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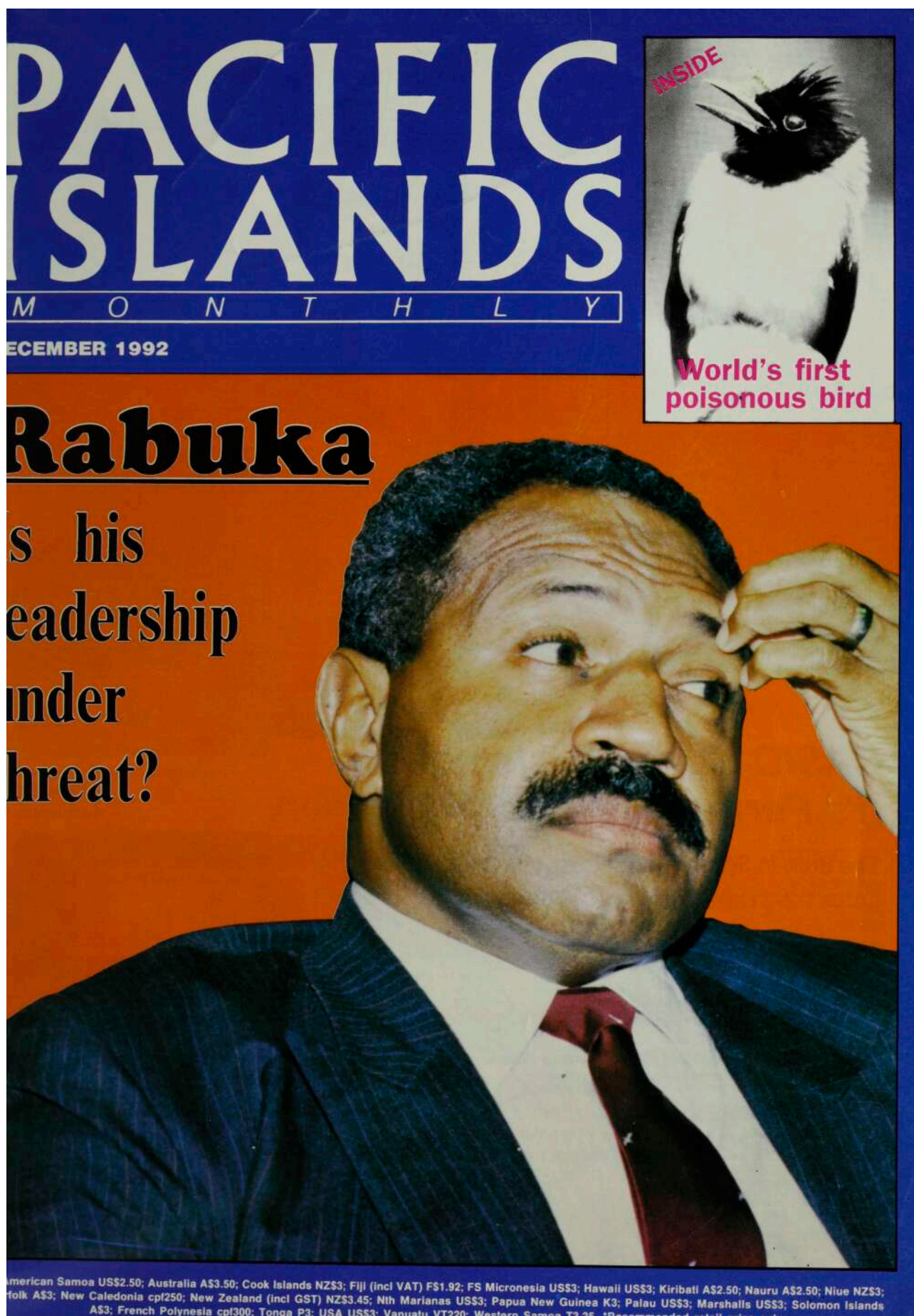
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PACIFIC ISLANDS

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DECEMBER 1992

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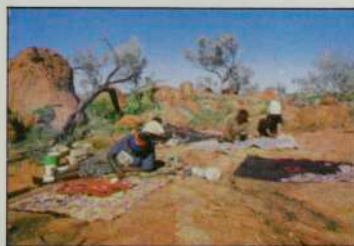
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Publisher: Brian O'Flaherty

Editor: Mala Jagmohan

Senior Writer: Martin Tiffany

Correspondents:

Christine Hatcher, David North, Ed Rampell, Ian Williams, Johnson Honimae, Karen Mangnall, Liz Thompson, Nicholas Rothwell, Pesi Fonua, Wally Hiambohn.

Columnists: David Barber (Wellington), Futa Helu (Tonga, covering the Pacific Islands), Jemima Garrett (Sydney), Margot O'Neill (Washington), Julian Moti (Pacific Law), Alfred Sasako (The Forum).

Business and Advertising Manager: Charlotte Thomas

Advertising Sales:

● Regional Sales (South Pacific): Salendra Narayan, Tel (679) 304111, Fx (679) 303809

● Sydney, Canberra: Bob Hill Media Representations, Tel (61-2) 4164245, Fx (61-2) 4165064

● Brisbane: Robert Walker, Media House, Tel (61-7) 3710533, Fx (61-7) 371-8904

● Adelaide: Hastwell Williamsons Representations, Tel (61-8) 799522, Fx (61-8) 799735

● Melbourne: Brown Orr Fletcher Burrows (Aust). Pty. Ltd. Tel (3) 696 5188 Fx (03) 696 5131.

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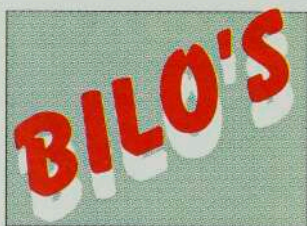
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*Merry Christmas!
Happy Holidays
from Bilo*

Merry Christmas and a Prosperous 1993

From the Pacific Islands Monthly team



The PIM crew: From left (sitting) Mala Jagmohan, Editor; Charlotte Thomas, Business and Advertising Manager; (standing) Salendra Narayan, Regional Sales Representative; Mereoni Bale, Typist/clerk; Martin Tiffany, Senior Writer.

LETTERS

Hawaiian
sovereignty

Madam,

I read your November 1992 cover stories "Hawaii's Quest for Sovereignty" with interest and humility.

The scheming on that fatal 17th day of January that signalled the downfall of the Hawaiian monarchy and the demise of the Hawaiians as a people is mind-boggling.

Commendations are due to the organisers of the Hawaiian Sovereignty Movement.

Those of us, fellow Pacific islanders who take our own sovereignty for granted, must not only lend them our sympathetic ears but also extend the movement our support.

During the "1989 Conference on US Pacific Insular Areas" held in Honolulu, I was humbled by the attention US federal agencies paid the small island states of Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands; and the US territories of American Samoa, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and Guam.

By contrast, spokesperson for native Eskimos and indigenous Hawaiians were not provided seats and had to remain standing while giving their 10-minute presentation as "petitioners".

