Middle East factions must ‘abandon nationalism’

By Jane Mundy

The path to peace in the Israeli/Palestinian conflict is complex and difficult, but if there is to be any hope, it must necessarily include the abandonment of all forms of nationalism, according to a researcher from the University’s Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies.

Presenting the first in a series of seminars on the conflict, Dr Paul White said both Palestinian and Israeli nationalism had failed and could only bring deepening carnage on their people, particularly civilians.

The seminars come at a time of heightened tension in the Middle East. Last week more than 100 Palestinians and 36 Israelis died in the bloodiest week since fighting resumed in September 2000.

Focusing on the historical, ideological and political issues behind the conflict, Dr White said that although Arabs and Jews had lived together in Palestine for thousands of years, it was only after the UN resolution to partition Palestine and establish the state of Israel in 1947 that a fully-armed Palestinian nationalist movement emerged. Zionism as a nationalist movement emerged with the persecution of the Jews in the 1930s and was later expressed by the first Israeli Prime Minister, Ben Gurion, as the ceaseless struggle of a divinely chosen people against a campaign to dilute or exterminate them.

Dr White said extremist groups on both sides wanted to derail the peace process and a global solution must be found to alleviate a situation which was becoming critical.

CPACS will present seminars in this series fortnightly on Mondays at 12.30–2pm in Room N728, Woolley Building, during the first semester. On Monday 25 March, Associate Professor Ian Ricketson from the School of History at UNSW will present Cansel David, Oslo and Beyond: The Official Peace Process and the Role of the West. Admission is free.

For further information, phone CPACS on 9351 5440.

Study into environmental impact of School of Physics is a world first

Measuring our ecological footprint

By Jane Mundy

Researchers in the School of Physics have carried out the world’s first comprehensive case study of a university’s environmental impact.

Dr Manfred Lenzen and third-year student Richard Wood have conducted a holistic assessment of the “ecological footprint” (EF) of the School of Physics, using methodology developed by Dr Lenzen and Shauna Murray from the School of Biological Sciences based on economic input-output analysis. This footprint is expressed as the total area of land required to support the operation of the institution indefinitely.

The School of Physics was found to have an ecological footprint of about 800 hectares — or 6.8 hectares per employee. This figure can be compared with the ecological footprint of the average Australian, which is 7.2 hectares per person.

“However, comparing our footprint with the global available space of 1.7 hectares per person shows that we are by far exceeding our equitable share,” said Mr Wood.

The largest impact was from electricity use (14 per cent), followed by air travel (four per cent), and electricity used by other campuses such as administration, security, or catering (three per cent).

“University/ies have a responsibility to be role models,” say researchers Manfred Lenzen (right) and Richard Wood.

A plurality of these supply chains means that as much as 75 per cent of the impact occurs at one or more levels of separation away from the School of Physics, and is spread across the whole of Australia and even overseas.

Dr Lenzen said previous studies have not been comprehensive because they have cut off the calculation at the first level of suppliers, and have not explored higher-order impacts. This results in a serious underestimation of the ecological footprint, he said. But input-output analysis can be used to provide a comprehensive picture of an institution’s impact, and presents the material and energy flows in a transparent way.

An important application of the methodology developed by the Sydney researchers is its potential as a policy and planning tool for sustainable development and operation of institutions. It can be used to both monitor and improve the effectiveness of an institution’s environmental management system.

“A footprint can provide very useful information, especially for commercial and institutional decision making,” Dr Lenzen said. For more information call 9351 5440.

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Future of Stone Address secured

The Education Heritage Foundation has made an endowment of $1.4 million for the future of the University's annual Julius Stone Address, an important public lecture on jurisprudence and public policy.

At a special ceremony in the Vice-Chancellor's meeting rooms, the donation was gratefully accepted by the Vice-Chancellor and the Dean of Law, Professor Jeremy Webber, from Michael and Jeremy Dunkel. The Stone family was represented by Professor Jonathan Stone and Roger Beer. The Foundation has supported the Address since its inception. Director of the Julius Stone Institute, Associate Professor Desmond Manderson, said the endowment demonstrated its confidence in the Institute's activities and ensured the continuation of the lecture in perpetuity.

"Within a very short space of time the address has established itself as a major event on the legal and academic calendar in Sydney," he said. Each year the address supports a visit to the University by a scholar whose work on the relationship of law, philosophy and society, is of international importance, and introduces their work to a wider public.

The inaugural Address was delivered by Professor Tsiang, the dean of English jurisprudence, who spoke on globalization and legal theory. Last year Professor Negroponte, Baudrillard and Foucault, demonstrated the role of law at, and one-time Vice-Chancellor of, New Delhi University, created a debate of rights and responsibilities in the context of development and underdevelopment.

This year the Julius Stone Address will be delivered on Thursday 1 August at 5.30pm in the Bank of China Court on the South Bank of NSW.