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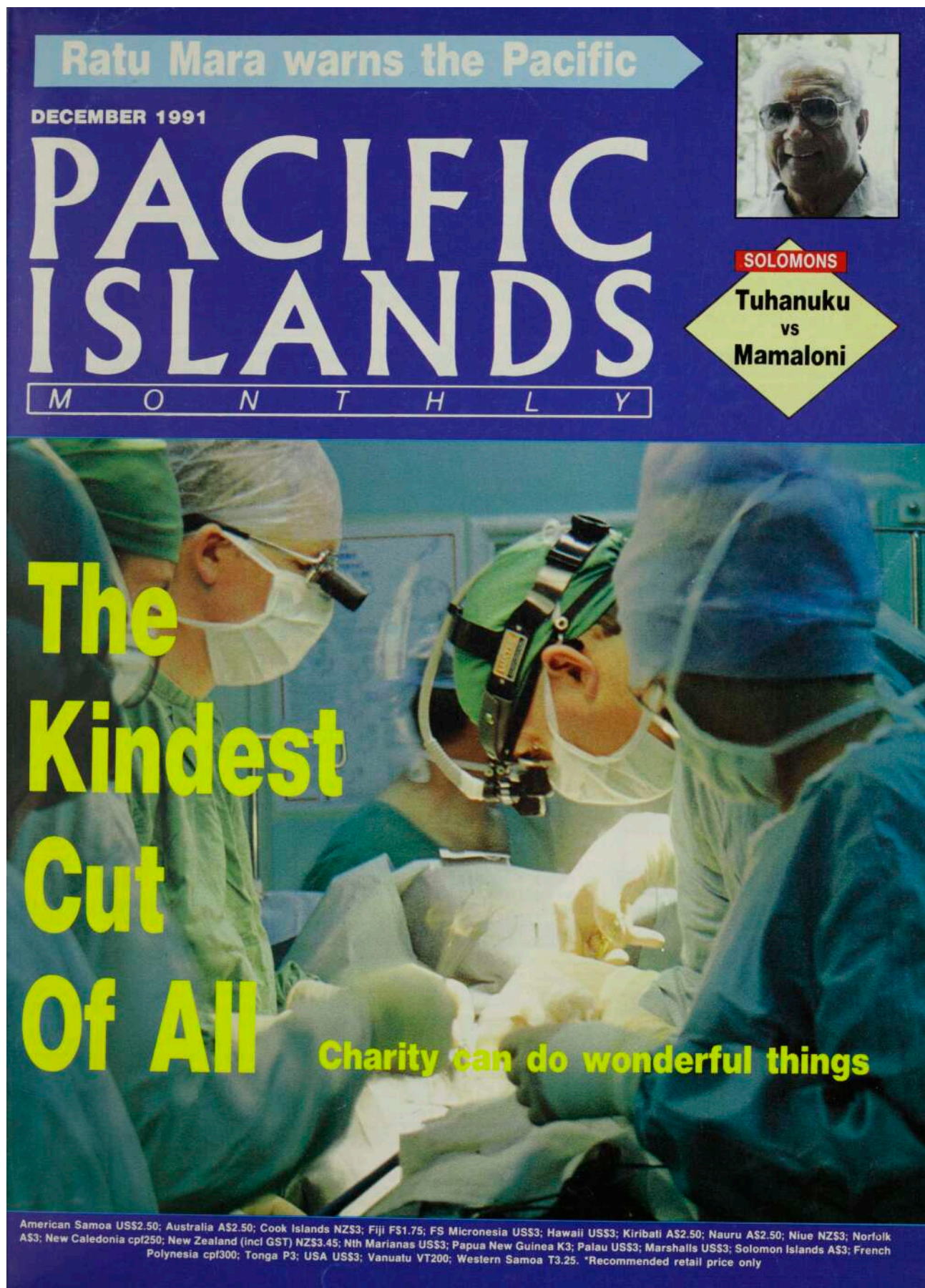
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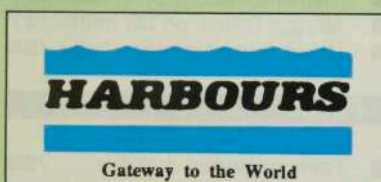
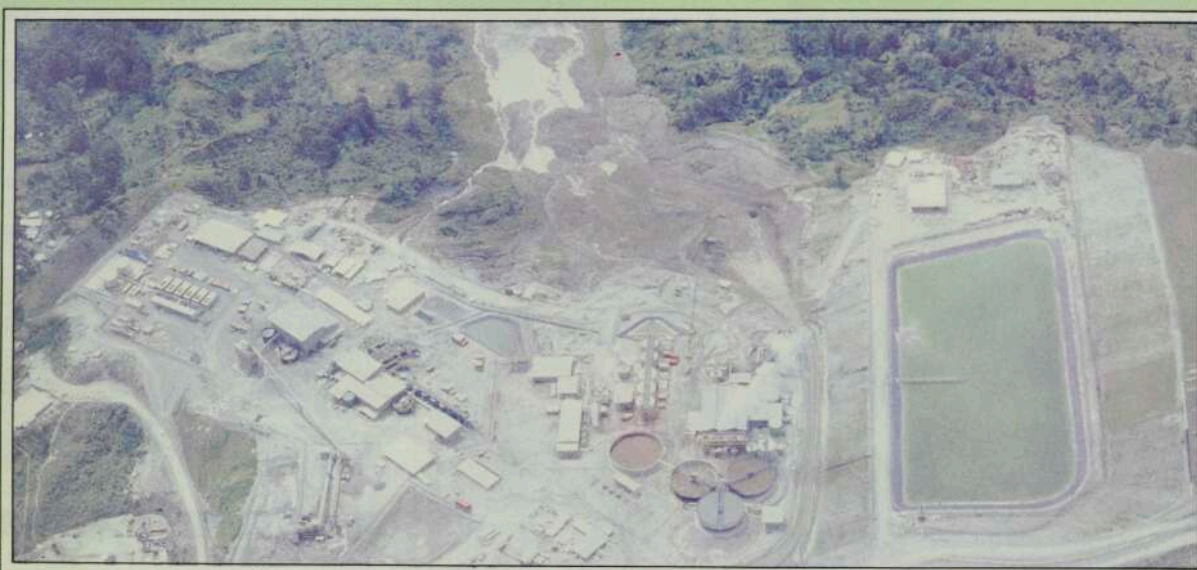
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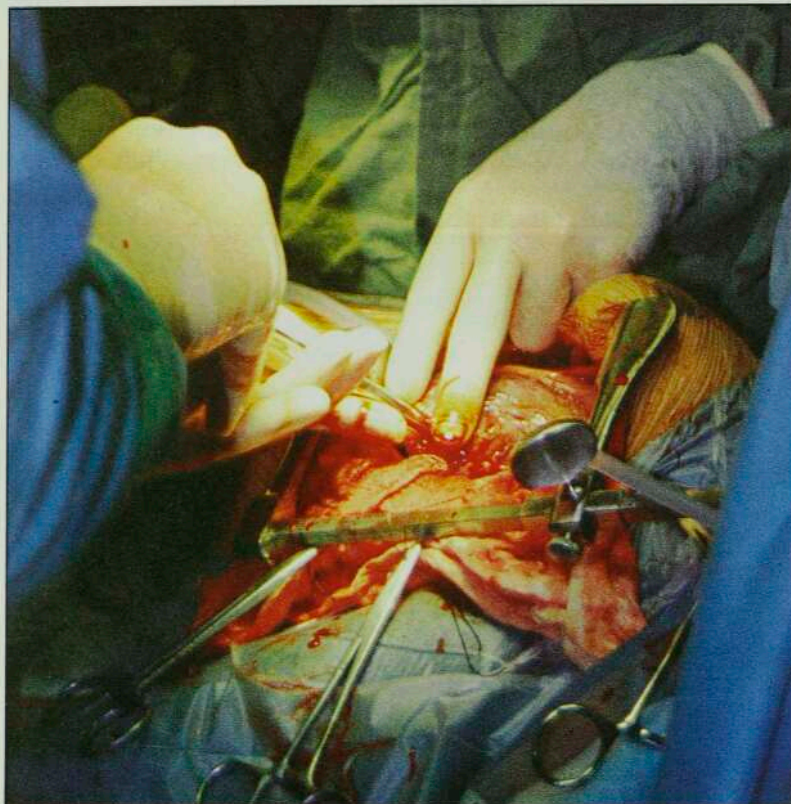
PACIFIC ISLANDS

M O N T H L Y

Vol. 61, No. 12

THE NEWS MAGAZINE

December 1991



The good news is that some children who were doomed to die, are alive today because of charity. The bad news is that the threat of rheumatic heart disease, one of the major killers of people in the Pacific Islands, remains. Why is this disease so prevalent? And what can we do to stop it? /36

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Publisher: Geoffrey Hussey
Editor: Jale Moala
Assistant Editor: Beryl Cook
Senior Writer: Martin Tiffany

Correspondents: Al Prince, Angela McCarthy, David North, David Robie, Diana McManus, Dykes Angiki, Frank Senge, Franck Madoeut, Ian Williams, Irene Nisbet, Karen Manghall, Lito Vilisoni, Loveni Enari, Macel Manua, Nicholas Rothwell, Pesi Fonua, Richard Dinnen, Ulafala Aiavao, Wally Hiambohn
Columnists: David Barber (Well-

ington), Futa Helu (Tonga, covering the Pacific Islands), Jemima Garrett (Sydney), Margot O'Neill (Washington)

Business and Advertising Manager: Charlotte Thomas

Advertising Sales:

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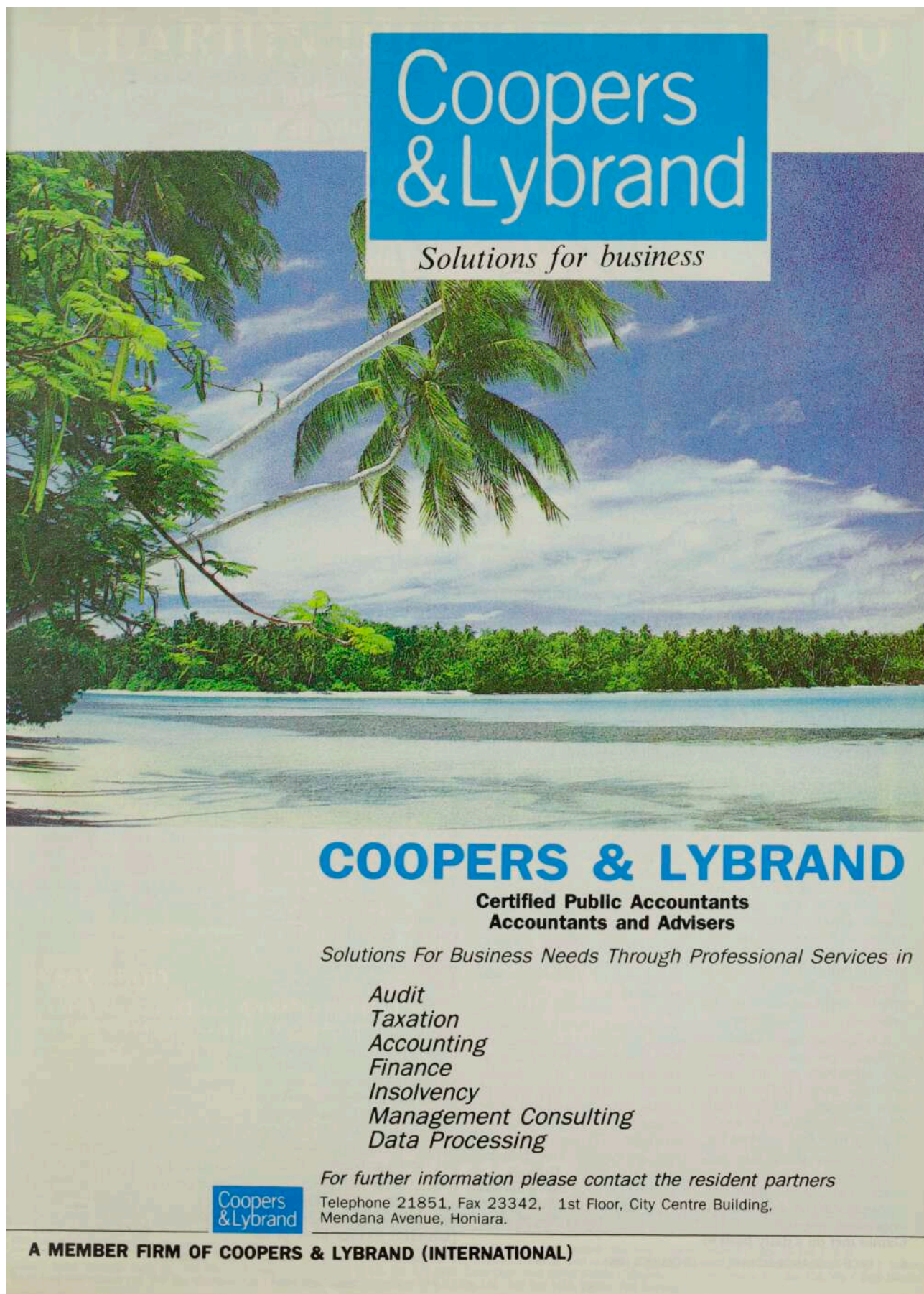
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LETTERS

Wallwork under fire

THE-NEWLY elected President of the South Pacific Games Council, Paul Wallwork, criticises the organisers of the 9th South Pacific Games for paying more attention to sponsors than to sport (*PIM* Oct. 91).

This I utterly refute.

It is true that the PNG Games were supported by a generous and regionally minded private sector. Sport at this level deserves the best facilities that money can buy, and sponsorship is an essential ingredient of any successful international sporting event today. All participants, including Mr Wallwork, greatly enjoyed the facilities, equipment, hospitality and other benefits provided by the generosity of our sponsors.

But having made their contribution, our sponsors generally withdraw to the background, to enable the sportsmen and women of the South Pacific to have the two weeks of glory they had worked for.

Sport was given top priority. Visiting team managers, our sports directors, venue managers and the full organising committee of the Games met on a daily basis to

ensure that the needs of sport were met ... the needs of the athletes, managers, technical officials, spectators and the media.

Similar committees dealt with the needs of the visiting VIPs, and the officials of the SP Games Council.

No such attention was paid to sponsors. If we inadvertently neglected to provide any courtesy to anyone deserving of it, then of course we apologise. But to suggest that this was because we were paying undue attention to our sponsors is simply not supported by the facts.

We modestly believe that the 9th South Pacific Games set 21st Century standards for this great Pacific event. Countless happy visitors agree with us. The success was achieved by our volunteers, our professional administrators, our crowds, our government, and our sponsors. But it was first and foremost an achievement of the people for whom the Games are held ... the sportsmen and women of the South Pacific, and the officials who support them. We in Papua New Guinea never lost sight of that.

Bart Philemon
Chairman, 9th S.P. Games,
Papua New Guinea.

Helu's comment

IN Mr Futa Helu's recent commentary (*Aid aiding corruption*, *PIM*, October, 91), he states that "US aid very rarely, if every (sic), supports postgraduate studies by Pacific Islanders." This charge is blatantly false. Likewise, Mr Helu's assertion that through its educational programmes the US Government aims to monopolise "the rarefied world of ... imported advice" by "bar (ring) islanders" from obtaining advanced degrees is ridiculous. Had Mr Helu checked his facts he would have easily found his accusations were unfounded.

In the educational programmes which the US Government funds directly for the Pacific, the vast majority of the candidates study for masters' or doctorate degrees. Under the Fulbright programme which the United States Information Service administers, all guarantees from the Pacific are studying for masters or doctorate degrees. In the case of East-West Center which is largely funded by the US Government, the majority of individual applicants vie for postgraduate placement.

The US Agency for International Development (USAID) focuses most of its

training efforts on postgraduate programmes for Pacific Islanders as well. Since 1985, 24 islanders have undertaken postgraduate studies at American universities for masters, doctorates or postgraduate diplomas. USAID has undertaken the funding of only a few undergraduate students. In addition to five undergraduate students who were sent to the US for specialised study programmes not available in the region, several undergraduate candidates supported by USAID have undertaken their studies at regional universities. This is because USAID feels that where regional programmes can meet the needs of individual students, USAID's resources should remain in the region and support those institutions. USAID's training programmes, which also include postgraduate non-degree studies, are directly linked to its projects which are developed in cooperation with the island nations' governments.

There are many viewpoints concerning the merits and drawbacks of aid programmes. A thoughtful discussion of aid programmes in the region would be welcome.

Judith A Moon
Director, Information Service
US Embassy, Suva

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THE REGION

● FIJI

An Era Ends

And Ratu Mara tells what it was like from the start and what the future might hold

AT the opening ceremony of the South Pacific Conference, King Taufa'ahau Tupou, of Tonga, arose from his chair to greet only two of the regional heads of government. It was a mark of respect and affection for the Governor of American Samoa, Peter Tali Coleman, and the Prime Minister of Fiji, Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara. If the SPC meetings have been likened to King Arthur's meetings around the round table, then these three could be the three musketeers. Together, they have pioneered and played leading roles in the evolution of the South Pacific Commission, its member countries, and the region.

The attendance of Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara at this year's South Pacific Commission (SPC) meeting in Tonga from October 28 - 30 marked the end of an era for the region and for Fiji, because he plans to hand the reins over to a new Fiji Prime Minister after elections scheduled for March next year.

Ratu Mara spoke to *Pacific Islands Monthly's* Beryl Cook about changes in the region, its statesmen and their style of decisionmaking; his concerns for Fiji and the region; and his fears that the Pacific Way may be lost.

What are the most significant changes you have seen in the SPC and the region?

The South Pacific Conference is really the ground where the young leaders in my time met frequently and discussed issues common in our region, and then formulated policies. I used the term, the "Pacific Way" of discussion in about 1970. Looking back as to how that phrase came about, it was mainly because our discussion usually ended up in a consensus rather than raising hands and dividing the groups, and this is actually what happens in each of our own countries.

◀◀ **Ratu Mara:**
*I can't help being
born a chief*

Why it was perpetuated in the South Pacific conferences was because we never used to speak from notes and I fear there is a danger the Pacific Way will be written off because

'I fear there is a danger the Pacific Way will be written coming on with a written statement of their position. They can't written and apparently agreed to by their government. Room

THE REGION

everyone is coming on with a written statement of their position. They can't move from what has been written and apparently agreed to by their government. Room for flexibility is not easy. I don't know how they manage to get their consensus because they are simply following the United Nations system — you come and read a statement of your government and you let someone else, the chairman or so, try and find a consensus.

And that is now gone right down to the selection of officials where voting is a must. It never used to be; in our day it was by a consensus. Now you go lobbying and you count the number of votes.

What effect will this new style of reaching agreements have?

I think that will have its affect on the future. Because we (the SPC) are larger in size there is bound to be little enclaves of views, and I think this will become manifest particularly when you select officials. The groups will try and coalesce in order to get the numbers to elect whoever it is.

And I see that the original founders, the Polynesian countries, are now in the minority, and you will probably find this also will be reflected in the official positions.

Do you see this as a change toward the style of the western powers?

We used to speak quite openly and frankly and usually we ended up coming to a consensus. I talked (at the SPC opening) about the intrusion of the traders and the missionaries. Although there are advantages and disadvantages the total effect was divisive, and this western way of making decisions is also divisive (among our own people).

Will this affect the balance of power?

