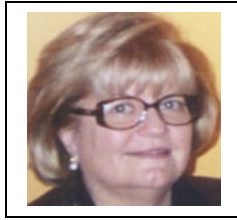


## EDITOR'S COMMENTS

Affie Adagio

Here we are, the last edition for this year. Also my last as editor of Viewpoints. I have been the editor for 7 years and it has been an honour.



Some of the articles I chose to include have been not only extremely interesting but also inspirational at that. Some have caused heated debates while others have been hugely supported. I have tried to use articles that would provide a good balance between topical issues and that of interest to different people.

I am happy to announce that the new editor will be from Queanbeyan, **Max Wallace** (ANU) author...



"there will be published in the next few months a book entitled "The Purple Economy" by Max Wallace.

Max Wallace

Studies by Max shows that due to the absence of the separation of church and state the tax concessions granted to churches amounts to about 10% (a tithe!) from all tax payers (believers or not) to the churches for decades and decades. This has aggregated to enormous sums! No wonder they can run hospices, schools, employment services etc. whereas non-believers have no such concessions and no reasonable amount of resources around which interested people can gather to do "useful" things"

Victor Bien

Also thanks to the Buddhist Library, **Paget Sayers**, who has applied for a HumSocNSW membership, and who has provided a printing contact which will mean we could produce Viewpoints in a magazine form and with colour pictures that will cost us half the price of the present one. We will also have Viewpoints available electronically for those who prefer it that way.

**End of Year Celebration.** Again a fun event which is a fancy dress and/or funny hats. Prizes of champagne, chocolates, and more. We supply the food and you please bring your own drinks. Looking forward to seeing you all on Sunday December 10 at 4pm after our management committee meeting. We had great fun last year, don't miss out this year.

Welcome back to **Victor Bien** who has recovered from a serious operation and is back on deck working for us as hard as ever. **Silvana**, Victor's wife, is also on the mend. There were many who passed on their well wishes through the Humanist discussion list during Victor's time in hospital.

## VALE

**Our deepest sympathy to the families and friends of those shown here:**

Sadly in August, we had to say goodbye to **Paul Kaufman** of Canberra who played an important role in the history of Australian Humanism in the ACT and CAHS. Messages may be sent to his widow Mrs Ethel Kaufmann, 72 Waller Crescent, Campbell A.C.T. 2612 (Mary Bergin).

(Message received by Affie) Thank you so much for your kind message and thoughts for Paul. Unfortunately, I am very sad to have to tell you that Paul died early on Tuesday morning August 29 after a particularly trying couple of months suffering from lung cancer. We are having a private family cremation for him on Friday. He enjoyed his time and involvement with the Humanist Society throughout the years and he expressed a wish that the current problems will be solved to your satisfaction. Thank you again, Sincerely, Ethel Kaufmann.

Only recently we found out that we lost another member **Jack Power**. Jack was often seen at HuVAT and annual general meetings. His jolly manner was always a breath of fresh air.

Also gone is **Keith Rex** who regularly created a passionate debate on the Humanist Discussion List on the Internet. Although members of that group did not agree with him there has been an influx of comments, about Keith's death, coming through and, therefore, included in articles in this issue. (Also see David Duffy article page 11)

Shann Turnbull advised is about his father, **Reginald Turnbull** who passed away in the morning at 12.10 a.m. "in a way of his choosing aged 98 and five months". Senator Turnbull was the inaugural Parliamentary leader of the Australia Party.

**In Memoriam Vern Bullough** former co-chairman of IHEU. His death was announced by Paul Kurtz, founder and chairman of the Center for Inquiry and Council for Secular Humanism. Paul Kurtz writes: "...a true Leonardo Man, Vern was a distinguished professor emeritus at the State University of New York at Buffalo, an Outstanding Professor in the California State University, a past president of the Society for the Scientific Study of Sex, past Dean of natural and social sciences at SUNY in Buffalo, New York, and one of the founders of the American Association for the History of Nursing. In addition, he was a recipient of the Distinguished Humanist Award and a past Vice President of the IHEU".

**Mrs. Saraswathi Gora**, a veteran freedom fighter, social revolutionary and founder of Atheist Centre, died at 4 am (early hours) at Atheist Centre, Vijayawada. She was 94. She was battling a heart attack which she suffered a few weeks earlier and

died of lung infection. All the children and grand children and co-workers were with her in the last moment. She has 9 children. Very few people were as active as Mrs. Saraswathi Gora at the age of 94. She is a life long fighter for the cause of atheism, humanism and social change on Gandhian lines. She was a veteran freedom fighter, a crusader against untouchability and caste system, a champion of inter-caste and inter-religion marriages and secularism. As a humanist and social revolutionary she set an example before others by practising what she championed. It revealed her firm commitment to social equality and human values. Under her able guidance, hundreds of such reform marriages for the abolition of untouchability have taken place over the decades. (Gora Vikas).

**9/11:** Also remembered are the many who lost their lives on the day of that tragedy.

**PRESIDENT'S COMMENTS**

*Richard Howard*

It is important that as many members as possible attend our **AGM** and be a part of the decision-making process of the Humanist Society of NSW, now more than ever.



