

## NEWSLETTER UNAA SA DIVISION

Issue No. 13 Spring Equinox Edition 2010

**"THAT'S THE TROUBLE WITH YOUNG PEOPLE . . . . ."**

In recent times I have in my work encountered the following :

1. A third-year ex-St.Peters Med Student from Adelaide Uni who volunteered several weeks accompanying an Aust. Medical Team to Ethiopia to deal with the many undernourished women suffering from the degrading condition associated with *fistula*.
2. An ex-Pulteney double degree Sociology student, Felicity, who is packing her bags to spend a preliminary month in *Kiribati* prior to residing there for 6mths to do an in-depth study of the human impact of *sea-level rise* on that community.
3. Emma, from St Peters Girls, accompanied Archb. Driver to the Sudan. She came back fired-up at the brutality of anti-personnel Landmines. On being introduced to Patricia Pak Poy, Emma set up among her Uni friends a group working internationally for their abolition.
4. A 3<sup>rd</sup> Year Law student, from the same School, with a strong sense of Social Justice, worked with a small group of her fellow-students to set up a power-packed debate in the Elder Hall re a Human Rights Bill for Oz. Kathryn Branson, Human Rights Commissioner, Julian Burnside the Refugees' friend, and Paul Kelly (Editor, The Australian ) were three of the five.
5. A country girl, Catriona Standfield, was so appalled by the prospect of *Nuclear Proliferation* and the prospect of nuclear war that she packed her bags and went over to Belgium where she spent a week in the presence of Hans Blix, learning all she could. This week, the Jamestown girl is putting on the second of four Fora :*What would Einstein Say?* at UniSA.
6. Larissa, now student-counsellor at Cardijn, did great work in 2008-9 with the OakTree Foundation, a group of social-change youth. 16-26. On June10, her fellow 'Acorns' had persuaded two senators, Simon Bermingham (Lib) and Dana Whortley (ALP) and Prof. Suzanne Schech of Flinders to the Hawke Centre UniSA West to form an expert Panel on *Make Poverty History* .*This is one of the MDGs - Millenium Development Goals*. How many of us UNAA people could even NAME the eight Goals, let alone have an idea of their progress?

**" . . . . . THEY TEND TO PUT US TO SHAME"**

*P.J.F*

[mail@unaasa.org.au](mailto:mail@unaasa.org.au)

Ph : 08 8226 4141

Fax 8271 4433

Web [www.unaasa.org.au](http://www.unaasa.org.au)

## A peace movement victory in court

Oh, what a lovely war

"Fourteen anti-war activists may have made history today in a Las Vegas courtroom when they turned a misdemeanor trespassing trial into a possible referendum on America's newfound taste for remote-controlled warfare." That's how one Las Vegas newspaper summed up our stunning day in court last Tuesday, Sept. 14, when fourteen of us stood trial for walking on to Creech Air Force Base last year on April 9, 2009 to protest the U.S. drones.

We went in hoping for the best and prepared for the worst. As soon as we started, the judge announced that he would not allow any testimony on international law, the necessity defense or the drones, only what pertained to the charge of "criminal trespassing."

With that, the prosecutors called forth a base commander and a local police chief to testify that we had entered the base, that they had given us warnings to leave, and that they arrested us. They testified that they remembered each one of us. Then they rested their case.

We called three expert witnesses, what the newspaper called "some of the biggest names in the modern anti-war movement." These were: Ramsey Clark, former U.S. attorney general under President Lyndon Johnson; Ann Wright, a retired U.S. Army colonel and one of three former U.S. State Department officials who resigned on the eve of the 2003 invasion of Iraq; and Bill Quigley, legal director for the New York City-based Center for Constitutional Rights. We presumed they would not be allowed to speak.

All fourteen of us acted as our own lawyers, and were not allowed any legal assistance, so members of our group took turns questioning our witnesses, and trying not to draw the judge's wrath. Lo and behold, the judge let them speak, and they spoke for hours.

They were brilliant. They spoke about the meaning of "trespassing," and the so-called necessity defense and international law, which allows citizens to break minor laws in adherence to a higher law. Ramsey Clark, looking like Atticus Finch on the stand, said it was a duty.

They cited the classic example of someone driving down a street, seeing a house on fire, noticing a child in the third floor window, hearing the screams, breaking through the front door, violating the no trespass law, and entering the house to save the child.

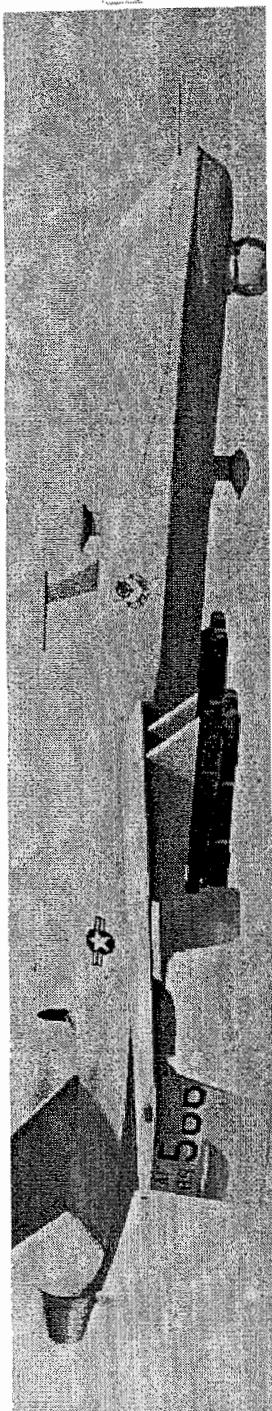
"[People] are allowed to trespass if it's for the greater good -- and there are certainly exceptions [to the law] when there is an emerging, urgent need," said Quigley.

