium I shall categorize those referenda, which have failed. Powers to nationalize in 1911, 1913, and 1919. Powers to regulate industry and industrial disputes, in 1911, 1913, 1919, 1926, 1946. Extensions of Commonwealth powers in all of the above referenda and additionally in 1910, 1937, 1944, 1948, 1951, and 1973. Two further referenda must be mentioned. The first tore the country apart. That of 1951 to give the Commonwealth authority to make laws in respect of communists and communism. The second induced a collective yawn, which nevertheless, could have been expected to pass, the so-called Gareth Evans fantasies of 1988. Namely 4yr parliamentary terms, one vote one value, constitutional recognition of local government, entrenchment of the right to trial by jury, freedom of religion, no confiscation without proper compensation. All failed in all states by overwhelming majorities. None of these proposals seemed contentious but all fell at the barrier of indifference and of a peculiarly Australian syndrome "if she's working mate don't fiddle". Another outstanding failure was the Monarchy or Republic dual referendum of 1999, which consisted of two inter-related parts. A republic as modelled by a specially called Constitutional Convention and amendments to the existing Preamble It failed in all states 45% in favour of the model and 39% in favour of the Preamble modifications. If I may say so, and without irony, Australian political apathy, is a virtue most other countries cannot afford. Unless change is compelling, "Vote No". I suspect that the Monarchy V. Republic proposal fell over not because most Australians were or are avowed Abbottian monarchists, but because it appeared to vest too much power in the hands of the "Politicians". A term in the Australian lexicon of unparalleled obloquy. Had there been a plebiscite along the lines of "should Australia become a republic," the question would almost certainly have been answered affirmatively. However, that would not have satisfied the constitutional requirements of a Bill stating with precision what changes were envisaged. I have some familiarity with this episode having been Legal Counsel at the Convention, to the Chairpersons, Their Hons Ian Sinclair and Barry Jones

I come to the interrelated issue of the origins of our referendum provisions. Firstly, for the purposes of comparison, I canter through the procedure in some similar federal jurisdictions. Most federal jurisdictions have terms relating to constitutional change. Most suffer from the same joint maladies, difficulty of, or undue ease of change. Unitary nations are mostly spared. Switzerland, a federation since 1848, and where cantonal commitment is stronger than the national one, has frequent referenda by virtue of the ease by which they can be called. Their long history there, commenced after the civil disturbances of that year. Communal differences

over language and religion divided that nation, and still do; fortunately, these devisors are no longer potent here. In Switzerland, a referendum can be called to vote upon a particular law as well as to modify the constitution. Often the threat to call one stymies a proposal. Circumstances, which simply do not pertain here. Canada is a more fitting comparison. There have been many provincial referenda; however, by a federal process of plebiscite the Canuks were able to bind their country together by voting for the Charlottetown Accord in 1992, in effect a rebuke to both French and Anglophone political elites. Canada conducted national referenda about Alcohol Prohibition in 1898 and Conscription in 1942. The first was not enacted because of the slim majority and the second adopted following a significant Yes vote in all provinces but Quebec. Unlike us, the referendum results there do not ensure enactment of the proposal. The United States constitution, the source of much of our own, does have provision for referenda of sorts (Article V). Two paths for amendment are set out, one through the Congress and another via the States calling for state Conventions. Through the Congress, a two third majority of both Houses is required to send the proposal back to the states, which then must be passed by three quarters of them. Alternatively, by way of State Conventions called by two thirds of the state legislatures, the so-called super-majorities. Needless to say, the latter mechanism has never been successful although not for want of trying. In total, Congress has sent 33 amendments back to the states for ratification and 27 of them have become effective. The first ten emerged as the Bill of Rights. Germany on the other hand has had bitter experience of referenda, especially so in the case of the Enabling Act which turned the former Weimar republic into a Nazi puppet state. Plebiscites of dubious accuracy were used by the pre-war Nazi government to legitimize its land seizures programs, and the Anschluss. Referenda can be used now in the Federal Republic for only two purposes, to change the constitution or state boundaries. The constituent states all have referendum procedures.

2.

Before I introduce Hughes and Quick, I need to inform you about one of the root causes of sectarianism in Victoria, now largely irrelevant, but in 1917, vilely significant, because it played such a large part in the conscription fights. In 1872 the Victorian colonial parliament passed the Education Act. Commonly referred to as "free, compulsory and secular" education. At that, time most schools were confessional and the Catholic hierarchy had built many such schools. The Act removed government funding from religious schools and established a department to build, staff and run, to a common curriculum, schools open to all. However, to the overwhelming Irish Catholic clergy, the requirement for such schools to be secular was anathema. The Act was characterized by them to be the path to perdition and moral ruin. Sending a Catholic child to a secular school was said to lead to certain immolation and God's wrath. Of course, it led to a sudden and huge expansion of Catholic schools, most necessarily impoverished and it sent the Catholic non-metropolitan population to the fringes of community life. Examination of the composition of the Bendigo city Council is illustrative. Of the 66 Councillors in the fifty years between 1863 and 1914, of course all of them male, merely 8 were Catholics. Fifty-three were Protestants of various staunchness. (Source Kevin Peoples unpublished but brilliant MA thesis. Uni of Melb 1979). Predominantly Anglican, Presbyterian and some Methodists. The remaining five were Jews. During those years, Jews made up about one-half of one percent of the population, and Catholics 25%. Some of the Jews became Anglican lookalikes, a course not pursued by Catholics. To many Protestants the school issue entrenched notions of Popish plots to take over the country and made Catholics appear as "the other" in what was already a bifurcated colony. Of course, the boundaries were not

absolute, but inter-faith marriages were few and often led the partners to being excoriated by their own kin. The relevance of this digression will appear later.