**Motions for AGM**

1. Proposed Constitutional Changes: to add the clause to section 10 - disciplining of members:

That the Committee may vote by simple resolution to cancel the membership of any member of the Society found to have publicly expressed views which are inconsistent with Humanist principles.

2. AGM Nominations

That members nominating for Committee must have been members of the Society for not less than six months, except in cases where the Committee has reason to waive this requirement.

3. Changes to Humanist House Mural

That the external walls of Humanist House be forthwith painted ONE uniform colour sympathetic with the surrounds of Chippendale.

4. AHOY Nominations

That, sensitive of the fact that the last SIX Australian Humanists of the Year have been male, in the interests of gender equity and participation of women, this meeting urges CAHS to appoint a worthy woman in 2007.

**AGM Committee Nominations**

The following nominations have been received:  
**President:** Richard Howard, **Vice Presidents (2):** Affie Adagio, John August, David Duffy,  
**Treasurer:** Victor Bien; **Editor:** Max Wallace

**Committee:** David Blair, Anthony D'Angiolillo, Sturt Duncan, Brian Edwards, Gillian Ellis, Fred Flatow, Harry Gian, Robin Hall, Ian Jones, Wade McInerney, John Markovina, Steve Maxwell, Vicki Potempa, Max Wallace, Ann Young.

**Note:** there are two vice president positions, and a maximum of fifteen ordinary committee members so an election will have to be held.

**COULD 9/11 HAVE BEEN PREVENTED?**

**CBS News Katie Couric ...**

Following the attacks of Sept. 11, the independent 9/11 Commission was created to generate an account of the circumstances surrounding the attacks.



In addition to exposing the failures that led to the attacks, the final report set goals and made recommendations on how to achieve them.

**What was the 9/11 Commission?**

The National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States (known as the "9/11 Commission") was an independent, bipartisan commission created by congressional legislation and President Bush in late 2002. Its mission was to prepare a full and complete account of the circumstances surrounding the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, including how to prepare for the possibility of a future attack. The commission was also mandated to provide recommendations designed to guard against future attacks.

On July 22, 2004, the commission released its public report.

**How many people served on the Commission?**

The commission had nearly 80 full-time employees on staff. All the commissioners and staff have received the security clearances they need to carry on the investigation. Thomas Kean was the commission chairman and Lee Hamilton was the vice chairman.

**How many people were interviewed for the account?**

As of March 15, 2004, more than 1,000 individuals in 10 countries were interviewed. The commission has also held 10 days of public hearings to date, during which it received testimony from 110 federal, state and local officials, and experts from the private sector.

**What were the major findings?**

In addition to exposing the failures that led to the attacks, the final report of the Sept. 11 commission set goals and made recommendations on how to

achieve them. The commission concluded that lack of communication among U.S. intelligence agencies contributed to the inability of government officials to stop the attacks. The report called for a three-pronged global strategy, and the creation of a new intelligence center and high-level intelligence director.

### **What did the commission say was al Qaeda's plan on Sept. 11?**

The commission reports al Qaeda originally envisioned a much larger attack and is working hard to strike again, most likely in the form of a chemical, radiological or biological attack.

The commission staff said Sept. 11 mastermind Khalid Shaikh Mohammed initially outlined an attack involving 10 aircraft targeting both U.S. coasts. Mohammed proposed that he pilot one of the planes, kill all the male passengers, land the plane at a U.S. airport and make a "speech denouncing U.S. policies in the Middle East before releasing all the women and children," the report said.

Bin Laden rejected that plan as too complex, deciding instead on four aircraft piloted by hand-picked suicide operatives.

### **Could 9/11 have been prevented?**

Thomas Kean, the chairman of the commission said publicly in December 2003 that 9/11 could have and should have been prevented.

"There are people that, if I was doing the job, would certainly not be in the position they were in at that time because they failed. They simply failed," Kean said. But on May 16, 2002, Secretary of State Condoleeza Rice said, "I don't think anybody could have predicted that they would try to use an airplane as a missile, a hijacked airplane as a missile."

Picture and article from website, for more info see – <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2006/09/11/fyi/main1994075.shtml>

### **TO ALL SUPPORTERS OF 9/11 CONSPIRACY THEORIES**

*Dick Clifford*

you should read the latest edition of "E-Skeptic" dated 11th September 2006 being the Email Newsletter from Michael Shermer of the US Skeptics. This consists of an article by Phil Mole which covers most aspects and answers most question put up by the conspiracy theories including the fate of building 7 and how steel loses strength even at 700 degrees. Subscribe to *eSkeptic* by sending an email to [join-skeptics@lyris.net](mailto:join-skeptics@lyris.net). Browse, search, and read the [eSkeptic archives online](#). subscribe to *Skeptic* magazine at [www.skeptic.com](http://www.skeptic.com).

### **BOOM BOOM** (Australian 23.8.06)

*Phillip Adams*

### **Mark Steyn is no joke - his insights could lead to a lot more bloodshed around the world**

MARK Steyn has been making his mark, or leaving his stain, on the conservative speaker's circuit First in the US and now in Australia.



Here, as there, adoring crowds of neo-cons and camp followers flock to laugh at the Canadian columnist's jokes and to applaud his insights. Trouble is it's near impossible to tell one from the other. The insights are comical and the jokes unfunny.

