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**Beautiful and Courageous Estelle**

*by Stuart Rees*

FOR THE FUNERAL OF BEAUTIFUL, HUMOROUS, COURAGEOUS ESTELLE HINDS 1979-2010: AT SCARBOROUGH CEMETERY NSW, 30 MARCH 2010

You always had light in your eyes and love and space for delight enriching the length of each day tho’ faced with the darkness of night.

Our mem’ries should not be mournful tho’ tragedy’s beyond our reach best her laughter/ lightness to recall, Estelle’s special lesson to teach:

“Now look here you fellow mourners I don’t like you looking so sad, I lived my life with irreverence and even the low points weren’t bad.

My parents have always loved me, my brother and sister too in a home for dancing and colour family snaps show how that was true.

At eighteen I went to Hunan tho’ some thought this risk a sin but I lived and loved the Chinese and soon I could speak Mandarin.

I lived in Sweden and loved it and fell for a beautiful man engineer, handsome and caring, my love in a seven year span.

We took an African journey, we wanted to reach for the moon, to share completely new custom: playing soccer in Cameroen.

To add to this African flair to Islam, Rawalpindi we ran, to a clinic we flew by Thai Air and the intrigues of Pakistan.

These were mind-bending adventures and a few of my many parts including inspiring capoeira a great dance of martial arts,

a Brazilian protest for freedom a display which resembled fights for women and children and slaves a dance to break chains and for rights, resembling my CPACS Centre—with Lyn, Leah & Keryn on lease, the place where I worked on my thesis and joined in a struggle for peace, near my Ultimo home an oasis a sort of swarming bee hive both a refuge I really needed and a place I could be alive.
But again the wanderlust got me, my life should be lived at a pace there’s too little time for pausing to the end it has felt like a race.

So I left for the north west frontier to test our stereotyped views and took a bus to Peshawar to discover what really was news.

I put on my scarf and looked native and spoke with these bearded guys, visited their homes and their children and recorded their plaintive cries:

“We also want to be human like this generous Aussie girl a treasure for coming to see us, our newly discovered pearl”

Emeritus Professor Stuart Rees is Director of the Sydney Peace Foundation and former Director of the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies

I was a trifle foolhardy an ethics committee would hiss but life should never be rule bound, but more a heart warming kiss.

I will remain with you, hugging if you’ve courage to follow the way to tell the world about loving ‘cos here is my last chance to say.

In mist I’m sun that is blinking, a dolphin diving in seaside play, my life is the main course for evening please cherish me – not just to-day!”

Peace without justice for East Timor?

by Rachael Hart

IN A SPEECH TO THE UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION ON 11 MARCH 2010, EAST TIMOR’S PRESIDENT, JOSÉ RAMOS-HORTA, JUSTIFIED HIS OPPOSITION TO AN INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL TO DEAL WITH CRIMES COMMITTED IN EAST TIMOR UNDER INDOONESIA OCCUPATION. IN POST-CONFLICT SOCIETIES, HE CONTENDS, “THE BLIND PURSUIT OF JUSTICE WITHOUT REGARD TO THE COMPLEX AND OFTEN FRAGILE BALANCE ... MAY IGNITE NEW TENSIONS AND CONFLICTS AND DERAIL THE ENTIRE PEACE PROCESS.” RAMOS-HORTA FIRST ARTICULATED THIS POSITION ON 30 AUGUST 2009 DURING THE TEN-YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF INDEPENDENCE. MANY COMMENTATORS HAVE CRITICISED THIS POSITION, ASSERTING THAT HE WILL SEND A MESSAGE THAT PERPETRATORS OF ATROCITIES CAN ACT WITH IMPUNITY. AN AUSTRALIAN JOURNALIST, PAUL DALEY, EPITOMISED THIS COMMENTARY CLAIMING, “EAST TIMOR CANNOT BE EXPECTED TO TAKE THE INTERNATIONAL LEAD” ON JUSTICE (SYDNEY MORNING HERALD, 25/10/2009).

Ramos-Horta champions a vision of justice cast in compassion and directed towards the future. International tribunals restrict justice to retribution for past crimes, not, for example, the justice of having enough food, education, or healthcare. This justice renders victims of past crimes victims of present inequalities. Furthermore, it destabilises nation-building efforts, for, as Ramos-Horta argues: “international tribunals were ... and are always created by the victorious warriors to try those defeated in the battlefield.” Instead, he...
draws inspiration from Vietnam, Mozambique, and Franco’s Spain that developed peace and democracy without a crimes tribunal, but instead “address[ed] the complex legacies of the past in creative and dignified ways that do justice to the victims, reconcile the divided communities, heal the wounds, and move on.”

There are equally compelling reasons to support an international tribunal. Under international law, victims have the right to obtain legal justice, truth and full reparations. To demonstrate commitment to the rule of law, respect for human rights and dignity, East Timor should hold people accountable for war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide. Indeed, as Amnesty International affirmed in an open letter to Ramos-Horta: “peace and justice are not mutually exclusive, but complementary concepts that can and must exist together” (17/03/2010).

Ramos-Horta’s vision confronts the liberal peace to which the most powerful institutions and governments that engage in peacebuilding are committed. He asserts independence from one of the most venerated international institutions and denies the vested political, economic and emotional interests of the international community in trials. However, this question of independence extends to Ramos-Horta: can a President convince the UN not to hold an international tribunal depending on his or her personal peace and justice ideals? If so, this potentially exacerbates the competitiveness and violence that accompany many post-conflict ballots. Additionally, Ramos-Horta could employ this rhetoric just to portray his and his government’s unpopular decisions positively, for example, Prime Minister Xanana Gusmao’s release of Indonesian militiaman Maternus Bere in August 2009.

Even so, by criticising Ramos-Horta’s position on international tribunals without engaging with his vision for peace, international actors ignore the importance of East Timorese leaders not just in delivering justice, but also in defining it. They demonstrate doubt in the parliament and voters in East Timor, undermining the state-building projects fundamental to East Timor’s future stability. In fact, the no-confidence vote cast over Gusmao after his decision to release Bere demonstrates the parliament’s capacity to respond when leaders make decisions that it deems wrong.