It is a new ballgame altogether as far as I'm concerned because we now have a larger number of Micronesians, Melanesians and Polynesians and I think the Polynesian nature of things is you have a structure of leadership, and that is where you easily get your consensus. The difference is that for the Polynesian, you have an all-embracing structure. Although I'm from Fiji, if there is someone from Samoa and someone from Tonga we soon find who is the eldest and we put him as the leader and you have that pyramid. I don't think that applies in Melanesia; there are many little groups and they themselves make an effort to find a consensus through their Spearhead Group, and that's only instigated by the New Caledonia issue.

Will one group gain dominance?

I know Michael Somare, who represented the first purely Melanesian group to come into the Forum easily melted into the consensus. When there were more of them, by the

time they formed a Spearhead Group it was difficult — there were two distinct views in most of the issues and they had to get together and find a consensus.

As far as the future is concerned, one of the things that is an advantage and a disadvantage is the number of organisations associated with the SPC which necessitated SPOC over it. One of the advantages was it provides places for aspiring leaders to play a role in leadership. This may be a disadvantage in having one single regional organisation. I was never enthusiastic about a single regional organisation because I have been responsible for the Forum and the PIDP (Pacific Islands Development Programme). It's branching out from the SPC. The reason why we went and formed the Forum was because we couldn't talk politics in the SPC.

And then I found there were little groups who didn't belong to these two organisations and they came in on the PIDP. I think it was when the PIDP came in that the idea of a single regional organisation was also voiced because people were afraid there were so many organisations that we were spending time and money trying to attend them. But we did a study in the PIDP as to the number of regional organisations that we have and we found there are over 300.

When we take in the non-governmental organisations as well as government there are others such as choir groups — so many groups in which the people of the region wanted to organise themselves into regional organisations. So there was therefore a need for many regional organisations — the choir master wouldn't be anywhere in the society if there wasn't any competition. PASOWA, the women's organisation, women come up through there.

And that is one advantage. And as we see, as each issue comes up, the number of these organisations compete to carry the baton and you will then find leaders who are the



Ratu Mara meets relatives in Tonga: renewing family links

off because everyone is
move from what has been
for flexibility is not easy'

THE REGION

best to express it from that organisation rather than coming from the Commission or the Forum or the PIDP. To try and think ahead as we did when we developed the Forum and the SPC, it's not the same as from now on. The multifarious little organisations connected somehow or other will continue to be there and they will take their special subjects and issues.

Take the environment. That has come up right now; how long it will be up in the top issues I don't know. But it seems to engage the attention of everyone because it concerns all of us, especially the small islands. If what we hear is true, then many of us fear extinction in the near future.

What should the region be looking toward in the future?

One of the things which has concerned me is the new ballgame of security. During the Cold War, discipline was managed in each particular group by that superpower. Now that discipline has disappeared. A prime example is Yugoslavia. During the Cold War, Russia would have been right down there and said 'No, no, behave yourself', but now Russia is concerned with its own problems; the US seems to think it is not near enough to the oil countries to be concerned, and Europe couldn't manage. So that is what could happen in the Pacific.

What action would you propose?

I think there should be some effort to try and see how you can link with the existing (defence) organisations. ASEAN for example, I think we have a lot to gain from ASEAN, they know our experience, they have made it. They are the source of materials we are now getting from Australia, the US and UK, and we have not fully tapped that source of materials. So apart from the security itself, if we moved along toward them (ASEAN countries) and let them be concerned with our welfare our problem will be solved. We did start the Forum and actually asked PNG to liaise between ASEAN and the Forum, which PNG did for the first and second year until they became observers ... and they've forgotten about us. That bridge still has to be constructed, between ASEAN and the Forum.

Should Fiji and the other Pacific Islands look more toward Southeast Asia than traditional alliances such as Australia and New Zealand?

You're talking to someone who's been the victim of the wrath of those two countries. I never knew it could happen, so we may as well look elsewhere. When we were alone and condemned so strongly by Australia and New Zealand, the rest of the Forum countries stood by us. They were sympathetic about how we were trying to solve it, but not New Zealand and Australia and I think they still don't understand.

We have never tried to interfere with the problems of the Maoris in New Zealand or the Aborigines in Australia, yet they (Australia) thought we are doing this to the Indians or that to the Indians. I thought that was pure arrogance.

I am very interested in what Canada is doing now. Canada is now recognising the indigenous Red Indians, it is recognising that there is a reality in the separatist movement in Quebec and we think that they could face the future by providing for the aspirations of these people within Canada. They are not continuing to say 'Red Indians you don't count unless you come in as a democratic unit in our country'. The French, they listen to them. Why don't Australia and New Zealand do the same?

Has the status or influence of the smaller



Pioneers: Coleman and Ratu Mara in Tonga

countries risen significantly in the SPC?

Politically yes, but your politics can't go far if your economy can't sustain it. You argue with the French and you argue with Australia and New Zealand and you wave your finger at their voice, and then you come to them and ask 'What about our school, do you think you can give something?'

What are the qualities of a good statesmen?

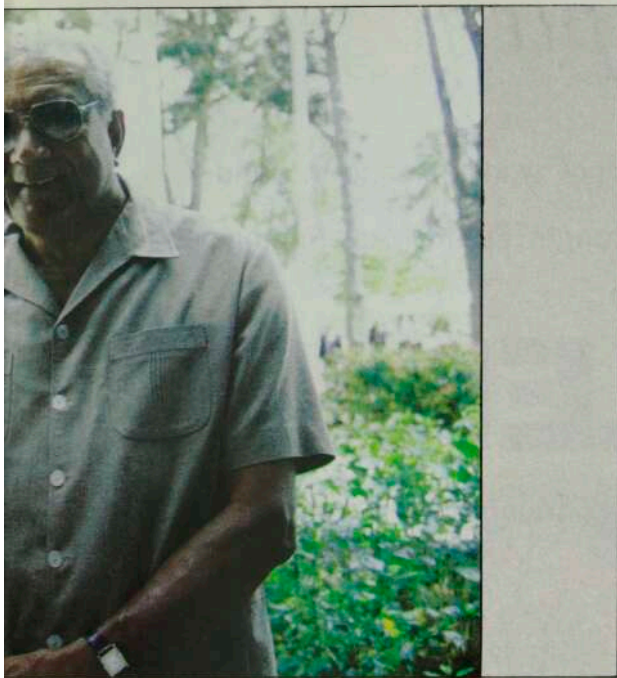
Major-General Rabuka has been articulating some of his views about custom chiefs and merit chiefs and I was looking at myself and asking 'Where does he classify me?' Well I think he's classifying me as a custom chief, now what do I do to belong to the merit chiefs?

I went to the same school as Major-General Rabuka (Queen Victoria School), I was able to get to secondary school, I was able to get to the University of Otago. I played cricket for my university and for the Otago province and I got a blue for that. Athletics — I broke the high jump record at my college, Sacred Heart College, at Otago University and at the University of New Zealand. I played rugby for Otago province. I set a record for the drinking horn.

I was on the dancefloor as a ballet dancer. What else can I do? (laughs). What else can I do to merit the other side. It is not my fault I was born a chief. It was my father's fault and my mother's (laughs). When I was last at New Zealand I spoke at a lunch and I was astounded that New Zealand thought I am the person described by the media. I came here, I had my nose rubbed in the mud, people trampled

**'One of the great advantages
seven years you'll have the
every 10 years afterwards ... the**

THE REGION



over me. They made a man out of me. And that is part of my character, and now I am a 'traditional chief', a 'conservative' and I don't know anything about it. Where do we stand. What do we have to do?"

What about the role of the emerging group of educated leaders who may not have traditional ties or chiefly blood?

We the chiefs, in the olden days, would recognise a warrior, a good one who sails and saved the people of the fleet, a good producer of dalo and other things. We recognise them. There are more opportunities to recognise them now. If they have done well as a doctor or scientist, yes. Someone must do something well, and someone must do something else well. So what is the distinction between tradition and merit? Where is the country which is run by meritocracy.

What are your plans for the future?

I want to retire. I have had enough. I have worked for 20 years to try and bring the two races (in Fiji) together. I thought I succeeded. I went through the colonies in 1967 and I came back from that tour really enthusiastic, thinking 'I can fix this, I can get the races together'. And I worked hard for it. The result of it is the Indians blame me for being pro-Fijian and the Fijians blame me for being pro-Indian. So you're not honoured in your own country (laughs).

Was the coup in Fiji in 1987 a Ratu Mara initiative?

I cannot lead a country that does not accept a leader who

will serve both sides. I have done my best, I'm rejected as such. This constitution is not the type of constitution I'd like to serve under. Because I've served for 20 years under a constitution that has been displaced. I had to come in to help bring things back to normal.

One great advantage of this constitution is that in seven years you'll have an opportunity to change it, and every 10 years afterwards. I think this is a feature which makes the Fiji constitution one of the best in the world. They boast about the US constitution which is 200 years old, and they only got to about the fifth amendment. Well I think it's long overdue for overhauling.

What about negatives of the constitution?

They say that it shouldn't have racial divisions. I think if you don't have that you'd have the instability that Gyana has, Trinidad has, Mauritius no longer has because they're completely dominated by the Indians. But you don't have it in Malaysia because they're in the minority, in Singapore because they're in the minority. But whenever they get up to almost a majority you have problems. You have it in Sri Lanka.

Are you only talking about political power?

This is the danger of the Fijian constitution and I think Rabuka is trying to express it in another way. He didn't expect economic power to be obtained in about four years or overnight when he took over power. Your political power will not go very far if it is not sustained by economic power, and there is some economic power as far as the Fijian is concerned in the ownership of the land, but they have not flexed their muscles in that.

Will we always be tied to relations with Australia and New Zealand?

I hope not, I sincerely hope not. If we are tied to anyone at all I would like to be tied to Asian countries, Southeast Asian countries, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia. Their people understand our mind. The Australians and New Zealanders I think they prefer not to understand our minds. They want their way to be the way we live by rather than trying to understand us.

Will we have to rely on them for some years to come though because of economic considerations?

If they buy our goods then we buy theirs. But we now want to get out of the dependence on oil and look at the row they've kicked up.

What are your plans for the future?

I have to hand over to the new Prime Minister after the next election.

And what then?

That's my problem ... a trade secret (laughs).

(Fiji's Prime Minister slipped on the black sandals which one of his aides had put beside him, and headed toward the same garden where he had been guest of honour in a traditional ceremony with his mother's Tongan relatives just an hour before. The woven mats had been replaced by a temporary cocktail bar, and the elder statesman merged into the throng of today's regional heads of government.) □

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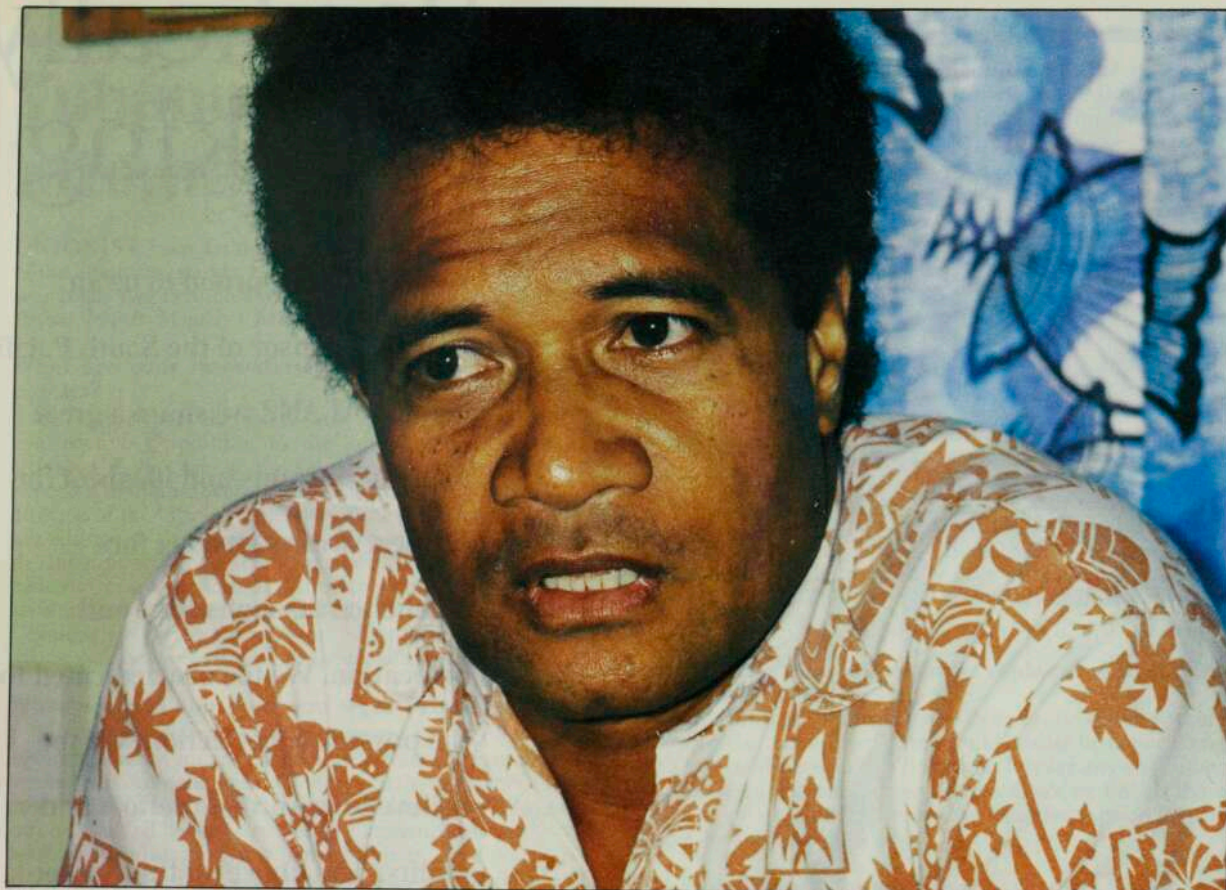
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The new challenger: Tuhanuku prepares the assault on Mamaloni

● SOLOMON ISLANDS

Tuhanuku vs Mamaloni

After making money on a horse, the new Opposition Leader now looks at greater economic issues

By Martin Tiffany

JOSES Tuhanuku has been getting many surprises lately. Last month, at the Honiara Golf Club on Melbourne Cup day, he bet \$20 on favorite Let's Elope and won \$100. From a man who doesn't usually gamble, that was real beginner's luck and a nice surprise.

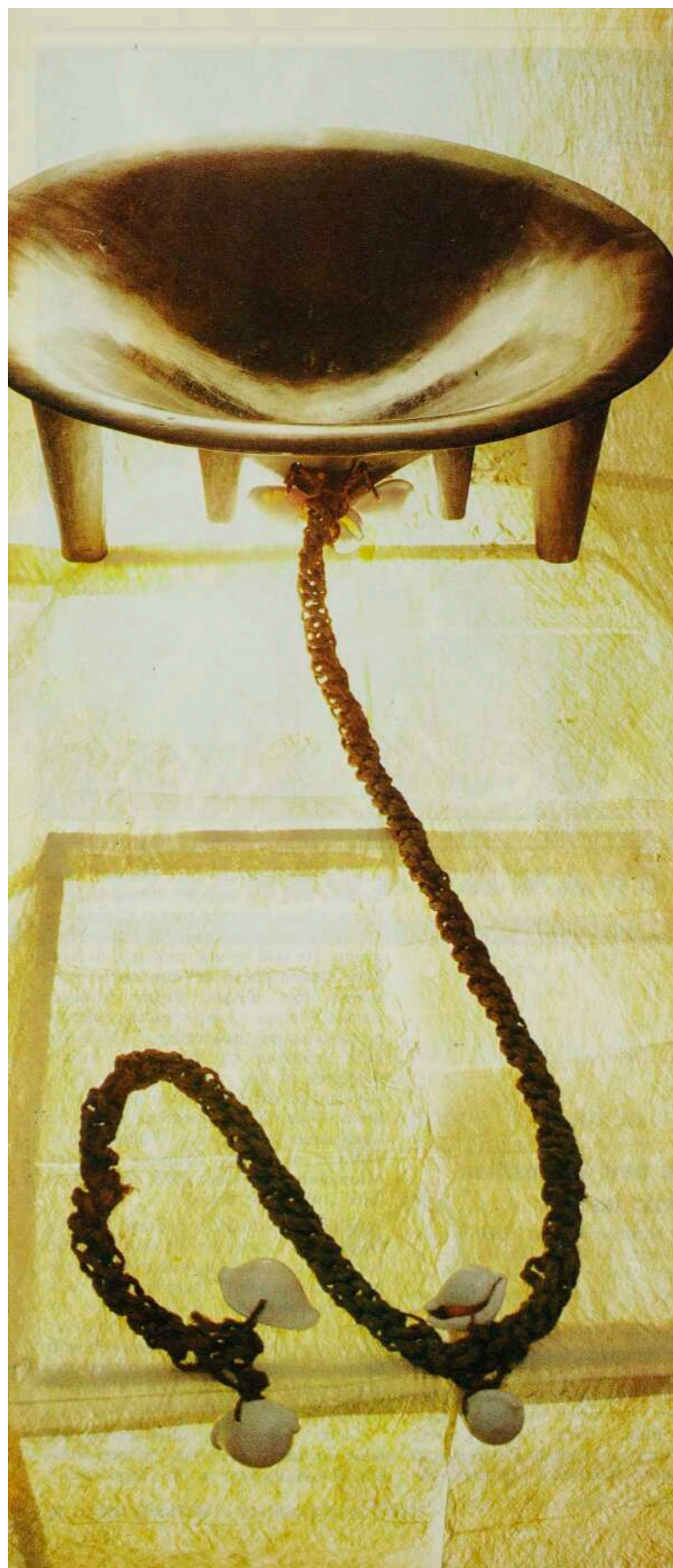
Two week before making money on Just Elope, Tuhanuku received a really,

really big surprise: he was asked to take over the reigns as Opposition Leader in parliament. "I was surprised when they asked me, I expected the Alliance members to put up a leader," Tuhanuku. Nevertheless, he said yes and took over command from Andrew Nori who stepped down, saying he did not think he had the support of the 16-member Opposition which comprises members from Labour Party, United, Liberal, National Front for Progress, and independents. Tuhanuku represents the

small constituency of Rennell and Bellona and is a member of the Labour Party, whose two members in Parliament represent a minority in the Opposition group. He said he was surprised to have been chosen ahead of experienced politicians like former Prime Minister Ezekiel Alebua. "I expected the Alliance members to put up a leader," Tuhanuku said, referring to the seven former members of the ruling Alliance Party who are in the Opposition as independents. (Five Alliance members joined the Opposition after being dropped from Cabinet by Prime Minister Solomon Mamaloni in October 1990. Two others later crossed the floor.)

While Tuhanuku supported Nori as Opposition Leader he felt that Nori did not have the total support of the parties in the Opposition. "There are 16 of us in the Opposition and seven of these are from the Alliance camp. For whatever reason they don't seem to work well with the former Leader of the Opposition and Andrew started to talk about a change of leadership," said Tuhanuku.

"After the resignation and my takeover the 16, including Andrew Nori, are all consolidated in the Opposition."



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Tuhanuku's alternative

UNIONIST Josés Tuhanuku is the new Opposition Leader of the Solomon Islands. He is a member of the Labour Party which has two members in Parliament. Tuhanuku spoke to *Pacific Islands Monthly's* **Martin Tiffany** in Honiara:

What are your immediate plans for the opposition parties?

