Paul Kelly–“New strategic vision for Australia”

Paul Kelly, The Australian’s Editor-at-Large and well-known international affairs commentator, spoke on Australia’s future in a public lecture co-hosted by the Griffith Asia Pacific Research Institute and the Australian Institute of International Affairs on the Nathan Campus on September 3. Mr Kelly explained the need for Australia to develop a new strategic vision if it is, at the very least, to maintain its current middle power status in the Asia-Pacific. He indicated that the costs of not doing so would result in Australia’s economy lagging far behind its neighbours by the middle of the 21st century. Mr Kelly spoke at length on the need for Australia to further open its economy and maintain population growth while also further developing the economy’s ability to adapt quickly to changing areas of comparative advantage.

In line with an overall theme that stressed the need for Australians to embrace openness and diversification, Mr Kelly also prescribed a multidimensional approach to Australia’s foreign policy, with particular emphasis on the importance of not restricting political and economic ties to only our traditional partners. “We need to engage and deepen our ties with Asia and the US, but we should not be limited by these ties,” he explained. Indeed, the central issue concerning Australia’s future, in Mr Kelly’s view, is our “real role and purpose in the world” given Australia’s relative isolation and inability to join in the global trend of political/economic union with other states. While noting Australia’s history of alignment with larger powers and the difficulties of achieving self-reliance, he pointed to the current use of US power and America’s current approach to the war on terror as examples of why Australians should consider “what kind of America is Australia drawing towards?”.

Mr Kelly’s national strategy rests upon the assumption that Australia has become globally competitive and can continue to hold its own in trade and investment terms. His “strategic vision” involves five inter-related priorities: “a growth economy that maximizes our GDP performance and hence the future size of our economy; an emphasis on a high productivity knowledge based economy; strong on-going population growth that avoids the European malaise of population stabilization or decline; a foreign policy that is genuinely global; and a soft power as well as a hard power strategy”. Both the economy and the knowledge economy require greater investment in education and a generally greater commitment to higher education from all Australians. The growth of Australia’s population in tandem with the economy is in order to ensure that our “economic weight” (currently fourth in Asia and fourteenth in the world in GDP terms) does not diminish relative to the growth our neighbours are expected to achieve over the next fifty years.

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Editorial: From Brisbane to Beijing

The public lectures featured in this issue demonstrate Griffith University's strong commitment to discussion of current issues within the community. One lecture was on recent events in Indonesia, our near neighbour. Dr Tim Lindsey from the University of Melbourne talked about the Bali bombing trials in terms of contemporary Indonesian law. The other was on Australia, the region and the world. Mr Paul Kelly, the Australian's Editor at Large and a Griffith Asia Pacific Council member, expounded on “a new strategic vision for Australia” in the twenty-first century.

The program of the Griffith Asia Pacific Research Institute (GAPRI) reflects these concerns. Our focus is on global and regional interactions and their impact on nation-states in the Asia Pacific. Our researchers confront key issues in the region and the world that surface daily in Australian newspapers: ongoing opportunities such as tourism, trade and investment as well as new challenges such as terrorism, religious fundamentalism and pandemics.

The Griffith Asia Pacific Research Institute (GAPRI) is now approved as a major research centre within the University. This status enhances Griffith's reputation as a centre in Asia Pacific studies, building on the University's established profile in Asian Studies and International Business and its new offerings in, for example, International Relations in Brisbane and on the Gold Coast and a joint Masters of Public Health program with Peking University in Beijing. Our research is not confined to the academy. We continue to mount a vigorous community and regional program that reflects our interests, our expertise and our extensive networks.

Paul Kelly—“New strategic vision for Australia”

Continued from Page 1

The final priority in Mr Kelly's strategic vision is to rebuild Australian “soft power”, something he believes has diminished under the Howard government. While highlighting recent soft power successes, such as Australia’s peacekeeping role in East Timor and the Sydney Olympics, he stressed the importance of maintaining an “inclusive political culture” and described John Howard's refugee policy as a disaster for Australia's image and its capacity for soft power. According to Mr Kelly, the power of persuasion, rather than coercion, is essential for middle-powers like Australia and our failure in this regard is made evident by our declining influence in the United Nations and the international criticism some Australian policies have attracted in recent years.
“Will Amrosi go free? Retrospectivity, the Bali bomb trials and the army”

