



Edmund Rice Centre
Awareness. Advocacy. Action

ERC JUSTICE UPDATES

October 2022 No.78

Dear Friends,

This 78th Edition of ERC Justice Updates, our regular newsletter from the Edmund Rice Centre, on matters relating to human rights, first nations and environmental justice.

As one faces this ever changing, complex, unjust and unequal world let us always remember Blessed Edmund Rice's three main tenets:

COMPASSION LIBERATION & PRESENCE

May togetherness of this earth continue to guide us, and may the divine bring peace and understanding to protect the world. Nigerian Prayer

Please note that if you come up against a paywall in any of the articles below - please contact me at: mmcinerney@edmundrice.org and I will send you the full article.

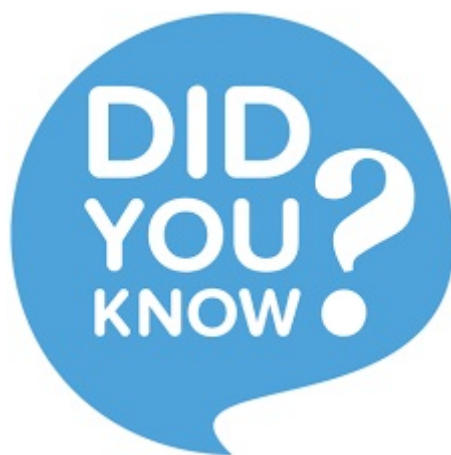
Previous editions are available at <https://www.erc.org.au/newsletters>

Peace & Blessings

Marita

**Communications Project Officer,
Marita McInerney**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are advised that there may be articles in this publication with names and images of deceased people.



Australian 2022 Anti-Poverty Week 16th to 22nd of October

The Latest World Bank's *Poverty and Shared Prosperity* report provides the first comprehensive look at global poverty in the aftermath of an extraordinary series of shocks to the global economy. Some of the Main Messages from this report are as follows:

- **The COVID-19 pandemic dealt the biggest setback to global poverty in decades.** The pandemic increased the global extreme poverty rate to an estimated 9.3% in 2020 - up from 8.4% in 2019. That indicates that more than 70 million people were pushed into extreme poverty by the end of 2020, increasing the global total to over 700 million.
- **2020 marked an historic turning point-an era of global income convergence gave way to global divergence.** The world's poorest people bore the steepest costs of the pandemic. As a result, the income losses of the world's poorest were twice as high as the world's richest, and global inequality rose for the first time in decades.
- **The poorest also suffered disproportionately in many areas that directly affect their well-being. eg. they faced large setbacks in health and education, with devastating consequences, including premature mortality and pronounced learning losses.**
- **The economic recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic has been uneven.** The richest economies have recovered from the pandemic at a much faster pace than low and middle-income economies.
- **These setbacks occurred when the speed of progress toward poverty reduction was already slowing.** In the years leading up to the pandemic, poverty reduction had slowed to 0.6% point per year.

To access Full Report and Overview:

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/publication/poverty-and-shared-prosperity>

Key message of Australian Anti-Poverty Week: *Poverty exists. Poverty hurts us all. We can all do something about it. It is one of hope, not despair.*

Key findings from an ACOSS/UNSW Report entitled '*Poverty in Australia: a Snapshot*' are as follows:

- The poverty line (based on 50% of median household after-tax income) is \$489 a week for a single adult and \$1,027 a week for a couple with two children, based on the latest data from the ABS.
- More than one in eight people in Australia (13.4%) lived below the poverty line in 2019-20, the first year of the pandemic. That amounts to 3,319,000 people.
- One in six children (16.6%) live in poverty. That amounts to 761,000 children.
- The poverty rate soared to 14.6 per cent in the March quarter of 2020 due to Covid-19 restrictions.
- But it fell to 12% – a 17 year low – in the June quarter of 2020 due to boosted income support payments.
- The boosted payments brought 646,000 people – or 2.6% of all people – out of poverty.
- The child poverty rate rose from 16.2% in the September quarter of 2019 to 19% in the March quarter of 2020. It then fell to 13.7% – a two-decade low – in June 2020.
- Average weekly incomes of people in poverty (from different-sized families) are \$304 below the poverty line. This is known as the poverty gap.
- The poverty gap increased steadily from \$168 a week in 1999 to \$323 in March 2020 and then fell to \$310 in June 2020 due to the extra Covid-19 income support.
- Boosted income support pushed weekly social security payments for single adults with no private income from \$134 below the poverty line to \$146 above it. Single parents with two children went from \$119 below to \$176 above the poverty line. Couples with no children went from being \$152 below to \$411 above the poverty line while couples with two children went from being \$187 below the poverty line to \$361 above it.