To consolidate the party and to continue to provide constructive Opposition to the government. Technically speaking if you are in the Opposition you are naturally expected to oppose everything the government does. But the attitude of the Opposition is that if the government is doing something in the interest of the country the Opposition should support it. At the same time we must develop our own alternative policies and if there's a need for us to form an alternative government we should be in a position — and I believe we are in the position — to form an alternative cabinet if the present government collapses or resigns.

What would you do if you were Prime Minister?

The main concern of any government is to develop the economy, which means we have to attract investment. The present government hasn't done enough to attract investment. Fishing is the best developed industry but a lot more can be done. The same is with the agricultural sector and a lot of other areas. What is needed is to create economic growth in the private sector which means attracting a lot of growth from outside. We must also improve the machinery to deal with potential investors. We must also have an effective system of industrial relations — the Solomon Islands needs a tripartite summit. The government should come to some general agreement with employers and trade unions on a lot of principle matters relating to the private and public sector.

I don't believe in asking for aid, I believe in developing the economy of the Solomon Islands. We have great potential for economic development but first we need a well-organised government.

Tuhanuku works out of an office high up on Vavaya Ridge overlooking Honiara. He is confident he could continue from where Nori left off and create a better Opposition in Parliament. "Andrew and I are two different personalities," he said, "his approach may be different from mine but what is important is that it doesn't matter about our different style of doing things as long as we deliver the result."

"Andrew was a very good leader but at the same time I believe I am capable of doing the job."

Tuhanuku was the national secretary of the Solomon Islands Council of Trade Unions (SICTU) before becoming Opposition Leader. He resigned and his

brother, David, replaces him at SICTU — the powerful umbrella body of Solomon Islands trade union movement.

Tuhanuku, 44, is from Ghongau village on Bellona Island in the Central Province. He has been a union man most of his life. In 1975, while working as a training manager for an exporting firm, there was talk about forming a trade union movement. He resigned the following year to become a fulltime union official and in 1977 and 1978 he did trade union training in Denmark.

This union connection and experience makes Tuhanuku a formidable Opposition Leader at a time when the Solomon Islands is facing big economic problems and pressure is mounting on

Should Mamaloni resign unconditionally?

If Mamaloni has any moral conscience he should resign immediately. The country is in a mess and this is connected directly with his leadership. He has a Cabinet that is so undemocratic — he does not call on Cabinet to make a collective decision, he dictates and that is why many things are going wrong. He should allow for the formation of a new government.

Why is Mamaloni continuing to be absent from regional leaders' meetings?

Even with the Forum meeting here next year I have my doubts whether he will attend and chair it. There is no doubt of the importance of his attending. Why he doesn't attend — he has no good reason. When he did not go to CHOGM (in Zimbabwe in October) he was back home not doing anything — he was playing cricket and darts — this reflects his priorities.

It is important for him as Prime Minister to talk to other leaders about the problems we have as they also exist in those places. He may learn something and may even get some assistance. The people are very disappointed and very angry that their PM has not been attending any of these meetings.

Is he worried that he might be replaced while out of the country?

I don't think so — this is a very democratic country, there will never be a coup here. He should realise he is not going to be Prime Minister of the Solomons forever anyway. Once he loses the support of the people he will not be PM. If there is a vote of no confidence but he has the support of the people he will still be PM.

What would you like your voters to know about you and your party?

The Labour Party is not built around a personality, it is a party based on ideological position — looking at how best we can distribute our goods and services to people. Especially to low income and poor people and ensure we don't live a luxurious life at their expense. It is going to be one of the strongest parties in the long-run. The people have tried all the other parties and if they want anything new the group they can expect it from is the Labour Party. We present ourselves as a well organised group who is capable of running the country. We are an alternative. □

Mamaloni to resign. SICTU, Tuhanuku and former Prime Minister Alebua have called on Mamaloni to resign because of his failure to redress the country's diving economy. Similarly Mamaloni's former private secretary and secretary to the People's Alliance Party, Edward Kingmele, said the worsening economic situation demands that Mamaloni resigns.

SICTU members met on November 6 and two days later presented a number of resolutions to government, demanding among other things, for Mamaloni's resignation. The SICTU also called for the government to restore the salaries of constitutional post holders like the Commissioner of Police, Speaker of Parlia

COMPANY DIRECTOR/COMMERCIAL ADVISER, TUVALU

Applications are invited for the position of Company Director/Commercial Adviser based in the Ministry of Finance Commerce and Trade, Funafuti. The duration of the appointment is 2 years.

Candidates should be professionally qualified and experienced in private sector commercial financial management and accounting and should have a working knowledge of commercial and company law and procedures in the Pacific region. They should have the ability to personally oversee installations of accounting and reporting systems and to teach staff and managers to use these. An interest in Pacific cultures and peoples is essential and candidates should be well informed on the politics and economics of the region. The ability to get along with people of widely varying cultural and educational attainments is necessary and some ability with language (able to pick up and use basic phrases and courtesies) is desirable. Specific duties are:

1) To advise the Ministry of Finance Commerce and Trade and Tuvalu Government on the further development of commercialisation policy including clarification of Government policy on capital cost recovery by statutory authorities, the valuation of assets and their ownership, the regulatory framework and the need for operating agreements to be drawn up as a basis for corporatisation.

2) To develop a strategy for implementing a commercialisation policy for commercial activities currently on the Government budget. This should include an action plan identifying the steps to be taken and a timetable for their implementation for each activity and the identification of any other inputs that may be needed to achieve the objectives set.

3) To clarify Governments requirements for monitoring existing Statutory bodies and Corporations and to set up

and operate a monitoring and reporting system within the Ministry of Finance Commerce and Trade.

4) To serve as a Government appointed director on all boards of public enterprise statutory corporations including the Development Bank of Tuvalu in order to ensure compliance with Government policy and monitoring requirements and to improve management generally.

5) To provide advice and assistance in commercialisation of the accounting, control, reporting and management systems in Statutory Corporations and the on-budget public enterprises.

6) To assist the Tuvalu Government with planning and setting up administrative systems for the operation of any outward looking companies Registry in close consultation with the Attorney General.

7) To perform such other tasks in developing complementaries on commercialisation between private sector and public enterprises.

The appointment will carry a salary of around A\$50,000 after tax. Benefits for non Tuvalu citizens will include free accommodation, passages, freight and if eligible childrens education allowances.

Application should be sent to:

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Closing date for receipt of applications 5 January 1992.

THE REGION

ment and Attorney General to levels before they were awarded hefty pay rises this year. The 15 permanent secretaries have also recently been given lucrative pay packages, from SI\$27,000 to SI\$80,000, Tuhanuku said. The SICTU wants the massive pay hike to be revoked because it is adding pressure on the ailing economy.

"In this very difficult time the Prime Minister decided to move all permanent secretaries from \$27,000 to \$80,000 per annum. This has no relevance or connection to their work output — it is irresponsible," Tuhanuku said. "The PM is doing it to buy political loyalty, it has nothing to do with the economy or the effective management of government finances."

Tuhanuku has publicly called on Mamaloni to resign. In a front page story in the weekly newspaper *Solomon Star* of November 8, Tuhanuku said that "if Mamaloni and his government do not have the moral consent for the country, they should step down and give way for a new government to run the country."

So far Mamaloni has remained silent. He has stopped going to the office everyday and works out of his new residence at Lengkiki, which is being renovated to the tune of over SI\$1 million. He has not replied to the SICTU demands. Attempts by *Pacific Islands Monthly* magazine to interview Mamaloni were unsuccessful. Two PIM appointments were cancelled and several calls after failed to secure a meeting. PIM joins a growing list of people who have been promised a meeting with the Prime Minister only to find the appointments cancelled at the last moment.

Those unfortunate to have been turned away by Mamaloni include Australian Foreign Affairs Minister Gareth Evans and New Zealand Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for External Relations, Don McKinnon. This year, the South Pacific Forum voiced disappointment at Mamaloni's continuing absence from regional leaders' meetings.

The Solomon Islands Government's cashflow problem has reached what has been described as "crisis level" although in a press statement Mamaloni said the government's financial position is still manageable and looks brighter than

most countries. "In fact the government's financial statement as of today is much healthier than the unnecessary panic," said the Prime Minister's statement. He said the government is confident that although certain fiscal measures have been put in force the government still has the money to support the services up to the end of the year.

Tuhanuku disagrees and said the government's cashflow problem is very serious. He claims that the government has used up more than 60 per cent of the country's total net credit facilities which does not leave much for the private sector. He says the private sector can't expand because there is no money.

Before he resigned, Nori threatened to take out a high court injunction preventing the country's three commercial banks — ANZ, Westpac and the National Bank of Solomon Islands — from giving

that the government is broke were made without proof.

Again Tuhanuku disagrees: "Our foreign reserves at the end of 1988 stood at \$83 million, at the end of 1989 they were down to \$60 million, at the end of 1990 they were down to \$40 and now they are about \$23 million. This is cover for about two weeks which is very serious."

Figures released in the first week of November put the country's foreign reserves at SI\$23 million, a drop from SI\$34 million four weeks previous. And Finance Minister Christopher Abe said that the government had surpassed the \$53.4 million borrowing limit it has with the Central Bank of Solomon Islands (CBSI).

He said the government still has money to pay public servants and run essential services, but it did not have enough money to cover overseas debts and non-essential services. Abe said this critical shortage of funds had led to the government borrowing from other monetary institutions and stopped borrowing from commercial banks.

He said that the government had surpassed its borrowing limit with CBSI because of a huge overseas debt payment made last month. The government had to make that payment because it would lose credibility if it did not service overseas debts.

The government has introduced measures to help ease the cashflow problem. All overseas

trips by ministers, constitutional post holders and government employees have been cancelled from the first of this month until the new year. Local travel, seminars, workshops and fuel for motor vehicles for ministers and other senior government post holders have all been stopped. Overtime claims by non-essential workers have been stopped and after-hour allowances for police officers reduced. Police officers are now angry and have threatened not to work after hours because the reduction in allowance is a breach of an agreement signed with the government, their association said.

Warren Paia, the president of the Business Federation of Solomon Islands, said the worsening economic situation is creating a feeling of hopelessness among the people. He called on the government to introduce an economic recovery plan. Failing, he said, the economy will collapse — in a matter of a few weeks. □



Honiara: capital of a struggling economy

anymore overdraft to the government. He said the government had reached its borrowing limit provided for in the 1991 Appropriation Act. Nori added that more overdraft would lead the government into financial disaster.

Nori did not go ahead with his threat, saying it might affect the welfare of the families of public servants.

In a press statement released on November 5, Mamaloni warned that "any move by any of the existing foreign-owned commercial banks to support Nori will be severely counteracted even to the extent of closing the bank involved and deporting its management."

Mamaloni said one bank manager, whom he did not name, has "helped in creating the widely-publicised rumour that the government has gone broke."

The three commercial banks refused to comment on Mamaloni's threat. Mamaloni said that comments by Nori and Opposition MP Nathaniel Waena

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Boulekone's election offer

THE Tan Union party, of Vanuatu, could join with the ruling Vanuaaku Party to form a government after December's general election, Tan Union president Vincent Boulekone said. "If the results of the elections are that the Vanuaaku Party of (Prime Minister Donald) Kalpokas does not have a majority, it is taken for granted that we would be able to work with him to form a coalition government within the parliament," he said.

On September 6, Tan Union helped Kalpokas and his supporters pass a motion of no-confidence in Prime Minister Walter Lini, who had led Vanuatu since independence from France and Britain in 1980. Boulekone said his party would win four to six seats at the elections. But if added to the 18 to 20 seats he expected the Vanuaaku Party to win, the coalition would achieve the necessary majority of 24 in the 46-seat house.

If the two parties fail to win enough seats, he said, it would still be possible to attain the necessary number with the help of some francophone parties quitting the Union of Moderate Parties. □

Help, help

UNESCO is complaining that its Regional Warning System for the South West Pacific is suffering from lack of political support, and consequently of funds. It may be on the verge of abandonment.

UNESCO wants UNDP to fund the project — but the latter's resources are already stretched in other directions. A UNESCO spokesman says that if cash doesn't come through in two years, the project will have to be dropped. □

Tuvalu trust

THE Tuvalu Government is to receive A\$5.88 million from the Tuvalu Trust Fund. The fund achieved a 23 per cent return last year. The Fund as at 30 September 1991 had a market value of A\$41.609 million which represented an average 11.7 per cent return per annum for its four-year life, a period in which it had to weather the 1987 stock market collapse, the Gulf crisis and unprecedented turbulence in the financial markets.

Tuvalu is seeking further contributions to the fund from other nations. Following a promotional visit to three Asian countries, a visit to European aid donors is planned for June 1992. □

Telecom profit

TELECOM Services of Kiribati Limited (TSKL), has recorded an after tax profit

of A\$106,000 in its first five months of operation. □

Great achiever

ELIZABETH "Betty" Silverstein, Founder and President of the Foundation for the People's of the South Pacific has won the 1991 US presidential "End Hunger Award" for individual achievement. She will receive the medal at the White House on 12 December.

During World War II, she became "Red Cross Queen" of Australia, and was "spotted" for a career as a film star. Then she toured the South Pacific and fundraising drives before Japan entered the War — and the South Pacific. Later she married Mo "Red" Silverstein and she recalled for PIM their flight was on a flying boat which made frequent, island hopping stops across the Pacific. "I fell in love with it, and its people" she says.

In the sixties, when her children were grown up, she decided that she wanted to help the islands. Her husband, President of Metro Goldwyn Mayer, came on board to help and the FSP was set up shortly afterwards. The Marist Fathers released one of their missionary priests, Father Stan Hosie, to run the Foundation. "We wanted to promote socio-economic development, while allowing the people to keep their own identity"

Over a quarter of a century later, Stan Hosie is still acting as director. This year FSP has US\$5 million worth of support for its programmes which cover a range of bottom up projects like "wokabout" saw mills in the Solomons, and Vitamin A programmes to combat child blindness in Kiribati. FSP is also working in Tonga, Vanuatu, Fiji, FSM, Cook Islands, PNG and Guam. USAID has now offered 50 per cent self-support grant to match any funds that FSP itself can raise. □

Language hope

THE Australian Federal government is funding a project to produce dictionaries for 40 Aboriginal languages, including several no longer spoken. Aboriginal Affairs Minister Robert Tickner said the A\$150,000 project was in response to studies showing a desperate need for Aboriginal language materials.

"The 40 languages will include a handful from capital city areas which are no longer spoken, researched from archives and other historical sources," Tickner said. "In some cases the production of the dictionary may be the first time the language has been written down."

Tickner said there had been a dramatic reduction in the number of Aboriginal languages since white settlement in 1788, when between 200 and 250 languages involving 700 dialects were

spoken. All 40 dictionaries would be both english/aboriginal and aboriginal/english, he said. The project would be completed next year. □

Quota on tuna

AUSTRALIA, Japan and New Zealand have agreed not to raise their global catch of Southern Bluefin Tuna for 1991-92 above quotas for the previous year, Federal Primary Industries Minister Simon Crean announced said. The global limit of 11,750 tonnes was set at the annual voluntary trilateral negotiations for management of Southern Bluefin Tuna in Wellington recently.

Crean said the latest decision meant individual allocations would remain at last year's levels of 6065 tonnes for Japan, 5265 for Australia and 420 tonnes for New Zealand. Scientific evidence indicated there were unacceptable risks associated with any increase in catch levels. □

Getting stronger

AOSIS, the Alliance of Small Island States, is going from strength to strength. It now has 36 members, 29 of which are United Nations members. New members include Cape Verde and Sao Tome, island states off West Africa, Cook Islands, and Trinidad and Tobago, while recently the Cayman Islands expressed interest in joining.

Its clout is respected by other participants in the International Negotiating Committee on climate change. When the non-aligned "Group of 77" nations met in Nairobi last September, an OPEC spokesman ridiculed the idea that small islands representing a mere three million people could stand in the way of human progress — by which he meant oil sales.

After AOSIS protests, Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, two of OPEC's most important members, dissociated themselves from his report. "The last session was really quite positive," said Robert Van Lierop, Vanuatu's UN ambassador, and chairman of AOSIS. When AOSIS was set up, he anticipated it being a bridge between the environmental concerns of the industrial countries, and the developmental concerns of the rest of the world. Had those hopes been matched by the reality of AOSIS's first year? "Yes, very much so. We are frontline states."

Many observers reported that the US delegation was holding up the drawing of an effective Convention against Climate Change. Was that his impression? "The US is not so much stalling as having fundamental differences. There is a big gap between its perception of the problem and that of the developing world," he says. "Economic development is as important as the environment for many developing countries, but the US recognises the imperative of economic issues from a very different perspective". □

Evans Third World diplomacy

DESPITE the sweeping changes of the past couple of years, the end of the cold war and the collapse of Eastern European Communism, Australia's Foreign Minister Senator Gareth Evans sees a bright future for diplomacy by the small nations of our region.

That along with the revolution in Australia's approach to Asia form the central themes of his new book *Australia's Foreign Relations in the Third World of the 1990s*, co-authored with diplomat and journalist, Bruce Grant. *Australia's Foreign Relations in the Third World of the 1990s* is a rare book in that it deals with the process as seen from a serving foreign minister's perspective. And it has been well received, even scoring a plug by Indonesia's Foreign Minister, Ali Alatas, on the dust jacket.

It will be of interest in the Pacific, not just because it gives an authoritative account of Australian foreign policy but because the issues Senator Evans tackles on Australia's behalf — how to become a part of the 21st century boom in Asia and how, as a small nation one can make oneself visible — are also issues at the top of the agenda of Island governments.

It also takes a close look at "new internationalist agenda" issues such as the greenhouse effect and other global environmental problems, the growing trend away from free market trade and the threat of AIDS and international crime, for which collective solutions are needed.

As Evans points out, a geographically remote country of 17 million people in a world of five and a half billion should not get ideas above its station but "a middle-sized power like Australia can nonetheless do a great deal — using techniques of coalition building and niche diplomacy, paying careful attention to priorities and credibility maintenance, exercising intellectual creativity at the right times and through sheer persistence and stamina."

As evidence for what can be done, Senator Evans cites Australia's key role in the recent Cambodian peace settlement (in recognition of which he has been nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize), the establishment of the Asia Pacific Economic Co-operation process and the Cairns group of free trading nations which has made a big impact in multilateral trade negotiations and in getting international agreement to protect Antarctica's pristine environment.

To that list the Island nations could add their success in halting driftnet fishing and in helping build a coalition of small island states demanding tough international action to deal with the greenhouse effect. Although both Australia and the Island nations may feel proud of in their diplomatic record over the past few years, now is not the time for complacency.

Recent changes, particularly the faltering multi-lateral trade negotiations under the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) add new uncertainties for small countries. Australia's strategy for dealing with this new fast-changing world has been to firmly embed itself in its own region, the Asia-Pacific.

Half of the Evans-Grant book is given over to a detailed examination of relationships with individual countries and regions, beginning with the South Pacific and followed by South East Asia, Indo-China, North-East Asia, South Asia, the Middle East and Africa, finishing with Europe and the Americas.

As Gareth Evans stressed at the launching of the book, this was a deliberate choice. "It reflects a way of looking at the world which we believe is long overdue for a country whose

SYDNEY



JEMIMA
GARRETT

geography and future is that of the Asia Pacific," he said.

On placing the South Pacific first, Senator Evans said the region was "in many ways the part of the world closest to home." It is where we have some of our most longstanding and comfortable diplomatic relationships. It is where we have an intricate maze of economic, political, development, defence and personal connections.

Despite that the Foreign Minister warns against seeing Australia as having too much influence. In fact, he says, we have less than might be expected considering what our relative size wealth and market power might imply. As an example he cites Fiji after the 1987 coups. Despite Australia's desire to see a stable and racially harmonious Fiji, he says "our encouragement to those advocating the resumption of constitutional democracy was at best of marginal utility".

