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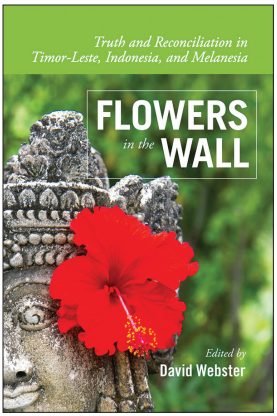

FLOWERS IN THE WALL
Truth and Reconciliation in Timor-Leste, Indonesia, and Melanesia
by David Webster

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The Solomon Islands "Ethnic Tension" Conflict and the Solomon Islands Truth and Reconciliation Commission: A Personal Reflection

Terry M. Brown

From late 1998 through 2003, Solomon Islands, a small independent nation in the southwest Pacific, suffered a period of what is locally called "ethnic tension" or "the tension" between Indigenous people of two of the major islands, Guadalcanal and Malaita.[1] Since the end of the Second World War, people of the country's most populous island, Malaita, settled in and around Honiara, on the north coast of Guadalcanal, formerly a US military base but, since the close of the war, the colony's capital. This movement of Malaitans to Guadalcanal continued for the next half century—including after independence in 1978—largely for economic reasons, as Malaitans sought jobs in Honiara, in the oil palm and rice plantations on the Guadalcanal Plains and at the Gold Ridge goldmine east of Honiara. The Indigenous people of Guadalcanal sold customary land to incoming Malaitans and many villages named "New Mala" sprung up around Guadalcanal. The Malaitans were entrepreneurial and often flourished economically while local Guadalcanal people often pursued a more traditional subsistence lifestyle. Malaitan men often took Guadalcanal wives,

thereby giving them access to local land through Guadalcanal's matrilineal and matrilocal land tenure system.

With time, this gradual colonization of Guadalcanal by Malaitans became a source of anger among many people on Guadalcanal, and in late 1998 a local militant group emerged from the remote Weather Coast (south shore) of Guadalcanal, variously called the Guadalcanal Revolutionary Army (GRA) or Isatabu Freedom Movement (IFM), and began harassing Malaitan settlers on north Guadalcanal. The violence increased dramatically in 1999, when some twenty thousand Malaitans were expelled from Guadalcanal back to Malaita via Honiara, as houses, businesses, and oil palm plantations were burnt or destroyed and lives and properties lost.

By the end of the year, a Malaitan militant group, the Malaita Eagle Force (MEF), had emerged in Honiara to protect Malaitans there and to fight the IFM. Both militant groups relied on weapons stolen from or provided by the police, who generally split along ethnic lines. The government tried to broker various peace agreements but neither militant group was satisfied and the conflict continued between the Honiara-based MEF and the IFM, who were spread across the rural areas of Guadalcanal. Checkpoints appeared between the two militant groups' territories and travel through them became very difficult, if not impossible. Only certain church organizations, such as religious communities, were allowed across.

One local peace agreement after another failed, and at midnight on 5 June 2000 the MEF and a group of Malaitan Police Field Force officers raided the central Royal Solomon Islands Police Force (RSIPF) armoury in Rove, Honiara, effectively disarming the police. They then placed the prime minister, Bartholomew Ulufa'alu, under house arrest, demanded his resignation (which he eventually gave), and declared all-out war on the IFM.[2] Ulufa'alu was replaced three weeks later by Manasseh Sogavare, who met the approval of the MEF.[3] The coup was quickly denounced by the international community, including Australia, which brought in a warship to evacuate its citizens. The country's economy collapsed as businesses and non-government organizations left the country and fighting between the MEF and IFM spread throughout Guadalcanal, and even to other provinces. (In Auki, Malaita, where I was the local Anglican bishop, the MEF took over the police station.) In the meantime, fearful of militant activities by Malaitans in the Western Province, another group of militants, the Black Sharks, were brought across the Papua New Guinea (PNG) border from

Bougainville for protection.[4] However, all these militant groups, especially the MEF, also attracted criminal elements that saw a good chance to steal trucks and other goods and settle old scores.

