

## Letters

### The Polar Challenge

Following our recent phone conversation herewith a statement as requested The most significant highlight of my 28 day trek to the Magnetic North Pole was the opportunity of flying the same Australian National Flag that my hero Sir Douglas Mawson used in Antarctica.

Our flag of stars and crosses is Australia's chief national symbol and of great sentimental value to me. To have had the unique honour of using the original Australian Flag that Sir Douglas Mawson claimed the Australian Antarctic Territory with was one of the greatest moments of my life.

Yours sincerely  
**Peter Bland**

### Leader of the Opposition

Dear Mr Gibson,

Thank you for your letter of February 27 1998. I am delighted to let you know that I still hold the view that the Australian Flag is 'the most beautiful flag in the world.'

As such a powerful symbol of the nation, it is important that a flag be truly representative of the people. The Opposition strongly believes that our flag should never be changed without the consent of a majority of Australians.

I and all members of the Parliamentary Labour Party will always respect and defend the current Australian flag, or, if a plebiscite determines that the majority of Australians want an alternative flag, any replacement chosen by the Australian people.

Thank you for your letter and for taking the time to write to me.

Yours sincerely  
**Kim C Beazley MP**

### Linfox Group

Dear Mr Gibson,

I refer to your letter dated 18th June, 1998 requesting my view on the Australian flag.

It is my opinion that the flag should not be changed - it is a symbol from whence we have come - i.e. the Union Jack represents the cross of St George for England; the cross of St Andrew for Scotland; the cross of St Patrick for Ireland; surely this represents our early settlers, then, of course, there is the Southern Cross representing our place on earth, lastly, the seven point Star of Federation - it is our history book - you can't change history!

Kindest regards  
**Lindsay E Fox, AO**

### Sydney Morning Herald Letters

When you invited readers to phone in and say which of the 100 flag designs they preferred you were inviting them to make an aesthetic judgement on design and not a political statement on whether Australia should have a new flag.

Of the 23,000 who phoned in, 8,253 preferred the present flag. The next best was 1,581 for the second choice and so on down the line. To claim that those who preferred new designs were united in their determination to get rid of Australia's existing flag is mere assertion unsupported by evidence.

6 February 1998  
**Geoffrey Reading, Castle Hill**

### **Sydney Morning Herald Letters**

Sydney Mr

Your editorial "The debate on a new flag" (January 27) says that the Ausflag organisation has produced compelling evidence that Sir Robert Menzies changed the Australian flag in 1953 from red to blue because the colour red had connotations of communism.

You may find it compelling; in fact, approval of the blue Australian flag, and the Australian Red Ensign as our merchant flag, was officially proclaimed in the Commonwealth Gazette of February 20, 1903.

It is noted with regret that the Herald has become an active promoter of the anti-Australian national flag agenda of Ausflag Ltd.

5 February 1998

**John Vaughan, President**

### **Sydney Morning Herald Letters**

I am personally insulted by the fact that Ausflag restricted its competition to professional designers. How can we have a flag by the people, for the people, if the people don't get a chance to voice their opinions? Sure they get to vote, but it is still a controlled decision. Restricting the competitions, to me, is saying that the a people who ran it don't believe that ordinary people have either the ability, creativity, intelligence or "taste" to do something of such great importance as this.

After looking at the top seven flag designs, I am appalled. Is one of these the flag we want our children to live under? Have we no respect for them, to give them something that not even Al Grassby would wear as a tie? Do we want them to look "up" to something that is in fact, a pure embarrassment, handed on by a generation with a taste as kitsch as a painting of a doggy doo?

I know traditionally, children are supposed to be embarrassed by their parents' taste (or lack of) but this really is taking it too far. It's time we thought about leaving something for our children that they will value and respect, not held at arm's length, then go and line the dog kennel with it. So let's put these flags back in the Channel 9 one day cricket wardrobe , where they belong.

4 February 1998

**Amy Macauley, Seven Hills**

### **Sydney Morning Herald Letters**

If the selection of flags shown in last Saturday's Herald is any indicator, it seems inevitable that we'll end up with a second-rate amateurish national flag. The seven shown look like Christmas gift tags at best. The inclusion of kangaroos, boomerangs and the ghastly green and gold brought tears to my eyes - but of embarrassment, not pride.

I've never understood where the green and gold came from. Didn't Bob Hawke just decree those colours? Did we have any say? Wasn't it the same with our national anthem? Someone just decided for us. I don't mind the inclusion of Aboriginal flag colours, but how traditional are they? Again, who picked those colours and when?

If there has to be a change, let's choose something that we can look to with pride. However, I'm fearful that the final outcome will be a compromise which will satisfy nobody and cause further divisions among us. Is it really worth the hassle?

1 February 1998

**Allan Jones, Narrabri**

### **The West Australian Letters**

Despite the popularity of our flag, Ausflag continues its campaign to replace it with another from a motley collection of designs, one of which reflects our magnificent British-Christian heritage, symbolised by the united crosses of saints George, Andrew and Patrick.

The Ausflag people's disdain of the Union Jack is patently clear. However, it is sheer arrogance on its part to assume that it can cast aside our much-cherished flag, one that reflects the God-given rights and duties bestowed on each citizen of this land, and inflict a new flag on us.

Australia is what she is today because of our forebears. We should thank God daily for our British heritage that has

given us a stable nation, freedom, democratic government and roots that go deep into history.

In their zeal to rid us of our beloved flag these people insult the servicemen and women who fought under it. Many sacrificed their all to defend everything that it represents.

Let us strongly resist any change to our beautiful flag and be ever-thankful for the blessings we have known as it has fluttered over this great land of Australia.

29 January 1988

**D Jackson, Ballajura**

### **All Australians**

After viewing the Ausflag exhibition of 109 possible designs for a new national flag I came away most disenchanted.

The exhibition displayed a plethora of lines, dots, balls and meaningless patterns - not to mention awful colours.

There were some very bad attempts at drawing kangaroos and other forms of doodling that failed to inspire me at all. The designs which depicted the Southern Cross were the most imaginative. However, none of them outshone the dignity and beauty of our present flag.

Our flag tells of our heritage and history. It is an instantly recognisable flag of stars and crosses, our flag - of stars and crosses, our flag - the Australian national flag.

**B Lane, East Victoria Park**