My advice to the Palau delegation to endorse the Eskimo and Hawaiian statements went unheeded.

My heart goes out to you all: Dennis "Bumpy" Kanahele, Mililani Trask, Dr Sekuni Blaisdell, Hayden Burgess, and our other fellow activists.

Please send us your campaign materials so that we too can take up the cause of your inalienable sovereignty held for the time being in abeyance.

Vic Uherbelau
Director,
Foreign Affairs
Palau

PNG
politics

Madam,

I refer to the article "Resource development — the dividing line in PNG politics" by Frank Kolma, in *PIM* July, 1992.

With the exceptions of the bits on the number of parties and on the secret ballot, when I read the article, it almost seemed like reading about politics in the USA (or many other countries).

Robert Silberstorff,
Antioquia
Colombia

Women and
violence

Madam

We appreciate the coverage you gave to the first Pacific Regional Workshop on Violence Against Women, recently co-ordinated by us in Fiji. However, it is important to put the event into its development context and to clarify the detail of some of the issues discussed.

The workshop was an integral part of what is a major four-year development project which strengthens and utilises the services of the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre to train women from the Pacific in crisis counselling and the establishment and management of services for women victims.

Pacific women plan to integrate these services in many of their ongoing development programmes. Community education on violence against women will begin with events during the forthcoming International 16 days of Activism, culminating on Human Rights Day, December 10.

This AIDAB funded programme is enabling women to develop a broader understanding of the complex issue of violence, plus a framework of strategies, and sources of financial, moral and political support to do ameliorative and preventive work.

The issues highlighted in your October *PIM* formed part of background discussions. Participants examined the social economic and political aspects of gender violence and the role of the state, the judiciary, military and police.

The vulnerability of women in conflict zones and states of emergencies were discussed. But we would like to clarify that references to Bougainville was balanced and impartial. Ms. Cox has in fact been seriously misquoted.

Our position and concerns are well reflected in our 26 resolutions and will be apparent in the publication of handbooks, co-ordination of community education, and establishment of crisis services throughout the Pacific over the next few years.

Shamima Ali
Fiji Women's Crisis Centre

Home
finance

Madam,

I refer to the comment in your article entitled "The Political Connection" in the September issue of *PIM*.

For the record I would be grateful if you would publish that the PNG Home Finance Co Ltd, a company which, as you correctly state, was set up to give low and middle income level earners easier access to housing finance was in fact established by the Commonwealth Development Corporation of the UK. It is however licensed by the Government of PNG.

Its success, which you believe will not be evident for another few years, is in fact already being seen by a number of home ownership schemes which are being established by private companies and government departments to take advantage of this initiative.

Brian Glasscock
Commonwealth Development Corporation

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HEADLINES

VANUATU

Parliament boycott

All 16 members of Vanuatu's Opposition boycotted the beginning of the second ordinary session of the House on November 9 forcing it to adjourn because of a lack of quorum.

Only 30 of the 46 members of parliament turned up at the chambers when, according to the Standing Orders, at least two thirds or 31 members should be present for the sitting to go ahead. Speaker Alfred Maseng postponed the meeting until November 12.

In a statement, Vanuatu's Opposition Leader, Donald Kalpokas, said they boycotted the meeting because the notice of the parliamentary sitting put out by the clerk on October 19 was not consistent with the Standing Orders.

He said the Appropriation Bill had not been given to the MPs within the required 25 days before the parliament session. Kalpokas said he had sought corrective action from the speaker in a letter on November 3 but did not receive a reply.

Kalpokas had earlier called for the resignation of Prime Minister Maxime Carlot Korman. This follows the supreme court's ruling the government's Business Licence Amendment Act and its Broadcasting and Television Act are unconstitutional.

Kalpokas says the government went ahead with the two acts contrary to advice from its lawyers that the legislation breached the constitution. He says this amounts in effect to misleading parliament.

Kalpokas says the Prime Minister and the Finance Minister Willy Jimmie in particular lied to parliament and to the people of Vanuatu. He says this means they've breached the country's leadership code.



Kalpokas: resignation call

FRENCH POLYNESIA

Politicians charged

The president of French Polynesia's Territorial Assembly, Justin Juventine, has been charged with abuse of influence and passive corruption.

It's his second indictment in less than a month. The charge, brought by an examining judge in Papeete, follows an inquiry into the construction of a golf course by a Japanese company on Moorea in 1991.

Also implicated is French Polynesia's deputy in the French National Assembly, Alexander Leontieff, who has been charged with passive corruption. Juventine already faces trial for abuse of his position relating to his alleged involvement in the building of a sewage treatment plant on Tamara Nui.

SOLOMON ISLANDS

UN mission visits

The government of the Solomon Islands Choiseul Province has called for United Nations personnel to assist with security on the common border with Papua New Guinea.

A United Nations mission has visited the province as part of a tour of border areas following Solomon Islands complaint to the Security Council over incursions by PNG troops. The mission reportedly opposed by the PNG government is led by the Director of the United Nations Tokyo Information Centre, Mian Gadru-din.

Choiseul's premier Clement Kengava has told the mission the UN should help the Solomon Islands provide efficient security in the border region until the Bougainville crisis is solved. He also suggested the UN act as a mediator between PNG and Bougainville leaders to help find a solution.

The Choiseul authorities have called on the United Nations to help the Solomon Islands government provide a telephone service for the border region as a further boost to security. The United Nations mission left Solomon Islands on November 10 after briefing the country's Governor General, Sir George Lepping, and its Prime Minister, Solomon Mamaloni, on its findings.

Meanwhile, the Solomon Islands has apparently snubbed Australian and Papua New Guinea by not inviting them to an official reception in Honiara for the UN mission. The High Commissioners of both countries were left off the guest list for the reception hosted by the Solomon Islands' Governor General.

No explanations have been given for the exclusions, but political observers in Honiara say this might be a way of the Solomon Islands government protesting to the PNG government over its unwillingness to allow the UN mission to visit Bougainville. Solomon Islands has repeatedly accused Australia of assisting PNG in the Bougainville crisis.

EAST TIMOR

Human rights abused

The human rights organisation Amnesty International says Indonesia arrested hundreds of suspected supporters of independence for East Timor ahead of the first anniversary of the Dili massacre.

On November 12 last year, Indonesian troops killed dozens of unarmed civilians after opening fire on them at a cemetery. Amnesty says the situation in East Timor has deteriorated since the massacre.

It says torture and ill-treatment of political detainees is routine and the situation will get worse unless the Indonesian government changes its policies. Meanwhile, a member of the UN Commission on Human Rights, William Treat, has made a brief visit to East Timor to seek to improve relations between Indonesia and the international community.

HEADLINES

FIJI

Fire-starters arrested

In Fiji, 22 men have appeared in court charged with unlawful assembly and obstruction in connection with fires they lit to block access to one of the country's top resorts. Their arrest on November 10 restored access to Shangri La's Fijian Resort which has been deserted by tourists since the fires were lit a week ago.