According to a University of Melbourne specialist in Indonesian law, convicted Bali bomber Amrosi could be set free under the provisions of Indonesia’s constitution. At a Griffith Asia Pacific Research Institute sponsored public lecture on September 11, attended by the Chancellor, Ms Leneen Forde, Associate Professor Tim Lindsey, Director of the Asian Law Centre, explained that Amrosi’s conviction for his role in last year’s Bali bombing could be overturned because the retrospective application of anti-terrorism legislation in his trial appears to be in breach of Indonesia’s 1945 constitution.

This situation, according to Associate Professor Lindsey, places the Indonesian authorities in the difficult position of choosing between upholding the conviction of a high profile terrorist or upholding the rule of law. This decision now rests with Indonesia’s recently established Constitutional Court, which is likely to be heavily criticised regardless of the position it takes. Adding further to the court’s problems is the closely related issue of how its decision on Amrosi’s fate will affect the prosecution of members of the Indonesian military currently facing charges over the militia violence during East Timor’s independence vote. Because the human rights law under which eighteen Indonesian soldiers have been charged also has been applied retrospectively, their future is now tied to that of Amrosi.

Indeed, as Associate Professor Lindsey pointed out, a great deal more than only the successful prosecution of a suspected terrorist is at stake, not least of which are the rule of law and the separation of powers. And like the constitutional court, the military is facing the problem of how it can support the constitutional rights of its own without at the same time appearing to be “soft on terrorism”. Associate Professor Lindsey believes that “support exists to exonerate the military from the East Timor charges”, but noted that considerable domestic and international pressure is being exerted to ensure that Amrosi’s conviction and sentence stand. He sees the current conflict between legal and political imperatives as being primarily the legacy of endemic incompetence and corruption within Indonesia’s legal system, and points to the prosecution’s failure to satisfactorily demonstrate Abu Bakar Ba’asyir’s role as the leader of Jemaah Islamiyah, the group authorities believe to have been behind the Bali bombing and other attacks in Indonesia, as another example of the system’s dysfunctional character.

The prosecution’s case against Ba’asyir was, in Lindsey’s view, “shaky”, leaving the judges with little choice other than to acquit the Muslim cleric of the charges implicating him in the activities of Jemaah Islamiyah. The combination of a lack of hard evidence (partly due to refusals by the Bush administration to supply US held witnesses) and a very inexperienced prosecution team left little hope for his conviction on the most serious charges, particularly since Ba’asyir’s defence lawyer is widely regarded as the country’s best defence council. The trial was, therefore, a no contest, largely because of the prosecution’s
GAPRI hosts visit by Chinese delegation

Griffith Asia Pacific Research Institute (GAPRI) hosted a visit by a delegation from the China Association for International Friendly Contact in August 2003. The delegation was led by Mr Li Changshun, Vice Chairman, China Association for International Friendly Contact, and included Mr Cai Wenzhong, Director, Ms Gan Suqing, Researcher and Deputy Director, Ms Chen Ting, Associate Researcher, Deputy Director of American and Oceanic Department, and Mr Lei Shi, Division Director, all from the Centre for Peace and Development Studies.

The delegation contributed papers to a workshop on the topic “Prospects for Security in Northeast Asia” held during their visit. Speakers covered possible threats to the security of northeast Asia such as the North Korea nuclear crisis, and the position of Taiwan. Speakers included Mr Cai Wenshong and Ms Gan Suqing from the China Association for International Friendly Contact and Associate Professor Russell Trood from GAPRI and Dr Rod Lyon from the Department of Political Science and International Studies, The University of Queensland.

