restorative justice in bougainville

Br Patrick Howley

Training Manager, PEACE Foundation Melanesia, has a background in teaching and educational administration in Papua New Guinea. He is now a conflict resolution trainer and writer. Particularly well placed to speak of the nuts and bolts processes that lead to restorative justice, he shares his expertise and vision.

THE work of Peace Foundation is exceptional: The overall emphasis of Peace Foundation work is on community self-management. The resident community facilitates its leaders in various processes instead of depending on outside mediators and negotiators.¹

Peace Foundation Melanesia is a Non-Government Organisation (NGO) which has been active in Bougainville since 1994. It was set up to empower village people and organisations with self-understanding, knowledge and skills to deal with their own community justice issues. It has offered a variety of training courses in People Skills, Conflict Resolution Mediation, Negotiation, Counselling and Community Development Training.

In the past, before colonial times, the villages of Bougainville had been relatively self-governing and autonomous. Over the years, changes have taken place due to the influence of colonial governments, the greater mobility of people and the controls limiting the power of village 'bigmen'. Community justice required a new approach to leadership, using 'power with' rather than 'power over' people. Instruction

was needed on how 'bigmen' or chiefs could exercise power-sharing and justice-mediation in consultation with the leaders of the various groups in the village community.

Theodore Miriung's vision in Bougainville

Theodore Miriung was a lawyer and had risen to the position of an acting High Court judge. He went into the bush with the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) when the Bougainville crisis began in 1988. He came out again in 1994 and was elected Premier in 1995. He also held opinions on power-sharing and justice and the need to train the chiefs in Bougainville. The following is a paraphrase of his response during a discussion I had with him in August 1995:

The leadership in the villages was first damaged by the money and mobility which came during the life of the mine. Then it was further destroyed during the crisis. However, the village leaders are the only real leaders that we have who can gain a following. People will not listen to them if they go back to the old authoritarian ways of dealing with the problems or the old ways of protecting their privileged position for their own benefit. What we need is leaders with ability to listen, facilitate, negotiate and mediate. The people will accept these leaders and follow them. I want you to continue training with special stress on the village leaders.

We are planning to develop our government on the Council of Chiefs.² Chiefs are very independent individuals and often one or two out of any group will stand out from a decision through jealous rivalry or to protect their own power. I would like your training to concentrate on the chiefs. The training that you are offering could be a tool to help them to reach consensus.³

Peace Foundation begins training in Buka

In 1994 there was a kind of peace in Buka and Selau but the fighting was still going on in the districts further south. We conducted a three-week course in People Skills and Conflict Resolution. The response was much more enthusiastic than we had expected and there was a demand for further courses. No doubt part of the enthusiasm was for the skills training, but there was also a terrible hunger for ongoing adult education which had been neglected during the civil war. There was ample time for discussion during the course and we developed a number of ideas to meet the requests of the people who were asking for more training. We were keen to hear their opinions because this was the only way we could provide training to meet their needs.

Target group for training

The first request from the participants was in relation to the groups of people to be targeted for training. People gave us the following list: Chiefs, leaders of women's groups and youth groups, church workers, magistrates and any persons with positions of service in the village. We believe that it is important that the people in each course come from a variety of backgrounds, villages and religious groups. Women should make up half the group.

Process of training adult education

The Foundation training was built around adult education. The trainer introduces each topic, after which the larger group breaks into smaller groups of six and discusses the topic. They write their findings on butcher's paper and present their ideas to the whole group that then discusses them further and possibly draws some conclusions. The trainers make some clarifications before discussions begin: 'We do not have any answers ourselves. We do not have any right answers. What you come up with are the right answers for you, and you present them to the group for further discussion.' The trainer is essentially a facilitator, not a lecturer. The wisdom of each group and the responses it

produces is a constant source of surprise and satisfaction to the trainers. Participants draw on their own experiences and express a range of ideas that would never occur to any one trainer.

Selecting trainers for Buka

Strong interest in the course made it necessary to find trainers. We selected them from among the participants who showed the best understanding of what the course was about. Generally they were volunteer church workers with some secondary education and between the ages of twenty-five and forty. Training was conducted on an apprenticeship method. They taught as they learned. Each evening the co-trainers were given a topic that they were to teach on the following day and were prepared for it by senior trainers. At the end of three courses (nine weeks), they were expected to be competent facilitators through their own training and the observation of competent trainers in action. Finally, there was a training of trainers course after which they were given a certificate and became head trainers. Not all of them passed the first test. Those who did not had the option of doing further work as co-trainers until the head trainers were satisfied with their work.

Effects of courses on the participants

The courses in People Skills and Conflict Resolution challenge people to look at their own culture, customs and attitudes. People learn to speak what is in their minds and become assertive without having to resort to being subservient or aggressive. This can be a serious threat in a male-dominated society and a system of village government based on the vested interests of the 'bigmen'. The Community Justice Package envisages considerable changes in attitudes, especially in regard to the powerless (women, youth and children), power sharing and involvement of the community in decision-making. One politician criticised the course for this very reason, claiming that women were no longer submissive and obedient, as had been the custom. Even worse, they were involving themselves in public affairs and criticising the Government. On another

occasion, we were criticised for encouraging divorce after some of the women had left their husbands. We were expected to condone the suffering caused by domestic violence.

Beginning of mediation in Buka

There was a major breakthrough in 1996 in Buka when the Council of Chiefs (CoC) and the village magistrates of Lontis village (Buka) requested Alina Longa, Leonard Tsitoa and Hubert Helung to act as mediators in solving a village conflict that had been going on for some time and directly involved the work of the CoC. The mediation was a success and all parties were well satisfied with the result. The mediation was quite extraordinary for two reasons. Firstly, this was the first time that mediation had been applied at the official request of the CoC. Secondly, the CoC had actually approached a woman to be involved in mediating between chiefs.

Other signs of change in Buka

Mediation was introduced into all village *wanbel*⁴ (one mind) courts. The Village Court coordinator asked for mediators to handle all 'wanbel' courts and wished to have trainers recognised at an official ceremony of swearing in. They agreed that all cases in the village must first go to the 'wanbel' court.

Support for work of Peace Foundation

Training had gained in popularity. The Provincial Police Commander, a strong supporter of the Foundation team, wanted training for his 140 reserve police. He needed to provide them with skills to do their work more effectively. A number of schools arranged with nearby trainers to take their senior students for People Skills instruction for one period a week. School boards were also asking for training in how to run their meetings. They thus began to replace the chair person with a neutral facilitator. In Gogohe, the mediation team came to an agreement with the police and the village magistrate that all cases, except the most serious, must be dealt with in the village before the local court.

And in Hanpan, the chief appointed Anne Sapur as their official mediator for the village.

Value of a neutral mediator

It is believed that the presence of a neutral mediator reduces the cultural stress that comes from a direct confrontation and so greatly increases the chances of a successful solution to the conflict. The mediators usually work in groups of two or four and involve the chief, magistrates and the *wanbel* court officials in these exercises both to maintain the authority and goodwill of these officials and train them. In one or two cases where this has not been done, there have been complaints from the chief that their power was being undermined.

Case studies from Buka

A woman brought a case of adultery to the mediator at Lontis. Mediation was attempted but failed because the wife was not convinced that the husband was telling the truth in his version of events. The wife therefore took the matter to the District Court and the husband was forced to pay a fine of K200. Fights are still continuing within the family because no-one has been really happy with the situation and the court decision. After further domestic violence they returned to the mediation process and the matter is now settled.