"The very characteristics that may seem influential — our disproportionate size, wealth, state of political and economic development, and liberal democratic tradition — make it easy in these situations to paint us as uncomprehending, domineering and patronising however carefully we may tread."

It is a paradox that has taken Australia a long time to recognise. That recognition has now been formalised in the policy of "constructive commitment" defined by Senator Evans as "involving a spirit of partnership rather than dominance, mutual respect for sovereignty and national individuality, and the development of shared perceptions of regional strategic and security interests."

While Australia may have had its difficulties with Fiji since the coups, Senator Evans says it is in Asia that we are confronted with our "trickiest foreign policy tasks".

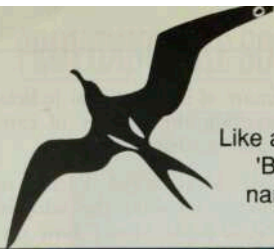
"There has been no greater turnaround in contemporary Australian history than the appreciation that his region from which we so long sought to protect ourselves, whether by esoteric dictation tests to exclude migrants, or high tariffs to protect our manufacturers, or security alliances with the distant great and powerful — is now the region which offers us the most," he told his audience at the launch of his book.

"One of the things which I think has been hardest for many Australians to learn, and I do not exclude myself from this description," Evans confessed, "is that if we are going to really succeed in comprehensively engaging Australia with our Asian region, this is going to require some moderation of our own instinctive behaviour, which is characteristically direct, blunt and straight down to tin tacks."

"What is involved here is simply recognising the very different cultural milieu that does by-and-large operate with Asia ... The essential characteristic of that milieu is that how something is done is as important, if not more so, than what is done."

While Senator Evans is receiving plaudits for Australia's new activist, consensus-seeking foreign policy in Asia, he must also be wishing that the constants of change in international affairs were not quite so relentless.

The massacre of peaceful independence protestors by Mr Alatas's army in East Timor has left his "good friend and colleague" Gareth Evans, architect of the Timor Gap treaty and close relations between Australia and Indonesia, in a very uncomfortable position. Senator Evans has been set a test over East Timor which will require all his undoubted intellectual creativity, persistence and stamina in the months to come. □



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THE LAW

Moti's Law

Calling for changes to find uniformity in modern day Pacific

IN the sphere of international and trans-Pacific trade, one should realise that not only is 'no man (or person) an island' but no island can afford — let alone pretend — to be an island. This was the message conveyed to delegates at the International Trade Law Conference in Suva by Julian Moti, an international lawyer based at the Sydney offices of Baker & McKenzie, one of the world's leading law firms.

Moti was among the panel of experts addressing the region's senior lawyers and government officials at the conference from October 21-25, jointly-sponsored by the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL) and the Forum Secretariat.

Born in Lautoka, Fiji, and a graduate of Sydney University and the Australian National University, Moti has written on international law, maritime law, commercial law and dispute resolution. He is also a trained legal anthropologist and deals with customary laws of the Pacific Islands.

The regional conference was designed to introduce participants to recent developments in the law affecting international trade. Experts from UNCITRAL and Australia discussed the text of various conventions, model laws and rules developed by UNCITRAL to foster the harmonisation of international trade law.

Among the smorgasbord of international legal instruments considered at the conference was the Model Law on International Commercial Arbitration adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1985. The provisions of the Model Law reflect on international consensus of opinion on the law regulating the arbitration of disputes arising out of international commercial transactions.

In his paper entitled *The UNCITRAL Model Law: A Pan-Pacific Perspective*, Moti provided a comparative analysis of commercial arbitration laws of the Pa-

cific region. He identified a number of deficiencies in the current laws which were either "inherited" during the colonial era or were modelled on legislation which has now been largely superseded in the metropolitan countries.

Moti said that "the prevailing framework of arbitration laws in the Pacific region has all the hallmarks of an



Moti: calls for reform

antiquated system". They are "ill-equipped to meet the demands and complexities of trans-Pacific and international trade".

Reflecting on the need for reform of existing arbitral laws of the region, he referred to the "increasing recourse to arbitration as an alternative and efficient method of dispute resolution by the international business community". He also pointed to the "change in the

climate of international judicial opinion regarding the efficacy of extra-judicial dispute settlement".

Mr Moti urged Pacific nations to seriously consider the adoption of the UNCITRAL Model Law on International Commercial Arbitration. He said that "the Model Law offers a ready-made package of legislation which is designed not only to modernise but also to harmonise international arbitration laws". Its adoption "will enhance the capacity of Pacific states to attract potentially lucrative arbitral business to their shores".

According to Moti, "the adoption of the Model Law in all Pacific jurisdictions will enable disputing parties to select the locals for arbitration in this region for reasons other than differences in the prevailing procedural law. These would include considerations of convenience, availability of facilities and administrative services, location of subject-matter of dispute and the acceptability of a country in political, economic or cultural terms".

Conscious of the fact that arbitration is already considered as an "invisible export" generating substantial revenue for some nations, Moti articulated the need for Pacific nations to develop an infrastructure that is generally conducive to arbitration. He said that "the Pacific region clearly deserves a place on the international arbitral map".

Outlining several "pragmatic and programmatic issues" concerning "the potential role of the Pacific region as a hospitable forum for the Pacific settlement of international commercial disputes", Moti called for a regionally-coordinated approach to the adoption of the Model Law. He expressed the hope that participants at the conference will impress upon Pacific nations to consider the "eminent sensibility" of adopting uniform laws regulating the conduct of international trade in this region.

He said "sharing as we do common problems and concerns regarding the conduct of international trade, there is undoubtedly considerable merit in adopting a Pan-Pacific regional perspective on trade issues". □

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SPORTS

Come in, it's time to join the world

By Loveni Enari

THANKS to Western Samoa's performances at the recently completed World Cup, the Pacific, as a rugby force, though not yet in the spotlight of the international stage, has emerged from the wings to take on one of the minor starring roles.

Whether it — as represented by Samoa, Fiji and Tonga — can progress to one of the leading lights by the time World Cup 1995 rolls on, remains to be seen. But the road ahead doesn't seem as difficult as it has been in the past.

As the only Pacific Islands journalist covering the Samoan's progress in the United Kingdom, their successes were as much a joy to behold as the the Fijians' losses were an exercise in frustration.

But where to for Samoa and Fiji from here? And where does it leave Tonga who failed to qualify for the tournament and yet who are traditionally one of the big three in Pacific rugby? Sitting by a gas heater surrounded by sports papers filled with soccer news, while the rain drizzled outside my London flat is not the best location from which to pass comment on the game in the islands.

But one thing is certain: administrators of the game in all three countries must become more vocal to gain international competition to capitalise on the ground gained by Samoa's success.

And any complacency from the Samoans should have been hit hard on the head by a comment from Don Furnley, chairman of the Australian Rugby Union, in the immediate wash-up to

Australia's victory over England in the final. Proposing a Southern Hemisphere competition similar to the Five Nations in the North, Furnley said he thought Australia, New Zealand, Fiji and Argentina could provide the basis for it.

It was a hypothetical statement and didn't grab much attention. But the fact someone in his position could mention Fiji ahead of Western Samoa, in light of the two side's contrasting performances, should serve as a sharp reminder to the Samoans that their results, hailed as heroic in Apia, were only glimpses of glory on an international scale and should never be taken for granted.

There is still much to be done and the Fijians must feel that most. Seeded eighth in the world going into the competition and finishing with three poor performances from three matches was a bitter pill for them to swallow. They were built up by the British media as superb sevens players deficient in the more technical aspects of the 15-man game and the dark men in white played as if guided by the headlines.

Coming from a nation whose most well known personality is the gung-ho Sivi-tani Rabuka, they struggled to live up to his fearsome reputation and their impressions of hailing a taxi when going in for the tackle were schoolboyish. Their lack of aggression and unwillingness to confront their opponents in the forwards, while relying on their flamboyant style to see them safely through, was never going to be enough.

But unlike Tonga their problems are on-field ones and, judging by the number

of times the Fijian side is overhauled and injected with new blood, the pool of talent is still flowing strongly.

The Tongans are faced with a more difficult proposition. Despite their absence from the tournament, Tongan-born Australian flanker Viliami Ofahengaue, ensured all that is admirable about Tongan rugby — power, pace, and tremendous ball skills — were on display in his man-of-the-match performance in the final.

Ofahengaue received his rugby education in New Zealand's rugby capital, Auckland, and there-in could lie the key to a rejuvenation of Tongan rugby — for there are any number of budding 'Ofahengaues' waiting to be discovered in Auckland. Players like of Daniel Manu and Sakeasi Taumalolo, both included in the Auckland squad this year, are just two examples. And just below players of their calibre the numbers of big Tongan schoolboys and club players — with names that have Palagi match commentators speaking in shorthand — are even more impressive.

To be fair to the Tongan Rugby Union it has not overtly discouraged New Zealand-based players. But their system of recruitment is by no means as organised as the Samoans, with the latter's success this year closely linked with the increasing influence from New Zealand.

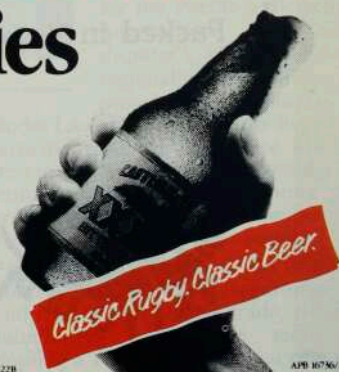
However while they struggle to come to terms with the issue, administrators in the islands must not wait for an edict to be handed down to them. Samoa, and Fiji before them, have proven the Pacific can stand tall amongst the more established unions of the world on the field.

Whether or not Tonga, Fiji and Samoa feature in the opening credits when the curtain goes up on World Cup '95 will depend much on the off-field work of administrators of all three countries in the intervening years. □

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Cracking the American market

IT is difficult to waylay the average harried New Yorker long enough to ask directions. It is a city where the guy in front of you will elbow his way into your taxi and where jaded inhabitants barely blink when they bump into celebrities like Madonna or when they step over a ragged man groaning on the pavement.

So how do you break through such a mountainous rabble of skyscrapers, traffic and people which are all locked into a ferocious daily contest? That was the challenge faced by a group of South Pacific Islanders who recently took their entrepreneurial wares to the Big Apple. "New York was tough," says Papua New Guinea Ambassador Meg Taylor, who smiles at her own understatement. "It's a tough city to get in to." If it can be daunting just to hail a taxi, imagine how formidable is the challenge to grab the attention of those frantic men wearing striped shirts and suspenders on Wall Street. Especially when no one knows who you are.

But there they were, Ambassador Taylor and a 20-person entourage from Papua New Guinea's private and public sectors, pitching to about 50 financial analysts, bankers and investors at the Plaza Hotel during a day-long seminar. It is not so surprising. New York has long been mythologised as a jungle-city with golden opportunities. PNG is a country whose wild mountain ranges are literally steeped in gold.

Ironically, in a city where residents are relieved to have been mugged and not shot, the main thrust of PNG's presentation was to soothe business anxieties about law and order and political unrest. "I think we took them by surprise because we were up front about everything," says Taylor. "We dealt with Bougainville, law and order and the environmental issues in mining and exploration." The trip to New York was part of a four-city investment promotion Taylor initiated to try to revitalise confidence in Papua New Guinea. The delegation also visited Houston, San Francisco and Toronto in Canada.

"The Bougainville issue had really raised concerns among investors and banks and insurers about the investment climate in Papua New Guinea and the question of political risk," she said. "So I went to the Government and said we have got to tackle this and not just sit back and hope things improve. We've got to get out there."

It took 18 months to organise, and involved a partnership between government officials and business representatives such as CRA, Chevron and Mobil. They backed up government claims that it was safe and profitable to do business in PNG with powerful first-hand testimony. Taylor believes the investment roadshow, which attracted about 50 people in each city, was a success. "I know 50 people may not sound a lot to anybody but if you get 50 decision makers you're on the right track. We found it very difficult to get people and this is where the Pacific nations have to understand that we are so minuscule in the perceptions of the American market."

"I know how difficult it is here in Washington to get Papua New Guinea across to the United States. Having this delegation was like taking 10 steps in one go." The presence of such a high-powered delegation produced tangible results almost immediately. One US oil company had been so unnerved by reports of political instability that it was considering pulling out. "We were able to salvage that situation just by having our top people there and that means many millions of dollars to Papua New Guinea. So it paid for this exercise one million times over."

WASHINGTON



**MARGOT
O'NEILL**

Taylor says there was another unexpected fringe benefit from the tour. "It really bonded people from the private and public sectors. People who had not known each other at all or who had had suspicions about each other ended up going home as a real team. I came away with a great sense of satisfaction that we had not only accomplished something in North America but that we had also reinforced our own infrastructure of government and private sector interests at home."

None of the questions from the American and Canadian businessmen took the delegation by surprise but their concerns underscored Taylor's belief that one of the biggest schisms is over the South Pacific's system of land tenure. Why can't an American company just buy the land it wants? Business doesn't understand that issue. And there is no way Papua New Guinea will change its land tenure laws to accommodate foreign business. Look, when they go to the Middle East they have

to adjust to a different cultural context. It is the same thing. They will have to learn to work in our social structure, within our land tenure system and it can work. Chevron especially emphasised their landowner relationships and how they had been able to do that successfully."

But Taylor says the issue highlights how the imperative to solicit foreign investment is a double-edged sword — it offers the key to throwing off dependence on foreign aid, particularly from Australia, but inevitably introduce new pressures on traditional culture. "I think we have a culture that is strong enough to weather the storm. There is a strong commercial tradition in Papua New Guinea. They are natural entrepreneurs. The important thing is to diversify investment so that we can start generating more light industry, manufacturing, small businesses which provide jobs and help develop a truly national economy."

The roadshow did not cover tourism which has been a focus for many South Pacific nations but not Papua New Guinea. "Most of the rest of the South Pacific is geared toward tourism and you can say that's created jobs but my concern there is that we are creating whole nations of people who are just servicing wealthy foreigners."

"It's only now that we are encouraging tourism. I don't think we wanted it before. But now we realise it's a way of earning foreign exchange. But the kind of tourism we want is different. There's enough hotels on idyllic beaches throughout the Pacific. We can get the kind of people who are interested in the environment, ecotourists, people who are interested in going somewhere unknown and untouched. PNG should really be encouraging a small and exclusive kind of tourism."

Therein lies the key to how tiny South Pacific nations can succeed in the massive American market — go after a specialised niche. Taylor refers to Tonga's export of pumpkin squashes to Japan, Fiji's sale of ginger, Tahiti's lucrative annual auction of black pearls. There is a gourmet niche out there. Like Papua New Guinea coffee — it could be a speciality brand sold in gourmet shops. There's something romantic about drinking coffee that comes from 12,000 miles away.

"We've got to really look at creative entrepreneurial ways of marketing what we've got. I mean Americans will buy anything! And if you can sell a million of them you've got a million dollars." □





Fire Power

By Beryl Cook

IN the not so remote regions of Fiji, men walk unharmed on fire and lie unscratched on beds of nails. In fact, the ceremonies are now performed before crowds of visiting tourists on the popular Coral Coast, in a strange ritual which weds ancient tradition to the modern call of the tourism dollar.

Since the Pacific Harbour Cultural Centre opened in 1978, groups of Fijians from Beqa Island have walked over hot stones to show the gift bestowed on them by a grateful spirit (see p33).

And in recent months, a group of Fiji Indian performers have drawn the disapproval of more conservative members of their own ethnic background by walking on knives, lying on nails, and walking through fire for tourists on the Coral Coast, the tourist belt on the southern shores of the main island of Viti Levu, and for the Hindu god, Ram.

The tinkling of the dantal, or cymbals, signals the approach of the group of men who come from Nadi in Fiji's West to work as carpenters at the resort by day, but moonlight by night as performers. One of the Hideaway Resort's proprietors, Kelvin Wade, has dubbed them the "New Delhi Troop".

As they approach the small stage in the restaurant, the clatter of cutlery and loud guffawing of the Australian tourists hushes to a minimum — now they strain and squint to see whether the buxom figure in red and saffron robes really is a woman. I wonder what they would think if they had seen Ram Kali a few months ago at the Fiji Accountants Congress — he had a moustache then, but his dervish dancing still drove a few accountants to join him in part-fun, part-frenzied gyrations on stage.

Tonight, Ram Kali begins the ritual

◀◀ **All in a night's work:** a blaze of orange and blue flame, and Kali enters the fire



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with an evocative, skirt-swirling dance designed to gain the attention and favour of the gods, but he fails to keep the attention of many of the beer-swilling diners. The commentator, Ratu Maiyale, explains that Ram Kali dresses as a woman to appear more attractive to the gods, but most of the male tourists are only joking when they wolf-whistle and cheer.

The members of the orchestra play the dholak (drum, the dantal (cymbals), the harmonium, the magira and the kartal in a mounting frenzy of thumping and chiming, which drowns out the clatter of cutlery and the diners' fruitless calls for drink waiter service.

By the time Ram Kali lights a fire on the head of his assistant, Sachide, he has the audience's attention, however. Prem Chand holds a small metal teapot over the flame and Ram Kali resumes his dance. In no time at all the water in the teapot is boiling and a cup of steaming tea is thrust into my hands.

"Do I drink this, or is it baptismal tea?" I won-

der to myself. But the show whirls on.

Ram Kali performs a wailing song and dance to attract the attention of the gods before he performs his next offering, and the wooden blocks studded with nails are shown to the audience for inspection. By now the tourists are shuffling their chairs forward and one shoots a sidelong glare at another to keep her front row position.

The camera flashes explode as Ram Kali walks across the nails, pausing often to take small jumps and bat his eyelashes seductively at the photographers. Another barrage of flashes ... he is lowered onto the bed of nails.

Finally, the children have forgotten to eat as they watch Sachide stand on Ram Kali's stomach to increase the force of the nails. His slash of red lipstick barely quivers.

He emerges smiling to perform a love dance to the Gods.

Now, mouths are agape and expressions confused as Ram Kali is ready to walk on the

cane knives mounted into two wooden planks. As a further sacrifice to Ram, he walks across the knives in what Ratu Maiyale describes as "quite a trance". Still, he summons a smile for the cameras.

The knives are taken around for audience inspection, and one Australian asks his friend: "Reckon you c'n cutya steak with this, mate?"

Ram Kali's final dance is one of thanks to the gods, and a bowl is passed around for the tourists to join the celebration and donate some funds for distribution to the poor through the temples. Coins tinkle into the bowl, and for the audience the show is almost over.

For the grand finale, they are herded out on to the lawn by the volleyball court, which becomes a sacred sandpit. Ram Kali and his group kneel and bury something in the sand with reverence.

"I reckon it's a frog," offers a helpful Australian in an Akubra. Later, Prem explains it is a coconut — an offering to their God which symbolises themselves and their hard exterior, white flesh, and clean water within the body and a pure heart within.

Ram Kali prepares himself, and the volleyball pit becomes a blaze of orange and blue flames. He saunters confidently back and forth through them. None of the tourists join him.

They return to the clinking of glasses at the bar and the disco music is wound up higher. The sound fades, washing



FOCUS

away by the swssshing of waves as I follow the group down to the sea.

Here, Prem explains, they will finish their dedication and prayers. Few words are spoken, but the purple bougainvillea blooms are laid gently on the sea, where they bob in the light of flickering candles floating on small plates.

