



TWICKENHAM and RICHMOND BRANCH
working towards a credible, strong and effective
UNITED NATIONS

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A very warm welcome to the autumn issue of the TRUNA newsletter presented in a new monochrome format, yet still maintaining a vibrant and diverse content.

Looking forward to the UN Climate Conference in Copenhagen this December (COP15) with 192 UN member states attending, the focus for clarity on combating climate change is one of the defining challenges of our century. The new climate treaty will be replacing the Kyoto Protocol which was adopted in Japan, in December 1997. The Kyoto Protocol sets binding targets for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and has been signed and ratified by 184 parties of the UN Climate Convention. Since the protocol was entered into force on 16 February 2005, it should be noted that there has been measurable achievement in engaging the governments of those nations responsible for the planet's highest emission levels to recognise and address this world environmental crisis. The world's population is already adversely affected by impact on water levels, food production, health issues, shelter, security, economic stability and the inevitable impact on humanitarian needs. The time to act is now!

Sally-Ann Marchan
Editor

***All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.
They are endowed with reason and conscience and should
act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood***

Article 1, Universal Declaration of Human Rights

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CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT:

TRUNA has had another great year of events and fund raising. This year we have successfully raised, with Amnesty International, £9600 for our public sculpture to celebrate the 60th Anniversary of the Declarations of Human Rights. This was thanks to the Small Grants fund and the Thames Community Foundation as well as help from Richmond Council's Arts Department. The sculpture will be unveiled in spring 2010 - so watch this space! We have also raised for UNA/UNICEF over £1,700 – a magnificent result which reflects great credit to all who contributed in any way.

Our calendar of events has been diverse. TRUNA was well represented at the Annual Conference of UNA-UK which was held this year in Edinburgh during the summer. I am proud to report that we were successful in having a number of policies approved including Respect for Culture.

Locally, we held two interesting house meetings; the first with Jim McCluskey who spoke about the controversial issue of "Trident" and the second with Diane Maile, UNICEF's Education Officer. Diane took the UN's Protocol on the Rights of the Child to schools in Hampshire and is now rolling it out in counties north of London. She also talked about her ongoing work in education, following a model established in Canada. At our annual pub lunch Lawrence Sewell spoke on "The Monitoring of British Investments in Charity Work around the World". We also looked to expand our calendar of events and had a talk in East Sheen Library by Neville Grant, the chair of the London and South East Region UNA who spoke on, "The UN, Unnecessary or Indispensable, in War and Relief?". Other events included a Civic Service at the Unitarian Church; the Mayor of Richmond upon Thames, Cllr. Mrs Helen Lee-Parsons hosting an event for Human Rights Day and a summer BBQ at my mother's house.

Foremost, there also has to be a very special mention of heartfelt thanks to Derek and Estelle Smith who were our longest serving committee members, they stood down at the last AGM. Derek first joined in 1964 before I was born! and it is a special delight that Derek has taken the time to record some of the memories of his 45 year commitment and service to TRUNA. We have also seen committee members change. Sam Trevelyan was the editor of our newsletter since 2006, but has now gone off to university and we would like to say a big thank you to him for his fantastic work over the years. Sam is being replaced by Sally-Ann so a warm welcome to her.

Special thanks has to go to Dennis Wilmot and Mary Holmes who have continued their classes in schools promoting the United Nations citizenship program. They are now expanding into many other schools within Richmond Borough as they have had a meeting with a Council officer to work out the details of this. This expansion shows how well their classes have been received so far.

Virgina Morris
Chairman

DATES for your DIARY

Committee Meeting	...	09 November 09
UNA/UNICEF Collection Day	...	14 November 09
London/SE Region AGM	...	14 November 09
Pub Lunch	...	28 November 09
Human Rights Day	...	10 December 09



AGM ADDRESS:
'Global Problems and Global Governance'

At the Branch AGM on 7th October in Teddington Methodist Church, Lord Patten of Barnes addressed an audience of 75 made up of Branch members and members of the public who had been drawn by his reputation and the importance of his subject.