He cited the history of protesters who broke petty laws, from our nation's founders to the Suffragists to the civil rights activists who illegally sat in at lunch counters. In the long run, we honor them for obeying a higher law, for helping to bring us toward justice, he said. Unfortunately, there is a gap between "the law" and "justice," and so, he explained, the struggle today is to narrow that gap. The best test is through "a hundred year vision," he explained. That is, how will this law and ruling be seen one hundred years from now?

Through carefully crafted questions, the defendants were able to extract several key points from their witnesses:

- Intentional killing is a war crime, as embodied in U.S. constitutional law.
- Drone strikes by U.S. and coalition forces kill a disproportionate number of civilians.
- People have the right, even the duty, to stop war crimes.
- According to the Nuremberg principles, individuals are required to disobey domestic orders that cause crimes against humanity.

Armed Drones and the 'Playstation' Mentality



Brian Terrell stood up and delivered a short, spontaneous closing statement. It was one of the most moving speeches I have ever heard. Here are excerpts:

Several of our witnesses have employed the classic metaphor when talking of a necessity defense. There's a house on fire, and a child crying from the window and there's a no trespassing sign on the door. Can one ignore the sign, kick down the door and rescue the child?

I submit that the house is on fire and babies are burning in Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan because of the activities at Creech AFB.

The baby is burning also in the persons of the young people who are operating the drones from Creech AFB, who are suffering from post traumatic stress disorder at rates that even exceed that of their comrades in combat on the ground.

Colonel Ann Wright testified that soldiers do pay attention to what is going on in the public forum, and that they do respond to a "great debate" in the public sphere. There is no great debate going on about drone warfare in our country. Some have noted that the trend toward using drones in warfare is a paradigm shift that can be compared to what happened when an atomic bomb was first used to destroy the city of Hiroshima in Japan.

When Hiroshima was bombed, though, the whole world knew that everything had changed. Today everything is changing, but it goes almost without notice. I hesitate to claim credit for it, but there is certainly more discussion of this issue after we were arrested for trespassing at Creech AFB on April 9, 2009, than there was before.

Judge Jansen, we appreciate the close attention you've given to the testimony you've heard here. The question that you asked Bill Quigley, -- "Aren't there better ways of making change than breaking the law?", is a question we are often asked and that we often ask ourselves.

It was a question that was asked of Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. in 1963 when he was in jail in Birmingham, Alabama. Several clergy people of Birmingham wrote a letter to Dr. King asking him the very same questions that you asked Professor Quigley. Isn't there a better way? Why sit-ins? Why marches, why protests? Isn't negotiation the better way?

Dr. King's reply to these questions -- in his famous Letter from the Birmingham Jail, which is regarded by many as one of the finest things ever written in the English language -- heartily agreed that negotiation is the better way. But, he said that a society that refuses to face crucial issues needs "nonviolent gadflies" using direct action to raise the level of awareness and raise the level of "creative tension" for a society to rise from the depths of monologue to the majestic heights of dialogue, where the great debate that Colonel Ann Wright says we need, can happen.

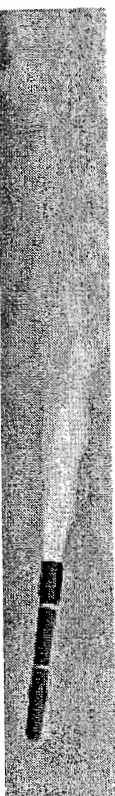
The house is on fire. And we fourteen are ones who have seen the smoke from the fire and heard the cries of the children. We cannot be deterred by a No Trespassing sign from going to the burning children.

As he finished, Brian burst into tears and sat down. Many in the courtroom wept. Then Judge Jansen stunned us by announcing that he needed three months to "think about all of this" before he could render a verdict. He marked twenty five years on the bench just the day before, he said, and this was his first trespassing case and he wanted to make the best decision he could. There is more at stake here than the usual meaning of trespassing, he noted. The prosecutors were clearly frustrated and disappointed. With that, we were assigned a court date of January 27, 2011, to hear the verdict. As he left, he thanked the fourteen of us and the audience, and then seemed to give a benediction: "Go in peace!" Everyone applauded.

"By all accounts, the Creech 14 trial is the first time in history an American judge has allowed a trial to touch on possible motivations of anti-drone protesters," the local paper said.

Convenient Killing

Behind The Mask: a rare insight into drone industry thinking: 'more war, less peace please'



**The Following Letter came across the UNAA Desk on July 29**

Dear Peter,

All across the blue planet, fisheries are rapidly reaching the end of the line. We humans are literally eating ourselves out of house and home. If this trend continues unchecked, our children and grandchildren will be condemned to live beside empty acidic oceans in a world very different to our own. The only chance we have of turning this around is by reforming our fishing practices, controlling our appetites and by providing sanctuaries for marine life. And our task begins here at home.