Link to full report:

<https://antipovertyweek.org.au/2022/10/new-research-confirms-1-in-6-australian-kids-live-in-poverty/>



DJ was held in youth detention for two years after his arrest, but transferred to adult prison after he was sentenced. Photograph:

Jonny Weeks/The Guardian

‘Dying is normal in this jail’: teenager held in Port Phillip prison for four months

Nino Bucci, The Guardian, 9th October 2022

Sentencing judge feared that the life of young man held in an adult prison and not offered rehabilitation would become ‘a disaster’

A Victorian teenager has been held in a maximum security adult prison for almost four months despite a supreme court judge warning authorities that if the boy were not put in youth detention and given a chance at rehabilitation it could mean his “life would become a disaster”.

The teen, known as DJ, turned 17 late last month while being held in Port Phillip prison. He said he has routinely been held in isolation and confined to his cell for 23 hours a day.

In August, an Aboriginal man being held opposite him died after a fire started in his cell. DJ, who also identifies as Aboriginal, said he saw the man being taken out by guards.

“I found out later that he died,” he told Guardian Australia in a statement sent by his lawyers.

“It made me feel like people dying is normal in this jail.”

DJ said he had been forced to wait three months before being granted a visit with his mum, which occurred on his 17th birthday. The visit lasted 30 minutes and he was handcuffed and separated from her in a box. Every phone call to his mother costs \$7, he said.

He said his age meant he was unable to participate in rehabilitation programs, prison activities, or prison work.

“Port Phillip [prison] isn’t set up to give proper support to kids,” he said.

“I want to be somewhere that I can do my school work and go to therapy with other kids my age.”

DJ murdered a man when he was 14 and was sentenced to 14 years in prison in June this year after pleading guilty. He will be eligible for parole in 2029.

Read full story:

https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2022/oct/09/dying-is-normal-in-this-jail-teenager-held-in-port-phillip-prison-for-four-months?utm_term=63421d154ba29a191236c5bdd7b84bfc&utm_campaign=GuardianTodayAUS&utm_source=esp&utm_medium=Email&CMP=GTAU_email



Prime Minister Anthony Albanese with Yothu Yindi board member Djaawa Yunupingu during the Garma Festival in northeast Arnhem Land, where he announced his plan for a referendum on the Indigenous Voice to Parliament. Aaron Bunch/AAP

The power of yindyamarra: how we can bring respect to Australian democracy

Stan Grant & Jack Jacobs, *The Conversation*, 18th October 2022

This is a piece by Stan Grant, Professor of Indigenous Belonging at Charles Sturt University, and Jack Jacobs, Research Fellow at Charles Sturt University, following the launch of the Yindyamarra Pledge for democracy: a call to reimagine Australian democracy.

Democracy is under siege.

In every corner of the world, it faces external and domestic threats that challenge its standing relative to alternative political systems.

China rises, an authoritarian power to threaten the West.

Russia invades Ukraine, its democratic neighbour, as the West rallies in support.

Autocracy is also on the rise within democracies. The United States, Brazil, United Kingdom, India and several European democracies are – or have recently been – led by populists fuelled by the discontent of the dispossessed: those left behind by markets that have for decades prioritised profits over people.

All this is inflamed by tribalism and a public debate deranged by the worst

aspects of social media.

Not long ago, political scientist Francis Fukuyama declared liberal democracy the “end of history”.

What went wrong?

The legacy of history and the myth of ‘progress’

One place to look for an explanation is in history, in the Enlightenment myth of “progress” that has shaped our world since the 18th century.