The international community should use this opportunity to engage with broader ideas of justice and peace, and re-envision international tribunals to enhance peace built on dialogue, negotiation, apology and forgiveness. The problem is not that “East Timor cannot be expected to take the international lead” on justice, but that we are unwilling to let it.

Rachael Hart is a PhD Candidate at the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies

Building youth building peace

by Susy Lee

With very little fanfare, the Youth Peace Initiative (YPI) is changing the world. The work is not glamorous, but this project of the Sydney Peace Foundation, driven by Trent Newman, is showing that young people are not the vandals and no-hoppers that the media tediously projects. As an intern with YPI, I’ve visited schools where students are giving up their lunchtimes to work on projects that help their peers in afghanisation, to make movies against racism, and to raise awareness of human rights issues with their school communities.

As part of my Masters in Peace and Conflict Studies, I’m taking a double internship program through the Human Rights Department which requires me to work for a human rights organisation for 140 hours and then make a scholarly reflection through a 7000 word research project. Working with YPI means I will be mentoring student social justice groups in 2-3 schools for the whole semester. We’ll be bringing some of these inspirational students to present their projects and progress at the opening session of IPRA in July.

My desire has been to learn about peace education in general, and work in schools has exposed me to different approaches as well as their obstacles. In competitive education systems with jam-packed curricula, students need to absorb knowledge fast and replicate it in exams. Critical pedagogy, however, inspired by Paulo Freire, is interested in helping students look more deeply into the root causes and personal consequences of events and policies, organisations and experience. It is a relational and time-consuming method of education, but one more likely to have long-lasting effects in the hearts and minds of the students.

In practice, when students enthusiastically tell us they want to run a fundraiser for charity, we’ve been asking them questions like: What do they really hope to achieve? Will the year 8 boys care more about this issue afterwards? Is there a more creative way to present their information? Is this part of a long-term strategy? What do they know about the organisation they’re raising money for? Students are rising to the level of our expectations and then some, by challenging their peers and their teachers(!) with their own thoughtful questions and innovative ideas.

Young people may lack critical literacy about peacebuilding, but their sense of justice is sharp and their willingness to bring their effort and relationships to
bear is often an untapped resource. In fact, Lederach’s essentials for peacebuilding – relationship, curiosity, creativity and risk – are vivid features of adolescence. This means young people and peace education enrich each other and are exciting resources for peace. According to peace education scholar Roshan Danesh though, “theorising about youth and peace, and programs targeting youth as agents of building peace, remain underdeveloped aspects of the peace education field”. It seems to me that YPI is working hard to reverse this trend.

“Education at its best – this profound human transaction called teaching and learning – is not just about getting information or getting a job. Education is about healing and wholeness. It is about empowerment, liberation, transcendence, about renewing the vitality of life. It is about finding and claiming ourselves and our place in the world.”

If you’d like some more good news, go to www.youthpeaceinitiative.org.au

Susy Lee is an MPACS student and intern with the Youth Peace Initiative


**IPRA: communicating peace to the world**

by Jake Lynch

International Peace Research Association conference hosted by CPACS at the University of Sydney, July 6-10, 2010

- To be opened by Patrick Dodson, winner of the Sydney Peace Prize for 2009 and known as the ‘father of Reconciliation’.
- Keynote speaker: Professor Johan Galtung, founding figure of peace research.

Other speakers include:

- Irene Khan, outgoing Secretary General of Amnesty International
- Oliver Richmond, author, Peace in International Relations
- David Kinley, Professor of Human Rights Law, University of Sydney, author, Civilising Globalisation
- George Kent, University of Hawai’i, author, Freedom from Want: the Human Right to Adequate Food
- Michael Intriligator, UCLA
- Carolyn Arguillas, founding editor, Mindanews (Philippines)
- Lawrence Wittner, author, Confronting the Bomb
- Ursula Oswald Spring and Hans Guenter Brauch, co-editors, Hexagon Series on Human, Environmental Security and Peace: HESP

As many as 500 delegates will gather to discuss various ways of approaching the conference theme of communicating peace. There will be as many ways of doing this as there are people at the conference! So, what follows is my own ‘take’ on the theme and why we chose it for this year’s conference.

Most Australians want our troops to be pulled out of Afghanistan. More favour cutting our military budget, or keeping it at the same level, than support the Rudd government’s program of ongoing rises, above the rate of inflation, which are creating the world’s eleventh biggest ‘defence’ spend in a country with no real military enemies.

And yet these points of view are virtually absent from what most would think of as ‘public debate’: speeches by leaders, debates in parliament, news and comment in mainstream media. We are sliding rapidly into a wasteful, divisive and potentially dangerous arms race in our quadrant of the globe, just when we need to find ways of cooperating, on the world stage, to tackle real and pressing problems such as climate change and the people movements it may bring about.

The challenge to formulate and implement new approaches to conflicts, large and small, is a challenge of communication. How can we take the wisdom we have accumulated, between us, from the shared experience of living in an ever-more interdependent world, and bring it to bear on decision-making processes?

How can we avoid another invasion (Iran, anybody?) or another dismally under-achieving climate summit like the one in Copenhagen? How can we extend a welcome to asylum seekers heading to Australia, to at least alleviate the suffering and trauma caused by massive violations of human rights and
humanitarian protection, in the face of synthetic outrage by right-wing politicians and shock jocks, cynically scrambling for votes and money?

This is just a glimpse of a formidable agenda, and if we are to make any headway, we need to seek partnerships and support from a broad range of actors and networks. As peace researchers, we clearly have a part to play, and the need to find new ways, and strengthen existing ways, to Communicate Peace is the agenda for this year’s major event in CPACS: the biennial conference of the International Peace Research Association.

Founded in 1964, IPRA developed from a group of scholars interested in holding research conferences on the topic of international peace and security. Under the leadership of John Burton, the pioneering Australian scholar and exponent of conflict resolution, this group formed a professional association with the principal aim of increasing the quantity and quality of research focused on world peace. Since then, IPRA has held twenty-two biennial general conferences, the venues of which have been chosen with a view to reflecting the association’s global scope.