Asia Pacific visitors since July 2003

- Dr Seo-Hang Lee, Professor of Security Studies, Tae-Hyo Thomas Kim, Assistant Professor, and Kim Won-soo, Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Seoul, South Korea - 25 July 2003 (see picture this page)
- Dr Thee Kian Wie, Senior Economist in the Economic Research Centre of the Indonesian Institute of Sciences, Indonesia, the 2003 Sir Allan Sewell Visiting Fellow in Griffith Asia Pacific Research Institute - August-September 2003 (see article p.5)
- Mr Li Changshun, Vice Chairman, China Association for International Friendly Contact, Mr Cai Wenzhong, Director, Centre for Peace and Development Studies, Ms Gan Suqing, Researcher and Deputy Director, Centre for Peace and Development Studies, Ms Chen Ting, Associate Researcher, Deputy Director of American and Oceanic Department, Centre for Peace and Development Studies, and Mr Lei Shi, Division Director, Centre for Peace and Development Studies, China Association for International Friendly Contact, Beijing, China - 2-5 August 2003 (see article this page)
- Mr Zhang Zhuanggu, Counsellor of the Chinese Embassy, Mr Huan Nianping, Second Secretary (Education Section), and Mr Zhang Shizhuan, Second Secretary (Education Section) - 27 August 2003
- Mr Colin Heseltine, Australian Ambassador to Seoul, South Korea - 22 September 2003

Below: Dr Seo-Hang Lee, Professor of Security Studies, Tae-Hyo Thomas Kim, Assistant Professor, and Kim Won-soo, Institute of Foreign Affairs and National Security, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Seoul, South Korea with Associate Professor Russell Trood, School of International Business and Asian Studies, Griffith University
Asia Pacific visitors since July 2003

GAPRI hosts 2003 Sir Allan Sewell Visiting Fellow

Dr Thee Kian Wie, Economic Historian in the Economic Research Centre, Indonesian Institute of Sciences in Jakarta was awarded the 2003 Sir Allan Sewell Fellowship, hosted by Griffith Asia Pacific Research Institute. During his two month visit to Griffith Dr Thee gave a research seminar and guest lecture as well as completing much research. Dr Thee shares some of his impressions of Griffith and Brisbane:

Aside from my academic activities at GAPRI, I utilised my first visit to Brisbane to see several places of interest in the city including the Queensland Museum and the Queensland Art Gallery. On my first Sunday in Brisbane, I had a first hand experience of Australian kindness to foreigners when I took a bus ride to downtown Brisbane. On my way back to Griffith University, I absentmindedly got on a wrong bus and ended up in what seemed to me one of the empty outskirts of Brisbane. I was the only passenger left, and the bus driver told me that I had to wait one hour before the bus would return to the City. The bus driver told me the bus did not go into the Nathan Campus, but kindly drew a rough map, indicating which path I had to walk back to arrive at the Circuit of the Nathan campus, and warning me that if I took a different foot path, that I would end up in the cemetery!

While sleepily waiting for the bus to ride back, I suddenly heard the bus driver talking to what seemed to me the central bus station, requesting whether he could give a ride back ‘a bloke who got stranded in Algester Road’ to the Nathan campus. Apparently, permission was not given. Soon, however, another empty bus drove by, apparently on the way back to the bus pool. I heard the bus driver asking his friend whether he would care to ride ‘the stranded bloke’ back to the Nathan campus. The second bus driver did not mind, so at 10 pm I was taken back hungry, but safe and well, to the Nathan campus. Needless to say, I gave both bus drivers a hearty and grateful handshake. Obviously, this experience made a very great impression on me, indicating how friendly and helpful ordinary Australians can be to foreigners they don’t know at all.

I extend my great appreciation and sincere thanks for a very pleasant and rewarding time at GAPRI.

Graduate Profile – Adam Kamradt-Scott

Adam Kamradt-Scott, dual international scholarship winner

For Adam Kamradt-Scott the chance to study at the University of Wales (Aberystwyth) was simply too good an opportunity to pass up, so he swapped the sun-drenched Queensland skies for the wet Welsh coastline! Recently Adam was accepted to begin his PhD studies in the area of Global Health Governance at the UWA’s new Centre for Health And International Relations (CHAIR). The Centre is due to open in September 2003, and Adam is one of the first students to be accepted. As one of the first-ever recipients of the CHAIR scholarship, Adam has also been awarded an ORSAS award, which will mean he will be fully funded throughout his studies.

Adam has a long history with Griffith University. After completing his Bachelor of Nursing degree in 1994, Adam went on to work as a Registered Nurse in the emergency departments of the Royal Brisbane Hospital and the Mater Private Hospital – South Brisbane. While nursing he undertook further undergraduate studies in Asian Studies, but later transferred into the Master of Arts in International Studies program in 2001. After graduating in July 2002, Adam was employed as the Mater Health Services’ Clinical Risk Management Coordinator, and was instrumental in establishing the Mater’s Patient Safety program.

