SUBMISSION TO

THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON TREATIES

INQUIRY INTO THE 1998 STATUTE OF AN INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

November 2000

.Contents-

Introduction

Terms of the Statute
1) Reasons for the Court's Establishment
2) Appointment of Court Officials
3) The Court's Jurisdiction
4) Criminal Law Principles
5) Investigation & Prosecution
6) Trails of Accused Persons
7) Penalties
8) Accountability of State Parties
9) Obligations of States Parties
10) Costs
11) Future Protocols, Annexes and other legally binding instruments
12) Implementation

Consultation & Publicity

Conclusion

June Beckett
Director & Journalist,
"The Issue",
P.0. Box 294,
Bay Village, NSW 2261

Mobile: 0418 455 644;
Fax: 02) 4388 9675;
email: junebeckett@bigpond.com

SUBMISSION TO

THE JOINT STANDING COMMITTEE ON TREATIES

INQUIRY INTO THE 1998 STATUTE OF AN INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

Introduction

The first point to make is that, by their joint press release of 25 October 2000, the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Commonwealth Attorney-General, in announcing their intention to ratify the Statute of the International Criminal Court by the end of this year, blatantly tried to override the normal democratic processes, namely the Committee's Inquiry. As this Inquiry will not, I understand, be completed until early next year, those of us who realised long ago that Mr. Downer, in particular, is not only inept as a Minister but seemingly without integrity have now had our suspicions of him validated. I have been told that, after considerable pressure was applied in Canberra circles, Mr Downer has been forced to back down. Unfortunately, the damage has now been done and I have no reason to think that any of the submissions received by the Committee in relation to this disgraceful Treaty, nor the Committee's recommendations will have any effect. Mr. Downer has obviously made up his mind to commit Australia to the Statute, regardless of what any of us might think.

As far as I am concerned, his actions clearly demonstrate - if any further evidence were needed - as much his contempt for the public's wishes as it does his disregard for democracy and "Australia's national interest".

The Statute of the International Criminal Court is, without doubt, the most dangerous and sinister document that any Australian government could ever contemplate. It is an iron fist camouflaged by a velvet glove, and anybody, particularly our so-called "political representatives", who thinks otherwise, is suffering from severe delusions.

Since World War 11, many hundreds if not thousands of UN treaties and conventions have been signed on our behalf, without our knowledge or consent. It is claimed that all these instruments are designed to ensure the peace, unity and wellbeing of all the world's peoples by the upholding of human rights and freedoms.

However, despite these frequently expressed noble sentiments, the world is in more turmoil than ever before. Increasing numbers of people around the globe are plunging into poverty and debt, crime, civil unrest, starvation and disease while the rich get richer and national governments are overridden by international authorities intent on subjugating the peasants, and undermining their identity and independent, sovereign decision-making processes.

The effects of the multitude of UN Treaties intrude into all our daily lives at virtually every level while the Big Brother rules and regulations have taken away - with our tacit acceptance - our most precious possession.. our freedom - including our freedom to speak and express our opinions, our freedom to choose; our freedom to vote for whomsoever we please, or even to refrain from voting at all.

June Beckett November 2000

The wishes and needs of the people of all nations are being subverted in deference to the personal whims and desires of the international elite and big business who have no compunction in imposing their rules and their not-so-secret agenda on to the largely unsuspecting global population, unchecked by national governments due to political expediency, personal greed both for power and financial gain, or through an abysmal ignorance of the eventual ramifications of their collective actions.

Terms of the Statute

It would be easy to write volumes on the various clauses of the Statute but I shall restrict myself to some of the major points covered by the National Interest Analysis (NIA), using, as far as possible, the same sequence as that document -a copy of which you will undoubtedly have.

