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THE VERDICT



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SHOULD THE CONSTITUTION BE AMENDED TO RECOGNISE ABORIGINES AS AUSTRALIA'S FIRST PEOPLE?



FRANCES

There is a school of thought that the Constitution is enshrined in gold, that it is a document of such historical worthiness that you should not tamper with it no matter what. I don't agree with that school of thought whatsoever. I would say to those critics, what are you afraid of? They were the First Australians, our history with them is somewhat chequered. Things don't always have to be practical. Sometimes they can be more healing. And if you saw the footage from the Sorry Day, there was an awful lot of healing that day. My opinion is this move will do no harm.

ROBERT

I am far more interested in what is happening on the other end of the scale. My kids are in primary school and they are already getting stories read to them about the Stolen Generation. Now that is quite confronting for them but I quite like it, because at that age they are being told who we are and some of the things that perhaps didn't go the way they should. It's their generation that we can make a real difference by telling them who we really are even more so that by what is in the constitution.

MIKE

The Constitution is a bit like language – it evolves and has to reflect the society we live in. I frankly

can't see why it is a debate. What is so scary about it? It is not about compensation or restitution but about acknowledgment, the same way the apology was an acknowledgment, and it is a very positive step. I think it is Tony Abbott's best move to date.

FRANCES

There has also been controversy about why our kids are learning that stuff but in my day all we ever got was a trip to the museum to look at a family of aborigines along with their dingo and gnyah in a glass display case. It was almost like they magically disappeared. We never got any more than what was in that display case in the museum.

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM? A LITTLE CHANGE TO THE CONSTITUTION MIGHT HELP UNITE THE NATION

THE BOTTOM LINE