The issue of home-brew has long been a contentious one in Buka. In the past the chiefs, church groups, women's groups and the Government have tried to stop the activity without success. This has included cultural pressure as well as threats of new laws containing heavy fines. To date there have been a number of arrests but no charges have been laid. The chief at Lontis village requested the Foundation mediators to deal with the problem. In the discussion that followed people said that, in view of past failures, a complete ban was unworkable. They held that each village should be responsible for managing the home-brewing problem and other anti-social activities. In Lontis village draft ground rules have been laid down to control home-brew and associated activities. The draft ground rules are:

- No drinking is allowed during the day;
- Drinking hours shall be from 6pm–12pm;
- You can only drink in your own house or at a friend's house (there is to be no drinking in public places);
- When you are under the influence, you are not allowed to go to another village;
- When fermenting home-brew you can only use fruit from your own garden.

These ground rules, along with sanctions, were then taken to the village chief and the youth for approval.

A major fight broke out in a village hamlet when a young person accidentally hit a village person with a stone from a slingshot. The family of the injured man retaliated with violence and the ensuing fight quickly involved the whole hamlet. The case was brought before the Village Court and fines were handed down against the family members and the headman who had bashed up the young boys.

Both families felt that the fines were excessive and that they had been unfairly charged. They were therefore not willing to pay the fines. The family then approached the Foundation mediators and asked them to explain how they carried out mediations. Mediation was finally arranged and a solution reached in which both parties came together. Each family cooked food and there were some contributions of cash but no specific amount stated. Following the mediation the Village Court magistrate was asked to withdraw the case, which he did. It was also agreed that, in future, mediation would be used for similar problems.

Domestic Violence is a common problem and takes different forms. In this instance, a husband became angry over some incident and killed and cut up one of his dogs in front of his family. The whole family was terrified because they felt they could be the next victim and they approached the mediator in the village and the Uniting Church pastor. Both of them went to meet with the family.

The mediation team allowed both the husband and wife to talk about their feelings and the problem they were facing. The wife was able to express her concern that the situation was

now so tense that she felt her only option was to leave home. The husband did not want this to happen and agreed that, when he did become angry, he would have to learn to talk about the problem with his wife or another party such as the mediator. It was agreed following the mediation that they would use the mediator whenever problems arose in the future. The wife has since advised the mediation team member that she was talking regularly with her husband and the situation seemed very calm.

Peace Foundation makes its mark on mainland Bougainville

Training in Steamas and how the cause was spread by the BRA
 Steamas is a village north of Wakunai on the east coast. When the fighting broke out again after the phoney peace of '94 there were some groups of people that decided that war was not the solution. In Wakunai and Steamas, the Resistance ignored the activities of the army and effectively confined them to base. They joined forces with the BRA and settled down to make peace themselves. These villages were fortunate in having some very intelligent leaders who were committed to peace as well as to independence. The two paramount chiefs of the area — Peter Siva of Wakunai and Mark Eric of Steamas — as well as the head teacher of the local school were among the leaders. They asked that we conduct courses back-to-back until the whole area was saturated because they wanted to set up courts using mediation processes. In the meantime, Elias Batapar, the jungle BRA commander, was looking for training for his people back in the mountains.⁵

We conducted People Skills and Conflict Resolution courses and the villagers made very strong efforts to bring the BRA members back into their community in time for the training so that they could take part. This gave them a head start on the other communities.

Inus is a region of Bougainville that straddles the border between Wakunai and Tinputz districts. Deserved or not, Inus has gained notoriety in this crisis as a place where the most active elements of all sides in the conflict could be found. The chief told William Kalawin, our head trainer from Buka, that

they had made a decision to end the fighting. They had had enough of 'blacks' killing 'blacks' and wanted training, which would help them to heal their communities and deal with their own internal problems. There was still a good deal of suspicion because the crisis in this area had been unusually violent. For this reason Daniel, the commander of the Resistance and the BRA commanders, Cosmas Ito and his deputy Obert Riso, were invited to take part. All three had very fearsome reputations and people were not sure that they would turn up. When they arrived, they were fully armed but propped their guns up against the wall during the course.

One day the training was interrupted by the local BRA Intelligence from Kefesia. They had received information the Government was conducting training. There is a very strong feeling against the Government in this region. They sent a truckload of armed men to arrest William Kalawin and take him back to their village. Fortunately, this was one of the courses attended by a commander of the BRA who was able to convince them of our bona fides. However, to satisfy themselves, they left two of their people behind to attend the course. These two were so impressed with what they learned that they requested the next course be run at their own village. It was a request William could not refuse.

After the first lot of training, Steamas village requested training in Conflict Resolution and Community Planning workshops. It was impossible not to notice that the community of Steamas has made real advances in the peace process and this is not just in shaking hands.

The story of Obert — from 'stone head' to community leader

Obert is a BRA commander in his mid-twenties who lives in Steamas. He has attended People Skills, Conflict Resolution and Community Planning courses. In reflecting upon his character, Obert described himself as having had a head like stone, which in Papua New Guinea means he was stubborn and recalcitrant. This is how Obert told his story to me:

Before, I wasn't a man who would discuss things. I was like a stone! I would sit down and not talk. But if

someone said something that woke me up, I would erupt. Never mind talking about it — just fight! An important event in my life was when they [Peace Foundation] ran a People Skills course here. From the course I understood that I should truly understand myself and not judge others. Before, I didn't attend meetings. When committees or the community held a meeting, I would say 'It's not for me. You do it.' Before, if someone troubled or upset me, I would always fight them. I wouldn't discuss it. The course taught me to let go of my short temper. When the course finished, I was the same as how you see me now. Now I'm the [elected] chairman of the Area Council of Chief.

On using a Facilitator – 'There is no other way now!'

A few days after we arrived in Steamas, a public meeting was held with the Wakunai District Manager. Actually, the day was set aside to hold three public meetings to discuss and settle three major issues in the community. For any community anywhere, this is a daunting task. Despite the presence of the district manager, the Steamas group facilitated the meeting. Community leaders appointed a facilitator to help ensure the meeting ran smoothly and everyone had a chance to speak. A recorder was also appointed to monitor everyone's ideas and ensure that the decisions were clear. The meetings lasted most of the day and, according to community leaders, were successful in resolving the issues.

This method of conducting meetings, using a facilitator and recorder, is a very practical component of the Peace Foundation course. Mark Eric, a Resistance commander, member of the Council of Elders and of Clan Chiefs explained to us that applying these skills in conducting meetings represented a major change in how meetings are conducted in Steamas. He said that those community members who previously were not inclined to speak during meetings, subsequently tended to speak out. 'Now

in every meeting [at Steamas] we follow the facilitator method. There is no other way now.'

Mediation and negotiation skills by magistrates from Steamas strengthen custom justice

If a justice system is itself to be subject to judgement, ultimately it must be in terms of how effectively it manages to promote and maintain peace in the community. Mark Eric and Jacob Luviana are the two magistrates in Steamas. They were pleased to gain the mediation and negotiation skills contained in the Peace Foundation Conflict Resolution course. They use these skills to assist the parties in conflict to resolve disputes amicably. In this type of *win-win* court, the magistrate does not pass a sentence or judgement. Determining what retribution (if any) is fair is the work for the two parties themselves and the magistrate merely facilitates this process. For Mark and Jacob, an important aspect of this type of court is that it strengthens customary justice. Unlike British law, which makes no provision for forgiveness, nor does it encourage anyone to admit their guilt, the *win-win* court emphasises personal reconciliation and encourages all parties to speak honestly. The *win-win* court asks the parties to say 'sorry' and demonstrate that their dispute is finished. According to custom this, exactly, is justice.