1) Reasons for the Court's Establishment

The NIA states that, 7he establishment of the Court has been one of the Government's prime human rights objectives and reflects the Government's policy of seeking to achieve practical outcomes, particularly of an institutional nature, that will materially benefit people's lives … Australian ratification of the Statute will contribute greatly to maintaining Australia's reputation as a State that observes and promotes fundamental human rights and humanitarian principles and that is opposed to allowing persons responsible for committing grave crimes of international concern to escape punishment." Here the Government is telling people what is best for them. The above statement shows the customary "cringing cur" mentality, as we are forced to bow to international pressure to do as we are told or risk being viewed by others in a bad light.

The NIA goes on.. "Australia played a leading role in the negotiation of the Statute ….. it is important for Australia to be one of the first 60 ratifications, in order to have influence in the Court's administration, including its financial matters, the setting of its budget and the appointment of its judges." But it is naive rubbish to think that just because we show eager support, we shall have even the slightest influence on the Court's processes. Any Minister who believes that shows himself to be unfit for office.

2) Appointment of Court Officials

Judges are to be "chosen from among persons of high moral character, impartiality and integrity who possess the qualifications required in their respective States for appointment to the highest judicial offices". (Art.36) They are apparently to be appointed by secret ballot of States Parties. Who will decide whether a candidate is suitably qualified? There is already existing the International Court of Justice and it is abundantly clear that not all the appointments to that Court are appropriate, many having been appointed by undemocratic and repressive regimes.

So Australians charged with a so-called serious offence against humanity will stand before "judges" from countries such as Zimbabwe (where scores of white farmers are still being murdered and their lands seized with Government approval), or South Africa (which now has one of the worst crime rates on the planet.) Is Mr. Downer really serious?

Judges "must naturally also be independent (Art.40). Well, of course, but who will decide that?

"The Prosecutor and the Deputy Prosecutors must also be persons of high moral character, be independent and highly competent in and have extensive practical experience in the prosecution or trial of criminal cases." (Art.42) The Registrar and the Deputy Registrar are to have similar characteristics and expertise (Art.43). I ask again, who is to decide all that? Will their experience in the "prosecution or trial of criminal cases" be expected to be experience obtained in a similar criminal justice system to ours (the Westminster system, where an accused person is presumed innocent until proven otherwise)? Clearly, that will not be the case. Has Mr. Downer contemplated what would happen if the Prosecutor and Deputy Prosecutor - both very powerful and influential officers of the Court - were to be, say, Haitian or Ugandan? As far as independence goes, their roles would be wide open to corruption and influence by other "interested" parties.

Art.46 provides "that a judge, the Prosecutor, a Deputy Prosecutor, the Registrar or the Deputy Registrar are subject to removal from office either for serious misconduct or serious breach of duty or for inability to exercise their functions." But who will decide that?

3) The Court's Jurisdiction

No nexus or connection between the commission of crimes against humanity and armed conflict will be required (Art.7). In other words, ordinary citizens can be arrested and prosecuted for alleged "crimes" even in peacetime, while going about their daily business.

"The Court's jurisdiction will extend to war crimes which are committed in international or internal armed conflicts" (Art.8). This really means that if there should ever be a conflict within Australia, instead of being allowed to resolve it ourselves, the Court would have the power to interfere and prosecute all our own citizens as alleged troublemakers. In addition, Australian peacekeeping forces in areas such as East Timor would run a grave risk. If the Indonesian Government, for example, became offended at any stage over our perceived interference in their affairs, it could conceivably lodge a complaint with the Court (if Indonesia were a State Party), or with the UN Security Council (if not a State Party) which in turn could request the Court to intervene and charge our troops with a trumped-up &I offence".

June Beckett November 2000

"The Court will operate where a national jurisdiction is unwilling or unable genuinely to carry out the investigation or prosecution of persons alleged to have committed crimes. It will be the Court which determines whether a national jurisdiction is unwilling or unable to deal genuinely with alleged crimes by way of investigation or prosecution" (Art. 17). Therefore, the Court will have the final say in all cases and we have no choice but to do as we are told.

