

Does Govt plan sneaky approval of dangerous Trans Pacific Partnership deal?

The Turnbull government is reportedly planning to sneak through a vote to endorse the much-contested Trans Pacific Partnership agreement on 1 December, the last sitting day of the year.

The move would pre-empt a parliamentary inquiry into the deal, which is due to report in February 2017. Tacticians believe the government will move a Bill to “endorse” – or “tick-flick” – the TPP agreement, avoiding any possible negative finding of the committee.

The TPP Tick-Flick Law would be rushed through both houses by gagging debate.

Already endorsed on party political lines by the Joint Standing Committee on Treaties, the TPP includes the dangerous Investor State Dispute Settlement clauses, under which Australia can be sued simply for instituting good health or environment policy if the policy disadvantages a big corporation’s marketing.

The Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade References Committee is undertaking the current inquiry.

Submissions closed on 28 Oct, and it is due to report on 7 Feb 2017. But its findings may be avoided, and voided, by the Tick-Flick TPP “law” tactic of the government, Civil Liberties Australia believes.

Govt engenders fear among those who speak up

The Australian government had generated "an atmosphere of fear, censorship and retaliation" among activists, according to a UN special rapporteur on an official visit here.

Michel Forst released an end-of-mission statement last month after a fortnight in Australia. He said he was "astonished" by numerous measures heaping "enormous pressure" on public servants, whistleblowers and ordinary citizens.

Increased secrecy provisions, especially around immigration and national security, were hampering the ability of journalists and human rights defenders to hold public institutions to account, he said.

Mr Forst condemned "anti-protest legislation" in Tasmania, NSW and before the WA Parliament targeted at environmental activists, which he said contravenes Australia's international obligations. <http://tinyurl.com/jevr58j> and <http://tinyurl.com/hpyaroj>

Is contempt revealed in fewer staff, less expenditure?



CLA believes discretionary, positive human rights activity has been actively diminished in recent years by the Abbott-Turnbull governments, under the stewardship of Attorney-General Senator George Brandis (photo).

Senator Brandis’ contempt for Prof Gillian Triggs and the Australian Human Rights Commission is well known. His latest contretemps with the newly-resigned Solicitor-General Justin Gleeson is a further indicator of the difficulty he has in actually delivering human rights and civil liberties, contrasted with speaking platitudes about them, such as with his ‘Freedoms inquiry’ reference to the Australian Law Reform Commission, and the new reference on “incarceration of Indigenous Australians”. <http://tinyurl.com/jckrmxn>

But it is almost impossible to quantify what the government is NOT doing in the liberties-rights field, what it is failing to do or has stopped doing. Here’s what we would like to know:

Question to A-G Brandis:

Please provide, for the Human Rights Branch/Section (however described) of the A-G’s Department for each the years ending 30 June 2015-2010-2005-2000-1995, and where appropriate measured at 30 June of those years:

- Budget expenditure by the branch/section
- Number of staff in the branch/section
- Any available measure of workload-output achieved in each of those years
- A dot point listing of the major activities of the branch/section during each of those years.

Note: It would be useful to know how much terrorism-related staff, expenditure and activities of AGD have expanded over the same period.

If any CLA members can think of other questions for Ministers or departments/agencies that might illuminate what the government is NOT doing, ideally research the answers for CLA...or email the questions to [Secretary\(at\)cla.asn.au](mailto:Secretary(at)cla.asn.au)

Sue Neill-Fraser case back in court this month: The next directions hearing for the SNF appeal against her murder conviction, under the 'Right To Appeal' law which CLA helped shepherd through the Tasmanian Parliament, will be held on Monday, 7 November at 2.15 pm in the Supreme Court in Hobart. Such hearings are to give 'directions' to the parties about the things that need to be done to get ready for the main, substantive hearing. <http://tinyurl.com/jsev2a>



Illustration: Artwork, drawn in jail by Sue Neill-Fraser. Though Sue offered no description, CLA President Dr Kristine Klugman believes it represents her as the mouse, subject to vagaries of the Tasmanian justice system, like a mouse on an ear of wheat, being buffeted by winds from all directions.

'Jail without justice' becomes how Australia treats prisoners

Australia's Parliament should reject any proposal to keep people locked in jail after they have served their sentences as un-Australian, against the considered opinions of Australian statesmen a century apart, and as an attack on the rule of law in our democracy.

In a submission to the Security and Intelligence Committee (SIC), Civil Liberties Australia quoted once PM Alfred Deakin in 1912 and the current Attorney-General, Senator George Brandis, in 2014 as politicians who have spoken eloquently in defence of not taking away the rights of the citizen.

In a speech in the Australian Parliament in 1912, Alfred Deakin said, in outlining a vision for Australia:

"It means the full calling forth of all the powers, abilities, qualities, and characters of the people of Australia, not their suppression as citizens..."

Current AG Brandis, commissioning a two-year analysis of the state of the nation's liberties, rights and freedoms by the Australian Law Reform Commission in 2014, eloquently summed up the danger of allowing fear to swamp common sense and individual rights:

"For too long we have seen freedoms of the individual diminish and become devalued. The Coalition Government will strive to protect and restore them. Freedoms are some of the most fundamental of all human rights. They underpin the principles of democracy and we cannot take them for granted."

SIC has held a hearing, mostly involving police- and security-boosters, on a proposal to keep people in jail, after they have served their 10- or 15-year sentences, based solely on an offence they might commit in future after being released. A judge could decide to keep the person in jail, without any "due process": proper charge, production of evidence, hearing in a courtroom, and conviction.

"If the Australian Parliament allows this law to pass, it will have changed the nature of Australian democracy," Civil Liberties Australia CEO Bill Rowlings said. "We will have become like those countries who lock up people without trial if they don't agree with the government. We will have become a country who locks people up on suspicion without giving them a day in court. We will have become a nation which has abandoned the legal principles on which our Constitution is written."

He said Australia was lacking a Bill of Rights because the majority of the founding fathers felt that the traditional rights and freedoms of British subjects were sufficiently guaranteed by the nation's Parliamentary system and independent judiciary under the Australian Constitution. "Passing the proposed law would demonstrate the parliament is no longer a guarantor of traditional rights and freedoms. If the Parliament passes this law, the people need the protection of a Charter or Bill of Rights.

"Civil Liberties Australia calls on the judiciary to state clearly and unequivocally, in advance, that they would not take part in such a travesty of justice as locking people up in jail, beyond having served their full sentences, for what the government thinks they might do."

After one day of committee hearings, the proposal for 'jail without justice' seemed to require a re-drafting of the legislation based on technical difficulties highlighted by the Qld government.