I return to the second part of this lecture. John Quick was only 3 years old when his gold digger father died in Bendigo. Actually born in Cornwall, later he was able to overcome that fact. At 10, he had started work in an iron foundry in Long Gully. He moved into journalism, became super proficient with short hand, which made him indispensable at meetings, a skill which in turn oiled his subsequent political career. Scholarships, solid ability and tremendous industry stamped his passport to tertiary education, eventually graduating with an LL.D. His political career was illustrious. He was the member for Bendigo in the colonial legislature by 1880. He supported the reformist Berry government. He was active in the ANA, after receiving dispensation attaching to his non-native birth. The ANA, then a racist, nationalist but imperialistic organization was the prime vector for a federal Australia; He was an active Freemason, when that organization had power and influence as epitomized by the Capital Theatre here, which is by far the grandest Greek Corinthian structure in all of regional Australia. This was a time when religious division was rampant pitting an Anglo-Presbyterian Ascendancy against those subscribing to another trinity namely Catholic, Irish and Labour. Of which much more later. Quick publicly a Methodist was in private a devotee of Scottish malt. On the very day the Commonwealth of Australia came into being, January 1st 1901, his book co-authored with Robert Garran was published. "Annotations to the Australian Constitution". He became the first federal member for Bendigo and held the seat until 1913. He was the PMG in the first Deakin government. He served on the Conciliation and Arbitration Court, his Awards were seldom challenged. He died in Bendigo in 1932. Somewhat pedantic and brusque, but no person ever questioned his integrity.

Quick and federation are inseparable. Again, a canter through the process is helpful. Australia talked, not fought its way towards federation, throughout two legal concepts remained constant in all the conversations. The first was to sustain the states as separate constitutional entities. The second and more important was that each state had to approve of the federation by either popular vote or specific assent of its colonial legislature. During the process of federation, the issue of amendment was live but not centre stage. At that time, Britain was a unitary state and really deserved the title of United Kingdom, but it has never had a settled process for constitutional reform as indeed it does not have a written Constitution, as the Brexit convolutions attest. Accordingly, the other examples of a federal system were examined. Switzerland, Canada and particularly the United States were proffered.

The 1891 Convention considered a federal constitution based on the drafts prepared by Andrew Inglis Clark and modified by Sir Samuel Griffiths. The consensus was that the drafts gave too much power to the states and insufficient to the people. That draft delivered the amendment power into hands of the state legislatures. Playford, Deakin and Cockburn all disputed the Griffiths draft; they favoured amendment by referenda of all electors. At that Convention, the Griffith draft prevailed. In 1893 at the Corowa federation conference, convened by the Australasian Federation League, John Quick was the representative of the Bendigo ANA. It was not a meeting of colonial governments. He tendered the device already referred to, which broke the deadlock between the opposing colonies. Quick moved that the preparation of a "Bill for a Federal Constitution be entrusted to representatives popularly elected specifically for that purpose and that this Bill be submitted for acceptance or rejection by a general vote of the people of each colony". Upon returning to Bendigo, in 1894 Quick did not dally. He drew and then submitted via the Bendigo League an "Australian

Federal Congress Bill". This Bill became the Enabling Acts, later passed by all colonies except NZ ultimately bringing the Federation into existence as the Commonwealth of Australia

The second Federal Convention was held in late 1897 and January 1898 in Adelaide, Sydney and Melbourne. Here the mechanism to amend the proposed constitution received attention that is more marked. In the result, and as Quick's co-author Robert Garran remarked, "We are already committed to the Referendum to decide upon the acceptance of the constitution in the first instance; and it seems equally applicable to subsequent amendments of the Constitution". The draft adopted at this Convention adopted a modified Swiss model for amending it. That is it should not be overly rigid or too difficult to change. The ultimate authority lay with the states and the electorate. It was and is a marriage of the Swiss and American models.

I now introduce Billy Hughes aka the Little Digger or the Rat. He was the Federal member for Bendigo 1916-1922. At one time or another, a member of every Australian political party, except the Country Party, about which he said he had to draw a line somewhere. Australia was at war when Hughes eased Prime Minister Fisher out of office and sent him off to the parking station in London reserved for retired or surplus Australian politicians, namely Australian High Commissioners. Immediately prior to his banishment to London, Fisher had delivered a War Census. Its purposes was to assess the nations capacity in both finance and manpower terms to wage the war. Part of the census process, and it was compulsory to answer, was addressed to all men between 18 and 45, they were required to complete an "invitation" to answer such questions as to how many dependants they had and whether the respondent was willing to enlist whether immediately or at some later time and if not, why not. The ALP caucus elected Hughes P.M. in October 1915, and compulsion moved from incipient to likely. The next year he returned to Pimlico his birthplace in London and spoke there with the vigour and passion for which he was famous, exhorting Australian soldiers on leave or wounded to continue to fight for the Empire. This jingoism and his personal commitment to conscription given as a governmental undertaking to the British Cabinet, in contravention of Labour Party policy, led to his expulsion from it in 1916. With typical hubris, he announced the Labour Party had left him, not vice versa.