The *win-win* court in Steamas has settled many cases including adultery, rape, assault, land disputes, break and enter, theft, shootings, broken marriages and disputes between clans. Now in Steamas citizens are not going to jail. Whilst the village and district court system remains an option, Mark and Jacob say they will only use it if the parties break their agreement. To date there has not been a single case where the magistrates and two parties have not been able to reach a mutually agreeable decision. Now the Steamas village magistrates are beginning the long process of resolving the serious cases of murder and destruction of property that involve people outside Steamas. This cannot happen until there is a degree of trust in the justice system. Before people were scared to come forward, now in a *win-win* court there is no longer any reason to fear justice.

Story from Manetai: an angry soldier becomes a responsible paramount chief

In 1997 Peace Foundation began training in Manetai, another place where fighting between the BRA and the Resistance had left deep scars. Agatha Puritam, the wife of chief Patrick, takes up the story of how training has affected their lives:

Originally my husband and I attended a People Skills course in 1997. After that I was selected to work as a co-trainer with the People Skills and Conflict Resolution courses and it was only this year that I was certified as a head trainer. The course helped me to change my behaviour in some ways especially in the way I treated my children. I used to be impatient and react angrily when they wanted something. I used to get cross and hit them and yell at them. I don't do that any more.

I have not done the Restorative Justice course yet. We want to attend all the courses. Personally I feel that I would like trauma counselling also. I need someone to counsel me. You see my husband was a soldier in the Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF). He left the army in 1988 and then the crisis started. He has a violent nature towards people. He has been violent towards me [especially when drinking] ... He only drinks on the odd occasion now. I recall how he used to get drunk and fight me ... I constantly remember it. I am traumatised ... He used to hit me, and hit me, and hit me.

Now he has changed ... Since he attended the People Skills course, he hasn't hit me. Now he's been recognised by the community and just last month they made him a paramount chief. He is also the chief's representative on the new Rigu [Mabiri] High School. He is also a church worker at Manetai. He holds a lot of positions now. I'm really happy that he has changed his ways. It's just that I recall his old ways when I see him drinking ... I hate alcohol.

Maybe I can't tell you about our marriage. We used to fight all the time. We were friends whilst I was at high school at Asitavi. He used to train with the army and later he joined the army. It was already 1988 when he went to Koromira. He came and got me and I stayed at his mother's village. During this time, he used to drink a lot ... He would constantly come when he was drunk and fight me ... The Sisters used to come up and see me in the village ... I would ask them to help find a way to change my husband's ways. They used to sit him down and talk with him. He began to change very slowly. But he still was getting drunk and fighting me.

When we came down and stayed in the Care Centre, sometimes he would be violent towards me. I told the catechists to find some work for him within the church. They made him a church worker and gradually he kept changing. When the People Skills course came, he attended. He changed completely. Now he doesn't like seeing other married couples fighting. He cries. He recalls how he used to treat me and he says that his behaviour was really terrible. Even now, he still says sorry to me for what he used to be like. Since this time, he hasn't hit me, but I still remember. Our relationship is better now. But I still get cross when I see him drinking ... I don't want to look at alcohol now.

It's not long since I returned from the west coast by boat where we conducted Peace Foundation courses. There is a small group up in the mountains near Karato that don't follow the Christian religion. Their religion follows the beliefs of their ancestors. When we went up there, we met them on the road and they expressed interest in attending a People Skills course. A lot of people up there haven't attended this kind of course. I spoke to the women after the course we ran up there. They don't speak very much Pidgin

language, but we share a common language. So we could communicate. I explained the content of the course to the women and they were really interested. We must run these courses in these remote villages in the local language

Buin — Win-win mediation to prepare warring groups to reconcile

Buin is the most southerly district in Bougainville. It was not directly affected by the mine operation but the devastating effect on the local culture was considerable. When the BRA succeeded in driving the army and police out from Bougainville, the Buin chiefs decided reluctantly that they would have to protect themselves from the BRA groups on their borders. The chiefs called on their men to form a 'home guard'. Thus, in the beginning, the BRA in Buin was regarded as an extension of the authority of the hereditary chiefs of the area. Subsequently, more than fifteen BRA commands were formed. They claim that in the beginning they were not involved in the same violence as occurred in other places, but soon jealousy, suspicion and former conflicts caused divisions and inter-group fighting began. The army returned to Siwai at the invitation of the chiefs because of the excesses in arson, killing and torture of the rambos from over the mountains and within Siwai itself. The army recruited a Resistance in Siwai and began fighting against the Buin BRA. In Buin, they recruited their own Resistance and, again, there was the situation, which Bougainvillians found so distressing of 'blacks' fighting 'blacks'.

Peace in Buin 1995

After the Peace meeting in Arawa, (October 1994) Major Walter Enuma⁶ the commanding officer of the Army and Resistance in Buin directed his efforts towards reconciling leaders, making peace and building healthy relationships between the various groups in the area. He toured the district unarmed and invited all the BRA commanders to come to the army barracks for talks. Walter coordinated the various power groups in Buin: the chiefs, the Interim Authority, the churches, the women and the BRA. He encouraged them in organising peace ceremonies in the seven

Council of Chiefs areas and preparing for a major peace ceremony for the whole of Buin on 15 March.

Good Friday peace march

On Good Friday, several thousand people joined in a ten-kilometre 'Way of the Cross' procession carrying a large cross. Each of the fourteen stations on the way marked a spot where someone had been killed. Soldiers, civilians, BRA and Resistance were all remembered. The situation in Buin was developing quite differently from other centres. In Buin, the army, BRA, resistance, government and chiefs were all working well together to achieve peace. All problems were thrashed out at joint meetings and nothing was allowed to get in the way of the peace process. The atmosphere in Buin town was excellent. In this mood the people together with the army ran a weeklong sports' carnival. It was a pleasing success.⁷

Peace Foundation training in Buin, March to August 1995

On the advice of Walter Enuma, the Buin Interim Authority and the Council of Chiefs invited the Peace Foundation to conduct training in People Skills and Conflict Resolution. We appointed a local committee and they conducted Awareness meetings to inform people about the course. Our first team of qualified trainers — Henry Posin, Anne Sapur, Bernard Musein and Eileen Kahuh — arrived in Buin in April 1995 and at once began training. The trainers were all from Buka and not aware of the tensions that existed in Buin, so they were very concerned when, on the first day, they found thirteen armed men among the thirty participants. There were three soldiers including Capt. Steven Tolikum and his second-in-command, three BRA commanders and six of their followers, the commander of the Resistance and a number of chiefs. The tension was temporary and, by the third day, they all left their guns and uniforms at home and got on with the job.⁸

Courses conducted in Buin

In all, the trainers conducted seven courses — five in People Skills and two in Conflict Resolution. The Buin Peace Foundation Committee had done excellent Awareness work

before the team arrived. Each course had been fully subscribed and, after the first course, there was a waiting list of more than a hundred people. The training was delayed when the kits containing teaching materials and books were held up in Lae. So the team went out into the villages and conducted Awareness for a couple of weeks. They noted that Buin seemed to be settling down and operating very well under the combined authority of the Interim Government, Council of Chiefs and the BRA.⁹

Joint law and order process in Buin

While I was in Buin, I attended a Complaints Conference attended by representatives from the three groups: the Chiefs, BRA and Interim Government. The complaint was that one of the BRA commanders had planned to go back into the bush. The CoC called on the police to arrest him and then sent him to Buka to be tried by the court. The other BRA commanders were angry and pointed out that it was not a proper procedure. They claimed that the police should have arrested him and handed him over to the Peace and Good Order Committee. It was not right to send him to a 'foreign' court which did not know the background and the nature of what he had done wrong. The chiefs agreed to go to Buka and have him returned to Buin. I was impressed with their natural Conflict Resolution skills in handling a disagreement.