For whom the poll tells

Some 18,000 people apparently voted more than once at the federal election in July 2016.

Two people were marked off the electoral roll 11 times, and another two had their names marked off 5 times, while four others had 4 marks and 51 people had 3 marks.

Australian Electoral Commissioner Tom Rogers told a Senate estimates hearing last month that 18,343 people have been asked to explain why their name was checked off more than once. NSW recorded 6760 instances, compared with 4800 in Victoria and 2792 in Queensland...and just 178 in the NT.

Despite nearly 8000 cases of suspected voting fraud at the previous 2013 federal election, not a single person was prosecuted for multiple voting.

The Commonwealth Electoral Act allows for fines of \$10,800 or up to a year in jail for people convicted of multiple votes. Anyone found to have impersonated someone else at the ballot box faces up to six months in jail or a fine of \$1800. <http://tinyurl.com/hjz4qat>

Right to privacy tort may emerge in states, but not nationally

Australians may get a legislated right to privacy, actionable under tort-style justice – but only through state and territory laws, because the federal Coalition government won't play nationally.

The issue was on the agenda of the Law, Crime and Community Safety Council, a body of attorneys-general, police, justice and emergency service ministers from throughout Australia and NZ. The council never acknowledges that it has an agenda, and says officially that it keeps no minutes: instead, it releases a communique:

“AGs discussed the desirability of a nationally uniform approach to a statutory cause of action for serious invasions of privacy and noted that NSW will convene a working group, to which other jurisdictions may choose to contribute, to consider the matter further. The Commonwealth noted that it does not support the creation of a statutory tort for serious invasion of privacy,” the October 2016 communique said.

In relation to OPCAT – the convention against torture that would allow regular, independent inspection of our jails and detention centres – the communique said: “AGs noted ongoing work towards a decision on ratification of the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment.”

In response to numerous letters from CLA, the Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull, AG George Brandis and a host of other ministers at the federal and state level have repeatedly said: “OPCAT is under active consideration”. CLA is puzzled whether “ongoing work” is the same as “active consideration”.

– communique <http://tinyurl.com/hyny4qj>

Battle continues over terrorism transparency

An intra-parliamentary battle is being fought for terrorism and security transparency.

The Labor Party wants to open up the Security and Intelligence Committee (the SIC, or formally, the PJCIS) to act like the US Congressional equivalent, holding public hearings in the glare of publicity.

The PJCIS Amendment Bill 2015 would give the committee extraordinary powers to launch its own-motion investigations. Currently, it can only consider issues and bills referred to it by the parliament.

The proposed new system is the love-child of former Senator John Faulkner, a towering figure in parliamentary reform of recent years (if not the only figure). He believes SIC should have more bite.

Under his proposal, the committee could review operational activities of the Australian intelligence agencies and the Australian Federal Police.

The proposal would expand the powers of the SIC by authorising the Independent National Security Legislation Monitor (INSLM) and the Inspector-General of Intelligence and Security (IGIS) to give SIC a copy of any report provided to the PM or the relevant minister within three months.

Speaking to the proposal in parliament last month, Senator Louise Pratt (Lab, WA, photo) said the proposals “would bring the parliamentary joint committee in line with equivalent parliamentary committees in the US and the UK, which already have this power.



“But here in the Australian parliament our legislatures have, comparatively speaking, handed more power to government and more power to the agencies, while our parliamentary committees have been relatively more constrained in their capacity for scrutiny.

“In 2013 the UK's Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament was reformed by the passage of the Justice and Security Act 2013. So we now need to be able to keep up with these international movements,” she said.

The governing Coalition, however, is dead against the proposal, as it is also against opening up the SIC committee to wider membership from more MPs, including independents and those from small parties.

CLA calls for uniform national bail laws

Australia needs national – and humane – bail laws, Civil Liberties Australia says.

Bail laws are currently a mish-mash around the nation, frequently targeting Aborigines for greater pain.

In NSW, the Indigenous prisoner population has doubled over the past 15 years despite a sharp drop in arrests for serious crimes, because of bail laws that target disadvantaged communities hardest.

Bureau of Crime Statistics and Research figures reveal a 40% rise in the rate of Indigenous imprisonment between 2001 and 2015, partly caused by increasing rates of refusing bail. At the same time, Indigenous involvement in violent crime and property crime declined by 37% and 32% respectively.

Nearly 40% of Indigenous defendants refused bail and held on remand – in custody awaiting trial or sentence – do not go on to receive a prison sentence at their final court appearance.

Greens MP David Shoebridge, the party's justice spokesman, said the NSW government should wind back "regressive amendments" to the state's bail laws, which began in January 2015.

CLA says there needs to be a new federal-state-territory body to review bail laws throughout Australia to make them human rights-appropriate in the first instance. The revamped laws should then become part of a uniform code throughout Australia.

“Why should bail laws be different one side of a state border line to the other?” CLA CEO Bill Rowlings asked. “We are the same people, with virtually identical standards as to appropriate behaviour.”

“Different bail laws are a result of ‘law and order’ publicity auctions during election campaigns, with feverishly scared politicians outbidding each other to appear ‘tougher on crime’. Every time they do, it’s Aborigines, and mostly Aboriginal kids, who end up suffering most.” <http://tinyurl.com/zwa7nan>

Offshore gays should be sent further offshore: official Pezullo policy

PNG, where homosexuality is illegal, should dispatch LGBTI refugees to a third country, but it was no concern of Australia's, Immigration head Mike Pezullo told a Senate estimates hearing last month.

He also said Immigration bureaucrats administering the government's policy were ‘traumatised’ and ‘demoralised’ when people criticised offshore processing. Criticism of staff, Mr Pezullo said, was the fault of “left, Marxist publications” that claimed Immigration was part of a “totalitarian, secret state”.

Mr Pezullo made no mention of any trauma suffered by refugees who have to endure offshore “processing”, CLA notes. The refugees also are not paid a salary, and have no compensation available to them for any physical or mental suffering. – Report by Bernard Keane, *Crikey*, on 161018.

ODD SPOT: Is Australia a totalitarian state?

Bernard Keane (see above) also commented that, “Under the Australian Border Force Act, Immigration can prosecute whistleblowers who reveal the abuse of children in offshore detention facilities, with penalties of up to two years’ jail, with the AFP able to track down whistleblowers using the government’s mass surveillance laws”.

Fiscal inequality is on the rise: poor getting poorer

Shadow Assistant Treasurer Andrew Leigh (Lab, Fenner, ACT) has outlined how society is changing.

“On inequality, the past generation has been good for the billionaires, but not so much for the battlers. Earnings have risen three times as fast for the top tenth as the bottom tenth. The top 1% income share

has doubled. The wealthiest three Australians now have more wealth than the poorest one million Australians.”