The 22 men have been released on \$US130 bail each with one of the conditions being they must not be seen within one kilometre of the resort causeway for any reason. Police are looking for 10 other men in connection with the case. The protestors have been demanding the removal of Adi Lady Lala Mara, wife of acting president Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara, as sole trustee of a fund into which lease money for the hotels is paid.

Resort general manager Radike Qereqeretabua says he and his staff will travel widely in order to attract visitors back to the hotel. But he doesn't expect business to be normal until January.

Rabuka's budget

Fiji's Finance Minister Colonel Paul Manuelli announced the Rabuka government's first budget in Parliament on November 6. The budget projects revenues of \$US436 million, giving a deficit of \$US86 million.



Manuelli: reserves adequate

Manuelli announced the introduction of a Capital Gains Tax from 1994 but did not indicate how much it would be. He said the Fijian Holding Company would be given an interest free loan of \$US5.2 million to enable indigenous Fijians to buy shares in existing profitable companies. Government funds allocated specifically for indigenous Fijian education have been increased by another \$US1.6 million to nearly \$US million.

He also announced additional funds to subsidise interest rates for commercial loans to indigenous Fijians. Import duties on cars have been increased but decreased on food items, building materials, textiles and clothing in line with the government's deregulation policies. Manuelli said Fiji's foreign reserves were adequate and stood at the equivalent of six months of imports. Observers in Fiji say the budget is very much in line with the policies of the former interim administration.

Foreign exchange controls relaxed

The Reserve Bank of Fiji has relaxed a range of foreign exchange controls as part of measures announced in the Fiscal 1993 budget. Announcing the measures, Reserve Bank Governor Ratu Jone Kubuabola said the relaxation was prompted by the comfortable level of foreign reserves and signs of a gradual re-emergence of confidence in the economy.

Foreign Reserves stand at a record \$US 32 million, sufficient for about six months imports. The new measures allow all exporters to retain up to 10 per cent of their export proceeds offshore.

Commercial banks will be permitted to offer forward cover on foreign exchange up to six months to importers and exporters.

To control the high liquidity situation, the Reserve Bank has reduced its minimum lending rate to commercial banks by two per cent from eight to six per cent. It expects an appropriate reduction in lending rates to stir up economic activity.

TONGA

King supports party formation

Tonga's King Taufa'ahau Tupou is reported to be supporting the establishment of the kingdom's first political party. The King has indicated he wants the formation of a Christian democrat party which would give him political backing.

The Prime Minister, Baron Vaea, reportedly told a secret meeting with church leaders the king was looking for support. He appealed to the churches to resume their traditional function as what he called "trusted supporters" of the monarchy. Agence France Presse says it is understood the king's move to get political support has created division within the Tongan Council of Churches which donated money to pay for a conference late last month to discuss the revision of the constitution.

The government confirmed it would not take part in the conference and participation by foreigners would be banned. The conference has been called by a pro-democracy group formed by four people's elected members of Tonga's parliament. Under the present constitution, Tonga's 30 seat parliament is composed of nine members elected by the people, nine elected by the 33 noble families and 12 appointed by the king.

Tonga's next elections are to be held in February.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Secession threat

Plans by the Papua New Guinea Prime Minister, Paias Wingti, to scrap the country's 19 provincial governments have run into difficulties. The Opposition leader, Sir Michael Somare, has announced that the Opposition will vote against the proposed constitutional change. Until now Sir Michael has supported the Prime Minister on the issue.

The scrapping of provincial government would require the support of two thirds of the members of the PNG parliament. This seemed likely while Somare was backing Wingti's attack on the waste and inefficiency of the current system. However, in a surprise announcement on November 11, Somare announced the Opposition Coalition has decided to oppose the abolition of provincial governments because it was being done in haste and without planning. Provincial leaders in the islands have threatened to secede if their governments are scrapped.



Pacifically Speaking

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SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION

Clean up this mess

By Martin Tiffany

THE big boys at the 32nd South Pacific Conference in Suva were not happy. And they warned the South Pacific Commission to clean up its financial mess or they would reconsider their financial contributions.

Despite assurances at the October meeting from the commissions outgoing secretary-general, Atanraoi Baiteke, that the deficit problem was under control, Australia, France, the United Kingdom and New Zealand expressed concern. Australia is the biggest donor, contributing almost \$US2 million of the \$6 million received in assessed contributions.

Australian representative Stephen Martin said his delegation could not accept Baiteke's statement the budget deficit was under control. If the current situation persisted, Australia would have to review and consider scaling down the level of its extra-budgetary assistance and use some of its funds to improve the financial management of the commission.

France said if reforms proposed by the SPC Management Systems Review Sub-Committee were not implemented, they would have to reconsider the payment date and the amount of its contributions to the SPC.

The United Kingdom representative said in 1993 they would continue their extra-budgetary assistance to the projects they now supported. However, the amount of this assistance in 1994 would depend on the steps taken in 1993 to improve financial management and control.

New Zealand said it was concerned because last year's conference had directed the secretariat to take appropriate remedial action following consideration of last year's audit report, but the current audit report had covered much the same ground.

The problem the commission has been faced with over the past couple of years is financial mismanagement and a growing budget deficit. The 1991 deficit was first believed to be around \$US1 million but according to conference spokesman, Nauru's Leo Keke, it is between \$US500,000 and \$US750,000.

The commission's budget consists of the core budget and an extra-budgetary fund. Seventy per cent of the core budget covers administrative costs and 30 per cent finances the work program. The extra-budgetary fund makes up the shortfall in the work program.

The 1991 auditor's report showed a



Baiteke: the finger will, naturally, point at him

negative balance in the core budget of \$US2.4 million.

What the donor countries — Australia, France, the United States, Britain and New Zealand — want is the commission's financial situation monitored closely before they give any further payments.

The 17th meeting of the Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (CRGA), held in Suva immediately before the conference, agreed to accept the recommendations (with two exceptions) made by the auditors for immediate implementations. The CRGA meeting also requested the auditors to closely monitor the financial situation and the implementation of these recommendations.

The report by auditors Coopers and Lybrand for 1991 said some accounting principles applied in previous years did not conform with generally accepted accounting principles. And recommendations made in previous audit reports had not been implemented.

The budget for 1993 of \$US22 million was approved on the condition the new management implement recommended

changes to the commission's financial systems and management practices.

These changes are to ensure a stricter control on expenditure, improve internal auditing and ensure the financial situation is closely monitored.

What was interesting was there was no attempt made to apologise or make excuses for the financial mismanagement. It was accepted there was a problem and a solution had to be found. What perhaps irritated some countries, the donors in particular, was that after the financial problems were brought to light at the 1991 conference they expected something to have been done about them. Especially after four CRGA meetings — two last year and two this year. The CRGA acts as a board of management for the SPC and it was expected they would sort out the problem. Many countries were genuinely surprised nothing had been done.

But who is to blame? The finger will naturally point at secretary-general Baiteke. He tried to assure the conference the deficit problem was under control.

