A Commonwealth Day reflection

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Presenting as Queen of Australia
and wearing the insignia of the Order of Australia
Her Majesty visited Perth in 2011 to open and address
the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting

The people of South Australia, Victoria, Tasmania, and Canberra may enjoy a well-deserved break on the second Monday of March each year, but perhaps do not realise the public holiday coincides internationally with Commonwealth Day.

Two billion people in 53 Commonwealth nations have good reason to celebrate a shared enthusiasm for democracy and human rights - which makes for happy trading and ease of cultural exchange, with participation in the Commonwealth Games. Nor do Commonwealth nations attack each other.

But those numbers do not include Fiji, whose suspension (in 2009) for anti-democratic and roguish behaviour provides a salutary warning that with privilege comes responsibility.

Member nations must also utilise English for Commonwealth communications, and recognise the Queen as Head of the association.

Hence the persistent calls for renewed republican agitation, and for a rejection of the Union Jack within Australia's Flag, do not sit comfortably with the foundation and aspirations of our great Commonwealth family.

As we think about the value of the Commonwealth of Nations, led by the Queen, we may reflect on the Christian promises Her Majesty made in 1953 at the Coronation. We may be sure that it remains Her Majesty's wish, as it should be of every Christian, that *all the ends of the earth will remember and turn to the Lord, and all the families of the nations will bow down before him* (Psalm 22:27).



The Queen with Commonwealth Heads of Government