Staged over five days (July 6-10), with the Footbridge Theatre – just across the road from the Centre – its main plenary venue, this year’s version of the IPRA conference promises a rich and coruscating mixture of debate, dialogue, sounds and images: an opportunity for immersion in the latest ideas on peace, how to build it and how to communicate it, in all its forms.

The conference will also be a memorial and tribute to our dear colleague and friend, Estelle Hinds, who worked on IPRA as Conference Assistant, until her tragic and untimely passing in March (see Stuart’s poem on the front page of this edition of PeaceWriters).

I remember when Estelle was appointed to her job, the consultant from Sydney Recruitment who helped me with the applications and interviews said she had a ‘conference personality’: able to infuse and animate an event with intangibles of life and positivity. And she certainly did that. The success we all hope for at the conference will, in no little measure, her success.

Happily, two very capable students in our MPACS program, Anna Kohler and Sarah Shores, stepped in to share the conference assistant post between them, and they are doing a great job – thanks.

So do come and join us at the conference. Several CPACS research students are presenting papers in their own right, but it is also open to those who wish to attend as observers. Daily rates are $95 or a concessionary rate of $50. More details at: www.iprasydney2010.org

Associate Professor Jake Lynch is the Director for the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies

A global standard for news about conflict

by Annabel McGoldrick

IMAGINE IF PECMAKERS WERE IN THE HEADLINES ON CHANNEL 9; IF NEWS OF DIALOGUE CAME ALONGSIDE THE DETAILS OF SUICIDE BOMBS ON CHANNEL 7 AND CHANNEL 10 NEWS FEATURED STORIES ABOUT INSPIRATIONAL INDIVIDUALS WORKING FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND PEACE. HELPING TO BRING ABOUT MORE PEACE JOURNALISM IS THE OVERARCHING AIM OF MY RESEARCH TO DEVELOP A GLOBAL STANDARD FOR NEWS ABOUT CONFLICT.

We have global standards for products and services, from cars to computer software and even aromatherapy sessions. It means there’s a guarantee that what you pay for complies with certain standards to ensure safety and value for money, and is produced under internationally agreed criteria, the Quality Assurance system devised by the International Standardisation Organisation, ISO 9000.

What would that entail, for news about conflict? Would it mean that stories talked about more than two parties; explored the contradictions, backgrounds and contexts rather than blaming or demonising one side? Perhaps stories would investigate manipulation and propaganda rather than reproducing it. If the New York Times and Washington Post had done that in January 2003 they wouldn’t have needed front-page apologies for hoodwinking the world’s publics with phoney justifications for the invasion of Iraq. And maybe there’d be a more consistent presence of positive, hopeful stories of people bringing about change, against the odds. These are all aspects of Peace Journalism – aspects...
that many journalists as individuals are often interested in but frequently say: “my editor isn’t”.

So how do we make these stories and approaches appear more commercially viable, something that news organisations can commit to and market themselves on? The ‘infosphere’ has long passed the point of being overwhelming, and at the same time many news organisations’ profits are plummeting. Just a decade ago, the *Sydney Morning Herald* made $200 million a year, now they’re lucky to make $15 million. The marketing departments are sweating to find that new marketing ploy. Routinely they ask people what they want to read about. Depressingly the answer is often the familiar “more celebrity news”. But I believe what people say they want – and what they really want – are two different things. A few years ago the BBC tested this theory by showing news bulletins to focus groups and asking them what stories they found most interesting. Invariably it was the ‘foreign’ stories: a category of news which, when mentioned in abstract, was the least popular! Proving my point that we don’t always know our own minds – which, as a psychotherapist, I now understand are made up of unconscious associations and emotions people often can’t talk about.

So my research will set out to explore audiences’ perceptions. I will show focus groups two versions of the same bulletin. The first will be mainstream commercial news and the second the same bulletin, with the same reporters and presenters but repackaged and reframed as Peace Journalism. I will use psychological tests to measure people’s emotional responses and unconscious associations.

Earlier psychological studies showed mainstream news routinely leaves people feeling stressed, anxious and depressed. No surprise there from your own viewing of the evening news! One US study even found it worsened symptoms of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder.

So what do people feel – what are their perceptions – when they watch Peace Journalism? My Masters study showed they found it more balanced, hopeful, interesting and positive. That was showing just one news item. This study will be much bigger – two versions of the same bulletin reproduced in five different countries: Australia, the Philippines, USA, Germany and South Africa, testing audience responses with a range of techniques developed by psychological researchers, and also conducting in-depth interviews to merge qualitative and quantitative data.

Annabel McGoldrick is beginning her PhD with an Australian Postgraduate Award (Industry), part of the Australian Research Council linkage grant obtained by CPACS Director, Associate Professor Jake Lynch, with partnership from the International Federation of Journalists and Act for Peace.

### Peace between the two ceilings

by Neven Bondokji

I was trying to kill time while transiting for six hours in Sharja airport when I came across an article in the *Khaleej Times* about a beautiful concept. The author was discussing a saying by his grandmother about the two ceilings we humans keep and where we store ‘junk’. The first ceiling is that of our flats and offices; the second is that in our heads, where we store all our negative feelings and memories.

The author then shares his memory of the moment when the roof of a local mechanic collapsed in front of his eyes as a child, creating a massive sound and mess. He then discusses how we should clear our negative memories and burdensome baggage before our ceiling also collapses, leaving us with depression, troubled self-esteem, or aggressive feelings.

I was amazed by the concept and saddened that we tend to ignore the powerfully transforming concepts we have in rich local and folk knowledge. We tend to forget our ‘grandma’ stories and funny local anecdotes that hold much needed wisdom as we move from childhood to adulthood, embarking on our individual journeys in an age of electronic and ‘modern’ knowledge.

If we extend the concept of the two ceilings to examine the ‘knowledge’ we gain from history books and religious education, one is amazed at how many negative and destructive notions we store in our ceilings. History and religion, as miscommunicated and misinterpreted as they are, can indeed cause the ceiling of humanity to collapse.