"The capacity of the Court to pronounce on the willingness of all States genuinely to investigate and prosecute perpetrators of crimes themselves will provide a powerful incentive for States to bring to justice those who commit atrocities." In other words, dictatorships which want to "look good" will be able to dob in other countries for alleged crimes.

The crimes with which the Court will deal are the most serious crimes of concern to the international community as a whole". Listed in Art. 5, they cover genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity, such as widespread or systematic extermination of civilians, through to enslavement, torture, rape, forced pregnancy, persecution on political, racial, ethnic or religious grounds and enforced disappearances. To be included in the list at a later date, are the crimes of "aggression" and possibly drug trafficking and terrorism.

But who will decide what is or is not a "crime against humanity"? The definition of genocide is to be identical to that contained in the Genocide Convention" - which has already formed the basis of an appeal by Australian aborigines to the Human Rights Commission, given that they claim that genocide has been perpetrated upon them by previous white administrations. If the aborigines' claims are made to the ICC and are held to be genuine (a distinct possibility) there would be nothing to prevent the Court from prosecuting Australians for supposed crimes against the aborigines.

As to the "crime of aggression", whilst this is not to be included until "the States Parties have adopted a provision defining the crime", any such definition must necessarily be loose, open-ended and wide open to criminal misinterpretation.

The term "aggression" does not only relate to physical force; it also covers speech and the written word, visual expression and attitude. It is often merely a perception in the eye of the beholder; who is to say what is or is not aggressive? It seems quite feasible that this writer could end up being charged with a so-called "crime against humanity" for merely having the temerity to write a critical submission! If freedom of speech or expression is not already dead, then it surely will be when the Court becomes operational.

Another good example of a possible "crime" under this Statute would be Australia's current practice of detaining illegal arrivals in centres such as Woomera and Port Hedland. Under the terms of the Statute, there would be nothing to prevent the prosecution of the Minister for Immigration and all detention centre officials. Has Mr. Downer or the Attorney-General given this any thought or could it be that all Ministers and bureaucrats will, in truth, be exempt from prosecution under this Statute? And, further, that the ICC's unspoken and unwritten intention will be to curb the irritating activities of ordinary civilians only - excluding our political "masters" - in order that there would be no impediment to the smooth implementation of the final stages of the introduction of One World Government?

June Beckett November 2000

According to the NIA, "A State is allowed, upon becoming a party to the Statute, to declare that, for a period of seven years, it does not accept the jurisdiction of the Court with respect to war crimes when a crime is alleged to have been committed by its nationals or on its territory" (Art. 124). But the]CC will have jurisdiction over all nations and will step in when a nation is unable or unwilling to prosecute.

"Crimes within the jurisdiction of the Court will not be subject to any statute of limitations" (Art.29). In other words, no citizen can ever feel safe from prosecution over perceived crimes, no matter when they were alleged to have taken place.

The Court's jurisdiction will be triggered three ways: a) by a referral to the Prosecutor by a State Party, b) by a referral to the Prosecutor by the Security Council, or (c) by the initiation of an investigation directly by the Prosecutor. While it is said that in respect of (a) or (c) "the Court may only exercise jurisdiction if either the State on the territory of which the conduct in question occurred, or the State of which the person accused of the crime is a national, is a party to the Statute or has accepted the jurisdiction of the Court as a non-State Party, in relation to (b), there is no such proviso, as both States Parties and non-States Parties would be obliged to co-operate with the Court, under Chapter VII of the UN Charter. So, one way or another, every nation will come under the ICC's jurisdiction.

4) Criminal Law Principles

General principles of criminal law to be applied by the Court are contained in the Statute. It is not an exhaustive code and will be supplemented by the jurisprudence of the Court. The principles represent an attempt to meld the criminal law doctrines of different legal systems." In other words, as mentioned above, the Westminster system will not be the sole modus operandi. The different legal systems from dictatorships, or lawless and repressive regimes will all be thrown into the melting pot.

