

## ALF RATTIGAN LECTURE

### Opening remarks by Prof Gary Banks AO, Dean of ANZSOG

Welcome to ANZSOG's inaugural Alf Rattigan Lecture. We are pleased to be holding it in the Australian Academy of Science's Shine Dome here in Canberra – a splendid example of modernist architecture from the 1950s and a venue that has hosted many important public lectures and discussions over the years.

The Alf Rattigan Lecture is intended to be an annual event, held in early December, for the purpose of “elevating the importance of good process, sound institutions and effective leadership to beneficial policy and reform”. As many of you here will appreciate, Rattigan's career exemplified all three.

It is gratifying to see such a large and distinguished audience for this important first Lecture. There are senior representatives from government, academia and the private and 'third' sectors. There are many alumni of ANZSOG. And there are people now retired who played significant roles in the past. Thank you all for attending. Many of you deserve acknowledgment by name, but given time constraints I am sure you will not mind if I mention just a few special people.

My first specific welcome is to the Rattigan family, who I am pleased to say are here in force. ANZSOG offers its condolences to them on the recent passing of Alf's wife Win, who had attained the venerable age of 102. In a moment you will hear from Alf's grandson Luke, whose notable career in the private sector followed a first job as a graduate with the Industry Commission, the successor of his grandfather's old firm.

I would also like to offer a special welcome to two of the original commissioners of the IAC, who were appointed under Alf's chairmanship in 1973 – Hilda Rolfe and Roger Mauldon.

We are also honoured to have here tonight Alf's close adviser during his time at the Tariff Board and IAC, Bill Carmichael, who went on to become chairman of the IAC himself some ten years after Rattigan's retirement. Bill has remained active in policy debate since his own retirement and was a prime mover in the creation of the Tasman Transparency Group. For over a decade, that body made a significant contribution to the ongoing public discussion about trade policy and industry assistance. And on it being wound down last year, it was Bill Carmichael, together with David Trebeck and Greg Cutbush, who came to me with the idea of using residual TTG funds to initiate this Lecture series.

In response to my invitation, many of you expressed pleasure that Alf Rattigan was to be honoured and remembered in this way, and also that Paul Kelly was to be the inaugural lecturer. As you can imagine, much thought went into the question of who should do this. It had to be someone “who has played a significant role in promoting or implementing the ideals” of good process in policy and reform. Ideally also someone well acquainted with the Rattigan story and the 'reform era' and who had an ability to draw useful lessons for today.

I think you will all agree that Paul Kelly ticks all those boxes! He is, as described in the biography in the invitation, “the doyen of Australian journalists of politics, policy and international affairs”. He began his professional life as a junior public servant at PM&C, but was soon attracted to the world of journalism. He made his mark there very quickly, prolifically writing not only news reports and commentaries, but also longer essays and books. The first of these was devoted to the Whitlam Prime Ministership and 'Dismissal' – a big topic to start with.

The books that have followed chronicle this country's path from economic isolationism to the embrace of globalisation and our more recent difficulties in holding the course. The works stand out not only for their readability, the normal forté of the journalist, but also for their careful research, close analysis and original insight. Indeed they convey more of the academician than the journalist and have deservedly earned Paul a Doctor of Letters at the University of Melbourne, among other awards. I should also note that ANZSOG is proud to have Paul Kelly as one of its Distinguished Fellows, in recognition of his important contributions.

In short, no-one is more fitting than Paul Kelly to deliver this inaugural Alf Rattigan Lecture, which characteristically Paul has titled: *Economic reform: A lost cause or merely in eclipse?*

Please join me in welcoming him to the podium.

Thank you.