But it was his experiences at Griffith University that Adam said have enabled him to pursue this new direction in International Politics. Supervised by Associate Professor Russell Trood, Adam completed his master’s thesis in June 2002 on the human security and political implications of infectious diseases. “My time at Griffith has just been fantastic. All the support and encouragement that I received from the School of International Business and Asian Studies’ staff – in particular Professor Trood, Dr Bradshaw, and Dr Farquhar, has been tremendous. I put it all down to the quality of supervision and support from these people, that I have been able to make the rather big ‘jump’ from nursing to International Politics! Being able to research new areas has been such a rewarding experience, and I am very proud to have said that I’ve studied at Griffith University.”

Graduate Profile – Adam Kamradt-Scott
Conserving tropical fruit species in Southeast Asia

Associate Professor Rod Drew and colleagues Drs Sarah Ashmore and Mahmoud Azimi-Tabrizi, Faculty of Science, have just completed a month-long training course for colleagues from Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines.

The course on cryopreservation techniques for tropical fruit species will complement the activities of an Asian Development Bank (ADB) funded project on “Conservation and use of Tropical Fruit Species Biodiversity in Asia” that is being implemented in 10 Asian countries by the International Plant Genetic Resources Institute.

Tropical fruit species are gaining increasing importance worldwide due to their nutritional importance in the human diet and their significant role in environmental protection and income generation. Of the 400 tropical fruit species in the Asia-Pacific and Oceania region, only a few are being exploited commercially. Several species have tremendous potential for commercial use; however, many are subject to genetic erosion and some are rapidly approaching extinction.

The development of cryopreservation methods and alternative strategies for conservation and regeneration is extremely important if we are to conserve the genetic resources of these species for future generations,” Dr Rod Drew said.

The new cost-effective and efficient techniques of cryopreservation will be used by national genebanks for selected species. The representatives from the participating countries have now returned home to apply the research techniques in their respective countries and share the information learnt with colleagues.

Asia Pacific activities of the Multi-Faith Centre

The Griffith University Multi-Faith Centre (MFC), founded with the support of diverse faith communities in May 2002 and directed by Prof. Toh Swee-Hin since June 2003, recently participated in several educational activities and events in the Asia-Pacific region.

Imam Mohamad Abdalla, a Griffith PhD candidate in science and an Imam of Kuraby Mosque, and Clayton White, a Griffith PhD candidate in environmental education, were 2 MFC sponsored delegates at an executive program organised by The Network of Universities and Institutions for Asia Pacific Peace-Building and Conflict Prevention in July 2003.

The Multi Faith Centre also sent a delegation to the 2003 International Institute on Peace Education (IIPE) conference held in August in Seoul, South Korea. The 2003 conference confronted the challenge of educating toward justice, peace and sustainable development, nations, and regions deeply divided by political, ideological, cultural and religious differences. The MFC Director, Professor Toh and Tony Kitchen, Executive Officer for Curriculum, Queensland Catholic Education Commission, presented plenary papers related to the theme of Education for Healing and Solidarity.

After the IIPE conference, the Multi-Faith Centre co-sponsored with APCEIU an Inter-Faith Dialogue on the Role of Faith/Religious Education in Building a Culture of Peace on August 11, 2003. Scholars from Australia, South Korea, India, Canada, Indonesia and the Philippines shared insights and experiences on faith/religious education and inter-faith dialogue for promoting peace at local, national, international and global contexts.
Study Abroad Agreement between Korea University and Griffith

On Monday 1 September 2003, Professor Doo-Hee Lee, Dean, Development and External Affairs of Korea University, and Professor Ian O'Connor, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning), signed a Study Abroad Agreement between Korea University and Griffith University.

Commencing in Semester 1, 2004, Korea University will send 100 students a year for 5 years, studying a wide range of disciplines. The students will live on campus, in residences at the Nathan and Mt Gravatt campuses, and eventually the new residential colleges on campus at the Gold Coast.