For generations Australians have been caught up in a love affair with the sea; it's a big part of our self-image. We're islanders. We grow up expecting access to open beaches, clean seas and good seafood. We regard all this as a birthright as much as a lifestyle. But here in the twenty-first century we persist with a nineteenth century notion of the sea as an inexhaustible resource, a mighty and invulnerable force, a field of endless plenty. This is a demonstrably false image, and clinging to it out of nostalgia isn't just silly - it's reckless.

**Today, I ask you to do something about it**

You don't have to be a fisheries scientist or a marine biologist to know that more and more people are fishing harder for less and less. Any recreational angler forced further and further from shore in order to get a feed knows the true picture. Any diver can see the evidence of depletion in the water. The consumer buying fish at the market can't avoid the link between higher prices and scarcity of product. Every oil spill, every algal bloom, every mass fish-kill along the coast tells us the truth - that the ocean is vulnerable, that sea life is under enormous and unrelenting pressure from overfishing, from pollution, from mining and unchecked coastal development. The science on this is universally in agreement: worldwide, corals and fish stocks are in desperate trouble. Most of the great pelagic species are 90% gone. Seventy percent of our planet needs a break, and it needs it in a hurry.

Here at home the marine environment is an incredible asset, a gift we tend to take for granted. But it's also finite, fragile and largely unprotected. Most Australians are shocked to realize that a mere 1% of our own South West waters are off-limits to mining or fishing. This is a level of protection that surely belongs to another century. In terms of marine conservation we've fallen behind poorer nations and it's a scandal.

In an era when conservation was a new and challenging concept, our grandparents had the foresight to accept that Australia's terrestrial environment is precious. When the nation was poorer than it is now, individuals and governments had the courage and wisdom to begin reserving lands across the continent for conservation. This was a radical departure, a real innovation, and thanks to this major cultural change of heart, 12% of the country is managed with conservation in mind. Imagine Australia without Kakadu and the 'Bungle Bungles'; it's inconceivable.

We owe these visionaries of the past a great debt. As heirs to their brave and enlightened actions, we need to build on their example and extend sanctuary to a significant proportion of our marine environment as well. Fish, corals, mammals and invertebrates desperately need places of refuge and respite from pollution and exploitation. Marine protected areas are a significant investment in the future health of our seas. If a mere 1% protection for land conservation was deemed inadequate by our forebears, why should it be an acceptable level of sanctuary for the seas in the twenty-first century? This is the moment for change. It's time - way past time - for us to wake up and to catch up.

Australian waters are home to some of the world's oceanic treasures. These precious ecosystems need proper and realistic protection right now.

Here is a generational opportunity to reward the good faith of our forebears. Let's seize it and make a material difference to the future. Together we can create a legacy to be proud of. For the sake of our children - and for those yet unborn - help save our marine life while there's still time.

**Tim Winton**  
**Patron, Australian Marine Conservation Society**  
**AMCS is a proud member of Save Our Marine Life**

## **THE FUTURE - FULL OF HOPE !** <sup>5.</sup>

***We senior UNAA sa Members are in admiration of the enthusiasm, ideals and work-ethic of our partner organisation, UNYA (Youth Association), whose motto is :- EDUCATION EXPRESSION EMPOWERMENT. [Ed.]***

***Here is a recent report from Catriona Standfield, 2009 President of UNYA.***

---

I recently had the luck to attend the United Nations Department of Public Information's NGO Conference, from 30 August to 1 September in Melbourne. The theme of the conference was Advance Global Health: Achieve the Millennium Development Goals. I was a delegate representing the United Nations Youth Association of Australia. The three days were structured around a series of roundtable discussions and workshops, all with a theme related to global health. Some of the workshops I attended were on diverse themes such as building transnational coalitions, the floods in Pakistan and the eradication of polio. These workshops and roundtables were a great opportunity to hear from experts in the field and to familiarise myself with new topics. Another important part of the conference was the NGO stalls, where NGOs represented at the conference were able to showcase their work and provide further information. Wandering around the stalls was also a chance to talk to others, network and hear about the excellent work that many NGOs are doing in advancing health both in Australia and overseas.

UNYA's role at the conference was to provide youth insights into advancing global health, where possible. We did this through co-hosting a workshop on youth engagement, which was highly successful. We also talked to other youth delegates and like minded organisations, in order to foster cooperation and seek out new opportunities. I attended the conference in my capacity as UNYA's International Year of Youth Coordinator. This meant that I spent a lot of time talking to others about the year and coming up with ideas for action.

The DPI NGO conference was certainly an insight into the NGO community and the workings of the UN. It was a positive and productive experience, and I sincerely thank the UN Association of Australia SA Division for their generous sponsorship and support.

Catriona Standfield

International Year of Youth Coordinator e: [catriona.standfield@unya.org.au](mailto:catriona.standfield@unya.org.au)  
Organising Committee Member, UNYA National Youth Conference 2011.  
Immediate Past President, United Nations Youth Association of SA.

