

NEWSLETTER UNAA (sa)

December 2007

UN Wins Nobel Peace Prize , Again

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change ,set up by the UN Environment Program - and Al Gore, jointly won the Nobel Peace Prize for their work to educate the world on predicted catastrophic climate change. This is the third time in the past seven years that a UN entity has been recognised with the Nobel Peace Prize.

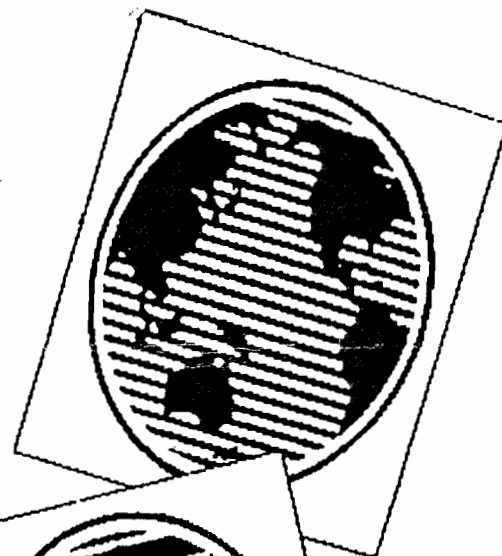
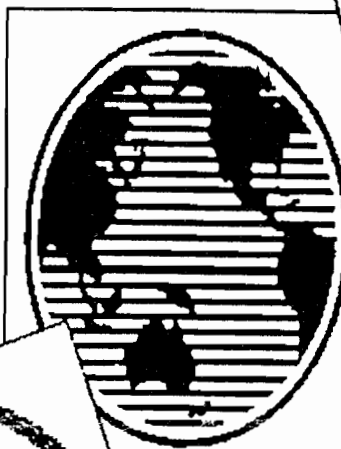
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On Sept. 13, indigenous peoples around the world were engaged in celebrating the UN General Assembly's approval of the Declaration on the Rights of Indig. Peoples. Approval by a strong majority in an historic vote in New York. Favour: 143 nations; Against: USA, Australia, NZ, Canada. Eleven Abstained.

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UNEP/United Nations Environment Programme, facilitates international environmental cooperation, monitors the world environment, coordinates sound environmental practices and promotes the exchange of environmental knowledge. Headquarters: Nairobi. www.unep.org



Also in this edition:

**Rights Torch
Iraq Plan .. Ours
The Book of Spud ..
A Little History
Vedran of Sarajevo
"People and Planet" Diary**

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News in Brief :

Following the call from the UN Commission on **Climate Change** an international body of scientists Australians responded on Sunday, Nov. 11th, to the tune of some 115,000 in the Walk Against Warming in about 60 locations across the country. Not only local media coverage was attracted, but also that of China, UK, Italy and USA. Prominent among the organisers were the Aust. Conservation Foundation, the CCSA, and the Friends of the Earth.

Giant Australian natural gas company, **Woodside**, has opted to plant 20 million mallee trees in WA and NSW to **offset** the emissions from its \$12 billion Pluto LNG project.

Ties between the **ANZ Bank** and the suspect PNG **Logging Industry**, has opponents of the projected Gunns' pulp mill in Tasmania seeking to pressure ANZ not to fund the mill.

Forestry Tasmania (FT), a State-owned company, wants to build a new 132km **Tourist Road** through the renowned **Tarkine** forest of NW Tasmania.

UN Security Council Resolution 1325 : acknowledged for the first time in its 50 year history that "Peace is inextricably linked with equality between men and women" but that 'the equal access and the full participation of women in power structures and their full involvement in all efforts for the prevention and resolution of conflicts are essential for the maintenance and promotion of peace and security'

Dr. Sue Wareham, President of MAPW (Medical Ass'n for Prevention of War) calls the attention of all Australians to the two big dangers threatening our future - **Climate Change**, alluded to above, and **Nuclear Weapons**. Similar warnings come from **ICAN**, International Campaign against Nuclear War.