"The problem with the deficit is under control with the institution of stricter procedures on expenditure, financial resource procurement, recruitment and straight cut-backs in some services and program activities," said Baiteke.

He also claimed the commission's finance section was understaffed. "Delegates would be aware of the number of staff in finance sections of other regional organisations. At USP for instance, the number of staff in the bursary is three times more than those in the commission's finance section, although they handle a budget half the size of the commission's budget.

"The process of accounting to some dozen donors, as is the case with SPC, by such a small staff is an invitation to problems."

Baiteke said there was an urgent need to increase the number of staff in the commission's finance section.

There is no doubt there are financial problems in the SPC. And the donor countries let it be known they were not impressed with the running of the commission. What they wanted was someone to lead the commission out of the mess. What they got was George Sokomanu. A man they obviously do not consider capable of tidying up the mess. Sokomanu and the SPC will be under close scrutiny by the donors. He will have to impress before money is forthcoming. The islands now have to show they can control donor money. It will be a sad day for the Pacific if they fail. □

SOUTH PACIFIC COMMISSION

Starting off with a bang

By Martin Tiffany

NEWLY appointed secretary-general of the South Pacific Commission, George Sokomanu, began his appointment as head of the largest regional organisation with a bang.

Within hours of his appointment the former Vanuatu president lashed out at the "colonial club" attitude he said still existed in the region, singling out Australia for his attack.

His appointment at the 32nd South Pacific Conference in Suva on October 27-29 did not go down well with several countries, including Australia, and this is believed to have provoked the Sokomanu attack. Australia, France, the United States, the Cook Islands and French Polynesia were among countries who wanted the appointment deferred to allow for other nominations.

Former South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC) director Fiji's Jioji Kotobalavu and Sokomanu were the only nominations for the post. But Kotobalavu, who was expected to get the job, withdrew only days before the conference to take up the permanent secretary position in his Prime Minister's office.

This caught most SPC countries by surprise, some coming to the conference with no knowledge of his withdrawal. It is understood most countries — especially the metropolitan ones — would have favoured his appointment because of his proven management record with SOPAC and as one of Fiji's top civil servants. Especially so after disclosures of financial mismanagement within the SPC.

There was some suggestion of "conspiracy" by delegates of Sokomanu's appointment and suspicion that Fiji was part of this.

Kotobalavu has strongly denied the conspiracy allegation. He said he was approached by the government to assist in the Prime Minister's office and he responded by accepting. "My country needed me and I responded by rejoining the public service, it was just unfortunate it was so close to the meeting,"

Kotobalavu said.

"In hindsight we now realise in Fiji we should have taken the initiative to ensure we tell the other countries of the decision. I suppose we learn from our mistakes."

"I feel very bad and I owe them all (the other SPC countries) an apology, but there was no conspiracy just an 11th hour decision."

Perhaps one action which fueled the conspiracy allegations was the attempt to rush the appointment of the secretary-general when the conference began.

Conference chairman, Fiji's deputy Prime Minister, Filipe Bole, said he had received requests to have the item, listed 12 on the agenda, brought forward to third or fourth slot.

This met with strong opposition from Cook Islands deputy Prime Minister



Martin Tiffany

Sokomanu: appointed, but after controversy

Inatio Akaruru who objected to such an important item being rushed. The move was shelved.

When the appointment item finally came up, the closed-door discussions lasted well over two hours. According to delegates Australia was behind a motion to defer the appointment. This failed and the meeting finally agreed to Sokomanu's appointment.

The main objection from delegates was they had not put forward any other nominations because they were happy with Kotobalavu's candidature. However as official conference spokesman Leo Keke of Nauru pointed out, all countries had been given ample time to forward nominations. He was responding to a question asking if there was a strong case to change the selection procedure for choosing SPC leadership.

Dr Richard Herr of the University of Tasmania, speaking to *PIM* said there was a critical need to find a better system for the appointment of senior officers. Herr wrote his doctoral thesis on the SPC and has attended almost every South Pacific Conference since 1971.

He said there was a need to find a process for getting a larger field of candidates and narrowing it down to a short-list agreeable to everyone.

There was no suggestion at the Suva meeting the selection process should be

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altered — the feeling being the countries knew the post was up for nominations and only Fiji and Vanuatu had put forward names.

The Sokomanu outburst, saying a colonial club did exist within the SPC, came at a press conference on the afternoon of his appointment.

"The way the Australian government is carrying on, we're back at the stage we should be out of," said Sokomanu.

"Do we still need people to bulldoze us around here or let Pacific islanders do their own thing and show places like Australia and others that they can do the job as well as others?"

Australian Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Stephen Martin, was not impressed with the criticism. Martin, the head of the Australian delegation to the SPC, said Sokomanu was respected in the region but said deferring the appointment would have possibly allowed other candidates to be nominated who possessed the "required financial and management skill" to tackle SPC's current problems.

Martin said after this sort of outburst Australia — one of the SPC's major financial supporters — didn't feel very welcome.

He also dismissed as "absolute nonsense" suggestions that frosty relations between Port Vila and Canberra came into play over the leadership issue. Sokomanu's attack on Australia did not go down well with other meeting delegates.

In its final report the conference rapped Sokomanu's knuckles by endorsing comments by the representatives of French Polynesia, the Cook Islands, France and Tokelau condemning an interview the secretary-general elect gave to the press. The conference noted Sokomanu had referred to in-camera discussions on the appointment of principal officers and he had criticised the positions of certain member countries on this item.

Sokomanu was requested by the conference to help maintain a spirit of regional unity and refrain from "commenting publicly on the positions of individual members".

Meanwhile, Sokomanu said he believed he had the experience for the SPC saying, "what is a degree when experience is there for a job". Certainly one thing Sokomanu has in his favour is as a former Vanuatu president he knows the regional heads and they view him on an equal standing. To further help his regional dealings he speaks fluent English, French, Fijian and pidgin.

Despite the differences over his appointment none of the countries felt this would strain their dealings with the SPC.

Removing barriers



The 32nd conference: held in October in Suva

ABOUT three-quarters of the way through his address to the 32nd South Pacific Conference Fiji Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka made an interesting suggestion. A suggestion which got little reaction from the conference and the media.

Rabuka suggested the Pacific follow Europe's lead "to remove barriers that hamper the movement of people and goods within the economic community. Perhaps there is an example here for the Pacific. I throw out the suggestion as something else you might care to consider in your deliberations."

In comparison to the rest of the world the South Pacific — with the exception of Australia, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea — is a group of tiny islands dotted across a vast ocean. Far removed from the rest of the world.

Surely it would make some sense to group the many tiny dots and their resources together. To give them some sort of competitive edge. What about a Pacific airline for example? Instead of a number of small — and financially troubled — ones.

There is of course the question of whether the grouping will include Australia and New Zealand. Or if the Pacific's big two would want to be in such a grouping.

Along a similar vein Fiji's former Trade and Commerce Minister, Berenado Vunibobo, last year suggested Fiji form a trading bloc with Australia and New Zealand and later on with the other Pacific countries, to allow competition on a more equal footing with the rest of the world.