***UNAA SA was very happy to assist Catriona in attending this event by providing a small supporting grant from the Norman Percy Cole Bequest.***

---

***Philip Alston Contd :*** (From P. )If he has a regret as he prepares to end his two-term posting, it is that he has not been welcome to conduct investigations in India, Pakistan ,Bangladesh, China , Russia, Iran, Thailand and Israel . . . with India top of the list (Police-killings)

Early, Alston worked for Gordon Bryant in the Whitlam Gov't. Then he moved to Berkeley School of Law, graduating in '77. A job in Geneva followed with the UN while he studied for his Doctorate. He worked full-time for the UN on human rights issues from '78 to '84. Next move . . . professorships at Harvard and Tufts (Law and diplomacy) and the ANU from '90 to '95 to enable his adopted Peruvian daughters to become acculturated Australians. Presently, NYU (best in the world, he says, for internat'l humanitarian law)

*Tony Walker (Financial Review)*

*Photo: Jessica Shapiro*

# Light in Darkness: Mondragon and the Global Economic Meltdown

By Dr. Race Matthews

The current economic crisis will not have been in vain if the world is reminded that grass roots initiative can triumph even over seemingly overwhelming adversity. In the aftermath of the devastation of the Basque region of Spain in the Spanish Civil War, a young priest, Don Jose Maria Arizmendiarieta, himself only recently released from concentration camp confinement and narrowly spared imminent execution, was sent by his bishop in 1941 to the small steel industry town of Mondragon. It was here over the subsequent decade and a half that he through painstaking pastoral care, grassroots organization, community development, consciousness-raising and technical education laid secure foundations for the great complex of some 260 worker-owned industrial, retail, agricultural, construction, service and support co-operatives and associated entities that the world now knows as the Mondragon Co-operative Corporation.

Share

From a standing start in 1956, the MCC has grown to the point where by mid-2008 it was the seventh largest business group in Spain. Annual sales increased between 2006 and 2007 by 12.4 per cent to some \$US20 billion, and overall employment by 24 per cent, from 83,601 to 103,731. Exports accounted for 56.9 per cent of industrial co-operative sales, and were up in value by 8.6 per cent. Mondragon co-operatives now own or joint venture some 114 local and overseas subsidiaries.

Hard-hit by the economic meltdown as like other business the co-operatives now find themselves, their members are tightening their belts in a further exercise of the solidarity that has enabled them to weather previous major downturns, and achieve new heights. For example, in 2008 worker owners at the Fagor appliance co-operative elected to forego the additional four-week's pay normally due to them over the Christmas period, and have subsequently cut their pay by eight per cent. As the MCC's Human Resources Director, Mikel Zabala, points out, "We are private companies that work in the same market as everybody else. We are exposed to the same conditions as our competitors". What then are the attributes to which Mondragon owes its remarkable success?

## Industrial Co-operatives

The basic building blocks of the MCC have been its industrial co-operatives. The industrial co-operatives are owned and operated by their workers. The workers share equally in the profits - and, on occasion, losses - of the co-operatives, and have an equal say in their governance. That they are able to do so is due to the unique structures and systems of governance and financial management which the Mondragon co-operatives have developed. In the case of governance, the workers in a co-operative have their say in the first instance through its General Assembly, where the performance of the co-operative is discussed and its policies determined. The workers also elect a Governing Council, which conducts the affairs of the co-operative between Assembly meetings, and an Audit Committee - referred to by some as the "Watchdog Committee" - which monitors the co-operative's financial operations and its compliance with its formally established policies and procedures. Only members of the co-operative - all of them workers - are eligible to stand, and voting is on a one member/ one vote basis.

Successful candidates hold office for a four-year term, but continue to be paid their normal salaries and receive no compensation for their Council responsibilities

meetings are normally held before the working-day begins, and members then resume their normal workplace duties. The Council appoints a Manager for the co-operative on a four-year contract, which may be renewed subject to a mandatory review of his performance by the Council. The Manager may attend Council meetings in an advisory capacity, but is not a member and has no vote. There is a separate Management Council where the top executives and officers of the co-operative liaise with one another on a monthly basis. The separation of the Management Council from the Governing Council reflects the clear distinction which the co-operatives draw between the governance function which is properly the prerogative of their members and the carrying on of operations for which management is responsible.

A final body - the Social Council - is elected annually, by and from shop-floor groups of from twenty to thirty workers. Members of the Social Council hold office for a two-year terms, and may offer themselves for re-election. The Council is a unique structure, with a highly distinctive contribution to the well-being of the co-operative. Whereas the Governing Council represents the members of a co-operative primarily in their capacity as its co-owners, the Social Council represents them primarily as workers. The Council's character in this respect reflects in part the fact that the co-operatives were established during a period when trade unions had been outlawed by the Franco government. Franco's negation of workers' rights was unacceptable to Arizmendiarieta and his associates. In effect, the Social Council has had built into it the union function of enabling members to monitor, question and - if necessary - oppose the policies of the Governing Council and management. The Social Council is required to give advice to the Governing Council on industrial and personnel issues - for example, working hours, the evaluation and classification of jobs, and occupational health and safety - which the Governing Council must consider before its decisions on them are finalised.

The earnings of a Mondragon co-operative are the property of its members. In place of wages, members are paid monthly advances - referred to as *anticipos* - against the income their co-operative expects to receive. Two further advances required by Spanish custom are made available at Christmas and for the summer holiday period. The co-operatives observe a "principle of external solidarity", under which no advance should exceed by more than a narrow margin the wages paid for comparable work by nearby private sector businesses. The level of each member's advance is determined in the first instance by a labour value rating which the Social Council of the co-operative assigns to the job. Overall, incomes are kept as equal as possible. The highest advances a co-operative pays its members cannot exceed the lowest by more than eight to one. By 1990, members had had an estimated increase in their purchasing power since 1956 of around 250%.

