

WOMEN SPEAK OUT ON BOUGAINVILLE



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Bougainville: History, Chronology, Culture, Politics, Human Rights, Land, Environment

Marilyn Havini

Introduction: Ellen Whelan

Marilyn Havini is a school teacher, who 26 years ago married a Bougainvillean Chief, Moses Havini. She lived on Bougainville for 20 years after a traditional Bougainville wedding at Buka in 1971. Marilyn speaks fluent Pidgin and some Haku, the language of Moses' clan, where she was formally adopted in a traditional assembly of Buka Chiefs and given the name Taleo. Marilyn was head of Visual Arts Faculties at Hutjena High School, Arawa High School and North Solomons International High School. She was Principal of Arawa International Preschools and was on the Haku Curriculum Committee for Viles Tok Ples Skul. She was a founding member in 1972 of the Bougainville Women's Association and later served in several capacities of the reconstituted North Solomons Women's Council.

Marilyn was widely recognised as an artist both in Bougainville and PNG, exhibiting both oils and pastels. She designed the Bougainville flag. She was active in leadership among church and women's groups yet learned to live as a village clan member and came to regard the village as her true home.

Marilyn and Moses were living in Bougainville when war broke out. Moses is now the International Representative of the Bougainville Interim Government, based in Sydney. Marilyn and Moses have lost more than a hundred relatives and close friends in the war. The appalling horror and savagery inflicted on villagers led Marilyn to make a compilation of human rights abuses against the people of Bougainville, Marilyn's List, in 1995. A second volume was published in May 1996.

(Marilyn spoke to a detailed paper which is reproduced in full in the Appendix A of this publication.)

The Bougainville flag is the people's, it's the recognition of the unique symbols of Bougainville that belong to Bougainville alone in the entire world. There is nobody else, there is no culture in the world that has the Upe, that wears the Kap-Kap with the special designs that they do as a symbol of authority in the same way as the queens or kings would wear their crowns. There are these unique symbols that have united Bougainville; the flag is being flown interestingly enough (and it is the thing that gives me courage) by not only the BRA [Bougainville Revolutionary Army] and the BIG [Bougainville Interim Government] who have continued to hold that flag since 1975 when we first raised it as the Republic of the North Solomons! But it is being flown by Papua New Guinea still in representing Bougainville under the BTG [Bougainville Transitional Government]. I understand they took it down for a little while but that they in fact are allowing it to fly again now, to represent the people in the PNG-controlled areas because it is actually the flag that was recognised as the flag of Bougainville at negotiations in 1975; it became the district flag or the provincial flag for Bougainville.

It has been flown at UNPO [Unrepresented Nations Peoples Organisations] at the Hague in the Netherlands, representing the indigenous people of the world, and it is still a unifying element for a society that is torn by war. I was very privileged to be able as an art teacher in Bougainville to learn and understand these designs and these symbols of the people. The reason it won the Papua New Guinea held competition for a flag for Bougainville is because it did reflect those unique elements. I got those from the people themselves.

I am going to look at a chronology of some of Bougainville's history as we go along.

Moses and I have recognised the importance and the scant availability of materials about the people of Bougainville. When we have come across information, even information which has not been published, we have stored it. We have taken notes at lectures given by anthropologists and archeologists as they pass through Bougainville and leave again and I have woven all of it together with information out of text books. What I have really relied upon is the word of the people. I was not a political animal until I went home to the village. I have learnt politics from the Bougainvillean people, they have taught me well.

The first thing that I want to show is this map. If you look at the map it does show sea levels. Bougainville was formed 26 million years ago. The reefs were built around the island about 2.5 million years ago and as far as can be established from pre-history diggings people have occupied Bougainville for 30,000 to 38,000 years and when they came across the sea in those Pleistocene times, the first human habitation, it was a total land area that included Bougainville and the Solomons. They were one land. When the people came south from South-East Asia they crossed the land bridges and island hopped to New Guinea and, as we know, most of the Australian aboriginal populations came down through New Guinea. We understand what the theory is these days although they are now pre-dating it. Some Australian findings are beginning to think that maybe migration took other routes. Who knows? Bougainville was totally separated by the biggest trench of ocean that existed for any of that migration period. There were about 515 km that separated Bougainville from the closest mainland in the New Britain, New Ireland area.

Once they reached Bougainville shores, the people could then walk through the whole of Bougainville into the Solomons. It was all one island down to as far as Guadalcanal. It was a short passage between Guadalcanal and the Western Solomons; joined on to Bougainville. What we understand is that the people stayed there without any contact with the outside world for 25,000 years. That is how long those people were a separate people. They developed their ethnicity, they developed a culture, they developed a skin colour that was unique in the Pacific and this is what the Bougainvilleans know. They don't know the exact years the anthropologists provide but the people tell me their creation stories, they tell me that they have owned the land from time immemorial.

They also tell us that where my husband comes from [Buka Island] they were that little bit closer to the sea crossing and became very brave seafarers. They could actually go out on long fishing trips, they built their own plankwood canoes, called Monas that are unique to the Solomons. They have big prows and are beautifully constructed, very light. They can be very small carrying two or three people or large enough that some carry 50 men, a whole line of warriors.

These Monas could go on long distance voyages and the people set up elaborate trading routes and sites and that is the reason why some of the Buka people have a slightly lighter skin, we presume from outside contacts. That period was three to four thousand years ago.

Because of the Buka trading, the Lapita pottery spread; it was unique in South-East Asia, as it had very intricate design work stamped into the pottery wall. The Lapita phase being discovered by historians has just pre-dated Bougainville another couple of thousand of years. In finding that, we know that they had contact with those tribes that were passing down into New Guinea; that they traded out, that they were never conquered, that they had their own historical phases that have been identified by anthropologists. There is an enormous pre-history there.

After that, about 1568, when Spanish captain Don Alvaro de Mendana first sighted the Solomon Islands, there followed other voyages of discovery and rediscovery. Nobody actually took sovereignty or invaded Bougainville. They visited them and traded with the people. These contacts through the Solomons included Bougainville. Oral history does go back that far. In 1768, for example, Louis de Bougainville discovered the island that bears his name. Buka was originally called Ritana in my husband's people's language. Mendana,

asked the people what they called themselves and they said "What's he talking about?", because they could not understand him, and the word for "what" in Haku is *boka*. He heard that and he wrote it down as *Buka*.

We have here a very long oral history that traces these events: the people know how these Europeans came from across the sea and traded; the people who were hunting sperm whales in the Pacific in the 1800s; the people who came from Australia blackbirding. Bougainvilleans were prime material for the sugarcane fields of Queensland. They were taken as slave labour to the sugar fields of Queensland. There are very moving accounts written by the captains themselves who boasted of the way they knocked them out and "popped off a few before breakfast", i.e. the ones who were recalcitrant and didn't want to stay on board. It is very interesting that Australia has actually been plundering Bougainville since the 1870s.

The tug of war over Bougainville as a possession became heightened. Australia never actually thought of having to hold onto it because it thought it was theirs. They had free access to it until Germany elbowed its way into the Pacific and when it did that, suddenly there was a big race for all sorts of things in Samoa and elsewhere too. There were exchanges, very polite, diplomatic, exchanges of notes. This is where the greatest tragedy occurred, Bougainville was separated from the Solomons. That happened because England cut it in the middle and said, "You [Germany] stay out of Western Samoa and we'll cut off Bougainville and give it to you."

It was a German colony. When the First World War came they weren't fighting, but they were suddenly surprised that Australians turned up and said "Surrender!". It was no man's land until after the First World War when Germany lost the right to its colonies. Australia petitioned the United Kingdom to hang in there with them and for their security, asked them to join the New Guinean and Papuan places together. When they did that ie Australia got the Trust Territories of Papua and New Guinea that were supposed to be actually administered separately but Australia didn't obey the League of Nations. It continued to administer them and kept very heavy control over the whole territory as one.

Now to pass into recent history, from 1914 after the First World War. We find the churches coming in, missions being established and bringing services to the people, ameliorating the high-handedness of the officials. A lot of the officials recognised the work of the churches and there was a very big co-operative program going on. It is a good thing and a bad thing. On the good side the churches have a real role to play.

They, the missions, are caring and localised and so to a certain extent they champion a voice for the people. They can be brave, they provide even a certain amount of protection over their lives because the administration cannot harm them. There's a little bit of extra protection there. So they can be a little bit braver for our people and that's why Bishop Singkai who just died (we are all grieving his death) was very special to the people as a brave champion, just for even saying "Listen to my people". Bishop Zale from the United Church has the same weight of responsibility in a political climate that suppresses free speech. Our sisters here today represent three different churches of Bougainville.

We have got Sister Lorraine who's Catholic and in the Nazarene order there. We've got Ruby who's a very active church worker with the Seventh Day Adventist Church and Daphne Zale who is the wife of the Bishop of the United Church. One of the reasons we could do something amazing and bring these three women together today was because they do have that protection of the church.

The thing that wasn't good about the missions is that the administration rode on the back of the church in imposing its will. The people felt that if they were to be "good Christians" they had to listen to and obey the administration and government, even when it was denying their rights, and this is one of the major contextual problems that confuses

the situation today. Lots of people in Bougainville have a great desire for freedom and independence, but they are frightened that they are not being "good Christians" if they fight, or if they express their own opinion.

The other thing that Australia found very quickly was gold in the hills of Kupei [near Panguna]. It didn't do very well initially as a mine in terms of the techniques used, because although there was an enormous amount of gold, it is what they call low grade. It is rich but it is spread out.

The International pressure on Australia to prepare the indigenous people to have some rights and self-determination at some stage was actually interrupted by the Second World War. Bougainville went through the worst horrors of the war. It was totally occupied by Japanese forces. Those Japanese forces were actually quite cruel. They cut off the breasts of women at times to eat, because they were hungry. On the other hand they had the people out planting rice and teaching them to be good little soldiers for Japan and gave them sticks to practice military manoeuvres. There is a tremendous amount of fascinating oral history from our people of the war. There is an enormous amount of evidence; Bougainville was littered with military equipment and ammunition associated with the Battle of the Coral Sea.

The man who engineered the whole attack on Pearl Harbor, Japanese Admiral Yamamoto, was shot down returning over Bougainville from viewing the battles. His plane is there in Bougainville. There are Japanese pilgrimages every year to go and see Yamamoto, the great "hero".

Further south, down here, at Tonelai, you see that little indent here [pointing to the map]. The Japanese called it Number 2 Tokyo during the war. It was the big harbour that sheltered all the battleships that went out for Japan down to fight in the Straits, in the Coral Sea. It was very strategically important and the forward base for the Japanese base at Rabaul.

They were sending planes all the time, up and down. There were several plantations that had been expropriated by the Australian Government from the Germans and had been handed out as gifts to Australians, they were the best plantations, prime agricultural land of Bougainville that was just handed on a plate to Australians at the end of the First World War. All those areas had men, Australians who had returned after being evacuated before the Japanese arrival; they were trained to be patrol officers or coastwatchers in communications and returned back into Bougainville as coastwatchers. So Bougainvilleans protected them under the totally Japanese occupied Bougainville so they could report to the American bases in the Solomons all the enemy's movements. It was thanks to the Bougainvillean and Australian coastwatchers that the Coral Sea Battle was not lost to Japan. It was only through their forward messages that the Allies knew when the Japanese were coming and got their planes up in the air so that they weren't wiped out.

So Australia followed America and New Zealand in then invading Bougainville from the west and then big battles were fought around Bougainville between our Allied forces and the Japanese until the final surrender.

After the Second World War Australia was even more concerned at the regional security of holding on to Bougainville along with New Guinea. They were terrified of future invasions and believed Australia required a buffer zone: "look how close the Japanese got right down to Kokoda Trail". They probably thought, "We don't want the rest of the world to do this to us, we want to have that little protection area on South-East Asia's doorstep, and for security reasons of the Pacific." I think it is very important to notice that there is still that fear in Australia to let Bougainville go for very selfish reasons.

However, the big thing that follows is "The Mine". In 1966 the Con-Zinc Rio Tinto Copper, Gold and Silver mine at Panguna was opened. Bougainvilleans countered by advanc-

ing the idea of self-determination as a separate nation from PNG, either as a part of the Solomons or alone.

When Australia realised they had to listen to the League of Nations and prepare Papua New Guinea for some form of self-government or autonomy—independence (they did not use the word independence yet—it took time to actually be able to say it). They actually realised that they needed something to pay for it otherwise it was going to be a drain on Australia's economy forever.

Bougainville Copper became the Independence Gift to PNG. They raced that development, they raced it over the people, they forced the people, they beat the women on the beach of Rorovana with batons. The women were being forced off the village land at the time of my future husband's writing the accounts of this to me. He sent me the photo of the women being battered by the police with the truncheons as they were pulling out the surveyors' pegs that were staking their own village to forcibly remove the villagers from their own homes. Moses changed his career in response to this incident from studying law and how to enforce it to politics and how to change it. Our lives suddenly became radical and political from that point.

It was that photo more than anything (and we're from Buka); that wasn't even our own people on our land! But the unity, the heartcry of the Bougainvillean people when that happened was just felt right through our island. It was a big day.

From there, we have gone through a recent history and struggle for Independence that has started with the mine as the catalyst. We have all sorts of things happening with the mine and with the re-negotiations, PNG's independence and Bougainville raising our flag on the 1st of September 1975 (after having been promised District Government or an autonomous state). District Government was denied on the eve of PNG Independence because PNG had no time to write it into their constitution. So just with the stroke of a pen they said "forget it". Three years of work around Bougainville establishing District Government just suddenly brought Bougainville together in a nationalist movement the likes of which had never been seen before. It was an inspiring thing to live on the run, in the mountains supported by a nationalist movement that existed throughout the island.

After that, of course, I've got this information [see appendix for details] taking us up to PNG occupation in 1989, to the beginning of this recent war in 1990, the battle for Bougainville, where the riot police and the Defence Forces have blotted their copy book. They've made a real mess, they've stuffed up the whole occupation of 1989. PNG thinks, "We've really made mistakes here, what are we going to do? We'll teach them a lesson."

The Australian advice we received "off the back of the truck", (not from any source that's here) to PNG was that these people were rich, in fact they were better off than the rest of Papua New Guinea; just make them suffer for a bit, withdraw everything and they'd come begging. The advice was: pull out from Bougainville totally, set up a blockade and bring the people to their knees and then they will welcome Papua New Guinea back with open arms.

That did not happen. What actually happened instead is that the people said: "Wow, we are free at last", and they raised the flag and for the second time they declared Independence. Instead of being declared the Republic of the North Solomons [of PNG], as in 1975 when they first raised the flag; they raised it again and said that it's now the Republic of Bougainville; we'll come out straight and say "We are Bougainville".