Australian politicians dubbed Solomon Islands part of the "arc of instability" that began with East Timor and West Papua and extended across PNG, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and New Caledonia to Fiji (the home of several recent coups). Peace talks ensued and a ceasefire was agreed to on 2 August 2000. Formal peace talks between the MEF and the IFM took place in Townsville, Queensland two months later and on 15 October 2000 the Townsville Peace Agreement (TPA) was signed. It provided for the laying down and collection of arms and a special non-armed International Peace Monitoring Group (IPMG) from overseas to monitor the process. It also provided amnesty and rehabilitation for the militants and economic development projects for remote parts of Malaita and Guadalcanal.

While the TPA represented a major settlement of the conflict between the IFM and the MEF, problems remained. One Guadalcanal militant, Harold Keke, leader of the Guadalcanal Liberation Front (GLF) on the eastern Weather Coast of Guadalcanal, refused to participate in the Townsville talks or sign the TPA and continued his fight against the Solomons government. In turn, the government organized a Joint Operation of police and former militants of both sides to go to the Weather Coast to fight Keke. These groups were quite undisciplined and Keke became paranoid about disloyalty in his own ranks. Ordinary people on the Weather Coast were caught in the middle and many were killed or tortured. In April 2002 Keke and GLF members killed six members of the Melanesian Brotherhood, an order of the Anglican Church of Melanesia, who were seeking a fellow member whom Keke had killed earlier that year; in August 2002 Keke killed the local member of parliament, Father Augustine Geve, a Roman Catholic priest. Nor had things entirely settled on north Guadalcanal and Malaita, with occasional killings continuing as militants returned home still eager to fight. The unarmed IPMG stood by powerless as acts of violence took place. In Malaita, where I lived, it was more violent after the TPA than before, as ex-militants returned home and terrorized villages. Violence also continued in the Western Solomons between the Black Sharks and locals.

Finally, in June 2003, the (new) prime minister of Solomon Islands, Allan Kemakeza, requested external military intervention to end the

conflict. Until then, Australia had been strongly opposed to such intervention (Prime Minister Ulufa'alu had requested it when the conflict first began in 1999 but was refused) but post-9/11 security fears about the "arc of instability" prevailed and the intervention was agreed to. Australia, after a formal request from the Solomon Islands parliament, organized the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI). The missions was comprised of military and police units of Commonwealth countries in the Pacific region, including Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Samoa, and Tonga. Its troops arrived to a warm welcome on 24 July 2003. The troops quickly ended the conflict on the Weather Coast, arresting Keke and his cohorts; RAMSI line officers were placed in the provinces and the situation in Malaita and the west quickly settled. RAMSI, unlike the local police force, was armed and had power to intervene. While initially envisioned as a small and short intervention, RAMSI grew into a major military, police, and civil-service operation. Only now has it shrunk to almost nothing, though many fear the recurrence of ethnic conflict should it completely disappear.

I hope this long historical introduction helps explain why Solomon Islands came to have a truth and reconciliation commission. About two hundred persons died in the conflict and many hundreds were injured, tortured, sexually assaulted, traumatized, run out from their homes (in most cases permanently), and deprived of their properties. Initially, Guadalcanal militants terrorized Malaita settlers; then the two militant groups fought one another, with the MEF having the advantage, drawing on the armaments of the state, including a patrol boat; each group killed and tortured members of the other group. But both militant groups terrorized their own people, too, whom they thought were disloyal; the IFM also employed child soldiers. The MEF in its occupation of Honiara stole from innocent civilians and intimidated members of the government. After the TPA, the Solomon Islands government participated in state terrorism through the human rights abuses committed as part of the Joint Operation. And Harold Keke and the GLF killed many Guadalcanal civilians. One striking conclusion of the TRC report was that the majority of human rights abuses were intra-ethnic rather than inter-ethnic. Only in the first stages of the conflict was it inter-ethnic. Thus the frequent description in the international media of the conflict as a "civil war" is not entirely accurate. The Roman Catholic archbishop of Honiara, Adrian Smith, described

the conflict to me as one between two groups of displaced people: Malaitans on Guadalcanal and Weather Coast Guadalcanal people on north Guadalcanal. To say that the provinces were at war with one another is a gross overstatement. I lived fairly quietly in Malaita during the height of the conflict.