From the French Revolution of 1789 to the invasion of Iraq in 2003, many philosophical liberals have been motivated by the idea that history has a forward movement: that human societies, though infinitely complex and diverse, are to be experimented on and redesigned according to rational, liberal principles.

This “illusion of destiny” – to invoke a striking phrase from Harvard University philosopher and economist Amartya Sen – has left tragedy in its wake.

Colonialism and coercive liberalism

Perhaps the most pernicious form of “progress” myth has been colonialism.

Throughout the 16th, 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, European powers struggled to subjugate once free peoples in Australia, the Americas, Asia, Africa and the Pacific.

In her recent book, *Legacy of Violence*, Harvard historian Caroline Elkins reminds us that in the British case, liberalism was used as a coercive force:

[...] violence was inherent to liberalism. It resided in liberalism’s reformism, its claims to modernity, its promises of freedom, and its notion of the law – exactly the opposite places where one normally associates violence.

In places like Australia and India – from where these authors hail, respectively – the British promised freedom but delivered submission.

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A constitutionally enshrined First Nations Voice offers its own version of what Noel Pearson has spoken of as radical hope.

Proponents of the Voice say it is a pathway to justice – to truth and treaty.

Political philosopher Duncan Ivison says it “prefigures a possible refounding of Australia”.

But its modesty – a voice not a veto – risks losing faith with First Nations people. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese has already said it is a voice “nothing more, nothing less”.

He says the parliament will set the composition of the Voice.

That begs the question: can the parliament meet the urgency of the demands of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples?

The challenge of the Constitutional Voice is to honour the unending struggle of those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander champions who have sought to prise open the locked door of Australian democracy.

Read full article:

https://theconversation.com/the-power-of-yindyamarra-how-we-can-bring-respect-to-australian-democracy-192164?utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20October%2019%202022%20-%20202434424351&utm_content=Latest%20from%20The%20Conversation%20for%20October%2019%202022%20-%20202434424351+CID_a4de42b19809af5a7787e40a9ce98e54&utm_source=campaign_monitor&utm_term=The%20power%20of%20yindyamarra%20how%20we%20can%20bring%20respect%20to%20Australian%20democracy

Link to take Yindyamarra Pledge for democracy: https://about.csu.edu.au/community/events/upcoming/online/yindyamarra-pledge-for-democracy/_nocache



Prime minister Anthony Albanese addresses a gathering to discuss the Indigenous voice at Marrickville Town Hall. Photograph:

Jessica Hromas/The Guardian

‘If not now, when?’: PM addresses first meeting of volunteers to educate Australians about voice referendum

Caitlin Cassidy, The Guardian, 14th October 2022

Sydney’s Inner West council aims to train 1,000 people for a civic education program that could become a model for other jurisdictions

The prime minister has committed to “throwing everything” at implementing an Indigenous voice to parliament at a surprise appearance in his home suburb of Marrickville.

Speaking at a packed Uluru Statement from the Heart summit on Friday night, Anthony Albanese addressed the first meeting of volunteers who have signed up to educate Australians about the voice.

Enshrining an Indigenous voice in the constitution is the first step to reconciliation prior to treaty, Albanese said.

“The Uluru Statement from the Heart is a generous, gracious and optimistic invitation to all Australians.

“It is a hand of friendship outstretched. It is extraordinarily generous given the history of this country since 1788. It asks that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be consulted on matters that affect them.”

Albanese said he had been told by some that a referendum was a “risk” but “no one ever won a grand final by not running on the field, by being scared of losing”.

“Unless we have a vote, and we will do the next financial year ... that momentum and opportunity for advancing reconciliation would be lost,” he said.

“If not now, when? We’ve spoken about recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our constitution for a very long period of time. We haven’t been able to achieve it. But I think that Australians are ready for this debate.

“For those people who say, I want all of the detail out there, I’m very consciously not saying ‘here, this is the government proposal, take it or leave it’. This is a process we’re going through at the moment ... I want this to not be my proposal ... I want it to be Australia’s proposal.”

In a nod to reports the businessman Warren Mundine had enlisted the Greens senator Lidia Thorpe to fight against constitutional recognition – a claim repeatedly denied by the party – Albanese said he wanted the voice to be a consensus embraced “across the political spectrum”.