From there PNG thought: we've really done the wrong thing. They went into a huddle and the battle for Bougainville was pursued with a whole new impetus that has lasted from 16 May, 1990, and is now in its seventh year; although the long term battle hasn't really stopped since the European invasion of last century or the PNG invasions of 1975 and

1989.

Marilyn in response to a question from the floor on seeking more information on the mine's impact on Bougainville:

The mine has devastated a fifth of the island. Environmentally it cuts across the coast. On the eastern border it took whole areas for townships, for ports and for the power station and all the handling of the ore once it was shipped down to the coast by an over-land pipeline.

Then it's cut a swathe of jungle through for the pipeline that carried all the slurry down the coast along with the port mine access road that cost a million dollars a mile, I think it was, in those days. It took \$18 million dollars to build. It's an amazing feat, it's quite a road, it's a super highway in the middle of Bougainville. Just that strip, nothing else.

The people would have liked to have seen a development like that for the village people to get to hospitals and things—it would have been nice if it went a bit further. But when it got to the mine it stopped at what had been Moroni Village (at the foot of a mountain). They took the people away and they actually dug a hole (where the mountain stood it was excavated) one and a half kilometres deep. It is seven kilometres wide in each direction. That's just the main pit.

Besides that they took another valley for the processing, there's the Primary Crusher then a conveyer belt over the mountain stockpiling and stripping a mountain, into the next valley for the Secondary Crusher; then on to where all the extra filtration and everything else happens in the Concentrator, with open drains to the river and flotation tanks and a pipeline extending back to the coast.

What they did with the slurry—you can imagine this enormous mine, where does all this ground go? It has to be dumped somewhere. It gets dumped on the only good land that's left around. It gets dumped further west and south-west into a whole series of valley and river systems. The river is harvested to wash the copper but because it is such low grade, three quarters of all the gross volume of material is wasted and is actually washed down the Karrawong River and Jaba River. The Jaba River that was once used as a major life source for all the villages right out to the west coast turned into a moonscape.

You should have seen it. The enormous jungle trees were cut down hundreds of metres back from the bank on each side—everything went. The river sort of expanded a couple of kilometres across and just became a big mud slurry full of all the chemicals, and the mud splattered up the trees. When we would drive down that back area to go south to Siwai and Buin areas of South Bougainville we could see the jungle trees hundreds of feet in the air just covered in mud. The devastation was immense. The river delta extended several kilometres into the sea with dead slurry that cut coastal villages from access to the sea.

The area that was physically, visibly affected was one thing. The next thing is that the chemicals just somehow were there in the air too. The people noticed that their crops were not bearing as well in a large area around the mine. Not only that, but the flying foxes, all the birds, all their protein sources were dying; their river fish of course have gone, the very important food supply is dwindling. It was those secondary effects, imperceptible to ordinary people but perceptible to village people who know what to expect from their land in order to survive. With increased population (the population had a boom under health care improvements) the people were feeling the pinch in a very real ecological way.

For a fuller account of the history of Bougainville, see Appendix A.

Bougainville

Lillian Kuntamari Crofts

Introduction: Ellen Whelan

The third speaker on this morning session is Lillian Kuntamari Crofts. Lillian is from Central Bougainville. She is the first Bougainvillean to be granted refugee status in Australia, this happened in 1994. She describes herself as an "activist", she works with Australian support groups in Melbourne and she participates in seminars and conferences like this, bringing a Bougainvillean woman's voice to the situation. She also completed the Diplomacy Training Program through the University of New South Wales in 1994.

I wanted to address active solutions towards the peace and independence for Bougainville because having achieved refugee status and over the years trying to grasp everything to understand the war and family and myself. And to arrange myself in a way that, what is my priority in life which is personal.

So hopefully by the end of this seminar from me what I would like to see is some active solutions. But I'd like to take you back to 1989 when I was 19 completing Year 12.

My personal relationship with the war is an emotionally intimate one even though I'm physically removed from my family. In 1989 I was completing Year 12 at Narraburn College when I realised I could not go home to Bougainville and at my mother's advise I pondered about what to do next because I was a student at that time, on a student visa. Between 1990 and 1991 I was stranded in Canberra thinking: What is the best status, immigration status, for me to come under? At that time the term refugee was out there and I did not really understand what a refugee was because I was just 19 years old attending college and then the war confronted me and it was 'bang'. So what do we do? I did some research, I tried but every time I went to someone I would get a flop. So for the rest of 1990 I gave it a rest and decided to move to Melbourne.

In 1991 I moved to Melbourne and I gained enough courage to go to Immigration. I had this letter with me that was written by my ex-guardian, Dr Barbara Woodhouse, and I went up and I showed them my letter and it explained everything about who I was and why I needed to seek another status because of the conflict on Bougainville. And they did not understand. They said "You are a student, you are on a student visa." So to cut a long story short, I ended up in a detention centre in Marribinong. I was there for three weeks and it was just by pure chance that I had a letter from my stepfather and this was some kind of evidence that I was allowed deportation out of the detention centre.

In September 1993 Immigration rejected my application. I can kind of understand because between 1991 and 1993 when I was trying to get enough information to support my case, there had been hardly any. The only man at the time who was working on Bougainville was a guy called Gabriel Lafitte. I had two or three pages from him. I appealed and it was brought up in an independent body called the Refugee Tribunal Hearing and in time I was granted refugee status and I was in Sydney doing my training for the Diplomacy Training Program. So I was relieved because I don't have to have negotiation of where I am going to be in the next three weeks—they were going to send me to Port Moresby where I didn't really want to be.

But I think an interesting point for me was not having any identification with Port Moresby. When I confronted Immigration and I said, "I can't go home to Bougainville",

they said, "You can go to Port Moresby" and that was like foreign to me because I had no connection with Port Moresby.

When I was granted refugee status it was all over for me. After the training and also during my application being processed I was very active with an organisation called Australian Humanitarian Aid for Bougainville. It's a group of young people, mainly students, and we targeted Australian involvement, highlighting their military involvement [in the conflict]. And we organised actions at places like Australian Defence Industry. Australia has been training people, at an Academy at Queenscliff and private companies like Transfield who maintained the patrol boats that enforce the blockade.

I would like to tell you about ADI—Australian Defence Industry. I was the only Bougainvillean there [at the protest] and I missed the war being here, and when I was confronted with a building that I knew that inside there they manufactured all the hardware or made the bullets I thought: "My God, all these bullets kill people and I know where it goes to." So it was a bit of an emotional trip for me. But having that as a backup is powerful when you do the action, you just go.

At the end you get arrested and then you feel it's worth it because being arrested is nothing like being starved or denied your basic human right or even medicines and clothing. And then I was at Queenscliff Training Academy and I questioned as I climbed the wall: people who go into these places to train—what is their role in life, to train to defend a country, to train to kill people? And so I think in a situation like this one of the most important things for me is to be able to survive here and to keep focus on the big picture and to see everything, mostly in balance. There are people dying, people being killed in the most horrific descriptions but how, how do we get to the core?

When the Dalai Lama recently came to Melbourne; he is a great spiritual leader but he had thousands of people in front of him and he didn't come up with any strategy. Maybe through the spiritual sense, maybe it will get the people active because for me being active is a way of making a change and even though it is small, in the longer run, in the future, people will come together. And that's how I see my activism—focusing on Australia's, especially the military, involvement because I am here in this country and if I can expose Australia's involvement, hopefully it will change.

As I said, I would really hope for active solutions towards peace for independent Bougainville.



L to R: Ellen Whelan, Lucy Morris, Marilyn Havini and Lillian Kuntamari Crofts

Women and War, Life Issues, Refugees, Peace and Justice

Daphne Zale

Introduction: Joy Balazo

Daphne Zale has had 24 years experience in teaching in Buka, Rabaul, Kieta, Panguna, Buka Atolls and Tubiana. Until 1992 she lived behind the blockade. In 1992 I met her in Honiara because she was sick with malaria, an infectious disease. She travelled from Bougainville to the Solomon Islands in 1982 to get medical help. She "ran the blockade" with her family, the whole family. While she was there security around the blockade intensified and she was unable to return. She has lived in the Solomons with her family ever since. Daphne has been involved in the humanitarian work with refugees from Bougainville who reached the Solomons, many of whom arrived with illnesses, including malaria. She supports self-reliance programs to cater for family needs in conjunction with church groups in the region. Daphne Zale represented her people at the conference last year [the United Nations World Conference on Women at Beijing, China].

I thought before I go on to what I am supposed to be saying this morning, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank the committee who has arranged such a wonderful forum, because it is giving us the privilege to be able to sit with our sisters from the other side of the island known as the non-government controlled areas and Sister Lorraine from the government-controlled areas. We are very privileged to be able to meet after eight years of war. We haven't seen each other and the committee has made it possible for us to be able to see our sisters from the other side of the troubled island.

I am very humble to be able to stand in front of you and to review some of the issues that are affecting our island in this time of war. I am Daphne Zale, mother of four children. I come from the small island of Bougainville in the south-west Pacific. I am a teacher by profession but I also represent my people at international forums and conferences such as this: seeking support from sisters and brothers in Australia, the Pacific and worldwide, for peace and justice for my people of Bougainville.

Ran block 92
I have not been able to work as a teacher since the war erupted in Bougainville in 1989. I am one of those mothers who had to cross the blockade, the PNG border blockade, to go into Solomons for medical treatment and humanitarian assistance in 1992. Since then many families, women and children have decided to remain in the Solomon Islands for security reasons or as refugees. Since 1989 the people of Bougainville have been forced to take up arms against the government of PNG to fight for their shattered economy, cultural and political rights. But to also promote their right to self-determination as enshrined in the United Nations' Universal Declaration on Human Rights.

Geographically, Bougainville is the most northern and biggest of all the islands of the Solomon Island Archipelago. It is nearly 1,000 km from PNG's capital Port Moresby, 500 km from PNG's nearest town of Rabaul; but only 8 km across the border to the Solomons and about 400 km from Solomon Island's capital of Honiara.

As has been established recently by pre-historians and archaeologists the islands of Buka, Bougainville, Shortlands, Santa Ysobel and Choiseul were joined together some 28,000 to 30,000 years ago, and were only separated by a small narrow strait from the Guadalcanal—in the same way that the landmass now known as Papua New Guinea and West Papua was once joined in a greater landmass of South-East Asia and the northern part of the Australian continent. Our cultural and ethnic ties within the Solomons and Bougainville have existed from time immemorial. This is still the case today where in fact

even some of our tribes own land on either side of the imaginary border on Bougainville and the Solomons because of the ethnic ties. Our songs and dances are similar. So are our artifacts and our traditional customs. Beside ethnic traditional and cultural ties Bougainvilleans and Solomon Islanders have also strengthened these ties through marriages. I am a case in point where although we come from Buka Island my husband is a part Solomon Islander, thus all my children are also part Solomon Islanders and part Bougainvilleans.

Bougainville was separated from our Solomon brothers and sisters in 1898, in a "colonial real estate deal" between Germany and Great Britain, that did not even seek the views of our leaders and people. Our people argue today as they have always argued in the past that they never freely gave away or surrendered their sovereignty to anyone including the Germans, the British, Australia and now to Papua New Guinea. This is the very basis on which our people continue to legitimately argue against being a part of Papua New Guinea, in this current conflict and war between the PNG State and the people of Bougainville.

This separation finally led to the entrapment within Papua New Guinea State, when the Australian Territory of Papua New Guinea attained its independence in 1975; despite the fact that we Bougainvilleans demanded that a referendum be held on the island to decide our own political future. When this was refused our people declared their own Unilateral Declaration of Independence from Papua New Guinea and Australia on September 1st, 1975, to assert this right. This was 16 days before Papua New Guinea itself became an independent state from the Australian colonial government on September 16, 1975. This right continues to be denied to our people today.

One of the many reasons we were denied our right to self-determination in 1975 was the fact that the only resource generator that Papua New Guinea had available at that time was the Panguna copper mine on Bougainville, which was established by the colonial government of Australia in 1968, through its mining company CRA, Conzinc RioTinto of Australia.

The then Australian colonial government knew this because as it was preparing Papua New Guinea for its independence (because of pressure from the United Nations), it was clear that Papua New Guinea did not yet possess a viable economy to support an independent country.

The Bougainville copper mine, is owned 53 per cent by CRA, 20 per cent by the Government of Papua New Guinea and the rest by private shareholders both in PNG and in Australia. From this equation not even one single equity share was given to the people of Bougainville, let alone the landowners whose land was taken off them to dig the copper, gold and silver from. What also followed afterwards was the huge environmental destruction to our environment, flora and fauna.

Since 1975 the economy of Bougainville, with its copper, gold and silver, had been bankrolling PNG's independence, with only a trickle of financial budgetary allocations going back to Bougainville every year. This is in terms of billions of dollars to Papua New Guinea and Australia, since 1972. The Island had been responsible for 43 per cent of PNG's foreign earnings, and 17 per cent of its internal revenue and budget in the last 20 years until PNG had its own mines produce gold, copper and oil.

The big thank you that we are now getting from Papua New Guinea is a terrible war on our hands, and it is the women, children and civilians who are the worst victims of this war.

The disenchantment of Bougainvilleans because of this great economic, social and political injustice finally led to the people rising up and asserting their rights. This eventually led to the people forcibly closing the CRA mine on Bougainville in 1989. They are now known as the only indigenous people in the world to have closed a mine owned by the

biggest mining giant in the world CRA/RTZ. And they are very happy to keep it that way forever.

Women and war

I was amongst more than 3,000 women that met to address women's issues and agendas during the United Nations World Conference on Women at Beijing in 1995. As a part of the women's delegation from the Pacific region I also represented our women on Bougainville, especially those from behind the blockaded region. They were and are still subjected to all manner of hardships, pain and sufferings in the war currently conducted between the Papua New Guinea armed forces and the Bougainville Revolutionary Army, or BRA, on Bougainville.

Although we women came from different parts of the world, with different backgrounds, the problems that women face in times of war or under repression were the same for all of us, not excluding the women of Bougainville. Violence against women, effects of war on women, atrocities and crimes against women during war time were our common problems faced by women of the world in one form or another. Women are raped and killed during the time of conflict and war. Rape is very often deliberately used as a weapon of war not only for self-gratification by an invading army, but also to demoralise the opponent. Our women have experienced or have been subjected to all of these kinds of treatment since the war on Bougainville started in 1989.

Such treatment to women humiliates and denigrates us and the effects reach through to our men and our communities. In all our societies it is the women that maintain our communities, are the custodians of our land, and by attacking them the opponent aims to destroy the very roots of our communities.