The implications of Rabuka's suggestion are too great to be ignored. Hopefully the idea will at least be discussed at an appropriate forum soon.

Meanwhile a number of other points of interest emerged during the three-day conference. These included —

- * the appointment of Vaasatia Poloma Komiti of Western Samoa as SPC's Director of Programmes and Fiji's Fusi Caginavanua as Deputy Director of Programmes;

- * the unveiling of a model of the commission's new \$US16 million headquarters to be built in Noumea. France, New Caledonia and Australia will fund the building;

- * the SPC receiving a grant up to \$F71,000 from Japan for "Pacific Agricultural Information System (PAIS)";

- * the possibility that Japan and Chile may be welcomed into the SPC fold depending on the finalisation of the Canberra agreement. This could also open up the way for other Pacific-rim countries to join;

- * New Zealand issuing a statement encouraging all regional governments to support a total ban on drift-netting;

- * the signing of a draft management arrangement by the parties to the Nauru Agreement for the purse seine fishing industry in the Western and Central Pacific. This industry which mainly targets skipjack and yellowfin tuna, accounts for the majority of commercial tuna catch in the South Pacific. The Nauru Group countries have been concerned at the rapid over-expansion of this fishery by foreign fishing fleets and the possible effects on the stocks of tuna.



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HITACHI

Shame on you, Channel 10

IN THE recent storm over a television report on Australia's network Ten, Fiji's Prime Minister, Sitiveni Rabuka, said he had been blatantly misrepresented by reporter Jacqueline Wilcox on a number of issues including the constitution and Indians in Fiji.

He slammed the report as "mischievous and grossly inaccurate".

They are claims we have heard before from politicians unhappy with media coverage.

But in this case the remarks are no overstatement.

PIM has obtained a full copy of the original Channel Ten interview and it clearly shows 'Life Under the Rabuka Regime' the story that went to air on the *Inside Edition* program misrepresented Rabuka's comments.

The report was unfairly edited and in places simply incorrect.

The segment which caused the greatest storm was this.

Rabuka: *This is the real me talking, that was the television me. We want a constitution which has ... that's totally Fijian-oriented.*

Journalist: *You do?*

Rabuka: *We still want that.*

Journalist: *Why so?*

Rabuka: *Because this is Fiji.*

Journalist: *Would it be better then if the Indians just went back to India?*

Rabuka: *Yes.*

For this edited segment the comment about "the real me" was brought forward from much later in the original interview when Rabuka believed the camera was turned off.

The unedited segment of the interview gave a much different view of Rabuka's views on the role of the Indian community.

Rabuka: *We want a constitution which has ... that's totally Fijian oriented.*

Journalist: *You do?*

Rabuka: *We still want that.*

Journalist: *Why so?*

Rabuka: *Because this is Fiji*

Journalist: *No place for Indians?*

Rabuka: *Not that we're saying that but its now that we've taken on the responsibility of running this country, we will have to treat them as our guests.*

Journalist: *What does that mean?*

Rabuka: *Consider their views and listen to them and we want this country to be one where they can ... one which they can call home and we'll welcome it.*

Journalist: *Would it be better then if the Indians just went back to India?*

Rabuka: *Yes, but that's not what we're driving for.*

On the question of the constitution journalist Jacqueline Wilcox suggested Rabuka had blatantly conned the Fiji Labour Party and the people of Fiji in his agreement with Labour through which he clinched his appointment as prime minister after Fiji's first post-coup election in May.

The report said Rabuka's "written commitment to the Labour Party in exchange for their support agrees to

AUSTRALIA



JEMIMA GARRETT

CHANGE THE CONSTITUTION IMMEDIATELY".

That is incorrect. If fact Rabuka agree to "take action" to "immediately INITIATE A PROCESS OF REVIEW AND CHANGE". NO timetable was given for changes and at the time even the Labour Party admitted changes would not happen overnight.

The other major gaffe by Channel Ten was over Rabuka's comments on the poor in which he said, "Are they really poor? I think they are lazy, very lazy".

He also suggested it was "the biggest sin to be poor" and said, "I don't think there should be any social welfare system anywhere in the world."

Strong comments to be sure.

Again these comments have been edited together to strengthen their impact and the context of the comments has been omitted.

In the full interview Rabuka admitted some people had "genuine" problems.

On poverty and social welfare he made it clear he thought social welfare attracted people to the city from the villages where they might be able to give their children a better life and on the issue of the poor Indians, in the city, admitted he did not think they were lazy.

Not only that, but these comments were clearly made after the formal interview was over and when Rabuka believed the camera was no longer rolling.

In the trade these sorts of discussions are termed 'off-the-record'.

They are an important tool which adds to the accuracy and depth of reporting especially when dealing with complex and sensitive material which must be produced under the pressure of strict deadlines.

'Off-the-record' discussions enable journalists to obtain briefings on still confidential government initiatives so that when the decision is announced they will immediately be able to put it in perspective.

They are also a means of gaining an insight into the thinking of key figures in an environment in which that figure does not have to watch the nuances of every word as he or she would in a formal interview.

In this case 'off-the-record' was used by Prime Minister Rabuka to elaborate on comments in the formal interview and to talk generally about conditions in Fiji.

While opposition politicians in Fiji may argue it is in the public interest to know Rakuka's view on poverty, the principle of honesty on the part of journalists is more important.

Breaching the principle of 'off-the-record' risks an end to the new openness which has revealed far more of significance than one small discussion with an inexperienced journalist and which, for Fiji, has meant a higher and more positive profile overseas.

Now the flaws in the Channel Ten report have been revealed the network should apologise.

□

COVER STORY

Rabuka — walking

By Mala Jagmohan

JOSEVATA Kamikamica's assessment of the Rabuka government's performance so far is that "it is trying to win the popularity stakes by attempting to please everyone through promises which will come to roost one day". He is not alone in this assessment. There are enough people — both within Sitiveni Rabuka's coalition government and from the Opposition benches — who are becoming increasingly convinced he may not have been the right choice for prime minister.

For the man who became prime minister after winning an intricate game of numbers — stacking up more parliamentarians in his favour than the other contenders — the game is far from over. He is still wooing support, consolidating his position and above all trying to hold on to that support amid conflicting demands.

What was seen as a Rabuka asset — his ability to bring together people of widely conflicting views — is now working against him. He had used this ability to weave a blanket of support — from the pro-multi-racialism, Indian-dominated Fiji Labour Party, the extremist all-Fijian nationalists, the moderate, pro-business General Voters Party and a majority of his own Fijian party, the Soqosoqo ni Vakavulewa ni Taukei.

But the support hadn't come cheap. There were conditions attached to the support. For the FLP it was a list of four, and included, as a priority, an immediate constitutional review. For the GVP it was to be part of a coalition and ministerial posts — it ended up getting three of its five MPs as ministers. The nationalists gave their support to Rabuka on the understanding they would feature in the coalition — they didn't. After some bad blood between the two, things appeared patched up. The SVT members — 23 of the 30 MPs got ministerial posts. (Four of the seven who did not turned the posts down anyway.)