But put them together and you can see how the radical Right thinks, if you can call it thought. Not that I've been able to attend one of Steyn's soirees. Though the blogger and Bush-lover was brought to Australia with some taxpayers' funds, the Steyn Gang issuing the invites clearly suffer from political bias. Thus RSVPs are received from the VIP's and RIPs of the Right - the likes of John Howard, Peter Costello, Alexander Downer, Nick Minchin, Santo Santorn, Janet Albrechtsen, Tim Blair, Keith Windschuttle and the editor of this page - while my invitation went missing in the mail.

But a review of the Steyn stand-up act by my colleague Matt Price (published in The Weekend Australian) and a glimpse of the Canadian on the ABC's PM and Lateline give us the picture.

Stability, he tells both invited guests and audiences, is "profoundly unstable", so he advocates more bold and brilliant policy initiatives such as Afghanistan and Iraq. If the US (and by extension Australia) are going to be on the receiving end of trouble, why wait? Why not cause it?

Don't laugh. This isn't one of Steyn's jokes. It's one of his insights. He tells his adoring fans that we should be attacking Syria. We? Who is this we? Is he employing the royal plural? It's unlikely he's talking on behalf of Canadians who, thus far, have maintained a degree of independence in their foreign policy on a range of matters from trade with Cuba to the war in Iraq. Canada may share a border with the US but it rarely echoes its political inanities and insanities. (It leaves that to us.) Given Steyn's unswerving support of Bush and Co, he may be referring to the US, the land that has adopted him. Or to a coalition of the willing, or to the West in its entirety.

When local conservatives say we they usually mean Australia and the US, just as conservatives saying we in the Menzies era meant us and the Brits. We're dealing with the same sort of blurred patriotism, except that Old Glory has replaced the Union Jack. For the past decade Australian right-wingers have

been at least as jingoistic about the US than our own states and territories.

Since Bush's election, if you can call it that, they've been as misty-eyed over The Yellow Rose of Texas as Waltzing Matilda.

We have to brace ourselves for decades of violence anyway so we might at least try to direct where and when it occurs. So let's hit Syria, Iran and North Korea and give Hezbollah a hiding wherever it is hiding. Sounds like Goebbel's campaign for total war, a global rampage of neo-cons with nukes.

MAD - mutual assured destruction - provided a surreal stability because no Soviet or US leader was mad enough to press the button. It seems that the Steyn Gang feel no such inhibitions. In recent decades the total death toll from acts of terror - mainly internal terrorism by the likes of the Tamil Tigers - is about 38,000. One-tenth of the total involved attacks on we or us or the West But mad Mark (what is it about that name?) wants to up the ante. And he makes it sound like fun.

Trouble is many in the Bush administration share Steyn's sense of humour and of history, preferring reckless action to the hard work of analysis, diplomacy, calibrated policy, coalition building.

And they know they can rely on Australia and Britain to sign up, albeit with increasing reluctance.

At the time of Bush's re-election in November 2004, this column predicted that despite the fiasco in Iraq the President would keep the neo-con juggernaut rolling with an attack on Iran - or using Israel as a surrogate. Despite Washington's bad case of imperial overstretch, entirely ignored by Steyn as he urges escalations in all directions, I still believe the comedians in the administration and the clown in the Oval Office will go for another roll of the dice. They did with Israel's invasion of Lebanon: first urging them on, then hanging them out to dry with the dodgy truce.

So don't laugh at Steyn's shtick. It isn't satire. It's an early warning system.

#### **ANTI-SEMITISM MYTHS**

*John Perkins*

#### **Here is my Age LTE of today:**

Dear Letters Editor  
Myths and nonsensical premises may well be at the heart of the problems in Israel and the Middle East, as Paul Gardner suggests (30/9), but they may not be the myths he refers to.



He may be quite right in saying that the Jewish community is as democratic as it is possible for a

religious-ethnic community to be. But how democratic can that be? The concept of democracy must extend equally to all religious-ethnic communities. There should be no presumption that the rights of any religious or ethnic community should dominate over the rights of any other. A peaceful world must be based on the assumption of secular equality. Human beings have human rights, religions dot not. Universal principles of compassion, honesty, freedom and justice should prevail. It is impossible to look at the problems in the Middle East and not see widespread violations of these principles, by all sides. In particular it is very difficult to distinguish Israeli nationalism from expressions of religious-ethnic superiority. Is it anti-Semitic to suggest this? If so, then the cause of this anti-Semitism can be identified and all the myths dispelled. The cause is Semitism.

**Keith Rex** was a long time contributor to this discussion group. Like many, I disagreed with most of what he said, but he did occasionally have a good and valid point to make. Like everyone, his views were no doubt influenced by his life experience. The value of his contributions often lay in the fact that his views, while perhaps not popular with most of us, did reflect popular opinion at large to a fair degree. So we all benefited from that type of exposure. It is unlikely that anyone else will take his place. So farewell Keith, you old bastard!

(Dr) John L Perkins  
President, Secular Party of Australia

#### **POSSIBLE SPONSOR FOR DARWIN DAY?**

*Ann Young*

Humanists featured prominently in the April, 2006 edition of 'UNSWorld', the magazine for Alumni and friends of UNSW, not that Humanist affiliation was mentioned.