In history textbooks, we learn how ‘we’ defeated the ‘enemy,’ and how great and superior our people are compared to ‘their’ viciousness. Whether it is in the glorifying images of military leaders, or the euphemisms of the ‘expansions,’ ‘expeditions,’ and ‘openings,’ it all takes us down to the fine lines formulating our identity and developing animosity to the ‘other.’ We learn about the wars, with exact dates and exact gains and losses. We have movies, photos and paintings of the victories. But we rarely learn that we could have managed differences by resorting to other nonviolent means. Similarly, we don’t learn that the hatred and violence of any war erodes centuries of coexistence, or that after this or that war a culturally-rich minority has vanished or migrated from ‘our’ land. We also don’t learn that with this loss of coexistence or minorities ‘our’ greatness is lessened and diminished.
On the other hand, we can question who decided our history curriculum in primary schools. Do we analyse why our history education is decided by the nation-state, which is itself a creation to assert difference and supremacy? The overall history of nation-states is that of imagined communities based on boundaries of hatred and illusions of superiority. We neither question the fact that all our historical knowledge was passed to us through ‘historians’ who were allied to the emperor, king or sultan; and who happened to be all males.

How often do children in classes hear the assertion that human development was overall an exercise in nonviolence? It was a constant movement to share knowledge and build on human success. But we push many such facts under the carpet and we prefer rather to stick to the ‘official’ historical narrative. To take one example, how many students of Islamic history have learnt that Jews occupied important positions in Islamic empires? The personal physician of Saladin, the Muslim leader during the crusades, was the famous Jewish physician and philosopher Maimonides. How many students of European history have learnt that much of Greek and Latin knowledge was accessible to Europeans in the Renaissance only through the translations by Muslim scholars? How many students of science have learnt that significant knowledge in biology, physics and algebra came through Muslim scholars like Ibn Razi, Ibn Haytham, or Al Khawarezmi?

Religious education ‘terrorises’ even more. Not only do we learn that as followers of one religion, followers of other religions are non-believers or sinners, but we are taught to fear God rather than to love Him or Her. The sermon ‘Sinners in the Hands of Angry God’ is just one classical example. As children, many of us are told that if we sin, we will burn in hell. Many of us – through the authoritarian forms of religious education and practice – missed out on the fact that God is love; God is mercy. We were so preoccupied with fearing God that we actually forgot to enjoy our belief in God. The educational forms of religious practice instilled fear and insecurity in place of rejoicing in the meaning of religious beliefs. With that we lost our capacity to seek serenity in human differences as a form of enrichment. With so much differential logic, we only added to the ‘junk’ of hatred, fear, and destructive dualisms that threaten universal peace.

As we continue piling all this negativism and cynicism in our ceilings, how can we expect tolerance, coexistence and peace to have a chance between our two roofs? I believe that questioning our habits is the start toward a journey of change.

Neven Bondokji is completing a DSocSci at the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies

The human rights of children in institutional and foster care

by Peggy Craddock


Due to the death of our mother, two of my sisters and I had to be sent to a children’s home and are three of the so-called ‘Forgotten Australians’. We were fortunately not as ill-treated as so many were, and have, despite the treatment received, made reasonable lives for ourselves. Self-reliance was our creed, despite the massive inferiority complexes that we developed. Our short time in ‘care’ left mental and physical scars, and we kept the fact that we had been in care to ourselves and our immediate family. From this personal knowledge, and from accounts of others known to me, I would like to draw attention to the mistreatment and abuse of the human rights of defenseless children.

There were many reasons for their placement in care, with the death or serious illness of one or both parents a common cause. For a variety of reasons, children could be sentenced by the court to institutional care, or placed in orphanages by relatives who were unable to look after them. Everything they had was taken from them and so there was nothing from home to console them. Loneliness and fear were always present, with psychological abuse and a complete lack of kindness making it difficult for children to settle into the new environment. Hunger was a constant companion, and malnutrition was common. Sometimes, with staff changes, there was some improvement in the standard of care, but this did not always occur. If children spoke out about what was happening, they were punished for lying. 2009, however, as a result of unrelenting work by advocacy
groups, was a momentous year, with apologies made for the official disbelief and the wrongs which had continued for more than a century.

The Apologies
On 19 September 2009, care leavers came from all over Australia to the Botanic Gardens, Sydney, to be present at the ‘Healing and Memorial Unveiling for those who grew up in Orphanages, Children’s Homes and foster homes in New South Wales.’ The Honourable Minister for Community Services, Linda Burney, Mrs Millie Ingram and Dr Joanna Penglase, co-founder of Care Leavers Australia Network (CLAN), participated in the ceremony. The Premier, the Honourable Nathan Rees, delivered the formal apology, and spoke with great sincerity. He acknowledged the damage done and the problems the care leavers faced as adults because of the authorities’ failure to prevent the widespread abuse. He reminded the community that “those with little or no experience of such hardship cannot hope to comprehend the scale and depth of suffering entailed.” His speech is available on the CLAN website. The Rt Rev. Robert Forsyth, Anglican Bishop of South Sydney, read a statement of apology on behalf of other care providers. Following this, the memorial plaque was unveiled by the Premier, and representatives of various groups placed flowers there. The plaque states:

“In this place we remember the many thousands of NSW children who grew up in care in the decades leading up to the 1990’s- in orphanages, in children’s homes and foster homes, in institutions.

We remember the lonely and the frightened, the lost, the abused-those who never knew the joy of a loving family, who suffered often at the hands of a system meant to provide for their safety and wellbeing. We rejoice in their courage and strength. This corner of the gardens is dedicated to their memory.”

I felt a weight lifted off my shoulders and my feelings of relief and peace were echoed by others I talked to who had also been in care. The setting of the ceremony and the placement of the memorial were inspirational and enhanced our feelings that at last justice had prevailed. The ceremony would help heal old wounds and it was hoped the National Apology would be as heartfelt.