"The flowers are offerings. They are perfect. They must not be allowed to be stood on or bruised in any way," Prem explains.

We walk back into the dim kerosene lamp light of the galvanised iron shed, where I had tried to interview Ram Kali before the show. He and his followers, who had been squatting on the bare floor of the shack, had not been too welcoming then. Now, they are relaxed and happy to talk.

"We prepare right up to just before the show. We fast for a day and we have to pray for at least 15 minutes beforehand to make our god, Durga Mata, happy," Prem Chand explained. "Then the priest will know that she is happy and allow us to walk on the nails, knives and fire."

The preparations for the performance were sacred, and it was a privilege to be allowed to witness the final rites by the sea. The bit in the middle may well prove to be a tourism attraction, but the group seem to believe it can retain an untarnished place in the deeper, spiritual aspects of their lives.

This belief has been with the Fiji Indians since they arrived in Fiji as indentured labourers more than 100 years ago, and it still is evident in the life of the high priest himself today.

By day 22-year-old Satish Raj cuts cane, but by night he is Rami Kali — one of Fiji's three Singh High Priests. The ritual he leads as a priest is thousands of years old, introduced by the indentured labourers who were brought in from India in the 1880s and 1890s to do the same work on the British-owned sugarcane fields which Satish does today.

The indentured labourers of last century fared little better than slaves, receiving minimal wages and living in conditions of poverty, but held tight to their customs and religion for community, strength and survival. By the time their indenture was finished, the Government encouraged them to stay in Fiji by offering them attractive leases. Today, about 43 per cent of the population are descendants of these labourers and many have expanded new businesses and prospered. □



Walking faithfals: *Fijian firewalkers on white-hot stones at Pacific Harbour*

The power of the Eel

By Beryl Cook

TWENTY-ONE year old Ratu Maiyale is the official announcer for the New Delhi Troop. He explains the ritual of the Fiji Indian firewalkers. But Ratu Maiyale himself is from the island of Beqa, off the southern coast of the main island of Viti Levu and visible from the capital Suva — the home of the Fijian firewalkers. "We have been doing it for tourists for a long time," he says.

It is a gift from a spirit which has been passed down through the generations — and which today is a livelihood for many of the islanders who perform for tourists at the Pacific Harbour Cultural Centre, 50 kilometres outside Suva, driving west.

Legend has it that long ago there lived on the Island of Beqa a famous storyteller named Dredre. He entertained the tribe of Sawau whose people lived on a mountain village called Navakeisese. The people enjoyed his stories and gave him gifts in return. One day the villagers asked him what he would like. He replied that he would like the first thing they each caught when they were out hunting the next day. One warrior, Tui-ni-

Ivialita, went fishing in a mountain stream. The first thing he caught was an eel which, when it was pulled out, assumed the shape of a spirit god.

Tui was proud of his catch but the Spirit God begged to be released and offered all kinds of gifts in exchange. Tui refused them all, until the Spirit God offered to give him power over fire. To prove his gift, a pit was dug and a large fire lit in it. Stones were heaped on the fire to heat. When the stones were white hot the spirit god jumped in. He called out to Tui who jumped in, too, and walked on the hot stones unharmed.

He released the Spirit God and his descendants have been walking on white-hot stones ever since.

Like the Indian firewalkers, the Fijian firewalkers prepare beforehand. "There are taboos, like no milk, no coconut milk and no sex for two weeks beforehand," Ratu Maiyale said.

But their's is not a ritual with an end.

"It is a permanent thing," he explains. "We can also heal burns. Recently one of the men at the resort burnt himself in the torchlighting ceremony. All that the people of Beqa have to do is touch the burn, and it becomes better." □

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The Cook Islands dilemma

HOW much longer will New Zealand keep propping up the economy of the Cook Islands, the largest remaining vestige of King Dick Seddon's fanciful attempt at Pacific empire building, which came under Wellington's control a century ago?

In 1987, the former Labour government decided another 20 years would be long enough, and it started chopping direct budgetary support on the basis of a schedule that would see it phased out entirely by the year 2007. It was a unilateral decision, made on the basis of a review of the island chain's economy from which the Cooks' administration, peeved at a dispute over its representation, pulled out. New Zealand went on to decide that, given the encouragement of a bit of deprivation, the Cooks could in time fund themselves from their own resources.

The Rarotonga government, which still describes its economy as "extremely fragile" and is not convinced it can pay its own way, never endorsed the cutbacks and has been smarting ever since — not so much, perhaps, from the loss of the money as what it saw as a lack of consultation. New Zealand's new National government, forcing self-reliance on its own people, at home, says the Cooks cannot be treated differently and is maintaining Labour's schedule of cuts.

It would not be true to say that the issue has ruptured relations between New Zealand and its one-time colony, which has been self-governing "in free association" with its former master for more than a quarter of a century now. Normal ties continue and broad agreement is reached each year in consultations on the level of separate project and training aid, this year worth \$NZ5.6 million.

Talks on direct budgetary support (now down to \$8.7 million, against \$13.5 million 15 years ago) have effectively been shelved, but the issue is still there, festering away, a bone of contention and an unresolved cause of grievance. The two countries are about to have another go at settling the dispute amicably. New Zealand officials are looking again at the original macro-economic review of the Cooks' economy that led to the 1987 decision, in the light of updated data. Some time this month both sides will get a new report to analyse and early in the New Year they will sit down to discuss it.

From a Wellington perspective, it is unlikely that the eventual outcome will change, even if the timing is amended. The New Zealand government cannot make belt-tightening demands of its own residents (who include more Cook Islanders than there are left at home) without applying the same philosophy to its overseas aid programme. It would be irresponsible to continue pouring government money into Rarotonga at the expense of, say, Tokoroa, which has about the same population as the Cooks' entire 15 islands. New Zealanders would object to being disadvantaged by what might be seen as unreasonable generosity to the islands.

The question really is: To what extent is the Cook Islands a part of New Zealand? The New Zealand government has made its decision. It is not suggesting that it cut budgetary support to Northland, the Gisborne-East Cape region, or the Chatham Islands, which are as under-privileged, disadvantaged and unemployed as the Cooks.

WELLINGTON



DAVID
BARBER

Rarotonga has, understandably, retained a dollar each-way stance. It wants self-government, "in free association"; it wants contact with the rest of the world — it has actively sought such contact, encouraging and developing international ties since 1975 when it became an associate member of the Asian Development Bank, joining bodies like the World Health Organisation and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation and in practice undertaking its own foreign policy, though constitutionally this remains a New Zealand responsibility. (It wanted, under Sir Tom Davis, freedom to welcome United States Navy ships when New Zealand's anti-nuclear policy denied access to New Zealand ports.)

But it has shied from electing total independence — independence that would give it full freedom, including, for instance, access to European Community aid monies that go to sovereign Asian, Pacific and Caribbean states; access that could

bring in vast sums of development money it so badly needs, currently denied because EC rules decree that the Cook Islands is not truly "independent".

It has not done so because the present arrangement gives Cook Islanders New Zealand citizenship and therefore the ability to come here at will. That would not necessarily be taken away if the Cooks elected for independence, but given New Zealand's current economic state and level of unemployment, it would be understandable if Wellington shrugged its shoulders at the prospect.

After five years as the Cooks' representative in Wellington, Iaveta Short has identified the problem as one of attitude. He cites, with justification, a New Zealand Press that is only interested in bad news from the Cooks and a business community that would rather invest elsewhere.

He says the economic progress the Cooks has made — average GNP growth of 7.3 per cent between 1982-87, compared with a little over 1 per cent in New Zealand — is overlooked. He notes that the aid contribution to GDP has fallen from 44 per cent 15 years ago to 14 per cent. He says New Zealand, which exported \$24 million worth of goods to the Cooks last year, while buying less than \$4 million in return, gets, the better of the trading deal. While New Zealand's budgetary support is now totally committed to education and health, most of that comes back to New Zealand in one way or another.

He says, again with justification, that New Zealand business has exploited the Cooks, which was a captive market, over the years. He asks why the Cook Islands International airline was forced out of business and why it is this month cheaper for him to fly from Wellington to Rarotonga via other parts of the Pacific than direct from Auckland.

He warns that the days the Cooks will continue to buy goods from New Zealand — from building materials to soap and toilet paper — more expensively than from elsewhere are numbered. He says the Cook Islands wants to, and will have to, develop its trade with other islands, including French Polynesia, and New Zealand companies ignore that prospect at their own cost.

It's a warning that goes much further than the debate about aid and one that, without due care and attention, could see, in 2007, a realignment of relationships that is not necessarily in New Zealand's interests. □

HEALTH

● COVER STORIES

Saved by the Knife

**Charity succeeds in the islands
and highlights the
dangers of poor hygiene**

By Beryl Cook

THE echogram charted the hills and valleys of Joyce Mary's heart. It amplified the rhythm of the blood pounding through the arteries, and the screen showed the irregularity of the mitral valve — an irregularity which could bring her short 19 years of life to an abrupt halt.

The irregularity was the result of rheumatic fever and, by coincidence, the same irregularity which had caused the death of her mother in 1974 when Joyce Mary herself was only two years old. This year, Joyce Mary Bainivesi joined the list of patients for Fiji's Operation Open Heart.

According to Australian heart specialist, Dr Fred Nasser, rheumatic heart disease is the second biggest killer in the Pacific Island countries, particularly in the age group 5 to 24.

"In most western countries death from rheumatic fever is a very rare occurrence. In fact this is almost unheard of," Dr Nasser said. "The tragedy of this is that rheumatic fever is completely preventable."

Rheumatic fever and rheumatic heart disease tend to develop from substandard sanitation, hygiene and close living quarters when, for example, families move to the city and crowd into accommodation together.

Rheumatic fever begins as a sore throat secondary to an infection by a bacteria labelled as group A streptococcus. Death can occur from myocarditis during the initial infection, as early as the first one to two months. More commonly fibrosis of the heart valves occurs slowly over years, leading to the crippling destruction of the heart valves and then death — unless surgery is performed. The clinical symptoms are fever and a sore throat (pharyngitis) and painful joints, in particular the larger joints such as the



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knees, ankle, elbows and wrists. The pain peculiarly "migrates", or spreads from one joint to the next. The joint pains usually last for three weeks. Inflammation of the heart muscle can occur although this is uncommon, and more frequently the heart valves are damaged and the "murmur" can be detected by a doctor in this early stage. If further infections occur, the valve can be quickly scarred and deformed and death can occur during adolescence.

The treatment is usually bed rest plus Penicillin for 10 days. Penicillin against further infection is essential and is provided by a monthly injection of Penicillin for at least 10 years following the initial infection.

Dr Nasser said this can be a problem in remote areas, particularly if people are unaware of preventive measures.

"Reducing the risk of rheumatic fever involves several measures which include personal hygiene, appropriate sanitation as well as spacious accommodation and medical attention," he said.

When it is contracted, rheumatoid fever or heart disease can appear as a simple throat infection followed by longer-term breathlessness. But the result can be fatal.

Dr Nasser said: "The after-effects such as a mitral valve stenosis can cause the heart to work harder and harder to pump blood through the body. Often the patient will die if he or she is not operated on." Dr Nasser has seen only two cases in 10 years in Australia. Only eight cases have been reported in a major teaching hospital in Sydney since 1980. The provision of adequate housing, hygiene as well as the ready availability of Penicillin have made the number of cases in developed countries like Australia negligible.

In the past few years, cardiac teams have visited Nepal, Tonga and Vanuatu, and the number of closed heart cases in Fiji warranted a visit by them last year. This year was the first time open heart surgery (in which it is necessary to stop the heart and let a bypass machine take over its functions) was performed in Fiji.

Dr Nasser said the considerable number of people listed for assessments in Fiji was far greater than last year. He visited centres in Lautoka, Labasa as well as the Colonial War memorial Hospital in Suva. "It was difficult and painful selecting from among the many patients who are going to be operated on, on this occasion," Dr Nasser said. "Unfortunately we could only do 20 cases in the given two weeks."

A few days into the examinations, Dr Nasser noted the severity of many of the cases, which had been left to develop untreated for many years. The severity of their problems made some of the operations more complicated than expected.

A team co-ordinator, Annette Baldwin, said this placed more pressure than anticipated on the operating team.

"Many of the patients had suffered rheumatic fever years ago, and the after-effects had become severe. The case mix was also a problem — we had anticipated doing 50 per cent closed heart surgery, and 50 per cent open heart.

◀▶ surgeons operate in Suva's Colonial War memorial Hospital to save children with heart defects

"But the number of severe cases was so bad we ended up doing something like 85 or 90 per cent open heart surgery."

As a result they ran out of oxygenators for the heart-lung machine. Dr Bakani approached local businesses who helped with donations so more oxygenators could be bought from Australia, and Air Pacific allowed another staff member to bring them over as excess baggage. This year's Operation Open Heart began

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with discussions between cardiac authorities in Fiji and Australia. Funding for accommodation and meals for the team was secured from the Fiji Government and the Fiji Sixes, (a lotto run by Fiji Times Ltd, publishers of *Pacific Islands Monthly* and *The Fiji Times*). The Australian Embassy agreed to pay for the freight of the team's 120 boxes of equipment — everything from high-technology monitoring equipment to drapes.

The negotiations and ground-work started to become reality when the setting-up contingent of the 40-member team arrived on September 22.

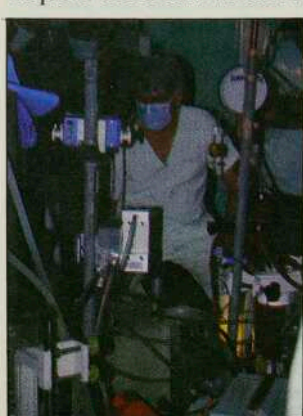
"They came in and basically set up their own heart surgery. They brought with them everything from the bandaid to the scalpel to the pacemaker," Dr Nasser said.

The complicated machinery was begged and borrowed from different hospitals and businesses in Australia. This will be returned, but many of the left-over disposable items will be left for use in Fiji.

The benefits are ongoing. Patients are given an increased chance of living longer, more active lives; and Fiji medical staff gain more experience. The Australian team members, who paid their own airfares and took holidays from their jobs in different hospitals in Australia to donate their time, also gained experience. But this is not the principle motive of the team.

Dr Nasser explains: "It's basically something to do with a crazy love of humanity. How can you just tell a mother her child will die, if there is something you might be able to do for the child." He and the Fiji medical authorities hope sponsors can be attracted for more visits of this kind, because of the number of patients still to be treated.

But expanded medical back-up in remote islands could have longer-term benefits. The Australian team has made every effort to repair the heart valves because replacement requires special drugs, such as doses of anti-coagulants, and frequent blood tests which are unavailable in remote areas.



"Realistically, this just doesn't happen when people live a relaxed lifestyle on a remote island," Dr Nasser said.

But they also stress educational initiatives to help islanders live healthier lifestyles and minimise the incidents of heart disease. "We would rather not have to operate and in many cases it shouldn't be necessary. Preventive measures are much better than a big scar on the chest," Dr Nasser said. □



Joyce and Dr Nasser: saved by charity

Touch your scar, Joyce, you can play again

19-YEAR-OLD Joyce Mary first showed signs of heart trouble after she went for a holiday in a nearby village. "We had never encouraged her to swim a lot because she is so fair," Joyce's aunt and surrogate mother, Timaima Bainivesi, said. "But on that holiday she had a wonderful time and did all the things everyone does. She did a lot of swimming. When she came back she started yelling out in pain.

"I took her to a traditional Fijian healer and he massaged her but it didn't help. She had to go to hospital."

It was 1988 when Joyce Mary's condition was first diagnosed by Fiji cardiac consultant, Dr Bhagat Ram.

Joyce Mary's mother had also died of a heart disease 14 years earlier. In Joyce Mary's case, rheumatic fever had fused the two leaflets of her mitral valve together. Instead of being the usual 2.5 square centimetres the opening was less than one third of the size, restricting the blood flow. The fight to

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save her went like this:

Monday, September 30, 3.15 pm. Joyce Mary has been brought from the ward down to the anaesthetic room. She has been given pentothal to make her sleep, and a morphine-like compound is now given to her intravenously to paralyse her muscles.

3.30pm. She has been transferred to the surgery next door, and gases are used to keep her asleep and breathing. A probe is inserted into an artery in her neck and three sensors measure her heart beat, the level of oxygen in her blood, and the pressure in the heart.

The operation begins. Theatre nurse Pat Saar paints the front, left part of Mary Joyce's torso with iodine to sterilise the area. The excess is wiped off and a "drape" or adhesive, transparent sheet is stuck to the area. This "drape" allows a clear view of the wound. It also keeps the area clean and sterile but allows air to circulate to the skin.

The operating team assembles around Mary Joyce. Dr Terry Mau takes a scalpel and makes a long, light cut through the skin. A thin trickle of blood marks the line he will follow with the cautery, like an electric drill, which cuts the skin and flesh using electrical heat. A light trail of smoke and the smell of burning flesh are obvious, but the heat also cauterises, or assists clotting, so there is very little bleeding.

Joyce Mary's beating heart is exposed. Head surgeon Dr Alan Farnsworth and the assisting nurses calmly help Dr Mau open the wound between Joyce Mary's ribs (these days it is not necessary to cut out a rib). They position a clamp and hold the incision open. Dr Mau punctures the heart and inserts a tube. He then uses the same puncture to insert two fingers into Joyce Mary's heart and feel blindly for the mitral valve. It is a cruder way of exploring the heart, but in some ways less traumatic than linking the body to a bypass machine, redirecting the blood through artificial tubes, and taking over the body's heartbeat and oxygen flow.

When Dr Mau has finished his physical exploration, he inserts a Tubbs, or dilator, to force the valve to stretch open.

In most cases the complexity of the operation is now over. But the heart is a sensitive organ, and Joyce Mary's begins to "fibrillate" or beat irregularly because of the intrusions.

The team moves quickly to give the heart electric shock therapy. Dr Farnsworth considers whether to proceed to more complicated surgery and replace the mitral valve with a man-made one.

Dr Mau begins to retreat back through the operation, removing all instruments and finally stitching the incision back together.

4.30 pm. Joyce Mary, still unconscious,

is being wheeled back to the intensive care unit.

Evening: Recovery should start from now, but Joyce Mary begins to bleed externally. She is taken back to the surgery, the incision reopened and a visual check is done. Her heart stops twice during the night and her lungs are not working well.

Tuesday morning: Another scan is done using the echogram, a machine which uses sound waves to plot the heart's contours and show the valve in operation on a computer screen. The echogram shows the valve opening is still too small. Joyce Mary has been weakened by the operation, but the heart function is unsatisfactory and Dr Farnsworth decides that the team must proceed to a more complicated, open-heart operation.

Tuesday afternoon: Joyce Mary is back in the operating theatre. She has been connected to the bypass machine which takes over the flow of her blood and the functions of the lungs and heart. Her natural heart has stopped. Her heart is now opened and the team examines the mitral valve. The dilator had not opened the valve as much as usual — it has only split one side; the other is too thick. It is now necessary to use a scalpel to split the other side. After the operation, Joyce Mary's heart began to function well, although she had to recover from the effects of three operations in just two days. Her rehabilitation took about six weeks in hospital.

Joyce Mary will have a scar for life, but her heart will be stronger. She may need to have a valve replacement in the years to come but meanwhile, if her body accepts the operation, she can do all the normal things a young woman does — even have children with less risk of a heart failure. □

Plugging a hole in the heart

WHEN 13-year-old Parmendra Singh shuffled into the cardiac clinic at Colonial War Memorial Hospital in Suva, his mother's eyes brimmed with tears but his own were glazed and listless. An examination on the echogram revealed why — a gaping hole in the atrium of his heart.