“I’m trying to give space for people, whether they be from the Coalition or from minor parties, to embrace this opportunity as well,” he said.

“We’ve read in the last weeks of rather strange alliances forming in opposition to this proposal. But the door is open.

“I’ve said very clearly to Peter Dutton and David Littleproud and to Adam Bandt and other party leaders, I want you to be a part of this positive change for the nation.”

The minister for Indigenous affairs, Linda Burney, said the current moment was for “having conversations”, with formal campaigning for the voice to begin in 2023.

Read full story:

<https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2022/oct/14/if-not-now-when-pm-addresses-first-meeting-of-volunteers-to-educate-australians-about-voice-referendum>

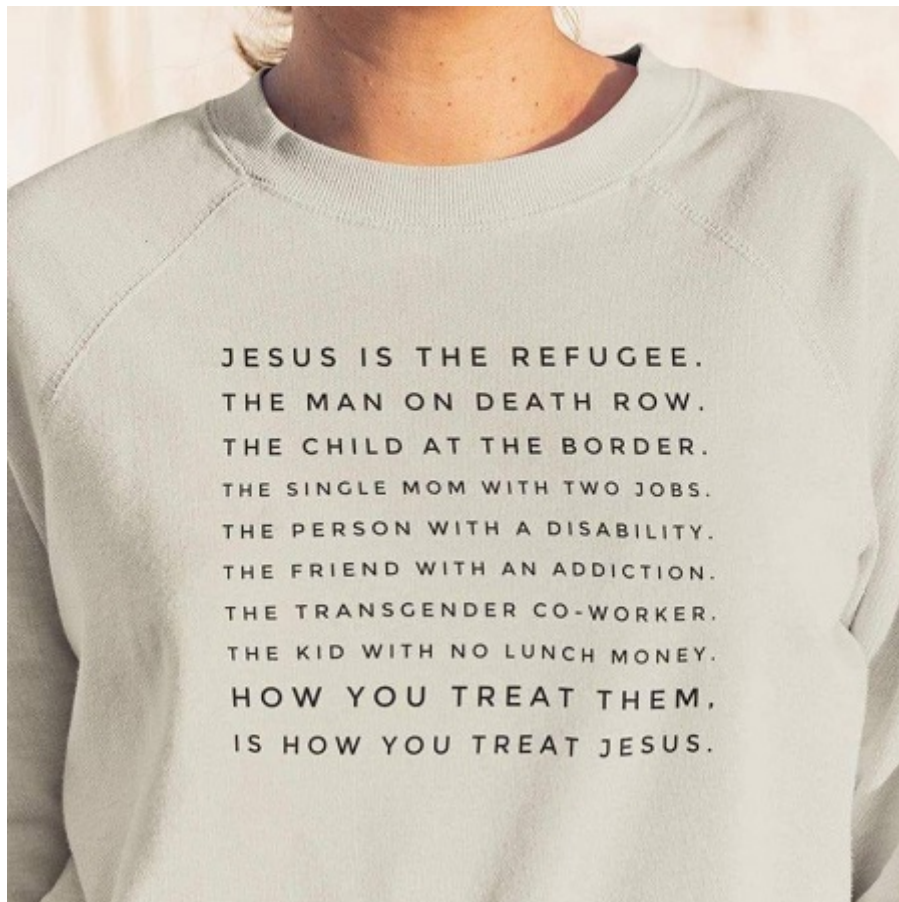


Image: iStock

Repatriation of Muslim families from Syrian camp

Frances Letters, Pearls & Irritations, 12th October 2022

What? Let those terrorists' spawn and their sly "Australian" mothers sneak out of that Syrian camp, and into our country? Never!

An old White Australia-type call-to-arms is sounding yet again. Beware 'The Other'! Peter Dutton has called the proposed repatriation a "significant risk ... that can't be mitigated". But a few calm facts might help soothe the

indignation...

For years our media has been flooded with click-bait stories of Islamist extremists and their undoubtedly seething hatred. The normal humanity of the vast Muslim majority wins only the thinnest trickle of attention. Yawn! Normality makes such boring copy...