The National Apology
Monday, 16 November, brought over 900 people to witness the National Apology, which was delivered in the Great Hall of Federal Parliament. Many expressed surprise that mere ‘homies’ and ‘useless rats’ (terms of vilification used by many care givers to describe the children) were treated so magnificently. On the walls, images of children in homes and disembarking from ships were presented throughout. Sprays of wattle and bottlebrush were on each chair and were available to be sent to family members who could not attend. A very emotional crowd heard the Prime Minister, the Honourable Kevin Rudd, deliver the apology on behalf of the nation, supported by the Leader of the Opposition, the Honourable Mr Malcolm Turnbull. Both speeches were moving and sincere. Reaction from the child migrants and the Australian care leavers was extremely positive.

My sister attended this apology, and while she was emotionally battered by memories, she felt an enormous sense of relief that at last we have been believed. She said that those she spoke with also felt some peace. During the ceremony, she sat next to a man who had six siblings, each of whom had been placed in different orphanages. He grew up believing he was an only child until his brother located him three years ago. By then, the other five had died. We all feel the apologies were essential to allow people to get on with their lives, with the shame of having been a ‘homie’ lifted at last. It added to our sense of peace that we were told it was not our fault that we had been placed in care.

Projects to Help Care Leavers
The Prime Minister announced projects with both the National Library and the National Museum to ensure that the children’s treatment
in care will not be forgotten. Where necessary and appropriate, care leavers will be classed as a special group and helped in accessing aged care, together with counselling and support services. For many who were so brutally treated, the prospect of entering another institution brings terrifying memories.

A National Find and Connect Service will help to locate personal files and reunite family members. As many institutions listed only names and numbers, this will be difficult. Some names were changed and siblings were often placed in different locations. Care leavers’ networks will receive some funds to assist their work (but not as much as given to the attempt to have the World Soccer Cup finals played in Australia) and more diligent supervision of places providing care will be mandatory.

Lost childhood can never be regained, but the peace felt by many after these apologies must be an ongoing experience, and the abuse of children placed in care must never occur again. Research is still being called for into this shameful chapter of our history and into ways to assist those whose experiences as children have left them unable to cope in senior years. Our CPACS Resource Centre holds material to assist such studies, and CLAN and other organisations are willing to help.

Peggy Craddock is a Council Member and librarian at the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies

Dr Timoci Bavadra and his dream of a multiracial Fiji

by Sanjay Ramesh

I HAVE A DEEP AND EMOTIONAL RELATIONSHIP WITH FIJI AND STUDYING THE COUNTRY HAS ENABLED TO ME TO CRITICALLY ASSESS MY PERSPECTIVES ON SOCIAL AND POLITICAL RELATIONS BETWEEN INDO-FIJIANS AND INDIGENOUS FIJIANS. WHILE TO MANY FIJI IS ANOTHER EXAMPLE OF A FAILED STATE, PLAGUED BY COUPS AND ETHNIC HOSTILITIES, THERE IS A STORY THAT IS LARGELY FORGOTTEN. A STORY ABOUT A HUMBLE INDIGENOUS FIJIAN MAN WHO SHOWED THE NATION THAT A COMMON HUMAN BEING CAN RISE ABOVE PREJUDICE AND EMBRACE HUMANITY IN WAYS NOT THOUGHT OF IN THE PAST.

I am talking about the late Dr Timoci Bavadra, who was elected as the leader of the Fiji Labour Party and the National Federation Party coalition on 28 November 1986 and led a multiracial coalition to victory in the April 1987 elections. On 13 April 1987, Bavadra was sworn in as the Prime Minister of Fiji and the Minister responsible for Public Service and Fijian Affairs. In little over a month on 14 May 1987, members of the Royal Fiji Military Forces, led by Lieutenant-Colonel Sitiveni Rabuka deposed the Bavadra government and incarcerated members of the cabinet for seven days. As a result of the coup, the fate of Fiji was changed forever as indigenous nationalists jostled for political power, resulting in four military coups.

In June 1987, I met Bavadra at his home in Viseisei, Vuda in western Viti Levu and after speaking to him realised that he was greatly influenced by the thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi and Dr Martin Luther King. He was committed to a multiracial Fiji and argued that those who were behind the May 1987 coup were protecting their own narrow communal interest by instilling ethnic animosity. He requested that the people of the country engage in civil disobedience and deny the coup makers any legitimacy. At Viseisei village, a large crowd of Indo-Fijians and indigenous Fijians had gathered to provide support to the deposed Prime Minister. Australian and New Zealand journalists were swarming the place, trying to piece together the events of May. One of the journalists asked me whether the coup was a nationalist response to the increasing Indo-Fijian population that had overtaken the natives since 1946. I replied that the coup was a response by the entrenched indigenous elite to the threat posed by multiracial ideas of Dr Bavadra. Unfortunately, this interpretation was largely lost outside of Fiji.

During a public speech at Brent Hall in London on 8 June 1987, Dr Bavadra reiterated that the economic prosperity of Fiji was largely due to Indian labour. He argued:

“If the people of Indian origin had not been brought into Fiji as labourers over a hundred years ago, it would clearly have been the indigenous Fijians who would have been exposed to the horrors of plantation work in those primitive colonial times. It would not be an exaggeration to say that the coming of Indians to Fiji has allowed the continuation of Fijian tradition and custom…. (‘Atu Bain and Tupeni Baba eds (1990). Bavadra: Prime Minister, Stateman, Man of the People - Selection of Speeches and Writings 1985 to 1989. Nadi: Sunshine Press, p. 166)”
On 3 November 1989, Dr Bavadra passed away while continuing his struggle for a multiracial Fiji. Some 60,000 people attended his funeral. As a mark of respect, on 8 November a country-wide shutdown of businesses, schools and sporting activities took place. Bavadra’s ideas still dominate the policies and manifestos of the Fiji Labour Party and many in the community remember this humble man as the pioneer in the struggle for a multiracial Fiji.