An observer from the United Nations who visited Buin about this time had difficulty in understanding their united approach to law and order. He found it difficult to believe that people who had been shooting and killing each other just a matter of a month before were now jointly handling law and order without the help of courts. He wanted to know who, in the final analysis, was in charge. He spoke to the chiefs, the Interim Authority and the BRA in turn and each told him the same story. 'We are working together'. He could not accept what they said and departed with the belief that the BRA were 'in charge' of Buin.

Mediation work in Buin

Within three months of the start of training, the people had formed Mediation teams in the main centres and were handling conflicts successfully. There were the normal run of the mill cases of stealing and fighting and drunkenness and there were a

number of arguments about taking bush materials¹⁰ from private land for building houses in the Care Centres. When the peace arrangements were made at Arawa, the Prime Minister had offered amnesty for crisis-related killings. The legality of this offer was very doubtful. Michael Lakenau and Peter Naguo (former BRA commander, trainer and mediator) were called on to settle a case of murder that had been committed during the crisis. They ignored the amnesty matter and settled it through mediation. The two groups of family were brought together and made an agreement. They settled the matter with traditional gifts of shell money, a pig and a small amount of cash. The shake-hands was conducted at a feast in front of the entire village. Michael and Peter reported the matter to the Premier, Theo Miriung, who gave his blessing to the group to continue mediating these and similar cases. The Foundation team continued work in Buin for five months. Eventually they were withdrawn for two reasons. First, the Foundation ran out of money and, secondly, a new army major arrived on the scene. It was not for another two years that we heard of the results of our work.

Change of Army policy in Buin

Walter Enuma and his 'hearts and minds' approach to peace in Bougainville was the method preferred by Jerry Singirok, but there were many soldiers who disliked both Singirok and his methods. Not only did they refuse to follow his approach but they also appear to have done their best to discredit him by fomenting trouble in the field.

Talk from the soldier who replaced Enuma

One afternoon I went to visit the Chairman of the Peace Foundation Board, Sir Barry Holloway, at his office in the Moonlight Disco. While I was there I met a soldier who had been there drinking for some time and so was in the mood to speak his thoughts. He mentioned Buin. I told him that I had an interest in the place but had not been there for more than a year. I asked him if he would fill me in on what was happening there. By this time Jerry Singirok¹¹ was brigadier and in charge of the army and I knew that he was promoting people like Enuma and trying to trim away from the army, the unfit, the incompetent and the

undisciplined. He had come through the ranks very quickly and, although the Prime Minister did not like him, and many of his colleagues were jealous of him, he was the best man for the job. I was not surprised when the soldier began to sound off about the soft policy of Singirok and Enuma and his preference for the aggressive, retaliatory approach of his former commander.

The soldier I met at the Moonlight told me that he could not accept that the Buin BRA had equal say in running the government and that his first move would be to return government to the Interim Authority and send out armed groups to hunt down and kill the BRA leaders. He sent armed patrols against BRA villages, treated Buin as an occupied country and placed the Care Centres under martial law. He regarded the Buin people as 'BRA sympathizers in the occupied area'.

War breaks out again in Buin

Because of these tactics, the war broke out anew with more violence than before. Suspects were tortured and killed, the people in the Care Centre were harassed, and the soldiers and Resistance used harsh treatment to crush the BRA. One of the most horrifying events of this time was when the mortar team were 'practising' and fired a random shot that demolished a church where people were holding a prayer meeting. Nine people were killed. The BRA and the Resistance attacked each other in their villages and laid ambush on the roads. Neither side could gain the advantage and the war dragged on.

The Icebreakers

People who had attended courses with Peace Foundation in 1995 came together to see what they could do to reduce the terror. They arranged teams to go from village to village conducting Awareness courses, drawing on the training and skills that they had learned. The 'Icebreakers', as they called themselves, continued to run short courses and discussion groups in the villages throughout the height of the conflict without any support from our Buka or Port Moresby offices. Tragically, there was a high price to be paid for the outstanding work of these dedicated trainers. The work of the

'Icebreakers' aroused suspicion from both sides in the conflict and, in the shocking madness that typifies the war in Bougainville, three of our trainers were murdered in separate incidents and in the cause of helping to bring peace to their homeland. News of these deaths has only recently surfaced as the dark shroud imposed by the PNG Government's blockade is being lifted in light of the Burnham Declarations.¹²

Ice breakers killed

The PNGDF/Resistance murdered Tony Kasia of Tumbu village and Tony Kaima of Maraku village in October 1995 and May 1996 respectively. In August 1996 the BRA killed Angelina Nuguitu who was staying at the Buin Care Centre. Another Icebreaker, Francis Kauna, was imprisoned by the BRA on suspicion of working with the PNG government. Peter Naguo, a BRA commander and himself an Icebreaker, helped to arrange for his release. While under arrest Francis had sufficient time to explain the work of the icebreakers to his captors and how mediation could be used to settle conflicts.

Mediation between BRA and Resistance

As the fighting died down in 1997, the chiefs called on the BRA and the Resistance to become reconciled. The two guerrilla groups — Thomas Tari's BRA 'H Company' and the Resistance 'Murray Company' — had left nineteen dead and three villages had been burned to the ground. Both sides trusted Francis and Peter and they were asked to handle the mediation. They shuttled between the two groups for more than a week discussing arrangements for meetings and the gifts that would be presented to the victim group to 'wash away the tears' as a prelude to further reconciliation later. When all was settled and the agreements made, the two sides met and the chiefs presided over the traditional reconciliation.¹³

Tari requests training in Buin

In December 1997, in the wake of the Burnham Declarations, Thomas Tari met us in Buka to officially request that full Peace Foundation courses be run in his area. Thomas has guaranteed

the safety of our Buka trainers and has organised accommodation and transport. Thomas's invitation not only marks the culmination of four years of work in Buin, but also represents the highest tribute for the BRA work of the Buin Icebreakers.¹⁴

Feuding and mediation after the death of Paul Bobby

In October 1998 Paul Bobby the BRA Commander for Buin Township was shot dead in his village of Kararu in Buin District. The killing was done by one of Thomas Tari's men because it was believed that Paul Bobby was involved in criminal activities that were threatening the whole peace process. As a result of the killing, the peace arrangement was halted and several ambushes and shoot-outs threatened to return Buin to the conditions of the crisis. In a wave of reprisals and counter-reprisals during the ensuing eight months, there were armed clashes between the relatives, soldiers and supporters of Paul Bobby men and the followers of Thomas Tari. During this period, the BRA splintered into factions and all efforts by the other BRA commanders failed to resolve the conflict. The CoC intervened but the splintered BRA groups claimed that it was an internal affair. Francis Kauma made attempts to intervene in the conflict but was rejected by the BRA Commanders on the same grounds that, as an internal matter, it must be resolved within the BRA.

