



Brexit is Our Battle Too

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Boris Johnson is fighting not just for a United Kingdom free of the European Union, but for the survival of the nation-state as an idea and institution which can withstand the 21st century.

The interest displayed by Australians in the constitutional crisis playing out at Westminster is greater even than the elevated level we typically apply to the land from which comes our institutions, our language, sports, and so much of our light entertainment; the heightened interest comes because we are an independent nation-state seeking to maintain that independence even as we enmesh our economy with lands adjacent. The traditional nation state is under unprecedented pressure from within and without. Supranational institutions aggrandise to themselves ever more power and prestige, helped along by a proliferating series of international treaties given the widest possible application in Australia by the High Court, even as cultural forces deconstruct images and institutions of nationhood, sovereignty and independence.

Boris is fighting for the survival of the nation state

Boris Johnson is seeking no more for the UK than the independent constitutional status enjoyed currently by Australia. Georgina Downer saw this from the start, when she titled her 2016 (pre-referendum) IPA Research Paper: [*In Defence of the British Nation State: The Australian Case for Brexit.*](#)

Now, three years on from that referendum, we very much notice the vast institutional cultural and legal forces arrayed against Brexit and against Boris Johnson, because he is trying to reverse the long slow slide into the grips of the EU. We see the sneering elites, the mendacious misrepresentations by the BBC and the mainstream media, and stitch- ups in the Supreme Court introduced by the globalist government of Tony Blair, all because the battle is in the open and the contesting forces are readily identifiable.



In Australia our continuing fight for sovereignty is less obvious as it does not suit those on what has been the winning side to make plain the stakes. Better to rely on the High Court, to seek to change the Constitution under the guise of righting past wrongs, to routinely denigrate nationalism, and to limit the scope of our bilateral alliances.

All the domestic representatives of internationalism need do for the moment is enjoy the high culture pile-on against Boris Johnson himself: the political parvenu, the serial insulter, the figure of fun, the Etonian toff, habitual imbibor and adulterer. To join this argument on character would be a dead- end for conservatives, when there are deeper constitutional issues at stake.

In this context, the commissioning of a *Senate Inquiry into nationhood, national identity and democracy* is timely. The [IPA's submission to the Committee](#) includes a section outlining the ongoing relevance of the nation- state as a home where millions of individuals can live together with a shared set of values, customs, habits, and beliefs, and enjoy with one another a common



heritage and tradition. This will appear online, with an excerpt in the forthcoming IPA Review Summer edition.