In a ground-breaking move, Korea University plans to internationalise its campus by sending similar numbers of students to Canada, Australia, the United States, and the United Kingdom. The University of British Columbia, in Canada, already receives a similar number of students each year.

Griffith University was selected after a short-list of five Australian universities was visited by Professor Lee in August.

Professor O'Connor believes that Griffith’s success was due to the active exchange program between the two universities over the past five years, its multi-disciplinary academic offerings, and its international reputation, particularly in Korean studies.

Professor Yul Kwon, Director, Australian Centre for Korean Studies, has been appointed by Griffith University as the institutional representative, and will provide liaison, co-ordination and guidance to the Korea University students.

Will Amrozi go free?

Continued from Page 3

incompetence. “If cases are [usually] decided by politics or money, you don’t need to be a good prosecutor,” explained Lindsey.

The Indonesians, however, counter their critics by pointing out that their efforts so far have been more successful than those of the US and its allies. Indonesia, they argue, at least has been able to arrest and bring to trial terrorist suspects while Bin Laden and Saddam Hussein remain at large despite George W. Bush’s well resourced “war on terror”. Associate Professor Lindsay also believes that governments, in particular Australia’s, should appreciate that “Indonesia is trying hard in difficult circumstances” and provide more support to Indonesia’s prosecution and police. He suggested that an “engage not criticise” approach is essential if Indonesia’s prosecution and police are to weed out the corruption and incompetence within their ranks.
International Conference on Islam held in Indonesia

Dr Julia Howell, Griffith Asia Pacific Research Institute

Early in September scholars of Islam from around the world converged on the bustling town of Bogor, just outside Jakarta, to revise paradigms of Islamic societies and modernisation in light of the surprising revitalisation of Islam’s Sufi traditions. The occasion was a conference entitled “Sufism and the ‘Modern’ in Islam.” The theme was originally conceived in discussions between myself and Professor Dr Azyumardi Azra, Rector of Indonesia’s leading State Islamic University, Syarif Hidayatullah (Jakarta).

Sufism is commonly identified as Islam’s mystical tradition, but it also encompasses many forms of personal spiritual enrichment – ways of ‘softening the heart’ – through ethical reflection, musical devotions and meditation. In the West, the spiritual poetry of Jalal al-Din Rumi has topped the best seller lists in the last few years and Sufi groups attract the same sort of New Age seekers as have explored Buddhism and other Asian religions. However, in many Muslim-majority societies Sufism has suffered from substantial image problems.

But how common is it for Sufism to be a vehicle for liberal social attitudes elsewhere in the Muslim world? Are there other places where Sufi traditions have been adapted to modern social, economic and political institutions? Is Sufism elsewhere being recast to strengthen pluralistic civil society in democratic states, and if so, how? These are some of the questions that brought scholars from around the world to our conference in Bogor.

Their cases ranged across the Muslim world, from Senegal and Mali in West Africa to Morocco, Egypt, Turkey, Syria, Iran, Pakistan, India, Indonesia, and even Muslim migrant communities in the UK. Professor John O. Voll, Associate Director of the Center for Muslim-Christian Understanding at Georgetown University gave an overview proposing new theoretical directions for comparative studies of Muslim societies. Other participating scholars came from North America, Europe, the Middle East, Indonesia and Australia.

Professor Dr Martin van Bruinessen of the Dutch Institute for the Study of Islam in the Modern World (ISIM) joined me and Professor Azra’s team at the Center for the Study of Islamic Societies (PPIM) as organisers of the conference. The Griffith Asia Pacific Council’s and PPIM’s initial financial support for the conference were generously supplemented by the Ford Foundation, ISIM, the Dutch International Institute for Asian Studies, and the Melbourne Institute for Asian Languages and Societies under the direction of Professor Merle Ricklefs.

Selected conference papers will be published in an English language edited volume. The Ford Foundation is supporting translation of that volume and its publication in Indonesia.

Farewell to Bob Elson

The Griffith Asia Pacific Research Institute (GAPRI) sadly farewelled Professor Bob Elson in July 2003 after more than twenty-four years at Griffith and more than five years as Director of the Griffith Asia Pacific Council and GAPRI. Bob has taken up a Chair in Southeast Asian History at the University of Queensland. Our best wishes accompany him on his exciting new journey across the river.

Congratulations!

