

## Boot camp gets the boot

During the height of the mandatory sentencing furore in February this year, a full page spread in the Courier Mail newspaper announced that a boot camp was going to operate in Queensland. It was funded to the tune of \$3m and expecting to attract corporate support. This project had the personal approval of the Prime Minister.

The camp was going to take young men who were deemed to be at risk of suicide, drug abuse and sexual exploitation. They would be signed up for two years. They would learn bush skills at 'Hell Hole' bush camp for three months, live on a farm for nine months and then return to the city to work under supervision for a further 12 months.

The project was heartily endorsed by the Premier and Queensland's Chief Justice who seemed just itching to find a way to formally include the boot camp as an option at the Court face. No talk about civil rights, exclusion from society or outmoded rambo-like impositions on troubled young people.

But as fortune would have it, in August, the Courier Mail reported that the 'military style youth programme' had gone into liquidation following a lack of corporate financial support. An inadvertent victory for modernity, human rights and young people!

**Kerry Walker DCI - Australia National  
Committee Member**

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## New Human Rights Commissioner for Australia

On 31 October it was announced that Dr Sev Ozdowski AM has been appointed Human Rights Commissioner and Acting Disability Discrimination Commissioner. Dr Ozdowski succeeds former Human Rights Commissioner Mr Chris Sidoti whose term expired in August.

Since 1996, Dr. Ozdowski has been the Chief Executive of the Office of Multicultural and International Affairs, Department of Premier and Cabinet South Australia. He previously held various positions in the Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

Professor Alice Tay, President of the Human Rights & Equal Opportunity Commission has welcomed the announcement saying:

*"Dr Ozdowski brings wide-ranging experience in many areas of human rights - in race relations, multicultural affairs, human rights law, community relations and education ... His background as an eminent sociologist will also contribute enormously to the broader work of the Commission."*

DCI-Australia looks forward to learning of Dr Ozdowski's view of his new role in advancing the rights of children and young people.

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## Human rights 'change over' in January

Professor Ivan Shearer, who will replace Justice Elizabeth Evatt as an Australian member of the United Nations Human Rights Committee in Geneva in January, has responded to UNAA's request for regular contact with him.

In a letter to UNAA National President, Professor Margaret Reynolds, he says:

*"I appreciate very much that the United Nations Association of Australia looks forward to working with me. I value the work of the Association highly and I shall be very happy to have regular contact with it. The work of the Human Rights Committee is immensely important and I am very conscious of the responsibilities membership involves. I shall do my best in that respect, and*

*also to make the work of the Committee better known in Australia".*

Professor Shearer, of the Sydney University Law School, is currently a visiting professor in the Stockton Chair of International Law at the US Naval War College in Newport Rhode Island for the academic year 2000-2001.

Justice Elizabeth Evatt will continue to be a member of the Human Rights Committee until the end of the this year. Another session of the Committee will be held in Geneva in November.

**For more information, call UNAA President  
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