Now six months later, Rabuka's challenge is to hold on to the post he had promised so much to get. Keeping the support of the different groups who had backed him as prime minister is proving much more difficult than he had anticipated. Fiji Labour Party is losing patience playing the waiting game on the constitutional review and is now demanding some action.

How Rabuka will entertain its demands, of a constitution based on racial equality, and at the same time keep



Rabuka: not unduly concerned

Many expected this to be provided for in the new budget; there was no mention of it. Now Rabuka's deputy, Timoci

Vesikula, is explaining it is still very much in the government's mind and provision will be made at a later date.

As if this was not enough, those who had not backed him are increasingly becoming a force to be reckoned with. Not

happy opposing groups who are in favour of indigenous Fijian supremacy remains to be seen. Six months after he promised an "immediate review" no one is the wiser on how or when the review will be conducted. Views differ from within the next five years, to 1996, to an announcement being made at the next parliamentary session.

And even if the constitution were reviewed, what aspects would be considered for change? Would Rabuka, or his Fijian party, or even the Fijian grassroots accept anything short of absolute political dominance?

Would this be a mere exercise in rhetoric with nothing changed?

The GVP, is far from being a silent partner in government. It has recently called for an increase in its share of seats in parliament and its pro-business/private sector stand sometimes contradicts Rabuka's other policy of positive discrimination for the indigenous.

And the nationalist support seems to sway back and forth, depending on the issue at hand. They withdrew support after they were not counted in the coalition government, then they supported him again, then they were upset when a \$10-million out-of-court settlement for their spokesman, Tony Stephens, fell through, then they were angry that Rabuka had, as Minister for Home Affairs, ordered the arrest of members who had blocked access to a hotel in protest over land rights issues.

Hoteliers and the business sector, on the other hand, were concerned he waited two weeks before deciding the road-blockers should be arrested.

Then there are promises Rabuka and his ministers have made, as they toured the country, in a getting-to-know the electorate exercise. What about the \$1 million promised to each province?

only are they watching with glee, from the sidelines, the utter debacle, but they are also plotting strategies as to how and when government leadership should be changed.

One of these would be to move a motion against him from within the party caucus — a difficult proposition because the party management, they claim, is being stacked with more and more Rabuka-faithfuls, and also because, in the Fijian scheme of things, they are not willing to stand up and be counted as being against Rabuka — not yet, anyway.

You see, the move could back-fire on them. Supposing such an attempt were made, and supposing they did not get the support they bargained for, they could very well be sacked from the party for being disloyal. This would automatically mean they would cease to occupy their seats in parliament, and by-elections would have to be called.

While the anti-Rabuka faction is confident it has at least 12 supporters, and a few doubtfuls who could sway towards them, from within the party's 30 parliamentarians, they are not sure these people will openly defy Rabuka.

And one thing Rabuka still has on his side, is the support of the masses. If by-elections were to be held, the voters could turn against those who tried to oust Rabuka, and not only would they not win back their seats, they'd be political history.

Some optimists within this group, however, feel a by-election is perhaps a necessary evil which has to be faced to bring the country to more able leadership. They argue elections for Fijian seats are not dependent on party stands, but on traditional provincial linkages — in which case the only doubtful seats to win back would be the urban ones.

n tight-rope

Rabuka became Fiji's prime minister after a numbers game which saw him gain majority support. Six months later, the game is far from over.

Another strategy is to use parliament as a forum to topple leadership. While it is argued parliament does not have the right to change the prime minister since it did not appoint him in the first place (the President of the country appoints the prime minister based on who in his deliberate judgement commands the majority support of the House), a defeated government motion or an Opposition motion which gets carried can technically be seen as a vote of no confidence.

Whether this vote is against the entire government or the leader of the government side is a question which the president might have to step in to resolve. He could dissolve parliament and call for fresh elections, or he could decide the government might function better under a new prime minister.

Another option is for members of the house to send a petition to the president, indicating a lack of support for Rabuka.

The role the Opposition parties will play in such a move is obvious. The 14 National Federation Party MPs have never been Rabuka supporters. They had backed Kamikamica, finance minister in the interim government before the elections, as prime minister and they have not been inspired by Rabuka's leadership since to change. The FLP, on the other hand, have never been keen on Kamikamica.

So while NFP might feel Kamikamica is the most able person for the job, it might be expedient to look for an alternative, such as Ratu William Toganivalu, who got FLP's 13 votes.

Toganivalu, a veteran politician, has through the years advocated multi-racialism with a view to improving the indigenous' lot. In fact, as far back as

1963, he had highlighted the dangers of apportioning blame on any one community for the lack of advancement of another. Yet he had also pointed out the dangers of economic inequality. He talked about "competing with them (Indians) cleanly and with all our might and with all our strength in our endeavour not to be their masters but to be their economic equals"—a sentiment which would sit very well with the Indian Opposition. He has recently also been on record saying the constitution can be changed for the better.

But Kamikamica, himself, is not out of the running for prime-ministership should a crisis arise. A cooler and calmer head than Toganivalu, it is unlikely he would like to rush into a situation without having first worked out exactly which way the masses would swing. He is more likely to take the cautious wait-and-see line and maybe let the people see the shortfalls of Rabuka first. But it was exactly this caution and lack of aggressive lobbying which had cost him the prime-ministership in June.

What is the driving force behind the anti-Rabuka group? Is it through pure envy they missed out on the prime-ministership? Is it a case of sour grapes? Or do they genuinely feel they can do a better job and Rabuka is sending the country to ruin?

"He does not know what he's doing," said one. "There are no policies the government has on anything. In fact, their whole policy seems to be to hold on to power at any cost."

"The promises which are being made to the people — promises which reek of a popularity contest. Promises, which he will have to honour sooner or later. My concern is that when that time comes, when people realise these are nothing but

hollow words it might be too late. The country would have gone too far down the drain."

He points out investment is at a low. There is no growth in the private sector. There is no attempt to boost investor confidence or to get the economy going. "They do not know what they are doing."

Part of this disillusionment stems from the way the Rabuka-government handled some of the crises. In its early days it had to contend with the Fiji Post and Telecommunications saga, a problem inherited from the interim government. After much controversy, including having the portfolio removed from Minister Ilai Kuli, an illegal strike which Kuli appeared to be sympathetic towards, the resignation of the board and profound apologies to the board from government, the matter was finally settled.

But the scandal which really rocked the government and forced the resignation of attorney-general Apaitia Seru, was the Tony Stephens settled. Stephens, who had sued the government for unlawful detention during the days of the Internal Security Decree, was given a settlement by Seru amounting to some \$10 million — a staggeringly high figure which stunned the nation.

The payment was deferred, with parliament calling for a commission of inquiry into the whole settlement. Now the government has announced it will seek to annul the settlement in parliament.