The latest anti-Muslim trumpet-blast has let loose a tide of memories in me—and doubtless in many others who've spent time in Muslim lands. Memories, especially, of kindness and generosity to a stranger: a sacred duty in Islam.

When in the mid 1960s I set out on my travels, no wary Western view of Islam existed. Exactly the opposite. The sahibs of the British Raj and Empire had always felt far more relaxed with Islam than with the luxuriant mysteries of Hinduism or Buddhism. They thought it a far manlier, more muscular religion—and with so many shared beliefs, scriptural heroes and tales from the Bible, comfortably familiar. Who on earth would employ a Hindu when you could get a Muslim?

So the British in India thought it completely natural to load the scales in favour of Muslims against the Hindu majority. Believe it or not now, 'Divide and Rule' was the Empire policy everywhere, proclaimed and enacted without a hint of shame. And it worked a treat.

But of course it stoked resentment—most spectacularly in India. Muslims had long basked in advantage at Hindu expense. As the struggle for independence grew, fear of Hindu reprisals triggered urgent Muslim demands for their own state. When at last the British hurriedly packed up for home, they left behind a smoking landscape as India ripped itself apart, at war with newborn Islamic Pakistan.

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Today's fierce Islamist brew really only bubbled up when the oil crisis of the 1970s revealed how politically powerful oil could be when religion was whisked into it. Not surprisingly, the more volatile and fiery the religion in the cocktail, the more potent the kick. And Muslims had most of the oil.

Finally, after 9/11, the deeply unjust and unwise invasion of Iraq lit a touchpaper that set the whole bonfire ablaze.

Despite what jihadis may proclaim, intolerance is in no way basic to Islam. The Qur'an clearly spells out a command to respect the religions of others; and famously, it's as blunt as the New Testament in its prohibition against killing. 'Anyone who takes a life takes the life of all humanity. Anyone who saves a life saves the life of all humanity.'

Read full story:

<https://johnmenadue.com/repatriation-of-muslim-families-from-syrian-camp/>



My dream came true tonight. Finally met my wonderful friend Jim Moginie and the Midnight Oil family. What a great night! Thank you so much #MidnightOil for standing up for justice and humanity. Moz (Mostafa Azimitabar)@AzimiMoz

Hey, Albo, it is 'Time to Fly' beyond L-NP's immigration mistakes **Jane Salmon, *Independant Australia*, 11th October 2022**

After years of Coalition cruelty toward asylum seekers, it's time for Australia to be progressive and show overdue compassion, writes Jane Salmon.

MIDNIGHT OIL'S historic last gig was marked by the attendance of Prime Minister Anthony Albanese. Band member Rob Hirst chose a particular t-shirt to mark the event. This fabled band's form is to be political to the last, bless them.

The t-shirt, easily seen on the drum dais, is illustrated with a bird and the words 'Time to Fly'. It is a design by a refugee held by Australia on Manus Island in PNG.

When trapped on Manus for six years, songwriter, t-shirt designer and artist Farhad Bandesh did indeed dream of flying away to a safer place such as Australia, Canada or New Zealand.

Instead, he was used as a deterrent against "irregular" (but never illegal) maritime arrivals. He was made a hostage in a tropical hell.

The children of parents held in tents on sweltering Nauru became the focus of another campaign.

Medical chaos and human distress collided, often only alleviated by Panadol. Oddball contract staff came and went as did contractors and immigration ministers. There was the raid by hyped-up outsiders and local guards that caused the death of Reza Berati within the wire. Sometimes no one was in

charge as during the November 2017 siege when generators and water, as well as food, were denied.

During the forced move from the Regional Processing Centre to new, unfinished quarters run by PNG directly after the siege, men were hit with iron bars. This was under the eye of Australian Home Affairs staff and possibly at their actual behest. Thanush Selvarasa shared this on live video with the world.

Detainees like Farhad and his friend Moz managed to turn their pain into art and music. Farhad's 'Time to Fly' design became a t-shirt worn around the world. Back in Australia, producers helped with fatter harmonies, while cartoonists and dancers gave form to Farhad's compositions. Flash mobs danced at railway stations.