Sanjay Ramesh is completing a Master of Arts by Research on Inter-group conflict in Fiji at the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies

Balancing human rights and responsibilities: The Roman Catholic Bishops of Malawi

by Bonaventure Mkandawire

FEW PEOPLE RECOGNISE THAT AFTER INDEPENDENCE FROM BRITAIN IN 1964, PRESIDENT DR HASTINGS KAMUZU BANDA RULED MALAWI BY RITUALISED PATERNALISM. HE IMPRISONED ANYONE WHO DARED TO CHALLENGE HIM, AND IN FACT USED MALAWIAN RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS TO BOLSTER HIS OWN MORAL AUTHORITY. THE EARLY 1990s SHIFTING GLOBAL AND REGIONAL POLITICAL MILIEU, HOWEVER, ENCOURAGED THE SEVEN ROMAN CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF MALAWI TO CHALLENGE THE PREVAILING CULTURE OF NEGATIVE PEACE. IN THEIR LENTEN PASTORAL LETTER, LIVING OUR FAITH, WHICH WAS PUBLICLY READ IN THEIR PARISH CHURCHES THROUGHOUT MALAWI ONE SUNDAY MORNING IN MARCH 1992, THE BISHOPS REPROACHED THE BANDA REGIME FOR ITS DESPOTISM AND HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES.

They deplored the vast disparity between the rich and the poor, and massive human rights violations by both his Malawi Congress Party (MCP) and the Government, calling for an end to injustice, corruption, and nepotism, and demanding recognition of freedom of expression and political opposition. While none of this was new, it was the first time we Malawians had trumpeted at roof-tops and signed our names.

Reaction from Banda’s government reminded me of the scene in Thomas Becket in which King Henry II roars: “Will no one rid me of this meddlesome priest?” Two weeks later, the MCP organised demonstrations against the Bishops, with banners and chants calling for their instant death. A day later, the Catholic Montfort printing house, where the pastoral letter had been printed, was firebombed. Audio tapes smuggled out of Malawi and broadcast by the BBC exposed a secret meeting of the MCP in which the murder of the Bishops was discussed.

The timing of the letter and the Bishops’ straightforward and powerful argument transformed a respectful admonition into a precipitant of popular outcry for their instant death. A day later, the Catholic Montfort printing house, where the pastoral letter had been printed, was firebombed. Audio tapes smuggled out of Malawi and broadcast by the BBC exposed a secret meeting of the MCP in which the murder of the Bishops was discussed.

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And there he stands

by Andrea Ottina

CURRENTLY, I AM EXAMINING THE MANAGEMENT AND POLICING OF DEMONSTRATIONS DURING INTERNATIONAL SUMMITS, WITH A PARTICULAR FOCUS ON EUROPE AND MY OWN COUNTRY, ITALY. THESE DEMONSTRATIONS CAN ALSO BE REFERRED TO AS ANTI-GLOBALISATION OR ALTER-GLOBALISATION PROTESTS AND EMERGED IN APPROXIMATELY THE LAST DECADE.

Writing about your own country is certainly not as easy as many people might think. You take on the responsibility to present evidence and to elaborate theories that will hopefully be valuable and truthful. People back home will read your work, make judgements and express opinions. Everything will more or less be reflected in your future existence. Fortunately, however, a well-known context makes the research process an easier task.

Field research is often an essential component of this process. It can be extremely diverse, depending on one’s topic, and it can include the search for documents in dusty archives, visiting organisations and government departments, the gathering of media and, lastly, also interviews. For my thesis I decided it was opportune to interview some key figures that were involved in the anti-globalisation protests in Italy.

While I was travelling through my homeland, I interviewed one of the most unique individuals that I have ever met. This person, whose identity is confidential, worked for several years at the top level of police and intelligence activities in Italy. He received me in his spacious but unpretentious apartment, filled with books, conveying a nostalgic sense of the past. On my arrival at his door, there he stood with a long white beard, the man who was once on the frontline of the fight against terrorism, at the zenith of police leadership and the apex of the secret services. His glance is deep, his eyes bear witness to the weight of several decades spent recovering the bodies of young men and women and being a humble and dedicated servant of the Republic.

When he talks his words are always attentively considered, his tone is never too high but under no circumstances too low, his hands are as delicate and gentle as the touch of a father. This is the man who was once in the midst of what many scholars and journalists have labelled a civil war. A war that was fought by the nation and its devoted servants, by obscure state apparatus and their international supporters, by young people of the bourgeoisie entangled in an utopian fight to subvert the national order, and lastly by those citizens who died under the fire of bullets or under the blows of bombs.

Today, there is nothing left of those years, neither the violence nor the ideals. Today, the fight no longer hinges on the salvation of the democracy, nor on societal change; the battle is now fought on the grounds of legality and the eradication of bribery and corruption. Today, the fight has lost the bitter taste of blood, and the smoky smell of gunfire. Now retired, this man has many memories to reflect upon. Perhaps those memories will inspire future generations of democratic enthusiasts, who will take on the battle for the salvation of our collective conscience, and who will deliver to our children a more optimistic sense of state and civic duty.

Andrea Ottina is an MA (Research) student at CPACS
The Refugee Language Program

by Lesley Carnus

FOR SOME OF OUR STUDENTS (THOSE LUCKY ENOUGH TO BE GIVEN REFUGEE STATUS QUICKLY), AUSTRALIA IS A FRIENDLY, WELCOMING COUNTRY; FOR OTHERS THE IMPRESSION IS A MUCH DARKER ONE. FOR SOME, INTERROGATION AND DETENTION OCCUR AS SOON AS THEY STEP OFF THE PLANE; FOR OTHERS, THEY EXPERIENCE LONG YEARS OF WAITING AND LIVING IN A STATE OF CONSTANT ANXIETY. ONE NIGERIAN REFUGEE DESCRIBED HOW HE DIDN'T EVEN GET THE CHANCE TO ACTUALLY SEE SYDNEY WHEN HE ARRIVED. HE WAS APPEHENDED, INTERROGATED AND DRIVEN STRAIGHT TO VILLAWOOD DETENTION CENTRE IN A CAR WITH HEAVILY TINTED WINDSCREENS. WHEN ASYLUM SEEKERS ARE RELEASED FROM DETENTION, MOST ARE LEFT TO ROT IN POVERTY, BECOMING VIRTUAL BeggARS DEPENDANT ON THE RED CROSS AND OTHER NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS.