Troubles caused by the feud

The conflict resulted in restrictions of movement especially on the Buin highway to Arawa and the strategic road to Kangu beach where ships are unloaded. Consequently, there was a disruption to the delivery of services to the district. The vehicle donated to the district to assist in facilitating the peace process was shot at on more than one occasion and subsequently prevented from travelling. Incidents of lawlessness increased, especially in Buin town, and a general feeling of fear and uncertainty prevailed. The conflict threatened to spill over into neighbouring Siwai and Kieta districts as incidents spread. In the sporadic shoot-outs that followed Bobby's death, one young man was killed and three others seriously injured. Although only parts of the full story of this conflict filtered through to the rest of Bougainville, it was generally acknowledged throughout the

island that this conflict represented the gravest threat to the peace process in Bougainville.

Pressure to reconcile

However, as the number of incidents escalated, individuals and organisations from outside the BRA became more active in trying to begin the process of reconciliation. Enormous credit should be given to the various women's groups in Buin who initiated discreet dialogue between the factions. Their efforts gradually restored a sufficient level of trust between the factions to allow them to come together for the first time to try to resolve the conflict through discussions rather than violence. With the initiative of the Telei District Peace Committee chairman (Steven Kopana) and, with the support of the International Peace Monitoring Group (PMG) based in Buin, Francis Kauma and Joe Nakota were requested to mediate in the reconciliation. These two experienced Peace Foundation Conflict Resolution trainers were recognised both for their skills and neutrality as key people in the meeting.

Reconciliation ceremony in Buin for Bobby/Tari

The reconciliation took place at the 'PMG Haus Garamut' (meeting house) in Buin High School on 21 May 1999. The meeting started at 9.30 am and concluded in the afternoon at 4.30. It was witnessed by hundreds of people who had gathered from the east and west, the mountains and the coastal parts of Buin.

MOU for peace

After moving speeches, tears and the shaking of hands, the reconciliation concluded with the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) by the eleven BRA Company and Platoon commanders involved in the conflict. The seven points agreed to in the Memorandum of Understanding (written in Tok Pisin) state clearly the common desired goal. 'We will reject violence and initiate again peace and trust between ourselves'. The other points agreed to were brief but poignant. Upon close examination, they reflect a deep understanding of the root causes of the conflict and of the possible obstacles in

implementing the agreement. This indicates that the Memorandum of Understanding was clearly agreed to after a great deal of honest and assiduous discussion and provides testimony to the good work of the mediators, Francis and Joe.

Francis describes the Win-Win Mediation process to Miller

Francis is not a great talker. When Phillip Miller, the Australian volunteer working with Peace Foundation, asked him to describe how they actually mediated the conflict, Francis referred him to page 48 of the Peace Foundation Conflict Resolution Participant's Workbook. On this page headed: 'Mediation On Matters Which Can Be Settled Easily!' one can find the ten steps in Win-Win Mediation that they followed.

When I spoke to Francis, I wanted to know how he managed the reconciliation. I was expecting details on how he went about identifying the killers, imputing guilt, the details of the killings and deciding punishment. I should have known better. He explained that for Bougainvillians the process is already known, so it does not require further attention. *The order of importance for any mediator conducting reconciliation is first of all a meeting with an exchange of gifts to show that peace has been restored and a first public reconciliation.* Later, there will be further reconciliations and, finally much later, the offenders will very likely meet face-to-face with the victims and/or their relatives and admit their guilt and express sorrow and will be forgiven.

The PMG at Buin and what they thought

I spoke to the CO of the Buin Peace Monitoring Group shortly after this event. I was curious to find out how this event appeared in the eyes of an outsider. He did not know who I was or that I had a special interest in the reconciliation. He was rather noncommittal and did not want to appear critical but it was obvious that he believed that the process was quite inadequate and needed a good deal of straightening up. He openly expressed doubt that the peace would hold because there were no sanctions in place to punish anyone who broke the agreement. This comment is not by way of criticism but

rather to illustrate that it is difficult to view the customs of other people through our own glasses.

What role Francis was playing

The mediation work of the Buin team is undoubtedly spectacular and the brief report given by Francis gives little insight into how the mediation was done. In fact, Francis and the other team members each see their job as that of a go-between, to listen and to avoid becoming involved in the process as far as possible. They presume that the people that they are dealing with know what they want and how to achieve it. What they need is someone who will stand between the two groups to hear what they are saying and pass it on. They are not there to intrude themselves but to provide a connection between two groups who cannot interact. They know that the main purpose of the meeting is to 'get rid of the hurt and the damage'. It is not their work to search for the options nor are they attempting to obtain the kind of legal vengeance that shames but does not reconcile. For the Bougainvillians and indeed for most Melanesians, the purpose of the mediation meeting is not about guilt, judgement and punishment but about shame, forgiveness, restitution and reconciliation.

Peter Mekia on Reconciliation

When I spoke to the Chairman of the North Nasioi CoC, Peter Mekia, he knew that I was training people in Restorative Justice but he was still doubtful if I would be capable of understanding what he was telling me. He felt that the cultural gap between the West and Bougainville could be too great. He said:

It is difficult for people who are not Bougainvillians to understand our way of reconciliation. Reconciliation is a part of our culture and it has been there for thousands of years. In its simplest form it is just a question of two people saying 'I did you wrong and you did me wrong. I forgive you and you forgive me.' That is what happens in its most simple form.

Of course, there will be an exchange of goods, money and pigs and shell money. People in other cultures do not really understand this. They prefer punishment

and putting people in jail. We would rather do it by saying, 'I forgive you. You forgive me. Let us get on with our lives.' There is no profit to anybody in making a big thing out of courts and judgement and punishment.

It is the pragmatic solution rather than a matter of virtue. It would be far easier to surrender to the way of revenge but the result would be unthinkable. Bougainvillians have, for thousands of years, lived with the reconciliation solution and have internalised it as the best solution, so that even though the anger still exists, the good of the community outweighs the personal need for vengeance. There are people such as Gloria¹⁵ who clearly despises the person who has injured her and yet for the good of the community she is able to put aside her personal hurt and offer forgiveness. Along with the conditioning towards reconciliation, they have discovered that this is also the most healthy and fruitful way to live in a community.

Peter went on to explain:

This is our traditional way that we used before the white man came. We had to do it this way for the sake of peace because, if we did not have peace in our villages, we would be open to attack from our enemies. We have developed this method of reconciliation so that we can bring the people back into the community and make the community strong again. There is no advantage from hatred when it is possible to forgive. When we make peace, it is not [for] the food and it is not [because of] pigs and it is not [for] the speeches. It is people saying, 'I forgive you. You forgive me. Let us get on with our lives.' All the rest — the pigs and the food and the speeches — are just the outward signs of our making peace. The shell money is something that people see and they can put their mind on matter as the sign of our making peace.

I can understand Peter's feeling that I would not be able to understand. It is extremely difficult for the Western world to

understand the Bougainville process. People living under the law of the Queen's justice have been conditioned by society to believe that there must be a 'just' punishment if the crime is to be made right. People have been conditioned to believe that a just punishment will stop the person from repeating his/her offence. They are conditioned to believe that 'wrong deserves punishment'.¹⁶

Chris Baria from Nasioi is well educated and works as a field officer and trainer for Oxfam. He attended the reconciliation between his mother's village and the BRA who had killed some of their people. He commented on the process and its associated problems:

I was involved in a big reconciliation at Section 6 [Arawa]. The PMG was also there. This was for my mother's village Kui in South Nasioi, being reconciled with the BRA. The process of reconciliation can be quite lengthy and can go on through three or four or even more meetings and discussions and arrangements. One of the problems that we had was in getting everybody together. Some people had moved away and we had to find them and bring them back for the ceremony so that everybody would be there and everybody would know that the reconciliation had taken place.