### **Worker/Consumer Co-operatives**

Mondragon's initial focus on industrial co-operatives was expanded by the creation in 1968 of its Eroski worker/consumer co-operative. Reflecting the overall Mondragon approach, *Eroski* - unlike traditional consumer co-operatives - is not limited to consumer members. Instead, its membership falls into two categories, namely, the workers who operate its outlets and the consumers who shop at them. The Governing Council has equal numbers of worker and consumer members, with the position of chairman always being held by a consumer. A further difference is that *Eroski* does not pay the traditional consumer co-operative dividend, but instead concentrates on low prices, healthy and environmentally-friendly products and consumer education and advocacy.

**W**

When Philip Alston attended Melbourne's Xavier College in the 1960s, he found his Jesuit masters quite a stodgy bunch; a group more interested in football than the world around them. "The Jesuits at Xavier were a very conservative lot and were quite inflexible," he recalls. Alston remembers coming first in a religious knowledge test where the prize went instead to a runner-up destined for a seminary – Alston being regarded as not sufficiently pious.

So it was something of a relief when he discovered, after working as a human rights lawyer for the United Nations, that "Jesuits were deeply revered subversives in a great many countries around the world". This discovery restored his faith – if not his *faith* – in Jesuitical scholarship and social activism. These reflections are quite revealing of a younger Alston who is, arguably, one of the more interesting – and under-appreciated – Australians of the 1960s era.

It's even more interesting when you consider he shares a gene pool with one of the more conservative ministers of the Howard government (older brother Richard Alston), who distinguished himself in his later career as a senator by taking on the ABC over its Gulf War coverage, accusing it of bias. If there was a problem with ABC's coverage and that of many other news outlets, it was not that they were too disbelieving of arguments for going to war in Iraq. Rather they were insufficiently sceptical of what turned out to be a deeply flawed case, based on faulty intelligence and outright fabrications.

What could not be said about Philip Alston in his current role as UN special rapporteur on extrajudicial, summary or arbitrary executions is that he lacks scepticism – or the determination to pursue inconvenient truths. "There's not a set of governments out there saying we want you to really be as effective as you possibly can in putting an end to these unlawful killings," he tells *The Australian Financial Review Magazine* on a visit to his Melbourne University alma mater. "That's not at all the real mandate. The real mandate is: 'Well, we feel we've got to do something. There are really some killings that really go beyond the pale and we'd like you to do something about them, but take it easy otherwise'."

In Geneva this June giving the final report of his second three-year term as a UN investigator of human rights abuses, Alston did not take it easy on the US over its use of predator drones to kill suspected al-Qaeda terrorists in places such as Waziristan. His concern was not with the use of these devices as weapons of war, but the identity of those manning them: operatives often based thousands of kilometres away in front of computer monitors and not subject to the sort of constraints that might apply to members of the military.

In other words, his argument is with a decision to empower the Central Intelligence Agency to operate these devices beyond reasonable scrutiny. The CIA is not subject to the sorts of rules of engagement that apply to the military. This is a new type of aerial warfare that can – and has – caused the deaths of hundreds of civilians, including women and children. "Because operators are based thousands of miles away from the battlefield, and undertake operations entirely through computer screens and remote audio-feed, there is a risk of developing a PlayStation mentality to killing," Alston stated in a 29-page report to the UN Human Rights Council in June.

Adding a chilling footnote to Alston's testimony is author P.W. Singer's account, in his book *Wired for War*, of a 19-year-old high school drop-out co-opted by the CIA to operate predator drones because of his skill with video games. Alston argues that CIA killings risk violating international law because "outside the context of armed conflict, the use of drones for targeted killing is almost never likely to be legal".

He relates an interesting exchange with the CIA's inspector-general, effectively its watchdog, on the issue of the agency's use of predator drones. "I said to the inspector-general, 'I have specific cases; do you want me to go through them with you?' and he said, 'Absolutely, I very much want to hear about these'. And I said, 'Good, will I be getting a response from you?' and he said: 'Oh well, that's unlikely!'"

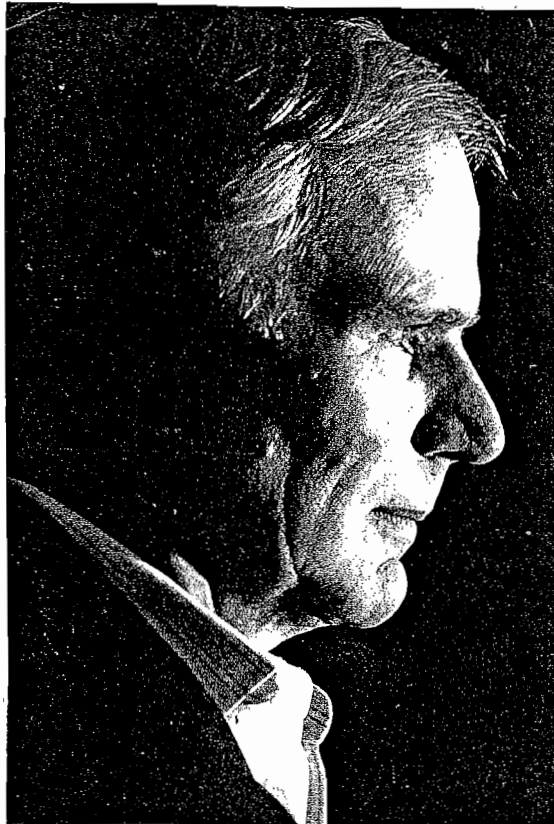
Asked whether being an Australian was an advantage in his work as a human rights investigator, he replies: "It was an advantage because Australia is – or was – seen as a country with some independence. That certainly became less so under the Howard Government, where Australia was predictably supporting the US on almost every issue."