Asylum seekers, who are not detained but have challenged the Immigration Department’s decisions, face years of court battles and are unable to access the most basic rights including health care, Centrelink payments or education. I wonder how many of us could manage in a foreign country without functional language skills, employment, money, social services or social contact and support.

In the Refugee Language Program (RLP), we do address, to a small degree, some of these shortcomings. We offer classes, friendship, support and a willingness to help wherever we can. One of our students, Lana, is currently living in Anna Maria’s (one of our teachers) spare bedroom. When Anna Maria saw the conditions that Lana was forced to live in, she became so distressed that she cleared out her attic and asked Lana to move in. Lana had actually received her deportation order, but a new lawyer, Barbara, referred to us from Balmain for Refugees, took on her case with renewed vigour and she was able to stay the order, and finally have her client’s refugee status recognised after 10 years. We would like to send our thanks to Barbara for her wisdom and perseverance.

Another of our teachers, Lesley S, invited her entire class to her home for an after Christmas barbeque. The teacher’s husband regularly took 3 of the refugees to soccer matches over the Christmas break. In February, Lesley returned to teach her class, after a major operation, while she was still in substantial pain, because she didn’t want to let her students down. She also organised a fund-raising campaign amongst her friends, family and contacts in the film industry. Another teacher arrives with books and toys for the student who brings her baby to class; a volunteer last Saturday, gave away a television, fridge and a table and chair set to students; others supplement our simple lunches with fruit and cake they bring in from home.

Our program is more than just a series of classes. It is a community where the people in it value and care for one another. In December 2009, I submitted a report to the Vice Chancellor outlining our modest achievements for the year and requesting that the program be funded again. My request was approved by the VC’s Office and the Refugee Language Program continues to support asylum seekers in 2010.

Sadly, however, we have lost a member of our community, Estelle Hinds. Two RLP volunteers, Helen and Ray, are assisting Estelle’s parents with their loss and grief. Estelle’s parents are their best friends and they had known Estelle since she was three years old.

Estelle was one of our community. She had been a volunteer home tutor to a young isolated mother with a new baby. She was like our other volunteers, giving that much extra. Estelle had volunteered to help with conversation skills but was also often organising donations of clothing and furniture to help her student, making calls and appointments on her student’s behalf and trying to organise some additional social activities and support to supplement the weekly meetings she had with Estelle. Estelle’s death is a great loss to all who knew and loved her. She was part of the CPACS community.

Lesley Carnus is the coordinator of the Refugee Language Program

Rotary World Peace Fellowship: my journey so far

by Goranka Slavujevic

EARLY IN MAY 2007, I DECIDED TO APPLY FOR A ROTARY WORLD PEACE FELLOWSHIP. AFTER LOOKING AT THE ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA, I WAS SURE I WASN’T GOOD ENOUGH FOR THE PROGRAM, BUT DECIDED TO APPLY ANYWAY BECAUSE I WAS SICK OF LETTING A LACK OF SELF CONFIDENCE GET IN THE WAY OF HONOURING MY COMMITMENTS.

By 1 July, I had to complete an application form, which entailed writing a piece about my motivations for applying and what I hope to achieve if I am selected; getting my Serbian language instructor, with whom I was last in contact in 1996, to sign a form stating I am proficient in the language; and collecting three reference letters supporting my application. I also needed to ensure I was endorsed as a candidate by a Rotary Club, then by the District to which that club belonged,
who would send my application to Rotary International for consideration in a worldwide competitive process.

I was told there are over 700 high-calibre candidates who reach the international level, and that only 60 are chosen. Through the entire process I had to keep reminding myself to honour what I want – I didn’t have the luxury of entertaining self-doubts. I wanted to be a peace fellow as soon as possible, which meant completing the process by 1 July.

In September 2007, I resigned from my job as a Marketing Executive at Singapore Airlines. Most people working for the company at the time were extremely excited by the launch of the A380, which only further confirmed my realisation that a managerial position in an airline was not the right path for me.

I’d realised that a meaningful life for me meant working for peace. I’d spent close to two decades convinced that peace was impossible and I wasn’t prepared to spend any more time worshipping this thought with inaction. I was ready to let go of the cynicism I had carried since my personal experiences in the Croatian war of the early 1990s, and move as quickly as possible towards a present where I’d be actively engaged in creating the kind of world I want – a peaceful one.

By February 2008, my place as a Rotary World Peace Fellow starting in September 2008 at Bradford University in the United Kingdom seemed a done deal, except for one issue. A visit to a chiropractor in January left me with acute sciatica down my left leg. Despite weekly physiotherapy, kinesiology, reiki, massages, and spending several thousand dollars on treatments, I was still in severe pain by July and had been recommended back surgery. The only reasonable option was to defer my studies to the following year and focus on my health. I remember vividly the day that I deferred my Rotary World Peace Fellowship to 2009. I was at Martin Place. The outer world looked the same as before my visit to the physiotherapist a few moments earlier, but my world seemed completely changed.

Whereas before I had grand, exciting plans to go to Bradford University in September, I now had to wait more than a year to commence my studies. The in-between period would be filled by doctor’s appointments and living with my parents on the Newstart Allowance, which didn’t seem to me to be particularly grand or exciting at all.

However, within moments of going down the bitter, resentful self-pitying route, I considered how someone committed to peace would deal with my predicament. Three words came to mind – acceptance, compassion and love. Although there were several occasions before my recovery and finally commencing my Rotary World Peace Fellowship in September 2009 when I strayed from this path of acceptance, compassion and love, I kept bringing myself back to it, through my commitment combined with support from loving family, friends and Rotarians.

Looking back now, it makes complete sense that before embarking on the journey of building peace in the world, I had to learn how to build peace in my own, inner world. As a current Rotary World Peace Fellow, I can confidently say that the experience was worth the wait. I’m surrounded by world-leading professor-practitioners in peace work, inspiring students from all across the world, and am learning daily about my role in developing peace as part of a global community of committed actors.