He began by emphasising that though we live in a post-war world shaped by the 2 World Wars of the 20th Century, this fact is more and more meaningless to the present generation. After the First World War, President Woodrow Wilson of the USA had been instrumental in setting up the League of Nations based on 14 points and the idea that nations should decide for themselves how they should be governed. The League, which the USA refused to join, was shaken to pieces in the 1920s and 30s by European nationalism which encouraged dog eat dog protectionism and xenophobia. Forty million people died in the Second World War, most of them civilians. At its end the USA, under Franklin Delano Roosevelt, tried to lead the world back to what Woodrow Wilson had tried to do, a Super Power creating institutions and a rule book to which all would be subject, including itself. It was the driving force for the establishment of the United Nations and the International Criminal Court, setting up an infrastructure of economic and political affairs for the world. However, the UN reflects the crooked timbre of humanity. Its record is pretty ragged, not because of the inadequacy of the context but because of how nation states have handled situations. Institutionally, power centres reflect 1944/45, with the 5 Permanent Members exercising the veto. Any reform of the UN is slow and is prevented by the Permanent Members of the Security Council. This increases the world's reluctance to accept the authority and legitimacy of the UN.

Lord Patten felt we should not be too critical. We think there are more conflicts in the world but there are actually less, many ended by the UN or UN style conflict resolution. To solve the problem of the veto, it should only be used in the national interest and use of the veto should be justified to the General Assembly. In the case of Darfur, the other Permanent Members are afraid that if they push too hard China will use its veto to block any action. That is the biggest problem the UN faces, the question of humanitarian intervention. The Westphalian Treaty had established the idea of Realpolitik which says that inside the boundaries of the nation state everything is the business of the State. However, individuals have rights as well as States, so the idea of the "responsibility to protect" has arisen. Laos under Pol Pot, Bangladesh at the time of its War of Independence, Rwanda, Bosnia, and perhaps the recent events in Sri Lanka lead us to say "Never again". On a visit to Rwanda, Lord Patten was told by his host, the Ambassador, that for months after the events, while many of his friends had disappeared, he had never seen so many well-fed stray dogs. 220,000 Bosnians were slaughtered and Dubrovnik was shelled but the international community did nothing. It is essential that International Law is observed at all times by all members of society. Diplomatic intervention must be used to remove causes of conflict. Too often a UN Secretary-General is appointed because he will not cause too many waves. When someone tough is appointed we may sleep better in our beds.

One final point to be made was that the Nation State continues to be the focus of people's loyalty but no State can cope on its own. The only existing Super Power found it could not cope by itself, much to President Bush's disgust. Diseases, Nuclear Proliferation, Terrorism, Organised Crime, the Small Arms Trade, Slavery all prove that National Boundaries are more and more porous. All countries are having to deal with common problems. The UN has been weakened when it is most needed. A world designed for the 1940s cannot deal with today's problems. China will soon be the world's second largest Power. The potential SARS pandemic resulted in a strengthening of WHO. Dealing with crises like the present economic one might lead to a re-thinking of sovereignty and boundaries, with small and medium-sized Nation States pooling their sovereignty to deal with common problems. There was the meeting of the G20 in Pittsburgh and the Financial Times reminder of the European Union but though there is a limit to what people will accept, cynicism and self-interest in smoke-filled rooms is preferable to shooting each other. In Finance the UK is a giant but in Foreign Policy and Arms we are a mouse. We may not be willing to pool resources, but it is imperative that nations work together. We are constantly held back by the huge difficulty in accepting loyalty to international institutions. It is a delusion that we can manage our own affairs without anyone else being involved. contd/



During Lord Patten's time in Hong Kong their economy was attacked by Hedge Funds. In a small way it showed the limitations of national sovereignty in a global inter-dependent world. As is said in "Waiting for Godot" : "You're on earth – there's no cure for that". The UN was an effort to make the world more civilised. If it is not, that is not the fault of the UN but of the people. One of the problems of the UN and the EU is ignorance.

In response to questions, Lord Patten said that raising the profile of the UN and the EU is difficult. It is extraordinary how insular people are, even when they inhabit large land masses. People are ignorant of politicians but know all about football managers. At the time of the Iraq War, Mr. Blair took no notice of us, not even the two million who marched against the War. The UK membership of the Security Council was an acknowledgement of the extraordinary bravery of the UK in the Second World War. Today we still employ the rhetoric of Winston Churchill but we are poised between Europe and the United States and the USA regards us as more useful when we are working in concert with Europe. We have lost an Empire and failed to find a role.