The Churches and the Genesis of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

Solomon Islands is largely Christian and the "ethnic tension" caught many unawares, myself included. Christian evangelization began in the mid-nineteenth century, first with Anglicans, Roman Catholics, and Methodists; then later, South Sea Evangelicals (akin to Baptists), Seventh-day Adventists (SDAs), and many smaller groups; recently there has also been a proliferation of small new churches, many of them breakaways from the mainline churches. There are now small groups of Muslims. The Roman Catholic Church is predominant in rural Guadalcanal though there are also small groups of Anglican and South Sea Evangelical Church (SSEC) members. The western Weather Coast of Guadalcanal also includes what might be called a neo-custom movement, the Moro Movement, a group of former Roman Catholics who advocate a return to traditional Guadalcanal religion, custom, and lifestyle, including the rejection of Western religion, dress and technology. (Some of them appear in the film *The Thin Red Line*.) Many early IFM members came out of Moro and Roman Catholic backgrounds and IFM fighters frequently wore traditional Guadalcanal dress of a *kabilato* (bark loincloth) and relied on traditional magic to fight. MEF militants came out of largely Protestant backgrounds, especially members of the SSEC (the largest church in Malaita), SDAs, and Jehovah Witnesses, though there were some Anglicans, especially among the leaders. MEF members, however, also called upon Malaita custom magic in their fighting. On the western Weather Coast, Harold Keke, though initially Roman Catholic, identified himself as a member of the SSEC and his followers ascribed messianic qualities to him. But generally, the IFM-MEF conflict took on a certain Catholic versus Protestant quality, and the MEF limited the access of Roman Catholic leaders in Honiara to rural Guadalcanal.

However, once the character and scope of the conflict began to be understood, church leaders attempted to intervene to secure a peaceful resolution. The Peace Committee of the ecumenical Solomon Islands Christian Association (SICA), which included members of the Roman Catholic, Anglican, United (Methodist), and SSEC churches (with the SDAs as observers), proposed and promoted ceasefires and peace talks. Individual denominations tried to bring their members from the warring ethnic groups together for discussion. The Anglican religious communities (the Melanesian Brotherhood, the Sisters of Melanesia, the Society of St. Francis, and the Community of the Sisters of the Church), whose Honiara and mother houses were divided by the front line, were crucial in securing transportation across the checkpoints and providing counselling to both militant groups.[5] The General Synod of the Anglican Church of Melanesia passed resolutions and urged both the militant groups and the government to work for peace. The Anglican archbishop of Melanesia, Sir Ellison Pogo, participated in the Townsville peace talks as a representative of SICA.

As Church of Melanesia (Anglican) Bishop of Malaita, based in Auki, the capital of Malaita Province, I found myself in the middle of the conflict. I first worked in Solomon Islands as a Canadian missionary lecturer in theology at the Anglican theological college on Guadalcanal, the Bishop Patteson Theological Centre, from 1975 to 1981, before returning to Canada for graduate studies. I worked as Asia-Pacific mission coordinator of the Anglican Church of Canada from 1985 to 1996, during which time I visited the Solomons many times. In 1996 I was elected bishop of Malaita and returned to the Solomons, expecting a relatively quiet tenure touring the five hundred or so Anglican villages in the diocese. The rise of the conflict was a surprise but my experience of similar conflicts and human rights abuses in Sri Lanka, Burma, the Philippines, Korea, and elsewhere was invaluable.