5) Investigation & Prosecution

Under the "complementarity" principle, the Prosecutor must consider whether a particular case would be admissible under Art. 17, for example, where a case is being investigated or prosecuted by a State .... unless the State is unwilling or unable genuinely to carry out the investigation or prosecution;" or where the State has already investigated and has decided not to prosecute the person concerned, "unless the decision resulted from the unwillingness or inability of the State genuinely to prosecute." While Art.17 gives guidance to the Court regarding the definition of "unwillingness" or "inability", this whole provision is open to loose and corrupt interpretation by the Court.

Art. 58 provides that "The Prosecutor must establish there are reasonable grounds to believe that a person has committed a crime within the jurisdiction of the Court." Here again, who says what "reasonable grounds" are?

6) Trials of Accused Persons

According to Art.74, the Trial Chamber (or should that read "Star Chamber"), comprising three judges, is "required to attempt to achieve unanimity in their decision on the case, failing which the decision shall be taken by a majority" So two people from some foreign land can sit in judgment on an Australian.

7) Penalties

"The Court may impose a term of imprisonment not exceeding a maximum of thirty years or a term of life imprisonment when justified by the extreme gravity of the crime and the individual circumstances of the convicted person. In addition to imprisonment, the Court may order a fine and forfeiture of the proceeds of a crime" (Art.77). By this provision, Australians could be jailed for life for alleged crimes committed on Australian soil by a majority vote of overseas nations, none of whom uphold law in their own countries. Who decides what "when justified" actually means?

8) Accountability of State Parties

If a State Party does not co-operate and prevents the Court from exercising its functions and powers, the matter can be referred to the UN Assembly or (if it is a Security Council matter) to the UN Security Council (Art.87). What penalties are then imposed on the offending State Party?

9) Obligations of States Parties

States parties will be obliged to co-operate fully with the Court at all times, giving it "the necessary legal capacity ... for the exercise of its functions and the fulfilment of its purposes and to enable it to exercise its Statute functions and powers on their territory" (Art.4). So the ICC will sit in judgment on Australians on Australian soil, possibly on a politically-motivated, trumped-up charge, and we have to give our full support.

Art. 12 "obliges a State becoming a party to the Statute to accept the jurisdiction of the Court with respect to the Statute crimes." We therefore completely lose all our remaining sovereignty.

Art.18 "obliges States Parties to respond without undue delay to requests from the Prosecutor to inform him or her of the progress of their investigations and any subsequent prosecutions." We must therefore snap to attention at all times when Big Brother demands
it

States Parties are to be obliged "to grant the Court in their territory such privileges and immunities as are necessary for the fulfilment of its purposes. Judges, the Prosecutor, the Deputy Prosecutors and the Registrar shall, when engaged on or with respect to the business of the Court, enjoy the same privileges and immunities as are accorded to heads of

diplomatic missions and shall, after the expiry of their terms of office, continue to be accorded immunity from legal process of every kind in respect of words spoken or written and acts performed by them in their official capacity." In other words, they will all be untouchables. They will be able to cause mayhem in this country or anywhere overseas and there will be no redress.

When the Court requests an arrest, the State Party must immediately comply, bringing that person promptly "before its competent judicial authority to determine the propriety of the arrest' (Art. 59). But the so-called "competent authority" cannot review the issue of the arrest warrant by the Court. Therefore, even if Australia does not like or agree with the arrest, we can do nothing about it.

Art.70 obliges States Parties to extend their own domestic criminal laws to cover offences under the jurisdiction of the Court, committed in their own territory by one of their nationals, and in addition, to prosecute such cases at the Court's request. In other words, we must now change our criminal justice system to reflect the requirements of the Statute. Even if we don't do this, our domestic courts have already shown themselves quite willing to take into account International obligations" when making their decisions, as has been the case in the past with respect to various UN Treaties to which we are already a signatory (e.g. the Teoh case).