Lord Patten has written extensively about the Conservative Party and Europe and has not always been in agreement with others in the Party. He believes the best way of pursuing our national interest is as a member of the EU and NATO. On Afghanistan, he believed the resignation of Peter Galbraith was bad for the UN but that we need to sustain the Afghan Government, however corrupt, rather than having women in university being drenched with acid. President Karzai vetoed the appointment of Paddy Ashdown because he knew he would not be a pushover. We need to support the UN in every way, especially intellectually. Very brave soldiers are engaged in UN Peace-keeping, but even more UN civilian staff have been killed, one being a personal friend blown up in Baghdad. UN staff in the field do incredibly difficult jobs in very dangerous circumstances and need our whole-hearted support. UN staff are often lawyers, not technical people, people in politics who put themselves forward. Lord Patten said he would love to see them drawn from a wider social mix and he would particularly like to see more women working in UN posts. At present he was employed by the "Crisis Group" (crisisgroup.org) started after the Bosnian War when we were responding to "Never again". They try to issue a report before a crisis blows up and suggest what should be done about it, not in an adversarial way but to give Governments an insight into what is happening. In the case of Iran, it is curious that we only talk to people we agree with. We need to come to an agreement with them on nuclear energy and stop them weaponizing. We need to police them with international sanctions and get China and Russia on board.

Lord Patten concluded by saying he was pleased the UN had so much support in South West London but he hoped we would make trouble for the UN from time to time. He then had to hurry away to another appointment and could not wait for the refreshments and socialising that finished the evening.

Olivia Richardson
General Secretary

News in Brief:

- The AGM of the London and SE Region UNA will be on 14 November at 1.30pm – to book a place contact Wendy Higgs at: wendy-higgs@hotmail.co.uk / T: 8318 1050 M: 07751 297291
- The Pub Lunch will be held at The Cabbage Patch, in central Twickenham at 12.00 noon on 28 November 09 will be with John Reekie talking about Amnesty and the International Criminal Court.
- UNA/UNICEF collection on 17 October 09 raised **£428.44**.
- Donations received following the recent appeal were in excess of **£300.00**.
- The 'bbq summer' as heralded earlier this year by our erstwhile weathermen, duly arrived in September, when sunshine rained down as members enjoyed a delicious bbq lunch, generously hosted at the home of Virginia's mother.



Memories of an Octogenarian:

When I joined the Twickenham Branch Committee in 1964, as a representative of Twickenham Congregational Church, the Branch was well established, having been in existence for just ten years. Founder members such as Alice Bostock, Edome Bromley, Revd. George Osborn and Messrs. Bligh and Millward occupied positions of leadership. It was Alice who had been largely responsible for bringing the Branch into being and having established firm foundations she was then seeking a successor as Secretary. Sad to relate, none could be found so Edome gallantly stepped into the breach as Acting Secretary (a position which she held for at least three years!).

Almost unbelievably *two* volunteers then appeared on the scene almost simultaneously – both of whom went on to give truly outstanding service to UNA. One was Rashid Kareh who served on UNA's National Executive and in 1998 was appointed OBE for his part in getting the UK back into UNESCO. However, it was the second of the two, Commander Alfred Holmes (Mary's father) who became Branch Secretary and made a huge impact upon the Branch membership during the 1970's. He was a truly dynamic and dedicated person who insisted on covering almost all UNA activity himself (leaving just a little for the Treasurer and even less for the Chairman!). Consequently, the Chairmanship, then of two years duration was a position of honour, but whose only responsibility was to preside at meetings. It was on this basis that I was persuaded to become Chairman for 1978-80. However, when Alfred died tragically and unexpectedly in 1979, a huge void was left and not too surprisingly all eyes then turned to the Chairman to fill that void. In response I made it clear that I could only consider taking on the Secretaryship if the branch appointed a Membership Secretary, Press Officer and Flag Day Organiser. Thankfully, all three positions were filled and thus I became Branch Secretary.