A side note of interest to lawyers is the Barton and Griffiths JJ advised Hughes to call for a plebiscite in order to clothe compulsion with a public vote, because at the initial stages all pundits thought that conscription would succeed. (Fitzhardinge, L.F. 1979 "The Little Digger" [179 A and R.]) He held onto the Prime Ministership with the support of the Commonwealth Liberals. Opposition to Hughes and the proposed legislation to enforce conscription within the ALP was led by Frank Tudor and Frank Brennan. The party, to which 24 of the Parliamentary ALP defected, was rebadged as the Nationalist Labour party, and then the Nationalist Party. The ALP branch in his West Sydney electorate had expelled him before the party did so. He realized he could not win in that ALP stronghold which left him free to accept the invitation of Bendigonian plutocrats and worthies, to come and contest the Bendigo seat then held for the ALP by Alf Hampson. It is ironic that the hapless Hampson was defeated by Hughes in the 1917 general election and then enlisted into the AIF. It was Hughes' defection from the ALP and an alliance with the conservative Liberals plus his devotion to compulsory service that united this cabal of worthies and then to proffer him the seat. This an accommodation between the interests of Labour working class voters and conservative backers parachuted Hughes into the Bendigo electorate as the sitting Prime Minister. I turn to outline this cabal. It was headed by Mayor Beebe, and included former mayor James Semmens, in particular James Curnow, Richard Abbott (who lost a son at Ypres in 1917) and a later Mayor and Senator, William Willkie, Mr Marcus Cohn, the McKay

brothers, owners of the Bendigo Advertiser (the Addy), Mr David Lazarus, and certainly, the former member, Sir John Quick.

Bendigo, at this time was in population decline numbers falling from 30.000 at federation to 28.000 in 1914. Bendigo had been for a few years the richest place on earth. Very little of the gold and its attendant wealth remained, that went almost exclusively to the UK. Between 1852, and Federation in 1901 About 1600 tonnes of gold was taken out of the Greater Bendigo goldfields, This is the assayed amount, how much more in saddle bags and corsets will never be known. The current value of this gold is AUD \$112.876.800.000. Almost \$30 million per person at 1855 levels. (56.438.400 troy ounces at \$AUD 1600 average per ounce, but of course over 50 years). This injection of almost costless capital into English banks enabled Britain to finance its latter 19<sup>th</sup> century mercantile dominance. (the binary is intended). Meanwhile here in Bendigo we enjoyed the irony of borrowing some of it back to finance the construction of the Melbourne to Bendigo dual track railway, not paid back until the late 1950's. The mining suburbs, Long and Cal gullies, Kangaroo Flat and west Bendigo tended to vote ALP but the fringe suburbs and towns swung, generally towards the conservative side. With the support of the plutocrats and worthies and the Addy, Hughes felt sure of election. Otherwise, he had little connection to the district and his wife flatly refused to live here. She remained a refugee in Melbourne.

I come now to the central issue, which unites Hughes with Bendigo, Conscription for overseas military service. In 1911, Australia introduced universal military training for men aged between 18 and 60. The officer corps was populated by volunteers and tendered to be much better educated and motivated than the "other ranks", as is exemplified by John Monash. However, the binary was not to the same extent of the British where the division between the two was exemplified by the different languages. One lot with strangulated vowels and the other without any. In August 1914 when war was declared by Britain but not Australia, a pool of men, partially trained, healthier, and better educated than their British cohort was available for service. However by the end of 1915 voluntary enlistment from the pools of the under, and unemployed began to dry up, and calls were being heard for compulsory conscription. Just over 5000 enlisted in November 1915, but that had fallen to 2247 in December 1917. Conscription had come to Britain, New Zealand and Canada by mid-1916. Both the Addy and The Independent (the Indy) newspapers and the Bendigonian magazine controlled by the Addy called for compulsion in their New Year 1916 issues. Both asserted the "inhumanity of the "Hun"" and his greedy desire to annex Australia to house the surplus German population. Wild xenophobia of this character swept the nation. Even Wilhelm Vahland aka William the architect of the Shamrock hotel, the Bendigo Masonic temple already mentioned, the Bendigo Hospital and the Bendigo synagogue, a Lutheran and Freemason and certainly a beloved member of society had been declared an enemy alien. He declared he was Hanoverian and not German; the declaration did not spare him from alien status. When Vahland arrived in Bendigo, Germany was not yet a nation. The same outcome did not befall other Hanoverians, for example the Queen and wife of George V. Princess Mary of Teck. However, for Vahland at the age of 87, and despite being an Australian citizen and having lived in Bendigo since 1855, arriving on the same ship as the Danish Jacob Cohn, had to report weekly to the police. None of the worthies ever accompanied him to the police station. All of them had applauded him for his civic work before the war. He was a broken man but had the good sense to "pass on" in July 1915. (Source Dr R Ballinger. History in the Making. Mar 2105 and John McInnes private monograph) By mid-1916 it was apparent that voluntary enlistment for overseas service, despite exhortations even more florid than those already referred to, was not producing the 5500 men a month that the British and their Australian satraps thought necessary. Some statistics are essential. Over the course of this phase of