Dr. David Schak (International Business & Asian Studies), Professor Wayne Hudson (Humanities) and Professor Julia Huang (Anthropology Institute, National Tsinghua University, Taiwan) have received a US$65,000 grant from the Chiang Ching-kuo Foundation for a three year research project on the links between religion, social capital and civil society in Taiwan.

Griffith Asia Pacific
Griffith activities in the Asia Pacific

As we go to press.....

The Chancellor and Vice Chancellor return from Beijing

A delegation led by Chancellor Leneen Forde has just returned from Beijing having secured important new partnerships for Griffith University.

There are two pleasing developments in the health area, both drawing on long-term academic links developed by Associate Professor Cordia Chu. The first is a joint Masters of Public Health program with Peking University. A signing ceremony involving Associate Professor Chu and Health Sciences Dean Professor Roger Willis, along with Chancellor Forde, followed an inspection of the Peking University First Teaching Hospital. The School of Public Health will work with eighty or so Chinese students a year, teaching in both Beijing and at various Griffith campuses.

Also on the health front, the University has signed an innovative agreement with the Chinese Centre for Disease Control (CDC), a new national organisation established to improve public health outcomes across China. The importance of this role was emphasised by the SARS outbreak earlier in the year, and the signing ceremony with Griffith attracted a large crowd of medical specialists, Ministry of Health officials and Chinese media. Thanks to academic contacts developed by Associate Professor Chu, and a generous donation of 10 cataract machines by the overseas Chinese community, represented by Griffith Special Adviser Jenny Wong, the CDC is keen to draw on Griffith expertise in managing epidemics. In 2004 at least 100 CDC staff will undertake Griffith courses, once again in both Beijing and in south-east Queensland. Chinese representatives stressed the importance of accessing training and modern equipment. Accepting the cataract machines from Jenny Wong, Vice President of the China Charity Federation Peng Yu responded with a moving speech about the number of people with disabilities in China and, in particular, the difficult circumstances facing the visually impaired. There are 5 million visually impaired people in China – a staggering number.

Switching from health to public administration, the delegation finalised an agreement with the Chinese University for Politics and Law (CUPL), an elite Beijing institution that trains senior government officials. The agreement follows long-established collaboration with Professor John Wanna from the School of Politics and Public Policy, and Chairman Shi of CUPL presented Professor Wanna with an honorary professorship to recognise his role in creating the link. The jointly offered Master of Arts in Administrative Sciences will be offered in both Beijing and in Australia, with up to ninety middle level Chinese administrators visiting Griffith during their program.

Members of the Griffith delegation also played a leading role in a new international organisation in Environmental Sciences - the UNEP-Tonji Institute for Environment and Sustainable Development. In one of China’s leading universities, Tongji University, the Director of United Nations Environment Program for the Asia-Pacific has established a new Institute for Environment and Sustainable Development.
Griffith activities in the Asia Pacific

The Institute has political backing within the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) and China, as well as UNEP-raised private financial support. The aim is to build the capacity of Tongji as the leading national institute for environmental studies, focusing on the global environment and integrating areas of social sciences, biodiversity, economics, management & law, and to develop education programs to prepare students to become the next generation of leaders who will influence and understand the global environment.

Griffith University has been invited to join this UNEP consortium of some of the world’s leading Environmental Science Universities, and also signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Tongji University in Environmental Sciences. This MOU will result in PhD students from Tongji enrolling in Griffith’s world-class Faculty of Environmental Sciences, in addition to both undergraduate and graduate students articulating into our Faculty. Opportunities for joint research projects, staff and student exchanges, and the possibility of joint-degree programs in this strongly emerging area have been made available to the University through the efforts of Professor Lex Brown, the Dean of the Faculty, and his staff.

Finally, the delegation visited a new Red Cross bilingual school outside Beijing, meeting staff and students and signing an agreement to develop links and student exchanges. This well-equipped school, designed for 1600 students from ‘heroic, model and low-income families’ has been built in just six months and is the first of many Red Cross schools across China.

Such agreements are part of internationalising the Griffith experience – a key aspiration of the university’s mission statement. They provide opportunities for Griffith staff to collaborate on research and teaching programs with faculty in major overseas universities, and encourage student exchanges.

Glyn Davis