A full page article on the work of Dr John Hirshman titled "*A Healthy dose of Humanity*" appeared on p20. It concluded "He was named Australian Humanist of the Year (1992) and made a member of the Order of Australia (AM) in 1993". Dr Hirshman voluntarily ran a course about health in developing countries as part of the Master of Public Health studies until the end of 2005. "*Creationism in a tuxedo: Archer leads the charge*" was the title of the full page article on p11. In it Professor Archer explains the strategy of some religious organisations in USA to be included in school curriculums by disguising their religious idea of Creation as 'intelligent design theory' and insisting it is Science. "Intelligent design isn't science," he is quoted as saying. Macquarie University's Professor Paul Davies agrees. NSW members might like to consider asking the UNSW to sponsor Darwin Day in 2007. What about calling it "Dinosaur Day"? That has the advantage of not being confused with the

city, as well as sounding more exciting for kids. By the way, did everybody notice the logo for *Hire Intelligence* on the spine of the Yellow Pages? It's nice to see evolution implicitly accepted like that.

### **FRANCIS FUKUYAMA SPEECH SUMMARY**

*Victor Bien*

Francis Fukuyama's speech where he clearly disassociated himself from the "neocons" was at Philadelphia and was rebroadcast by Background Briefing of Radio National on 11 June 2006. You can read the transcript from here:



<http://www.abc.net.au/rn/backgroundbriefing/stories/2006/1657712.htm>

The transcript is quite long. To help our thinking process here is a précis of his talk and who he is. Francis Fukuyama is probably best known for his book "The End of History" published a few years ago;

Of late he is seriously put out by neocon columnist Charles Krauthammer's intransigence such as wilfully ignoring the fact that WMD were not found in Iraq. (Krauthammer often has his opinion essays published by Time magazine);

Neocons are not a entirely homogeneous group like "card carrying Communists" were but enough of them must be like Krauthammer to have caused Fukuyama to need to disassociate from this grouping completely;

Many neocons started out on the left during their student days. I.e. Marx is important and by extension Karl R Popper's Open Society and Its Enemies book which has a thorough even handed critique of Marx. (Popper shows that Marx, despite making valuable contributions to political science, was an "enemy of the open society");

What drove these people away from the left to conservatism was, in short, unintended consequences of political and social activism. The worse example of this was the rise of Stalin and out-of-control state power. Stalinism disillusioned these idealistic students;

America realised, as a super power, it could help democracy around the world from 1945 on. Ever since then America often has debates whether they should remain "isolationist" from time to time. (The fact that this "help" may be anything but is another issue);

James Q. Wilson convinced the early neocons that activism should not attempt to address "deep causes" such as poverty and racism but should address the symptoms that flow from this such as tacking the actual crime prompted by these causes;

Leading up to the present there was 12 years of debate whether to follow "social engineering" or trying to pursue a deep root cause of trouble in the Middle East. (If Karl Popper had a say he would have counselled social engineering not pursue root causes). The group gradually swung away from James Q. Wilson. They have a notion of "benevolent" use military power. This led to the Iraq war;

9/11 stands out as a central driver of concern;

Asserted that Bush admin was dishonest about Saddam and al Qaeda - these two quite different things were "simply mixed up";

Notion of "preventative war" (that by not acting now Saddam would get WMD, pass them onto Osama and then NY would then be bombed with a nuke) depends on accurate forecasting. The aforesaid forecast was just fanciful;

America seriously misjudged how the world would see its "benevolent hegemony". The misjudgement is so severe it is laughable;

Key misjudgement relates to "nation building". Fukuyama says he doesn't know the reason for this misjudgement but I think that he is too deeply a well placed American to be completely candid. As I mentioned in my previous posting, America has a history of failing to follow through with its (moral) obligations when any immediate threat to its interests subsides. I heard this morning that the reason North Korea fired those missiles is because promised negotiations with the US have failed to happen because the US seem to have lost interest and not come to the party. So North Koreans fired the things in total frustration;

He admits to "mindblowing failure" and "astonishing self-deception";

Argues for the need to demilitarise the "war on terror" (that is consistent with the cited article from the current issue of Time in my previous posting);

Radical terrorists come from the ranks of 1st world well educated Muslim who have an identity crisis, not from the 3rd world;

Rise of secular society in Europe stemmed from the breakaway movement of Martin Luther. There was 400 years of violence following his pinning his principles on that cathedral door. There is an argument that Islam has to go through a similar process. Fukuyama hopes the inevitable violence won't last 400 years!

Basic theory that Bush is working under may be exactly wrong.

### **BUDDHISTS' GENEROUS OFFER**

The supporters of the Buddhist Library at 90 Church Camperdown would like to support the Humanists

with whom they have so much in common. One of their Trustees, Paget Sayers has joined the Humanists on the 13<sup>th</sup> September. Paget has offered on behalf of the Buddhist Library supporters to contribute \$1000 (provided it is matched by Humanist supporters for a specific project).

Paget gave a very interesting presentation at HuVAT showing the similarities between the Humanist and Buddhist way of thinking. It was also clear that he was giving his own viewpoint of Buddhism. Obviously everyone else thought so too because Affie (HuVAT chairperson) did not need to throw anyone out! Also the audience appeared to be mesmerised apart from some enthusiastic questioning.