the Great War 420,000 men between the ages of 18-44 enlisted, that is 39% of that age cohort, or 1 in 10 of all adult males. At least 62,000 were killed on the battlefields, (latest revised estimate which does not include many subsequent deaths related to war service) 156,000 wounded 4000 captured. Statistically every one of them was sick at some time for some reason or another. It is the enlistment figures, which unmask the social wrenching. 1915, 166,000. 1916, 124,000. 1917, 45,000. 1918, 28,000. The figure to which I give most attention is the reduction of over two thirds of the enlistment numbers between 1915 and 1917, and the additional fact that we were losing over 1000 each day at some western Front slaughter houses. (Source AWM and Official Commonwealth Yearbooks. Nos 12, 13, 14.)

The Victorian Premier Sir Alexander Peacock, like his distant relative Andrew, five decades later, in relation to Vietnam, called for conscription. (The Indy, 13 Mar 1916) It was answered the same day by the Catholic Bishop of Sandhurst (aka Bendigo) Stephen Reville, who voiced outright opposition. Not unconnectedly, Reville died of a heart attack a month later. The local Recruiting Committee, which was supported by the city Council, converted itself into an active pro-conscription committee. The Bendigo A.N.A branch in which Quick was active, the local Red Cross branch, as I have noted the municipal council and many local organizations, vociferously supported conscription. The local Protestant clergy were the more vocal. The Methodist Rev. H Worrall invoking "the tears that dropped like rain in memory of the immortal dead" even in the face of this oxymoron called for conscription. He was joined by both local Lutheran pastors and most importantly by the Anglicans, Bishop Langley and Archdeacon Percival. ". A local divine of the Bendigo Baptist Tabernacle the Rev E H Hobday, openly espoused compulsion as a Christian duty. (Addy 25 Aug 1916). Viz "I beseech you in the name of Almighty God, in the name of King and Country" and several more beseeching is until the end "causing our boys to leap with pride of race and the assurance of triumph". This patch of purple prose was to be outdone by the Anglican Bishop of Bendigo, Bishop Langley who co-opted biblical references to declare the war a "righteous one". (Addy 24 Oct. 16). Committees in support of Yes and No. campaigns were established and flourished. Facebook and Twitter have since replaced public meetings, but at the time, attendances albeit regularly inflated by both sides, indicated strength. John Quick, Nurse Witham and Archdeacon Percival, and the Mayor of Eaglehawk Cr Ralph, were especially vocal pro-conscriptionists hence they were favourably reported by the newspapers. However, the anti-conscriptionists were not quiescent and they too held monster meetings

Bendigo's organs of opposition centred on the Trades Hall and Political Labour Councils. The ALP local member, Alf Hampson was unswerving in his opposition; he was ousted from the seat by Hughes in 1917. A near local, namely John Curtin, born at Creswick and short time schoolboy at Macedon, came to personify opposition to conscription. In October 1916 at a meeting on the Yarra Bank of allegedly 100,000 people he thundered "Refuse to be bullied, or lied to, or voted into slavery of Military Control, under which your progress – the admiration of the world – will be stayed and your life made unendurable". (unpublished pamphlet in the Lloyd Ross papers in NLA). And much more even more purple but certainly up to Hughes standard of oratory.

Prime Minister Hughes had returned from his sycophantic trip to Britain on 31<sup>st</sup> July 1916. Clamour for conscription had increased especially in Bendigo while he was away. The City Council declared itself in favour of the proposal. The Addy of 25<sup>th</sup> Aug. 1916 editorialized that Hughes should "introduce compulsory military service as a natural corollary to our liberties After his return from Britain in 1916 Hughes announced he would go to the people to ask by way of a national plebiscite. "Are you in favour of the Government having, in this

grave emergency, the same compulsory powers over citizens in regard to requiring their military service, for the term of this War, outside the Commonwealth, as it now has in regard to military service with the Commonwealth". The question is confused with a referendum, which was called just that, by both sides, because the plebiscite proceeded under the terms of War Precautions. Military Service Referendum Act No. 27 of 1916. This enabling Act had passed the Senate 19 to 9 and in the Reps 46 to 10. That Act recites as its purpose - -to submit a question to a referendum on military service. It was a proposal to change an Act not the Constitution, and cannot accurately be described as a referendum.