A slight build and bookish manner belie a certain toughness in Alston, who almost certainly factored the exchange into his report to the Human Rights Council – not that these documents go anywhere in a UN hierarchy. Their value lies in the public attention drawn to such potential abuses. Alston has become quite adept at attracting publicity, especially when he conducts in-country investigations, such as his 2009 inquiry into post-election police killings of more than 1,000 people in Kenya.

He compiles a preliminary report and briefs media before leaving the country, thus ensuring his findings get local publicity and avoid getting completely lost in the UN bureaucracy. "Whether it's a case of bucking the system or just doing things people haven't done before," James Ross of Human Rights Watch says, "he's been very effective." Alston himself attributes government actions to restrain military death squads in the Philippines to a 2007 report he compiled on the issue. It led to a significant drop in 'extrajudicial killings' of suspected communist sympathisers and supporters.

This journey from asthmatic, non-football-playing Xavier College student of an insufficiently pious disposition to a distinguished professorship in the New York University School of Law and director of the NYU Centre for Human Rights and Global Justice attests to a quiet persistence. It's the sort of doggedness that has frequently put Alston at odds with human rights abusers in Africa, Latin America, Asia (he has accused Sri Lankan authorities of war crimes over the slaughter of 30,000 mainly Tamils in the latter stages of that war), and the US.

Washington would, no doubt, much prefer that Alston confine his investigations to non-American targets beyond its shores. But in his time as a UN rapporteur – an unpaid position to preserve its independence – he has delved into American activities at home and abroad, including the imposition of the death penalty in southern states such as Texas and Alabama. "It is widely acknowledged that innocent people have likely



*The problem with Israel is a complete accountability void because the US protects Israel in the UN context. Israel is probably the only country that can consistently refuse to co-operate at all with any UN bodies, and that has greatly exacerbated the situation.*

One of the most distinguished, though lesser-known, Australians of his generation, Philip Alston is a quietly achieving human rights warrior.

been sentenced to death and executed," he reports in his 2009 statement to the UN Human Rights Council. "Yet in Alabama and Texas, I found a shocking lack of urgency about the need to reform glaring criminal justice system flaws." Asked whether being an Australian was an advantage in his work as a human rights investigator, he replies: "It was an advantage because Australia is – or was – seen as a country with some independence. That certainly became less so under the Howard government, where Australia was predictably supporting the United States on almost every issue."



## CHILDREN'S WEEK LAUNCH 2010

UNAA(SA) is again proud to sponsor Children's Week this year.

A number of events have been planned, including an official Lunch, an Award Ceremony at Government House, a Minister's Award Ceremony and an Ethnic Schools Parade.

The launch with Stephanie Alexander, UN Patron, from the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation will take place at Elizabeth Downs Primary School on Friday 22nd October. The compere will be Children's Week Ambassador Jane Reilly. The School is the official Demonstration School for this important project in SA, encouraging Children in the growing of Food and learning how best to cook it.



Our photo shows students Sandy, Bradley and Tyson with Karyn Duance from the Stephanie Alexander Kitchen Garden Foundation, with Lidia Moretti UNAA(SA), who invited them to 5RPH to talk about their involvement in the project. The program will go to air on October 10th at 9.30-10.15. You will find 5RPH at 1197 on the AM band.

We look forward to hearing about the launch where the children will cook for about 150 invited guests with support from Award Winning Chef Camillo Crugnale from Assaggio Restaurant.



## OUR UNAA(SA) NEWSLETTER &amp; OTHER COMMUNICATIONS

In our membership renewal this year we have been offering a number of options to our members and friends which keep people informed and also save on postage and paper (not to mention printing, collating and folding).

Our newsletter is usually posted to our members, but we now also have the option to send it by email. This can be in addition, or in place of the posted copy. Since Peter Faulkner has taken over the job of editor he has produced most impressive and interesting newsletters. They are published each quarter, as close as we can manage to the solstice and equinox dates.

UNity is published by the UNAA, and gives a list of links to general UN information. It uses an email list distributed by its editor on a weekly basis. If you indicate that you would like to receive UNity we forward your email address to the editor for distribution directly to your email box.

The UN in New York have published for some time UNWire. While we can subscribe to this individually direct from New York, we have previously forwarded the UNWire to those members and friends who have indicated an interest in receiving it. We have had some difficulties in downloading it, and it is still available at <http://www.unfoundation.org/our-solutions/campaigns/un-wire/>

Instead of UNWire we have changed to distribute the locally compiled "UN in the News" published by the United Nations Information Centre in Canberra. It contains much the same snippets of interesting UN information, but without the problems we have been encountering with UNWire.

The third group of email news we offer is called "General news and other items of Interest". This tells of more local events that might be of interest to people here in South Australia. Things like lectures and special events.

Fortunately with email it is quite easy to add (or delete) names on any of our lists, and also to incorporate a change of email address.