I am encouraged to know that the United Nations Commission on Human Rights last year during its 52nd Session in April 1995, in Geneva, adopted a resolution to give further protection to and promote the dignity and human rights of women and girls. The UN called for governments, amongst others, to enact legislation to better protect the rights of women and girls, and to punish perpetrators through both criminal and civil measures.

It is against this backdrop that we the women of Bougainville are fighting and calling for an end to this seemingly unending war. And to also call for all parties either participating in, or aiding and abetting, this war to stop it, as we the women have suffered so much—rape, violence and even death from the hands of all those involved in this war.

You may now ask: Have the women and young girls on Bougainville been subjected to rape, violations and mistreatment? The answer is 'yes', with hundreds of cases committed by all parties under arms, since this war started eight years ago. I have emphasised *all* parties including the Papua New Guinea Security Forces, pro-PNG Resistance fighters and some members of the Bougainville Revolutionary Army.

A few examples are as follows which highlight only the tip of the iceberg in the eight years of violations against women on Bougainville:

- Rape and sexual harassment—a 16-year-old girl student of Biruna village, Central Bougainville, was stripped naked and held up to public view by PNGDF troops.

- Rape—Mrs Barbara Kinima, on April 24, 1989, was stripped and raped at gunpoint by four members of the PNG Police Riot Squad.

- Abduction, rape and detainment—in December 1995, at the Manetai Catholic Mission, 16 km north of Arawa, the PNG Security Forces rounded up all the young girls of the area, detained them in one of the nun's houses and continued to use them for their

Riot Squad rapes

sexual gratification.

Rape in care centres
• Rape and pack rape—in July 1995, in a “care centre” [compounds controlled by PNG military] in South Bougainville, young women and girls, married women, were offered money—20, 25, and 50 kina—or goods such as salt and soap, in exchange for sexual favours, and were then subjected to rape and pack rape by members of the PNG Security Forces.

• Rape—a sister-in-law of one Aaron Mirana Nawason, on February 7, 1990, was raped in broad daylight in the Arawa supermarket carpark by two PNGDF personnel.

• Rape and murder—in late 1989 a mother and her daughter were pack raped and then killed in their food garden by the PNG soldiers in the Kongara area in Central Bougainville. The PNG soldiers came across them as they were trying to locate the BRA soldiers in that area.

• Pack rape—Mrs Alberta Baria (married with three children) in a small village on the outskirts of Arawa, was pack raped by PNG soldiers in the company of a young eye witness (a small boy named Donatus). She was unconscious for several hours.

• Rape victims—in Central Bougainville women in the care centres were reported in September/October 1995, as being the most “victimised, exploited and oppressed” since the start of the war. Many of them committed suicide after being raped by the PNG soldiers.

Life behind the blockade

Women and children who have chosen not to go down to care centres have to hide from the PNG military, otherwise they would be rounded up and forced to go at gunpoint on foot or by road in trucks. *↳ Women People forced into care centres*

A lot of women choose not to go down because they have heard from people that escaped that they are not free to come and go. They have to work at set times in gardens. Carrying water and washing in rivers is only under guard [of PNG Defence Forces]. Food shortages in these care centres have also been acute at the best of times.

detention centres
In the BIG[Bougainville Interim Government] and BRA controlled areas we have gardens and the people have built for themselves temporary houses. We call them “camps” as they are not on our own land, or on our true village sites. Our people travel between camps and are free to go anywhere, as they do not get pushed around as in PNG care centres, or detention centres as we really know them. The BRA has only been angry with people who have gone down to care centres for medicines and return again. This is because it endangers the lives of people who live in the bush from the PNG Security Forces. They prefer if women go down to care centres then they should stay there.

Our families in the bush choose to stay with the BRA because they don't want to give their land and freedom away and believe that the BRA are fighting for their rights. They are not prisoners of the BRA. They are free people and are free to move from camp to camp to visit their families; or set off like myself to seek medical treatment from relatives in the Solomons. We do not have “check points” behind the blockade like our relatives in care centre have to face.

The BRA risk their lives all the time in bringing the sick and injured people across the blockade for medical attention. They do this without any pay or favours. We report properly to the Solomon Islands Immigration Authorities and to the Red Cross camps. As soon as the people are well or strong they choose to go back in canoes that are doing the return

journey from bringing other people out.

We feel safe under the care of the BRA forces. Those few BRA that have tried to misbehave have been severely reprimanded by our leaders. Our young girls are still marrying by choosing their mate or going through the village chiefs.

Not all men are BRA. Men can choose to go out fighting or choose to be civilians. The girls sometimes choose to marry BRA men, others start life as civilian families.

Some civilian men and women are given responsibilities in the bush camps in leadership, and in carrying out administrative work such as law and order work in the villages. Others plan small training programs, as Sister Ruby will later explain. Others are teachers, medical officers, nursing aids, agricultural officers, men and women who have been training and work amongst our camps without any pay. Thus we have continued with full life community service—our reward being a happy community despite the lack of material possessions and any wage system.

When we are talking about independence, we are self-reliant and are already practicing it in the bush.

Behind the blockade there is a lack of medicine to treat illnesses (basically everyone leads a healthy lifestyle), lack of immunisation for children and babies which could be a potential problem—especially when the chemicals sprayed from helicopters over the jungle affect the children. Worst of all, symptoms of bad coughs, severe headaches, and swollen glands like mumps were experienced.

Chickens, flying foxes and birds fell out of trees and died. Chickens, ducks, flying foxes and some birds are the only source of protein in the bush.

Because the people have to live in the high mountains to escape the shooting on the lower plains and the coast, the people do suffer from the cold temperatures and clothing is in very short supply. In some areas it is very critical. There are some villages that are naked and are ashamed to come out to meet the rest of the people. The young and the elderly are the ones that feel it most; that is the hazard of lack of clothing on their backs.

People returning to Bougainville try to take extra supplies with them, but are limited because of small canoes and can only take what they can carry by walking up the jungle paths and tracks. The people have learned to survive on bush vegetables and fruits and local game such as wild pigs, etc. They no longer have the luxury of coffee, tea and sugar or tinned food items. In some areas the people are planting rice closer to their camps as well as sweet potato and taro. People exchange clothes for chickens, ducks, pigs; so a barter system has replaced the markets. There is virtually no hard currency since the banks closed on Bougainville in 1990.

Refugees

There are about 400 to 500 obvious refugees, but the total number spread with relatives across the Solomons could be even 2,000 from Bougainville. Many of us went into the Solomon Islands as patients, others for personal basic needs, but decided to stay on because of the continuous fighting on the island. We are glad that the Solomon Islands Government has allowed us under the Refugee Convention to live in the Solomon Islands as refugees. We are provided with grounds to build temporary houses and make gardens to help the families survive while we are there. Although the accommodation is not of the standard one could expect, we are pleased with what the Solomon Islands Government has done to assist us, and the Red Cross which provides housing and rations for families in the refugee communities.

Beside the Red Cross assistance we also try our best to find small ways to help ourselves financially, not just sit with open hands and beg. From the small production we get from our gardens we sell some and get a bit of income for our families. Women sew, weave, knit and sell to earn income to help not only the refugee communities in the Solomon Islands, but also to help establish the self-reliance training programs at home in Bougainville. These are run by some of the Bougainvilleans who were educated and were training officers before the crisis.

The number of refugees returning home from the Solomons has stepped up with the development of these self-reliance programs. Repatriation from the Solomons is not forced by the government upon us.

One of the many reasons I have remained in the Solomons is to facilitate humanitarian aid, medical supplies and to take care of the sick and the injured as they arrive from Bougainville. We ensure that they go to the hospital and take their names to the Red Cross.

Needs for refugees

We also acknowledge the Solomon Islands Government for allowing our children spaces in their schools to enable our children to get their education. We do find that this is another struggle, to support our children by means of school fees. Though we have those problems parents struggle to find ways to support their children to get money for their children's school fees. This struggle is going to go on because school fees increase each year. Finance is the main problem.

In spite of the struggles we are going through with our children we are thankful that some organisations came to visit the refugee communities. Such organisations are the Bougainville Freedom Movement and APHEDA [Australian People for Health, Education and Development Abroad], and some Australian trade unions. These groups are hoping to help in establishing an assistance program for training opportunities for the refugee communities, and in assisting in humanitarian aid. Even though these groups are going to assist in some ways, this does not allow us to sit back and do nothing; but we keep trying our best to support ourselves without having to wait to be served.

Although we are implementing self-reliance program while in the Solomons, Papua New Guinea continues to press the Solomon Islands Government to get us out of the country. Heartedly we'd love to go back to our island and be reunited with all our relatives and friends, but we cannot do that as yet. We, the mothers and children of Bougainville, are too frightened to risk our lives by returning to an area where fighting is still going on. We want to enjoy life with our relatives and friends but cannot do so when the two parties are still hanging on to their weapons, and the people are still dying here and there.

Peace and justice

Peace cannot be achieved without justice. Justice must be seen in addressing the legitimate aspirations of the people of Bougainville. Without justice to the people of Bougainville there can never be any early ending to the current war. We really long to see on Bougainville peace, hope and justice for now and the future. We want our children to go to school and be educated, receive good health services and travel freely in a peaceful atmosphere.

I, therefore join with all other women on Bougainville and appeal to you, our sisters and brothers of Australia and other countries, to help us pressure the Papua New Guinea Government, or mediate for:

1. Complete withdrawal of all PNG forces from Bougainville soil;

2. Bougainvilleans to reconcile and become one again;
3. One Bougainville people to sit and discuss with the PNG Government and decide their future; and
4. A referendum to decide their political future.

I strongly believe that when this is done, then peace will come to Bougainville. Then those of us that are refugees in other lands would be able to sail happily home to a peaceful environment.

We the mothers and children living in the Solomon Islands and within the PNG blockade, or in free Bougainville, want nothing else but long-lasting peace. This, I believe is the same desire that the women and mothers in PNG-occupied areas of Bougainville have and also long for.

Conclusion

Women too have a voice; an important voice in the social, cultural, economic and political issues of Bougainville. We are the custodians and the life-line of our societies through our matrilineal heritage, and in our positions in society. We have faced and experienced the brunt of this war through the loss of a normal life in which we have not been able to nurture our families.

Abuses, atrocities and violations are continuous this very moment against our persons by those under the force of arms. By those that have only tried to pursue their own self-interests without due consideration of the rights of the individual and the rights of the people of Bougainville as a whole.

We, the Bougainville women, deplore the continuation of this senseless war. And also impress upon those that have assisted the government of Papua New Guinea in terms of military assistance, finance and military training, how this had only unnecessarily prolonged the sufferings on the women, children and ordinary civilians on Bougainville.

We would also like to see *proactive actions* towards negotiation of a political settlement and an end to the war by all parties; including the Bougainville leadership, that is the BIG [Bougainville Interim Government], BRA [Bougainville Revolutionary Army], BTG [Bougainville Transitional Government] and the Papua New Guinea Government. Any assistance from our neighbours such as Australia, Solomon Islands, the international community such as international human rights organisations, the women of Australia and the United Nations are also welcomed.

In the voice of one of the women in Central Bougainville to the Bougainville Interim Government in 1991 in a meeting at Roroenang:

"We the women of Bougainville do not run around with guns in the bush like you men do ... but the pain that we feel for Bougainville is just like the pain we feel when we give birth to a new baby. We want to give birth to a new Bougainville ..."

This is the year of the women and we want our voice to be heard.

Women and War, Life Issues the Blockade, Refugees, Peace, Justice

Sister Lorraine

Introduction: Joy Balazo

Our next speaker is Sister Lorraine. Sister Lorraine is from the congregation of the Sisters of Nazareth of the Diocese of Bougainville. She resides at Chabai in Northern Bougainville. She is presently working with women in Bougainville. She was a planning committee member of the recently held Inter-Church Women's Forum in Arawa last August [1996] with the theme 'In Search of Genuine Peace and Reconciliation'.

Sister Lorraine completed her training and religious studies at Xavier Institute at Port Moresby, PNG, in 1986. On return to Bougainville she was stationed at Manetai in Central Bougainville, assisting women in spiritual and social development programs and self-reliance projects. From 1988 to 1992 Sister Lorraine also assisted in training young women entering the religious life. When the blockade brought the particular hardships to life in Bougainville, Sister Lorraine became a facilitator for the women who were negotiating peace and services for the people with the BRA. She has a special concern for justice and human rights issues.

Since 1991 Sister Lorraine has concentrated on working with the women and negotiating their life issues such as safety, jobs, with the Security Forces [another name for the PNG Defence Forces] under government authorities. She represented religious women of PNG/Solomon Islands at a conference in the Philippines in 1992 on the self-environment of women. She also represented the Catholic women of the Diocese of Bougainville at the World Union of Catholic Women's Organisations conference in Canberra in February of this year.

We welcome Sister Lorraine.

Thank you very much for giving me the chance to share with you what life is like in between two guns. I feel truly privileged to be here today sharing with you our life experiences of the last eight years. I am thankful that I'm able to meet and share with my two sisters, Ruby and Daphne, and more especially to meet with my Buka family.

For us, experience in separation has not been an easy thing. I will share briefly with you what it means to live in the government-controlled area.

The role of women in this time of [striving for] peace and harmony [has been] bearing the sufferings of the last eight years of war. We the women of Bougainville see it as our responsibility to take a much more positive approach to resolve the crisis of war on Bougainville, because we feel that the men had not been that way.

Peace is the desire of men and women, all the women, of Bougainville, the children, the land; [we want] peace and harmony to come to Bougainville, the families to be re-united. But without justice, peace will never come. We struggle to achieve that. Therefore we, the women of Bougainville, have come together as the Inter-Church Women's Group to search for genuine peace and reconciliation.

In August, seven hundred of us met from each of the Churches on the island—United Church, Catholic Church, SDA [Seventh Day Adventist] Church and the Pentecostals. It was not easy to gather us but we did it. We met and we shared. We identified the obstacles to peace and we felt and sensed from deep within. We encouraged one another to take a leading role in searching for genuine peace and reconciliation and a solution to end the

conflict. We see the importance of developing a unified stance on human rights and justice issues. And there is the task to develop plans and programs for a peaceful Bougainville. We continue to work establishing better co-operation and working relationship between Churches because we feel that at this stage the Church is the only one who can bridge the differences to save, to bring around peace and justice on the island. And our prayer at this stage is that we may be one.

We have experiences of the crisis. I myself have experienced suffering, I have experienced harassment both by the BRA and the Security Forces [PNG Defence Forces]. Women believe and see that when there is forgiveness and reconciliation, healing and new life emerges, growth takes place, justice and peace will abide. What is peace without justice? We believe that lasting peace will come one day with justice. We must learn and live to forgive and to forget. It is not easy.