This could be the motion which will be a test for the Rabuka government. While the NFP and FLP are not in favour of the payout, they do not see why they should bail the government out of a mess of its own making. While the nationalists generally agree with the payout, they are not likely to vote in favour of annulling it. And there are enough government members outraged by the settlement to either vote against it or abstain from voting.

Whether they will decide to make this the issue to change leadership will be known in the next few weeks.

If not, Rabuka will continue, well aware of the moves behind the scenes, of plans to oust him. He is reportedly not too concerned and feels can hold his way through a crisis.

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LAND RIGHTS

Land disputes in Polynesia

Pomare Party versus the Territory

By Karin von Strokirch

THE EXPULSION of the Pomare Party from the island of Mopelia, and their subsequent hunger strike in protest, highlighted the endemic problem of indigenous land rights in French Polynesia. These dramatic events in September, resulting from a dispute between the territorial government and the Pomare Party, were but a culmination of long-standing hostilities and protracted legal battles. That the government is constantly at loggerheads with the Pomare Party is perhaps not surprising given the latter's militant approach to land reform and their political agenda for independence and an end to nuclear testing.

The Pomare Party began to file claims to the island of Mopelia in the Leeward Islands in 1983 and has been occupying the land, first intermittently, and then permanently, ever since. Their removal became more pressing as in 1991 the territory granted land and maritime concessions on Mopelia to inhabitants of the neighbouring island of Maupiti who were keen to exploit these concessions. The Pomare Party's occupation of Mopelia was judged illegal by the local Appeals Court in July 1991, however, no action was taken until September this year. Due to a series of conflicts between the Pomare Party and the mayor and inhabitants of Maupiti, including violent exchange in December last year, a compromise seemed unlikely as neither side was prepared to tolerate cohabitation with the other on Mopelia.

The dawn raid on September 5 by the fast frigate *Prairiall* with 40 *gendarmes*, eight military men and a helicopter seemed a little out of proportion to the task of expelling eight squatters from Mopelia. Questioned on the size of the operation, the French High Commission said, to their knowledge there were up to 30 members of the Pomare Party on the island, while there was also the danger of reinforcements being sent from Tahiti to assist them, and therefore the forces employed were not considered to be

excessive. In fact, Joinville Pomare had intended to join the beleaguered activists at Mopelia but was delayed by the police in Papeete and eventually turned back when he realised he was too late to prevent the expulsion.

The High Commissioner, Michel Jau, justified the eviction of the Pomare Party on the basis their occupation was "without legal authorisation" but the timing of the "intervention by the forces of order had the equal objective of avoiding all risk of a grave confrontation and to protect the different Polynesian communities who were opposed in this affair." The fear of a violent confrontation was not without basis as the imminent arrival of 100 people from the neighboring island of Maupiti was almost bound to result in conflict.

It would seem this was one dispute which the high commission would rather not have become involved in. Indigenous land rights disputes are a messy business which France would prefer to leave to the locals. The assistant to the high commissioner, Lionel Rimoux, said the mission to Mopelia was a success from a technical point of view but had to be seen as a failure given that force should only be used as a last resort. A statement from Michel Jau, added "this intervention should not be taken to be a substitute for the search for a durable solution by negotiation, dialogue and mutual comprehension." This could be seen as an indirect criticism of the territorial government for not having done enough to resolve the dispute by peaceful negotiations and was interpreted as such by the Minister of the Sea responsible for this affair, Edouard Fritch.

Fritch argues in the government's defence that they had done all in their power to reach a mutually agreeable solution with the Pomare Party but these efforts, including last minute attempts at conciliation, had been consistently ignored or rejected by their leader, Joinville Pomare. The government, said Fritch, had been willing to grant con-



The Pass: the *gendarmes* have the

cessions to the Pomare Party if they lodged a formal application to the mayor of Maupiti and ceased obstructing the Maupiti people's settlement of Mopelia. Furthermore, the Pomare Party had prevented the free circulation of maritime traffic by blocking the pass which provided the only entry to Mopelia lagoon. Finally, much was made of the fact the Pomare Party members were cultivating marijuana on the island.

Joinville Pomare was opposed to the settlement of Maupiti people on Mopelia for several reasons. Firstly, because the Pomare family claimed to have ancestral rights to the land which the Maupiti people did not. Secondly, the Maupiti people had polluted their lagoon through water melon cultivation and associated pesticides and fertilizers, to such an extent their lagoon was unfit for pearl farming, which they now wanted to undertake at Mopelia. Pomare argued Mopelia's lagoon would soon end up in the same state as that of Maupiti. Finally, the Mopelia atoll is only 300 hectares and its sensitive environment would not support the presence of 100 or more new settlers from Maupiti.

The Pomare Party was cultivating pearls in the Mopelia lagoon. It was due to their success with this enterprise that the Maupiti people decided to start a pearl farm at Mopelia as well. Pomare is asking the territory pay damages of 50



Daniel North

the Pomare's skiff surrounded

million CFP for materials relating to their pearl farm which they were obliged to leave behind at Mopelia after their expulsion.

Only a day after the removal of the Pomare Party a boatload of 100 people arrived in Mopelia from Maupiti, 87 of whom were to settle there. The Pomare Party declared the fight was far from over. A week later, true to their word, some 30 activists started a hunger strike in protest at their expulsion and to demand negotiations over their land claims. The demonstration captured the attention of the media and, hence, the government. A war of words began between the strikers' encampment beset with protest banners in the main city square, Place Tarahoi, and the adjacent government offices in Avenue Bruat.

In response to the charge by Minister Fritch that the Pomare Party had failed to go through proper legal channels to obtain concessions at Mopelia, Joinville Pomare produced four examples of requests sent to the authorities between 1984 and 1989, all of which were refused. Fritch countered these were dealt with by previous governments and were therefore null and void. On the fourth day of the strike Pomare sent an open letter to the minister saying he would

sign a convention with the government if they would grant the party 10 hectares of land on Mopelia. Fritch replied this would be acceptable on the condition the Pomare Party end its occupation of Place Tarahoi and give up all lands illegally occupied by the party elsewhere. This latter condition was rejected by Pomare. Eight days into the hunger strike the two sides reached a verbal agreement that, in principle, the Pomare Party would be given a concession on Mopelia, the details of which were to be decided in further negotiations. The hunger strike thus ended on the September 21.

At the time of writing, however, the situation remained at a stalemate, with the government seemingly absolving itself of further responsibility. President Flosse argued, "The difficulty lies with the Maupiti camp. The mayor and his councillors are ferociously opposed to any return of the Pomares to the (Mopelia) atoll." He added two *gendarmes* could be installed at Mopelia to regulate any tensions which might arise should the Pomare Party eventually return.

Popular reaction to the trials and tribulations of the Pomare Party have been mixed. There is widespread sympathy for the Pomare activists having their pearl farms confiscated in govern-

ment raids. It is felt that these young and otherwise unemployed Polynesians were engaging in successful business ventures which should have been encouraged and not nipped in the bud because they had not obtained the necessary government authorisations. Moreover, incredulity has been expressed at the size of punitive expeditions organised by the police against these small groups of activists-cum-pearl farmers.

