



THE BULLETIN

Of the Australian World Citizens Association

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President's Column: More Good News

The recent victory of Barack Obama in the US Presidential election can only be good news for world citizens. It heralds a turn away from the unilateralist and neoconservative policies of the Bush administration, and a return to a more cooperative and multilateralist foreign policy by the US. I watched Obama's victory speech on TV, and was enormously impressed. He is a brilliant orator, and knew exactly the right things to say. His speech in Berlin also talked about "global citizenship". Now we will have to see if his actions match his words.

Even the global financial crisis is playing into our hands. There have been many comments about the need for stronger and more cooperative international oversight of the financial system to prevent another such melt-down in the future. Austin Mackell has more to say about that in this issue.

Paul Keating also made a notable speech recently, in which he remarked on the need for better international governance, and lamented the lack of progress in the last sixteen years. He seems to be on a wavelength similar to ours, at least. We may try to snare him for a public talk, or some sort of workshop or symposium on these topics in the future.

Our own mini-workshop with CPACS on 'Human Security, Global Governance' finally went ahead, thanks to Wendy Lambourne of CPACS. I enjoyed the occasion very much, although I managed to put a number of dyed-in-the-wool UN supporters offside. A review of the meeting appears elsewhere in this issue.

A major benefit of the mini-conference was that Daryl Le Cornu attended, and later joined our Association. Daryl is Head Teacher at Mount Annan High School, and involved in setting the HSC syllabus in both Legal Studies and Modern History in New South Wales— see elsewhere in the Bulletin. He has agreed to be our Education Program Manager, and will be an enormous asset to the Association. Welcome aboard, Daryl!

Our charitable aid program is also slowly taking shape. Wali Islam has been preparing a brochure, which will be printed very shortly. We are aiming to raise \$6000 for flood victims in Bangladesh in the next year. You will be hearing more about this!

Finally, our advertisements in the last issue bore fruit. Alan Ryan volunteered to become our new webmaster, and has already given the website a much brighter and more professional appearance – well done, Alan. Brett Samuel has stepped forward to take over editorship of the Bulletin from Lyndon Storey, and also to take over many of the Secretary's functions from Michael de Mol: many thanks, Brett. Perhaps we should advertise more often!

Best wisher to all, from

Chris Hamer.

News from WCA

Mini-Conference: 'Human Security, Global Governance'

After considerable delay, WCA and CPACS (through Wendy Lambourne) finally succeeded in organizing a mini-conference on 'Human Security, Global Governance' at the University of Sydney on 3 September. About 50 people attended, and I found the occasion very enjoyable. Below is a description of the conference put together by three students at Mount Annan High School, who were brought along by Daryl Le Cornu.

I discussed the need for democratic global governance, the need to consider alternative pathways to the UN, and the possibility of a Community of Democratic Nations based upon NATO. I have argued this case in previous Bulletins. There were some challenges to my remarks. John Langmore was clearly displeased at my 'dissing' the UN; I will have to be still more diplomatic in my remarks to lifetime UN supporters. But we had a useful and vigorous discussion.

Chris Hamer

Human Security and Global Governance Conference

On 3 September 2008, three Legal Studies students attended a conference at Sydney University run by the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies and the World Citizen's Association. Here are a few of their comments about the sessions.

Dr Le Cornu



The Canberra Commission and Elimination of Nuclear Weapons

Professor John Langmore (President of the United Nations Association of Australia) spoke about the Rudd Government's commitment to take the lead in setting tighter rules for the 40-year-old Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty when it comes up for review in 2010. The aim of this is the eventual elimination of nuclear weapons. We learnt that the

Rudd government's commitment to this goal is a development of the Canberra Commission of 1996. Current international figures such as Hans Blix (WMD commission), and even the current candidates for the American presidential election John McCain and Barack Obama agree that there is a need to address the issue of nuclear weapons and the effects that they have upon the stability of the international community. He spoke of the need for a global consensus in relation to the disarmament of nuclear weapons.