From the day of his birth, Parmendra's chances of living a long and healthy life were not good. His mother, Savita Devi, says he did not seem unhealthy until the chest pains started when he was aged 11. But even before then, Parmendra's heart had had to work overtime to pump the blood to his listless limbs, past the hole in his heart.

Normally, the hole between the atrial cavities close at birth to prevent mixing of blood low in oxygen from the right atrium to the left atrium thus bypassing the lungs. But Parmendra was born with an atrial septum defect, or "hole in the heart", which often has made him too tired and weak to join in the activities which most children take for granted.

Now, 13 years later, he is to be given the chance for a healthy, fulfilled life. This is how it went:

October 4, 7.30 am: Parmendra is semi-conscious but restless as Dr Judy Lynch and her assistants connect him to a drip and insert a tube into his chest to supply drugs and monitor pressure. Different drugs kill the pain, paralyse the patient



Parmendra and Mum: as good as new

HEALTH

and ensure he forgets what is happening.

8.30: Parmendra has been transferred to the adjacent surgery and the theatre nurse arranges the sheeting over him. A second sheet is suspended to protect his face.

His chest is painted with iodine.

9.15: The team are assembled. Dr Terry Mau cuts the skin with a scalpel, then uses the electrical cautery to cut through the flesh (the heat of this electrical drill also stops the bleeding). Once at the bone level, he uses a saw with a guard on it and splits the sternum.

A big metal brace called a self-retaining retractor holds the wound apart, doing what the human hands of the surgeon's assistant would have done in operations years ago.

Dr Mau cuts through the pericardium — a thin skin covering the heart. He stitches this open so the inside of the heart is laid bare.

9.45: Tubes from the bypass machine are inserted to take out blood and put in drugs. It is time to clamp the aorta and divert the blood from Parmendra's heart to the heart/lung machine. The machine will take over the functions of his heart and lungs.

The tubes of the machine slowly begin to run crimson with blood and perfusionist James Picken (specially trained to use the machine and administer the Cardioplegia drug which paralyzes the heart) is hard at work. The

heart bypass machine controls the flow of blood and regulates the temperature of the blood.

9.52: Dr Mau has exposed the gaping two-by-five centimetre hole in Parmendra's heart. "This must be the biggest one we've seen so far," Dr Mau comments.

But it is a simple matter to just take a patch off the pericardium and stitch it over the hole. Within a year the body will have fused the patch over the area and the stitches will hardly be visible, says theatre nurse Pat Saar.



Scarred: Parmendra after

10.17: The patching has been done and it is time to retreat back through the steps. The machine has been bypassing Parmendra's heart and lungs for 32 minutes, and it is now time to give them back their momentum. The flow of blood will wash away the drug which deadened its natural beat.

There is not much left to do except tidy up.

Even tying Parmendra's ribcage back together with wire ties and pliers is considered a lesser step, although it seems to be one of the roughest aspects of the operation. By the time the last layer has been stitched together, everything is neatly in place. Everything has gone to plan and the signs are that Parmendra's body will do the rest and heal itself. The smile on his mother's face is also one of the rewards of the operation. She has five children. Parmendra is the youngest — and still alive. □

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PACIFIC ISLANDS

M O N T H L Y

BUSINESS



The first flight: Royal Tongan Airlines on a Solomons 737

Flying time

As the big flyers leave the islands new airlines spring up to carry the flags

By Martin Tiffany

IF you took a plateful of cooked spaghetti and threw it on a map of the Pacific you may get some idea of air routes in this region. It is not that there is anything messy about aviation into, out of and between the many island nations in this area of the world. It is just that if you drew in all the Pacific air routes on a map you would end up with something resembling, well, a lot of spaghetti on a map of the Pacific.

Air traffic in this part of the globe is intensifying in a market that is already

fairly busy. Although it does not have airports to rival the likes of Los Angeles or London's Heathrow it does have its fair share of flights and airlines.

One major reason for the increase in regional intensity is the growth of Pacific-domiciled airlines as more Pacific Island governments risk the heavy financial burden and start their own airlines.

This is a direct response to major foreign carriers overflying the islands resulting in irregular services. This causes havoc to many island nation's plans of building a strong tourism base.

The latest to take the plunge into the tough international market is Royal

Tongan Airlines which formerly operated domestically in Tonga as Friendly Islands Airways. The airline retains its domestic services with two Twin Otters and under a lease arrangement they use Solomon Airlines' Boeing 737 to offer international services linking Tonga with New Zealand and Fiji.

After a couple of false starts in October the airline finally began its Tonga-Fiji service on November 4, a route it will share with Fiji's flag-carrier, Air Pacific. Air Pacific has flown the route exclusively for the past 30 years and at present operates an ATR-42 aircraft on the service. Operating its 737 service, Royal Tongan will have the advantage of offering a jet service with business class. However, when the airline flew media people to Nuku'alofa on November 11 to promote the start of the service, most of the seats on the Boeing 737 were empty. Of the 18 passengers that day, 14 were travelling free and only four were paying passengers, a fishing team returning from an billfish tournament in Fiji.

Obviously the increased services will lead to some competition, but for the most part the new services and new airlines have provided needed services and niches have been carved out.

Solomon Airlines have filled the vacuum left by Air Pacific when it traded in its 737 last year for the bigger 767 aircraft. The 767 was needed by the airline to meet demands on a number of its international services but left room for a regional jet operation.

Solomon Airlines has attempted — with some success — to fill this vacuum operating both in its own right and selling seats to other regional carriers. Flying to Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Vanuatu it sells seats to Air Pacific, Air Vanuatu and now Royal Tongan. Solomon Airlines currently operates a Boeing 737-200 on the routes but will increase capacity in June when it takes delivery of a leased Boeing 737-400 from the Los Angeles-based International Lease Finance Corporation.

Air Pacific seems quite happy to give

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AIRLINES BUSINESS

up some regional routes as it eyes the large international markets with tourism in mind. One gamble that paid off handsomely is the airline's second service to Tokyo's Narita airport which began in May. "Thank God we did it," was how Air Pacific's chief operating officer, Stephen Brown, responded when asked how the service was going.

"The Japanese increase is really filling a lot of the void created by the vanishing Australians. The Japanese market for Fiji (tourism) hasn't slowed and the growth is very exciting. The question we would like to ask is where would Fiji be without our second service to Japan — we would have suffered — there are fewer Australians, and fewer (visitors) from other source markets like America."

So encouraged are Air Pacific by the Japanese response that Brown said if they were able to get a third slot at Narita with the right sort of timing they would like to operate a third service as soon as possible. The increase in Japanese visitors has been dramatic — from 3425 in 1988 to 21,619 last year. Already the first three months of this year alone saw 5216 Japanese visitors to Fiji.

Air Pacific is obviously going to continue this large international market drive with plans for another leased 767 in August 1994. In September 1996 they take delivery of a brand new 767 from Boeing — an aircraft they are buying. They will then return the 767 they are currently operating which will modernise their international fleet.

Currently the airline operates one 747, one 767 and two ATR-42s.

As far as new markets are concerned, Brown said they have identified Taiwan as a market of the future and are monitoring it. In August Air New Zealand began an Auckland-Taipei service and more recently Australia Asia Airlines, a Qantas subsidiary, began operating a twice-weekly service to Taipei.

These services have interested Air Pacific, and undoubtedly other regional countries, because of the possibility of marketing to these travellers, encouraging them to extend their holiday to include the region.

Brown said within the next two or three years Air Pacific could operate a direct Fiji-Taiwan service if the market looked promising. The airline is also looking at the possibility of a route to the United States and are keeping a close eye on the growing number of Europeans coming to Fiji.

The pullout from the Pacific of major international carriers such as Canadian Airlines, Pan American and Continental provided the impetus for regional countries to close the gap created. Although not able to provide the same volume of direct international flights,

they set up their own network of connecting flights.

Air Caledonie, for example, took over the Wallis and Futuna flights from UTA French Airline in 1984 and provide flights from Nadi, Noumea and Papeete. The airline is typical of many regional airlines that began life as domestic carriers and graduated to international status.

With tourism at heart, Air Caledonie provides services to Brisbane, Melbourne, Sydney, Vanuatu, Auckland and Fiji. In October, Air Caledonie discussed with Air Pacific the possibility of increases between Fiji and Noumea and Wallis and Futuna. Phosphate-rich

Nauru has recently restructured its airline, Air Nauru, and given it routes that make economic sense. When the airline began it was more of a prestige symbol for the Nauru government which sent out its jets on routes all over the world. Now they are more regionally concentrated with flights to Fiji, the Solomons, Kiribati, Guam and New Caledonia. These connect with their flights to Sydney, Melbourne, Auckland and Manila.

Generally, aviation in the Pacific looks healthy. Most of the countries have adequate internal flights and have access to international flights either directly or through connecting flights. It is also important to bear in mind that the Pacific can be bisected quite neatly by the equator into the North and South Pacific.

Fiji, with Nadi International Airport, is undoubtedly the hub in the South as far as international flights are concerned. Similarly in the North, Guam is an important Pacific airline crossroads and a vital link in the air chain for travellers moving around Micronesia.

Guam also enjoys feed from Hawaii in the northeast with many international flights coming into Honolulu — the 17th busiest airport in the world. It also has direct flights to Guam International Airport from the US mainland, Japan, the Philippines, Korea, the Marshall Islands, Indonesia, Nauru and various Pacific Islands.

Probably the most important airline to Guam and Micronesia is the combined Continental/Air Micronesia services which provides the bulk of international connections to this area. Continental controls 99 per cent of Air Micronesia, which was created by a partnership between Continental and the Federated States of Micronesia.

However, Continental recently announced the sale of Air Micronesia to a new investment group, Pacific Air Micronesia Incorporated, for US\$290 million. But, before the sale can be finalised, it must be approved by the United States bankruptcy court judge who is overseeing Continental's reorganisation. As a mecca for Japanese and other Asian tourists, Guam also enjoys the services of two Japanese carriers — All Nippon Airways and Japan Airlines — as well as Philippine Airlines, Northwest Airlines and Air Nauru. The only real connection between the North



More arrivals: Fiji's Japanese visitor

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Pacific and the South is the twice weekly Air Marshall Islands flight between the Marshalls and Fiji via Kiribati and Tuvalu. This is a vital link to the Nadi hub.

Air Marshalls also provides a jet service between Majuro and Honolulu. The forward-looking, 10-year-old airline plans to seek landing rights in other Pacific Rim countries and has implemented a five-year plan which includes the acquisition of new aircraft.

Air Marshalls already has an order with Swedish company SAAB Aircraft International for a SAAB-2000 jetprop aircraft, due for delivery in 1994. It has an option for two more. The airline will be the first in the region to use the 58-seater plane and plans to fly it on both its domestic and international routes.

As mentioned, tourism plays a major role in the establishment of routes with even small nations like Tuvalu getting in on the act now that it has regular services. Apart from the Air Marshall service it also has a weekly service from Nadi provided by Fiji domestic airline, Fiji Air.

The hopes of the tiny atoll are high following its inclusion in package tours of the South Pacific.

In August a group of 14 Italian tourists visited Tuvalu as part of a tour which included Tonga and Western Samoa. However, the total number of visitors is expected to be modest. The country has one hotel with 16 rooms.

Tuvalu's neighbour Kiribati is also anticipating heavier air traffic. It recently obtained a US\$6.3 million dollar loan from China to develop Bonriki International Airport. The runway is being lengthened to accommodate 767 aircraft.

Kiribati's airline, Air Tungaru, flies internally after failed attempts to go international.

The potential in the Pacific is obviously being seen with a number of private airlines being established. The Tongan government recently granted approval to a Tongan businessman to operate an air service from Hawaii to Tonga via American Samoa. So the list of new routes, new airlines, new aircraft, new markets and future plans goes on.

The Pacific is seeing a lot more activity which potentially will lead to more competition. But as long as there is not an excess of capacity, which could lead to routes being abandoned, the competition should result in better service and cheaper fares.

Hopefully, this will open up many of the smaller island nations to the world.

□

Northwest has big plans for the Pacific

By Ian Williams

NORTHWEST Airlines still has big plans for the South Pacific. Speaking to *Pacific Islands Monthly* at the company's Minneapolis headquarters, in Minnesota, Joseph Francht, the Senior vice-president finance and treasurer said that Northwest was still interested in a deal with Continental: "It has Air Micronesia, which would be a very good fit for our route map. We would still like to talk to them if they came back. We will be moving into the South Pacific, either with Air Micronesia, or by building our own network — whichever is the most effective."

Since Northwest was taken private by a consortium including the Australian Elders group, the company has pursued a mixture of deals to expand its network. But the emphasis has clearly been on moving Southwards from its strong North Pacific position. Francht comments: "Last year we entered a marketing agreement with America West and we are strong in the North Pacific." Following an agreement with Hawaiian Air in December last year, which also gave it 25 per cent of the company, Northwest took over new route authorities. This year it opened the Hawaii-Australia route, and Japan to Saipan and Guam.

One of the airlines' biggest assets is its "fifth freedom" rights. By US/Japanese treaty since the early fifties, Northwest can function as a domestic Japanese airline. It has a major hub in Tokyo, allowing it to tap into the fastest growing segment of Pacific air travel. "The treaty gives us flexible authorities, and we have unused authorities in the Pacific which we think will become profitable when we get delivery of the Airbus 340 from 1993 onwards," said Francht. Those routes include Portland, Cleveland and Washington to Tokyo.

Indeed, Northwest has its eyes even further South — on Qantas. Francht says: "We have applications in with the Australian government — we would consider part ownership — and we

would consider a deal to manage its operations as well."

So confident is the airline that Francht was even prepared to consider a deal that swallowed Qantas and Continental together. "It's a function of how the deal was structured," he said, when asked if this would tax the company's resources. He pointed proudly to the company's growing strength in comparison with other US airlines. The first half of 1991 saw it with the second rank for operating margin in the US.

Indeed, Francht told *PIM* that the airline might be floated again — a surprisingly bold thought bearing in mind the current parlous state of the industry.

A steady stream of new aircraft, financed on advantageous terms, has allowed it to consider expansion of its route network taking advantage of weaker competitors. "We have no major outflows for the next sixteen months," Francht points out.

But the expansion is not aimless. Said Francht: "The destiny of the company lies in the Pacific. Currently 31 per cent of our revenue is from the Pacific, and 64.3 per cent domestic — and a mere 4.3 per cent Atlantic. We look at ourselves as a Pacific Region carrier. With 3.1 per cent share of the market Northwest was the biggest US Pacific carrier in 1990, before we added our South Pacific routes.

"We still have to play in the US market to ensure that we get the economies of scale of the other US airlines." But Francht felt that the recent through ticketing deal with Dutch airline KLM and their joint route from Minneapolis to Europe had given enough access to transatlantic passenger routes.

In the meantime route expansion preceeds space. In October Northwest started its Los Angeles to Sydney flights, and has plans to go from New York to Sydney soon after. Between Japan, Australia, and the Pacific states of the USA, Northwest should be able to fill the gaps.

□

AIRLINES BUSINESS

Royal Tongan seeks a place in the sky

By Beryl Cook

ROYAL Tongan Airlines is no fly-by-night airline; it is prepared to work day and night to boost tourism for Tonga and the region, according to its general manager, Christian Kaltenborn-Stachau.

Brushing aside skepticism that Royal Tongan Airlines's international efforts will be costly and short-lived, Kaltenborn-Stachau said he is confident that careful planning and recognising the limitations will help Royal Tongan Airlines reach for the sky. "Times are over when you can build an airline on a loan and a prayer," he told *Pacific Islands Monthly*, before proceeding to detail the airline's progress and future plan.

"I will admit the airline has not been making a profit in the past. It has been in domestic operation since 1985 and, like any other operator of 16-seater aircraft, it is just not possible to make a profit on such aircraft. The Government is realising this and is subsidising the company to assure all the islands the air services which are so vital to them. I see this aspect as a public service.

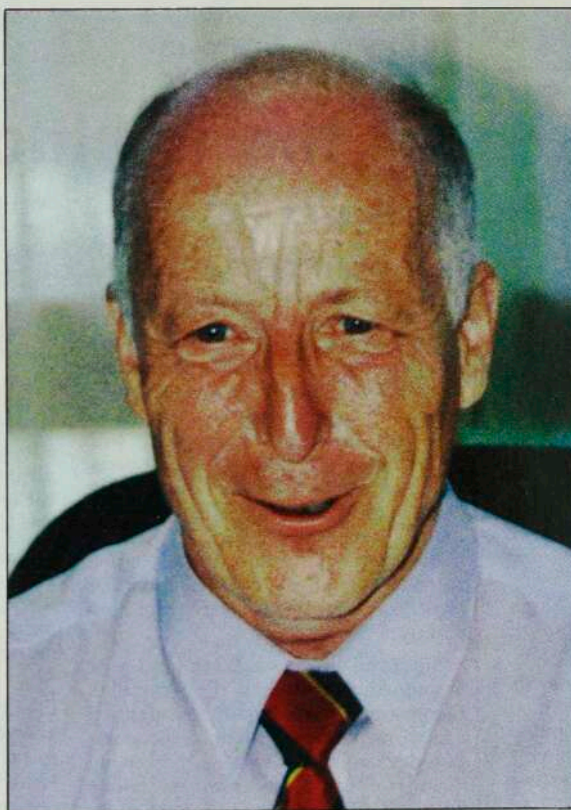
"But the international service is a different thing. It was started on July 1 of this year when we started flying to Auckland for the first time. Surprisingly enough, the service to Auckland is already in the black figures. Normally, one expects this to take about six months but we broke even after only four months."

Kaltenborn-Stachau believes that branching out on the New Zealand and Fiji routes will take the airline beyond being a public service, and help boost tourism for Tonga and the region.

He is optimistic about the Fiji-Tonga service, which was officially inaugurated on November 11 after a few hiccups over landing rights. (The bilateral agreement did not permit Royal Tongan Airlines to originate flights in Fiji.)

He said Royal Tongan Airlines had a crucial role to play in Tonga's aim of tapping into the tourist market.

"Fiji is now the second hub of the Pacific, many international flights are going there and we are connecting with quite a number of flights on Monday, so any international travellers from say Australia, North America, or Canada



Kaltenborn-Stachau: there's room for another service

can easily connect with Royal Tongan Airlines and come to the Kingdom of Tonga."

He acknowledged there was competition from Air Pacific.

"But it is a fact that they have been enjoying the proceeds from that route for practically 30 years all by themselves, and it is an internationally accepted fact that the traffic between two sovereign countries is always shared by the national carriers of these countries.

"So whilst we are competitors on the sales side we are of course colleagues, and Royal Tongan Airlines will obviously be pleased to support Air Pacific whenever we can. I suggest this is going to be vice versa too."

He believes sufficient demand exists to make the route profitable for Royal Tongan Airlines, and that Royal Tongan Airlines can satisfy a certain type of demand. "We feel the jet is superior to a propeller driven aircraft on that route and after a certain time people will realise that and start flying Royal Tongan Airlines on that day. So I expect traffic will build up.

"We are presently offering a service on

Monday a Boeing 737 jet and travelling time is just about one hour 20 minutes. We offer business class, can take all the luggage, and have plenty of cargo space in addition. Do we have something to offer? Yes, we do."

Kaltenborn-Stachau said Royal Tongan Airlines could start a twice weekly service to Fiji "in the not too distant future".

He says Australia is not an option at this stage.

"We may in the future but not alone, not without another airline. The Australian market with 16 million people is obviously more interesting than New Zealand with 3 million, but it is further away and requires different aircraft. That will be a different one."

