

Finding a Model of Reconciliation *

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Greetings: Honourable Speaker, Honourable Prime Minister, Cabinet Ministers, Members of Parliament, Ladies and Gentlemen: I wish to thank you for inviting me to address you today. It is a genuine privilege.

The title of my talk is 'Finding a Model of Reconciliation'. That, of course, is not something I can do for this country; it is a task for citizens of the Fiji Islands; a task which seems to have increasing importance, even urgency, as the months go by. So what *can* I offer then? How can I be of assistance? Before I answer that question, let me say something about the relationship between reconciliation in Fiji and reconciliation in other places. The challenges and possibilities of reconciliation in this country are both unique, and *not* unique. They are unique because no other country has Fiji's history, its collection of peoples and cultures, its land, or its configuration of institutions. As such, Fiji needs to pursue social healing and reconstruction in a way that can only be envisioned by people intimately familiar with its land and institutions and steeped in its history and culture. On the other hand, Fiji citizens of all stripes are human beings, and together they comprise a society; there are problems and tasks common to any human society trying to repair itself after a period of political conflict and injustice.

This is where I may have a little something to offer. I am no expert on Fiji, that is for sure, but I have spent some time studying the challenges that face post-conflict societies and the possible alternatives for meeting them. During my presentation, I will outline four broad tasks that must be faced, I believe, by any society that would repair itself in the wake of extreme political disruption. My identification of these tasks is based upon the writings of political

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scientists, sociologists, and others who have worked on these issues in a variety of contexts around the world, as well as my own research in South Africa and less structured observations in such places as Canada, India, Mexico, Israel and the West Bank.

These four tasks that must be undertaken can also be seen as four steps toward reconciliation. While I argue that all post-conflict countries need to take them, I also realize that the way each country takes them will be, indeed must be, unique. Fiji will have to find its own way down this path; so, even though I have only been in your country for a year and a half, and there are many, many things about you that I do not know or understand, I will offer a few comments about the unique challenges and resources of this nation as I take you through the four steps.

First, however, a quick word about defining reconciliation. To put it simply, I would say that reconciliation is a restoration of relationship. It is the mending of a relationship that has been torn by conflict or some kind of mistreatment. This seems pretty clear when it comes to simple, personal relations, but what about reconciliation on a national level, such as that which is being pursued here in Fiji. Here the situation becomes more complicated. We are no longer talking about the restoration of a relationship, but rather restoration of an extremely complex *web* of relationships. And this restoration doesn't just involve putting the relationships back together the way they were before conflict; it also involves building new relationships and new kinds of relationships.

If we were to think of Fijian society, for example, as a complex, multi-patterned mat that had been weaved over decades, even centuries, we could say that the events of 1987 and 2000 tore that mat asunder. It now lies partially repaired, but still with large holes and some very weak threads. The current national task is not to reweave the mat the way it was in 1986 or 1999. That would be impossible. But even if it were possible, it would not be enough. The challenge is to re-weave the mat in such a way that it is both more beautiful and more resistant to tearing than it was in 1986. To run with this metaphor a little further, let me suggest that the way to achieve both goals – beauty and resistance to tearing – is to bring the existing patterns into greater harmony with each other. The patterns weaved by Indo-Fijians must be entwined more profoundly with those weaved by Indigenous Fijians. The patterns of Muslims must be entwined more profoundly with those of Christians. The patterns of the privileged must be entwined more profoundly with those of commoners and the poor. And so on. O.K., enough of the handicraft metaphors.

Let us move on to the first of the four tasks facing a country

that needs reconciliation. This is **truth-telling**. I will speak about two different kinds of truth-telling, the first being what I call '*investigative truth-telling*'. In the wake of civil strife in a country, one of the great needs of its people is a sense of security. They need to be reassured that it will not happen again. In fact, real reconciliation is almost impossible until this need is met to a significant extent. Rival ethnic groups or communities will remain suspicious and hostile toward each other. Of course, a sense of security cannot develop so long as there is no public accounting for the causes and nature of the conflict: who started it? Who was operating behind the scenes? Who gave orders? Who financed it? Who benefited from it? Uncovering and making public this kind of information is a difficult and risky task, but a necessary one for the fostering of reconciliation. As long as people feel that there are unknown instigators or power brokers 'lurking in the shadows', able to strike again, they will carry too much fear to enter into a real process of forgiveness and social healing. As I said, this kind of truth-telling can be called 'investigative'. It is often a part of truth commissions or commissions of enquiry.