Proposal for the United Nations Emergency Peace Service (UNEPS)

A panel of four academics spoke about peacekeeping and its role in the United Nations, and possible directions for the future. They informed us of the proposed 'United Nations Emergency Peacekeeping Service (UNEPS)' which, if established, would respond to international crises in 48-72 hours, rather than the months it takes for peacekeeping services to assist today. The service would be comprised of a combination of military services, negotiators, and specialists in rebuilding infrastructure, especially in developing nations with pressing issues, such as those in Darfur, Sudan. All these jobs would be full-time jobs and the faster reaction times could lead to a reduction in deaths in international crises.

Australia, NATO and 'Community of Democracies'

Assoc. Professor Chris Hamer introduced his audience to the concept of an international strengthening of global governments, namely a 'Community of Democracies' based on existing multilateral organisations such as North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and the European Union (EU). He also proposed the possible United Nations Parliamentary Assembly (UNPA) which would act as a subsidiary of the General Assembly and offer advice based on International consensus presented through 'qualified voting'. Although many present were critical of the proposed structure, Professor Hamer presented many valid and new ideas for consideration.

Rebekah Conway, Caitlin Millen and Nick Najdoski

Daryl Le Cornu, Education Officer



Daryl Le Cornu BA (Hons) Dip Ed PhD is Head Teacher HSIE at Mount Annan High School. He is co-author of the Cambridge Legal Studies HSC textbook and of the HTA Modern History Study-Guide. He is co-author of the Cambridge Legal Studies HSC textbook and of the HTA Modern History Study-Guide. In 2007, he spent some time at the NSW Board of Studies writing the initial draft of the new Legal Studies syllabus.

His current area of interest is the promotion of knowledge and understanding of the United Nations and other global institutions that promote multilateral cooperation. He endeavours to do this through teaching and writing material for the 'World Order' option in the Legal Studies course, and the 'United Nations' option in the Modern History course. He is also keen to encourage links between tertiary and secondary institutions in Australia that promote multilateralism and to explore cooperation with like-minded educational institutions overseas.

Charitable Fundraising

We have been working on producing a brochure for our aid program in Bangladesh, and obtaining Deductible Gift Recipient status. We have acquired an ABN number and a TFN number; the next step is to apply to AusAID to become an “Approved Organisation”.

Human Rights Charter

For those following the consultation over establishing a Human Rights Charter, I thoroughly recommend Geoffrey Robertson's book, ‘The Statue of Liberty’, which can be picked up cheap in Big W for \$15. I am surprised there's no public debate yet. I expect at some point this debate will heat up as the shock jocks and others start sharing their ignorance with the community on the subject. This may not happen till after July when the consultation process has ended. Robertson makes the point in his book that the community must be engaged for a human rights charter to get off the ground and be successful.

Also, Gareth Evans' book on ‘Responsibility to Protect’ is highly recommended. I've got a copy but have not had a chance to read it yet. Geoffrey Robertson put a piece in the Herald on human rights. See:

<http://www.smh.com.au/national/teach-human-rights-qc-20090328-9er1.html>

Daryl Le Cornu

Balladur's 'Union of the West'

Edouard Balladur was Prime Minister of France, 1993-1995, and served as a mentor of the current French President and President of the European Union, Nicholas Sarkozy. He was a free market economist, an active member of the Gaullist party, and credited with drawing the mainstream of Gaullists back into a pro-European stance and away from an anti-American attitude. He has written a book entitled 'For a Union of the West between Europe and the United States', to arrest the decline in the economic power and moral self-confidence of the Western world. He argues that Europe and America must awaken to the shared civilization that unites them and build common institutions that enable them to act together in a world where they are no longer the exclusive holders of power. He suggests that they should gradually create a large common market, including a customs union, and put an end to the disorderly floating of currencies.

The Streit Council held a symposium on these issues when Balladur visited the US recently - see ‘Freedom & Union’, Vol II, no 1, Fall 2008. There appears to be a stirring of interest in these and related ideas for closer integration between the community of democratic nations: both John McCain of the Republicans and Madeleine Albright of the Democrats have made various statements on these themes. This is one possible evolutionary path towards global integration. The danger is, of course, that if mishandled it could deepen the divide between the 'West and the Rest', and exacerbate Huntington's 'Clash of Civilizations'.

