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Former Chief Justice Laments Unconscionable Behaviour by Government



The John Barry Memorial Symposium

4.15pm - 5.15pm

The Hon Alastair Nicholson AO RFD QC:

Human Rights and the Northern Territory Intervention

Professor Alastair Nicholson was the Chief Justice of the Family Court of Australia and a Justice of the Federal Court of Australia from 1988-2004. Prior to that he served as a Justice of the Supreme Court of Victoria from 1982-88. He has been an Honorary Professorial Fellow of the University of Melbourne since 2003.

In this lecture Professor Nicholson discusses Australia's inability to come to terms with accepting a Bill of Rights, pointing out that, "***Australia is now one of the few countries that do not have a Bill of Rights***".

Regarding the current referendum proposal Professor Nicholson goes on to say, "***The passage of a referendum paying lip service to our Indigenous people in a preamble to the Constitution will fool nobody into believing that we have changed our approach. What is required is deeds and action; not empty words.***"

On the Northern Territory Intervention Professor Nicholson laments that it is "***unconscionable behaviour on the part of Government that makes me feel ashamed to be an Australian.***"

"We should no longer tolerate this sort of conduct by our Government and we must act to close the door on the past and create a new era in which we take pride in our Indigenous people and their achievements. Theirs is one of the world's oldest cultures and their history extends over thousands of years. This is also ours as part of the history of our great land and we should embrace these people and be proud that they are living proof of a great heritage."

When:

Thursday, 11 November 2010 | 4.15pm to 5.15pm

Where:

North Lecture Theatre
Graduate School of Humanities & Social Sciences
First Floor, Old Arts Building

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