Farhad's 'Time to Fly' logo was frequently seen at protests in rural towns, at churches and, of course, rallies against Immigration cruelty in capital cities. Years were ticking by. It is now even on bottles of wine he has produced.

The shift of detainees to Port Moresby for more inadequate medical "treatment" under guard as defined by PNG immigration led to more challenges.

There was the political fight to retain mobile phones in detention. The injunctions won by solicitor George Newhouse to save phones were temporary and not binding on PNG-run hospitals or the Bomana immigration facility in Moresby.

The relentless greyness of the Preston Mantra Hotel in Melbourne under lockdown was the next of Farhad's ordeals. The windows barely opened an inch. All visits were stopped.

Occasionally, they were taken under guard to a doctor or dentist or to Melbourne Immigration Transit Accommodation (MITA). Protests outside the hotel continued.

Midnight Oil's Jim Moginie used the lockdown and his extensive network to produce music and videos for Moz.

Read full article:

<https://independentaustralia.net/politics/politics-display/hey-albo-it-is-time-to-fly-beyond-l-nps-immigration-mistakes,16852>

<https://independentaustralia.net/politics/politics-display/hey-albo-it-is-time-to-fly-beyond-l-nps-immigration-mistakes,16852>



Rev James Bhagwan and friends in Fiji for Faiths 4 Climate Justice 2021.

Open letter climate justice

Dear Prime Minister Albanese

We are grateful for your Government's efforts to take the climate crisis seriously.

Yet Australia is a wealthy country that profits from exports that are causing the crisis. We hear the cries of anguish from those most vulnerable in the human family who are losing their lives, livelihoods and homes through climate-fuelled disasters.

We humbly and respectfully request that Australia:

- Stops approving new coal and gas projects
- Ends public subsidies for coal and gas projects
- Fully respects First Nations peoples' rights to protect Country
- Re-starts contributions to the United Nations Green Climate Fund
- Assists extractive industry workers to prosper through jobs in sustainable industries
- Actively participates in creating and endorses a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The current level of warming is not safe. This moment in history calls for an urgent, courageous, visionary response, especially from those in power. Australia's leadership in this response, as part of its First Nations Foreign Policy, is vital for the vulnerable communities and ecosystems who depend on it.

Yours faithfully,

First Nations and Australian and Pacific faith leaders

NB: *This letter and following two links are courtesy of Australian Religious Response to Climate Change (ARRCC)*

Read full story with signatures:

https://www.arrcc.org.au/open_letter_climate_justice?utm_campaign=follow_up_f4cj&utm_medium=email&utm_source=arrcc

Read full report from ARRCC Website

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/0/?tab=wm&ogbl#all/FMfcgzGqQvxjwcGBDwSPmqcFJmpCCjfl>

Edmund Rice Centre Facebook Post 13th October 2022

Our Pacific Project Officer, Maria Tiimon, did a fantastic job this morning at the [#Faiths4Climate](#) event at St Patrick's Cathedral, Parramatta, speaking about her lived experience of climate change in Kiribati. The Cathedral was filled with love and hope for [#climatejustice](#). Well done to the organisers [Australian Religious Response to Climate Change \(ARRCC\)](#) and all involved!

Link to ERC Facebook :

<https://www.facebook.com/EdmundRiceCentre/>



Youth Alienation is a ticking demographic time bomb in the Pacific (Bradley Kanaris/Getty Images)

Australia and Pacific Islands: Polls apart?

Meg Keen, Lowy Institute *The Interpreter*, 10th October 2022

Without a comprehensive public opinion survey of Pacific people, common attitudes can be challenging to identify.

There's lots of attention given to China pushing into the Pacific and ramping up security engagement, but Beijing's actions are not the top issue for many in

the Pacific Islands. Economic hardship and health are pressing issues occupying the minds of Islanders in the aftermath of Covid, lockdowns and extreme weather events.

Many countries are facing a “lost decade” of economic development, and the biggest killer of Pacific Islands people is non-communicable diseases (NCDs) – 80 per cent of all deaths in the Western Pacific are caused by NCDs such as diabetes, cardiovascular diseases, cancer and respiratory diseases.

The Australian government claims it is listening to its Pacific Islands family, but if we don’t ask the people (in addition to politicians) about high priority concerns, we might not be getting our policy settings right.

