

WOMEN for an Australian Republic

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The Hon Julia Gillard MP
Prime Minister
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Prime Minister

AUSTRALIAN GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE QUEEN OF AUSTRALIA'S DIAMOND JUBILEE

We refer to a letter of 21 December (Ref C12/71958) sent by your Parliamentary Secretary, Senator Jan McLucas. The reply provides no responses to our letter of 24 October 2012 nor any information that we did not already know.

In the interests of transparency and accountability, WfaAR now invites you to provide answers to our questions of 24 October. We are particularly interested in the role played by the Canberra National Memorials Committee in the naming of Queen Elizabeth Terrace, a street/road in the Parliamentary Zone, and if the renaming was approved by the Committee as stipulated in the CNMC ordinance.

Further, we are surprised that the "approval" of the Sir Henry Parkes Foundation (also known to us from Senate Estimates transcripts) to the renaming of the top section of Parkes Place constitutes "public consultation". The members of this group are Parkes' descendants. We invite you to comment anew on the extent of *public consultation* about the proposed change given its significance to a large number of stakeholder groups and individuals.

WfaAR points out that it is not contesting whether Sir Henry Parkes is adequately commemorated in Canberra, or even in the PZ; we agree that he is. The essence of the argument that we make is that the Government saw fit to replace the name of a prominent Australian, female or male, with that of a British citizen at a time when a) we are more republican – and more Australian – than ever before and b) your party supports a republic, and indeed has steps to a republic, in its policy platform. Why hasn't a federal Labor Government done more to support a republic by whatever means at its disposal? The Queen Elizabeth Terrace episode was a step in the opposite direction especially as it was so unnecessary.

We look forward to receiving your response to the matters raised above.

Sarah Brasch
National Convenor
5 March 2013

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