The 20th October 1916 plebiscite/referendum was lost "Yes" 1.088mil or 48.4% "No" 1.160 Mil votes or 51.6% with a total turnout of 2.25million. Victoria voted 52% Yes, but NSW 57% No. similarly so did South Australia. At that time, our total population was 4.94 million. In Bendigo 5082 registered a Yes vote. It was outdone by 5748 voting No. The strongest No vote was recorded in Sandhurst East, an area previously known as Irishtown and centred around St Killians church. The "No", at that location was 64% and Yes after deducting informals, was 35%. However, it must be noted and it is an important note, that in the predominantly Methodist district of Long Gully the No vote was 58%. In contradistinction the then wealthier districts of Sandhurst Central and Ironbark, the residences of Anglicans and Presbyterians recorded 57% and 58% in favour. (Kevin Peoples PhD thesis). There is a clear correlation between the ALP vote and No vote. Catholic and Methodist subdivisions recording ALP votes in the 66 to 57% range whereas the conservative vote in more affluent subdivisions displayed the complete reverse. In my view the pellucid implication emerging from these and similar figures is that the No majority in Bendigo, indeed all over Australia, was populated by the poorer economic classes as much as by religious affiliation. This conclusion is affirmed by the results of the following 1917 plebiscite.

In 1917, The British government and Generals demanded a sixth Australian Division for active service, despite the five divisions in the field and rest areas being undermanned. Our country had lost 28.000 men on the Somme alone. The mutiny of the French Army of June 1917, their consequent static lines meant that they were no longer an offensive force. British Army HQ requested/asked /demanded Hughes provide 7000 men per month to meet the replacement needs. Less than half this number was volunteering. Hughes and his rebarbative government thought that the narrow defeat of the 1916 plebiscite could be reversed. As stated, in the year following the defeat of that plebiscite voluntary recruitment figures halved. On 20<sup>th</sup> December 1917 following the general election of that year at which the ALP was comprehensively trounced, Hughes and the Nationalist party called another poll. This time the question was both fairer and more direct. "Are you in favour of the proposal of the Commonwealth Government for reinforcing the Commonwealth Forces overseas"? Hughes proposed that voluntary enlistment would continue but the inevitable shortfall in recruits would be made good by the compulsory conscription of single men, widowers, and divorcees without dependents all between 20 and 44. They were to be selected by ballot of birth date, foreshadowing Vietnam. However, Hughes had jeopardized success for the 1917 poll, with typical narcissist hubris, by anticipating victory. Under the existing legislation, which permitted local compulsory service for self-defence, just prior to the second plebiscite/referendum he compulsorily called up all eligible 18 to 35 year old males, encamping them for training in Melbourne. Clearly, with the intention of sending those off to the Western Front, already trained, on the assumption the plebiscite would be carried. It may be this arrogance sent more of the eligible and certainly their mothers into the No enclosure, which became manifest in the subsequent vote of 1917. . Enlistments were 1915, 160.000. 1916, 124.000. 1917, 45.000. 1918, 29.000. (AWM official records).

At the Lyric Theatre in Bendigo on Feb 1<sup>st</sup> 1917, Hughes called for the establishment of a local branch of the new National Federation, at that moment the name of his coalition with the Commonwealth Liberals. John Quick and worthies such as Mr Cohn and the mayors of Bendigo and Eaglehawk supported it. On 16<sup>th</sup> March 1917, they made public the fact that Hughes would stand for the seat of Bendigo at the forthcoming elections. The Addy and Indy fell over themselves in adoration. Again, the Lyric became the venue for a public meeting at which Hughes delivered his program.

This second time the majority voting No increased. 1.015million for Yes, 1.182 million for No. The disparities between the states being, NSW 59% No. WA 64.4% Yes. The Bendigo Division results should have been a rebuff for Hughes. Yes 11.187 No. 12.275 that is about 60% against the position of the local member. Of course, Hughes was simply unrebuffable. The spread of votes within the Division reflect my previous statistics. Large majorities in favour in Castlemaine, large majorities against in Eaglehawk. The Nat's or as they styled themselves "the Win the War" party had foreclosed their further conscription options by making a pre-election pledge that conscription would not be introduced without another plebiscite. At the May 1917 general election, Hughes and Cook under the banner of the National Party won 54% of the vote but over 60% of the seats. Frank Brennan the local boy continued to hold the seat of Batman on a stridently anti-conscription ticket. A measure of the latter's influence is illustrated by the fact that later in the same year, 1917 conscription plebiscite results. By a more than 2 to 1 margin, voters at the Strathfieldsaye booth (Brennan residence) of which shire he had been mayor, recorded 125 Yes, but 331 No.

There is a common belief that the soldiers in the field voted No. It is not easy to desegregate the figures because men in the field were recorded by state of origin and not separately from those who had returned or were on leave or in hospital in Britain or simply refused to vote despite it being compulsory. The most informative of the figures are as follows. At the 1916 vote Soldiers on service including those on the way, and those carrying them, recorded a majority Yes vote of 1600. Alternatively, 55.1%. At the 1917 poll, the best estimate for that category of servicemen is that the majority Yes vote had fallen to 52.5%. Between the two polls, Victoria went from a slight majority in favour of conscription to a comfortable but not overwhelming No. vote. (See Australia during the War. Ch. 1X, p 387 et seq. The best informed but highly partisan pro-conscription record)

Given the aggregate numbers and the continuing death and injury rates, not even the most ardent of the white feather scatterers could question the result. Compulsory conscription died (pun intended) as an issue. The anguish and disharmony it engendered did not. It is apposite to rehearse again some statistics. From a population of less than five million, 417.000 enlisted. Almost 40% of the age cohort of men between 18 and 44, of that number, 62.000 died on or near the battlefields and 155.000 were physically wounded. In today's terms, equivalent to the death of 320.000 and the wounding of three quarters of a million men of military age.