There is no comprehensive public opinion survey of Pacific people. Those surveys that do exist suggest sometimes Australians and Pacific Islands people are poles apart, and at other times have goal posts that align.

Getting effective action might mean going beyond formal institutions and engaging communities, local leaders and educators.

If there are three topics that occupy politics in the region, they are climate, China and Covid recovery. Where does Australian and Pacific thinking line up and where does it differ?

Australians, according to the 2022 Lowy Institute Poll, feel their vital interests are affected most by Russian and Chinese foreign policy, the China-US tension, and then fourthly by climate change. In contrast, Pacific Islands’ leaders have been clear that the biggest security threat facing them is climate change, not geopolitical jostling. Climate change is an existential threat, and it magnifies economic hardship and service shortfalls.

Australia’s recent climate commitments fall short of the high ambition Pacific governments and even Australians have.

Seventy-seven per cent of Australians surveyed by the Lowy Institute Poll want more ambitious emissions reduction targets to 2030. But are we willing to act? Pacific experts have been critical about inadequate emissions reductions to meet global targets and the lack of new and additional climate finance to support Pacific climate adaptation.

Three-quarters of Australians support providing aid to Pacific Islands states to act on climate change and almost all Australians (93 per cent) support providing aid to the Pacific for disaster relief. That could help with adaptation, but how aid is given matters, and the delivery mechanisms could use transformation.

A recent study by the Humanitarian Advisory Group in Vanuatu, No Turning Back, and one by the Australian National University, Putting People First, in three Melanesian countries, found more inclusive approaches are not only wanted, they are more effective. During the pandemic, the double hit of Covid-19 and cyclones forced greater localisation in aid programs. Few on the ground want to go back to donor-dominated models – local NGOs surveyed

expressed a desire for a greater role in decision-making, not just service delivery.

Read full article

<https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/australia-pacific-islands-polls-apart#msdyntrid=XnB-X5vydB2QBKRLgArNPpqFkEsONaAxyXQf2yJleBl>



Lessons from the Bernard Collaery case

Gareth Evans, *The Saturday Paper*, October 15th–21st 2022, No. 421

It is difficult to conceive of a set of government decisions purportedly aimed at protecting Australia's national interests that have been more comprehensively destructive of them than those made by successive Coalition governments in the Timor-Leste case. Everything about the initial espionage operation, if reported at all accurately, and the conduct of the criminal prosecutions involving Bernard Collaery and Witness K that followed it, served not to enhance but to shred our reputation and status as a decent, principled and competent country.

What is required from intelligence agencies, senior officials and their ministers in sensitive national security matters is, above all, balanced judgement. And that seems to have gone spectacularly missing not only in the conduct of the operation in Dili in 2004 but in the decisions made in 2018 to initiate the prosecution of both Witness K and Collaery, and, over the course of the next four years, to run the court proceedings in almost total secrecy. The decision of Attorney-General Mark Dreyfus in July this year to terminate the Collaery case, one of the first made by the incoming Albanese government, was the right thing to do from every moral and rational perspective.

In commenting about what went wrong under the previous governments, and what we can learn from its mistakes, I speak as someone who learnt the hard way. Having had ministerial responsibility over nearly a decade, as attorney-general and later as Foreign Affairs minister, for both the Australian Security Intelligence Organisation (ASIO) and Australian Secret Intelligence Service (ASIS), I was badly burnt politically in my first year in each job for taking too much of their doomsaying at face value. The most painful example of this was the Combe–Ivanov affair in 1983. I also faced backlash for going along with attempts by ASIS in 1988 to get court injunctions against imminent press disclosures of some of the service's more embarrassing activities.

George Brandis, as attorney-general from 2013-17, wisely if not very bravely, chose the path of inaction in pursuing the prosecutions. It was Christian Porter, and his successor Michaelia Cash, who chose to set the trial proceedings in motion. They should have had more sense.

Both these agencies, and the intelligence community more generally, have become more sophisticated in recent decades as their roles have changed to focus more on counterterrorism, cybersecurity and perhaps more insidious and less comic-strip forms of foreign influence. But all continue to need serious adult supervision.

