

Letter to The Canberra Times

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(unedited)

Dear Editor

Nought out of ten for the latest British Foreign Office reports about Australian desire for a republic (Priceless ACT publicity from Queen's bargain royal visit, 27 December page 1).

Saying it's off the agenda and that visits by royal celebrities and a wedding have significantly lessened republican sentiment here only repeats our media's shallow reporting about this issue. That reached new depths during the Queen's pretty unremarkable visit in October.

The new fashion for royal persons to offer their condolences in person is striking bearing in mind that our Head of State has a local representative who can do this job for her.

The Government should decline requests for royal visits except when our Head of State's presence is essential, that is, hardly ever. Invitations should be as rare. Instead, we are being manipulated by a sophisticated and well funded royal PR machine.

Paul Keating's recent remarks that we will never be a great country until we are a republic and remove the Union Jack from our flag hit the mark. Painfully true, they deserve more than rapid rejection.

The British Foreign Office should get hold of them before it issues any more assessments of Australia's future. The British should never underestimate our determination to be free of them. It won't be stopped by pretty smiles, nice hats or royal visits whatever their purpose.

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