One-time Adelaidean, **Prof. Tony McMichael**, now at the National Centre for Epidemiology, Canberra, writes in regard to global warming : "*Finally, that other great moral dilemma : do we bequeath to future generations an impoverished and inhospitable world, or even, in the worst case, a world in which future generations cannot survive? Or might we yet get really serious about mitigating climate change now that we see more clearly not just what is at risk, but who is at risk?*"

Two vastly different towns, Qld's **Cloncurry** and Victoria's **Mildura** are set to become "**SOLAR**". The former will work on reflection by 8000 mirrors onto graphite blocks into which water will turn to steam to drive turbines in the conventional way. The Mildura plant will comprise one of the tallest towers in the world and will be based on a convection mode.

Very similar, certainly in their effects, to anti-personnel landmines, are **Cluster Bombs**. Once dropped, the canisters open spreading the several hundred bomblets they contain over a wide area. During **and after** conflicts, killing and maiming civilians occurs. Lebanon and Iraq experience the horror. Several countries including G.B. manufacture and sell this type of ordnance.

A Little History : **UNEP** (UN Environment Program) in its 1990 Global 500 list of 85 awardees for the year, honours three Australians : **ALCOA Aus.** for its post-strip mining reforestation in WA ; John Sinclair, of Fraser Is. Fame ; and Christine Milne, now a Fed.Senator, for grassroots action in preserving Tasmania's Forests. Do you recognise these names? *David Bellamy, Margaret Thatcher, James Lovelock?* They appeared in the same edition.

RIO + 15 :- The UN Conference on Environment and Development [UNCED] '92 was, although blighted by the "spin" of some world powers and the absence of some heads of state, the most far reaching meeting of national leaders ever conducted, with 178 nations attending. Positives to take from Rio were (a) the massive document Agenda 21 (b) a new recognition by Gov't ministries of the value of working with NGOs (c) born of frustration at the slow pace of change came the gradual formulation of the EARTH CHARTER launched in 2000.

Human Right Torch Relay



www.cipfg.org

Invitation

"Torch heat on China"

Sunday Mail October 28, 2007

"A Torch relay aimed at pressuring China on human rights ahead of the Beijing Olympics has arrived in Australia.

The Global Human Rights Torch Relay will visit 100 cities on five continents before next year's Games ..."

The highly anticipated arrival of the Torch to Adelaide is just round the corner and you are cordially invited to be a part of this history-making event.

Messages of Torch

- *Olympics & Crimes against humanity cannot co-exist*
- *Free all Falun Gong practitioners & other prisoners of conscience*
- *No Human Rights, No Olympics*

National Ambassador of Torch

Jan Becker, 1964 Olympics Swimmer

Supported by:

Free China
 National Civic Council
 Edmund Rice Centre
 Darfur Australia Network
 Doctors Against Forced Organ Harvesting
 Federation of Vietnamese Community in Australia
 Federation for a Democratic China
 Human Rights Arts & Film Festival
 Women's International League for Peace & Freedom (WILPF)



CIPFG – Australian chapter:

Dr Sev Ozdowski OAM
 Senator Andrew Bartlett (Democrats, QLD)
 Hon Louise Pratt (ALP, WA)
 Phil Glendenning (Director, ERC)

Welcome Ceremony & Relay

Adelaide

Time: 10 am - 4pm

Date: Monday, 3 December 2007

Place: Victoria Square (opposite the Hilton Hotel)

Guest of Honour :

**Attorney - General The Hon. Michael Atkinson
 Will officially welcome the Torch at 2:15pm**

Other speakers:

The Hon. Sandra Kanck MLC
 Archbishop John Hepworth, Anglican Catholic Church
 Ruth Russell, Democrat's Senate candidate for SA
 Lieu Do, Head of Australia Chapter of Viet Tan Party
 Representative, National Civic Council
 Representative, WILPF
 Torch Ambassador: Elaine Tiong
 Mt Barker

Time: 12 noon – 2pm

Date: Tuesday, 4 December 2007

Place: Mt Barker District Council (23 Mann St)

Guest of Honour: Mayor Ann Ferguson will officially welcome the Torch at 12 noon.