In his own words Paget said "Seems to me Humanism is compatible with Buddhism. Very. I thought in addition to joining to give moral support, I should give financial support. This might trigger a more giving attitude in other Humanists especially if on a dollar for \$ basis. Example I give up to \$1000 to be matched. I find this worked well at People Living with AIDS Luncheon Club (Carol King)."

#### **FRIENDS OF HUMANISTS**

*John August*

**(following a discussion recently John made this suggestion which I thought warranted a mention, even if it may sound somewhat disjointed, because it is a notion many Humanists have spoken about before...Ed)**

My own "resolution... would be to open up a new category of membership: "Friends of the Humanists".



That is, people who broadly agree with the outcomes we are promoting, but nevertheless have a stronger spiritual bent. OK, a difficult issue is how spiritual they should be before a "friends" membership is appropriate.

What to do about Unitarians and Buddhists? I don't know, but it seems a better approach to me. I can agree with Christians when we talk about the conclusions of their analysis, to the extent that their conclusions are compatible with mine. However, I do not say that their analysis has any particular worth because it is inspired by God's word or whatever. To the extent they are dependent on religious origin, that's a point of difference. There's a lot of Christians who endorse separation of Church and State, generosity and consideration for others, and so forth.

We can have something in common in terms of the "outputs" of their analysis. We will probably differ on issues like abortion and euthanasia. But, Humanism is about atheism, IMO. The whole point

is that you can have a valid ethical framework which does not require a supernatural origin.

#### **MEDIA RELEASE: DEATHS OF ASYLUM SEEKERS**

*Just Australia*

*Embargoed 11pm Monday August 7, 2006*

**Rejected asylum seekers killed after being sent back to Afghanistan from Nauru and 3 children dead.** Edmund Rice Centre research team reports...

A delegation from the Edmund Rice Centre in Sydney recently visited Afghanistan and found that as many as 9 men returned from Nauru may have been killed, and 3 children of people sent back from Nauru can be confirmed as having been killed. The delegation spoke with family members of Mohammed Moussa Nazaree and Yacoub Baklri who confirmed that both men had been killed by local militias after returning from Nauru.

'The families had been told on Nauru by Australian Immigration officials that Afghanistan would be safe. It clearly was not. It clearly is not'. Edmund Rice Centre Director Phil Glendenning said 'The only children of Abdul, his daughters Yolanda (9 years) and Rona (6 years) were killed when their house was bombed. Newspaper reports verify this. The only child of Mohammed Amin, his son, was killed. As was his mother.

'Abdul, a Block Leader on Nauru, was initially accepted as a refugee on Christmas Island. He had the offer withdrawn after the arrival of the Tampa into Australian waters. His father and uncle had been members of the Russian-backed Najibullah Government. He told Australian officials that if he was sent back he would and his family would be targeted as communist. He was not believed and as he was on Nauru he had no right to a lawyer.' 'His house was bombed and his children were killed after he was returned to Afghanistan', Mr Glendenning said. 'He told officials this would happen and it did. Both his children are now dead'. 'Any public policy that has as its end result the death of innocent people, and especially children, is a policy that no civilised nation can possibly consider'. The so-called Pacific solution is no solution at all. 'The Edmund Rice Centre urges all MP's and Senators to reject proposals to reinstitute off-shore processing of asylum seekers. In our experience in 18 countries there is too much evidence that we are getting it wrong. And on this issue if you get it wrong – people get killed.' Mr Glendenning concluded.

The delegation to Afghanistan consisted of Mr Paul Lane from the Lingiari Foundation in Broome, Mr Phil Glendenning, Edmund Rice Centre Director and Mr Martin Reusch, interpreter and former resident of Kabul.  
[mail@ajustaustralia.com](mailto:mail@ajustaustralia.com)

## **GAY SHOCK!**

**The included document is an open letter to the editor that we hope your paper will publish as a signed commentary - [musla-uganda@yahoo.com](mailto:musla-uganda@yahoo.com)**

### *Naming and Shaming of Red Pepper*

On August 8<sup>th</sup> the Ugandan weekly paper *Red Pepper* published an article titled "Gay Shock!" This article had a list of names, places of work and areas of residence of 45 men alleged to be homosexuals. In the article *Red Pepper* denounced homosexuality as "an abominable sin, in fact a mortal sin that's against nature", The paper is entitled to express any view about homosexuality it wishes, but to steep so low as to make allegations against Ugandan civilians is another matter altogether. Being homosexual is still stigmatised in the society, and acts of same sex sexuality are criminalized. That is why *Red Pepper* can use allegations of homosexuality to cause sensation. Even if one accept that human sexuality is diverse, it should be an individual's own choice how and when to share information about their sexuality with family, friends and colleagues.

According to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) every person has a right to privacy (UDHR, Article 12). This right has clearly been broken by *Red Pepper's* article. It is difficult to imagine that this article is anything but a salacious and malicious act of defamation that will cause hurt and damage to the lives of these individuals. Further, the article that *Red Pepper* has printed amounts to inciting violence against these people. Article 7 of UDHR guarantees the right to equality and freedom from discrimination; these rights are being undermined by *Red Pepper's* article. It may be argued that these rights do not pertain to homosexuals, as acts of homosexuality are considered to be criminal offences in Uganda. We do not know the truth about the sexuality of the 45 men named in *Red Pepper*. The point we want to make is that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights do not make exceptions; "Human rights are the inalienable rights that a person has simply because he or she is a human being." This means that you cannot lose these rights any more than you can cease being human. Human rights are also defined as those basic standards that people need to live in dignity. To violate someone's human rights is to treat that person as less than a human being.