When, after the 2000 coup, the Australian government advised all expatriates to leave Solomon Islands, there was no question but that I would stay. Indeed, the conflict did not excessively spill back over into Malaita until after the TPA, though there were incidents of kidnapping, murder, torture, and theft. While encouraging the diocese to stay out of the conflict and to work as peacemakers, I also spoke out in the media about human rights abuses, especially the cases of torture and murder I heard about. The Malaita churches also organized an ecumenical humanitarian assistance

program for the twenty thousand Malaitans forced to return, some with nothing, when the conflict first began, with the support of New Zealand government aid. I was generally treated with respect by the MEF, though there were occasional threats: for example, they arrested one of my staff (I secured his release) and my truck was once commandeered. I believe the voice of all the churches at all levels across the country—bishops, clergy, laity, religious communities, women's groups, ecumenical organizations, synodical bodies, private interventions, etc.—prevented the conflict from becoming the genocidal situation it might have been.

Despite the TPA and the arrival of RAMSI, many scars from the conflict remained, not least kidnapped family members presumed to be dead but whose bodies were not locatable; those suffering from trauma, including the effects of sexual assault and torture; and ex-militants in need of rehabilitation and ultimately forgiveness. Shortly after the signing of the TPA, the SICA peace committee, influenced by the ongoing South African TRC chaired by Archbishop Desmond Tutu, proposed a Solomon Islands TRC to address some of these issues. After eight years of advocacy by the churches, the Solomon Islands national parliament passed the Truth and Reconciliation Act in 2008. It formed a TRC of five commissioners: three local (from Malaita, Guadalcanal, and the west) and two international (from Fiji and Peru), along with research staff. The international commissioners were chosen for their international human rights expertise rather than any knowledge of the Solomons. Local commissioners visited East Timor and South Africa in preparation for their work, and the TRC was launched with a visit from Archbishop Desmond Tutu. It worked from 2009 to 2011 through public and closed hearings and private interviews and presented its five-volume final report to Prime Minister Gordon Darcy Lilo at the end of February 2012.[6] The report then vanished from sight.

While I supported the formation of the TRC, as diocesan bishop and a senior bishop in the Church of Melanesia, I was very concerned with reconciliation at the local and national levels. Using church resources, we organized events locally in Malaita and eventually the Church of Melanesia brought together those separated by the conflict from Guadalcanal, Honiara, and Malaita in a conference in Honiara from 28 April to 1 May 2008. However, I did prepare a written submission to the TRC detailing some human rights abuses I was aware of and I was asked to attend a closed TRC hearing, which I did. I also provided the TRC's principal researcher with

all my digital files of correspondence, notes, reports, and public statements related to the conflict, including press releases about torture and other human rights abuses. I can see that this material was used in the final report.

A couple of months before the final report was to be completed, the chair of the TRC, Father Sam Ata, an Anglican priest and a friend of many years, offered me a contract to do the final edit of the report: none of the commissioners or researchers spoke English as a first language. To this end, I spent January and February 2012 editing the report, sending back completed chapters one after another as I travelled in North America. As editor, I was impressed with the quality of the report and my editorial changes were largely confined to stylistic and grammatical issues. I finished the editing only a few days before it was submitted to the prime minister. About forty copies were printed under high security by the Provincial Press in Honiara and they were presented to the prime minister and cabinet. These copies apparently also vanished.

The decision by the prime minister to suppress the TRC's final report rather than tabling it in parliament, as required by the TRC Act, was very disappointing, especially to commissioners and staff of the TRC, the victims of the conflict, the churches, women's groups, and scholars of Solomon Islands history, politics, and society. In private, the TRC chair repeatedly urged the prime minister to release the report. By then, however, many of the militants had become politicians and some were now even members of the cabinet; indeed, one was deputy prime minister. The prime minister claimed the release of the report would reopen old wounds and even bring back violence. In truth, the TRC report was politically embarrassing as well as a potential source of much litigation and government compensation.

