

Pacific NFIP advocates seek end to NZ police aid for Papua repression

FRESH CALLS have been made for the New Zealand government to end its three-year \$6.34 million project training Indonesian police who are involved in the military occupation and repression of the West Papua region.

The government's police training programme was slated by Pacific and local community leaders and activists at a recent conference held at AUT University to commemorate international Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific (NFIP) day.

Chilling footage was screened showing Indonesian police invading a peaceful meeting of West Papuans, opening fire and then kicking and beating West Papuans while they were being forced to crawl along the ground. The footage was handed over to local television stations.

Pax Christi Aotearoa New Zealand representative Kevin McBride said the New Zealand government had falsely billed its police training programme in Indonesia as one which instilled principles of "civil policing and community engagement".

Former Green MP Keith Locke said it was "clearly not the sort of policing that the New Zealand government should be associated with".

He doubted that the programme could ever be successful when repressive practices were so entrenched in the Indonesian police and military.

'Aid that kills'

Sometimes the education could work the other way around, Locke said. When he addressed the NZ military staff college in Auckland in the 1990s, Locke discovered that the Indonesian officer present had convinced many of his Kiwi classmates that Indonesia's occupation of East Timor was a good thing.

Victor Mambor, chairperson of the Alliance of Independent Journalists of Papua, recently told the *New Zealand Herald* that



Pax Christi's Kevin McBride criticising New Zealand police aid in the context of Indonesian repression of peaceful Papuan protesters. Next to him is the PMC's new Pacific Media Watch project editor Anna Majavu reporting on the event. Image: Del Abcede/PMC

New Zealand's police training of Indonesians was nothing more than "aid that kills".

West Papua was colonised by the Dutch in 1660 and was invaded by Japan during World War Two. When the Dutch eventually recognised Indonesian sovereignty over the Dutch East Indies, this excluded Dutch New Guinea.

Despite indigenous West Papuans drawing up a declaration of independence in 1961, Indonesia invaded the territory in 1962 and has been occupying it ever since due to the disputed "Act of Free Choice" organised by the United Nations.

Foreign journalists are banned from visiting and there have been continuous allegations of Indonesian police and military atrocities and repression.

The campaign for a free West Papua is also being supported by local organisation Oceania Interrupted, which will continue a series of performances for West Papua at the Auckland Pasifika festival next weekend, says organiser Leilani Salesa.

The NFIP day was organised by the Asia Pacific Human Rights Coalition (APHRC) in association with the Pacific Media Centre.

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Pacific Journalism Review plans birthday video

AS THIRD year Communications students majoring in Television and Screen Production at AUT, we are tasked to produce a corporate or community video for a client.

The video I am producing is for the *Pacific Journalism Review*, coincidentally and delightfully celebrating its 20th anniversary this year.

There are 20 students in the major; so 20 videos are currently being produced, each on a different topic. I chose to take on *PJR* for a few reasons.

Firstly, I've known David and Del for a number of years now.

Secondly, since my mother has started her PhD, I've been getting more familiar with academic journals.

And my father has done some guest lectures on Indonesian media in the PMC's Asia-Pacific Journalism course.

Lastly and most importantly, I wanted to produce something with significance—a video that can have importance and that

can mean a whole lot more than a university assignment.

This video will tell the story of *The Pacific Journalism Review's* life over 20 years and it will be a celebration of this momentous milestone.

The journal began life at the University of Papua New Guinea in November 1994 and published there for four years.

Then it was published at the University of the South Pacific before AUT adopted it in 2003.

The video is planned to be screened at the 20th anniversary celebration and conference planned for AUT in November.—*Sasya Wreksono*



Sasya Wreksono ... video project.

Pacific Journalism Review 20th year of publication

Conference and celebration on
27/28 November 2014

See website: www.pjreview.info

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NFIP advocates speak out

The event also commemorated the 60th anniversary of the Bravo bomb test on Bikini atoll by the United States. The 15 megaton bomb saw a mushroom cloud of radiation spreading over more than 18,000 sq km of the Pacific – the lasting effects of which are the cause of a current standoff between former residents of the Rongelap atoll, just 120 kilometres from Bikini, and the United States government.

Greenpeace executive director Bunny McDiarmid said the US government had recently insisted that any Rongelap resident who refused to return to their still radioactive island would lose any chance of getting compensation.

The Rongelap residents were only evacuated after the Bravo bombing, with the US government returning the residents three years later. The residents then asked Greenpeace to evacuate them in May 1985 after experiencing high rates of thyroid cancer and leukaemia. Most have lived away from the atoll ever since.

Pacific Media Centre director Professor David Robie, who was on board the *Rainbow Warrior* for the evacuation and wrote the book *Eyes of Fire* about the mission, said that over the years the Rongelap residents had been paid “relatively minor” amounts of compensation, which they now faced losing completely.

“A major legacy from the US period is

economic and health imbalances and huge importation of processed food,” he said.

He showed the 1986 video *Nuclear Exodus* produced from *Rainbow Warrior* exhibition photos and discussed the background to making it.

