



Speech by

MIKE REYNOLDS

MEMBER FOR TOWNSVILLE

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REPUBLIC

Mr REYNOLDS (Townsville—ALP) (10.26 a.m.): Last week I called on Queenslanders to grasp the opportunity to take Australia into the next century as a new republic for the new millennium. Queenslanders, even more than their southern counterparts, have a lot to gain from Australia becoming a republic. More and more, our economic ties are with the Asia-Pacific region. That is recognised by the Liberal Leader. This is where we are geographically and, increasingly, this is where we are economically and socially.

For all these reasons, it is an increasing absurdity to have as our head of state the Queen or King of England. Australia must present to the people of the Asia-Pacific region as a truly independent nation that is part of their region, wanting to trade with them as a genuine part of their region and no longer as a colonial outpost. To achieve this, a new symbolism is important. The old symbolism does get in the road. It is both a cause for confusion and serves to set us apart from the region in which we live.

The most pleasing aspect of the referendum matter is that support for the "Yes" case is bipartisan politically. While the vast majority of prominent Labor leaders—past and present—are advocating a new republic, it is especially pleasing to see prominent Liberals, such as the Treasurer, Peter Costello, the Liberal Leader in the House today, Dr Watson, former Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser and the most significant National Party identity of recent history, former Deputy Prime Minister Doug Anthony, all advocating a "Yes" vote.

I call on Queensland business and community leaders to come out publicly in the next week and advocate a "Yes" vote on 6 November for a republic for Australia, and especially for Queensland. Our identity in the Asia-Pacific region is a must for Australia. Queensland business leaders especially must show leadership on this issue. They must lead the way, in a business sense, into the new millennium.