Russia had succumbed to internal revolution in 1917 principally due to the War, and Germany itself was on the brink of the same in 1918. This in major part as much as the arrival of the Americans and battlefield reverses, led the German High command to enter upon a cease fire or the November Armistice, it was to them it was a pause, not, defeat. The actual meaning of the term armistice is ceasefire or truce. It turned out to be so, with the armistice lasting twenty years. In the interim, the social fabric of Australia was torn by the War and its attendant plebiscites. That is the social as well as economic divide between Protestants and Catholics

widened and endured until the collapse of the Anglo-Scot Ascendency following the success of the DLP and its subsidence into the existing Conservative parties. I now turn to this phenomenon

The vitriolic and occasionally violent conscription campaigns were fought out as if it was a rematch of the 1916 Easter rebellion in Dublin. The Archbishop of Melbourne and Maynooth graduate, Dr Daniel Mannix, far more civil in discourse than Hughes, but just as an effective orator, became the voice of the anti-conscriptionists. The famous photographic medallion of him in clerical attire fastened with a green ribbon was taken by the Bendigonian photographer; Vincent Kelly it became a national emblem. Dr Mannix epitomized the debate thus. "Conscription is a hateful thing and brings evil in its train. I make no apology for putting Australia first and the Empire second". Dr Mannix spoke at Castlemaine rather than Bendigo because it was within his diocese whereas Bendigo was within the diocese of Sandhurst.

The 1917 election here in Bendigo was fought out by Hughes and an old comrade from his ALP days, Frank Brennan born at Sedgewick, son of an unsuccessful miner and farmer, and of a forceful and loving mother, was and remained a devout Catholic and member of the ALP. Archbishop Mannix married him. Three times Mayor of Strathfieldsaye. He stood against Quick for the Labour Party at the 1910 federal elections, but lost narrowly. He was the father of Niall Brennan. Although Hampson was the candidate Brennan actively campaigned for him here, because his own seat in northern Melbourne was considered safe.

I return now to Hughes' 1917 election campaign speech, which became known as the Bendigo Address, it was certainly directed to the Australian electorate. The Lyric Theatre, at the time the largest auditorium in all of regional Australia, saw and heard him address an audience allegedly of over 3000 (Addy of 18<sup>th</sup> Oct 1917) saying "we have never done enough" and "the party that I have the honour to lead stands openly and freely for the Empire "concluding with "the anti-conscriptionist party derived its strength from that infamous organization the I.W.W." Code for the precursors of the Communists. This piece of hyperbole had been outdone by the Bendigonian of 12 Oct. 1917. "The mad dog of Europe has threatened and is still threatening to kill us or enslave us. ... To turn down conscription is to refuse to honour the promissory note given to our Allies by the P.M. on our behalf. .... Surely no Australian worthy of the name ..... would be traitorous enough to refuse"

The 1917 conscription campaign discovered new depths of vitriol, at that time unknown but commonplace today. The hapless Alf Hampson, just before his death, was referred to in an Addy editorial as "a servile groveler at the feet of his party bosses" In Bendigo the Nationalist electoral success had exceeded all expectations as the comparison between the 1914 and 1917 results illustrate. In 1914, the ALP in the Bendigo electorate garnered over 55%. Hughes obtained 57.4% in 1917. As they are reciprocal figures, it means that one in eight voters changed sides over that three-year period. The Nat victory was complete gaining over 54% of the vote nationally, talk turned to action by mid-year. This time Dr Mannix drew astonishing condemnation. A Protestant Federation was initiated; its campaigners knew no limit of abuse. The Addy and Indy, in correctly declined prose was hardly better. Mannix was accused of "disloyalty" a reference to the so called Easter rebellion in Dublin,(the Addy) and attempting to "Romanise Australians".(the Indy). Eggs hit pro-conscriptionist speakers at public meetings, and even Hughes himself in Queensland. On Dec 12<sup>th</sup> Dr Mannix at Castlemaine, spoke to a crowd of over 1000 urging a No vote, the next night Frank Tudor the ALP spokesperson addressed more than double that number in Bendigo. However the largest crowd of all, 3 to

4000 heard Hughes deliver an attack on Mannix at Castlemaine on Dec 16<sup>th</sup>. (even the Addy was taken aback at the PM's personal assault upon an Archbishop, Addy 17<sup>th</sup> Dec 17). It should be noted that not all Catholics were anti-conscriptionist. Many were appalled at the so-called Easter rebellion, they thought and said it was counter-productive and a betrayal of all those thousands of Irish in the trenches.