I have a story to tell. I was held a hostage for five hours with two of my sisters and twenty village elders so that negotiations could take place between BRA and [PNG] Defence Forces. That was in May of this year. When I drove into the Army camp one morning to meet with the village elders I stopped at the check point. I was asked to get out of the car, my car keys were taken from me. Then the three of us were asked to sit under a tree. In me, I felt anger, I felt that I wanted to argue, I wanted to fight, but I just bowed. While we were sitting there for hours, there was this writing letters and all that going on between the two forces. And I was watching what was going to happen in the end. Then the officer in charge came and asked me; "Sister, why do you get angry when we do this to you?" And I said "because people have experienced harassment from BRA in the past. You came to liberate us, but it seems it is the same thing that you are doing".

When I responded he did not respond in turn, he just walked away. We continue to experience even though we live in a government-controlled area where there are supposed to be services—health services, education services. We think that we experience restriction of the services, transport—movement of people, communication. It is still restricted.

I've been living for the last eight years in an area where there is a curfew from dusk to dawn. You are not supposed to walk around at night, drive around at night. Sometimes I break the rules—I do it for the sake of justice.

These are the women living within the controlled area. Because we are all conscious of the fact that there are two guns pointing at us. We raise the question now and again. If we want a unified, peaceful and just society, how do we restore that confidence of trust? This is the question we are asking ourselves. We are not asking anybody else. Because we have lost trust for the two warring parties. We have experienced harassment from the BRA, from the PNG Defence Forces; even from the Resistance Forces. We've seen lives taken, beliefs and properties lost. Institutions such as schools, hospitals and churches have been burnt down by both parties.

Can we have reconciliation happen for us Bougainvilleans? Yes, we believe that can happen for us if we choose it.

Another experience that I have had is reconciliation with a BRA member. He is a lawyer by profession, he was an intelligence officer in the BRA from 1990 to 1991 in North Bougainville. And he got on me for going to seek medical help from the Army, on November 1st 1990. One of our sisters was just about to pass out I think. So I got on a canoe and paddled for two hours to Buka Passage, just for this injection. I had to face the guns of the Navy boat that was in the middle of the passage. When I came back, what happened to me? I was scolded, I was told to go to the command post for questioning. But I've had my chance to be reconciled with the person who had done that to me. It was a moving event for the two of us in 1993.

We, the women of Bougainville, believe that given the chance we can rebuild our lives. We are peaceful people. I've seen that happening in the northern tip of Bougainville with the Selau people, the people that I live among and work with. They declared peace in their area on August 17 of 1991. They took the steps to disarm the local BRA. They agreed not to have Resistance Forces in their area and to this day they stood up for their decision.

Women more especially have been the key people behind this initiative. Where I live in the northern part of Bougainville, we now live between two guns. We are still in hope and taking it as our responsibility to create an environment where we can dream about a peaceful solution to the conflict. It is not a 100 per cent but we plan to trust, we have confidence in each other again. And that's what we all Bougainvilleans need to do at this stage. Only then can we trust each other and have confidence in one another that what we want now will come about. It will come.

Women are working and have committed themselves to creating space where a dialogue can take place with all the parties involved. At the Forum [in Arawa] we came up with a resolution. We want peace talks to begin and it must begin right now between the Bougainville Transitional Government, Bougainville Interim Government, BRA and the PNG Government. And these peace talks must be held on Bougainville soil—not in Australia, not in Cairns, not even in the Solomon Islands, not even on the waters of Bougainville but on the soil of Bougainville. And this must be done in the absence of guns, in the presence of a neutral body maybe such as an international peace-keeping force.

The greatest obstacle to peace on Bougainville, even just peace talks within the districts, peace negotiations is skulls. Experience proves that. I believe that if given a chance we discuss our own solutions to our future. Why do we suggest that peace talks must be held on Bougainville? We had an experience during the Forum in Arawa when we were invited by a group of BRA in the Central Bougainville to have peace talks. Even though the Prime Minister's department wanted to bar that meeting. Because we petitioned, I said to the people dealing with the Prime Minister: 'This is the initiative, they have asked us to meet with them, it is their invitation, we listen to them.' They themselves organised the village community, and a place for us to have a meeting. And they even invited a woman to chair the meeting. And that was a very good meeting, a successful meeting. That's why we believe that we can discuss peace on our own land.

Another experience that the women have had in the last couple of weeks is that one of the women leaders in our planning committee for the Forum accompanied the regional member for Bougainville Mr John Momis to negotiate with the BRA regarding the 5 hostages [taken captive after the Kangu Beach incident a few weeks ago. It has not been easy for us, for those of us who live in the government-controlled areas. As I said, we live between two guns. We've learnt to survive it, to forgive and to forget, to rebuild our lives.

We've learnt to withhold something very valuable to every Bougainvillean and that is we are peaceful people, we are not tribal; that's why we believe that we can bring peace to our land, to our people. And as the saying goes, despite the crisis Bougainville is still beautiful! These are words of hope for our people and I believe that we can lay our differences aside to bring about peace. And I have learnt that in the last couple of days. We think differently because the others live on the other side, I live on the other side. But we are able to set this aside and come together to share and talk on what we can do together to achieve peace.

In hope and in the spirit of Christ we, women of Bougainville, take it one step at a time because we are simple village people. We don't know how to talk about human rights abuses at your level, that's why we take it one step at a time. And with this on behalf of the women and the people of Bougainville I take this opportunity to thank all of you who have made it possible for me to be here today. Thank you.

Another moving description of the other side of Bougainville. Thank you very much, Lorraine. It was really very helpful for everyone to understand life in the blockaded area and life in the PNG-controlled area.



L to R: Bill Leslie, Sister Lorraine, Marilyn Havini, Ruby Mirinka, Daphne Zale



L to R: Sister Lorraine, Marilyn Havini, Daphne Zale



L to R: Dee Margetts, Lee Rhiannon, Amanda Tibbey, Ellen Whelan

Questions and Answers

Question on care centres

Answer: Sometimes a care centre is a place in a village because in Bougainville people live in villages. So they will bring several villages together in that area, and place them all in a mission station. The conditions and the situation in the care centres is not always the best. It is one of our resolutions too that we don't want any more care centres. We want care centres dismantled. And we would like to see the people living in the villages where they can make a better livelihood because Bougainvilleans are used to that kind of life. We live in our villages and we are better off in our villages than anywhere else.

Sister Lorraine

Stk Nth care centres better

I come from north Bougainville where Sister Lorraine comes from. I think the care centres there are a lot better than in the care centres in south Bougainville from where we get the reports from. A lot of the people go back into the bush because they are not being looked after well in those care centres. There is a shortage of food and families cannot live in the care centres because of their children. They want their children to get good food and because the government does not supply enough they are hungry in the care centres. These are the reports we get from people who have escaped the care centres and go back into the bush.

Daphne Zale

I think it's important to realise the scale; the numbers of people. The population of Bougainville is anywhere between (it's anybody's guess who's left) it had grown steadily from 168,000 at a very formal, census figure up to what we estimated was close to 200,000. Now people are accounting, the government is assuming that there are 160,000 and they say, their last figures said that 69,000 people are in care centres. That's more than a third of the entire population. Ruby estimates that there are 100,000 people that she has to reach with her services behind blockaded areas. Just for you to understand the size of the population in containment.

Marilyn Havini

There are no fences around care centers. Even though I come from North Bougainville where there are no more care centres. In fact, in one of the islands because of the conflict that was going on, up north-west Bougainville last year where people were moved to an island where there is already a village. But most of these people have moved back. I had the opportunity to go to some other districts of Bougainville down South or in Central. There are no fences around the care centres. But there are regulations to be followed because some of these care centres are manned by the PNG Defence Force.

They set regulations or rules for the people to follow. That's why sometimes there is trouble in the care centres. But it's not the best and sometimes there is a committee set up by the local people in the care centre to help look after the people and to facilitate what goes on in the care centre. And sometimes government services do not always reach the care centres because of the restriction of transport. In fact even before I left there was still a restriction on transport going down to South Bougainville and South West Bougainville because of the latest incidents.

Sister Lorraine

Could you explain about women's role in BRA. Have they got a military role within the organisation. What women's role in the BRA is? What is response from the people of Bougainville on the Australian aid?

Lee Rhiannon (Aldwatch)

The role of women in BRA ... The role I play in there - because as I said that I am a refugee in the Solomon Islands - the role that I play there is the links between Bougainville and the Solomon Islands. When a person is sick or injured in the war they have to come through our doors and we direct them where to go, to the hospital and all that. That is the role we play in there.

Daphne Zale

Do women have a direct military role in the BRA?

Officially we don't have any women in the military, we only take it from the humanitarian stand.

Daphne Zale

Where did the idea for care centers come from? Did it come from the Government or from the people, and who has a say on peoples movements in or out of these centers?

1st care centres in Arawa 1989
Fenced!
The care centres started when I was in Arawa and the first ones were in Arawa in 1989. There were several thousand Australians that witnessed it. Anybody living in Arawa town saw that when the riot police came in to re-open, to force the mine to be re-opened when the people blew up the pylons just to stop the mine so that negotiations would take place, BCL cried foul and said, 'What are you doing to the government? You are supposed to be protecting us and keep this mine operating.' And so the riot squad was brought in, we were all placed under curfew and in those care centres there were fences. In those care centres they roped off, there are others here who witnessed it. They roped off our market town, they roped off our church areas and they roped off the Independence Oval, our football field for the kids. They herded, as they destroyed the actual villages around the mine to teach them a lesson, treating it like tribal warfare. To teach the people a lesson not to complain about the mine, and not to stop the mine, they moved the people in behind those fences and we drove past them day in, day out, not in light because we under the curfew. We were not allowed any contact through those fences.

Like detention centres
They were under blue plastic and they've lost everything on their back. And though they were in care centres from March, we were all held in our houses for a whole week in 1989, none of us was allowed out of our houses for a whole week. When that finished in Easter, from then on the people that were already in the care centres just blossomed overnight. They were contained there for the rest of, until when I left in January 1990 there were still in those internment camps. And even priests going in trying to minister to the people were beaten up, even German missionary priests were beaten up horribly because nobody was allowed to even talk to them.

That's where it has started from. It was exactly like one of the speakers said earlier as they want to do a military operation they clear the area. They drive everybody out of the bush. Then it went through another period where they were actually invited to come down but the invitation is 'if you don't come down, you cop what you get'. We are going in there on a military operation. If you are not down there in the care centre you are fair game, we'll treat you like a BRA. That's why a lot of people chose to walk down and were given passage to walk down the care centres and go through check points. Then the army held out the golden glove and said, "You are welcome, we'll look after you, we'll feed you", trying to actually use the care centres as if it was a way of buying the people's favour.

Marilyn Havini

The comment about our seeing Bougainville as the whole of the Solomon Islands; I think we are, it's not a question, we are part of the Solomon Islands.

Lillian Crofts

Australia's Role in the Crisis

Senator Dee Margetts

Introduction: Amanda Tibbey

This morning so much was covered. We are getting amazing sets of insights about the complexity of the situation. I think that's immeasurable. Now we are going to move outside Bougainville to look further at Australia's role at the Pacific, at the regional situation, economic, political, defence and aid implications of the situation and the things that are constraints in fact on dealing effectively with it. Thank you very much to Dee for coming. It's really come through to me that the committee really values your consistency in your support for Bougainville and that's really wonderful.

I forgot to say how really grateful I am for the efforts that I know were involved in getting this seminar and meeting together today. It is really important, it's the kind of meeting that happens and is able to happen too seldom in order to talk about and share the information that we need.

One of the few advantages of being a politician is that you do have the right to ask questions. Well everybody has a right to ask questions but we to a certain extent have the right to get answers, except when a Minister decides not to give one, but at least they have to come back and say, "We are not answering" or "We choose not to answer," or, in case of the Defence Minister, "I think it's a waste of our time". But sometimes we just kept asking the same questions.

I must say the previous Defence Minister Robert Ray was about as helpful as a lot of his high ranking officers and when I met some of them officially at meetings they mentioned to me how ratted off they were about how much time they've wasted answering my stupid questions. I said, "What's your \$14 million dollar defence policy unit", "Oh, it costs a lot more than that." "What does it do?" No answer.

I'd like to talk about Australia's contribution to the crisis in Bougainville, first of all through the environmental destruction through Australian mining operations on Bougainville which provided the source of conflict for the people of Bougainville, secondly, by the ongoing support of the conflict in terms of military equipment and training by the Australian defence establishment which has remained unchallenged by the Department of Foreign Affairs until recently.

I'm sure most of you here are aware of the history of the Bougainville conflict and Australia's role in it. We've had some very good background this morning but I'll give you a thumbnail sketch of our point of view.

Briefly I'll touch on some of the facts in this case. Bougainville Copper, a subsidiary of Australia's CRA which is now part of the merged multinational RTZ, opened its copper mine in Bougainville in 1966. This was, as we have heard, an ecological disaster, causing the fertile valley of the Jaba River to be turned into a wasteland, killing forests, fish and poisoning the air. CRA have a lot to answer for in their whole implementation of the mining development. I must say, when I've asked representatives from CRA mining they say, "We did what was required of us", basically the legal requirements.

The mining agreement was a sham—between a few hand-picked Bougainvilleans without the support of the landowners, chiefs or women representatives although the land ownership system in Bougainville is matriarchal. It was done with little consultation or

compensation to land owners and economic and social inequity was exacerbated between the traditional owners who lost their land and the central PNG Government and Australian business which reaped the profits.

Land is sacred on Bougainville, it's about people's livelihood and there was some compensation to replace people's clan homelands. However, some people received as little as \$200 per year which was meant to replace food, housing, clothing and essentials that come from the land. There's been an abject failure in the mine's development (over 17 years the mine has reaped over \$2 billion dollars) to redistribute the economic benefits of the mine to the people who have suffered its negative consequences. I've been to Jabiru just recently and it echoes in that too.

With the Bougainville Copper Mine providing up to 12 per cent of PNG's Gross Domestic Product the government in its corporate state model of development did its utmost to keep the mine open. This meant calling in the military and using repressive police tactics to quell landowner dissent. As a consequence of the combination of the importance of the mine economically to Papua New Guinea; the importance of the mine to Australian business and hence the Australian Government; and the framework of post-colonial defence ties between Australia and Papua New Guinea, Australia was poised to assist PNG to commit killings and general human rights abuses to fight the resistance to the mine and keep the revenue coming in.