When he looks back at the progress of the past few months he is pleased.

"We have got our fleet fixed up again. We have just started our summer schedule which shows 65 per cent more flights than before. We have introduced round trip fares which did not exist before. We are giving much much better service to the islands now."

He lists highlights of the past four months as:

- establishing a scheduled courtesy bus service between Nuku'alofa and the airport for every incoming and outgoing flight;
- An office in Nuku'alofa where passengers can check in, offload their luggage, receive a boarding pass, then relax in the lounge before travelling to the airport by Royal Tongan Airlines's bus. The downtown cargo business also allows people to deliver small parcels. Enlarged their reservation and sales office, and established a sales manager for Nuku'alofa, opened up their own offices in Ha'apai and Vava'u.

He believes the money invested by Royal Tongan Airlines will pay off, by giving Tonga a leg into tourism, particularly from new markets.

"The South Pacific is big news in Europe right now. The European tourists have been all over Europe, all over North America and South America. The Gulf region is off-limits for now, Africa is out of bounds and, yes, the South Pacific, it is." □

The question of origin

IN this column in October I pointed out some of the ways islands businessmen, and governments, fail to make use of many of the opportunities of the South Pacific Regional Trade and Economic Co-operation Agreement, or Sparteca.

My piece was sparked by comments made by Fiji's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Finance and Economic Planning, Josevata Kamikamica, that the agreement looked generous and accommodating to many island countries but on closer inspection many of them found it irrelevant. He said the agreement might even have diverted the attention of small island businessmen from more promising opportunities in other parts of the world, and he thought the time was ripe to consider changes to it. Kamikamica particularly mentioned inefficiencies that he said were brought about by the rules of origin.

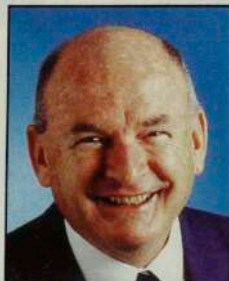
The point I made was that Sparteca was still a very useful tool, but many who could take advantage of its many provisions weren't doing so because they had failed to fully examine them. That point needed to be made, and it needs repeating.

There are some things Sparteca does not or cannot do. There can be improvements in what it does do, such as in the rules of origin. Networking South Pacific, the big internationally-attended Fiji investment and trade forum that has just concluded in Nadi, is a reminder that while Sparteca can promote investment in the islands, and it does, it cannot necessarily locate an investor and deliver him running and ready to go. Identifying specific, serious investors takes a great deal of time and resources, and while the South Pacific Trade Commission can help, great input is required from the island businesspeople or governments that, in the end, will benefit (which is only fair. Sparteca is a tool to be used, not a substitute for local initiative or action.)

The rules of origin are another matter. If they need fixing the repairs have to be made in the agreement itself. The rules of origin define the "local content" requirements of goods that can be admitted tariff free to Australia and New Zealand. The problem is that business is inclined to develop at a faster pace than the wording of agreements like Sparteca can keep up with, even taking into account the changes so far made to the Sparteca.

In the case of manufactured

TRADEWINDS



**BILL
McCABE**

goods, island business complains that the more efficient a manufacturer becomes the more difficult it could be for him to meet the rules of origin, which require that at least 50 per cent of the labour costs and material must originate from within Forum countries.

A garment manufacturer, for example, who imports his cloth from Taiwan, may fail to meet the rules of origin if he dramatically reduces his labour costs through efficiency and economies of scale but uses more cloth. Does he remain inefficient? Does he pay his workers more? Good business management says that you keep costs down and increase profits.

What is the solution? There might be several options.

One is that percentage of local content required be reduced. But how far should that go? What is the cutting-off point which ensures that the island garment manufacturer and his workers benefit from the entry concessions and not the Taiwan suppliers? No doubt, however, some exceptions could be made, but it is not an easy road. Some people will argue that if the agreement can't give 50 per cent of the benefits of a manufactured item to a Forum island country, what is the point of it?

Another option could be that tariff categories could be reviewed so that cloth becomes shirts, or steel becomes roofing iron, etc. Again, this would have to be looked at carefully to avoid establishing a new set of rules open to misuse by non-

Forum countries shipping goods via the islands — for example, made-up apparel originating in Asia, but falsely relabelled in a Forum island country for export to Australia or New Zealand. It would of course be a self-defeating exercise for the island manufacturer that shipped it, for it would destroy its own trading opportunities and future.

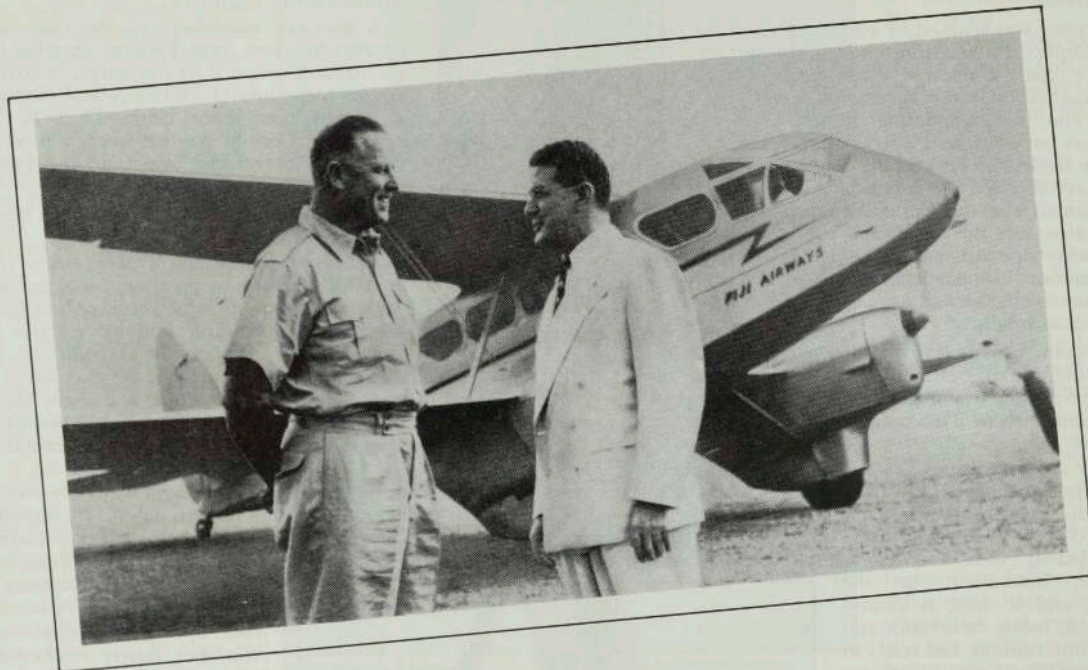
Meanwhile, trading opportunities that can benefit the island countries are opening up in other directions, and the truth is that some provisions of Sparteca are not as vital to island trade now as they were when the scheme was launched 10 years ago. The French territories will benefit from a recent decision by the EEC to allow goods into Europe free from EEC dependent territories, so long as normal duties have been paid in those territories. The EEC is also joining the Scandinavian Free Trade group, which means that the EEC market will now be extraordinarily wide. □



Fiji-made garment: is origin a problem?

Bill McCabe is Senior Commissioner of the South Pacific Trade Commission, Sydney, an arm of the South Pacific Forum.

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The Tourism Way

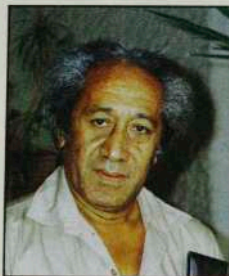
TOURISM in the South Pacific continues traditions of travel and contact through, and between, the islands. The two most notable of these traditions were: first the interisland communication in ancient times. These were contacts between people of the same racial stock, of similar cultures, and related (sometimes very closely) languages. The degree of distinction — or similarity, which is the same thing — between Pacific cultures is a general measure of the regularity or otherwise of these ancient contacts.

And second, the early missionaries and explorers whose movements (flow may be a better word) through the islands had a communicative and unifying effect, on these societies. From the first tradition we get the characteristic, traditional mythologies of fantastic exploits of maritime heroes and divinities. From the second have come myths like the noble (or ignoble) savage, sexual promiscuity and so on.

The impact of tourism on Pacific societies is no less significant and will certainly produce comparable mythologies. All Pacific Island states are making immense efforts to promote tourism and as a source of income for islanders it certainly has a very substantial share of the G.D.P. in all the islands e.g. Tonga and Niue is US\$3 million per annum and almost ten times this for bigger islands like Fiji and Papua New Guinea. The Cooks, and Samoa take middling value between those two figures. In all the islands tourism takes either second or third position in terms of size as a contribution to national income.

What is not as well understood is the effect of tourism on island cultures and social mores. The upshot of expanding tourist activities in the South Pacific issue in two general forms: the consolidation of the work ethic and bourgeois values, and the development of double cultures in the island societies. Traditionally Tongan handcraft — especially small items made of leaves, bark, or feathers — were fragile, flimsy little affairs made for simple applications and social

THE ISLANDS



**FUTA
HELU**

symbolic exchange. Now, however, island crafts are robust and acquire a performance that is new to this industry. Islanders now use synthetic materials such as nylons, plastics and anti-borer sprays in a variety of applications, but all concealed, of course, under cover of local decorative materials. All this contribute to strength and durability. This change has come about under pressure from tourists for goods of greater performance and more use value. Further, islanders are at the same time being transformed from makers of wealth objects of cultural value into entrepreneurs manufacturing commodities for the market adopting values associated with the capitalist.

The other important change that is part of the impact of tourism is the development of a new kind of performing arts — music and dance — in the islands. Tourists are treated to floor shows which perform short, fast, pieces and the repertoires are a mix of local and introduced dances. The bulk of the introduced pieces come from Eastern Polynesian primarily because dances of that area are generally fast and loud. An example is the fire-dance which is now offered to tourists in most parts of the South Pacific but it entered many of those by way of the east. So tourism acts as a facilitator for the dissemination of cultural items in the islands. But it would be very much culture as the almighty tourist wants it.

Thus in many islands now there is one kind of dances and songs — the hybrid, fact type which is presented to tourists and the village version which are the authentic and uncut pieces. They are usually slower, dignified and more contemplative that the poor tourists mostly miss. They therefore take away with them a wrong impression of island life — depicted in their accounts as either passionately erotic or idyllic but debilitating. Both are not terribly accurate.

Tourism is an inevitable phase in the evolution of Pacific islands. It is an expression of the second 'Discovery' of the islands by Europeans (and other foreigners) and vice-versa. It has its pros and cons but it is ours to understand it. □



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SHIPPING BUSINESS



Special: an aluminium fishing boat being built Fiji Customs Craft

Why aluminium? it lasts longer, says Customs Craft

SINCE the launching of his first boat at the age of six, Rob McLaughlan, Managing Director of Fiji Customs Craft Limited, has had a long and close connection with boats and the sea. From the first, a tin boat built of a beaten out sheet of corrugated iron for fishing in the river, he has progressed through timber, plywood and fibreglass to the present 32-foot aluminium gameboat.

Owner also, with his wife Brenda, of Fiji Machinery Limited, dealing in heavy equipment since 1976, the economic downturn of 1987 and 1988 forced a need to diversify from reliance on a drastically reduced market where capital cost had doubled and demand had virtually disappeared to one that showed potential for growth.

The Fiji interim government's move to encourage investment for manufacturing and the promotion of tourism and fishing has provided the opportunity to diversify, said McLaughlan. "What to diversify into was logical," he added. "With Fiji a country of islands, boats would be needed for inter-island transport and the potential for growth lay in the tourism and fishing sectors. The export potential to other Pacific Island countries, where conditions similar to Fiji existed, was another area of consideration."



Special: a tourist dive boat being built by Fiji Customs Craft

With the financial backing of the National Bank of Fiji and the Fiji Development Bank, it was possible for McLaughlan to diversify and Fiji Customs Craft Limited started building its first boat on October 1, 1989.

Why aluminium boats? "Aluminium is the best building material for boats to around 12 metres for Fiji and the tropics," McLaughlan said. "The

12-metre mark is based on cost of steel against aluminium. In European and American yards multi-million dollar luxury custom-built boats of 45 plus metres have been built in aluminium when cost is not the criteria. Oceanfast, Australia, built the aluminium 49-metre *Mystique* for an American owner."

Marine grade aluminium is quite different from that used in things like utensils. The aluminium specified for boats contains magnesium alloys and does not corrode in saltwater. With the right alloy the life expectancy of an aluminium boat is nearly 50 years without maintenance, even if the boat is left in saltwater. The bottom of the boat is painted with anti-fouling paint to prevent the growth of weeds and barnacles which affect performance.

Steel boats will rust from the inside unless thoroughly protected. Aluminium boats don't rust and therefore don't need special protection. Diesel fuel has no effect on aluminium tanks unlike stainless steel tanks which can develop pinholes or black iron tanks which can rust from the outside if not kept painted.

Aluminium will not blister, crack or have "osmosis" problems. It is non-magnetic, non-sparking and relatively fireproof. An aluminium boat is much less likely to be extensively damaged by fire than wooden or fibreglass craft. The latter is built with petroleum-based resins which are flammable and would inevitably burn to the waterline in a serious fire.

Aluminium has the advantage of lightweight and strength, giving it a strength/weight ratio of 205-209 compared to mild steel (123-145) and fibreglass (180-190). The tensile strength for welded aluminium is 35,000 to 39,000 psi, mild steel 58,000 to 68,000 psi and fibreglass 18,000 psi. Aluminium has the ability to stretch so that the hull plating can bend or dent in case of collision. It is difficult for aluminium to tear or fracture like fibreglass and wood.

The weight advantage of an aluminium boat allows more fuel-carrying capacity and longer cruise range or higher speeds with a given power. Fishing boats can get to the fishing grounds faster, using less fuel, and carry a heavier catch home.

Said McLaughlan: "Having made the decision to build in aluminium, Fiji Customs Craft Limited are justifiably proud of the boats built to-date. One of our 9.6-metre gameboats was mistaken for a fibreglass boat, proving the highclass finish. □

SHIPPING BUSINESS

Shipbuilders find growth in Perth

THE shipbuilding industry in Western Australia has grown significantly over the last 25 years and is in a position to offer extremely well designed and built vessels to the world market.

There are seven substantial shipbuilders located in the Henderson shipyards area near Perth. A wide range of ocean

going vessels is in production: passenger ferries, container and general cargo vessels, trawlers-deep sea fishing boats, tugs, patrol boats, offshore supply vessels, and other custom built steel and aluminium hulled ships.

Considerable expertise has been built up in 'small ships' construction, with container ships of 92 metres (3400 tonnes) being manufactured by Western Australia's most experienced cargo vessel builder, Australian Shipbuilding Industries (A.S.I.).

Three of these small container ships are now operating out of the port of Fremantle in Western Australia. They service the 1700 Km north western coastline of Australia between Perth and Darwin. Regional and interstate services also operate to Jakarta, Singapore, Kuching, Surabaya, Port Moresby, Tasmania and Melbourne.

The ships are operated by the Western Australian Coastal Shipping Commission (Stateships).

An opportunity to apply long standing shipbuilding know-how to the production of such vessels was given to Australia company Australian Shipbuilding Industries when they successfully tendered for construction of the ships in 1988. □

Shipping schedules

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Sofrana Unilines operates a ro/ro container service every three weeks from Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Lautoka and Suva. Contact Sofrana Unilines (Aust) Pty Ltd, PO Box Q136, Queen Victoria Building, Sydney, NSW 2000, Australia. Tel (02) 2648944, Fax (02) 2676547, Tlx (71) A170090, Contact Andrew McLachlin, Sam Attaway.

Carpenters Shipping, Suva, Tel (679) 312244, Fax (679) 301572. Sofrana Unilines Suva, Tel (679) 315 645, Fax (679) 300057. Carpenters Shipping, Lautoka, Tel (679) 639888, Fax (679) 64896. Sofrana Unilines, Lautoka Tel (679)

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Far-East - Fiji - New Zealand Service

New Zealand Unit Express (NZUE) operates a monthly service accepting containerised and break-bulk cargoes from Manila, Keelung, Kaoshiung, Hong Kong, Lae to Suva, Lautoka (via Suva) and thence to New Zealand ports.

Contact Carpenters Shipping Suva, Fiji, tel (679) 312244, fax (679) 301572. New Zealand Unit Express, Maritime Building, 2-10 Customs House Quay, PO Box 890, Wellington. Tel 727865, Cables Enzue Man, Wellington, Tlx NZ31340 Nedinz or Nedlloyd Swire Pty Ltd, Sydney, Tel 20522.

Japan - South Pacific Service

Same as Burns Philp

Japan - South Pacific Service - Kyowa Shipping Co Ltd

Kyowa Shipping, Shipping Co Ltd provides a monthly containerised service from Hong Kong to main ports of Japan, Saipan, Guam, Island ports, Lautoka, Suva via Nukualofa to Pago Pago and Apia. Contact Carpenters Shipping, Neptune House, 3/4 floor, Tofuaa Street, Walu Bay, Suva. Tel 312244, Fax 301572, Tlx FJ2199.

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South East Asia - Fiji Service

Nedlloyd Lines (NZEAS) Service operates regular fast cargo service from Jakarta, Pt Keelang, Singapore, Bangkok, Surabaya via Auckland to Suva and Lautoka. Contact Carpenters Shipping, Suva, Tel 312244, Tlx FJ2199, Fax 301572. Carpenters Shipping, Lautoka Tel 63988, Tlx FJ5215, Fax 63988

South East Asia - Mid South Pacific

Columbus Line operates a regular container and breakbulk-heavy lift service from/to Hongkong/Taiwan/Manila/Singapore/Malaysia/Thailand/Indonesia to Port Moresby/Lae/Rabaul/Kimbe/Madang/Newark/Honiara and Noro. Contact Express Freight, Lae, POB 3396, phone 423913 or 423822, fax 425193.

Far East - Mid South Pacific

China Navigations New Guinea Pacific Line operates a regular container and breakbulk — heavy lift service from Hong Kong, Taiwan, Manila, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand to Port Moresby, Lae, Rabaul, Kieta and Honiara. Cargo from the same eastern ports to the South Pacific Ports of Noumea, Santo, Vila, Papeete, Pagopago, Apia, Nukualofa, Rarotonga and Tarawa will be shipped via Japan or Busan on the monthly Bali Hai Service. Contact Steamships Shipping, Port Moresby, PO Box 634, Tel 220283 or 220289.

Australia - New Caledonia - Fiji - Samoa - Tonga

Pacific Forum Line operates a fully containerised service (general, reefer and ro-ro) from Sydney and Brisbane to Noumea, Lautoka, Suva, Apia, Pago Pago, Nuku'alofa, Sydney. Cargo centralised from Adelaide and Melbourne. Contact: Pacific Forum Line, PO Box 796, Auckland; Union Bulkships, 333 George St, Sydney, Brisbane and Melbourne; Union Co, Lautoka; Pacific Forum Line, Suva, Nuku'alofa; Pacific Forum Line, Apia; Polynesia Shipping, Pago Pago. Sofrana Unilines operates a RoRo/ container service every three weeks from Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane to Noumea, Suva and Lautoka with transshipment to the Samoas and Tonga.

New Zealand - Australia - PNG - Solomon Islands

Pacific Forum Line operates a containerised and ro-ro service from Lyttleton, Napier and Auckland to Brisbane, Port Moresby, Lae, Honiara, Brisbane then to New Zealand. Contact: Pacific Forum, Auckland, Christchurch; Union Bulkships, Brisbane; Steamships Shipping Port Moresby and Lae Sullivan Ltd, Honiara; Seabridge, Wellington.

