

LAURIE O'REILLY, crazy about kids

It was with great sadness that DCI learned of the death of Laurie O'Reilly, New Zealand Children's Commissioner. Many of us worked closely with Laurie, who was a speaker at many international conferences. His last was at the DCI Conference in Brisbane, April 1997, where his key-note address summed up his passion about the rights of children:

"We need to have an irrational commitment to children - be crazy about kids. We will provide protection for children if we commit ourselves to effective advocacy on their part".

Laurie was "crazy" about kids. He touched the lives of many people. Two thousand mourners attended his requiem mass, including the NZ Prime Minister and Family Court Judge, Patrick Mahony, who reflected in his eulogy how Laurie had been a fearless advocate with "something of the front-row prop" in his style and determination.

Laurie will be widely missed.

Double Jeopardy

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in children's organs? Surely, seriously enough to make it clear that governments have the duty to make sure it never happens!

Meanwhile, millions of children demonstrably need urgent and effective protection from commercial sexual exploitation and related trafficking. The Optional Protocol will create binding obligations on those States that ratify it, to criminalise sexual exploitation, to penalise offenders, and to have extradition procedures for foreigners.

Helen Bayes

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Young Persons from Asian Backgrounds

— a recent study on their perceptions and experiences of policing

DCI-Australia expresses its concerns over the findings of a recent study exploring the perceptions and experiences of policing of young persons of Asian backgrounds. This study, conducted by the University of NSW Law Faculty, draws on 123 interviews with young Indo-Chinese heroin users in South-West Sydney.

One of the study's chief findings was that encounters between police and young people of Asian background are often conducted in a climate of fear, racism and hostility. The study found that these young people are sometimes searched and detained without clear legal authority and are often subject to harassment and intimidation.

The study also suggests that the distrust these young people hold of police is due principally to their experiences of policing in Australia, rather than constituting a cultural 'hangover' from their country of origin. To gain Indo-Chinese community support for the policing of their communities more generally, the researchers urge current practices of discriminatory, unlawful and counter-productive policing of young persons from Asian backgrounds to be addressed by police personnel and those concerned with the administration of justice.

If you would like further information on the study or a copy of its findings, please contact Associate Professor David Dixon, Faculty of Law, University of NSW, Sydney 2052, fax: (612) 9385 1175 or email: D.Dixon@unsw.edu.au