The nation went to the polls on a weekday, Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> December 1917. Hughes and his advisors thought that would prevent many working people from voting, and it may have, although voting was compulsory. Two days later the result was obvious. Only Sir John Quick amongst the pro-conscriptionists had expressed caution before the counting (see the Addy of 14<sup>th</sup> Nov p5 1917). Participation rates were 83.8% at the 1914 general election, 85.2% at the 1916 plebiscite, 89.8% at the 1917 general election, which dropped significantly to 77.7% at the 1917 plebiscite. Yet another PhD. lurks in this yet unexplained 10% reduction in voting numbers, I suspect war weariness accented by despair kept some people at home. The informal vote of nearly 3% could not have been accidental.

One generalization becomes obvious. Many Protestants must have been dissuaded by their clergy and the local Press from voting Yes. Probably the pro-conscriptionist campaign led by upper middle class worthies, for example Mayor Beebe and John Quick did not resonate with the farmers and miners of the working class whatever their religious affiliation or none. What is certain is that many people who voted ALP in 1914 had moved to the Nats in 1916 and voted that way in May 1917 but voted against that party line in December 1917. In the nearby state seat of Eaglehawk the ubiquitous Sir Albert Dunstan of the Country Party in its many incarnations, the Premier of Victoria over many periods, moved to Bendigo 1918 and was elected in 1920. Deeply conservative he attracted the working class Toryism of those electors, which may have a resonance in Pauline Hanson. Many of them must have voted against conscription in both 1916 and 17.

I come now to an examination of the turbulence and divisions these plebiscites engendered. In the first month of the war, Bendigo over fulfilled its quota of 235 by 33 men. Enthusiasm for the war was almost universal then, a state of affairs which did not endure for more than two years. War fever induced merchants to capitalize on its popularity. For example the Addy of 25<sup>th</sup> Sept 1914, carried this ad. "Stick to your Sovereigns – like the Allies to their guns—to save, Join the ranks of Allied Money savers at Whitelock and Carters Great Sale" The Indy, on New Year's Day 1915 announced "the call of the blood has been heard and answered loyally and willingly". Both these local dailies never deviated from full-blooded support for the war and larded that support with racial and stridently xenophobic comments. In one instance referring to the British race; which is about as accurate as referring to a black skinned language. Voluntary enlistments by religious affiliation in Bendigo between 1914 and 1917 seem to suggest there was not much difference to their respective proportions of the eligible population. This must be qualified by recognition that C of E was the default position of those in doubt or were non-believers. Anglicans comprised 43% of volunteers viz being 33% of the putative enlistees. Methodists 21% enlistees to 26% of the population, Presbyterians 12% of enlistees compared to being 9% of the pool. Catholics 21% of volunteers, almost the same percentage as that of their total population. However after the conscription plebiscites, and perhaps affected by the Easter Rebellion in Dublin, Catholic enlistment fell away, but not dramatically. Between September 1916 and the Armistice in November 1918, the percentage of Catholic enlistees dropped to 16.6%. My guess is that many of them signed up as temporary C of E's. My view of this is that religious affiliation albeit important, was not the dominating factor in deciding whether to enlist or not. The question begged is not why Catholic enlistees declined after

the Conscription abuse they endured, but why so many of them did. (See Dr.Val Noone. The History of the Irish in Australia and numerous monographs. University of Melbourne. Especially Easter 1916. Lecture to the Central Victorian Irish Assoc. Bendigo Central Library. 1/9/2016. Also the script of the play by Fr. Lorcan Kennedy. "Advance Australia" withdrawn after a single performance at the Princess Theatre, Bendigo 5/4/1920).

As a digression, I refer to the irony, that clerical attitude to conscription reversed between 1917 and 1964. Catholic opposition in 1917 but support for it for Vietnam in the late 60's. Protestant support for conscription in 1917 but significant clerical opposition also in the late 60's and almost total opposition today. A future PhD. topic for a funded academic. Something about Godless Communism may be appropriate. Another digression is to refer to the hilariously inappropriate WW1 memorial stained glass window in what was then the Presbyterian kirk of St Andrews in Bendigo. It displays the A.I.F. badge, a rising sun of bayonets, in the gothic trefoil panel, underneath a large Celtic Jesus depicted as a laird from the glens with golden locks falling softly over the shoulders, but dressed in crimson papal gorgeousness, here Jesus is depicted as a Swede, anointing a ghostly knight. So much for the reality of the Levant. However, the knight exceeds all. He is dressed as a crusader with the cross of St. George on his vestment, odd, as one would have expected St. Andrew, no matter; he holds the largest sword in Christendom, ready to slay a few more for quotidian immortality. This is an egregious example of the various denominations appropriating the dead for sectarian purposes. A tour of Bendigo's numerous and often-empty churches confirms the ubiquity of these phenomena. Another PhD thesis lurks in the paradox of those of conservative persuasion, who proclaim the individual's right to freedom of action and respect for self-development, being the very same people active in extinguishing by both advocating compulsory service and possible death. (An interesting and parallel narrative is contained in Rural Australia and the Great War, from Tarrawingee to Talgambalanga. John McQuilton. MUP 2001) unfortunately our longest serving P.M. supported conscription in 1916 when a student with my father at Melbourne University, but he did not serve as my father did in the Great War in both its manifestations of 1914 and 1939. R.G. Menzies again supported conscription in 1964 for service in Vietnam. So much for the individual's right to self-determination.