While richness is no guarantee of rights, being poor brings the certainty that you have to fight constantly and harder to retain your freedoms and enjoy your civil liberties, CLA says.

– Leigh speech ‘Age of Ambition’ 12 Oct 2016 <http://tinyurl.com/j34rzaa>

Privacy looms with new code

The first code of conduct for Australia's life insurance companies means they can no longer spy on about 30% of their clients in the loo, Sarah Danckert reported last month.

Lactation rooms, change rooms, inside houses, hospitals and court rooms are also now off-limits for the surveillance arms of Australia's biggest life insurance companies.

The Financial Services Council released the code last month, along with updated definitions of heart attack, stroke and cancer. The FSC developed the code after the CommInsure scandal in which terminally ill patients were denied payouts because they weren't sick enough and other legitimate claims rejected under increasingly dubious reasons.

The code does not cover people with life insurance policies held through their super fund, which is about 70% of policies. <http://tinyurl.com/h7ugt4k>

CCC should focus on what it is obliged to do, not what it may not do

Like all crime bodies, the new Corruption and Crime Commission team in WA laments lack of power.

The chairrman, John McKechnie, said the CCC not being able to launch its own prosecutions – and always having to refer back to the State Solititor's Office or the DPP – caused injustices when the four-hour time to prosecute after arrest ran out.

He proposed a change to the law so that the CCC could start a prosecution by laying charges itself, then handing the matter over to other authorities.

Misconduct figures have dropped from 36 cases in 2014 to 25 cases in 2016, he told a parliamentary committee holding hearings last month into the CCC annual report: it was chaired by MLC Nick Goiran.

The CCC was concentrating on eight new serious investigations which began within the past 12 months, Mr McKechnie said. There were 79 active cases being investigated, with 21 going back as far as three years.

He told the hearing he saw his main responsibility as ‘reporting to the WA government’. Civil Liberties Australia believes he ought to be focussed on preventing and prosecuting crime and corruption in WA, public and private. The CCC's act charges the head honcho with ‘combating and reducing the incidence of organised crime, and improving integrity and reducing misconduct in the public sector’. – report by CLA member Margaret Howkins.

Photo: CLA's President Dr Kristine Klugman and Margaret Howkins of WA discuss justice issues with Michael Cornish, political adviser to NXT MHR Rebekha Sharkie, at Parliament House Canberra in October 2016.



Gearing up for new focus on charters of rights

Tasmania and WA may lead the way towards charters of rights legislation rolling around the nation.

Both states have held formal consultations over the question, but baulked at the first opportunity to introduce legislation. In both states, the need for citizens to have better protections and safeguards is likely to emerge as an election issues in 2017-18. WA goes to the polls on 11 March 2017, Tasmania in 2018, probably in May.

Two Australian jurisdictions have legislated charters of rights, the ACT from July 2004 and Victoria two years later (the law's introduction was staged in Victoria). With the Coalition government federally against a charter of rights, a national law is highly unlikely in the short term – though Labor, small parties and independents are getting daily a demonstration of why such benchmark laws are as needed in Australia as in comparable countries.

Australia is a partner in 'Five Eyes' surveillance with NZ, Canada, the UK and the USA, but doesn't contribute to the 'Five Legs' of national citizen justice by having a federal charter of rights. When it comes to the foundational rights of citizens and citizenship, Australia is "legless". For example, nowhere are the rights of Australian citizenship defined, allowing the government to tinker with liberties at will.

Govt proposes open-slathe speech despite 65-1 opposition

The Tasmanian government is still planning to change the state's anti-discrimination laws, despite Civil Liberties Australia revealing last month that public consultation showed massive lack of support.

The proposed changes would give religious bodies, for example, virtual open slather to criticise gays. CLA's Tasmanian Director Richard Griggs unearthed details of the submissions made to the government through a Right to Information (RTI, or FOI) application, showing only 1 of 80 submissions supported what the government planned to do. There were 65 opposed to the proposal, and just 14 giving partial support or undecided.

"We were astonished to see only one submission in support. It really beggars belief how it got this far from the government if there's only such a small level of support," Mr Griggs said.

CLA called for the government to abandon the proposal in light of the submissions, a call backed by the Labor Opposition and the Greens, Natalie Whiting reported for the *ABC Online*. <http://tinyurl.com/jnfbwym>



Photo shows Tasmanian Director Richard Griggs being interviewed by TV news over the issue.

Liberal Minister Guy Barnett said there was 'silent' support for the changes. "A lot of people who support what the Government wants to do wouldn't necessarily write in favour of that objective," he said.

CLA's Mr Griggs said there were limits to free speech. "It has always been the case that it needs to be balanced against other rights, in this case freedom of speech is being balanced against the rights of others to be protected from harmful comments."

Criminals get Justice Dept protection, not so much citizens

The Tasmanian government is covering up how much danger the public faced from criminals wrongly released from the state's Risdon prison.

Seven inmates were set free from prison by mistake in bureaucratic bungles over the past two years. But the Justice Department secretary, former top Victorian cop Simon Overland, has blocked a second request, under an FOI application by a newspaper, to release details of the crimes they had committed. *The Mercury* sought details of their offences but the Justice Department refused.

In an internal review of the decision, department secretary Simon Overland has backed the suppression of the potentially embarrassing details. Part of his reasoning relates to not wanting to identify the offences because doing so might identify the offenders.

While the public might have been in great danger, the offenders apparently are to enjoy full protection, given Mr Overland's decision. <http://tinyurl.com/hmwdjxk>

Police engage in cyber bullying, target fellow gay officers

Two Sydney police officers who mounted a cyber bullying campaign against NSW Greens MP Jenny Leong look likely to face charges.

Fairfax has reported that the Police Integrity Commission (PIC) is finalising a brief of evidence for the NSW prosecutor to file criminal prosecutions against them.

A six-month PIC inquiry has also found that several other police employees engaged in "questionable contact" when they targeted the Newtown MP with a stream of racist and sexist slurs.

The PIC probe was prompted by a *Fairfax Media* investigation which revealed how officers from Sydney City Local Area Command, Kings Cross, Bankstown, Cabramatta – and even senior management – had all contributed to the hate campaign while shielding their identities under social media pseudonyms.

In a separate matter, but also Newton-based, the NSW Anti-Discrimination Board is investigating complaints from four gay police officers who were allegedly targeted in a undercover drug operation by senior hierarchy because of their sexuality. After six months, the costly investigation found "no direct evidence of drug use" or "related misconduct", *Fairfax* reported. <http://tinyurl.com/hvo6c4t>

Mental health boost, new 'ICAC', after election win

A new Labor-Greens coalition ACT government is likely to spend big on mental health and corruption, and pass a 'Right To Appeal law', mirroring the legislation in SA and Tasmania.

