

Newfoundland Law Reform Commission

The Canadian province of Newfoundland is the latest Commonwealth jurisdiction to establish a Law Reform Commission. The Chairman of the Commission is Mr John J O'Neal QC and its Director is Mr Christopher P Curran. The Newfoundland LRC joins a family of Canadian LRC's which have a close corresponding contact with law reform agencies in Australia and other Commonwealth countries. The address of the new Commission is Confederation Building, St John's, Newfoundland A1C 527 Canada.

ALRC Staff Changes

The ALRC is fortunate to have the assistance of an officer from the Australian Public Service Board's Executive De-

velopment Scheme. Mr Val Manera, a Principal Auditor from the Auditor General's Office in Canberra will be working in the Commission's Sydney office for several months on expungement of criminal records. Val has a degree in Commerce from the University of New South Wales. The Commission has also recruited two temporary Law Reform Officers to assist in the final stages of the Evidence Report. They are Mr Peter Driessen, who has degrees in Arts and Law from Macquarie University and Ms Alexis Hailstones who has a Bachelor of Jurisprudence and a Bachelor of Law from the University of New South Wales. The Commission's administrative section is being assisted by a Special Youth Employment Trainee, Mr John Williamson. This scheme is funded by the Department of Employment.

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marianbad revisited. The Ninth Australian Law Reform Agencies Conference convened in Sydney on 15-16 June 1984. It was jointly hosted by the ALRC and the NSWLRC. Among leading papers read to the conference were:

- thoughtful addresses by the NSW Attorney-General, Mr Paul Landa and NSWLRC Chairman Ronald Sackville, on the relationship between LRCs and governments;
- a paper by Mr James Spigelman, past Commissioner of the ALRC, on Sanctions and Remedies in Law Reform;
- a paper by Associate Professor Bettina Cass (NSWLRC) on 'A Sociologist Looks at Law Reform';
- a detailed review by the Federal Attorney-General, Senator Gareth Evans QC, on law reform initiatives of the Federal Government.

For Senator Evans, it was like last year in Marianbad. The ninth ALRAC conference was convened in the same room as the second conference held in May 1975, attended by Senator Evans then as an ALRC Commissioner. The ALRC Chairman, Justice Kirby, remarked on the total disappearance of the tensions and suspicions that had existed in earlier conferences. He paid tribute to the close and harmonious working relationships between the Australian LRCs. Also present at the conference were two representatives of the PNGLRC and three representatives of the NZLRCs.

A full review of the ALRAC conference will appear in the next issue of *Reform*. Meanwhile, it is worth noting that a number of resolutions were passed. They included:

- the decision to hold the tenth ALRAC meeting in Melbourne on 7 August 1985 to coincide with the Australian Legal Convention;
- the decision to convene a special conference in Melbourne at the time of the 10th ALRAC on the subject of law reform research, to involve researchers employed by LRCs in Australasia;
- the decision to establish in the ALRC a register on legal researchers willing to move interstate on law reform projects;
- the decision to add the subject of sanctions and remedies in law reform to the agenda of the tenth meeting and to explore the possibility of a joint session with parliamentary counsel on this topic;
- a call for an examination of case studies of law reform statutes to evaluate their effectiveness in securing the objectives of LRCs.

in the clouds? It is expected that the NSWLRC will publish the minutes, record and papers of the ninth ALRAC meeting. Tabled at the Sydney conference was a volume just published by the ALRAC containing the Minutes and Record of the past three ALRAC meetings viz 6 ALRC (Hobart, July 1981); 7 ALRAC (Adelaide, September 1982) and 8 ALRAC (Brisbane, July 1983). Publication of this volume brings up to date the record of the proceedings of the ALRAC. This national conference of Australia's law reform agencies is now an established annual event. If the mood of the ninth conference is any guide, co-operation between the LRCs is now at a very high level. Doubtless this mood was not actually harmed by the fact that the conference took place up in the clouds on the 31st level of the State Office Block in Sydney, commanding a spectacular sight of Sydney Harbour, where the modern legal history of Australia all began.

Sydney

2 July 1984

Views expressed are not necessarily those of the Attorney-General, his Department or the Commission. Correspondence, information and views should be addressed to GPO Box 3708, Sydney, NSW, 2001, Australia.

Telephone (02) 231-1733.

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