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Australian Children's Rights News is the newsletter of the Australian Section of Defence for children International.

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Picture of Parliament House courtesy of Madu Bayes-Morton.

The views expressed in ACRN are not necessarily those of DCI.

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## Memorial: Iqbal Masih

Iqbal Masih, a 12 year old Pakistani boy who won international acclaim for his campaign against child labour was murdered in April this year.

Masih worked as a carpet weaver from the age of four, when he was sold by his parents to a factory, until he was ten. Much of the time he was shackled to a loom. After learning of a law aimed at preventing exploitation of children two years ago, he declared his own freedom and organised efforts to educate other children about their rights.

A labour reform group to which Masih belonged has said landowners or carpet makers were behind the murder, but police say all reports point to a man whom the boy and two relatives had seen having sex with an animal.

Former US President, Jimmy Carter, said the boy's campaign had liberated hundreds of children until he was shot dead as he and



two friends rode their bicycles in his village of Muridke, near Lahore. The former president belongs to an advisory committee that recommended Masih for a human rights award from athletic-shoe manufacturer Reebok International Ltd in 1994. "Iqbal's life and death call attention to the plight of an estimated 100 to 200 million working children worldwide," Carter said.

Sources: *The Economist and Reuters News Service*

Helen Alston

## Being part of DCI

DCI has had its most successful year, campaigning on particular issues such as child labour; sexual exploitation; youth justice; genital mutilation; physical punishment; and harmful training practices in sport.

We have given out information to children and young people, students, schools, child welfare and overseas aid organisations, national inquiries, government departments and politicians. We have held two conferences, various public meetings and community workshops and published 4 issues of ACRN.

We want to continue this challenging work - further campaigns, building our information resources and services.

Members are kept up-to-date through our two journals enabling you to participate in DCI campaigns. You will be able to make well-informed contributions to debates about children's rights in the wider community. For membership details ph 06-2479395 or fax 06-2470278. To renew your membership see the box on page one.