McDiarmid added that Rongelap residents had been put in a “hellish situation where they feel forced to move if they want to maintain this support from the US government”.

Although some infrastructure, such as a diving resort and landing strip, has been built, tourists are allegedly being told not to visit the island for longer than two weeks at a time.

Rongelap citizens who have returned to the island had been forced to spend much of their compensation money on “large amounts of potassium for the soil which makes it a little less radioactive”, McDiarmid said.

Impassioned plea

Conference participants watched an impassioned plea from the late Marshall Islands advocate Darlene Keju Johnson made on behalf of Pacific Islanders at the 1983 World Council of Churches conference in Vancouver, Canada.

Luc Tutugoro and Antoine Xulue, who represented the indigenous Kanak people

of New Caledonia at the conference, said the island’s independence from French colonial rule was looking doubtful.

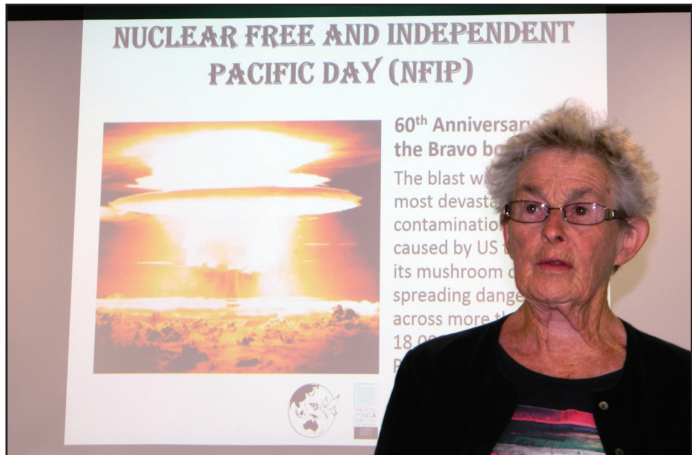
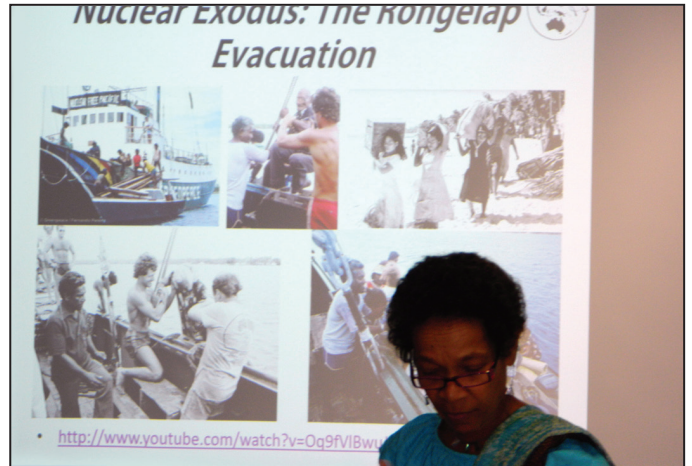
Tutugoro said that while there was “great enthusiasm for the French to leave”, about 6700 French citizens who had recently settled in New Caledonia had been put on the electoral roll.

The Kanak people had been forced to mount a court challenge to this as the French votes could “drown out the vote of Kanaks” in the forthcoming referendum on the political future, said Xulue.

Joan Macdonald of the Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom (WILPF) delivered a message to the conference on the New Zealand initiative as part of ICAN—the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons.

Conference delegates called on the New Zealand government to seek an international conference of governments to discuss a total ban on nuclear weapons, and for all members of Parliament to sign the global parliamentary appeal for a nuclear weapons ban.

A resolution was also passed calling for the demilitarisation of Guam, an American occupied island in the North Pacific which has experienced a growing concentration of militarisation in recent years.—*Anna Majavu*



Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific Day - 1 March 2014



Campaigning for a Free West Papua around Scandinavia, 2013

John Pulu

Director/Reporter, Tagata Pasifika TVNZ
Bachelor of Communication Studies in Television

While still at high school John Pulu was lucky enough to get work experience through Gateway on TVNZ's *Tagata Pasifika* programme.

Work experience opens doors

"I then kept in touch with *Tagata Pasifika* during my study – just persisting nicely – and one holiday break they arranged work for me on TV2's *Studio 2*."

John also took up other work experience offers, including freelance reporting for Tongan TV programme, *TNews*, and a bit of radio announcing with *Niu FM*.

His industriousness paid off. After John graduated at the end of 2009 *Tagata Pasifika* employed him on contract and in 2011 he became a permanent staff member.

Gaining practical skills

"The hands-on experience I gained through the Television major, which included directing, camera operation and presenting, prepared me well for this job. I also really enjoyed creating visual documentaries."

"Another great resource was AUT's Pacific Media Centre," says John.

The Pacific Media Centre offers courses and information for Pasifika students studying towards a career in the media industry.

Future in Pacific media

John feels strongly about telling Pasifika stories. "In the future I would like to pursue documentary making because there are so many tales from the Pacific yet untold."

"Another great resource was AUT's Pacific Media Centre."



Alyson Young Photography

TOKTOK NEWSLETTER EDITOR: DEL ABCEDE