Australia's defence establishment supported quelling the conflict in a repressive way on Bougainville instead of dealing with the source of conflict itself. There are three broad sources of conflict—social and economic inequality and environmental insecurity. This also ties in with Johan Galtung's basic needs thesis. He speaks of four conditions for peace to exist based on people's basic needs being met. These basic needs are: survival, well-being, freedom and identity.

As with the sources of conflict, every one of these conditions were violated by the opening and continued operation of the Bougainville Copper Mine and the government's response to it. Another aside. Recently the Deputy Premier of WA Colin Barnett spoke to the Conservation Council in Western Australia and I happened to crash the meeting. His opinion was that environment was "income selective" that is, only people with high incomes really expressed concern about the environment. Just about everybody had a go at him and said, "if your livelihood is dependent on the land you are vitally concerned about the environment". His response to that was, "you always go back to the past". We said, "No, we are not talking about the past, we are talking about now."

Australia perceives the Bougainville conflict as a threat in its own defence planning. It sees it as a threat to its economic exploitation in the region and prefers to see a stable government in charge of the resources that we want to exploit so that we can do it unhindered. The Australian Government also perceives, outlined in the Defence White Paper and in subsequent ministerial speeches of the new government that Australia's security is in terms of defence, reliance on PNG—and Indonesia for that matter—having stable governments.

This is their rationale for arming and training oppressive governments in our region. They think that if we train with repressive military leaders that somehow they will learn human rights. I thought that might rub off the same way—if Australian generals were to train with human rights abusers wouldn't it make our generals human rights abusers? But the logic was lost.

Not only are we being completely unethical in our defence approach to PNG and the conflict on Bougainville but we are also being ineffective in terms of Australia's security. With one hand we are arming and training a regime to exacerbate the conflict that is then providing us with the means by which we ourselves feel threatened. We then spend money

on high technology defence equipment to reply to an enemy defined through the Defence White Paper and Kangaroo exercises as a "low level threat of the type which could develop against Australia at relatively short notice flowing from unsuccessful attempts to resolve long-standing resource-based issues".

This enemy could be East Timor or West Papua or Bougainville which either began or was maintained over resources. East Timor for the oil in the Timor Sea; West Papua for the gold at Freeport mine and of course Bougainville for its copper.

All are resource-security issues which are classed as "internal threats to the governments of Indonesia and Papua New Guinea and therefore indirect threats to Australia".

In relation to Australia's defence assistance to PNG I'd like to provide details of the way in which Australia continues to support the crisis in Bougainville through defence, equipment, arms and training. Since 1988-89, \$250.5 million has been spent on arms and training to PNG through the defence cooperation program and has been used to quell the conflict in Bougainville.

The defence cooperation program is the main program by which training and equipment is sent to PNG. Arms, guns, ammunition, mortars and bombs are also supplied through the Supply and Support Agreement between Australia and PNG which developed out of the colonial defence relationship between the two countries.

For the first time it appears that the Department of Foreign Affairs are taking a stronger stance on Bougainville and putting pressure on Sir Julius Chan to resolve the conflict diplomatically and review the Defence Cooperation Program. The 1996-97 Budget in the Portfolio Budget Statements for the Defence Cooperation Program for PNG shows that in 1995-96 \$14.8 million was spent on defence assistance to PNG. This is projected to drop to \$11.8 million in 1996-97. This is part of a long-term decline in defence cooperation assistance to PNG since the early '90s during which it was around the \$15 million mark, when helicopters and patrol boats were handed over to PNG. However this decline does not hide the fact that the government has consistently provided around \$30 million per year to the PNG Defence Force which is used at its own discretion on Bougainville. The actual expenditure in 1995-96 of \$14.8 million in defence cooperation money to PNG is higher than Australian defence cooperation money to all the Pacific nations excluding Fiji—most got less than \$1 million.

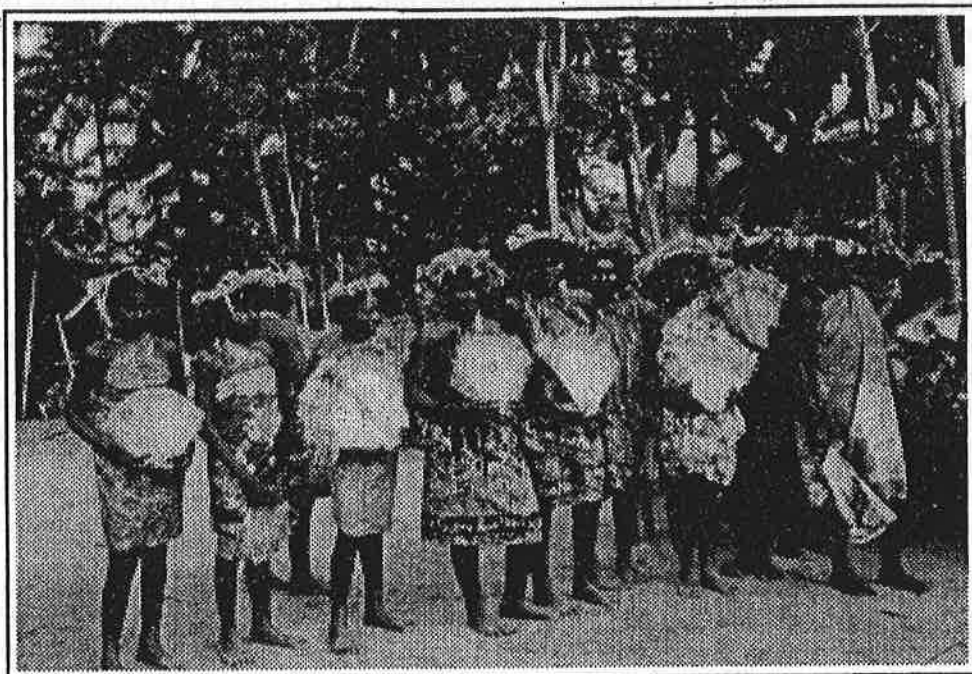
When we look at the breakdown of spending, Australian personnel visits to PNG total \$10.895 million; surveillance and other projects total \$1.128 million and joint training totals \$2.842 million. We've put many questions on notice asking for more details under each of these programs through the Estimates Committee process which allows the Senate to analyse the Budget. The answers are due back at the end of October. I guess we'll see how the new government answers defence questions and I'll pass them on to you when they become available.

Items that stand out in the Defence Cooperation Budget are money to maintain four Iroquois helicopters and four patrol boats. Over the last five years the Federal Government has spent \$1.9 million on maintaining the Iroquois and \$0.6 million on maintaining the patrol boats. As you may know, the government has consistently funded not only the ailing Iroquois helicopters themselves but also their maintenance which has been given under the guise of transport and logistics. Instead, the PNG Government have openly flouted the agreement in using the helicopters to kill innocent civilians at sea and also used them as gun ships to strafe villages and maintain the blockade.

The Australian Government also in the past supplied patrol boats which have been a significant part of maintaining the blockade on Bougainville which has taken reportedly up to 10,000 lives. In short, instead of arming and training PNG we need to resolve the real source of the conflict and that is, unequal development which divides communities, takes

the benefits away and leaves them (the communities) with the environmental and social costs and loss of lives. It is a mistake being repeated at Ok Tedi, Lihir and Freeport, to name some examples.

The struggle against the mine has unleashed a call for independence from many Bougainvilleans. What the Australian Government must support is the withdrawal of the PNG military from Bougainville, the abandonment of a military solution for Bougainville and self-determination for the Bougainvillean people through a referendum to sort out the future path of the country and its relationship to PNG.



Young girls of Central Bougainville display their Birikos (dancing fans), all dressed in colourful laplaps and bedecked with flowers for their school opening celebration behind a war front and blockade.

Aid for War—Bougainville and Australia

Lee Rhiannon

Introduction: Amanda Tibbey

Lee represents AID/WATCH, a non-government organisation which monitors the social and environmental impact of Australia's overseas aid program. Since AID/WATCH's formation four years ago, considerable support has been given to the people of Bougainville in their struggle for independence and for the end to the war on the island. Its magazine has carried articles on the issue, parliamentarians have been lobbied and action alerts and media releases have been distributed. AID/WATCH was very pleased to have Moses Havini [Bougainville Interim Government representative in Australia] as a keynote speaker at the official launch of the organisation at the NSW Parliament in October 1993.

Thank you very much to the organisers of today's meeting. Many of us here have spent much of our life attending meetings. As I listened to the speakers from Bougainville I realised that today's event has been one of the most moving meetings I have ever been to. Thank you.

In June last year our fax machine spewed out a few pages. It was one of the leaks that we periodically get from officers working within the Australian Government. It gave details of a training session that was occurring that day, June 15 [1995] in Canberra for AusAID workers.

"AusAID has funded the training of PNG police, including mobile squads, some of which were sent to Bougainville to quell riots. They burnt villages and abused locals. These squads have been given paramilitary training to cordon and search villages, land via helicopter, etc. When this is revealed, defend it."

This is a quote from training notes for AusAID representatives prepared by Newsmakers. AID/WATCH understands that Newsmakers is a media consultancy/training company. We were told that the ABC journalist, Pru Goward, conducted this workshop for AusAID. We have been informed that Pru Goward provides training for government departments, groups and individuals that need to be able to control potentially unfavourable media coverage. The documents that we were supplied with showed her providing training to AusAID staff in how to answer those difficult questions. This is a most extraordinary situation—a leading journalist employed to report on issues, is telling people how to present their case.

The example given above for Bougainville was repeated for many other troublesome AusAID programs. AID/WATCH believed that this was a news story in itself—how AusAID doctors the news with help from an ABC reporter. Unfortunately this story was never picked up, a saga all too familiar to people who work on Bougainville issues.

Australia and the war in Bougainville

Today's talk will detail Australian Government aid, both bilateral and multilateral, that goes to Papua New Guinea. Having provided this background AID/WATCH would then like to put before this meeting various campaign options that can be further explored in the workshops.

The Australian Government's public position on Bougainville is that a negotiated settle-

ment is the only way to end the war. The Australian Foreign Minister has frequently stated that "The Australian Government does not believe that there can be a military solution." In the conclusion to its report, the Australian Parliamentary Delegation to Bougainville had also stated: "There can be no military solution to the conflict on Bougainville".

Tragically there is an enormous gulf between these words and the actions of the Australian Government. This is something that we need to highlight in our campaigning. Dee has just spoken about Australian military support for the government of Papua New Guinea. Even though the amount of support has been cut back Australia will provide \$12 million in this financial year for hardware, training military personnel, and generally underwriting the whole war effort.

Approximately 2,000 personnel, which we understand is about half of the PNG Defence Force, have come to Australia at various times for training. Most of these officers have seen service on Bougainville. So on every level we are very much involved in this war. Surely if the Australian Government was committed to working towards a negotiated settlement on Bougainville it would start by cutting off financial support for the Papua New Guinea Government's military operations on that island. AID/WATCH believes that at every opportunity we need to point out this contradiction.

Development aid and bilateral aid to PNG

PNG is the largest recipient of Australian aid. This year's allocation is \$320 million, one fifth of the entire aid program. There is increasing concern that the massive injections of development aid are being used to underwrite the war effort. The PNG Council of Churches has raised its concerns that development money can underwrite the war effort. Their General Secretary, Rev Leva Kila Pat, wrote to the Australian Government in March with the plea that "any aid money destined for PNG not be used for military operations in Bougainville."

Since the war commenced Australia has given more than \$2,400 million in aid to PNG. Most of this has been for budget support. That means Australia does not stipulate what the money should be spent on. Australia is in the process of scaling back budget support. Each year an increasing proportion of our aid budget goes to what are called programmed activities. By the year 2000 budget support will be completely phased out.

What impact does the shift to programmed activities have on PNG Government's war effort? It can be argued that Australian funding of development programs, even if they are education and health projects that benefit people, frees up the PNG Government to use their own budget to pay for the war.

Also some of these programmed activities can directly or indirectly assist the war. A major Australian funded aid project has been law and order. This project, which commenced in 1987, employs Australian police to provide training for PNG police. Last year AID/WATCH was approached by Australian police officers, wanting help to expose corruption and gross mismanagement associated with the program. The police who spoke to AID/WATCH explained that Australian officers do a lot more than training, even though that is supposed to be the limit of their work.

This Australian aid project has been highly discredited. In the early 1990s it was revealed that mobile squads equipped and trained under this law and order program had done service in Bougainville. PNG officers are frequently brutalised by the training methods, with the result that villagers are harassed.

AusAID's response to criticism of this aspect of its PNG work—a name change to Law and Justice and another \$80 million for the next four years. Considering the track record of

this program and the fact that AusAID's own mid-term review stated that they found it difficult to recommend that the project go to phase III, AID/WATCH has called for this particular program to be scrapped.

Bilateral aid for Bougainville

All Australian Government aid to Bougainville goes through the PNG Government. In the 1993-4 budget the Australian Government earmarked \$5.5 million for "assistance for restoration of services and infrastructure in Bougainville". In 1994-5 a further \$10 million was allocated. We do not know the total amount that the Australian Government has designated for Bougainville, but we have heard that \$16 million of this amount has not been spent.

The latest budget papers for 1996-97 states that "significant assistance will be provided for the Bougainville Restoration Program". Details of what this means have not been provided despite written questions being submitted by AID/WATCH to AusAID.

The budget papers just mention health, education and infrastructure. All government aid programs in Bougainville are only carried out in PNGDF controlled areas. We have had considerable concerns about the aid allocation for building wharves on Bougainville—it is not hard to imagine that a major use for this could be by the PNG Defence Forces. Or are these wharves needed to land humanitarian assistance? These are questions we need to consider in formulating our demands for what type of Australian Government aid should go to PNG and Bougainville.

Multilateral aid

When AID/WATCH's PNG campaigner was in that country earlier this year many people raised concerns that the current liquidity of the Chan Government courtesy of loans from the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and the Australian Government is effectively bankrolling the war on Bougainville.

Last year the PNG Government received more than \$200 million under the current Structural Adjustment Program. Just this week agreement has been reached so PNG will soon receive a further \$31.3 million under the second stage of the SAP, or what the Bank prefers to call a rescue package.

The head of the PNGDF, General Singarok, has publicly stated that lack of resources is holding back the war effort. Wars need money, so we obviously need to look at what makes up PNG's budget.

This suggestion that large amounts of development aid, both injections to the budget or direct program aid, effectively underwrite the war effort is obviously denied by the powers that be. When AID/WATCH representatives met with Foreign Minister Mr Downer's staff earlier this year these concerns were dismissed. However, we believe it is necessary to raise this scenario today as it is another relevant factor to be considered when determining what our demands should be.