It appears that even our national security will be at risk. Under Art.72, a State Party has the right to "intervene" in the Court's proceedings if it is believed that information or documents are to be disclosed which would prejudice national security. Steps must be taken to resolve the impasse, but if there is no such resolution, "the State is required to notify the Prosecutor or the Court of the specific reasons for its decision." I assume that means that Australia would have to inform the Court of the nature of the sensitive information before a decision could be made, which in itself would be a security risk. But can the Court still demand compliance even if our security were to be compromised? And what is the penalty for non-compliance?

Art.73 also obliges a State Party to provide information originally disclosed to it in confidence, either by another State Party or intergovernmental organisation or international organisation, if requested to do so by the Court. If consent to disclose that information is not forthcoming from the original source, the Court must be informed. So what happens then? Not only does this provision place our own security at grave risk, but we would be obliged to compromise the national security of our overseas friends and allies - a totally un-Australian and abhorrent concept.

States Parties are required to "give effect to fines and forfeitures ordered by the Court" on a "guilty" person (Art. 109). So Australians will have to penalise other Australians in Australia because an international body has decided that we must.

June Beckett November 2000

Apart from being obliged to co-operate fully with the Court at all times, a State Party is required to ensure that there are procedures available under their national law for all of the forms of co-operation, as well as keeping ICC requests for co-operation confidential (Art.87). It therefore appears that the Court processes will also be secretive.

Art.89 requires States Parties to comply with requests for arrest and surrender of a person on their own territory, even if a person has already been judged for the offence (Art.20). If the Court decides that the case is admissible, the State Party is obliged to proceed with the arrest and surrender of the person. In other words, a person can be charged and convicted twice for the same offence.

A State Party must allow transportation through its territory of a person being surrendered to the Court by another State Party. And if a State Party receives a request for surrender of a person from the Court as well as from another State, the Court must be notified (Art.90). The process involved depends on whether one or both Parties are States Parties. But, in the end, Australia would be required to either do the Court's bidding or obey its "international obligations". Whichever way it went, Australia would be told what to do by others.

Art.93 obliges States Parties to comply with the Court's requests for assistance In relation to investigations or prosecutions, such as the gathering, preservation and production of testimonial, physical and documentary evidence, protection of witnesses and victims, the execution of searches and seizures, and the service of documents." If such assistance is denied to the Court, the State Party must inform the Prosecutor of the reasons. But what happens then?

If there are problems for a State Party in complying with the Court's request for assistance so as to impede or prevent its execution, that State must consult with the Court without delay in order to resolve the matter". What happens then?

Art. 100 provides for all States Parties to bear all the costs "for execution of requests in its territory, except for Court-specific costs". While a request can be made to the Court for assistance under Art.93, it is clear that the taxpayers of Australia will be obliged to carry yet another burden.

Art. 109, in requiring States Parties to give effect under their national law to Court-ordered fines or forfeitures, also requires that all property or proceeds "thereby obtained must be transferred to the Court." It would therefore be in the Court's best interests to prosecute as widely as possible in order to become profitable.

Under Art. 110, a custodial State is prohibited "from releasing the sentenced person before expiry of the Court's sentence. So even if we think that the convicted person was prosecuted, convicted and sentenced unfairly, we have no choice but to keep that person in jail at the International Criminal Court's "pleasure". I trust that Mr. Downer, when calculating the cost to the nation of this venture, has taken into account the extra exhorbitant cost to Australia that will undoubtedly be required in the building and staffing of additional jails.

June Beckett November 2000

10) Costs

Art. 115 and Art. 117 require States Parties to make a contribution to the expenses of the Court and the Assembly, including its Bureau and subsidiary bodies, in accordance with an agreed scale of assessment, based on the scale adopted by the UN for its regular budget and adjusted in accordance with the principles on which that scale is based." So now the ICC and the UN not only interfere in our affairs, we have to pay them to do it.
i