Finally, I should note that I retained a digital copy of the final report, though I had assumed it would be released immediately upon its presentation to the prime minister. It is a large document, 1,380 pages across five volumes. However, as 2012 turned into 2013, the prime minister announced it would be another nine months before the report would be released to the public (in other words, never). In consultation with some Solomon Islands friends, including some ex-militants, I therefore decided to release a digital copy of the report to anyone who wanted it. I felt it was better to make the report publically available to all rather than quietly secreting it to Western academics who were also asking for copies. By now it was clear that neither the TRC chair nor the other commissioners would release a copy and since

I was now living in Canada I had little to lose. I simply did not want to lose the valuable work that was done in the report. My release of the report was met with outrage and threats by the prime minister. The decision was generally well received by the public, although some other political leaders felt I had shown disrespect to the country and was engaging in self-promotion. The chair of the TRC did not agree with my decision, though he did not receive the punishment he feared. Other commissioners were supportive. The report is now freely available online.[7] Despite the prime minister's threats, I visited the Solomons in October 2013 without incident. I am told that eventually the prime minister did finally quietly table the report in parliament without a motion near the end of the 2014 parliamentary session; he promptly lost his seat in parliament in the national election that followed. The new prime minister, as noted above, is Manasseh Sogavare; he testified before the TRC and is much more comfortable with it. The TRC exonerated him of the common gossip that he was present at the Rove Armoury raid disguised with a balaclava.

Some Personal Reflections on the Solomon Islands TRC: Strengths and Weaknesses

I believe the greatest contribution of the Solomon Islands TRC is the very detailed documentation presented in the final report, especially the first three volumes, which cover the history of the conflict, the human rights abuses perpetrated in its course, and its sectoral impact, and present recommendations. These volumes are essential reading for anyone seeking to understand the conflict and empathize with its victims. These volumes also provide a road map to future justice and reconciliation, including efforts aimed at addressing the needs of those whose lives were damaged or destroyed by the conflict. Unfortunately, only until very recently successive Solomon Islands governments have simply ignored the document. I have noted a couple reasons for this above, namely political embarrassment and government liability. However, there are other, more complex reasons, too.

One of the peculiarities of the Solomon Islands TRC process is the relatively long gap (for a TRC dealing with a contemporary rather than a historical conflict) between the formal resolution of the conflict (the signing of the TPA in 2000) and the inauguration of the TRC (with the passing

of the TRC Act in 2008). Much happened in these eight years. The amnesty provision of the TPA provided only for death and injury between militants in direct conflict with one another, not for the killing of civilians or the commission of human rights abuses such as torture or sexual violence. RAMSI intervention included a major strengthening of the judiciary sector and ex-militants from all sides were charged with criminal offenses, from murder down, convicted and sent to prison. Others were arrested and remanded for many months until it was decided if there would be a criminal case. Likewise, church and traditional cultural practices of reconciliation, adhering to both church and local customs, took place across the country; led by church and parachurch organizations, such as Sycamore Tree Ministries (dedicated to reconciling convicted criminals and the victims of their crimes). Several former militants experienced religious conversion. After these civil, custom, and religious experiences of justice and reconciliation, ex-militants re-entered their communities, and some entered politics and were elected to parliament. Solomon Islands has always had a strong tradition of ex-prisoners re-entering their communities with good family and community support, and this was the case for those who were convicted of crimes connected with the "ethnic tensions."

Therefore, for many ex-militants the TRC arrived rather late, after they had already served prison terms and even been reconciled with their victims. At least for Malaitans, once compensation has been paid for a wrong, the matter cannot be re-opened. For some ex-militants, the aura of double jeopardy hung over the proceedings and as a result they simply refused to testify. The TRC provided confidentiality and limited amnesty (TRC testimony could not be used in a court of law) but information gained in TRC interviews could result in new or reopened criminal files.[8] The TRC's amnesty provisions were seriously undercut when the police arrested a fugitive ex-militant after he testified at the TRC; someone had tipped off the police that he would be testifying.

Because the government changed soon after the passing of the TRC Act, the TRC operated with limited government funding; nor were foreign funders particularly generous or quick to offer money. Thus the TRC often did not operate at full capacity, which in turn meant it could not achieve its full potential. Researchers who went out to remote areas of Guadalcanal were able to acquire much credible testimony, and this remains invaluable. But the public hearings were rare and, at times, felt almost staged.