ACT Labor promised to invest \$7.5m in mental health services if re-elected, and to start new suicide prevention programs in Canberra.

The party said it would allocate \$1.5m for a pilot version of the Black Dog Institute's lifespan program being trialled in NSW to reduce suicide rates. The program aims for a 20% reduction in suicides by working with GPs to improve early detection and increasing mental health awareness in high schools.

Another \$2.3m would fund an undisclosed mental health service for vulnerable and marginalised youth and \$1.6m would allow youth service Headspace to employ five more staff.

The Greens policy platform included introducing the Right To Appeal law, promoted by Civil Liberties Australia. The Greens also reaffirmed a \$10m commitment to establish an ACT ICAC with statutory powers to investigate allegations of misconduct and corruption. <http://tinyurl.com/haozpf>

Eastman case in the balance...again

Three Victorian judges imported to the ACT have reserved their decision on David Eastman's latest bid to avoid retrial over the alleged murder in 1989 of former AFP assistant commissioner Colin Winchester. Eastman spent 19 years in jail before his conviction for murder was quashed and he walked free in 2014.

His release followed an telling judicial inquiry which found flaws in the forensic evidence used to link him to the scene of the killing, and criticised the DPP's office for withholding information.

The ACT DPP later decided to re-try him, prompting Eastman to fight for a permanent stay on proceedings in the ACT Supreme Court.

Acting Justice David Ashley in April threw out Eastman's application for a permanent stay of proceedings, but kept secret his reasons for doing so he didn't jeopardise the fairness of the retrial. Eastman is now appealing that decision in the ACT Court of Appeal.

Most of the appeal has been heard in closed court. Eastman himself made a rare appearance in the court's public gallery on the first day, head largely obscured on entry by a sun-shelter hat (photo, *ABC*).

<http://tinyurl.com/h2edzcf>



ODD SPOT: Vote for minus...recent letter to the editor

I would love to see an amendment to the Electoral Act to allow one to cast a negative vote. For example, a vote of minus one (-1) for the candidate of one's choice means that the tally for that candidate gets reduced by one vote. – George Beaton, Greenway ACT (*Canberra Times*, 28 Sept 2016)

State gives cannabis green light

Queensland doctors from next year can prescribe medicinal cannabis for patients.

A new law passed last month will allow Queensland patients of any age and with a range of conditions to access legal medicinal cannabis products.

Some specialists, such as oncologists, paediatric neurologists and palliative care specialists will have the right to prescribe medicinal cannabis from March next year. Other doctors, including GPs, can apply to Queensland Health for permission to prescribe the drug for patients with certain conditions.

The bill passed unanimously with Labor government, Opposition and crossbench support.

Other, limited medicinal cannabis schemes operate in NSW and Victoria. Internationally, medicinal cannabis is approved for use in Austria, Canada, the Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Israel, Italy, New Zealand, Spain, Sweden and the United States. <http://tinyurl.com/je4qh83>

Changes aim to make parliament work better

The new NT government has announced changes aimed at making parliament work better:

- The register of members' interests will go online, instead of having just one paper copy;
- "Dorothy Dixers" questions will not be asked on Wednesdays, giving the opposition and independents a full hour of question time to scrutinise the government one day a week; and
- A new select committee, including opposition and cross-bench members, will investigate reform including improving question time, scrutiny of legislation and public participation.

Leader of government business (as well as Attorney-General and Minister for Justice) Natasha Fyles, announced the changes last month – media release 13 Oct 2016

Domestic violence cases to get special court

The NT will establish a special court and ask the federal government to establish a tax by volume on alcohol in a bid to overcome the NT's shocking rates of domestic violence.

A special Domestic Violence Court would start with a trial in Alice Springs, Families Minister Dale Wakefield said last month.

She said Central Australia had "some of the highest domestic violence rates in the world". "One of the things we'll be looking at with the federal government is looking at a specialised domestic violence court so that women when they do report, get a timely response from the court," Ms Wakefield said. <http://tinyurl.com/jt97nbp>

Women to get abortion relief in north

The NT is moving to legislate to stop people hindering women's access to reproductive health care or health providers giving information or health services to patients.

The NT remains the only jurisdiction in Australia to not legalise medical abortion.

Attorney-General Natasha Fyles (photo) has said publicly she hopes to have laws passed in 2017 that would allow women to access medical abortion drug RU486.

Tasmania, Victoria and the ACT all have laws aimed at allowing safe access zones of 150m around abortion clinics to protect the safety and wellbeing of patients and staff. A private member's bill has also been tabled in NSW for safe-access zones. <http://tinyurl.com/h6wkgp7>



Big drug hauls are a cop out: letter

A trapper would be delighted to bag a national record of rabbits...but the record would be a matter of despair for the farmer on whose property they were caught.

Similarly, ACT Policing's capture of "one of the largest hauls of cannabis in Australia last year" ("Police seize \$6 million of cannabis, 1 October p15 Canberra Times). The large catch shows cannabis is plentiful. – Bill Bush, CLA member, Turner ACT. <http://tinyurl.com/zptq2z5>

High Court upholds jury ‘sanctity’

The High Court last month upheld the ‘sanctity’ of the jury room.

It dismissed an appeal from Queensland by a profoundly deaf woman who complained she had been discriminated against by being excluded from jury service.

Summoned for jury service by the Ipswich District Court, she advised that she would need two Australian Sign Language interpreters. The court replied there was no provision under the *Jury Act* 1995 (Q) to administer an oath to an interpreter for a juror and that it was not possible for an interpreter to be present in the jury room during its deliberations.

The High Court effectively ruled the *Jury Act* trumps the Anti-Discrimination Act. Discrimination advocates are likely to campaign for a change to *Jury Acts* throughout Australia. *Lyons v Qld*: <http://tinyurl.com/zx9l92x>

Cancer Council challenges will over being left out

Cancer Council Victoria has launched a Supreme Court bid to get its hands on a dead woman's medical records, to establish whether it has a claim to \$12 million left to the organisation in her previous will.

Elizabeth Bell Thomson was 94 when she died in 2015. The dispute is over whether or not she had dementia when she changed her will.