For those without broadband email access there may be problems with slow download of large files. We quite understand that some people very much prefer to have real print on paper to read. But I feel some amongst us might prefer to try these formats to see what might best suit their preferences.

If you have changes you would like to make, or any questions, email us on [mail@unaasa.org.au](mailto:mail@unaasa.org.au), call 8226 4141 (or my own address [johncraw@internode.on.net](mailto:johncraw@internode.on.net) and 8344 4978).

John Crawford, Vice-President.

# United Nations Youth Conference 2011

10.

## *A Celebration of Youth Empowerment*

Adelaide, South Australia

10<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> July 2011

The South Australian Division of the United Nations Youth Association has long been active and effective within our state in its promotion of the ideals of the United Nations, and in the opportunities it provides for young people to participate in national and international issues and events.

Through its annual activities, UNYA (SA) has forged its own reputation as one of the leading youth bodies in South Australia. Their ability to deliver a first class event in 2011 is therefore very high.

The United Nations Youth Conference will not only showcase Adelaide to a national and international audience, but will give the youth of Australia a global voice; to hear and speak about issues of importance to them from wherever they are from, in the company of other passionate and enthusiastic young people.

UNYA relies on the tireless work of its committed volunteers, who are young people themselves, to continue its valuable work. As a non-profit organization, it is only through the generosity and vision of individuals, organizations, business and governments that such endeavours are able to continue and young Australians who might otherwise not be able to attend such a conference are able to participate.

With the very fitting theme of '*A Celebration of Youth Empowerment: Seeing the World Through a Younger Lens*' the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the United Nations Youth Conference will engage students in a number of different discussions, workshops, and debate, with the opportunity to meet and listen to a number of guest speakers to guide, inspire and educate the youth of today on a number of relevant topics.

UNYC 2011 hosted in Adelaide, with the support of you and others will showcase our beautiful state. Adelaide's most illustrious sites and venues will create the perfect setting for the Conference and will promise to be a memorable and special experience for all attendees.

I would be honored to have your support for the 2011 United Nations Youth Conference.

## Professor Stephen H. Schneider



The world has lost one of its leading climate change scientists, teachers and communicators. Professor Stephen Schneider, an Adelaide Thinker in Residence in 2006, died suddenly on Monday July 19, 2010, aged 65. One of the world's foremost climate change scientists, Professor Schneider dedicated more than 30 years to studying the forces influencing climate change, the policy implications of human-induced warming, and pressing the case for action to curb emissions of greenhouse gases.

An educator, researcher, writer and adviser, he played a central role in the IPCC, which shared the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize. He advised every United States presidential administration from Nixon through to Obama.

A gifted communicator, Stephen was a leading advocate for the science community to get out and communicate

directly with the public about the complexities of climate science and the need to address the serious risks it poses.

Stephen's time as a Thinker in Residence left South Australia with a legacy of leadership on climate change. Many of his recommendations to the state government have been acted on: establishment of the Renewables SA Board and a \$20 million Renewable Energy Fund; a world-leading renewable energy generation target of 33 percent by 2020 has been set; and South Australia is an active participant in the Climate Group States and Regions Alliance.

In recent years Stephen battled and subdued a rare form of cancer, all the while fighting tirelessly against climate change sceptics. He passionately argued "this is not an issue we can solve overnight, nor is it an issue where we can afford to wait and see." Stephen Schneider made a profound difference on a global scale. It is to be hoped that political leaders and whole communities will be inspired by Stephen's lifelong dedication to averting climate change, and take courageous action to continue his work. He will be sorely missed.



11.

## UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA

### Peace Ministry call as outstanding Australian gets UN's top award

The United Nations Association of Australia International Peace Award recognises individual efforts to promote peace and resolve conflict. This year the Award goes to a great Australian, Dr. Stella Cornelius, for a lifetime given to peace, conflict resolution, and social justice issues. The award ceremony will be on Friday, 13 August at the UNAA National Conference, in the NSW Parliament Theatre from 12.15 to 2pm.

Previous recipients of the International Peace Award include Nelson Mandela, the Dalai Lama and Mary Robinson.

Australian-born Dr. Stella Cornelius made an outstanding contribution to global peace through making access to conflict resolution training widely available. These skills are now used in workplaces, universities, schools, community organisations, and by individuals. She has been awarded the Order of the British Empire and Order of Australia and acknowledged as a Peace Messenger of the United Nations.

The presentation of the International Peace Award to Dr. Stella Cornelius is timely in this election year, focusing attention on a campaign for an Australian Ministry of Peace that began nearly 70 years ago through the voice of the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom. This call was sounded again in 1982 when Dr Cornelius launched a vigorous campaign for a Ministry for Peace at an Australian Federal Government level. Since then she never lost sight of the vision for an Australian Ministry for Peace.