NZ - Fiji

Translink Pacific Shipping sail twice a month to Fiji, with Polynesian Link and Coral Links which operate out of Tauranga and Auckland. Fiji Agents are: Campbells Shipping Agency Ltd, Ph 314189 Fax 300144 Suva; Ph 62231 Fax 62251 Lautoka. Auckland Agents: McKay Shipping Ph (9) 390229 Fax (9) 303293. Tauranga

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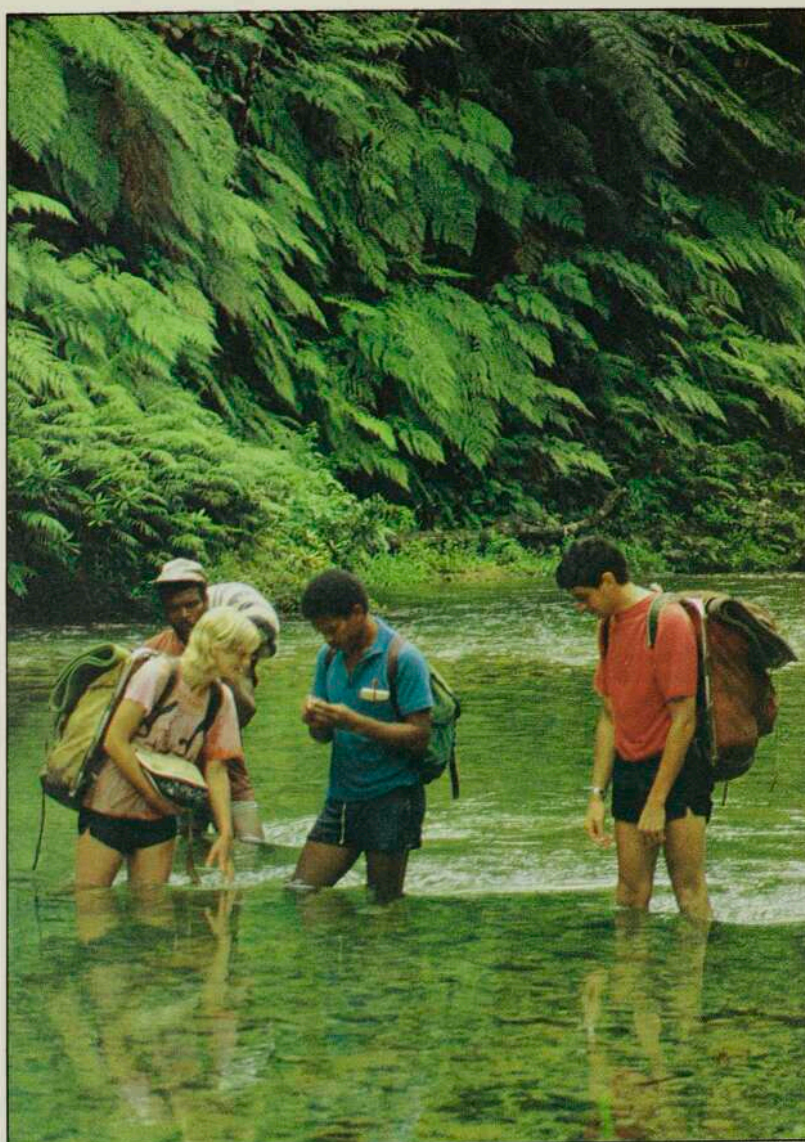
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ENVIRONMENT



Another Fiji: The Wainivodo creek a few hours away from Suva. Flanked by the dramatic Korobasabasaga and Medrausucu ranges this rainforest is a haven for adventurers.

Taking tourism to the bush

By Sean Weaver

THE Fiji tourism industry has placed almost all of its eggs into the same basket of clichés — white sand, bright sun, blue sea and a fruit cocktail sipped to the distant sound of drums beating in a token of traditionalism. Indeed, many travellers who currently venture to Fiji do so with the specific intention of relaxing beneath the rustling sway of palm trees on a beach somewhere.

In the past there may have been ample justification for the dominance of this form of tourism in Fiji, but in more recent times Fiji's principle market (Australia) has been indicating a growing boredom with what it is presently offering. Other countries in the Pacific are also growing rapidly as competitors in the tourism game, selling more of the same. Fiji needs to market something unique.

Another Fiji does exist, however, where waterfalls plunge from precipices through warm, teeming rainforest that shrieks with a commotion of bird song. And to add delight to the mystic of these magnificent forests is the fact that no danger is concealed by the damp green curtain of the Fijian jungle. Unlike other islands groups to the west, Fiji supports no crocodiles, malaria, or leaches, and yet its land masses surpass those to the east in size, biological diversity, and forest cover.

Fiji, however, is by no means exempt from the unfortunate phenomenon of tropical deforestation and accordingly it's remaining rainforests call out for

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protection. These unique, complex, and spectacular ecosystems are no less vulnerable to the onslaught of the timber trade any other. However, many of Fiji's rainforests still lie quietly undisturbed by the dismal clamour of machinery and chain-saws and await appreciation by those who might venture to experience them.

The Fiji Government recognises the need for greater protection of its surviving rainforests, but is having difficulty in pinpointing solutions to the wide ranging need for income, whilst sustaining the fabric of these ecosystems. There is a

compelling need to provide for the needs of the tribal owners of these resources if they are to allow their forests to remain standing. Trees, once cut down, can usually fetch a good price, and because of this Fiji's forest heritage is so often squeezed through a mill. But there are alternatives. Listen to this.

It was mid-morning as I sat in the clear warm stream water of the Busa River near the constant muffled roar of a waterfall. Above me a hanging forest quivered in the gentle breeze that wafted up from Viti Levu's Coral Coast not far from the Naviti Resort. It was a quiet time to contemplate after being shown through the ruins of an ancient temple site, built by people of the mysterious Nanga religion that once reigned in these parts well before the first Europeans set eyes on these islands. A hot spring empties itself into the Busa river a short way upstream from the temple ruins. Waikatakata, or "hot water" as its translation reveals, provides a new twist in the story of development in Fiji.

The newly established Waikatakata Forest Park with its archaeological treasures is an experiment in landowner-operated, nature-based tourism. Championed by the Native Lands Trust Board and the Forestry Department, Waikatakata, if successful, could help pave the way for the much needed diversification in Fiji's tourism industry.

Many other well kept secrets in Fiji are slowly being revealed as the tourism industry begins to cherish these jewels of Fijian heritage. This move into nature tourism will broaden the meaning of forestry, as conservation of rainforests will become a commercial activity.

Fiji possesses countless examples of potential nature tourism localities. On Viti Levu, near Nadi, the Mount Evans Range leaps to over 1200 metres and dominates the inland horizon with high forests tossing waterfalls from its steep volcanic flanks. A humble nature tourism venture has been quietly operating in this area where tourists are taken by villagers to witness some of these majestic falls. Further north a concoction of attractions awaits potential tourists with the forest reserves around Nadarivatu, the Mr Tomaniivi Nature Reserve surrounding Fiji's highest peak, the magnificent Fiji

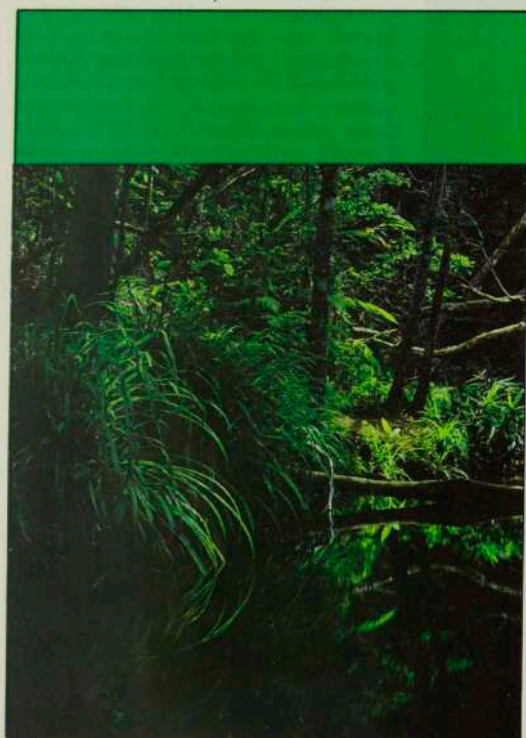
kauri forest in the Wabu creek catchment, Sigatoka Trail, and the Monasavu Lake. To the south, near Suva, the forest-clad Namosi Peaks pierce the sky and the nearby Sovi Basin sinks into the landscape with its edges held high by a crowning range of mountains.

On Vanua Levu the forested ridge back of the Tunuloa Peninsula overlooks Natewa Bay to the north and Taveuni island to the south. The Waisali Amenity Reserve goes largely unnoticed beside the highway on the crest of the main Vanua Levu axial mountains. The Vuniava Catchment near Udu Point has a wide range of lowland forest types, extensive everglades of mangrove swamp and a vast reef system off shore.

The "Garden Island" of Taveuni rises steeply from beneath the ocean carrying with it the wettest forests in Fiji that are rinsed with more than 10 metres of rain each year. It is drained by enormous waterfalls that in places plunge directly into the sea. On its eastern fringe the people of Bouma have taken to showing their rainforest, rivers and falling water to tourists as means of gathering an income. Like Waikatakata, Bouma has received much attention and assistance from the Fiji Government as well as a grant from the New Zealand Government for the construction of nature trails and tourist facilities.

But of course the test is in the tasting and the ability of nature-based tourism to live up to the commercial expectations of its advocates is still to be demonstrated. Indeed the survival of many natural forest areas in this Pacific Islands landscape could well depend on the attention they receive from international travellers. Otherwise tribal landowners will have no choice but to use logging as the only tangible means of gaining an income from their magnificent forests. □

● Sean Weaver, the author of this article, is a research biologist doing his doctorate at University of Canterbury, Wellington. He is attached to the Fiji government's National Environment Management Project



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TALES FROM THE FELLOWSHIP



At anchor: the Fellowship and the Soren Larsen off Nuku Island, Vavau

SALLY ANDREW

Making it to the Friendly Islands

"IT'S not the journey or how you get there that's important, it's the people you meet." I tried to remember this maxim as we struggled to make port in northern Tonga. Sailing conditions were ideal when we left the island of Penrhyn in the northern Cooks, but as usual, states of mind and sea are always temporary.

Two days from Vava'u we encountered boisterous seas and high winds. The seas whipped themselves into a fury in a matter of hours, getting much higher than the wind conditions at the time would have dictated. With a five-meter swell and winds to 40 knots, we scooted along at close to seven knots under a triple reefed mainsail. Lots of water came

aboard, uninvited. The intermittent rain and squalls, common to the convergence zone between Tonga and Samoa, obscured our vision and eventually we closed up the boat and ventured on deck only to check or adjust our course. Down below, the heat and noise and movement were oppressive.

Fifty miles from port we took down all sail and ran with bare poles at four knots through the night! We made landfall in the morning and luckily did not overshoot the cliffs of Port Refugio. With the rain, the cool temperatures and the fiord-like harbour entrance, our landfall reminded us more of the Pacific Northwest than the South Pacific.

Checking in with customs and immigration is often vexatious, but at Neiafu on the island of Vava'u it was easy. We tied up to the customs wharf and in between visits from customs, agriculture and immigration, a schoolboy introduced himself and escorted me to the bank and to the propane depot. Hiki is 15 years old and attends Vava'u High School. He returns to his village and family on Matamaka ("Number 15", he told me) each weekend. Many of the villages are referred to by their designation on a sailing chart used by Moorings, a local charter operation. It is amusing to hear Tongans use the numbered designations. Hiki told us that English was his favourite subject in school, and I got the impression he was good in all his subjects "except math!"

Hiki was not alone on the customs dock: 'Aisea Sikaleti, one of many Tongan entrepreneurs who organise "Tongan feasts" for the pa'alangis (whites) that visit Vava'u, came to announce his weekly feast at Lisa Beach (Number 10). On Kapa Island (number 8) we were invited to a feast of "island delights, wrapped in taro leaves, delicately flavoured with coconut cream, garlic and onions and cooked to perfection in a Tongan microwave." We must have looked puzzled because our Tongan host soon fessed up that his "Tongan microwave" was none other than the traditional underground oven or "umu". Tongan entrepreneurial skill and tenaciousness was reaffirmed as we visited many of the 34 islets that make up the Vava'u group. Boats of all designs stopped by and showed us their tapa, baskets, carvings, shells, fruits, vegetables and mats. One boat even came alongside to sell us vegetables — while we were under sail.

Near Mala Island (Number 6) we met a young Tongan girl named Mele who visits the boats in the anchorage every evening in her leaky outrigger. She seemed to be successful at selling her family's handicraft, but we were quite concerned for her safety. The outrigger

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TALES FROM THE FELLOWSHIP

filled up with water almost as fast as her younger cousin could bail it out. We bought two very sturdy baskets made of pandanus wrapped around coconut-leaf midribs. The basketwork in Vava'u is excellent.

All the women we met in Tonga kept busy with handicraft. Luisa Tuifua at the Vava'u Handicraft Shop near the post office showed us some of the many things she makes — round baskets, square baskets, baskets one inch high, baskets a metre high, picnic baskets, wine baskets, handbags, fans, slippers. In Tonga there is no mass production and each item is unique.

In Vava'u, many Tongans still wear their traditional and distinctive *ta'ovala* to work and around town, seven days a week. Made of finely woven pandanus, these mats are tied around the middle and secured with a coconut-fiber cord. Women and men wear these mats, and it is apparent that some of them had been around a long time and highly-valued heirlooms.

Women often wore a *kiekie* (or decorative belt) around their waist and over a mat or skirt. A *kiekie* can be made of pandanus, hair or leather, and is often decorated with shells, beads, or coloured fabric.

Neiafu is a port of call for hundred of yachts. In Vava'u we shared anchorages with many of the 70 odd boats that came north with the New Zealand Regatta and with the 40 odd boats participating in Europa, Jimmy Cornell's two-year Round-the-World goodwill sailing rally.

Vava'u is reachable by plane as well as boat and accommodation range from simple to the luxurious. The sailing is wonderful — flat water, steady winds, easy navigation and changing vistas that get more beautiful on each tack. Boats are available for charter, with or without a skipper. Watersports include diving, fishing, windsurfing, cave exploration, whale watching. Humpback whales are

often sighted in Vava'u and sometimes swim through the anchorages. We spotted a group of three near Hunga Island. In the Ha'apai group of islands (100 kilometres south of Vava'u) we heard



Neiafu market, Vava'u: the women keep busy

and then sighted a humpback who lobbed his tail 20 times in succession in an incredible display of power and perhaps passion. The humpbacks of the southern hemisphere use Tongan waters as their breeding ground. The caves in

Vava'u are incredible. Mariner's Cave on Nuapapu is reached only by diving or snorkelling 14 feet along an underwater passage. The entrance is difficult to find, marked only by a patch of dark, deep water. The anticipation of swimming through an underwater tunnel without banging my head and scraping my back frightened me. I am normally a confident swimmer, but it took me a few minutes to summon the courage to enter and as I dove down I almost panicked. I kicked as fast as I could and when I resurfaced inside, only slightly out of breath, I was wide-eyed with amazement. What a magical place! As the ocean swells flow into the cave there is a change in air pressure that creates a mysterious haze, an almost flickering fog. The colours are quite unbelievable. Nearby on the north end of Kapa Island, we were able to enter Swallow's Cave by dinghy. It is equally beautiful with a cathedral-like chamber that lights up in multi-tones of blue and green as the sun sinks lower in the sky. The lighting is extraordinary.

Vava'u is an easy place to fall in love with. The islands are beautiful, the sailing great and the people friendly. No wonder it is fast becoming a mecca for cruising boats in the South Pacific.

Sally Andrew

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THE SEARCH

Back to Nikumaroro



A reader with a long memory rekindles new hope in finding Amelia Earhart's camp on an isolated atoll

By David North

HELPED by a magazine reader with a long memory, a renewed effort is being made to find the plane that carried Amelia Earhart to her doom. With three bits of fresh information in hand, and carrying high-tech, deep-sea sonar and viewing equipment, a group of American aviation history buffs have again sailed to Kiribati's uninhabited Nikumaroro Island.

They hope, with the encouragement of the Kiribati government, to find the plane that Earhart and her navigator, Fred Noonan, flew out of Lae, Papua New Guinea, in the summer of 1937. The two aviators were aiming for Howland Island but never arrived.

The expedition, like an earlier one in 1989, will be mounted by The International Group for Historic Aircraft Recovery (TIGHAR), an American non-profit organisation. This time they have more evidence than before that leads them to think that Amelia Earhart's attempted round-the-world flight ended on Nikumaroro, then called Gardner's Island.

The island was selected for examination two years ago after extensive historical research convinced TIGHAR that the Earhart plane had sent post-crash signals for several days from somewhere in its vicinity. On the island TIGHAR found an airplane part fabricated out of aluminium. It turned out to be a bookcase for navigation equipment.

TIGHAR's scientists and historians concluded that it could have been from the missing plane, and further, that there was no other explanation for its presence on the island. A few months ago TIGHAR talked the Federal Bureau of Investigation's famed laboratory into examining the bookcase, though there was no question of criminal involvement. TIGHAR asked the FBI if there were any indications that the part had come from the type of US military airplane that visited the island during the war, PBV flying boats. The FBI, ever cautious, could not state that the bookcase came from the Earhart plane, but they said it could not have come from a US

military plane — the scraps of paint remaining did not match types used by World War II military.

The second new piece of evidence came from the archives of Purdue University in Indiana. It was a photo



Nikumaroro Atoll: are the remains of Amelia Earhart to be found here?

taken of Earhart, Noonan and an unknown man in Port Darwin, just before the two Americans flew to Lae, and on to their deaths. They were standing in front of the open door to their plane, and the interior can be seen. Using the latest techniques in photography examination, Autometrics, a Washington area firm was able to estimate the size and shape of a dimly-seen object within the cockpit, and determined that it could have been the aluminium bookcase.

This announcement was made with television cameras whirring at Washington's National Press Club on July 2, the 54th anniversary of the disappearance of the Earhart plane.

The third piece of information has not yet been fully developed. In response to

Pacific Island's Monthly's request in its April issue for information from anyone who lived on Nikumaroro during the British Government's colonisation scheme in the late 1930s. Virgil Stinnet wrote to *PIM* writer David North to say that his father-in-law, Bauro Tikana, had been clerk to Gerald B. Gallagher, a British colonial officer who died on the island during that period. Tikana now lives in Tarawa.

It was Tikana's memory that while some bones had been found on the island near a 1929 shipwreck, that no woman's skeleton had been found on the island during this stay there — contrary to other stories that came out of that period. (TIGHAR had heard that the Gilbertese had found such a skeleton and had quietly buried it at sea to keep the ghost away from the island). If Tikana is

correct, Earhart's remains may still be on the island.

This year's expedition aboard the research vessel *Acania*, is not looking for corpses of the aviators. What they hope to find, on the island, is the remnants of a survival camp, possibly used by the aviators and noticed by American Coast Guardsmen during World War II, and of course the plane, which TIGHAR thinks was washed off the fringing reef, and into deep water near the island.

If the plane is found, TIGHAR will confer with the Kiribati government about its subsequent fate. TIGHAR's executive director, Richard Gillespie, said that he hopes that Kautuna Kaitara, Kiribati's Deputy Chief Customs Officer, will again accompany the expedition, as he did in 1989. □

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