In her first will, in 2004, she left her entire estate to the Cancer Council (then the Anti-Cancer Council) in the event her husband died before her. But in 2011 she wrote another will, cutting the Cancer Council out entirely. <http://tinyurl.com/gp3ar37>

Australian briefs

Brandis cheapens the office of privacy and information oversight: Attorney-General George Brandis, in appointing Timothy Pilgrim – the Privacy Commissioner – as Information Commissioner and acting FOI Commissioner also, is getting three tasks managed for the price of one. This is a pretty clear indication of the value Senator Brandis puts on privacy, information and FOI. The office used to be a three-man job, until Prof John McMillan’s term as *supremo* fizzled out in June 2015 without reappointment, or allocation of funding. By such oversights do we lose our rights to transparency over government, and to the privacy of our lives and information, CLA says. <http://tinyurl.com/zklf6ya>

Police pay up to ‘hide’ mistakes: NT police have paid out nearly \$500,000 in four years for wrongful arrests and other stuff-ups. Police paid 71 times from 2011 to 2015 for public liability purposes – which includes wrongful arrests – for a total of \$497,516. RMIT adjunct professor Peter Norden said the amount would be much higher if the non-government sector was better equipped to hold the criminal justice system to account. “If places like NAAJA (North Australian Aboriginal Justice Agency) had better resources or there were more public defenders in the NT these figures would be multiplied probably 10 times over,” he said. <http://tinyurl.com/jbovyv6>

Police get to protect themselves better: After conducting their own review, the Australian Federal Police are to get a \$39m boost to their own staff security throughout Australia. Work at eight sites across Australia, including Canberra, Sydney, Melbourne, Perth, Brisbane and Adelaide, will be completed by December 2017 once the plans are rubber-stamped by the parliament’s public works committee. – media release, PSCPW 161020

Govt profits from tracking us: AUSTRAC information contributed to 3990 Australian Taxation Office cases last year, resulting in \$152m in income tax assessments, bringing AUSTRAC's total contribution to tax assessment and debt collections to nearly \$2.8 billion over the past 10 years. AUSTRAC information also contributed to 287 Department of Human Services cases, achieving total annualised savings of \$8.3 million associated with welfare fraud. – AUSTRAC annual report 2015-16 <http://tinyurl.com/gww5n69>

Escaped prisoners granted privacy – public kept in the dark: The Tasmanian government has blocked a second request to release details of how dangerous was a group of prisoners wrongly released. Seven prisoners were wrongly released over the past two years due to bureaucratic bungles. Six of the prisoners were released early, including one inmate who spent five months in the community before authorities realised the oversight. *The Mercury* lodged a right to information request but the Justice Department refused. Department secretary Simon Overland later backed the suppressing of the potentially embarrassing details, playing the “privacy” card. That is, privacy for the prisoners. <http://tinyurl.com/hmwdjxk>

CLA report – key activities for October 2016

Following letters to the 39 new members of the House of Representatives requesting a meeting with CLA representatives, we received 11 positive replies and seven polite refusals.

Of those agreeing to meet with CLA, seven were ALP, two Liberal and two Independent. Of course, the members who agreed were those more likely to be receptive to civil liberties and human rights matters. We researched the backgrounds of the members we had appointments to talk with, including the nature of their electorate, their backgrounds and their particular interests as reflected in their first speeches.

We sent an agenda of items to be discussed a day before the meeting, the items being to urge ratification of the Optional Protocol for the Convention Against Torture (OPCAT), CLA’s 10-year Better Justice strategy, developments with the introduction of a Charter of Rights, a summary of the Trans Pacific Partnership...and asking what the key concerns of the MP are.

We made up a package of leave behind material: a leaflet for them to join CLA, a current issue of the *CLArion* newsletter, a summary paper on our Better Justice strategy, a future issues alert on genes and data issues and a summary paper on the Trans Pacific Partnership.

Attending some of the meetings with President Kris Klugman and CEO Bill Rowlings were Perth CLA member Margaret Howkins and ACT member Pauline Westwood, CLA’s TPP expert.

Pauline Westwood is shown at right, with the Member for Fremantle, Josh Wilson, and CLA President Dr Kristine Klugman.

In general the discussions were very positive and some real connections were made. Ongoing associations are assured with several on topics of mutual interest. For details of particular discussions, please contact the President.

Networking meetings during the month were held with Sydney CLA members Diana Simmons and Prof George Williams, Melbourne members Lesley Vick and Ken Davidson, ACT members Jennifer Ashton, Thomas Mautner, Rosemary Jennings, and Tony Hanley, and WA member Margaret Howkins.

The CEO and president met with Victorian Appeals Court President, Justice Chris Maxwell, re the Better Justice plan and held a Skype meeting with Richard Griggs, a Tasmanian director.

Contact with the ACT Legislative Assembly’s reelected Greens Shane Rattenbury ensured the the ‘Right to Appeal’ legislation will be part of their negotiations with the ALP to form a coalition government after the recent election.

Submissions:

CLA is concerned that new legislation coming into the federal and states-territories parliaments is showing a marked predilection towards abandoning traditional Rule of Law boundaries and introducing mandatory punitive measures that prostitute the nation’s judges into highly-paid clerks. For example, in the past month we have made submissions on these Bills, which clearly indicate a worrying trend:



Federal:

- Criminal Code Amendment (High Risk Terrorist Offenders) Bill 2016 – see item above.
- Criminal Code Amendment (Firearms Trafficking) Bill 2015 [Provisions]: introduces mandatory minimum sentences for firearms trafficking and increases maximum penalties - see item above.
- Australian Crime Commission Amendment (Criminology Research) Bill 2016 [Provisions] - to approve a merger of the A. Institute of Criminology with the (old) ACC...which has already happened.

Tasmania:

- Sentencing Amendment (Assaults on Frontline Workers) Bill 2016 - Tas: introduces mandatory minimum sentences - see item above.

Tasmania:

CLA has been particularly active in Tasmania recently, under initiatives led by Directors Richard Griggs and Rajan Venkataraman.

In Hobart, Richard met with Michel Forst, the UN Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights defenders. Copy of End of Mission Statement from Special Rapporteur: <http://tinyurl.com/hjefqlb>

Through Right to Information laws, it became apparent there was an extremely low level of support for the State Government's proposed changes to Anti-Discrimination laws (see story above). As reported in Launceston Examiner <http://tinyurl.com/z5pdsbn> and by the ABC <http://tinyurl.com/jnfbwym>

Rajan and Richard met with Lara Giddings MP, Shadow Attorney General, and are preparing to meet with Attorney General Dr Vanessa Goodwin. Agenda items included mandatory sentencing and expungement of historic criminal convictions for homosexual activity.

Photo shows Rajan Venkataraman and Ms Giddings.

Richard gave evidence to the Tasmanian House of Assembly Standing Committee on Community Development during their inquiry into donor conception practices and the issue of retrospective laws to allow donor conceived children to locate their biological parents against the wishes of the biological parent.