In Fiji, the process of investigative truth-telling about the May 2000 coup has been going on for some time. This has taken place during a series of highly publicised trials. Trials such as these have their advantages and disadvantages when it comes to investigative truth-telling. They are good for examining evidence and testing the validity of accusations, but because of restricted rules of procedure and the reluctance of guilty parties to be forthcoming, they often do not get the whole story out. I will leave you with the question of whether the country will need some kind of commission of investigation or inquiry to further truth-telling after the series of trials has ended.

Of course there is also the need to examine the historical animosities and inequalities that go back much further than May 2000 and which have been catalysts for the coups. What about scrutinizing these deep-rooted tensions in a profound way, but also in a way that causes members of different communities and ethnic groups to sympathise with each other's plight instead of generating more hostility? The truth commission in Germany appointed a team of professors and researchers to study that country's history.

A different kind of truth-telling is also needed for reconciliation. This involves giving victims, those who were hurt or lost property during the time of conflict, a public forum in which to share their stories. What is the value of this? It meets three objectives that are very important for social healing and reconciliation: acknowledgment of suffering, abandonment of resentment, and sharing of perspectives. It is often impossible to return to victims

perspectives. It is often impossible to return to victims what they have lost, and it is always impossible to erase their painful memories. How can society come to their aid? Public acknowledgment of their suffering can be like a balm on their mental wounds, especially if it is accompanied by apologies from those who hurt them or statements of sympathy by important public officials. This 'balm', along with the empowerment and release of emotion that can come with sharing one's story in a public forum, can help victims surrender the resentment they feel toward those who hurt them or toward groups with whom they have been in conflict. Psychologists tell us that such a release of resentment is key to forgiveness. This kind of truth-telling can be called '*narrative truth-telling*'.

Of course, it is rarely the case that one side of a conflict is made up solely of innocent victims and the other side of guilty perpetrators. Usually both sides see themselves as the wronged party. When this is the case, narrative truth-telling can be structured so that representatives of each side tell their story in the hearing of the other side. In this way, each group comes to better understand the history, sufferings, and motivations of the other, each group has its sufferings acknowledged, and, hopefully, each group starts to surrender resentment toward the other.

It is important to point out that this kind of dialogue must be structured in a culturally sensitive and appropriate way. What works for one country does not always work for others. White North Americans, for example, can argue, criticise each other, exchange heated words and then shake hands and move on feeling that they have had a helpful and frank discussion. In Bougainville, I am told, a dialogue between two parties that talked in this way would never work. It would lead to further hostilities and bring about the opposite of reconciliation.

I know that the National Council for Reconciliation has been out in the various districts carrying out interventions that amount to narrative truth-telling. Its members, with officials from the Ministry of Reconciliation, have listened to the complaints of communities affected by the troubles in 2000, have brought alienated parties together for traditional reconciliation ceremonies, and have laid the groundwork for more such encounters. Is it appropriate to consider undertaking a much larger initiative of this kind – one that crosses racial, social, and economic boundaries, one that is done in a visible way so that all Fiji citizens can witness the storytelling and see reconciliation be modelled?

Let us move on to the second of the four key tasks, about which I will offer only a brief word. This has to do with **apology**

and **the claiming of responsibility**. When a community or society has suffered great wounds because of violence and wrongdoing, it cannot find reconciliation and put these ghosts behind itself until the responsible people identify themselves, admit to their misdeeds, and apologise. When the apology does come, it can have positive effects for all concerned. The persons who apologise are released not only from guilt, but also from the burden of having to defend and justify themselves while knowing deep down that they have done wrong. They are released from bonds they themselves have created. Their victims, and all who suffer from the disruption they caused, are also comforted. They are comforted to know that the offenders see that they have done wrong; they are comforted to know that the offenders also suffer from their actions; they are comforted to know that the offenders have abandoned attempts to justify these actions. Under these circumstances victims are more likely to be liberated from the resentment they carry.