Based on Australia's combined assessed contribution to the International Criminal Tribunals for the former Yugoslavia and Rwanda, it is estimated that the assessed contribution for Australia would be approximately $US5 million each year - but it is emphasised that this is only an estimate. "The actual figure will depend upon factors that are not yet known, such as which States will be amongst the first sixty to ratify the Statute and how quickly other States ratify following the Statute's entry into force. The costs in relation to specific requests for assistance will be borne through existing resources within the Attorney-General's portfolio." Assuming that the above estimate is reasonably accurate, based on the current exchange rate, it is clear that there would be a further burden on taxpayers to the tune of at least $AUD9.8 million per annum. It is also obvious by the above statement, that the States Parties are being bribed to ratify quickly, ostensibly on the fanciful notion that their costs' contribution might be lessened. Regardless of whether we take up the "carrot" or not, there is little doubt that, before too long, our expenditure on this omnipotent abomination would be well in excess of one billion dollars each year. One wonders what the battling Australian farmers will think about this profligacy.

11) Future Protocols, Annexes and other legally binding Instruments

While Art. 122 allows States Parties to propose amendments "to the various institutional provisions of the Statute at any time after entry into force", amendments to "all other provisions cannot be proposed until seven years after the Statute's entry into force" (Art. 121), at which time the UN Secretary-General is required to convene a Review Conference to consider amendments (Art.123). Thereafter, amendment proposals "will be considered by the Assembly which will decide whether to take up the proposal. In other words, if we decide that we do not like certain of the Court's processes, we can offer amendments but there is absolutely no guarantee that any proposed amendments will be accepted.

12) Implementation

The Government will soon be moving to introduce legislation necessary to reflect Australia's commitment to the Statute (according to the Joint Media Release of 12112199). Now that we have the benefit of hindsight, could it be that this lemming-like rush to support the Statute was the main reason for another recent piece of controversial legislation, now in force? I refer to the under-publicised and equally hurried Defence Legislation Amendment (Aid to Civilian Authorities) Bill 200 which passed through Parliament, with the combined co-operation of the Government and the Opposition, on 7th September.

June Beckett November 2000

This Bill, as we now all know, opens the way for Australian troops to be called out against fellow Australians to quell "domestic violence" on Australian soil. Could it be that this Bill was deemed necessary as a safeguard against any likely rebellion of our citizens against the subject Statute, when they become all too painfully familiar with its terms and conditions after the Court commences operations? For it is an amazing coincidence that the Defence Bill has been forced through Parliament, against the criticisms of many august bodies and individuals, at this time, given that the Government admitted that its introduction had nothing to do with the Olympics and given also that the sunset clause was rejected so that the Bill has an open-ended effect.

Consultation and Publicity

As successive Australian governments continue to ride roughshod over their constituents, they are aided and abetted by a corrupt and self-serving media "establishment", whose only aim appears to be the furthering of their own personal or corporate empires. With a few exceptions, the news media industry in this country has abrogated its moral duty and responsibility to inform the public, truthfully and without embellishment or bias, of those things which not only directly concern the citizens of this country, but which will seriously impact on the lives of their children and countless future generations.

In this specific case, the Government and its supporting bureaucracy, blandly state that a number of press releases have been published (from the Attorney-General on 26 August 1998, jointly from the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Attorney-General on 9 December 1998 and jointly from the Ministers for Foreign Affairs and Defence and the Attorney-General on 12 December 1999). I am engaged full time in writing and political research and yet I was unaware of these alleged announcements. I should therefore like to know the exact extent to which these announcements were published by the media: the frequency; in which publications; whether in detail or in précis form; and did "our" ABC bother to publicise them at all?

The Government states that it has consulted with the States and Territories throughout the negotiation of the Statute; that two representatives of the States and Territories were included in Australia's delegation to the Diplomatic Conference that negotiated and adopted the Statute, while the delegation to the Preparatory Commission which has been negotiating the Court's related instruments has included one States and Territories representative. It is claimed that, "There have been no objections from State or Territory Governments to Australian ratification of the Statute". I shall be demanding an explanation for this from the Premier of NSW but, if that is indeed true, then all State and Territory Governments should also be condemned for not consulting with the people and for not publicising their actions.