Website

Since the last Bulletin our website has been redesigned and updated, see www.worldcitizens.org.au. Much of the site content has been updated and new sections have been added for example the Pantheon of Heroes. There is now a forum for members and non-members to discuss anything in relation to world citizens. A blogs section can also be added to the site giving members a chance to openly write about topics of interest. If anyone would like to run a blog please email webmaster@worldcitizens.org.au. We hope that the new site gives World Citizens a place for members of the public to learn about our organisation. Hopefully some will join and become active members. If you have any suggestions please email webmaster@worldcitizens.org.

Alan Ryan

Bulletin editor

Brett Samuel has volunteered to take over editing the Bulletin, after Lyndon Storey was forced to resign the position due to pressure of work. Many thanks to Lyndon for his sterling work from the beginning of our Association. Brett has also kindly volunteered to take over many of the functions of secretary from Michael de Mol, who is also being submerged at work. Well done, Brett.

Thea Waddell

We note with regret the passing of one of our foundation members, Thea Waddell. Thea was previously a long-term member of the World Federalists Association led by Keith Suter. She was a notable patron of the arts in Sydney, and was awarded a Medal of Australia for her work with the Art Gallery of NSW. She was married to Tom Waddell, a former Supreme Court judge in NSW.

Keynes, the world financial system and Global Democracy

By *Austin Mackell*

Since the onset of the Global Financial Crisis there has been renewed discussion in the press of the works of John Maynard Keynes. As a master of the mixed model economy and one of the architects of the modern European welfare state, Keynes was an obvious thinker to turn to as the hardline non-interventionist model collapsed. Unfortunately, with a typical lack of imagination or research, all the journalists I have read, with the exception of George Monbiot (whose book *The Age Of Consent* is a must read for any serious advocate, or opponent, of a world parliament), stopped short of discussing the alternate model Keynes proposed for the world economic system, which was centred around an alternative to the World Bank and International Monetary Fund called the International Clearing Union.

The ICU would track each country's balance of trade (the total value of exports minus imports) in a theorised currency called the Bancor against which other currencies would be fixed. At the end of the financial year the ICU would charge countries a

percentage tax based on either a negative or positive balance of trade. This would, apart from quickly accumulating a reserve of funds with which to fight poverty and deal with humanitarian disasters, create an incentive for creditor nations (who usually have a positive balance of trade) to invest in debtor nations (who usually don't).

It was taken to the Bretton Woods conference as the United Kingdom's official negotiating position. Europe and Asia lay in ruins, and so America, at the time the world's biggest creditor nation, was the dominant partner in the talks, and America said no.

So we got the system we have now instead, and a little over half a century later, America – now the world's largest debtor nation - has asked China (whose massive export economy has produced a consistently positive balance of trade and allowed them to amass huge foreign currency reserves as America fell further and further into the red) to invest in America's convulsing markets. China has declined.

If the Keynesian model had been in place, China would have had, over the years of its rise, a strong incentive to reinvest its export earnings elsewhere, and debt laden America would have gotten a more timely and much more gentle kick in the pants about its own balance of trade and need for foreign investment.

I am not an expert in economics but I've not yet come across a good argument as to why the Keynesian model of an International Clearing Union would not have worked over the last sixty years to help: a) Insure a rising tide really did float all nations' boats; and b) Prevent collapses like the one we are currently suffering through.

I am however aware that my opinion on this issue carries no special significance over any one else's, and is no doubt much less thought through than the opinions of those who have dedicated their whole lives to economics. Therefore, if I were given a magic button that, if pressed, would re-write the world economic order along the Keynesian model, I would not press it.

I have no more right than the American negotiation team at the Bretton Wood's conference to determine what the architecture of our shared world system should be. The only body that would have the right to design – and the body most capable of designing such a structure – would be a global democratic assembly. Such a body would also have the legitimacy to restructure in meaningful ways the United Nations, World Court, the World Trade Organisation, and the way in which such organs of international governance interact.