3.

So now to the final section. First, what reasonably certain generalizations can be drawn for the above.

Plebiscites, especially those about the constitution, are incompatible with our representative parliamentary democratic system. They may be appropriate to test public opinion where settlement of a number of options is presented. However, they can be mightily divisive, wrenching apart community cohesion, despite the opposite intention at the time proposed.

Public Opinion Polls are absurd. Worse, they are an assault upon our system of representative responsible government. Matters of high public concern especially those which deal with human rights issues cannot be reduced to slogans for decision simply because the elected representative are stricken by indecision. Parliament can amend, rescind or refuse to move on these matters, it cannot abdicate its responsibilities to

be adjudicated upon by a public opinion poll. To do so will, and has, corroded confidence in our system of government and could lead to compromise of our democratic structures.

3. The parliamentary system enables amendment and review of enactments and possible reversal through the electoral process. The ordinary procedures of lobbying members, applying pressure through voluntary associations such as employer or employee organizations, public demonstrations or kindly persuasion, do not appear to be applicable to plebiscites. They are matters of shouting, not of discussion or civil discourse. The costs are significant, but the results are not determinative. In effect they are a hindrance to our constitutional stability. I refer specifically to the survey or poll about marriage equality. It degenerated into hubristic abuse, those who shrieked loudest considered themselves morally justified. As for a plebiscite about a republic, this may be more justifiable but it should be bifurcated thus:

Q.1. Should Australia become a republic with a citizen as its Head of State?

If Australia were to become a republic, how should the Head of State should be selected or removed. Please answer in order of preference.

Q.2. in the same manner as the Governor-General now is, but without the monarchs assent?

Q.3. By a two-thirds majority of the members of the House of Representatives

Q.4. By a simple majority of electors.

4. To return to the Constitution. Sec 28. In fact has worked. Popular amendments passed by the required double majorities have delivered the peoples will in matters of constitutional amendment. Similarly, those propositions, which fall in mid-range of popularity or are sectionally based, have failed. Again, the Australian Constitution despite its meagre origins has served the nation quite well, oiled as that mechanism has been by parliamentary and judicial inventiveness.

5. The Conscriptio results, demonstrated that religious and political leaders vainly assumed their adherents would adhere to them. The hubris of leadership was undone. If the Protestant majority had adhered to their clergy, Conscriptio would have been easily carried. Catholic imprecations by its clergy to vote No, must have been ignored, at least by a significant minority, whom must have voted Yes. The lesson learned and now practised in this country is to keep the official clergy out of politics, a lesson entrenched by the course of the DLP, but not yet absorbed by some Protestant fundamentalist churches. (See the Senate results in 2012 and 2015).

6. The Australian Constitution is proving to be organic rather than static. Referenda have passed just often enough to give it some constipated flexibility. Meaningful growth has come from two sources. Political pragmatism and judicial interpretation. We have institutions unknown to Quick, but which have made our society inure and prosper. The most obvious is the Council of Australian Governments, Coag. The illegitimate child of the Loan Council and referenda. There are many similar inter-state and Commonwealth bodies, which flesh out the placita of Section 51. A minor example illustrates the point. The Murray Darling Commission presides, sometimes amicably over riparian rights in four states.

7. The High Court in dealing with current issues and disputes has been the vehicle for enlarging the reach of Commonwealth powers. Therefore, while S128 remains largely decorative, Australia had governed itself rather well in worldwide terms, except for one signal misuse of purported monarchical power. Kerr in a later confabulation to explain his actions asserted he was exercising the Reserve Powers of the Viceroy. (Matters for Judgement. MacMillan and Co. 1978. A novel posing as an autobiography). Sir Garfield Barwick in collaboration with him at that time later asserted he was using existing constitutional powers. (His letter to the G-G of 9/11/75) At some time, as a Republic approaches we will be able to dispense with these arid contentions.

8. Advance Australia Fair, has happened over the last century. From an outpost of Empire, we are now enjoying the world's 12<sup>th</sup> largest GDP. In front of Spain and not that far behind Russia. (U.N. and World Bank. Human Development Index 2015) our population has quintupled our standard of living especially that of the middle 80% is together with Norway the best in the world, and for that 80%, considerably better than the U.S. or the U.K. Of course there are dark corners and I am not Pollyanna. However, Janus would have enjoyed this occasion. These achievements are not just the result of our present Constitution but it certainly has been the framework, which has permitted and produced them.

9. Should the Constitution be refurbished? Having suffered a Constitution examination called as an offshoot from a Premier's Conference in 1984, at which Jo Bjelke Peterson never agreed with anything, I am neither anxious to attend, or sanguine about another. It is time for a renascent Quick to emerge, break the inertia of apathy and suggest some sort of Corowa type procedure to revisit our Constitution. However, it is not urgent; we survived the monarchical crisis of 1975 without a single broken limb. In my view, the absurd notion of monarchical reserve powers deserves a decent burial, but that too, is no longer urgent. I believe there may be such persons as Quick in this audience, who could ignite the refurbishment process.

The Hon. Howard Nathan. Bendigo October 2017.