Campaign demands regarding aid to PNG

We need to consider both military aid and development aid. On the former we believe it is fairly straightforward. As the Federal Government regularly states a military solution is not possible to the war in Bougainville a priority in our campaign could be—an end to all military support for PNG in the form of budget assistance to their military, training and the supply of hardware.

We need to expose the hypocrisy that there is one Australian department, Defence,

funding death and destruction, and then another Australian department, AusAID, putting in money to relieve the suffering.

Personally I think that military support should not exist at all but again recognising the political world we live in, should there be a rider on this—that is, cessation of all military aid to PNG until there is a negotiated solution to the Bougainville conflict; or do we leave as is?

Demands regarding development aid going to PNG need careful consideration. In considering our options I think it is worth keeping in mind that there are people like the Pauline Hansons calling for no foreign aid at all.

Options for campaigning

** We could concentrate on aid to Bougainville as opposed to aid to PNG. AID/WATCH in the past after consultation with people from Bougainville has called for the Australian Government to ensure that our aid goes to government and non-government controlled areas, and that the type of aid be determined in consultation with representatives of all Bougainvillean people.

** Another option is to put a number of conditions on the delivery of Australian aid to PNG. Do we want to say development aid to all of PNG should be conditional on:

- * immediate cease-fire and withdrawal of PNGDF from Bougainville;
- * commencement of negotiations with all parties to the war, including women's organisations;
- * aid to Bougainville allocated in consultation with local people and made available to people in areas not controlled by PNGDF.

AID/WATCH puts these suggestions forward for discussion—from today's forum we hope we can devise a common campaign strategy on Australian aid to PNG, as it is highly unlikely that this war could be fought without our tax dollars. Australia carries considerable responsibility for the death and destruction occurring on the island of Bougainville. We need to remember that this war was caused by the greed of an Australian mining company. Aid money is just one part of the scenario, but we believe an important one. AID/WATCH looks forward to working with other participants at today's forum in devising ways to help end this war. Thank you.

*Paper by Lee Rhiannon
Research by Naomi Sharp and Lee Rhiannon*

Ellen Whelan

Introduction: Amanda Tibbey

Since 1986, Ellen Whelan has been editor of Pacific News Bulletin, a monthly newsletter of Nuclear-Free and Independent Pacific networks known as NFIP. NFIP campaigns on issues of self-determination and independence for Pacific peoples as well as de-nuclearisation and de-militarisation of the Pacific. Since 1990, Ellen has also been on the staff of Tranby Aboriginal College, supporting self-determination for Aboriginal people in this country.

She has 15 years experience listening to Pacific peoples speak their mind, and monitoring and writing about Pacific indigenous issues. For three years she served as the Chair of Community Aid Abroad's Pacific Regional Committee; she also serves on the Overseas Programs Committee of the National Council of Churches.

Like many Australians, she was unaware of the local opposition to the opening of the Bougainville Copper Mine and the Bougainville campaign for independence in the lead up to 1975, the year of PNG's independence.

She first wrote about Bougainville in May 1989; and in September 1989, Pacific News Bulletin, on the advice of the NGO community in PNG, called for three things: firstly, stop the fighting; secondly, withdraw the troops; thirdly, negotiate a settlement. That was back in 1989. Since then, Pacific News Bulletin has been covering events on Bougainville on a monthly basis, earning itself a reputation for fair and reliable coverage. Sometimes it was the only Bougainville coverage available in print for Australian and overseas audiences. Ellen, we welcome you.

I wanted to paint the picture of the Pacific response to the Bougainville crisis, to describe the reactions and the motivations of various countries in so far as I understand them; in the hope that it will give information to the Bougainvillean women who are here, and also the Australian audience, so that we can move to some creative outcomes.

How is it that the Pacific region has tolerated the Bougainville situation for eight years now? What are the forces at work and who are the key players?

My purpose this afternoon is in no way to accuse or to blame anyone, I simply want to describe the realities. We may not like the realities, but if we don't understand what they are, then we cannot create change.

I want to speak about three, I call them 'protocols', which I believe operate in the Pacific. First, is the protocol of silence: saying nothing publicly, especially if you disagree. But silence does not mean consent. That's very, very important in the Pacific.

To the best of my knowledge, no Pacific Island government has ever publicly supported Papua New Guinea on the Bougainville question. Never. The closest that I have seen so far was recently, when the now ex-Prime Minister of Vanuatu made it difficult for Ruby Mirinka when she went there to seek humanitarian support. There is a new government in Vanuatu now, and I'd be very surprised if that government had the same view.

Silence does not mean consent. The fact that we haven't seen statement after statement coming out from Pacific leaders criticising what PNG is doing in Bougainville, or what Australia is doing in Bougainville, does not mean that they are happy about what's been going on. The most overt statement that's been made over all the years came, apparently, on both Radio Australia and Radio New Zealand International, just after this year's 1996 Pacific Forum. The King of Tonga said, "Bougainville is part of the Solomons, the colonial

boundary was drawn incorrectly." That's the most overt statement which has come to my attention.

The second protocol is the protocol of respect. Despite strongly held differences of opinion, people work very hard at respecting each other. This fits in, hand in glove sometimes, with the protocol of silence. It would be disrespectful to openly challenge the Government of Papua New Guinea. And that is the position for many Pacific Island leaders. Yet they would instinctively also respect the Bougainvilleans, especially if they had the opportunity—like we did this morning—to hear people tell their own story, person to person. The respect that would be gained for Bougainvilleans would be set against the respect that is naturally accorded to PNG and to the leaders of PNG.

And the third protocol is the protocol of non-interference. There is a great reluctance to speak on anything that gets classified as 'an internal matter'. You will notice in the press how careful PNG is to maintain the position that Bougainville is an 'internal matter'. The reason for doing so is that it makes it extremely difficult for any Pacific Island nation to speak.

How do these protocols operate?

The main political event in the Pacific every year is the annual South Pacific Forum. The heads of government come together, they have two days of formal meetings, and they have one day of informal sessions which is usually called the 'leaders' retreat'. It is a cardinal rule, a very strong Pacific protocol, that the Forum does not interfere in the internal matters of other independent countries. The only time that I am aware of, where there has been any interference, is when PNG troops (interestingly it was PNG troops), came to the aid of Vanuatu to put down the Santo rebellion at the time of Vanuatu gaining its independence.

That's the only time. But out of that legacy comes a strong Vanuatu-Papua New Guinea link which does not work to the advantage of the Bougainvilleans.

The protocol of non-interference is so strong that, as far as I know, Bougainville in the last nine years has only made it onto the agenda once in the South Pacific Forum. That was in 1993. It is possible that it has been talked about around the poolside during the time of the leaders' retreat. I am sure that it is. But the only time that it was ever officially raised in the formal sessions was in 1993. And that was when, in 1993 you might remember, PNG was determined to keep international observers out, they had turned down the European Community, the Commonwealth Secretariat, International Red Cross, all NGOs, and so on.

A pressure was built particularly by the Pacific Council of Churches and the Catholic Bishops of PNG and Solomons who called on the Forum to address the Bougainville issue. This theme was taken up in regional publications such as "Islands Business".

So in 1993 when Rabuka (of Fiji) was the spokesperson to the media, he did indicate that both the Cook Islands and Tonga had raised the question of Bougainville around the poolside during the leaders' retreat. There were 'very frank discussions'. That was the quote, but of course nothing more would be said in public. New Zealand raised the issue on the floor of the Forum, but the session was adjourned, and then they ran out of time. Canada raised it again at the post Forum dialogue, but since that time it has never officially been on the agenda.

We know from a previous tour of Pacific countries by a PNG MP and a Bougainville representative to the United Nations, that Bougainville had the support of the entire region for bringing together a pan-Bougainville conference. We know that the support is there, but it's very hard to action it in the political structures.

What happened this year [1996]? This was one of the first times when it would have been possible to argue that Bougainville was NOT an internal issue because the Solomons had already complained to the United Nations about 'gross violations' of their territory (I call them 'invasions' by PNG troops). It could have been tricky at this year's Forum to argue the 'internal issue' line.

Remember that what goes on at the Forum includes what happens around the pool and in the corridors. This year the Papua New Guinea Prime Minister arrived with some 33 Papua New Guinea officials to attend the Forum. That is three PNG officials for every Pacific Island Head of Government. It would have been impossible in the dynamics of the resort where they were staying for anybody to have a conversation informally about Bougainville without being in the presence of a PNG official who would be there to be sure that the right things were said. This is how the system operates.

The other thing that you should be aware of is the Melanesian Spearhead Group. The MSG includes PNG, Solomons, Vanuatu, Fiji, and also the Kanaks from New Caledonia who are observers. That group meets together a couple of weeks before the Forum and they have their own agenda, but they also work out among themselves how they will handle issues that are going to come up on the South Pacific Forum agenda.

I have watched quite closely in recent years what happens with the MSG: for example, some six to eight weeks before the time of the Melanesian Spearhead Group meeting, the PNG government will arrange for a visit to Bougainville, or a new initiative, so they have first-hand reports to give, or positive news to bring. The crisis is then 'under control'. So that the Melanesian Spearhead Group countries won't bring it into the Forum.

The other regional feature (besides the South Pacific Forum) is the possibility of using a regional peace keeping force. This was always Chan's idea, he had that idea when he was deputy Prime Minister to Wingti and he approached Fiji, Vanuatu and Tonga; and they responded immediately. I do not believe that they responded with some gung-ho-macho military kind of thing in mind; they were just pleased and relieved to be able to make some kind of a contribution that would help the Bougainvilleans sort out their situation.

What happened? I haven't got time to detail the whole story, but you know how Chan rushed the whole thing, he lost the confidence of many of the Bougainvillean leaders. Fiji, Vanuatu and Tonga sent troops. They discovered when they got there (we heard this from a senior Fiji military official who spoke to the Fiji Times after they all went home ahead of time) that their troops had to take orders from the Australians, who commanded the whole operation from the boats off shore. The Pacific forces were very annoyed, because they thought that the Fiji military commander was going to be in charge. (Fiji has a reputation, as part of the international peace keeping forces of the United Nations, so the expectation was a reasonable one.)

Since that experience, there hasn't been any rush to mount any other kind of a regional peace keeping force. Thinking about what was said this morning, however, I believe that if an approach was made for an international peace keeping force, those same countries, and others, would be very willing to assist in the process of finding a negotiated settlement for Bougainville.

Thinking country by country—I won't go all around the region because I haven't got time to—I just went back and looked through all the Pacific New Bulletins. I want to make you aware of a certain history.

In January 1991, the Solomon Islands Foreign Affairs Minister and two Cabinet Ministers went to PNG with a request for a fact-finding mission by an international team into the state of affairs on Bougainville. They were turned down. So they requested two-way monitoring activities on the border. They were also denied this, because it undermined

PNG policy with regard to Bougainville.

Also in 1991 in Honiara, Solomon Islands officials brokered what was called the 'Honiara Accord', where key PNG leaders and key Bougainvilleans came together. There was an agreement established there and then, but it was destroyed by the PNG military. I'll come to that later on.

In September 1992, the Solomons called on Australia to support pan-Bougainville talks. In March 1993, Prime Minister Mamaloni came into parliament and said Bougainville was not an internal matter, it was spilling over into the Solomons, how can you say it is an internal matter. The PNG Council of Churches wrote to the Solomons Government and thanked them for trying to internationalise the issue. But the momentum just wasn't maintained. April 1993, January 1994, June 1994, August 1994, November 1994—for eight years the Solomons Government has tried to broker peace efforts for Bougainville.

I don't think that the Australian public are aware of that. Eight years of doing everything under the sun to broker peace talks.

Daphne spoke this morning about the humanitarian assistance which the Solomons have offered—Solomon Islanders feel themselves related to Bougainvilleans, they ARE related to them, they can't turn their backs on them. In addition to providing their own humanitarian relief, their own hospital and medical services, the Solomons have had to cope with tons of medical supplies and educational materials sitting on their wharves because the blockade made it so difficult to get the materials through to Bougainville.

When I went to look for it, I could not find the amount of money that the Solomon Islands Government has spent trying to alleviate the sufferings of the Bougainvillean people and to facilitate a solution.

Solomon Islanders living in the border provinces have endured raids, unauthorised aircraft landings, theft of property, being fired on by Australian patrol boats from off-shore, shoot-outs between border guards and, most recently, being accosted at gun point by PNG Forces, who were 'off course' as far as 200 kilometres into Solomon Islands territory!

Earlier this year, after 18 separate incidents in the matter of months, the Solomons went to the United Nations for assistance. The United Nations would not take up, I believe, the Solomons cause unless there was an indication from the South Pacific Forum that there was regional support to do so. The South Pacific Forum is the way you get to the United Nations from the Pacific. And, of course, as I told you, the Forum was swamped with PNG officials. I believe that the Solomons Government has never successfully been able to counter-act this kind of activity up-front, so they worked behind the scenes.

I would also have to say that I think the situation isn't helped by the fact that Solomon Mamaloni, who is the Prime Minister, does not personally attend the Forum meetings. I don't know why that is. But he does not, therefore, have that personal contact with other heads of government which I am trying to describe to you is so important in the Pacific.

Moving to other countries: Vanuatu I have already touched on—their loyalty is through the Melanesian Spearhead Group, although I think with this new government they may be a little bit more flexible.

I've seen little to indicate Fiji's position over the years, although, it certainly was willing to contribute to the peace keeping force. Tonga did speak out at the Forum in 1993 and then recently the quote on radio, which I mentioned before.

The Kanaks are very aware of and sympathetic to the Bougainvilleans, but they are

counting on PNG to support their de-colonisation process. So, I have been told, unofficially, that they will not confront the PNG Government on the Bougainville issue. They'll ask questions as best they can in private, but they cannot—because of their own position—challenge PNG. The Melanesian Spearhead Group this year (1996) agreed to push for the Kanaks, and PM Chan stood up most recently at the United Nations and challenged France on the de-colonisation process in Kanaky. Likewise on Tahiti: having already infuriated the French, two weeks later he championed the cause of the Tahitians, which was even worse because they are not even on the UN De-colonisation Committee list. He was saying that they should be.

We have here a supreme irony: that Prime Minister Chan of PNG champions self-determination for the Kanak/New Caledonia and Tahiti while denying self-determination for Bougainville. Because Chan is taking on the French colonies, he is well regarded in the Pacific region; it makes it more difficult to come challenge him on Bougainville. I'm trying to describe the realities.

The other key player in the region is the Pacific Council of Churches. In October 1992—you might remember—in those dark days when communication with Bougainville was so difficult, after a year of negotiating, and correspondence to and fro, the World Council of Churches, the Pacific Council of Churches and the PNG Council of Churches visited Bougainville. They were prevented by the military from getting to Central Bougainville. Several years worth of planning went down the drain.