By now the MEF and IFM were a united force (they reconciled in Rove Prison, among other places) against the government, from whom they wanted compensation for their work in saving the nation from each other. Many people simply did not hear of the TRC's work and they did not feel it touched their lives in any way. In the cash-poor Solomons, the salaries and perks offered to TRC commissioners and staff caused jealousy among those who lost houses and other possessions in the conflict and who have never been compensated.

Likewise, the abrupt halt met by the TRC after the handing over of the final report to the prime minister—the TRC was dissolved, never to be constituted again—left some of its good work up in the air (for example, the exhumation of graves of victims and repatriation of bodies). In theory, the TRC's work was handed over to the government's Ministry of National Unity, Peace and Reconciliation (MNUPR), but without formal access to the TRC report (until very recently), there has been little continuity.

In early 2016 the Sogavare government convened a consultation on the TRC recommendations facilitated by Carol Laore, a former local TRC commissioner. The prime minister's office then hired her on contract to collate the TRC recommendations with an aim towards their implementation by the various government ministries. However, the key ministry in matters of reconciliation, the MNUPR, has remained disinterested in the TRC recommendations; it has instead pursued a policy of developing local customary leadership as a path to reconciliation.[9] The ongoing presence of ex-militant groups asking for financial compensation from the government (agreed to for the Malaita ex-militants at the end of 2015 and the Guadalcanal ex-militants at the end of 2016) has also distracted from efforts to compensate the conflict's true victims. Laore's TRC-implementation contract was not renewed, although there has been some very recent indication that the recommendations will soon be distributed to the relevant government ministries.[10] However, the TRC report has not yet been debated in parliament.

Also frustrating is the fact that because of the government's suppression of the report, followed by the legal limbo brought on by my informal digital release in April 2013, media in Solomon Islands has largely ignored it, probably fearing legal censure were they to reprint or quote it. It is also a very large document that needs condensation. While the report is freely available online, Internet service in the country is notoriously slow,

unreliable, and expensive; to print a copy would be exorbitantly expensive; indeed, even downloading it is expensive. So the report is still not as freely accessible to the general population of Solomon Islands as one would like. Even parliament's secretive tabling of the report in late 2014 was designed to ensure it did not become public. There is no indication that the online publication of the report has caused any civil disorder. Those who read it are often deeply moved by it and readers have written me to tell me they read it with tears streaming down their cheeks.

Thus, I would argue that the final report remains the enduring monument of the Solomon Islands TRC. The first volume gives a nuanced and substantial account of the conflict and its root causes. The second volume details killings, abductions/detentions, torture/ill treatment, sexual violence, property violations, and forced displacement in all theatres of the conflict. The list of two hundred killed includes the victims' names and personal details. The third volume details the impact of the conflict on women and children, the economic, health, and education sectors, details the exhumation program, and presents final recommendations. The fourth volume includes most of the transcripts of the public hearings, already available on the TRC's website (now defunct). The fifth volume contains an institutional history of the TRC, biographical details of the commissioners and senior staff, texts of the Townsville and Marau Peace Agreements and the TRC Act, as well as extensive compensation claims lists. Together, these documents are an invaluable record of the conflict. However, it is also extremely painful reading and successive Solomon Islands governments have practiced avoidance, preferring instead to continue rewarding many of the perpetrators and ignoring the victims. However, I have hope that as the details included in the final report become more widely known, this situation will change. Editing the document immersed me in a pain that I still feel. Indeed, the chair of the TRC, Father Sam Ata, died in October 2014, partly from the stress of the work he pursued and the government's refusal to publish or implement the report. The report is also his monument and that of many other faithful TRC workers.