The first step in the negotiation may take weeks. If the community is divided and full of anger, this will take a long time because nothing can go ahead while people are in that condition. The first step in any process then is building a trust with the other group. After a lot of discussion and negotiation, we arranged for a lot of food, which was built up on towers so that everybody could see it. We also buried a large stone. The significance of the stone is that it is heavy and it does not move and it gives a sign of strong and unchanging reconciliation between our people in my mother's village and the BRA who killed some of our people during the crisis. Actually there were two stones, one

representing the BRA and one representing our own village people.

The first reconciliation does not always turn out the way that we want but, if it does not achieve its goal the first time we must regard this as a start, come back and do it again later. This may be just the first step for reconciliation and will be followed by others later on.

The purpose of the first step is to overcome the shame that exists between the two groups because of the wrongdoing. After this first ceremony, it is possible for the two groups to talk to one another easily and freely without embarrassment and this leads on to the next step in the ceremony.

Reconciliations and revivals of reconciliations may go on for years but at one of these reconciliations it is necessary for people who have killed and wounded other people or seriously humiliated bigmen to make a personal statement. It is necessary for them to stand in the 'eye of all the people' [ai bilong ol manmeri] whom they have hurt and admit freely that they have done wrong and ask for forgiveness. This normally takes time. I know of one case where this was planned for the first reconciliation, but because some of the people were too embarrassed and too ashamed about what they had done they did not come to this first reconciliation.

For the reconciliation with confession of wrongdoing we use only a very small group of two or three, not the big reconciliation. That is a different thing altogether. Reconciliation where people actually confess that they have done wrong is generally more private. This step is very important, otherwise there is no rock-final reconciliation.

We have not seen a great deal of personal reconciliation yet from some of our leaders and it is important for it to take place. I do not know how we are going to deal with the big men in government who have not reconciled and who are showing no sign of

reconciliation. I really do not know what we are going to do about this.

Compensation gifts and blood money

To an outsider the giving of a gift may seem to be compensation (blood money). To most Bougainvillians, however, compensation (blood money) is repugnant. A gift is intended to wash away the tears; in no way is it intended as a payment for the loss incurred. Compensation is for gain and is equivalent to setting a value on the life of a loved one. With a gift one asks for forgiveness; with compensation there is no forgiveness and the person is attempting something which is impossible, that is putting a value on something that cannot be bought or paid for. Thomas Suwono illustrated the point:

With our experience, we have decided that if people want money for compensation (Blood Money) then, we refuse to mediate and tell them to take it to the court.

Some of the people are asking for money to compensate for the damage that has been done. I am very much worried about this idea of money and compensation because I do not believe that *money* can reconcile people. In fact, I think that the very opposite will happen. Always in the past we have used our traditional things such as taro, pigs and shell money. In the past, we have never used cash money. If we start using money for compensation it is likely to grow and grow.

George is a man from a village down in the Nasioi. During the crisis, he, along with some of his family, came and moved to my village and eventually George married one of my aunts (Anna by name). In our custom the woman is the landowner and the man lives in the village. And so it was that George moved into our village. One day he sent a small boy, who is a relative to my cousin brother Thomas, to borrow his knapsacks such as backpackers use and which we call

a 'mountain bag'. I do not know if my cousin brother was willing to lend this bag or not but he was unhappy that the man should send this small boy to ask when he should have come and asked himself. Thomas put a great value on this mountain bag ... Sending a small boy implied that the bag was a matter of small value. As a result, he refused to give the bag to the small boy.

George, the man from Arawa, was angry with this and felt that his request had been refused because he was a stranger from another part of Bougainville. He did not talk to Thomas about this but he complained to some of his BRA friends from Kieta and told them that his brother-in-law, who refused to lend his mountain bag because he was the foreigner, had insulted him. It is unfortunate that these BRA friends of his were a very violent group and decided to take direct action. They went into Thomas's house. Thomas was asleep and his wife answered the door. They got Thomas out of bed and started beating him. Thomas's wife was there and she was crying and hitting at them to stop them from beating Thomas. The people in the village woke up and tried to find out what was going on. Thomas got out of the house but they chased him and one of them got a small axe and chopped him on the side of the head. Thomas fell down and the BRA people went away. The village people took Thomas into town but he died on the way.

We who are the members of Thomas's family tried to find out what had happened and why it had happened. None of us knew anything about the mountain bag or the supposed insult. And we knew nothing about what had happened. George and his family and all my aunt's family the (the relatives of the one married to George) moved away from the village and went to Kieta because they were afraid of payback.

In '98 my aunty and her family moved back again to our village. By this time I had been working with Peace Foundation for three years and I felt that I could do something about what had happened. I began to make inquiries with the intention of developing the reconciliation between my family and George's people. George himself did not want to come back because he was afraid that someone would kill him. However, I was able to talk to him and he returned because we were planning reconciliation. It took more than a week for us to talk about what had happened and to get the stories straight. Once we had the stories straight, I approached Cletus, who is the village chief, to get his support for the next step in the reconciliation. I needed Cletus's support because Anna is my aunt and I was not willing to handle the whole situation myself.

We had another round of talks at which the chiefs presided. I was present. At first Thomas's family demanded K10,000 compensation. I was very uncomfortable about this because once you start into large amounts of compensation you are not talking about reconciliation and forgiveness. When you ask for such a large amount of money there is no way that this can be paid back because people simply do not have that much money. Besides, the reconciliation would not be made for the number of years [that it took] to collect this money. In the meantime, there would be no reconciliation and no forgiveness and the whole thing would drag on.

I raised this matter with our family by asking them what was their purpose. Were they looking for blood money or were they looking for reconciliation? I explained that I had invited George back to our village for the purpose of reconciliation and I did not want to be involved in any arrangement which was for blood money. However, I would be happy to assist in setting

up a traditional reconciliation with traditional gifts of pigs and mimis (shell money) and a small amount of cash.

Thomas's family went away and talked it over among themselves and when they came back to the meeting they said that they had thought it over and felt that they would much prefer to have the reconciliation than a compensation payment. The new demand was for one large pig, one length of shell money and some cash, and that they must have a feast in front of all the people of the village so that everybody could witness the shake-hands. Also, Thomas's family agreed that they should also kill a pig to present to the family of George. The ceremony took place in the presence of the paramount chief and the local government council and we invited Father Thomas to say Mass so that the reconciliation could take place during Mass.

George remained in the village with his wife for six months and there has been no further problem. George is not the sort of person who can stay in the same place for long and so, after six months, he moved to another place with his wife.

Compensation paid for man shot dead by accident. Compensation Highlands fashion

In the Highlands of Papua New Guinea compensation is now the normal way of settling a conflict or a killing. The following report is from the *National* newspaper On Line, 26 July 2000:

A police officer accidentally shot a man from Kape [Highlands] area. Inspector Jacob Bando allegedly fired the shot in an attempt to distract the husband from beating his wife and their baby, which the mother used as a shield against the iron bar in her husband's hand.

Acting Madang Provincial Police Commander James Kupi said Mr Bando was standing a long way away from where the incident took place. Fearing for his safety, Mr Bando went into hiding right after the

incident. Mr Kupa said investigations into the incident were continuing. Relatives of the deceased demanded over K40,000 compensation from the Ramu Sugar Company and its smaller branches plus the police department.