In the early 80's my main tasks were to maintain the canvassing campaigns which Alfred had initiated and to build upon the Branch's reputation for attracting outstanding personalities of the day to address our Public Meetings. Names which come readily to mind in that category are Nobel Peace Prize-winner Lord Philip Noel-Baker; former Government Minister and Oxfam Director Lord Frank Judd; and former Governor of Cyprus and UK United Nations Ambassador, Lord Hugh Caradon. However, the largest attendance I can recall at a UNA Meeting in our area came in 1989 when Sir Richard Attenborough addressed over 200 people at the Queen Charlotte hall in Richmond about his role as a Goodwill Ambassador for UNICEF.

Our Branch has always had a great desire to take the message of UNA into local schools. This was exemplified in the 1980's by the UN Quiz Competition which we organised annually in local schools (when the winners were awarded the Alfred Holmes Trophy), and then in the early 90's by the two Model UN general Assemblies which I was able to organise in the Council chamber at York House. On the second of those occasions, Sir Trevor McDonald added prestige to the event by agreeing to be President of Assembly.

One of our prime purposes in UNA is, of course, to campaign vigorously and effectively for causes in which we believe. During the period in which I have been Secretary or Chairman there are three such campaigns which stand out in my memory. The first of these was in 1989 when Felix Dodds, then London Regional Officer of UNA launched a campaign entitled "Save the Ozone Layer" which we fully supported. This campaign to avoid damage caused by CFC's was successful locally in persuading some dry-cleaners to switch to less harmful chemicals and in encouraging Richmond Council to take action on the issue.

Perhaps our most successful campaign to date at the national level was our endeavour from 1997 to ensure that teaching about the UN became a compulsory part of the revised Schools National Curriculum in 2000. I remember that my first letter on behalf of the Branch on this issue was to Robin Cook, then Foreign Secretary in 1997 pointing out that as the UK was in the privileged position of being one of the five permanent members of the UN Security Council (with a veto) our country had a special obligation to ensure that its children were properly educated about the UN. Not surprisingly, the answer came back, "This issue is the responsibility of the Secretary of State for Education". When the provisional syllabus was circulated it simply stated that there should be compulsory words were included.

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Completely off the record, I learned subsequently that a phone call had gone from the Education Department to the Foreign Office before a final decision was made, so it may be that my original teaching about “the European Union”. We lobbied hard and long to have the words “Commonwealth and United Nations” added. It was a source of great satisfaction to us all to learn that ultimately those additional letters were not entirely wasted! The third campaigning topic to which I referred is, of course, a UN Standby Force which we have been pursuing since 2001. Dennis and I are the Branch members who have been most actively involved with this proposal and it was some encouragement to us to learn that the high level UNA/RUSI Conference of last year was held, partly at least, as a result of our persistence. It will need much more persistence yet, but we fervently hope that the Branch will continue to press this issue urgently until success is achieved, as it was with the National Curriculum question.

Perhaps I should conclude by referring briefly to what happened in November 2001. I was truly astonished to receive a letter from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office saying that it was proposed to submit my name as MBE. In view of my long-standing grave reservations about the Honours system, I must admit that my initial instinctive reaction was to respond, “Thanks, but no thanks”. However, I then reflected that this could only conceivably have happened if a number of local people had worked really hard to support this nomination and for me to decline would seem really churlish. I knew of others in UNA who had received similar honours, but these were for services at the national or regional level. As my service had been almost entirely at the local level it seemed to good to have some recognition of the great importance of the local branch in the vital work of the UN Association. I was, therefore, pleased to accept the award as a token of public recognition of what we as a Branch had achieved.

It has been a great privilege to be involved in the work of the Twickenham and Richmond UNA for such a long period and both Estelle and I are deeply thankful for all the wonderful people we have known as friends and colleagues.

Derek Smith

<p>TRUNA'S CITIZENSHIP PROGRAMME: Focus in Schools:</p>
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Thanks to Virginia's high-level contacts in the Borough, and her being Governor at Shene School along with education staff from the Borough, Twickenham & Richmond UN Association's work with schools in Richmond was the main part of the agenda at a recent Council meeting for School Citizenship Co-ordinators. The meeting was held at the Clifden Centre in Twickenham in September.

