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The Editor
The Australian

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The article by Emeritus professor Greg Craven (Australian 26Jul22), does a good job in outlining the issues and the risks for success of a referendum on the Voice. However, I would take issue with a few things he omits and otherwise says. He says he is a “resolute supporter” of the Voice but does not elaborate on why. His thoughts there could have been helpful. He then identifies what he considers to be “furphies” but does not explain why.

The definition of “who is indigenous” cannot simply be dismissed as a furphie. Many Australians, particularly of Anglo-Saxon/Celtic extraction take considerable umbrage to see and be lectured by self-proclaimed indigenes who are whiter than they are. A very clear definition of an indigenous person should be an essential pre-requisite to any referendum.

He then dismisses as a furphie “constitutional recognition reigniting sweeping native claims”. The Uluru Statement is not an innocuous document, as close study of the probable implications of the four essential things that the Uluru statement seeks would reveal. In particular, the Makarrata Commission can easily be read as an administrative body with veto power over any bill for legislation or regulations affecting First Nations people, which, of course, would be virtually any parliamentary bill for change.

Supervision of “truth-telling about our history”, smacks of rewriting history in the image of First Nations, true or false.

In respect of “What about the flag?”, I would object to replacing the current national flag in-toto with the aboriginal flag (which I think a brilliant design) but would fully endorse replacement of the Union Jack on our flag with the aboriginal flag, at an appropriate time, namely with the passing of Queen Elizabeth II. I have always thought that such a change to our flag would go a very long way towards reconciliation.

One needs to ask what First Nations people, self-proclaimed representatives and proponents of the Voice are really after. Would they ever be agreeable to a Labor Government proposal, without receiving major concessions of power, especially from a government only too eager to oblige?

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