Now, I have described apology in somewhat ideal terms. Some difficulties must be mentioned. First and foremost is the fact that wrongdoers are usually very reluctant to cast off all psychological (and perhaps legal) protection and apologise. It is hard work to bring them to a place where they will be willing to do this. Even then, it is important that they apologise in a sensitive and skilful manner. Botched or half-hearted apologies can do more harm than good.

It is not clear to me how much apologising has gone on in Fiji. It has been reported to me that George Speight has undergone a change of heart during the long hours he has to reflect on Nukulau Island. Is he willing to offer an apology for the 2000 coup? Are some of his collaborators willing to do this? Mr. Rabuka has also undergone a certain change of heart over the years as evidenced by his public statements. I don't know how much apologising he has done, but I wonder if he would be willing to claim some responsibility for creating a culture of coups in this country.

I use this phrase 'claim some responsibility' intentionally. Apologies can be good in and of themselves but they are even more affective when the apologisers take the moral weight of their actions upon themselves and commit to go further and work to undo the harm they have done. This can involve the payment of restitution, the performance of community service, or the voluntary forgoing of such things as public office or positions in institutions like the police or the military.

Again, it is important to look back further than the coups to the long-standing tensions between various sections of Fijian society. It would be very powerful to have leaders of these sections come together to offer mutual apologies for the hurt their peoples have

caused each other over the years. These leaders do not offer apologies as wrongdoers, but as representatives of their social constituencies.

The third task facing post-conflict societies is **justice-building**. While truth-telling and apologies can go a long way toward making a society feel more secure and to prepare it for reconciliation, they are usually not enough. We have a human instinct for justice, and we feel betrayed when those who have done wrong go unpunished – especially if their victims are not compensated. Truth-telling can be seen as the foundation of a reconciliation process, but that foundation must be built upon. A good place to begin is with measures oriented toward both *retributive* (punitive) and *restorative* justice. Let us look at each in turn.

Retributive justice basically means punishment. It can come in 'hard' forms like criminal prosecutions and jail sentences or in softer forms such as lustration (removal from one's position in government or the security forces). Retributive justice has two great values: one, it deters further violations and, two, it makes the public feel that the 'scales of justice' are being balanced. Both go a long way toward creating the atmosphere of security and the perception of fairness that are needed before true reconciliation can happen.

One of the problems with retributive justice in the form of a series of criminal trials is that it can take a very long time. Another is that it usually makes perpetrators reluctant to share the truth about their actions and accomplices. These complications can get in the way of truth-telling and delay or subvert reconciliation. Some countries (South Africa being the best known example) have struck a compromise and offered pardon for perpetrators as long as they cooperated fully with the truth-telling process. Another option is to follow through with the series of trials and then offer a reduction of sentence to those who have been convicted in return for more extensive revelations about their crimes – i.e. who were their accomplices, who offered financial support, who was involved in planning, and so on.

In the wake of the 2000 coup, Fiji has taken the path of retributive justice in the form of criminal and military trials. This has some very concrete benefits. In a country that has had three coups in less than fifteen years, there is a great danger of creating a 'culture of coups'. Deterrent measures that will make future prospective coup-makers think twice, are invaluable. The trials force a re-evaluation of the institutions that failed at the time of the coup. The victims of 2000's political violence witness the country saying a

clear 'no' to the actions of those who hurt them, directly or indirectly, and they also witness the administration of punishment for those actions. This may enable them to surrender some of their resentment, which is key to moving on to forgiveness.

But when the series of trials has ended, you will still be left with decisions. How will offenders be reconciled to their victims when they return to the community? What about the possibility of mercy for those like Mr. Speight who were given long jail terms? If Mr. Speight were pardoned, would that advance the work of reconciliation or would it just undo the deterrent value of his sentence? Is there a way to balance these goals?

While retributive justice is oriented toward punishing the guilty, *restorative justice* seeks to compensate victims and rebuild communities. This compensation can come in the form of material reimbursement, psychological aid (e.g. treatment for trauma victims), or symbolic recompense (e.g. providing memorials for those who died). Such measures are often called 'reparations' and can be granted to individuals, families, or whole communities. Reparations to communities usually do not come in the form of cash, but through such initiatives as the improvement of community services or facilities. Restorative justice is especially important where retributive justice cannot be fully achieved. It helps people feel that, even if the scales of justice cannot be fully balanced, sincere attempts were made to address the wrongs committed. Perhaps the most important aspect of restorative justice is its ability to revive the dignity of victims.