The meeting was very well attended by teachers, staff from Richmond youth service and council advisers in addition to Mary Holmes and myself. The purpose of the meeting was to explore ways of furthering our work with the Model UN program within schools in the Borough. TRUNA were able to talk about many successes over the years, having worked with 8 schools and colleges including The Mall School where we have helped to run and organise Model UN events for 8 out of the last 9 years.

We were lucky to have successfully invited two teachers to speak about their experience of the programme - Jane Chalk from Denmead School and Jill Sheldon from Teddington School. Both spoke highly of their experience with the work and the important impact on the students who had taken part. Jill was also able to confirm success of the event on one occasion including the whole year group, numbering over 200 pupils.

Generally further adoption of the UN model was received with considerable enthusiasm and not just for the 'gifted and talented' pupils. Minutes of the meeting have been circulated to schools and we have good contacts to follow up within Richmond and also at St Mary's College, Strawberry Hill.

**Dennis Wilmot
Schools Liaison Officer**



HOUSE MEETING on 'TRIDENT':

On 2nd July at the home of Mr. & Mrs. McCluskey in St. Margaret's members of the Branch met to discuss "Trident". Those present provided their ideas and opinions in dialogue form during the evening. With 26,000 nuclear weapons in existence, each weighing 100 kilotons, and 2,500 of them on high alert or hair trigger alert to be launched at the press of a button in a matter of minutes, it seems only the complete abolition of all nuclear weapons will make the world safe. Electronic warning systems are subject to malfunction and there is no way of ascertaining the truth of any alarm received via such systems. The weapons travel 1,000 miles in 4 minutes, not giving Joint Chiefs of Staff much time to judge the truth of the alarm and inform the Head of State so the button to start a counter attack can be pressed. The general public switch off when told these details because of the basic insanity of 9 nuclear States and 10 more who possess the necessary technology holding the world to ransom. It is an intolerable situation. Tony Blair said Britain needs nuclear weapons for the next 50 years even though Britain has signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. A nuclear submarine has 48 nuclear bombs of 100 kilotons each. There was no debate about replacing Trident submarines until the day before the Government announced it was replacing them. The International Court of Justice at The Hague has said there is an obligation on all States to rid the world of nuclear weapons. Recently President Obama of the USA and Prime Minister Medvedev of Russia agreed to cut down the number of nuclear weapons with a view to total abolition eventually. It is a step in the right direction but there are forces that refuse to let it happen since they make fortunes out of war and armaments. Britain and the USA have the most belligerent warmongers and arms manufacturers. Israel has between 100 and 200 nuclear weapons and the Palestine problem cannot be solved until Israel is told by Britain and the USA that their policy is wrong. No one can be trusted with nuclear weapons. Terrorists could fashion a nuclear weapon and hold the world to ransom. So-called rogue States could do the same. The world needs a properly funded Inspectorate to prevent anyone manufacturing them. The New Agenda Coalition is working towards the abolition of nuclear weapons. Most of the Southern Hemisphere has signed up to be nuclear free.

There is a basic desire to own land. Population is growing at a phenomenal rate. Scarcity of resources is sparking conflict. Global warming is even more of a threat. We need to get rid of nuclear weapons before there is conflict over water, land, energy sources and economic assets. War is a very bad way of resolving disagreements. Negotiation is the best way of solving differences. It has resulted in more wars being ended or prevented during the last 50 years than in any previous time. Nuclear war will lead to more innocent people suffering than in previous conventional wars and it will affect future generations. A number of large organisations are forming round George Schultz and Sam Nunn to respond to the present dangers posed by nuclear weapons. They are putting pressure on the UN. Australia is very strong against nuclear weapons, seeking abolition in gradual stages. "Securing Our Survival" details the process on a new Convention to be ratified by all 192 States. The Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is to be looked at in 2010 since it is designed to be examined every 5 years. The United Nations Association needs to put pressure on the UK Government and the UN, particularly the Security Council. The organisation MEDACT can be accessed on the Internet.

Olivia Richardson

TRUNA Committee Matters :

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Currently, the office of Publicity Officer is vacant and the Committee welcome any prospective candidates to apply directly to Olivia Richardson or email to info@truna.uk - this is a vital role to raise the profile of TRUNA and a wonderful opportunity to get actively involved.