The Government further states that the International Criminal Court (ICC) "is a standing item on the agenda for the bi-annual consultations between the Department of Foreign Affairs & Trade and Non-Government Organisations. NG0s are particularly supportive of ratification of the Statute." Perhaps the Government needs to be reminded, yet again, that NG0s are

unelected, often self-appointed, unrepresentative and, in some cases, corrupt bodies whose opinions are of no interest to Australians, and whose agenda in many instances is highly questionable. Indeed, as we know, the strings of many NG0s are pulled by foreign interests whose loyalty is far removed from Australia's welfare.

It is said that both the Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Attorney-General have made numerous speeches over a number of years concerning the establishment of the ICC. Again I ask, where were these publicised? My guess is that they were only posted on the internet - a facility not available to everybody, although Mr. Downer has previously shown a marked tendency towards the belief that as long as his pronouncements appear on a website, all his responsibilities to the public have been met.

It is claimed that the matter of this Statute is on the agenda of the National Consultative Committee on Peace & Disarmament, which includes representatives of the RSL and it is further claimed that at a meeting in December 1999 the Committee "encouraged the Government to ratify the Statute."

I find it hard to believe that the RSL would so meekly comply with the Government's actions in this instance, knowing as it must, that its members - our veterans who risked their lives for this country's freedom - would soundly condemn any such move. But if the RSL did support the Government, did it do so after consultation with the veterans or report its decision to them? If not, why not?

The Government's statement that the viability of the]CC was included in the terms of reference for the Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence & Trade UN Sub-Committee inquiry into Australia's relations with the UN in the post-Cold War environment is, of course, correct. I was one of those who took the trouble to send in a submission (No. 44 Vol.2) but it is now clear that that Inquiry did not serve any real purpose. As usual, it was merely a token gesture designed to try to convince the people that their opinions were genuinely being sought and would be heard.

Conclusion

If there were still any doubts remaining, it is now abundantly clear that democracy in Australia is dead. For a long time there has been virtually no difference in policy or effect between the two major parties, or their cohorts in the Greens, Democrats and National Party. Their collusion ensures that the citizens of Australia have become almost entirely subjected to international, as opposed to national, laws, despite their continued lukewarm attempts to maintain the ridiculous facade of "opposition" or "keeping the bastards honest".

They are voted into office by a corrupt and manipulated electoral system, where it is not only a criminal offence to refuse to vote but, because of compulsory preferences and the scandalous and unconstitutional two-party preferred fiasco, preferences have to be allocated to candidates that the people do not want.

June Beckett November 2000

Knowing, as the politicians do, that no matter how despicable their actions, either their security of tenure is assured or they can leave office for a comfortable life on huge taxpayer-funded superannuation and allowances, there is no requirement on them to consult the people, listen to their wishes, or even act in the best interests of anyone other than themselves.

All politicians who actively support the Statute of the International Criminal Court, are in my view, guilty of either appalling ignorance and naivete, or treachery and sedition. Either way, all of them should be, at the very least thrown out of office immediately. As for the Minister for Foreign Affairs, only he knows the real reason for his actions and he will have to live With his conscience. But, it may well be relevant to consider that Mr. Downer retained his rural seat of Mayo by a very slim margin at the last election. Rural voters are angry at the Government for a variety of reasons and it could well be that Mr. Downer is well aware that his chances in November are not good. That being so, could it be that, by currying favour to the international community" he hopes that, as the future ex-Foreign Affairs Minister, he might be offered a comfortable UN position, as did another incumbent, Gareth Evans, who was similarly noted for his predilection for all things international? Time alone will tell.

My contempt for the weakly compliant lapdogs who support this Statute is exceeded only by my abhorrence towards the globalists and everything they stand for, in forcing upon us their world government agenda.