I would recommend the Rotary World Peace Fellowship to anyone with a commitment to peace who wants to pursue Masters level study. The application process in itself is transformational.

More information about the Rotary World Peace Fellowship Program is available online http://www.rotary.org/en/StudentsAndYouth/EducationalPrograms/RotaryCentersForInternationalStudies/Pages/ridefault.aspx

Goranka Slavujevic is a past CPACS intern and World Peace Fellow 2009
Research student mini-conference

On 13 November 2009 CPACS research students gathered together for their annual mini-conference, a day-long event which provided them with the opportunity to share their research and receive feedback from their colleagues. All students who had undertaken at least a year of their candidature presented on topics ranging from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Liberia to representations of Muslims and Islam in Australian print media. Congratulations to Lynda-ann Blanchard, Annie Herro and Cammi Webb Gannon who organised the conference.

CPACS Winter School

Enrolments open on 26 May for four CPACS postgraduate units of study to be taught as part of the University of Sydney Winter School – PACS6901 The United Nations and International Conflict Resolution to be taught by Dr Wendy Lambourne, and PACS6910 Peace Through Tourism, to be taught by Dr Lynda-ann Blanchard. Both of these units will be taught on-campus at the University of Sydney. PACS6911 Key Issues in Peace and Conflict Studies and PACS6914 Conflict-Resolving Media will also be offered as intensive units of study taught at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London. Enrolments are open to any university graduate so get in quick to ensure your place – we expect all units to be very popular and numbers are limited. Enrolments close on 11 June.

For further information and to enrol go to the Sydney Summer School website: http://www.summer.usyd.edu.au/

DSocSci candidate Neven Bondokji presenting at the conference

PhD candidates Cammi Webb Gannon, Annie Herro and Thushara Dibley

Staff and students at the Research Student Mini-Conference

PACS6927 Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding class, Winter School 2009
Review: Ending War, Building Peace
by Ken Macnab


This book arose directly from an impressive conference titled ‘Iraq Never Again: Ending War, Building Peace’, held in Sydney in April 2008, partly to commemorate the twentieth anniversary of the foundation of the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Sydney. It faithfully reflects and enhances the expertise and motivation of the participants, which help make it an important contribution to both the scholarship and the debate about the issues of war and peace.

Its Introduction, ten chapters and Afterword focus consistently on the major themes indicated in the title. These are challengingly framed in the opening by Stuart Rees as the problems arising from the prevailing “fascination with violence and with war” and the necessity for “thinking and crafting peace”. The contributions are presented within this framework, with five chapters dealing with “the fascination with violence” and five with “nonviolent alternatives”.

Part one canvasses the ‘truth’ about war, its financial value to some and cost to others, its damaging impact on democratic society and politics, on people and the environment. The pervasiveness of ‘cultures of violence’ which use philosophy, rhetoric, concepts like ‘honour’ and the popular media to gloss over the realities of violence is emphasised throughout. The nonviolent alternatives canvassed in part two open with an incisive chapter on the global power of the media, its collusion with alarmist politics, structural violence, militarism and ‘disaster capitalism’, and the necessity for an enlarged ‘peace journalism’ contribution. Others examine reinterpretations of international peace and security based on our essential ‘humanness’, and canvass peace activism to highlight and confront issues such as foreign bases, nuclear weapons, disarmament, the small arms and weapons trade, humanitarian aid and hands-on anti-war protest.

The tenth chapter highlights the twenty-five year campaign for nonviolence by the Peace Boat, while the Afterword outlines the history behind the foundation of the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Sydney. Both make telling points about the need for courage and creative thinking to challenge the prevailing cultures of violence.

One of the strengths of this compilation is that the 14 contributors come from a variety of participating organisations and represent an impressive range of disciplines and perspectives, from political science and international relations, peace and conflict studies, social work and social policy, criminology and juvenile justice, media studies and peace journalism through to and overlapping with peace activism and political campaigning. They combine dialogue, debate, scepticism and doubt, with optimism, activism and courage. Their work challenges everyday perceptions, criticises everyday media and political assumptions, and goes beyond to creative thinking and constructive alternatives.

The creativity and quality of Ending War, Building Peace makes it of value to a wide audience, including university students and staff, writers and journalists, politicians and policy makers, and the willing-to-be-informed general public.

Ending War, Building Peace is available for purchase from the CPACS Office for $30 for members and students, or from the Sydney University Press website for $35.

Dr Ken Macnab is President of the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies

Remodelling peace studies

Over the summer holidays, teaching rooms 107 and 114 in the Mackie Building were stripped and refitted with high-technology touch screen control systems. These classrooms, in which the bulk of Peace and Conflict Studies units are taught, now have permanent access to computers with Internet connection, DVD players, data projectors and other services that have been available in main campus teaching rooms for years. Despite our location on Arundel Street, it is pleasantly surprising that though we be out of sight, we are not out of mind. Now, if only we could figure out how to operate our fancy, new equipment...
Goodbye and good luck to Keryn Scott

IN FEBRUARY 2010 CPACS SAID FAREWELL TO KERYN SCOTT, MPACS GRADUATE AND OUR WONDERFUL ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT FOR OVER A YEAR AND A HALF.

Keryn left CPACS to begin a full time postgraduate Bachelor of Secondary Education at the University of Technology. We will all miss Keryn for her unfailing kindness, her understanding and her helpful disposition. Keryn can also be credited for bringing peace to the minds of many staff and students at the Centre by teaching weekly Yoga classes! She will undoubtedly make a fantastic high school teacher and we wish her all the best for the future. Fortunately, we also welcome back the incredibly efficient Leah Chan to the role of Administrative Assistant. Leah is an MPACS student who has previously worked for CPACS and the Sydney Peace Foundation and co-edited the publication Ending War, Building Peace with Lynda-ann Blanchard.

Our wonderful past Administrative Assistant
Keryn Scott

CPACS in Pictures

Students at the CPACS welcome lunch, Semester 1, 2010 ▼

▲ Students at the CPACS End of Semester Dinner, Semester 2, 2009 ▼