The churches called for a lifting of the blockade and a stop to the war in 1993; again in 1994. In May 1994, 80 Catholic Bishops representing 23 Pacific Island nations called for the withdrawal of PNG troops, lifting of the blockade, processes to lead to peace etc. I just read recently that the Pacific Council of Churches meeting in September announced that they will try again to make an official visit to Bougainville. So perhaps within the women's church networks, that would be a link to be made.

I want to end with PNG, I've deliberately left PNG until last. And I want to be very clear about what I am saying. I stand for self-determination for the people of Bougainville. This is not a radical position, it's part of the United Nations Charter.

But, over the course of the years of writing month in and month out about Bougainville, (and it's not easy, it's not happy news to share with people), I've tried to understand what makes Papua New Guinea tick.

How do Papua New Guineans think in the NGO community? How does the government operate? And the first thing I want to remind everybody is that PNG is not a monolithic situation, not a monolith. The Council of Churches, the National Council of Women, the NGO community, members of Parliament from a range of political parties, provincial premiers—all have suggested ways of trying to resolve the crisis, including special autonomy provisions and the need for a referendum. The wives of PNG soldiers on Bougainville have called for a withdrawal of troops from the island just recently, and it's not the first time that they've done so. MPs Narakobi and Somare between them have kept coming up with ideas to try to keep the situation moving.

PNG, like everywhere else, has its hawks and its doves. The history of Bougainville, in my view, over the last eight years is the history of the pendulum swinging between the hawks and the doves. It's just that always the hawks return to fight another day.

Often, if you look back over the pattern of developments, when there was a chance for a break-through or a chance for peace talks, it is the military who has prevailed, and destroyed the peace process. Chan recently said that he can't control the military, he talked of the problem of communicating with troops a thousand kilometres away as being too difficult. I find that an amazing statement in a country that has a civilian government.

It makes you wonder, and worry.

Sometimes the PNG government does just the right thing at the right time to put off critics. In 1993, Prime Minister Wingti announced that he would proceed with pan-Bougainville talks, thus getting rid of international pressure that was on PNG at the time. Then, the government cancelled the talks that were scheduled and later re-scheduled new ones.

In June 1994, Wingti announced the establishment of a human rights commission, three months before the PNG Government were due to answer for themselves at the Human Rights Commission in Geneva. They made the announcement, went to Geneva, and then nothing happened; in 1996, there still isn't a human rights commission. Again in 1994, PM Wingti made a lightning visit to Bougainville a week before the South Pacific Forum; then he could say he had first-hand reports, he'd just been there, the situation was under control.

And then sometimes there are just outright lies or the denial of visas to Bougainvilleans, that's been one of the most powerful ways. It's absolutely extraordinary how completely frightened the PNG Government seems to be to let Bougainvilleans into the same room with each other. Because every time there is a chance to do that, something happens to interrupt it, or immediately afterwards, as happened after Cairns in December last year. They fired on Bougainvillean leaders going home from the peace talks! Naturally the peace talk process was completely stopped.

I conclude with a couple of recommendations: I would like this conference to go home and write a letter to both the Government and all the MPs of the Solomon Islands, thanking them for their efforts at brokering a peace on Bougainville, for their refusal to give up on the issue. I don't think this is something that has been done in the past, and I think it would be a terrific 'shot in the arm' for both the current Government and the Opposition. A letter of thanks, of appreciation for the work that they've done.

What is it that is operating for PNG leaders? What is it that is making them hold on to Bougainville in this way? I think one of the ingredients, it's not the only one, but one of them, is that most of them were in the ascendancy, if you like, during the time in the lead up to independence in 1975. They have in their head what I call 'old tapes'—the old tapes say: we must hold this scattered land area of 800 tribes, 800 languages all together in one nation. PM Chan and any other PNG Prime Minister—unless we can figure out a way around it—will feel that they have been a 'failure' if they let go. At one point, it was even called the "disease of secessionism". That's the language - "the disease". And that tape is very powerful.

We have to find ways to get around that tape—You could be a hero, Prime Minister, whoever it turns out to be, you could be a hero by allowing the Bougainvilleans to decide on their own future—That's the second recommendation.

And the third one: we must start now getting Bougainvilleans moving around the Pacific as much as we can get them out, because that person-to-person discussion with other Pacific people will be part of a campaign to break the deadlock at the South Pacific Forum. You can't get into the UN without the South Pacific Forum. So I hope that's an idea that we can work on in the workshops this afternoon.

And thank you very much.

Appendix A

by Marilyn Havini

Historical Context

1 The Land

1.1 Pre History

26 million years ago (approx.) Cenozoic period—volcanic activity, the dominant feature of the area, forms the first landmass, probably commencing in the Oligocene period.

19 million years ago Middle Miocene times saw major uplifting of the volcanic plateaus to a height of 4000 feet at eastern border and tilting downwards to west south-west.

2.5 million years ago to recent times Pleistocene and Recent have probably been the periods of maximum volcanic activity on Bougainville, and during this time the volcanoes forming the Tore, Balbi, Numa Numa, Billy Mitchell, Bagana, Reini, Takuan, and Taroka Volcanics, and some of the volcanoes forming the Emperor Range Volcanic Beds, have all been active. Volcanic activity today is represented by the active Bagana and the dormant Balbi and Loloru volcanoes.

Also during this time reef complexes built up offshore while older volcanic rocks, where they were left uncovered by young volcanics, continued to be eroded. The uplifting and gentle tilting of the Sohano Limestone on Buka and the North Coast of Bougainville probably occurred in the upper Pleistocene period.

30,000 years ago }
28,000 years ago } First human habitation according to 1987/88 research and excavation of Kilu and Palandraku caves and other sites under study by archaeologist Steve Wickler.

The origin of these people is believed to be from the north west, transiting through the Bismarck archipelago with various suggestions of sea voyages undertaken to cross from New Britain, New Ireland, Feni and/or Nissan.

The existence of Pleistocene settlement on Buka opens up new avenues of inquiry concerning the dynamics of prehistoric settlement of the entire chain of the Solomons as, during this period, the islands of Buka, Bougainville, Shortlands, Choiseul, Santa Ysabel and Nggela would have formed a single landmass from which Guadalcanal was separated by a very narrow ocean passage. Thus movement southwards from Buka would have been a matter of over land migration rather than island-hopping.

28,000 years ago
to possibly 3,000
years ago The Bougainvilleans appear to have had little contact with the outside world. They remained relatively isolated for nearly 25 millennia. It is possible that original settlers elsewhere in the region may have been as black as today's Bougainvilleans and at a later time in history swamped by new settlers (as on New Ireland); or, this time of seclusion may explain in some other way the distinct black skin colour of Bougainvilleans and related Solomon Islanders.

3,000–4,000 years ago

The documented period, where it's apparent that Buka's prehistoric population was actively engaged in exchange over considerable distances and must have been equally exposed to outside influences from these contacts. Historical sequencing of pottery styles has identified the following cultural styles with approximate dates in Nissan Island, north of Buka, North Bougainville:

*4900 BP or older
(NB: BP = Before Present or before 1950)

Takaroï phase: (Aceramic)

*c.3660–c.3200 BP

Halika phase: (Aceramic) First evidence of tree crops/domesticates and pigs.

*c.3200–after 2715 BP

Lapita phase: Lapita style pottery of "Far Western" tradition probably from Ambitle Island. Undated "Western" type Lapita at DES reef site probably from Buka.

*before 1860–1150 BP

Yomining phase: Plain calcareous temper pottery similar to Buka style

*c.800–BP

Late Hangan phase: revised to 1500–800 BP (from 1500–1300).

*c.800–c.300 BP

Malasang phase

*c.300–0 BP

Mararing and Recent phase: nowhere are the two styles separated, indicating Mararing is short lived.

1.2 Early History

1568

Spanish Captain Don Alvaro de Mendana became the first European explorer to set foot on Solomon Island shores (at Isabel). He thought he had discovered the source of the mythical/biblical "King Solomon's Mines"—a potential source of plunder, especially gold.

1594–95

Mendana returned to the Solomons but took ill, died and was buried there.

1768

Voyages of "rediscovery" in the region were made by Commander Philip Carteret and, more significantly, by French navigator Louis de Bougainville who discovered the island that bears his name. He also sailed up the coast of Buka (known to the people as "Ritana"). Louis de Bougainville never discovered how he "misnamed" Buka from the Hako word meaning "what", nor that the men fishing in the off-shore canoe could have told him they called the main island of Bougainville "Hois".

Oral history accounts of these and other encounters with explorers and traders suggest that an enormous task of fleshing out their very own history of recent and former centuries must be recorded by Bougainvilleans themselves.

1820–1860

British, French and American vessels hunted sperm whales in the waters of the northern Solomon Islands; through them Bougainvilleans acquired quantities of weapons, metal tools, cloth

and tobacco. During this period some Bougainvilleans accompanied the vessels as crew members, sometimes as far as Australia. European traders on the scene bartered directly with local islanders or through Bougainville Strait Islanders acting as middle men. The latter occasionally acquired live Bougainvilleans by kidnapping or trade to serve as menials, concubines or for religious sacrifice.

- 1870-1905 Bougainvilleans were recruited in large numbers for plantations in Queensland, Fiji, Samoa and New Britain, those from Buka were in especially heavy demand because of their reputation for trustworthiness and hard work. (Pidgin word "haus boi" has replaced the original term "Buka boi" in the post colonial era.) Blackbirding, i.e. kidnapping, was practiced by many of the labour recruiters.
- 1880s The Strait islands of South Bougainville were under the suzerainty of Gorai, a Shortland Islands Chief, whose influence extended up Bougainville's eastern coast as far as Cape L'Averdy.
- 1882 British naval surgeon H.B. Guppy recognised the likelihood of copper being found in the south-eastern part of Bougainville from ore specimens given to him by a Shortland Chief.
- 1884 Bougainville/Buka, outside the administrative influence of any foreign power (although assumed to be the domain of the British and Australian traders and recruiters) came under the influence of the German powers who annexed north-east New Guinea.
- 1886 A mere exchange of notes between Germany and Britain placed Bougainville, Buka, Choiseul, Shortlands and Isabel Islands under the German sphere of influence.
- 1899 Bougainville and Buka were officially added to the German Colony of New Guinea. This formal administration affected the accessible coastal areas but was not acknowledged by peoples from the interior of the larger island who the German Parkinson admitted remained "virtually closed off".
- 1902 Marist missionaries were the first whites to establish permanent residence in Bougainville with a mission station at Toboroi from Solomon Islands contact via Buin.
- 1905-1914 Permanent Government Station was established at Kieta by German rule.
- 1914 WWI The German colony surrendered to Australian authorities. Marist mission stations were established across the island and a Bishop installed at Kieta.

1.3 Recent History

- 1914-1921 The colony was administered by Australia under a military regime maintaining the German administrative system of recognising the village clan society with official titles of Luluai (paramount chiefs), Tultul (assistant chiefs) and Kukurai (medical orderlies). The indentured labour system for copra plantations took workers away from subsistence village living.
- 1920 A Methodist mission was established in Siwai from contacts

- established with the Treasury Islands in the Solomons.
- 1924 The Seventh Day Adventist church began evangelical work in South Bougainville.
- May 1921-1941 Bougainville, with the former German New Guinea, was proclaimed a ward of the new League of Nations under the mandate of Australia. The indigenous peoples had no voice in this exercise. All German-owned non mission properties were expropriated and sold outright to Australians, the labour indentured system continued much as before and the Administration imposed a tax on most adult male indigenes in "taxable" areas. Patrol officers maintained, almost unchanged, the system of local government established by the Germans.
- 1935-1959 European prospectors mined alluvial gold at Kupei near Panguna, except for the years 1942-48 and 1956-58. Gold production from Kupei years totalled 2,282 fine ounces, then valued at \$49,026.
- By 1937 Whites have by now alienated 28,000 hectares of Bougainville's land (nearly all of it prime agricultural quality and accessible to shipping points).
- 1942 WWII Jan-Mar, Japanese occupied Buka and Shortlands and controlled all Bougainville's coastline; Aug, United States forces landed in Guadalcanal. Australian and Bougainvillean Coastwatchers behind enemy lines helped in the Nov defeat of the Japanese at the Battle of the Coral Sea over Guadalcanal.
- 1943-1944 United States and New Zealand forces established a beachhead at Torokina (in north-west Bougainville). Australian forces took over the campaign to reoccupy Buka and Bougainville and destroyed or captured all Japanese forces.
- 1945-1946 Japanese forces surrendered. Australian civil Administration was re-established on Bougainville and Buka.
- 1946-1964 Australia exercised exclusive Trusteeship under the United Nations over the former Mandated Territory of New Guinea (NG), including Bougainville. Papua was already an integral dependency of the Commonwealth. The Australian Government administered the two as a single dependency and in 1949 set up a Territorial Legislative Council for T.P. & N.G. (Territories of Papua and New Guinea)
- 1950s-1964 Australians viewed the self-reliance of Buka & North Bougainville Hahalis Welfare Movement as a "cult" and constructed the Buka road to send in police and carry off all the leaders as prisoners, after the battle, to gaols in T.P. & N.G.
- 1960 Discovery of rich ore deposits at Panguna led to forcible eviction of traditional landowners by Australian Administration.
- 1964 Delegation of Bougainvilleans to the visiting UN De-Colonisation Committee objected to the alignment of Bougainville with T.P. & N.G.
- 1966 Opening of the Con-Zinc Rio Tinto (CRTZ) mine at Panguna. Self-

government advanced and Bougainvilleans stressed their right to self-determination as a separate nation from Papua New Guinea, either as a part of the Solomon Islands or alone.

Bougainvillean students throughout T.P. & N.G. formed Mungkas Association as a lobby group to support their people's nationalist and environmental struggles against both CRTZ Company and the Australian Administration.