Please kindly indicate your support:

- I will attend the Adelaide event.
- I will attend the Mt Barker event.
- I will walk / run with the Torch.
- I will address the audience.
- My apologies for not being able to attend. Please find my support message attached.

RSVP: Brian 0400 306 581 or 8381 5340

E-mail: sa@cipfg.net Fax: 08 8379 9223

South Australia Human Rights Torch Relay Organising Committee

Thanking you in anticipation for your support

<http://www.humanrightstorch.org/>

An initiative of CIPFG (Coalition to Investigate the Persecution of Falun Gong in China)

“People & Planet” A superb DIARY of this title has been published by Global Trade Watch in Victoria. Some of the 40 or so non-profit groups partnering GTW in this venture are : Pax Christi; Friends of the Earth; UNAA sa; Perth Fair Trade; The Greens (Vic.); Fair Wear; Jubilee Australia; The Trading Circle.

The diary is of the 7 days per opening and an evocative photo accompanies each week. Several copies are held at the UN Office, 1st Floor, 220 Vic. Square, and they sell for \$17:50. We guarantee that you’ll not be disappointed in the quality.

“A Hard Rain” Award-winning Filmmaker, David Bradbury, author of “Blowin’ in the Wind” has come out with this latest . . . set in the Township of Roxby Downs and the nearby Minesite, Olympic Dam. Keep an eye out for this strong film: it has a great reputation. *(and so has David : He had the courage to show it in Roxby theatres!)*

Vedran, and the Siege of Sarajevo Vedran Smailovic’s photo was in the N.Y. Times in July ’92 middle aged, longish hair with a great bushy moustache. Dress : formal evening clothes. Sitting in a café chair in the middle of the street where mortar fire struck a breadline in late May killing 22 people. He is playing his cello. Vedran is a member of the S. Opera Orchestra. There is little he can do about hate and war : it has been going on for centuries in this city. Even so, every day for 22 days - one day for each friend or neighbour killed - he has braved sniper and shell fire to play Ibinoni’s moving Adagio in G Minor. I wonder if he chose this piece knowing it was constructed from a manuscript fragment found in the ruins of Dresden after WW11. The music survived the bombing. Perhaps that is why he played it there in the scarred street in Sarajevo. Something must triumph over horror. Is this man crazy? Maybe. Is his gesture futile? Yes, of course, in a conventional sense. But what can a cellist do? All he knows how to do. Speaking softly with his cello . . . like the Pied Piper, calling out the rats that infest the human spirit. Almost everyone in S. knows now what a cellist can do, and the place where Vedran played has become an informal shrine. Croats, Serbs, Muslims, Christians alike . . . they all know his name and face and they place flowers where he played, commemorating the hope that must never die . . . that some day, somehow the best of humanity shall overcome the worst. An artist in Seattle saw Vedran’s picture and read his story. Her name is Beliz. Real person .. What could an artist do? She organised 22 cellists to play in 22 public places in her city for 22 days and the final day all 22 played together in front of a store window displaying burnt-out breadpans. The media were there. The story and the pictures passed back to Vedran Smailovic that he might know his music had been heard and passed on.

sure that what happened to us doesn't have to
gradually start down the road towards peace.

Thank you for standing up,
THANK YOU FOR STANDING UP



Dear friends,

Yesterday, we saw the Prime Minister launch his campaign - and the most astonishing thing happened. As the leader of a nation at war, setting out his vision for the future, **Mr Howard failed to even mention the war for which he is responsible - not a single word.**

We are not experts. But we are two young Australian women who know something about the real cost of this war in Iraq. I, Louise (*right*), survived the 2005 London bombings. I underwent six operations and spent three months in traction. And I, Sam (*left*), was married to Jacob McMillan - an American soldier, my 25 year old love, who was killed in action in Iraq last December.