International

Nauru fails to safeguard child refugees: UN

The Nauruan government must take “immediate action” to investigate all allegations of mistreatment, abuse and sexual assault against refugee and asylum-seeker children, the UN said last month in a report card on the Pacific island nation.

The report follows a UN committee on the rights of the child hearing, which reviewed the state of children's rights in Nauru. Its ‘concluding observations’, relate to the refugee and asylum-seeker children held or hosted on the island as part of its agreement with Australia to process boat arrivals.

The committee concluded that the Nauruan government had accepted asylum-seeking and refugee children from Australia “without taking their best interests into account”. The memorandum of understanding between the two countries also failed in this respect, it said. <http://tinyurl.com/hprgygl>

New report highlights Canadian experience of TPP provisions

Australia faces increasing expensive legal claims from foreign corporations if the Trans Pacific Partnership agreement comes into force, a new report – *Canary in the Coal Mine* – warns.

The author, the ANU's Dr Kyla Tienhaara who was working to a GetUp brief, said Australia ought to learn from Canada's experience after it signed the North America Free Trade Agreement, which came into force in 1994 and led to dozens of legal cases against Canada by US corporations.

She said the frequency of trade-based legal cases against Canada had increased significantly since 2006, in line with the global trend of such disputes, and warned a similar thing might happen to Australia under the TPP, because it has an investor state dispute settlement (ISDS) provision similar to NAFTA's.

The best current hope for an end to corporate greed-driven TPP is refusal by the USA to endorse the deal: both Hillary Clinton or Donald Trump personally oppose it, but there is concern that current President Barack Obama may try to slide Congressional endorsement through before he leaves office, CLA notes. See lead story for Australian comparison. <http://tinyurl.com/hm7yald>

UN Human Rights chief warns Trump presidency would pose world danger

The world would be in danger if Republican nominee Donald Trump became US President, the top UN human rights official said last month.

UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Prince Zeid Ra'ad al Hussein of Jordan, cited Mr Trump's views on vulnerable communities including minorities and his talk of authorising torture in interrogations, banned under international law, as "deeply unsettling and disturbing".

Prince Zeid said that he would rather not interfere in politics. But when a candidate's comments pointed to a potential use of torture, prohibited under the Convention against Torture, which has been ratified by the USA, or to vulnerable groups possibly losing their basic rights, he had to speak out.

In a speech in The Hague, Mr Zeid accused Trump of spreading "humiliating racial and religious prejudice" and warned of a rise of populist politics that could turn violent. <http://tinyurl.com/hbwpaj9>

Privacy worldwide is shattered in secret

Yahoo covertly built secret software to search incoming e-mails of all its customers, some hundreds of millions of them, it was revealed last month.

Under a secret warrant issued by the USA's secret Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Court, Yahoo scanned customer accounts worldwide at the behest of the US National Security Agency or FBI.

The New York Times reported Yahoo used its system designed to scan for child pornography and spam to search for messages containing an undisclosed "signature", apparently with possible terrorist links.

Elizabeth Goitein, co-director of the Liberty and National Security Program at the Brennan Center for Justice, suggested that the precedent set here has scary, real-world privacy implications outside the online world. If a judge can authorise a single probable cause warrant to allow a 'bot' to scan hundreds of millions of emails, then a judge presumably could order the same surveillance by a non-human robot in the real world.

"It's the equivalent of sending a robot to everyone's home to look for a piece of evidence. You can say it's not a person, but it's a computer. Would that be OK?" said Goitein. "In order to find a murder weapon, they sent a robot into every house in this country to look for it. That's kinda like what we're talking about here." <http://tinyurl.com/gwnxmp5>

Police misconduct suppresses crime reporting: study

After news broke that a group of Milwaukee police officers savagely beat an unarmed black man named Frank Jude in 2004, the city saw crime-related 911 calls drop by about 20% for more than a year – totalling about 22,200 lost reports of crimes – according to a new study by sociologists at Harvard, Yale, and Oxford universities.

The outcome wasn't unique to Jude's beating, the researchers found. Looking at the city's 911 call-records from 2004 to 2010, they noted similar drops after other highly-publicised local and national cases of police violence against unarmed black men, Beth Mole of ArsTechnica reported last month. The findings square with earlier research showing that communities – specifically black communities – become more cynical of law enforcement after brutality cases.

But the new study, published in the October issue of the *American Sociological Review*, is the first to show that people actually change their behaviour based on that elevated distrust. Community members become less likely to report crimes to law enforcement, likely out of fear of interacting with police or skepticism that police will take them seriously and help.

This, in turn, may contribute to crime spikes. In the six months after local media first reported Jude's beating in Feb 2005, homicides surged by 32% over the previous six months. The researchers noted it was the city's deadliest period across the seven years they studied.

As a control, the researchers found no such drops in 911 calls related to car accidents, which are often required for insurance purposes, during the relevant time frames.

“Police misconduct can powerfully suppress one of the most basic forms of civic engagement: calling 911 for matters of personal and public safety,” the authors concluded. <http://tinyurl.com/jxh8o8f>

Women to strike over extension of anti-abortion laws

Masses of women are expected to go on strike throughout Poland against a new law that would effectively ban abortion.

In Poland terminations are now legally permitted only when the life of the foetus is under threat, when there is a grave threat to the health of the mother, or if the pregnancy resulted from rape or incest.

Were the proposed new law to be enacted, all terminations would be criminalised, with women punishable with up to five years in prison. Doctors found to have assisted with a termination would also be liable for prosecution and a prison term.

The all-female protest is inspired by an all-out strike more than 40 years ago by the women of Iceland, when 90% of women refused to work, cook, or look after their children for a day in October 1975. <http://tinyurl.com/hyocls>

Social media magnates permit private surveillance on-sell

The American Civil Liberties Union last month outed Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram for feeding a private company their user streams—which were then sold to police agencies for surveillance purposes. After the disclosure, the social media companies said they stopped their data ‘firehose’ to Chicago-based Geofeedia. The ACLU said it uncovered the data feeds as part of a public records request involving California law enforcement agencies. Geofeedia touts how it helped police track unrest during protests. The department's intelligence agency's top brass wrote that it would allow police to analyse and respond in real time to "social media content from anywhere in the world."

"You are able to see real-time potential threats being made to an event," Denver Police Lt William Mitchell said. He said that the data feeds helped with the Boston Marathon bombing investigation. "It has the ability to identify criminal suspects and their actions as they post them to social media," he said.

Los Angeles authorities had written in a grant application that as many as 500 police departments throughout the USA were using Geofeedia. <http://tinyurl.com/jgyk6ch>

Full might of government takes on a simple taylor



To try to prevent prisoners having the right to vote, the NZ government appealed on 26-27 October to a full bench hearing of five judges of the NZ Court of Appeal.