They demanded a total of K20,000 from Mr Bando. Relatives wanted the police department to pay K5,000 as 'bel kol' (peace) money. Mr Kupa said the department was not profit making but he decided to comply with the request because if the relatives went to Ramu police station and an incident occurred, 'We may not be in time to protect them'.

The report indicates that the compensation was demanded with threats. This is common in negotiations for compensation in the Highlands. It is a clear perversion of law, justice and tradition. Given the circumstances it is doubtful that the wife will receive any of the money. Most of it will be the booty of the negotiators who provided the muscular leverage. There being no reconciliation, the way is open for police retaliation and further payback. This situation has now become the norm in Highland's custom.

Peace Foundation Mediators refuse to handle compensation payments. If they cannot dissuade the family of the victim from demanding compensation, they advise that the matter be taken to court. Compensation is about money and is opposed to reconciliation. Although the court may order compensation, the two families will still remain enemies and more blood will flow.

Violent trauma and restorative justice

Post Traumatic Stress Disorder is an ongoing problem in Bougainville. Most of the people who have lived through the crisis have a greater or lesser condition of stress to deal with. This is the same for the BRA and the Resistance, even though they both consider that they were freedom fighters for Bougainville's Independence. Most of them were away from their communities and thus became unsure of community support on their return. Generally the Home Guard are less

stressed because they never left their communities and still have their support even though they have committed murder in their defence. Some of the most seriously stressed are the young men who, at the age of nine or ten, watched their parents being murdered, raped and tortured. They still feel guilt that they did not help them. Women were equally traumatised but generally do not act out in the way that men do. Rather they internalise their stress and develop internal strains and illnesses. Bougainville can expect that acting out from PTSD can go on for the next ten or fifteen years. If traumatised persons are to recover they must be reaccepted into their community, time and time again, in spite of their violent and dangerous behavior

Most traumatised youths (male) go through a regular round of behavior. For weeks they act normally. Then something sets off a trigger. They begin to act out behaviour which is associated with their trauma. During the acting-out, they are capable of causing serious harm to others, even their friends and family. Often they drink to a stage of oblivion. In this state they are able to rationalise their behaviour by saying: 'I was drunk. I didn't know what I was doing. It's not my fault.' When they recover from their drunken condition they experience enormous shame because their violence against the community was done 'in the sight of the whole people'. To deal with this they will normally project the blame onto the victims saying: 'It's their fault. They were looking for it. They made me do it.'

This kind of behaviour causes fear and insecurity among villagers, many of whom would rather pretend that it is not happening. This is especially true if there are guns about. When the youths are not confronted with their behaviour:

- They begin to believe their own rationalisation that it was not their fault and that the others were to blame;
- The shame that they experienced has nowhere to go and remains with them.

According to Brother Ken McDonald, a Marist Brother with long-term experience as a teacher and trauma counsellor in PNG, rejection by the village is the worst thing that could happen to them. When this happens there is very little hope of recovery. The youth goes into a downward spiral of antisocial

behaviour, of rejection, of further substance abuse and of acting out the trauma over and again.

Josephine Didato, head nurse at Monoitu, relates an experience of young men acting out trauma:

We have people who come to the hospital with wounds. They are all young boys. [Boys means anybody up to low twenties.] They go off drinking home brew and get into a fight, slash each other with bush knives or *saraps*.¹⁷ This generally happens once or twice a month. It usually happens when the boys have been drinking home brew. Last month, we had two young fellows who went into the bush [with the BRA] at about nine or ten years of age and now they are about eighteen or nineteen. They had been drinking home brew and a fight started. At the time, they were not quite sure what they were fighting about and they probably do not remember even now. One boy who got cut was in a very bad way. His arm was slashed from the elbow to the wrist and all the tendons in his wrist had been cut so that he could not move any of his fingers. We had to work very quickly and sew together the tendons and then sew him up on the inside and then again on *the outside*. We started at about six o'clock in the evening and finished at about 3 o'clock in the morning. No sooner had we finished with this than they brought in another one whose leg had been slashed with the grass knife and again we spent another three hours stitching him up. It was about half past five when we finished sewing him up and shortly after that, it was time for Mass.

Let us consider the use of Restorative Justice as a way of dealing with the behaviour of the youths who were involved in the fight above:

- First, the chief calls on the person who had been wounded and on the offender. He tells them that it is necessary for a mediator to deal with this matter.

- The mediator speaks with the two youths and explains the process of Restorative Justice and gains their trust so that they will be listened to and not be victimised.
- A meeting is arranged in the village and the people are reminded of the restorative justice process and of its ground rules. Anybody is allowed to speak. They direct their remarks to the behaviour and not to the person who has caused the harm. They speak about how the behaviour has harmed them.
- The victim and his family speak. The people will speak about the behaviour of both the victim and the offender because both have been drinking to excess and so both are guilty. Members of the community speak about what they regard as acceptable behaviour for where they live. All this is done without attacking or blaming the victims or the offenders.
- Some form of compensation is agreed on to make up to the victim and the community.
- Finally, the victims/offenders are reconciled and brought back into the community.

This process deals with almost all the problems mentioned above.

- Offensive behaviour is recognised for what it is and blame is placed squarely on the perpetrator/s.
- The community is given the opportunity to take part in the process. It rejects the supposition that it was to blame for the anti-social behaviour.
- The villagers then take the opportunity to draw the boundaries of acceptable behaviour for their community. There is a public statement stressing that drinking to release antisocial 'acting out' behaviour is not acceptable.
- The offender is able to flush out the shame that is corroding his very soul.
- The offender is restored back to the community.
- The offender is provided with an opportunity to talk.

As McDonald has observed:

These youths are damaged, unaware of their condition, confused by the forces that drives them and because they are

inarticulate their acting out is their only voice. By their behaviour they are risking rejection by the community. I believe that there must be a very powerful force inside for them to do that. So what they need is to get heard without having to act out. For many of them it is a problem that they have gone to a position of very great power with guns to a position of almost complete powerlessness. Is it [for] the whole future of a young man who has fought for his country that he must return to the village as a person with no power whatsoever? [In his war experience it was] equivalent to saying: 'If you have a gun in your hand then you have something to speak with'.¹⁸

The process of restorative justice is being used by some of the better mediators. It is not yet general. Perhaps people are still too afraid to confront violence for fear of retaliation. Perhaps for many of the chiefs the process is still too new and untried.

Stigmatisation

There is a terrible danger in branding young troublemakers as criminals because when they are branded in this way they quickly become *raskols*. They become what they are named and if the community rejects them as *raskols*, there is no healing. If there is no reform they move further away from the community and their bonding relationship with it. That loss is replaced by further shame if they do not live up to the expectations of the criminal gang they have joined. Although I have not yet heard of it in Bougainville, there are gangs where rape and murder are initiation rites for its new members. On the other hand, when confronted with their behaviour in the sight of all the community, the offenders experience an intense, visible shame and are therefore forgiven and, subsequently reconciled. They now have a base from which they can hope for reform. Shame and forgiveness are most effective when applied in the sight of significant others.¹⁹

We have some boys in our village who have been involved in some activities during the crisis. On the outside, they seem to have recovered. But on the inside, there are still wounds that have not been healed. The result is that every now and

again they get drunk on home brew and when this happens they often become violent and abusive.