Some possible examples of reparations for Fiji would be: the rebuilding of homes that were destroyed in 2000; providing money to people whose businesses suffered or went under; or the upgrading of social infrastructures in communities that were split during the conflict. I know that the National Council for Reconciliation and the Ministry have been doing some of this. You need to be careful here. If such measures are not administered in a fair and systematic way, they will seem to show bias to certain parts of the citizenry.

Retributive and restorative measures can sometimes be combined, as when perpetrators are convicted and sentenced to community service in the places where they committed their crimes.

A quick word about another kind of justice that is relevant. This is *distributive justice*. As I understand it, economic inequality is growing in Fiji, as in most of the world. This seems to be an inevitable aspect of globalisation, but it can be very counterproductive when it comes to reconciliation. People who are underprivileged, who do not have the same access to education, health care, or

economic opportunity as some other members of their society, rightly see themselves as victims. They are generally in no mood to patch up their differences with their enemies, especially if they feel that these enemies have better access to these social goods. In fact, people with this attitude are extremely vulnerable to ethnic nationalism, religious nationalism, or other disruptive movements. They often become the unthinking foot soldiers of angry or unscrupulous opportunists in search of political power.

The fourth step on the path to reconciliation is **healing**. Social upheaval wounds people as both individuals and communities. As a result, it is common to see crime rates, family breakups and violence, and other social ills increase in its wake. Both the wounds and the ills they produce have a strong negative effect on social stability, hampering the prospects for reconciliation. When a society has undergone these kinds of experiences, the need for healing is great, and must be perceived at two levels.

First, is *individual* healing. People who have experienced violence, people who have lost loved ones, people who have had their homes destroyed or have been forced to flee them, people who have experienced great fear; all these individuals are very susceptible to traumatic stress disorders. Those who suffer from such disorders are more likely to engage in violent or criminal action, to turn to drugs or alcohol, to experience family crisis or break-up, to lose their jobs, or to get into other kinds of trouble. For their sake, as well as for the sake of their communities, it is important that they find some kind of healing. Unfortunately, very few of the people we turn to for such help – ministers, social workers, etc. – are trained to identify or treat traumatic disorders. In a country that has experienced strong conflict, providing such training and organizing treatment programs is extremely important.

Second, there is the healing of *communities*. Dialogue between people in conflict is crucial for communal healing, but such dialogue must be carefully managed. It is important that it happens in such a way that opposing parties come to better understand and sympathise with each other instead of using the dialogue to further bash each other. Traditional healing rituals can be very helpful here, but they can also cause problems. For example, reconciliation rituals performed when members of the community are still feeling strong resentment and victims have not been acknowledged or compensated can be premature and can actually cause an increase in resentment. This makes further conflict more, not less, likely. Another challenge is to find ceremonies or rituals that

honour the culture of people from different ethnic groups.

I have learned about the great need for both individual trauma healing and community healing in Fiji from your ministers and priests and from NGOs such as ECREA (Ecumenical Center for Research, Education and Advocacy). I think there is a real challenge facing this country. It has two sides. The first side has to do with developing human resources in this area: getting qualified trauma counsellors and community mediators; training priests and other religious workers as well as social workers and medical professionals in the recognition and appropriate response to trauma; and so on. The second side has to do with developing programs of treatment and mediation that are true to the peoples and cultures of these islands. It's fine to have trauma therapists or mediators trained in the United States, but they will do better work if they modify their approaches to fit the cultures and religions of Fiji's citizens.