It is our opinion that Red Pepper is violating the human rights of the 45 men, whose names were published, breaching both Ugandan law and International law. The editor, Arinaitwe Rugyendo, should take his ethical and social responsibility seriously and make a public apology for the damage he has caused.

**The statement is signed by the following organisation:**

**1. Musla - Uganda (Makerere University LGBT Association in Uganda)**

## **CENSUS ISSUE**

*Victor Gunasekara*

The whole purpose of the religion question in the Census is to find out the religion of the person. So if someone marks "No religion" it should logically mean and the question will not apply to that person.



Hence no need to add anything more. On the other hand marking "Other" means that the person has a religion but this is not in the boxes of the major religions provided.

I think Humanists are confused as they think that their belief system is an ersatz religion. We see this in the attempt of some groups to use the "Religious Instruction" period in schools to teach Humanism. Doing so logically means that Humanism is also a religion.

The logical position for Humanists would be to argue to delete the religion question in the Census, and the Religious Instruction period in schools.

The Queensland State Election campaign is drawing to a close and the polls suggest a comfortable win for Premier Beattie and his Labor Party. However an interesting feature in this election is the role of religion.

The Christian Church lobby with its new found influence has been lobbying both the main parties. The Liberal-National coalition is the normal support base for the religious groups, but this time the Labor Party too seems to have joined in. This is because both parties are wooing preferences from the Family First Party which is strongly represented in this election.

Quite early in the campaign Premier Beattie promised increased funding for religious chaplains in State schools, and also public funds to renovate old Churches. This is a step beyond the recent education reform to entrench religious instruction in state schools.

Even more disturbing is a spin off from the recent "History Summit" in Canberra which may see religious instruction invading the regular curriculum of schools as well. The Brisbane *Courier Mail* of Sept 6 reported that "Jesus Christ, biblical stories and Australia's religious divisions may soon be class-room topics".

The religious lobby are savouring their victory when the Humanist Society of Queensland proposal to introduce "humanist instruction" on par with religious instruction failed. The HSQ proposal actually validated RI in schools with a minor concession to the Humanists. In the event no concession was achieved but RI was reinforced in full vigour, ironically with the blessings of the HSQ.

This move led to the formation of a religious lobby uniting some 3000 church groups. What we are seeing in the current clamour by the main parties to please the churches in the growing power of this lobby.

### **Keith Rex**

I extend my sympathies to the family of **Keith Rex** whose death is now reported.

Keith had been corresponding with me on various humanist matters for the last three or four years. I found him to be a prolific writer who had very strong views on a number of matters. He seems to have a very good knowledge of the organization and agenda of various Christian groups, especially in the Sydney area. I understood that he had been involved with the organized Humanist movement for a very long time but had lately been disappointed in the direction which the Humanist movement has been taking in Australia.

I understand that the view of Humanism he espoused is that contained in the Second Humanist Manifesto (which is now about 40 years old) and the later Declaration on Secular Humanism (issued I think about 1990). He has disagreed with some of the later declarations which I think he felt had moved more in the direction of accommodation with religion.

Some people have criticized him for his final stay in a Catholic hospital. It must be remembered that these "religious hospitals" operate with money provided by the taxpayer, and the contribution from the Church is only a small part of their total expenditure. Thus I feel that any taxpayer has the right to use these facilities. If these hospitals do not provide some non-religious atmosphere for people who do not belong to the religion concerned this is a failing on the part of those who give public money to run these institutions. There should be regulatory oversight that at least some non-religious accommodation is provided, at least proportionate to the public contribution to the upkeep of these hospitals.

I hope the legacy of the critical evaluation of Humanism to which Keith contributed so much continues after his death.

### ***NURTURING A UNITED AUSTRALIA***

*Doug Everingham*

Extracts from **UNITY The national publication of the United Nations Association of Australia September 8, 2006 No 475.**



Acting Editor: Judy Cannon on 07 3358 2623  
Email: judycann@yahoo.com.au ***Nurturing a united Australia*** "It is time that key political leaders stopped using fear and division and focused on the bigger picture," said Voula Messimeri, chairperson

of Federation of Ethnic Communities' Councils of Australia (FECCA), on Monday. She was responding to recent calls by political leaders for Muslims to learn English and integrate into the Australian community. "Continuation and enhancement of effective orientation and settlement programs, and a real commitment to building connections between all Australians, is the most effective antidote to a divided country, not demonising and isolating Muslim Australians," she said. "We call on our political leaders to stop blaming people and to look at what new initiatives can be undertaken to build a cohesive community where people from all backgrounds feel that they fit," she said. "Becoming an Australian is not an event, it is a process.