Notes

1 Some have questioned the appropriateness of the continued use of the term *ethnic* to describe the conflict as there were certainly other causes besides ethnicity. However, that is the term the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission uses so I have retained it. For analysis of the conflict and truth commission, see Matthew G. Allen, *Greed and Grievance: Ex-Militants' Perspectives on the Conflict in Solomon Islands 1998–2003* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2013); Charles Brown Beu and Roselyn Nokise, *Mission in the Midst of Conflict: Stories from the Solomon Islands* (Suva, FJ: Pacific Theological College, 2009); Richard Anthony Carter, *In Search of the Lost: The Death and Life of Seven Peacemakers of the Melanesian Brotherhood* (Norwich, UK: Canterbury Press, 2006); Sinclair Dinnen, ed., *A Kind of Mending: Restorative Justice in the Pacific Islands* (Canberra, AU: Pandanus Books, 2003); Jon Fraenkel, *The Manipulation of Custom: From Uprising to Intervention in the Solomon Islands* (Canberra, AU: Pandanus Books, 2004); Holly L. Guthrey, *Victim Healing and Truth Commissions: Transforming Pain through Voice in the Solomon Islands and Timor-Leste* (Cham, CH: Springer, 2015); H. Guthrey and K. Brounéus, "Peering into the 'Black Box' of TRC success: Exploring Local Perceptions of Reconciliation in the Solomon Islands TRC," in *Transitional Justice in the Solomon Islands*, ed. R. Jeffrey (New York: Palgrave, 2017); Debra McDougall, *Engaging with Strangers: Love and Violence in the Rural Solomon Islands* (New York: Berghahn, 2016); Clive Moore, *The Happy Isles in Crisis: The Historical Causes for a Failing State in Solomon Islands, 1998–2004* (Canberra, AU: Asia Pacific Press, 2004); Clive Moore, "The Misappropriation of Malaita Labour: Historical Origins of the Recent Solomons Islands Crisis," *Journal of Pacific History* 42, no. 2 (2007): 211–32; Louise Vella, "Translating Transitional Justice: The Solomon Islands Truth and Reconciliation Commission," SSGM Discussion Paper 2014/2, Australian National University, https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/bitstream/1885/11757/1/Vella%20Translating%20transitional%20justice%202013.pdf (accessed 17 July 2017).

2 Ulufa'alu, though from Malaita, was thought to be sympathetic with the IFM because of his Guadalcanal landholdings and in particular his Malaitan ethno-religious background (Langa Langa and Roman Catholic).

3 Sogavare is the current (as of 2017) prime minister though there have been several intervening prime ministers since 2000. While Sogavare denies it, there have been persistent accusations that he was in some way connected with, or at the very least tipped off about, the 2000 coup. The continuing financial payments (2015 and 2016) to ex-militants rather than their victims have further encouraged this perception.

4 Bougainville had in previous years had its own militant movement, the Bougainville Revolutionary Army, which fought against the PNG government and a large Australian-owned open-pit copper mine there; their presence in Honiara during those years of conflict possibly contributed to the rise of the GRA/IFM.

5 I have documented the work of these groups in an article, "The Role of Religious Communities in Peacemaking" *Anglican Religious Life Journal* 1 (2004): 8–18.

6 The text of the Truth and Reconciliation Act and the institutional history of the TRC are included in volume 5 of the TRC report, available online at: http://pacificpolicy.org/files/2013/04/Solomon-Islands-TRC-Final-Report-Vol-5A.pdf (accessed 17 July 2017).

7 For volume 1, see http://pacificpolicy.org/files/2013/04/Solomon-Islands-TRC-Final-Report-Vol1.pdf. The same site also has the subsequent volumes.

8 By the time the Solomons Truth and Reconciliation Act was passed in 2008, the weaknesses of the full amnesty provision of the South African TRC process had become apparent. Thus, only limited amnesty was provided.

9 Carol Laore, interview with author, Honiara, SB, 9 June 2016.

10 Government speakers at the RAMSI symposium, "Understanding RAMSI's Legacy and Lessons", Honiara, SB, 28 June 2017, spoke positively of the TRC report and indicated that the recommendations would be acted upon.