Many, many things could be said about these four steps toward reconciliation that I have outlined. I will spare you, and instead burden your bureaucrats in the Ministry of National Reconciliation and Unity with my advice. But allow me to say one final word about the development of a model of reconciliation for this country. It is the same advice that I would offer to leaders of any country: be careful about rushing too quickly to a model for your process of reconciliation. The adoption of a foreign model, the South African Truth Commission for example, without testing it and modifying it to fit the needs of this country could cause as many problems as it solves. Whatever model is arrived at, if it is truly to meet the needs of your diverse population will have to be worked on and refined over a period of months with plenty of opportunities for individual citizens, academics, religious organizations, political organizations, NGOs, community and business leaders and others to give their input. If it is to truly work for the people, it will have to rise from the people.

Discussion

Member: The explanations sort of relate to incidents which require reconciliation in broad terms, as I understand it. Looking towards the future, considering the situation we are in, what are some prerequisites in ensuring that genuine reconciliation can be achieved in terms of what is done by the government, the policy makers and so forth?

Daye: I would say that in a society that has experienced conflict (and which ones have not these days), government measures should be appropriate to the distance in terms of time from the disruptive events. When there has been a coup, what the government can do in the immediate wake of that coup is limited. I think some of the things that the Ministry and the National Council have done have been quite appropriate. For example, they have gone into communities in a low profile way and opened up dialogue; they have identified communities that were really broken and experiencing a lot of tension, and in calm, low-key ways worked through the leadership, maybe through the religious leadership, to repair relationships.

Secondly, the ministry has tried more visible initiatives focused on generating pride in the country: shifting people's attention away from their ethnic identities, towards political citizenship, generating pride in the country of the Fiji Islands as a whole, beyond racial divisions. These are very helpful, and usually non-controversial, measures. Once you have moved through a couple of years of that kind of work, then you have to ask the question about work that involves greater risk.

I really would have liked to come here this morning and to give a speech that says everything that needs to be done towards reconciliation is nice and does not involve risk. But what we are learning from all the different countries that have tried reconciliation processes is that not taking risks is a big risk. Only doing non-controversial measures means that discontent simmers underneath the surface and will explode in its own way in the future. There is no guarantee that if you do take risky measures it will not explode again. This is like peacekeepers removing mines from a minefield – it is dangerous business, but that is no argument for leaving the mines there because then the children end up stumbling into the fields and finding the mines instead of the peacekeepers.

You asked a very good question. What I cannot answer is this: psychologically, how distant from the coup and other violence is the population of this country? How ready are citizens for some of the more risky measures that I have outlined? When the wise men and the wise women of this country decide that there is some readiness, then some of the other measures I referred to can help, measures like narrative truth telling, getting people together in structured ways to discuss things.

I would say that healing programmes can be non-controversial. There is not a great deal of risk in building up an infrastructure, a human resource infrastructure of healers, thera-

pists, and religious leaders who can treat people who are wounded or deeply angry about what has happened. Also things like the 'pride in your country initiatives' can happen in your country and can go on. I think it is good fortune that the SPG is coming here at this time. It is a good thing for the country. It is a good thing to develop some kind of national pride at this stage.

Member: Firstly, thank you very much for your excellent presentation. In the case of Fiji, from what you have gathered, what is your opinion about the fact that the Department of Reconciliation remains within the government framework? In our circumstance, would you think that for improved progress in this area, and based on the kinds of situations that people have endured, that a more independent structure for reconciliation removed from government would be a more appropriate method to apply in our case?

Daye: I knew someone was going to ask that question because it is a good one. I think that there is no problem in having a Ministry of Reconciliation and you will know that the Ministry has succeeded in its task when it is time for it to disappear. But I also think that you are right, or the concern that gives rise to your question is correct. If there is going to be a model developed and then a process carried through, it is to the advantage of the country to create some distance between the leadership of that process and the government. This is one of the great lessons from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

It succeeded brilliantly in some of its tasks. It succeeded in truth telling and in creating sympathy for the victims. It succeeded in reassuring white South Africans that blacks were not going to rise up as one and carry out vengeance against them. It succeeded brilliantly in reassuring black South Africans that the white generals were not going to take over the country again. I do not think that could have happened if the Truth and Reconciliation Commission had been under the thumb of the ANC, or had become progressively more politicized. Political life goes on and the motivations, goals, and contingencies of a government change over time. If your reconciliation process is blown this way and that way in the wind of political happenings it is not going to work.