One that needs to be nurtured. This is the best way of creating a secure society in the long term." For more information, Voula Messimeri, FECCA chairperson, on mobile **0414 532 529**

***Christian sect also 'oppressing women'*** In response to the prime minister's invitation to Muslims to adhere to the Australian ethos of equality for women, Greens leader Bob Brown said on Monday the prime minister should also insist that an extreme Christian sect should stop oppressing women. Two weeks ago the Federal Government blocked a Greens motion for a senate inquiry into a sect's "un-Australian" activities. Senator Brown said the sect banned married women from the workplace, banned all women from jobs where they were not subservient to men, banned unions from workplaces, banned all children from university education and forbade voting and military service.

For more information, Prue Cameron on **0408 473 379.**

### ***SOME THOUGHTS***

*Dick Clifford.*

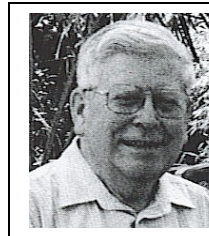
Google search "World oil production 2006". ... A look at

[www.theoil drum.com/story/2006/7/2/205758/5414](http://www.theoil drum.com/story/2006/7/2/205758/5414)

as a detailed report by Stuart Staniford, based on American figures showing that many areas in the world have production peaks in 2005 and while the number of oil rigs have increased in the last 18 months, sometimes doubled, there has been no corresponding increase in output.

The Australian story is worse, now in steep decline, 40% down in 4 years, we are now dependent on overseas oil and a new field to come on stream in 2008 wont make much difference.

When I first read the transcript (**Samsam Bakhtiari's evidence to the Senate Committee**) I realised that the fall in oil output of 32% in 14 years would reduce CO2 production by an amount better than most targets set by greenhouse proposals. This is not to suggest that climate change is no longer



important, fortunately corrective measures can help both oil shortage and climate change. However we must beware of industry building more coal power stations, making the situation worse. The fact that business is currently booming is deceiving us all as it will make the change to a contracting oil economy all the more sudden and difficult.

Very recent news shows that the output from the Prudhoe Bay field in Alaska has been reduced by 290,000 barrels a day due to pipe corrosion, and production in Nigeria has been reduced by 500,000 barrels a day due to sabotage, (Living standards should be up in Nigeria due to oil revenue, but in fact they are as bad as the other west African countries due to the uncivilised behavior of the owners) The oil is still there and will be available in time, meanwhile 70% of the world's oil wells are producing less each year so again we are unlikely to see more than 82 million barrels a day in future. Attempts to pump more out of existing wells may result in recovering less oil overall

Little thought has been given to the plight of Middle East countries when the oil does dry up. This could result in a huge emigration process which would be most unwelcome in other countries.

My suggestions for the future are:

**Transport:** (1) use your 2 feet, (2) use a cycle, (3) use an electric powered cycle (they are on the market now!) (4) use a mini car utilising electric or air power, (5) use public transport converted to an alternative fuel. - Demand that rail services be converted to electricity. Farmers to receive subsidised bio diesel units to run farm equipment..

**Water:** build large solar desalination plants in many locations with steam driven pumps. (Townfolk don't realize the serious drought now in many parts of Australia.)

**Power:** convert some coal stations to gas. Support Hot Rocks projects at Innamincka by building generators and extra transmission lines now

Duplicate power lines to cities and suburbs. (needed to recharge minicars etc

Encourage everyone to install solar cells on their roofs. Manufacturers to investigate the possibility of making small panels which DIY owners could erect and add one every year.

**Builders and Developers:** must re-examine all materials to find those that cause less CO2 in their manufacture, transport and erection. All new projects must be carefully reviewed to ensure low oil consumption by use of good planning i.e. minimum earthworks, closeness to work, transport, shops, services etc.. Small projects preferred as these can be completed before prices rise

**Banks and Treasurers:** realising that to continue using oil as we do now, instead of saving it for paint

and insecticides, will result in a worse depression than in the 30s. - we need to go back to Maynard Keynes, insist that governments go into debt and provide interest free loans to build the new infrastructure.

**Governments, State and Federal:** must conduct an active program covering both climate change and alternate energy. Oil and coal industries should be required to reinvest in alternative energy systems and caps placed on oil and coal production and consumption. Transport authorities should adopt higher registration on vehicles over 2 litres capacity and lower registration on cars that use alternate energy. They should license small economical vehicles and provide new legislation requiring all vehicles to reduce speed when traveling close to mini cars

**Churches:** Should re-visit their teaching on stewardship and realising that the base cause of our troubles is overpopulation, should give consideration to at least recommending the one child family and the importance of family planning.

**You, Me, Firms, Businesses, Governments:** should review last years performance and work out ways of using less oil in the following year. The largest to publish their reports and forecasts on the web. There are businesses and industries who have realised the importance of taking corrective measures. They deserve our support.

**The Media:** to publish detailed articles on this subject without regard to the objections of their advertisers. Congratulations to *The Independent Weekly* for their issue dated 12th August and to the *Sunday Mail* for publishing: "*World with no oil is grim face of the future*" by Bill Adair in their issue dated 13th August.

**Educators, Teachers:** to provide new courses on how to live without oil with emphasis on gardening, arts and crafts etc.