The economic crisis we are enduring now is nothing compared to the ecological, political, social and humanitarian challenges that loom ahead in the twenty first and twenty second century, any one who believes the current international system is up to these challenges seems to me to be kidding themselves.

Brief Excerpts From: “The Prosperity of Humankind” – A Statement by the Baha’i International Community Office of Public Information Haifa 1995.

“The effort of will required for such a task [global peace and prosperity] cannot be summoned up merely by appeals for action against the countless ills afflicting society. It must be galvanized by a vision of human prosperity in the fullest sense of the term -- an awakening to the possibilities of the spiritual and material well-being now brought within our grasp. Its beneficiaries must be all of the planet's inhabitants, without distinction, without the imposition of conditions unrelated to the fundamental goals of such a reorganization of human affairs”.

“History has thus far recorded principally the experience of tribes, cultures, classes, and nations. With the physical unification of the planet in this century and acknowledgement of the interdependence of all who live on it, the history of humanity as one people is now beginning”

“..endowed with the wealth of all the genetic and cultural diversity that has evolved through past ages, the earth's inhabitants are now challenged to draw on their collective inheritance to take up, consciously and systematically, the responsibility for the design of their future” (pages 1-2)

“The **bedrock of a strategy** that can engage the world's population in assuming responsibility for its collective destiny must be the consciousness of the oneness of humankind. Deceptively simple in popular discourse, the concept that humanity constitutes a single people presents fundamental challenges to the way that most of the institutions of contemporary society carry out their functions”. (page 4).

“Laying the groundwork for global civilization calls for the creation of laws and institutions that are universal in both character and authority. The effort can begin only when the concept of the oneness of humanity has been wholeheartedly embraced by those in whose hands the responsibility for decision-making rests, and when the related principles are propagated through both educational systems and the media of mass communication. Once this threshold is crossed, a process will have been set in motion through which the peoples of the world can be drawn into the task of formulating common goals and committing themselves to their attainment. Only so fundamental a reorientation can protect them, too, from the age-old demons of ethnic and religious strife. Only through the dawning consciousness that they constitute a single people will the inhabitants of the planet be enabled to turn away from the patterns of conflict that have dominated social organization in the past and begin to learn the ways of collaboration and conciliation. "The well-being of mankind," Bahá'u'lláh writes, "its peace and security, are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established." (pages 5 and 6)

“At the group level, a concern for **justice** is the indispensable compass in collective decision-making, because it is the only means by which unity of thought and action can be achieved. Far from encouraging the punitive spirit that has often masqueraded under its name in past ages, justice is the practical expression of awareness that, in the achievement of human progress, the interests of the individual and those of society are inextricably linked. To the extent that justice becomes a guiding concern of human interaction, a consultative climate is encouraged that permits options to be examined dispassionately and appropriate courses of action selected. In such a climate the perennial tendencies toward manipulation and partisanship are far less likely to deflect the decision-making process” (pages 6-7).

“At the heart of the discussion of a strategy of social and economic development, therefore, lies the issue of human rights” (page 7).

“Since the body of humankind is one and indivisible, each member of the race is born into the world as a trustee of the whole. This **trusteeship** constitutes the moral foundation of most of the other rights -- principally economic and social -- which the instruments of the United Nations are attempting similarly to define. The security of the family and the home, the ownership of property, and the right to privacy are all implied in such a trusteeship. The obligations on the part of the community extend to the provision of employment, mental and physical health care, social security, fair wages, rest and recreation, and a host of other reasonable expectations on the part of the individual members of society”.

“The principle of collective trusteeship creates also the right of every person to expect that those cultural conditions essential to his or her identity enjoy the protection of national and international law. Much like the role played by the gene pool in the biological life of humankind and its environment, the immense wealth of cultural diversity achieved over thousands of years is vital to the social and economic development of a human race experiencing its collective coming-of-age. It represents a heritage that must be permitted to bear its fruit in a global civilization. On the one hand, cultural expressions need to be protected from suffocation by the materialistic influences currently holding sway. On the other, cultures must be enabled to interact with one another in ever-changing patterns of civilization, free of manipulation for partisan political ends.