I have no trouble with there being a Ministry of Reconciliation. I have no trouble with its laying some groundwork, but once a process is identified, there is a sound logic for providing some distance between the leadership of that process and the formal government, and also for having a very carefully constructed balance – an ethnic, social, religious, economic balance – in the leadership of that initiative. I think that must answer your question.

Member: Dr Daye, you mentioned something about the process taking a long period. I believe that in a small country like Fiji, if we were to be engaged in the various processes that you have elaborated upon just now, and if we were to escape the coup culture, we need to engage in this process in a very short period. I believe we can do this within three or five years so that we can save the next generation from engaging in coups.

Daye: Three to five years is not so bad. I was thinking of that as kind of long. A point I would like to make is that there is reconciliation and there is reconciliation. You could go through a brilliantly planned three to five year process that causes the surrender of a lot of resentment, that makes people really feel secure that there will not be any more coups, that really generates some positive feelings between formerly rival groups. But your land issue is not going to be settled. Your dependence on multi-national corporations and global finance institutions and these kinds of arrangements that make life so difficult for developing countries – that is not going to be resolved. The education gap will probably not be solved by then.

You are really talking about two different kinds of things. You are talking about a certain window of opportunity or a certain horizon of opportunity for undoing some of the damage and constructing good feelings so that you can go on with the long work of facing the enduring challenges. If you think about the land issue, this is not going to be solved any day soon, but if a reconciliation process can generate some co-operation, some working together from different sides on issues like that, then it would be a gift to the future.

Member: Thank you Dr Daye for your delivery to us today. In my thinking and perhaps relating to what [Honorable member] has mentioned, I summarise what you have mentioned as the objective – to heal and to reconcile, if I read what you are saying. Communities should heal themselves and reconcile. Related to what the [Honorable member] said, in your experience and from your research, does it also look into an objective of this sort of activity that includes looking at the structures of the country? Does it become part of the resolution or a part of the programme, and at the end you recommend the most ideal structures for the State? Does the extent of civil war or the extent of conflict justify these sorts of actions and do you think it is relevant in the case of Fiji? Should Fiji take this path and go forward?

Daye: The first question, I will not give it as much attention as it deserves. I would say there is a great danger in bringing other problems into the reconciliation process. For example, if you try to deal with land conflict within the reconciliation process here you are in trouble because it is such a big and deeply rooted conflict. How can you solve that in three to five years? What you end up doing is creating expectations that cannot be met. I think it is more appropriate to focus on a narrow range of goals and try to generate goodwill that can be later used towards a broader range of goals. I also think that you can manage the transition if you have a reconciliation process that works well and builds relationships.

In South Africa, for example, at the end of the Truth Commission you had a white Deputy Chairman and an African Chairman who worked hand in hand. That was a really good relationship but can you turn that relationship towards solving other problems? I think you're putting your thumb on something that comes at the end of a reconciliation process, which is the managing of the transition beyond that process to other challenges.

In your second question, if I understood it correctly, you are asking whether violations of human rights and other abuses are bad enough in this country for you to need a formal reconciliation process. You have not gone through the same kind of suffering that Bougainville, South Africa, Chile, and Argentina have gone through, for example. The indigenous people of Canada and Australia have suffered much worse fates than any single population group in this country. That is true, but when I arrived in this country I was surprised at how deeply embedded the conflicts were and how much they were 'in your face'. I did not expect that. So few people had died here in political violence that I did not really expect myself to start thinking as though I was living in a post-conflict situation, but I have. I can only explain that in an intuitive way, which is to say that in my gut I feel there is real tension here. Maybe you do not need the same model as South Africa where there was almost a real bloodbath, but I think you need something.

Member: I ask two questions, if I may. The first one is: is your concept of reconciliation in the context of your lecture this morning, necessarily based on wrong-doing, that is, somebody has been wronged, and somebody has been wronged so you necessarily then look at reconciling them? Is that the kind of concept of reconciliation that you are looking at? Associated with that, what if it is not that and it is another kind of conflict resolution that may exist in only one party being unhappy with itself for a number of rea-

sons? What is your solution to that? Dr. Daye, even if it was a court situation where there is a wrongdoer and there is a group of wronged persons, do you have a system other than reconciliation available under the researches that you have undertaken in the past?