For a great many years, a few brave souls have endeavoured to highlight, for the benefit of others, the dangers of the Fabian "gradualism" approach, whereby One World Government will eventually take over. Such warnings have gone largely unheeded because the public foolishly listened to their parliamentary representatives and assorted non-governmental bodies, who scoffed at such a suggestion. People have been intimidated into silence by scorn and derision which has been heaped by the shovelful on those issuing the warnings, as politicians and "Balmain basket-weavers" alike described them as "redneck conspirators" or members of the "lunar right". Without the ability to openly discuss such a proposition, most people remain unaware of all the facts and therefore find it impossible to acknowledge that such an infamous scenario as One World Government could ever eventuate. But, while the anxious whispers remained behind closed doors, the prophecy is now on the threshold of reality.

The Commission on Global Governance, with the endorsement of the UN, is running rampant and its strategy is well on track. Consider the following quote from the Commission's recent report: "Although States are sovereign, they are not free individually to do whatever they want." Again, Maurice Strong, a member of the Commission, is reported to have said: It is simply not feasible for sovereignty to be exercised unilaterally by individual nation-states, however powerful. It is a principle which will yield only slowly and reluctantly to the imperatives of global environmental cooperation."

Even today there are some politicians who refuse to believe that One World Government is well underway, preferring instead to be sucked in by the warm and fuzzy sentiments

June Beckett November 2000

expressed by the international elite about the "rights" of individuals and nations to peace and stability. Unfortunately, they, like us, will all too soon wake up to the truth, but only when it is too late.

It has been reported by the Washington Times that the USA actively voted against the ICC, saying that it appeared to have all the hallmarks of a "Get America" strategy and that its structure would not protect US troops from frivolous or politically-motivated indictments or prosecutions. It was joined by Iraq, Libya, Israel, Russia, China and India. However, it matters not that the US is against the Statute, because Americans will still be subjected to arrest and trial, as will all other nations which refuse to sign. The fact is that, at the time of writing, there have been 115 signatures and 22 ratifications, included amongst which is the powerful European Union which has not only signed and is expected to ratify the Statute by the end of this year, but has promised financial and legal assistance to the Court. It therefore looks almost certain that this infamous institution will be well and truly established within 1 -2 years.

The Statute, I believe, could well be unconstitutional. However, that small detail will not deter the Government from going ahead with ratification, since it is common knowledge that most of the UN Treaties and Conventions already signed are probably also unconstitutional through a conveniently loose and irresponsible interpretation of s.51 (xxix).

It is claimed that these "crimes against humanity" pose a threat to the international community as a whole, that Australia's national interest is best served by a peaceful international community and that the creation of the Court will contribute to international peace and security. But there is no such body as the International community", per se. This is only a term to describe a collection of disparate countries banding together (with their own agendas -democratic or otherwise) to sit in judgment on others. International peace and security has been non-existent for a long time - thanks to the UN, the IMF and the World Bank - and the more International" rules that are imposed on the nations of the world, the less peaceful the world becomes.

Each nation world-wide wants to retain its own sovereignty, to make its own laws and run its own affairs unimpeded by foreign intervention. Globalisation, together with its offshoot Multiculturalism, is being rejected world-wide. The removal of boundaries and the enforced merging of national populations into one homogenous mass, removes all natural loyalties and national unity and creates only division and discord. It is a concept that cannot ever succeed and will never be accepted. Fiji's political upheaval is a classic example of this. In terms of this particular country's affairs, Mr. Downer's hypocrisy in criticising them for their 19 undemocratic" stance is mind-boggling.

June Beckett November 2000

Few would deny that those guilty of atrocities against humanity should be brought to justice. So to this extent the Statute is theoretically worthwhile. However, in practice, it will not be the likes of Mugabe or Milosovic who are tried and punished but ordinary citizens who lack the influence and resources to escape the clutches of the international juggernaut.

The Statute of the International Criminal Court is, I believe, the final nail in the coffin containing the remnants of our freedom, sovereignty and independence. If ratified, global government will be but a few short steps away.

June Beckett November 2000