The Crown's appeal was against Justice Heath's Decision on 24 July 2015 to grant a Declaration of Inconsistency on the Act of Parliament which bans prisoner voting.

Formally, the Speaker of the House of Parliament is trying to intervene to prevent NZ citizens exercising a democratic right, which must be a new twist on individual rights, CLA believes.

The Speaker claims parliamentary privilege to legislate as the parliament likes, regardless of the constitutional rights involved. The case is called Attorney

General vs Taylor & Others, with top silk Victoria Casey QC representing the Speaker.

Arthur Taylor (photo), known as the “jailhouse lawyer”, is being represented by Doug Ewen. Richard Francoise represents the other prisoners .

Senior lawyers describe the case as the most important constitutional law hearing in more than 25 years in NZ, and a real test of the NZ Bill of Rights Act. It is expected the hearing will attract many scholars and lawyers as spectators .

In making his 2015 ruling, Justice Heath found that the law was full of inconsistencies and would lead to arbitrary outcomes. One example he gave was home detention, where the person would keep their right to vote, whereas a person sentenced to the same amount of time in prison would be disenfranchised.

Prisoner Taylor turns 60 in 2016. He is serving a 17-year cumulative sentence in the high-security A Block at Paremoremo prison, and will be released in 2022 if he isn't granted parole earlier.— email from Arthur Taylor.

Crippled court 'not running on all cylinders'

"The US Supreme Court (which has just begun a new term) remains without a ninth justice seven months after President Obama nominated Merrick Garland to fill the vacancy created by the death of Justice Antonin Scalia in February 2016," an editorial in the *New York Times* said in October.

"That seat is likely to stay empty until well into 2017. This is entirely contrary to the workings of a constitutional government, and it is inflicting damage on the court and the country.

"The court, particularly after it decided the outcome of the 2000 presidential election by a 5-to-4 vote, has struggled to overcome the growing public perception that it is little more than another political body, no less ruled by partisanship than the other two branches (of government). The Senate Republicans' insistence that no hearing can be held for the next justice until after the new president takes office only serves to reinforce that notion." <http://tinyurl.com/zmthu7w>

Panama Papers: Robbing the poor to pay the rich people's taxes for them

"The economic system is, basically, that the rich and the powerful exited long ago from the messy business of paying tax," investigative reporter for the *Guardian*, Luke Harding told an audience of academics and research students.

"They don't pay tax anymore, and they haven't paid tax for quite a long time. We pay tax, but they don't pay tax. The burden of taxation has moved inexorably away from multinational companies and rich people to ordinary people."

Harding was commenting on the revelations out of the Panama Papers, leaked in 2014 but whose impact is still being felt. Who do you think are the "three current prime ministers" named with secretive offshore banking accounts, as mentioned in Alan Rusbridger's contributions to the *New York Review of Books*? <http://tinyurl.com/jjh49nx>

ODD SPOT: Pentagon fights dirty war by video

The Pentagon gave a controversial UK PR firm Bell Pottinger more than \$650m to run a top secret propaganda program in Iraq, according to the UK's Bureau of Investigative Journalism. Bell Pottinger's output included short TV segments made in the style of Arabic news networks and fake insurgent videos which could be used to track the people who watched them around the world, according to a former employee. <http://tinyurl.com/hkd7n56>

UK police 'failing trafficked victims': survey

UK police are failing victims of modern slavery by not recording what happens to them as crimes, so that many cases are never investigated, the independent anti-slavery commissioner said last month.

Kevin Hyland, whose job was created under last year's Modern Slavery Act, said just over a quarter of the 3,000-plus slavery cases identified in England and Wales last year under the national referral mechanism (NRM) for recording the offence resulted in crimes recorded by police. The situation was similarly bad in Scotland, Hyland noted in his report.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland logged every one of the offences referred to it. This meant too many police forces were failing victims, Hyland said. UK police forces are failing victims of modern slavery by not recording what happens to them as crimes, meaning many cases are never investigated, the independent anti-slavery commissioner has said in his first annual report. <http://tinyurl.com/jac4qc8>

Human Rights Act opens military to public scrutiny over death

The High Court in England has ordered a fresh inquest into the death of Private Sean Benton, who died during soldier training at Deepcut barracks in 1995.

Benton's family have fought for answers for more than 20 years, according to Liberty UK. "Just as with the Hillsborough soccer crush deaths, perfectly reasonable questions about Sean's death were met with decades of stonewalling, silence and suspicion," said Liberty's Mairi Clare Rodgers

"And, just as in those cases, it was only the Human Rights Act – the law the British government remains determined to repeal – that enabled the family to access information to which they had every right."

Tracy Lewis, Sean's sister, said last month: "Our family had just 20 years with Sean. It has taken us another 21 to secure the thorough, independent inquiry we should have seen immediately after his death. Our parents are not here with us to see this day. Our family has been tormented by questions about what Sean went through at Deepcut. If his death had been properly investigated in 1995, we would have been spared years of uncertainty and pain." – email, Liberty UK, 161015.

Female triple jeopardy may come to an end

Frowned upon even by hardline Muslims, and banned in Pakistan, Bangladesh and in other parts of the Islamic world, the practice of talaq-ul-bidat – or "triple talaq" instant divorce – persists in India, home to the world's third-largest Muslim population.

It grants men the power to dissolve a marriage with a single word, "talaq", said three times. Increasingly, the word is emailed or texted.

Now India's supreme court is being asked to declare triple talaq, and another law forcing women who re-marry their husbands to first sleep with another man, unconstitutional. Banning the custom would free up to 90 million Muslim women in the country from a potential "trapdoor" divorce. <http://tinyurl.com/jy3djkg>

Crime-fighting-writing lawyer believes death penalty may end

Prof He Jiahong – China's leading authority on miscarriages of justice and the author of a series of detective novels – believes the country may one day abandon the death penalty.

The 63-year-old former prosecutor and academic has exposed heart-stopping flaws in judicial procedures in a series of novels. The death penalty, real and fictional, is a recurrent theme in He's work. Opinion polls in 2002, he says, showed public support for executions at 93% of people. It was considered a natural part of Chinese culture.

"At the time, I said that we cannot abolish the death penalty. We have to respect public opinion. If you kill somebody then you should be killed. About 10 years later, I changed my mind," he says.

"Public opinion can be changed with education. More and more people think that [considering human rights] the death penalty is not a natural role for human beings."

Around 2005, the Chinese authorities introduced a criminal justice reform known as the "kill fewer, kill carefully" reforms. In 2014, an amendment to the criminal law further reduced the number of offences that carry the death penalty.