Daye: Those are again very important questions. The thing is, wherever you have had a big conflict, some people will have done some bad things and so you have to deal with the issue of what you will do with them. This country is sending people to jail for certain actions so there is a decision or judgment being made on the part of society that says 'some people have done some very bad things and we have to come to terms with that'.

I now make reference to your last question. There are other ways to deal with it. At the Ministry recently, we heard a presentation from Brother Pat Hogan about using traditional restorative justice measures, traditional custom law to deal with it. There are a variety of ways you can approach that. I did not get into the details in my presentation because my presentation already had too many details, but it is an interesting topic that I would be happy to explore further. Again, I would say, to find alternative ways it is important to reach deep into the cultural resources of this country. But of course not just one culture because this country has multiple cultures.

What about the conflict that really does not have to do with people doing anything wrong? Something that surprises me is that I do not often hear Fiji citizens pointing out that your history, your colonial legacy has left you in a situation where there are deeply structural tensions. If you look at countries around the world that were part of the British Empire, where you have a very large number of indentured workers left behind at the end of colonialism, you find great tensions. Look at Uganda. Look at what happened with the people of East Indian descent in Uganda at the time of Idi Amin. Look at Guyana and to a certain extent, Trinidad. There is a man from Fiji who has done some very interesting work on that.

Part of the reconciliation process is to get people in different social constituencies and different ethnic groups of this country to sit down and to say, 'we are all suffering from a colonial legacy that left us with one group of people owning the land and another group of people largely dominant in a mercantile system (although that seems to be changing somewhat), one group of people that seems to be oriented towards the civil service for professional advancement, and another group of people seems to be oriented towards business'. How can you be oriented towards something other than business when you cannot own land? Nobody in this

room set that system up.

It sounds like I am blaming the colonial authorities, but some of the colonial authorities, I think, made very good decisions and some of them made bad decisions. But this is a history that you have been saddled with. Is there a way to bring a sense of mutual burden into the future? Is there a way for a reconciliation process to engender a sense of common purpose in all this and to stop the fighting back and forth? That is the question I have.

Member: I think while Dr Daye was responding to some of the questions by the [Honorable Member], he had probably picked my question. Reconciliation can be addressed from two sides taking into consideration our current situation – the hierarchies and the grassroots level. What process do you think the country is facing today? On that note, what process do you have to deliver the top end as well as the bottom end? You have mentioned that we should use the NGOs, the churches, religious organizations groups and advisory councilors. How would that common goal you want to reach trickle down to the ordinary citizens as well as those at the top end? Do you have anything in the reconciliation process?

Daye: It is a very good question that you asked. One of the mistakes that other reconciliation processes around the world have made is that they have not engaged the various instruments of civil society enough in the process. They have not used churches enough; they have not used mosques enough; they have not used NGOs enough; and they have not used cultural groups enough. I am very impressed at the richness of your civil society here – your religious, cultural and sporting organizations. If you could turn all the energy people put into organizing sports in this country into organizing reconciliation, it would happen within three years. I think that your reconciliation process needs to engage all these instruments of civil society from the word go. It should consult with ECREA; consult with the Fiji Council of Churches; consult with the various Hindu, Muslim and Sikh organizations; consult with farmers' associations. It would be wise to use the cultural energy and the patterns of organization that people have already established in this country towards the goal of reconciliation; build it into the process and they will own it.

To finish, let me throw in a very trendy academic term, which is 'social capital'. Social capital is all of the trust and relationship building and networks that have been established in a society. It is something that makes it strong. If you look around the world you will find that all countries have got social capital, but it is not always shared among all members. Let us take Bosnia as an ex-

ample. You have social capital that only the Bosnian Muslims will spend amongst each other. And then you have social capital that the Bosnian Serbs spend among themselves, without sharing it with Muslim neighbours. There is social richness on each side of the divide, but it is not pooled together for the benefit of all.

I think an important task of a reconciliation process is to bring organisations of civil society into co-operation that crosses ethnic, political, and religious boundaries. That is why I like *Interfaith Search Fiji*. Once you can cross those boundaries and have one kind of social capital that works for everyone in the country, you are really on the right path.

(Vote of thanks moved by [Honorable Member])

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