1.4 Recent History and the struggle for Independence

- 1966-1972** Australia fought the request for self-determination as Panguna mine was the principal source of finance for PNG independence. In essence Australia handed Bougainville to PNG as an Independence gift.
- 1972** An attempt by the Chief Minister of the PNG Self-governing Assembly was made to ameliorate the situation by appointing Bougainvillean leaders to set up a "District Government" ready for Statehood of Bougainville within the newly emerging Nation of PNG.
- 1975** UN requested tabling of the PNG draft Constitution by June 1975. Clause on District Government for Bougainville not yet inserted; PNG leaders panic and cancel the established Bougainville District Government rather than delay the nation's celebrated date for independence in September.
- 1 September 1975** Bougainville raised the flag and declared Independence as the Republic of the North Solomons.
- 16 Sept 1975** PNG Independence. PNG refused to recognise Bougainville's Independence and, with Australian assistance, mounted international and local opposition.
- June 1976** Following several months of maintaining passive resistance, and on the brink of open war, negotiations on Arovo Island resulted in Bougainville being granted Provincial status within the PNG Constitution.
- 1980s** Bougainville leaders attempted to make the graft work with PNG leaders but the people remained deeply disturbed by the vast amount of geological prospecting, environmental destruction brought about by the mine, by increasing the transfer of mine workers from PNG to Bougainville, by cultural breakdown, by lack of government funding and the political power of a PNG built with Bougainville finance.
- 1988** Protests by Bougainvilleans and pleas for re-negotiation of the mining treaty especially by the new Panguna Landowners Association fell on deaf ears. Protests led to violence and the closure of the mine by a group of landowners calling themselves the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) led by Francis Ona.
- 1989** PNG sent in Riot Police and then Defence Forces to quell the BRA. Escalation of violence due to harassment of the general population by the PNGDF led to a popular uprising to defend the basic human

rights by the people of Bougainville. Civil war erupted and the cry for self-determination.

The PNG Government realised too late and offered a "rescue package" that was rejected by the people, although a failed attempt at a peace ceremony took place.

24 July, Australia passed Amendment Bill in Foreign Incursions and Recruitment Act allowing Australia to dispatch 4 helicopters and pilots to assist PNG in Bougainville.

1990

January: PNG withdrew all public servants and closed down all banks, offices, services and the business community was evacuated from Bougainville leaving the island under the control of the PNG forces until they were withdrawn in March.

February: formation of the Interim Government of Bougainville following withdrawal of all PNG and expatriate personnel. BRA recognised as the defence arm of the Bougainville movement for Independence and a more formal command structure set up. In interim Government prepared to negotiate with PNG.

22 April: PNG placed Bougainville under complete blockade and refused to negotiate. Australian advisors predicted a capitulation of the population within four months would see a chastened Bougainville accept defeat and request return of services with civil PNG government and sovereignty.

1.5 The Battle for Bougainville

1990

17 May: Interim Government issued a Unilateral Declaration of Independence, this time as the Republic of Bougainville, but retained the same flag as was raised on 1 September 1975 with the first Unilateral Declaration. There had been a total resurgence of the original Nationalist Movement. Officers appointed to seek assistance from other sources to solve the basic needs of the people. These included the World Council of Churches, United Nations, non-governmental organisations and other international organisations including UNPO (Unrepresented Nations Peoples Organisations).

November: New Zealand warships hosted peace negotiations which were violated by PNG by reoccupying Buka one week later.

Bougainville remained under complete blockade which caused the death of 5 per cent of the population due to lack of medical supplies and facilities.

1991

January: new peace talks facilitated by Solomon Islands Government in Honiara resulted in a fresh agreement with a provision for multinational peace-keeping.

February: PNG violated Honiara Declaration by further military incursions into mainland Bougainville. PNGDF formed a Resistance Force from the Buka Liberation Front (BLF).

Growing concern throughout the world about the denial of all basic

social, cultural, economic, political and civil rights of the Bougainville people expressed during the United Nations Sub-Commission on Human Rights.

1992

Some humanitarian aid transited through the Solomon Islands who saw it as their humanitarian duty to allow such access despite PNG protests.

HABSICA (Humanitarian Aid for Bougainville Solomon Islands Christian Association) formed.

27 August: Bougainville's first UN Resolution, "UN Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, 44th Session, Resolution 1992/19: Detention on Bougainville" was passed.

Among its operative parts, the resolution called for, "PNG Government to restore without delay freedom of movement to Bougainville in the interest of protecting and promoting human inhabitants rights and fundamental freedoms ... and requests Special Rapporteur open the study of treaties, agreements and other constructive arrangements between states and indigenous populations to include in his report the case of the agreements entered into between Bougainville and PNG."

October 1992: European Community Resolution on the ongoing crisis in Bougainville by the ACP-EEC (Asia, Caribbean, Pacific, European Economic Community) called on renewed negotiations for final peace settlement and called on involvement of the Commonwealth Secretariat and the South Pacific Forum to investigate different elements of the conflict including human rights abuses, social economic and environmental impact of the mine, financial implications of restoration of services and views of different parties in political solution.

1993

10 March, the first UN Commission on Human Rights Resolution was passed by consensus by members of the Commission. Amongst the operative parts of the resolution, the United Nations "called for the PNG Government to recommence negotiations with all factions of the Bougainville peoples with a view of achieving peace and a mutually satisfactory solution to the armed conflict on Bougainville".

PNGDF continued to pursue military option and policy of containment of civilians in "care centres" to put down Independence. Civilian population thrown into panic and people chose sides according to their location and chances of survival. This conflict and confusion led to many massacres and extra-judicial killings and to massive displacement of fleeing villages.

June: Bougainville Team, including the Bougainville Interim Government Representatives and members of the Bougainville Freedom Movement attended the United Nations World Conference on Human Rights as part of the Asia-Pacific Non-governmental organisations.

1994

PNG Government had established occupied "care centres" at all

major sea ports of the island. Some had been allowed to reoccupy their villages in military secured zones where the "State of Emergency" powers still applied under a Police and Military Occupation. All Bougainvilleans not rounded up or voluntarily in "care centres" and/or Resistance groups were regarded as members or supporters of the BRA and subjected to PNGDF harassment, torture and extra-judicial killing.

July/August: Major PNGDF military offensive mounted to recapture the Panguna mine with the declaration that it will open "before Christmas".

Australian, PNG and CRA advisors all confident of success and Bougainville Copper Ltd shares on stock exchange rose.

19 August: UN Commission on Human Rights, 46th Session, Resolution 1994/8 (XXIII) passed on the question of the violation of rights and fundamental freedoms, including policies of racial discrimination and segregation and apartheid. Four of six major clauses addressed PNG recalcitrance on negotiations, human rights and freedoms, human rights and abuses, blockaded medicines; and called on the invitation of UN Special Rapporteurs and Representatives.

August/September: PNGDF Operation "High Speed 1" failed soon after PM Wingti was sacked by a Supreme Court ruling. New PNG PM began negotiations with Bougainville Interim Government (BIG) and BRA in Honiara with Solomon Islands as third party. Two agreements were reached; "Honiara Commitment to Peace" and "Ceasefire Agreement".

2 September: Official Ceasefire in Operation.

Australia, Tonga, Fiji and Vanuatu mounted a South Pacific Peace-Keeping Force to assist a planned peace conference for Bougainville to commence in Arawa on 10 October.

10 October: PNGDF violated "Ceasefire" by refusing to move out of neutral zone designated for conference, and also by shooting civilians in and around neutral zone, Arawa.

December: PNG established Bougainville Transitional Government (BTG) as a rival government to the BIG for Bougainville. The "Mirigini Charter" signed in Port Moresby by PNG PM Sir Julius Chan with Theodore Miriung (as Premier of the BTG) who was the former legal staff of the BIG and had compromised the peace seekers at the Oct. 94 Peace Conference.

1995

PNG military option increased with mounting pressure to crush the BIG and BRA despite government's posture of "Reconciliation" via civilian BTG.

February/March: UN Commission on Human Rights passed its 5th Resolution on Bougainville that set a deadline for the commencement of re-negotiations.

September: initial working committee from PNG/BTG and BIG/

BRA met in Cairns, Australia, to seek ways and means and plan for restarting of peace negotiations.

October: UN Special Rapporteur on extra-judicial, summary or arbitrary executions visited PNG and Bougainville but failed to reach blockaded area.

December: second round of peace talks was held in Cairns funded by the Australian Government. This meeting comprised a full negotiating team from each party with facilitation by United Nations and Commonwealth Secretariat. A "Joint Communique" signed by BTG and BIG/BRA was delivered to PNG PM in Port Moresby by UN and Commonwealth Secretariat Representatives.

1996

BIG/BRA delegation on return to Bougainville from transit via Solomon Islands, escaped an attempted massacre by the PNGDF. This raised grave concerns from BIG/BRA whether PNG was genuine in pursuing peace talks and negotiations. Continued ceasefire violations, massacres of civilians and military operations confirmed to BIG/BRA their suspicions.

February/March: BRA launched counter raids to stock up on weaponry with sorties into government controlled areas in Buka and North Bougainville.

26 February: UN Commission on Human Rights presented with report and addendum E/CN.4/1996/4/Add.2 by Special Rapporteur on extra-judicial, summary or arbitrary executions pursuant to Commission resolution 1995/1996. 75 cases of execution were cited with the call for PNG to investigate. A 22 page addendum enumerated serious situation concerns for the crisis and justice issues with recommendations.

21 March: PNG PM Chan angry about BRA incursions, officially lifted dishonoured ceasefire and unleashed more troops to mount new military campaign despite strong objections from BTG Premier, Miriung.

21 June: PNG launched major military operation "High Speed 2" after procuring more weapons and logistics advice in overseas shopping spree.

15 July: BRA defeated the PNGDF in a major victory at the beachhead initially established by PNGDF at Aropa Airport.

PNGDF scaled down military combatant forces and maintained status quo of occupation of Buka Island and major government installations at key coastal points of Bougainville thus maintaining air and sea blockade of the island.

25-31 August: Bougainville Inter-Church Women's Forum held in Arawa. 700 women participants registered from all churches representing mainly the government controlled areas where civilians were tired of suffering war.

8 September: BRA successful in major offensive at the PNGDF camp at Kangu Beach, releasing more than 1,000 civilians from

the Kangu Care Centre who chose to return to villages to escape PNGDF mistreatment, acute food shortages and poor conditions of the centre.

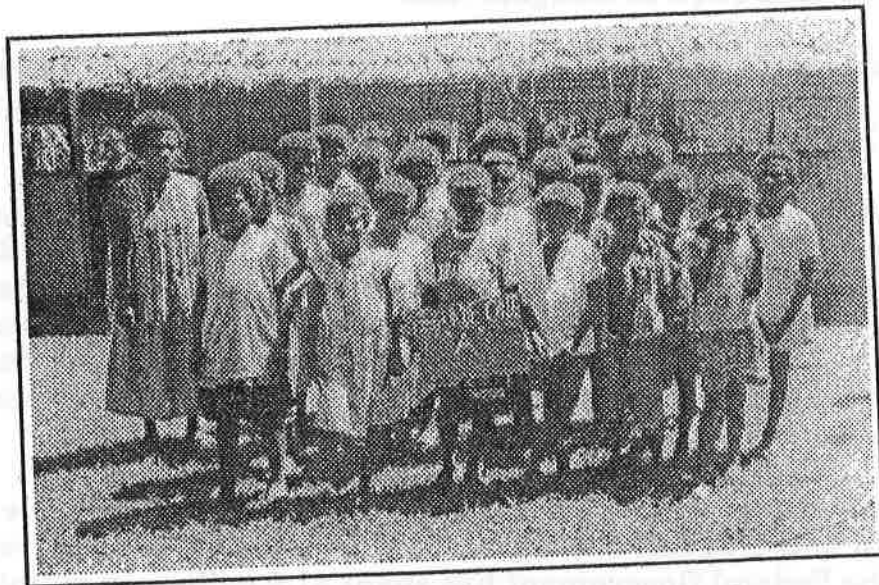
Current situation

BRA hold 5 POWs and issue conditions of release to PNG for:
1. Complete withdrawal of troops from Bougainville
2. Recognition of Bougainville independence. PNG and BIG strategising on negotiation and release of hostages.

Editorial Footnote

The Women For Bougainville Forum took place in Sydney, Australia on 10 October 1996. At the very time this forum was conducted, unbeknown to the women gathered the Premier of BTG, Mr Theodore Miriung (one of the key Bougainvillean negotiators), was flying into an assassination trap in Southern Bougainville.

Sri Lankan retired Judge, Mr Thirunavukkarasu Sutherland was appointed to head a coronial inquiry into the assassination. Investigations of the inquest concluded that 10 PNG soldiers and their Resistance accomplices were responsible for the assassination.



Grade One A with their teacher in a BOCBIHP school of Central Bougainville. The school, one of 20, boasts 8 classes of students in Grade 1 to 6, Primary Education.

Appendix C: Background paper

By Greens (WA) Senator Dee Margetts

I would like to provide details of the way in which Australia continues to support the crisis on Bougainville through defence equipment, arms and training. Since 1988-9, \$250.5m has been spent on arms and training to PNG through the Defence Cooperation Program and has been used to quell the conflict on Bougainville. The Defence Cooperation Program is the main program by which training and equipment is sent to PNG. Arms, guns, ammunition, mortars and bombs are also supplied through the Supply-Support Agreement between Australia and PNG which developed out of the colonial defence relationship between the two countries.

For the first time, it appears that the Department of Foreign Affairs are taking a stronger stance on Bougainville and putting pressure on Sir Julius Chan to resolve the conflict diplomatically, and review the Defence Cooperation Program. The 1996-7 Budget in the Portfolio Budget statements for the Defence Cooperation Program to PNG shows that in 1995-6, \$14.8m was spent on defence assistance to PNG. This is projected to drop to \$11.8m 1996-7. This part of a longer term decline in defence cooperation assistance to PNG since the early 90's during when it has been up around the \$50m mark when helicopters and patrol boats were being handed over to PNG. However, this decline does not hide the fact that the Government has consistently provided around \$30m per year to the PNGDF which it has used to its own discretion on Bougainville.

The actual expenditure in 1995-6 of \$14.8m in Defence Cooperation money to PNG is higher than Australian Defence Cooperation money to all the Pacific Nations excluding Fiji. Most get less than \$1 million.

When we look at the breakdown of spending, Australian personnel visits to PNG total \$10.895m, surveillance and other projects total \$1.128m and Joint training totals \$2.842m. We have put many questions on notice asking for more details under each of these programs through the Estimates Committees process which allows the Senate to analyse the Budget. The answers are due back at the end of October and I will pass them on to you when they become available.

Items that stand out in the Defence Cooperation Budget are money to maintain four Iroquois helicopters and four Patrol Boats. Over the last 5 years, the Federal Government has spent \$1.9 million on maintaining the Iroquois and 0.6m on maintaining the Patrol Boats.

As you may know the Government has consistently funded not only the ailing Iroquois Helicopters themselves, but also their maintenance. These helicopters were given to PNG by the Australian Government under the guise of transport and logistics. Yet, the PNG Government have openly flouted in using the helicopters to kill innocent civilians at sea, and as gunships to strafe villages and maintain the blockade. The Australian Government has also in the past supplied patrol boats which have been a