Support for capital punishment is now 70-80%, and coming down. He has advocated abolishing it gradually over the next two decades. <http://tinyurl.com/jt9rob4>

International briefs

Cameras mean people happy, not snappy: Police wearing cameras receive 93% fewer complaints from the public, according to a new study that suggests the technology helps to cool down potentially volatile encounters. Academics, whose research looked at nearly 1.5m beat hours across more than 4000 shifts by officers in the UK and California, claim their findings suggest the cameras herald a "profound sea change in modern policing". Lead author Dr Barak Ariel, from the UK Cambridge Uni Institute of Criminology, said: "The cameras create an equilibrium between the account of the officer and the account of the suspect about the same event – increasing accountability on both sides." <http://tinyurl.com/zxol9v4>

Plug inserted into WikiLeaks's email flow: Ecuador, which granted political asylum to WikiLeaks founder Julian Assange in its London embassy in 2012, inserted a plug to block his Internet access last month. In a statement, Ecuador said it did so because of WikiLeaks' dumps of hacked emails

surrounding Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton. "The Government of Ecuador respects the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of other states. It does not interfere in external electoral processes, nor does it favour any particular candidate," the Ecuador government said. <http://tinyurl.com/hj5wr8f>

Rape alleged in British Parliament: An MP's aide has been arrested on suspicion of raping a woman in the British Houses of Parliament. Sam Armstrong, 23, from the office of the Conservative MP, Craig Mackinlay, was arrested after the alleged attack in the early hours of one day last month. He has been bailed, pending further inquiries by detectives, to a date in mid-January 2017. <http://tinyurl.com/znl7ptx>



Uighur given world human rights award: A moderate Uighur intellectual, who was jailed for life after opposing China's draconian policies in its violence-stricken west, has been named the winner of a prestigious award known as the "human rights Nobel" in a move likely to infuriate Beijing. Ilham Tohti (photo), who has been called China's Nelson Mandela, was announced as the winner of the annual Martin Ennals award for human rights defenders last month. Two years ago the 46-year-old scholar was convicted of separatism and condemned to a life behind bars by a court in Xinjiang, a vast region of western China where there have been repeated outbreaks of ethnic unrest and violence. <http://tinyurl.com/hq9ahdv>

Pot leads the poll race: A Gallup poll last month revealed a record high 60% of American adults support legalising marijuana. When first asked in 1969, 12% supported doing so. According to the new poll, 67% of Democrats support legalisation, compared to 42% of Republicans and 70% of independents. Several states will vote to legalise marijuana, or not, along with the Presidential vote. <http://tinyurl.com/z3pgfmo> As well as deciding on pot and a president, US voters will decide whether to replace about a third of the 100-seat Senate and all 435 members of the House of Representatives. Republicans currently dominate the House.

Three withdraw from world court: South Africa, Burundi and The Gambia last month withdrew from the International Criminal Court, the tribunal that pursues the world's worst atrocities. The ICC's obligations are inconsistent with domestic laws giving sitting leaders diplomatic immunity, South Africa's justice minister, Michael Masutha, said. The USA is not a member of the court. <http://tinyurl.com/za9b2tc> <http://tinyurl.com/hsf8p3r>

24/7 bodycams slash police use of force: Two US researchers, Barak Ariel and Alex Sutherland, after analysing 2.2 million police officer contact hours, found that police use of force actually went up by an astonishing 71% when officers could turn their body cameras on and off at will. Use of force went down by 37% only when they recorded nearly every interaction with the public from start to finish. A second analysis of the same data, published recently, supports findings that citizen complaints drop significantly, almost to zero, when bodycams are present. <http://tinyurl.com/hhb6hym>

DATES

7 Nov, Canberra: Launch of book, *Strengthening the Rule of Law through the UN Security Council*, by Dr Jeremy Farrall and Professor Hilary Charlesworth. APCD theatre, Hedley Bull Centre. Details: bellschool@anu.edu.au

9 Nov, Canberra: ANU reconciliation lecture: Canada's Minister for Justice, Jody Wilson-Raybould (photo), on links between Canadian and Australian experiences with Indigenous peoples. The Indigenous woman was a provincial Crown prosecutor, British Columbia Treaty Commissioner and Regional Chief of the BC Assembly of First Nations before becoming an MP. Molonglo Theatre, Crawford Bldg 132, 5.30-6.30pm Rego essential: <http://tinyurl.com/glglav8>

14 Nov, Melbourne: Reflections on a Career in the High Court: Conversation with Justice French CJ as he is about to retire, with Prof Carolyn Evans. Theatre G08, Melbourne Law School. Inquire: law-events@unimelb.edu.au or 03 9035 1111



17 Nov, Hobart: Lifting the Veil: The Role and Ethics of the Government Lawyer. Assoc Prof Dr Gabrielle Appleby of UNSW discusses the role of government lawyers in Australia. Info <http://tinyurl.com/gphgqxn> Venue: UTAS Law Faculty staff room. 1-2pm. For catering: law.secretary@utas.edu.au

24 Nov, Brisbane: The (Qld) Supreme Court Fire of 1968. By former judge Richard Chesterman, a mere law student and associate when the fire broke out. Selden Society series lecture, QE II Courts of Law. RSVP by 17 Nov to events@sclqld.org.au

1 Dec, Hobart: Prof Simon Marsden of Flinders U - Protecting the Third Pole (ie, high altitude): Can It Be Done. 1-2pm UTAS Law Faculty staff room. Details: <http://tinyurl.com/zhjp624>

10 Dec, World: This year is devoted to a year-long UN campaign to celebrate the 50th anniversary of two landmark international covenants on human rights: the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which were adopted by the UN General Assembly on 16 Dec 1966.

10 Dec, Canberra: NATIONAL LIBERTY TREE: 5th anniversary of the planting of the Australian National Liberty Tree, by Civil Liberties Australia, National Arboretum.

7-9 Dec, Perth: Re-imagining Australia, Centre for Human Rights Education, Australia-Asia-Pacific Institute, and the School of Media, Culture and Creative Arts at Curtin U.. Venue: WA Maritime Museum. Details: <http://humanrights.curtin.edu.au/events/inasa-conference-2016/>

2017:

23-25 March, Adelaide: National Access to Justice and Pro Bono Conference, Law Society of SA. Info: <http://www.lawsocietysa.asn.au/na2jpb2017>

6-8 April, Sydney: A'sian Inst of Judicial Admin's *2nd International Conference on Non-Adversarial Justice: Integrating Theory and Practice*, at Darling Harbour. Details: mail@conferencedesign.com.au or 03 6231 2999 Register: <http://www.naj2017.com/>

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