40,000 of you have already signed the petition. Thank you!

We think anyone who wants to lead Australia must have a plan for peace. So today, we are publicly asking Mr Howard to meet with us before the election so we can directly present your petition and report back to you his answer.

We don't know if he will agree to meet us. We're just two people. **But we do know that when thousands of Australians sign the petition, we all become part of something too big to ignore.**

We know war can seem remote to many Australians, especially this war in Iraq, but it is very real to us. It has changed our lives - and the lives of hundreds of thousands of people around the world.

This issue must not simply slip away because our politicians would rather ignore it. We're coming to you because we know GetUp members feel the same way. You have been campaigning for over a year on the war - along with your petition, you raised over \$80,000 to help put Louise's message to the Prime Minister on the airwaves.

Can you help us in our final push to take our concerns directly to the top? **Together, we can make sure that what happened to us doesn't have to happen to any more Australians before we finally start down the road towards peace.**

Thank you for standing up,
 --Louise Barry and Sam McMillan
 Tuesday, November 13th 2007

United Nations Day Annual Dinner

Mings Palace was filled to capacity on Sunday 28th October for this popular event. Good publicity, followed by excellent organization by Lidia Moretti and Heather and their team contributed to this. Rosemary McKay ensured that the evening 'flowed' smoothly by her lively M-C ing. Generous donors ensured the online/silent auction was a real success. The presence of ten or more of our young friends from UNYA was very gratifying.

We were indeed privileged to have as our major Guest-Speaker, South Australia's Lieutenant Governor Mr.Hieu Van Le. The values that he put before us gave evidence of the man himself. It was fitting that Mr.Van Le was able to launch the new UNAA(SA) multicultural poster.

The newly arrived Italian Consul, Mr. Tommaso Coniglio addressed us on Italy's current involvement with the U.N. Italy is currently serving a two year term on the Security Council

Visit of the Director of UN Information Centre

Mr Abdullah Saleh Mbamba will be visiting Adelaide on Dec.12. He is the Senior UN officer in Australia and is based in Canberra, where his wide experience will be appreciated. Previously, Mr.Mbamba served at the UN Headquarters in New York followed by field offices in Pakistan and Indonesia. He is a national of Tanzania and holds, inter alia, a Masters degree in Leadership. The UNIC was established in 1948. As Director, Mr Mbamba is the official representative of the UN Secretary-General in Australia and the South Pacific.

Details of Mr.Mbamba's Adelaide program on Dec.12 will be forwarded to members by E-mail as they come to hand.

Microcredit movement tackling poverty one tiny loan at a time. September 30, 2007, *San Francisco Chronicle* (San Francisco's leading newspaper)

A Peruvian widow borrowed \$64 and bought a few pigs. For \$55, a villager in Ghana went into the mineral-water trade. A mother of nine in Guatemala upgraded her grocery store with \$250. These women from three continents have something in common: They are beneficiaries of microcredit - very small loans to very poor people for very small businesses. The benefactors, in many cases, are ordinary individuals inspired by a movement that is reshaping philanthropy. More and more of us are becoming convinced that lending even tiny amounts of money to destitute people in the developing world can transform lives - theirs and ours. "My life has changed because of this loan," said 27-year-old Patience Asare-Boateng, in a phone interview from Ghana. "This is something that people want: a sense of connection and a sense of community," said Bob Graham, founder of NamasteDirect, a microcredit organization in San Francisco. "Because it's decreasing in our daily lives." The microcredit approach carved out in Bangladesh three decades ago by 2006 Nobel Peace Prize winner Muhammad Yunus has inspired a war on poverty that blends social conscience and business savvy - especially in Northern California. Although Yunus, widely regarded as the father of the modern microcredit movement, made his first loan in 1976 and established Grameen Bank - lending to the poorest of the poor, 24 years ago, microlending only recently started seeping into public consciousness. ■ ERA N° 11/07