No intelligence operation should ever be considered unless the value to the national interest of the intelligence being pursued outweighs the damage likely to be done to our international relations and security interests if that operation is ever publicly revealed. No bugging operation of the kind alleged by Witness K could meet that criterion: it would involve taking maximum risk for minimum reward. The operational agencies will always be tempted to mount technical intelligence-gathering operations simply because they can. It is the role of ministers not to encourage them but to keep them under control.

The rationale for whatever operation may have been mounted in Dili in 2004 had nothing to do with national security. It would have been economic: to understand the East Timorese internal position in the negotiations between Australia and Timor-Leste for a petroleum and gas revenue sharing agreement. Any action would have been primarily for the benefit of Australian private commercial interests.

[Link to full article for subscribers:](#)

<https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/opinion/topic/2022/10/15/lessons-the-bernard-collaery-case?cid=3c71730767c169ee25f2f49aa7714163>

NB: If you are not a subscriber and would like to read the full article please contact me mmcinerney@edmundrice.org and I will send you the full article



An estimated 7.8 million people - roughly half of the population - are now affected by drought, of whom 213,000 are at high risk of famine, according to the UN [File: Feisal Omar/Reuters]

Somalia faces worst famine in half a century, UN warns

www.aljazeera.com/news, 18th October 2022

UN says a child is being admitted for medical treatment for malnutrition every minute in Somalia as drought worsens.

Somalia faces famine on a scale last seen half a century ago, the United Nations has said as it set a new target of more than \$2bn in funding needs.

“Things are bad and every sign indicates that they are going to get worse,” James Elder, United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF) spokesman, told reporters on Tuesday via video link from the drought-stricken Horn of Africa nation.

“Without greater action and investment, we are facing the death of children on a scale not seen in half a century,” Elder said.

In August, 44,000 children were admitted to health establishments with severe acute malnutrition, a condition that means a child is up to 11 times likelier to die from diarrhoea and measles than a well-fed counterpart, Elder said.

“That is a child per minute,” said Elder. “A child whose mother has walked days to get her child to help. A child whose body is fighting to survive. A child whose life hangs in the balance.”

Read full article:

<https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2022/10/18/somalia-faces-worst-famine-in-half-a-century-un-warns>

REFLECTIONS



Jamberoo Abbey Facebook Post 15th October 2022

*"Within the struggle, joy, pain,
and delight that attend our life,
there is an invisible circle of grace
that enfolds and encompasses us in every moment.
Blessings help us to perceive this circle of grace,
to find our place of belonging within it,
and to receive the strength the circle holds for us."*

Jan Richardson, Circle of Grace

Circles of grace and strength to all this weekend and thinking especially of all those experiencing the danger and heartbreak of flooding, warfare and loss.



Pace - e - Bene Nonviolence Inspirations

"Environment policy is the peace policy of the future. It is crucial that we create a culture of cooperation and mutual respect between north and south, rich and poor if we want to avoid ever growing tensions in a world where water and other vital resources can no longer be taken for granted." Klaus Töpfer

"People say, what is the sense of our small effort? They cannot see that we must lay one brick at a time, take one step at a time. A pebble cast into a pond causes ripples that spread in all directions. Each one of our thoughts, words and deeds is like that. No one has a right to sit down and feel hopeless. There is too much work to do." Dorothy Day

"It's okay to be scared, but fear is different. Fear is when we let being scared prevent us from doing what love requires of us."

Mairead Corrigan Maguire

"You cannot be afraid to speak up and speak out for what you believe. You have to have courage, raw courage." John Lewis

"In a world so torn apart by rivalry, anger, and hatred, we have the privileged vocation to be living signs of a love that can bridge all divisions and heal all

wounds.” Henri Nouwen



We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples of Australia as the traditional owners and custodians of the land. We commit ourselves to actively work alongside them for reconciliation and justice. We pay our respects to the Elders; past, present and future. As we take our next step we remember the first footsteps taken on this sacred land.

The Edmund Rice Centre wholeheartedly supports and endorses the
ULURU STATEMENT FROM THE HEART
and urges all Australians to get behind this wonderful statement.

Our mailing address is:

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