Dr. Keith Suter, strategic planning consultant and futurist, will highlight these issues at the UNAA National Conference in his keynote address 'Initiatives for Peace Around the World,' asking the questions: *Why is peace and an Australian Ministry for Peace not an election issue? What are our priorities?*

REMINDER: The UN Day Dinner is on October 24

<b>UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA (S.A DIV) INC.</b>	
Invitation	
Sunday, 24 October 2010	
<b>United Nations Day Dinner</b>	
Guest Speaker	
<b>Professor the Hon. Robert Hill</b>	
President of the United Nations Association of Australia	
6:30 pm for 7 pm Ming's Palace 157 Gouger St Adelaide This is a major UNAA (SA) fundraiser for 2010 so if you are unable to attend a donation would be most welcome	BSSVP Friday 15th October 2010 All places to be pre-paid Bookings Essential \$40 per person (transport) - Drinks extra or BYO (\$8 corkage)
<b>Dinner Reservation for United Nations Day Dinner</b>	
Name _____	Contact phone number _____
Address _____	
I would like _____ places for the Dinner	Place: _____ Donation _____
PLEASE PAY CASH OR CHEQUE made out to UNAA (SA)	
Send to: Mr. John Crawford 3 Church Yea WALKERVILLE SA 5061 Ph: 08 8544 4078 Email: john@unaa.org.au	Total amount enclosed \$ _____
<small>UNAA (SA Division) is a member of the World Federation of the United Nations Association which has consultative status on the U.N.</small>	

# Turning 92, Mandela sees his dream of a united nation as 'close'



Nelson Mandela

**JOHANNESBURG:** South Africa came close to achieving Nelson Mandela's dream of a united nation during the World Cup, President Jacob Zuma said yesterday during celebrations to mark Mr Mandela's 92nd birthday.

"We came very close if we did not fully achieve your dream, Tata (father), of one nation united in its World Cup. One, 39-year-old Patricia, a Zimbabwean mother of two, had been threatened by South Africans. "They say they give me a week and they'll come to me and do something," she said. "I'm scared but I'll fight back."

In Johannesburg, Mr Zuma hailed Mr Mandela for being a symbol of unity and tolerance,

July 28, 2010

diversity, celebrating its achievements and working together," Mr Zuma told thousands gathered at Mr Mandela's birthplace in the Eastern Cape village of Mvezo.

South Africa successfully hosted the World Cup, which ended on July 11, the tournament drawing rarely seen patriotism and unity among South Africans of different saying he was the first person to be honoured with a world recognised special day. Mr Mandela's birthday was recognised by the UN last year as Nelson Mandela International Day and was being observed across the world.

The Nobel peace laureate yesterday celebrated the day quietly with his extended family and

aces. But some foreigners feared that World Cup goodwill would soon evaporate to be replaced with renewed hatred for them.

Two years after a wave of anti-immigrant violence left 62 dead across the country, Zimbabwean refugees and migrant workers living in shanty towns had been threatened since the end of the grandchildren at his home in Johannesburg. His grandchildren presented Mr Mandela with a three-tier cake and sang "Happy Birthday, dear Grandad". His wife, Graca Machel, told BBC: "He is getting old, he is getting frail but he is absolutely healthy, full of life, spirits high."

AFP

## Allies relied on 'poor' intelligence on Iraq, says Blix

By Andy McSmith THE INDEPENDENT .... With thanks to - - -

Hans Blix, the former chief UN weapons inspector, accused US and British intelligence yesterday of paying too much attention to Iraqi defectors who told them that Saddam Hussein's regime had weapons of mass destruction, because that was what they wanted to hear.

The former head of the UN's Monitoring, Verification and Inspection Commission (UNMOVIC) has maintained for years that his team of inspectors should have been allowed more time to complete their work in Iraq, which was cut short by the invasion in March 2003. He claimed yesterday that the US administration at the time was "high on military" and thought that "they could get away with it and therefore it was desirable".

Giving evidence at the Iraq Inquiry he argued that it was "absurd" for the US and British governments to claim that they invaded Iraq to uphold the authority of the UN Security Council when they knew they could not get a majority resolution through the council in favour of war.

### (From Page 8). : Philip Alston . . . . .

If he has a regret as he prepares to end his two-term posting, it is that he has not been welcome to conduct investigations - he requires an invitation from countries to be investigated - in India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, China, Russia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Thailand and Israel. India, where extrajudicial killings by police are prevalent, is top of his list, but Israel is a vexed issue as far as Alston is concerned. "The problem with Israel is a complete accountability void because the US protects Israel in the UN context," he says. "Israel is probably the only country that can consistently refuse to co-operate at all with any UN bodies and that has greatly exacerbated the situation."

The die, it seems, was cast fairly early when this son of a Melbourne shoe wholesaler got to the Melbourne University law school on a scholarship and then on to the staff of Gordon Bryant, one of the more liberal ministers in the Whitlam government. When the Whitlam era ended badly, Alston exiled himself to the University of California at Berkeley school of law, where he graduated in 1977.

A job with the UN in Geneva followed, while he studied for his doctorate (he worked full time for the UN in Geneva on human rights issues from 1978 to 1984), then associate professorships in law at Harvard and at the Fletcher school of law and diplomacy at Tufts in the late 1980s. He held a professorship at the Australian National University from 1990 to '95 (to enable his adopted Peruvian daughters to become acculturated Australians) and now NYU.

It is, by any standards, a distinguished academic record. This year, Alston will return as a guest lecturer to Harvard, where his second wife, a specialist in European Union law, has accepted a teaching position. Asked whether there were plans to come home, Alston says: "The simple answer, for better or worse, is that NYC is the best in the world for international humanitarian law. I've got wonderful colleagues and it's a joy to live there [New York]."



NB Page One is substantially true. Because some of it was gleaned anecdotally, there may be minor departures from fact.

Special thanks to Kevin McCormack of Seaton for pointing us in the right direction for a major article.