When they start drinking they may say 'I am just having a drink with my friends'. But already they know that before the night is out, they will be quite drunk and they also know that when they get drunk they become violent and threaten people. In the past, some of these people have also burnt down people's houses. And so, the night goes on and sure enough, Alios gets drunk and goes around the village shouting and yelling and threatening people and throwing stones at houses. The following day he is sober and is terribly ashamed of what he has done. He hides away from the village. When he goes back into the village some of the people are going to attack him and tell him that he is a no good *raskol* and that he should be thrown out of the village. If this continues then he will really become a *raskol* and he will never recover.²⁰

The process of restorative justice is of value to the community. Not only does it give them the opportunity to draw the boundaries of desirable behaviour, it is also a deterrent. It reinforces the fear of shame that each one would experience in a similar situation. Shame, followed by forgiveness and by being accepted back into the community, is a very powerful instrument for building up the strength of the law. The symbolic nature of the act informs the consciences of all present. It is especially effective with young children whose fear of being shamed is linked with desertion by loved ones and social starvation. In Bougainville where the family of the offender must also bear the weight of shame, there is a strong social pressure against re-offending.

Dedicated trainers

There is no doubt that the course itself was very attractive but there are a number of other reasons for its being so attractive and successful. The dedication of trainers and their commitment to the work of peace was probably a major cause of the spread and impact of the course. There is no way that the work of the Peace Foundation could have been established without their

willingness and perseverance. There were three two-week courses to train apprentices and a one-week course in which trainers were instructed before they reached the position of head trainer. Applicants were drawn to them for other than purely monetary inducements. Those who were in training received only a living allowance and no pay. After they were fully trained they received only K150 (less than \$A90) per fortnight. Each one of them could have earned as much money by working copra or cocoa or even growing food to sell at the market. The conditions under which they worked were often difficult and uncomfortable, especially for those who worked among the people in the mountains where the unaccustomed cold must have been hard to bear. Probably their motivation was their dedication to peace and the personal satisfaction that they gained from the work. I suggest that trainers have been the Foundation's greatest asset. In our experience local trainers are more effective than overseas trainers, while trainers belonging to the local area are more effective than trainers from other parts of Bougainville.

Training women

The empowerment of women as equal partners in developing a *gutpela sindaun* (quality of life) in the village is one of the targets in the community Justice Package training program. Within this approach, women come into the life of the village, not as inferiors or in competition with the men who are dominant, but as a normal part of the emerging group of thirty-five to forty-five year-old leaders. This group is the major agent of change in the activities of village life through its activities in church, school, peace processes and interaction with public servants and the government. The Foundation recognises the vital role of women's groups. The courses for women foster solidarity, break down their isolation, provide them with various skills, and help them become an effective lobby group. Given that a goal of the Foundation's Community Justice program is to empower people to communicate better with each other, our training courses involve both men and women in a safe environment. By this

means we intend to avoid the backlash sometimes experienced when women are given special courses, seen by men as women's preferential treatment. The outcome of this strategy is that women are now more confident and assertive in speaking out at meetings. Their voices and arguments are beginning to be listened to because the precedent of hearing women's voices has already been established during the training courses. Alongside this is the emerging willingness of men to see women as worthwhile and equal participants, acting together in the welfare and interest of their communities, rather than as a threat to men's traditional position of power and influence.

Saturation

Our experience has shown that when we run one course here, another course there, and another somewhere else, the individual participants get quite a lot out of the course but the impact on the village is small. When only one person in a village has done the course, he or she is alone because no-one else has shared in their learning. The greatest impact occurs when about eight or ten people from the same village have completed the course. When we do this the participants in the village have a support group that understands the process of conflict resolution and that can help and support each other. Our policy is to continue training in an area until we have trained enough leaders in each village to be able to influence the thinking of the whole village.

Training in the village

We believe that it is more effective to run courses in the village church or church hall than taking people to a larger centre for training. In the village they have their own food and accommodation and their contact with those who are not involved directly in the course is more useful. There is a greater degree of transparency with people knowing what is going on. Training in the village also keeps the costs down. While each course is relatively cheap, the saturation policy makes the whole package very expensive.

Importance of awareness

The importance of promoting awareness before a course is held should not be underestimated. People are slow to take on anything that is new. They experience difficulties with what the course is about and how it will affect their lives. There are cultural and religious considerations, power structures and personal problems that may include suspicion and jealousy. Talking to people at church gatherings has been a useful strategy for getting information to the mass of villagers. Meetings of village leaders of all kinds, government and non-government, are useful.

Divisions in the community must be noted

Whenever training is provided there should be some time spent in making sure that the people in the village are working together and understand what is happening. There are some villages where the crisis has left very deep divisions among the people. If a project is being set up in such a village and the trainers do not take the local situation into consideration, then conflicts may break out as soon as the training is completed.

Over the seven years from 1994 to 2000 Peace Foundation conducted the following courses:

Community Justice Package				
Number of Participants and Types of Courses				
People Skills	Conflict Resolution	Community Development Planning	Training of Trainers	Mediation Restorative Justice
190	25	32	21	23

The work of Peace Foundation Melanesia in Bougainville is now entirely in the hands of Bougainvilleans. They are a skilled and dedicated team who are gaining more satisfaction from working for peace, and from the recognition of their communities and province generally, than from becoming wealthy.

Endnotes

- 1 Jones, Phillip Scott 2000. Field notes
- 2 The Council of Chiefs unit covers a geographical area encompassing a number of villages whose people are traditionally related by kinship, marriage obligations and agreements.
- 3 From notes of author's interview with Theo Miriung, August 1995 (held by author)
- 4 *Wanbel* (in Pisin/Pidgin) literally one belly meaning one mind, ie a case settled by the use of a mediation process. Although mediation had been used in the past, the memory of the process had been partially lost due to the introduction of the kiaps and the village courts.
- 5 Elias finally got his training and after going through his apprenticeship became a trainer with the Foundation.
- 6 Walter, then a Captain, spoke in favour of Peace Foundation when the Defence Force Colonel wanted to ban the Foundation from training in Bougainville. He advised a 'wait and see' policy rather than expulsion. He later became famous as the soldier who arrested the Sandline mercenaries and who flew them out of PNG in 'Operation Rausim Kwik'. PFM, *Quarterly Report*, May 1995
- 7 Ibid
- 8 Ibid
- 9 Ibid
- 10 Bush materials included timber for posts, sago palm leaves for making thatched roofs and bamboo and other plant material for weaving walls. Buin was a very large and crowded centre and the people could not travel the long distances to get bush materials from their own land.
- 11 On a number of occasions I had met Singirok whose wife was working with us at Peace Foundation. From time to time he provided us with information. I liked Jerry as a person and I found his strategy in Bougainville both enlightened and Christian.
- 12 PFM, *Quarterly Report*, November 1998
- 13 Kauana F (Buin Co-ordinator PFM), *Quarterly Report*, 9 June 1999
- 14 Miller P (volunteer with PFM), *Quarterly Report*
- 15 author's forthcoming book in press
- 16 There are five hundred and sixty-seven references to punishment in the Old Testament and sixty-seven in the New. It seems to me that most people prefer the Old Testament to the new law of Jesus.
- 17 A *sarap* is a scythe-like implement used for grass cutting. It is about a metre long and is made of heavy gauge hoop iron. It has a wooden handle at one end and is slightly weighted at the other. Workers generally sharpen it on one side with a file.
- 18 Interview with Brother Ken McDonald
- 19 Information supplied to author by Thomas Suwono
- 20 Ibid