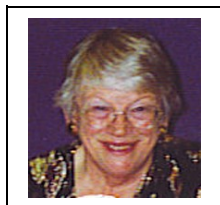
**Our Universe** has had 3 generations of stars, allowing the higher elements to be built up, necessary for life to develop. Our world has allowed life to develop but there were occasions when life was almost wiped out. For the past 8 million years man and woman has developed so that the current homo sapiens has produced the most sophisticated civilisation that we know of. But our greed, our insistence on unsustainable development, our high consumption of limited resources, our pollution and production of CO2 may well change the climate and make life untenable for most.

Many have forgotten that we are creature of this earth and dependent on it. But when faced with a problem most will buckle-to and do whatever is necessary. We have to inform everybody, other nations and the U.N., and obtain cooperation. We are very well equipped with tools to enable this to be done. There is the Internet, the media, including

newspapers, books, magazines, radio and TV. It is up to you and me. Please spread this message far and wide, talk about it with your neighbour, write about it to your overseas friend, discuss it with your M.P., your partner and your children.

*Dick Clifford Vice President, Humanist Society of South Australia*

**Keith Rex** used to write letters to CAHS Secretaries and Presidents, so Dorothy Bell and I [Dick Clifford] received our fair share.



He was always controversial but one rapidly learnt a respect for his intellect as his arguments always seemed logical. The advent of Email must have been a great boon to him as he was able to address a larger audience.

A little bit of humour occasionally surfaced in our correspondence. At one time he signed off his letters with "May the force be with you!" and I replied "when you go out to do battle for the force be very careful not to break your fluro tube - a lungful of the contents could be very fateful!" He was able to bounce back because I had mentioned either the gas or the powder as being fatal, I had picked the wrong one.

Victor Bien, Stan Stokes have added comments about hospices etc. Here is a little more information. I visited The Atheist Center Vijayawada SE India in January 2005 and they do have a hospital. (3 or 4 stories) It is a fairly new building, donated by the late Sir Hermann Bondi. The instruments are 30 years old but serviceable I had the impression that it was not used much and the doctors were away dealing with the Tsunami. The women's shelter is an impressive building with several hundred rooms and 700 beds. It is well used being 35% full in the "off" season. They have a number of other sections that deal with specific problems such as "Denotified tribes" in country districts, Aids programs, Criminal reformation and vocational training. A night's train ride south brings you to the Periyar Centre at Chennai (Madras). Started by E V Ramasamy. This is now a larger complex than the Atheist Centre and also has a hospital, women's refuge, auditorium, printing press etc.

We should also not forget that in Amsterdam and possibly other places in Europe they have hospices, hospitals, universities and other institutions for humanists thanks to their unusual taxation arrangements which sends a portion of your tax to your "religion or belief" which includes Humanism.

#### **ABOUT KEITH REX**

*Margit Alm*

Although I rarely agreed with Keith's statements I am saddened by his departure because I miss his contrarian views. I encountered him once by chance on another discussion list where he dished out a very

long sermon, again in his trademark contrarian manner. Fare thee well Keith. Margit Alm

#### **MEMBERSHIP NEWS**

*Angela Drury*

##### **Welcome New Members:**

G. Hesselberg, J Edmonds, J. Rolley, B. Houston, D. Riley, N&E. Korovin, B. Rich, G.& A. Domkins, S&L. McClean, C. Korb-Wells, I. Qunonez, C. Hong, W. Smith, M. Wolf, M&L Menon, M&N Dalpra, S. Cenatempo, G&J Cenatempo, J. Crook, M. Challocombe, J. Brewster, S. Russell, C. Dailhou, D. Rosolen, D. Crook, K. Darcey, J. Gobbi, E. Blair, S. Iacono, I. Pitt, D&D Biczak, B. Taylor, J. Taylor, M. Phillips, P&S Maxwell, C. Hesse, B. Raue, M. Hawthorne, A. Abbard, A. Emmett, I. Sills, M. Beehag.

##### **Thankyou for generous donations from members:**

Kevin Bryant, John Wilkes, David Blair, Lilian Emmett, Nan Marsh, Tryntje Bostick, Lyn Harsanyi.



**Resigned:** Ian Ellis-Jones, Seymour Bluhm is in a nursing home, Peter Ashley.

**VALE** Our sympathy to the family and friends of those who died during the past few months (see page 2) and of those who lost their lives in the 9/11 disaster.

#### **KEITH REX FUNERAL**

*David Duffy*

On September 13 I attended the funeral of former Humanist and prolific letter writer Keith Rex whose contributions to Viewpoints will be fondly remembered by many.



It was held at the Eastern Suburbs Crematorium at Matraville. Only seven were present not including the funeral parlour lady who officiated with kind words, she was ultra 'smooth'. Talia the wife of Keith's best friend for the last 20years, Tom (Keith's Literary Executor now who due to ill health was not present) handed out info sheets inviting anyone who has any of Keith's writings to contact Tom at PO Box 845 MANLY NSW 2095 (phone 9905 6314). The star of the event was Yuri, the Russian storyteller who gave an impassioned and moving eulogy. Yuri, gave his masterpiece "Jesus the Humanist" parable about the secular Messiah whose disciples would insist on fighting a civil war in his name, ignoring his real message of tolerance. Finally, Yuri turned towards the coffin and said "Keith, don't let it happen again". A fitting finale to a very controversial gentleman whom I had first met at the old Young Adult Humanist Group in Darlinghurst (1966) and yes, we did clap Yuri.