"The light of men", Bahá'u'lláh says, "is Justice. Quench it not with the contrary winds of oppression and tyranny. The purpose of justice is the appearance of unity among men. The ocean of divine wisdom surgeth within this exalted word, while the books of the world cannot contain its inner significance." (pages 8-9).

(Baha'i International Community, 1995 Mar 03, The Prosperity of Humankind)

“The tasks entailed in the development of a global society call for levels of capacity far beyond anything the human race has so far been able to muster. Reaching these levels will require an enormous expansion in access to knowledge, on the part of individuals and social organizations alike. **Universal education** will be an indispensable contributor to this process of capacity building, but the effort will succeed only as human affairs are so reorganized as to enable both individuals and groups in every sector of society to acquire knowledge and apply it to the shaping of human affairs” (page 11).

“To contemplate a transformation of society on this scale is to raise both **the question of the power** that can be harnessed to accomplish it and the issue inextricably linked to it, the authority to exercise that power. As with all other implications of the accelerating integration of the planet and its people, both of these familiar terms stand in urgent need of redefinition.

“Throughout history -- and despite theologically or ideologically inspired assurances to the contrary -- power has been largely interpreted as advantage enjoyed by persons or groups. Often, indeed, it has been expressed simply in terms of means to be used against others. This interpretation of power has become an inherent feature of the culture of division and conflict that has characterized the human race during the past several millennia, regardless of the social, religious, or political orientations that have enjoyed ascendancy in given ages, in given parts of the world. In general, power has been an attribute of individuals, factions, peoples, classes, and nations. It has been an attribute especially associated with men rather than women. Its chief effect has been to confer on its beneficiaries the ability to acquire, to surpass, to dominate, to resist, to win.

“The resulting historical processes have been responsible for both ruinous setbacks in human well-being and extraordinary advances in civilization. To appreciate the benefits is to acknowledge also the setbacks, as well as the clear limitations of the behavioral patterns that have produced both. Habits and attitudes related to the use of power which emerged during the long ages of humanity's infancy and adolescence have reached the outer limits of their effectiveness. Today, in an era most of whose pressing problems are global in nature, persistence in the idea that power means advantage for various segments of the human family is profoundly mistaken in theory and of no practical service to the social and economic development of the planet. Those who still adhere to it -- and who could in earlier eras have felt confident in such adherence -- now find their plans enmeshed in inexplicable frustrations and hindrances. In its traditional, competitive expression, power is as irrelevant to the needs of humanity's future as would be the technologies of railway locomotion to the task of lifting space satellites into orbits around the earth.

“The analogy is more than a little apt. The human race is being urged by the requirements of its own maturation to free itself from its inherited understanding and use of power. That it can do so is demonstrated by the fact that, although dominated by the traditional conception, humanity has always “been able to conceive of power in other forms critical to its hopes. History provides ample evidence that, however intermittently and ineptly, people of every background, throughout the ages, have tapped a wide range of creative

resources within themselves. The most obvious example, perhaps, has been the power of truth itself, an agent of change associated with some of the greatest advances in the philosophical, religious, artistic, and scientific experience of the race. Force of character represents yet another means of mobilizing immense human response, as does the influence of example, whether in the lives of individual human beings or in human societies. Almost wholly unappreciated is the magnitude of the force that will be generated by the achievement of unity, an influence "so powerful," in Bahá'u'lláh's words, "that it can illuminate the whole Earth."

“The institutions of society will succeed in eliciting and directing the potentialities latent in the consciousness of the world's peoples to the extent that the exercise of authority is governed by principles that are in harmony with the evolving interests of a rapidly maturing human race” (pages17-18.

(Baha'i International Community, 1995 Mar 03, The Prosperity of Humankind)

COMPILERS COMMENTS: The bold print is my own, put there to highlight subject matter discussed in that section .This Statement is 21 pages long and is very worthwhile studying in full.

Contributed by *Michael de Mol*

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