Nevertheless, politically there is little support for the Pomare Party and they have to date not had a representative elected to the local parliament. This is in part due to scepticism about the motivations behind the Pomare Party's campaign for land rights. Many, including leaders of other pro-independence parties, suspect this of being a single-minded reclamation of lands for the Pomare family and not in the broader interest of the indigenous Maohi people.

Land tenure is an area of primary concern to the Maohi people. Over the past century Maohi families have lost much of their land not only to the public domain but also to the Catholic and Protestant churches, French residents and land speculators. Today there is an uncomfortable co-existence between French Laws requiring individual land titles and the traditional system of undivided and collectively owned land which colonial authorities tried so hard, unsuccessfully, to eradicate. The present system creates much confusion and hardship for the indigenous people. It is common for Maohi families to spend many years and large sums of money searching for titles to properties inherited from their ancestors and disputing claims in court.

The territorial government is the larger holder of land since responsibility for the public domain was passed from the state to the territory in 1984. Joinville Pomare questions the colonial heritage of this public domain. In view of the 150th anniversary of the French colonial presence last September, he suggests that it is high time the land was returned to its rightful traditional owners. Reforms to the territory's statute of Internal Autonomy in July 1990 did include a commitment to establish a consultative body to study and provide recommendations on the problem of land tenure and the laws which govern it, but to date this has not been done.

Whatever the end result of the Pomare Party's land claims, until the controversial issue of indigenous land ownership is resolved, it will continue to pose problems for the territory in terms of economic developments, social cohesion and stability.

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LAND RIGHTS

'French no inside. Stay outside'

FISTS raised, eight Polynesian fishermen faced a French warship from their seven-metre skiff. A sign in the skiff said in French, 'GO BACK. PRIVATE PROPERTY BELONGING TO THE POMARE PARTY.' Two heavy steel cables hung across the 20-metre width of the pass, laced through the reef on either side.

We were anchored in the lagoon off Mopelia atoll, 420 km west of Tahiti, with four other foreign sailboats. The eight pearl farmers were Mopelia's sole inhabitants when we arrived. In just five days everything changed.

Tuesday, September 1, 1992

That night, Moana and John, leaders of the pearl farmers, explained all eight are members of the Pomare Parti in Tahiti and that they had declared Mopelia, and the nearby atolls of Bellinghausen and Scilly, a free and independent state. An abandoned village on Mopelia had been flattened by a succession of cyclones and the villagers relocated to the island of Maupiti, 160 km east. The Maupitians wanted to resettle Mopelia, but the Pomares had thus far kept them - and the French - out. They had set up an extensive black pearl farm in the lagoon which was already paying dividends.

Wednesday, September 2

In the afternoon a small white jet flew over the atoll, circling over the anchored yachts twice. After just a few minutes, the jet headed off again to the east.

Thursday, September 3

The captain of one of the American yachts, *Ethereal*, reported hearing a boat with a twin-screw engine motor pass about 3am. There was no sign of another boat that morning. Moana and John came on board that evening to ask if we planned to leave the next day. When I said yes, Moana replied a French ship was coming and they were going to close the pass tonight. "There's going to be an action. No boats go in, no boats go out." He said we might be able to get out by Monday if all went well.

Friday, September 4

At noon, a sailboat approached the pass. The Pomares went out in their skiff to warn them the pass was blocked with steel cables. My father talked with the yacht on VHF radio. It was the German yacht *Laguna*, and they reported seeing a large military ship on the way to Mopelia. *Laguna* stayed outside the pass for an hour, then turned west towards Suvarrow in the Cook Islands.

Moana and John came on board that afternoon and told us they expected a French navy ship that night sometime.

Holly North, who was moored off Mopelia that September day when the gendarmes marched in, gives her account of the events

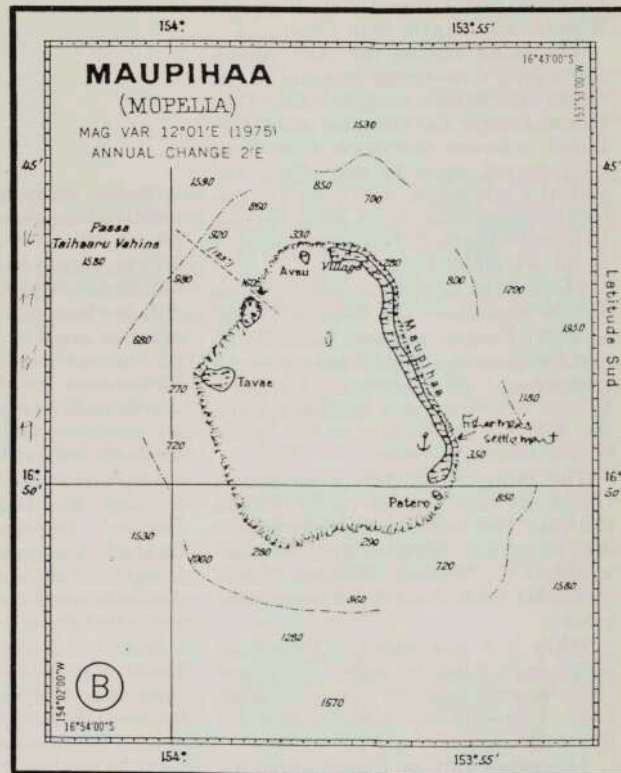
They said another boat was leaving

Maupiti and would come later. They were in touch with Pomares in Tahiti by radio.

Saturday, September 5

At dawn the pass is dwarfed by a huge grey ship of war. A helicopter lifted off the ship's after-deck and slowly circled the atoll's perimeter, just above tree-height. It hovered over the fishermen's camp, passed over each of the five visiting sailboats, then returned to the pass, buzzing the Pomares in their skiff moored in the pass.

Four Pomares were in the skiff, the other four guarding the reef on either side. The ship manoeuvred sideways just outside the pass, and there was activity on deck. About 8am, eight inflatables sped out from behind the ship, loaded with gendarmes. Some were landed on the reef edge, others surrounded the skiff in the pass. There were 40 or 50 gendarmes involved in the landing. They approached the Pomares slowly, and no contact occurred. The helicopter landed on dry reef and a French officer with a briefcase got out and waded over to the skiff. He waded back to the knot of Pomares and gendarmes near the skiff. The Pomares in the skiff and on the reef were surrounded by gendarmes, some with sidearms, some with automatics on shoulder straps. The Pomares were unarmed.



As we watched from the pass, scuffling broke out as the gendarmes began frisking and handcuffing the Pomares. A few of each ended up in the water, but no one appeared hurt.

The last we saw of the Pomare fishermen was John, full name Tehaeora Teihoarii, a descendent of Queen Pomare IV, being taken away by gendarmes to the ship after returning their skiff to the camp. He shouted to us and raised his fist, a proud Polynesian.

Sunday, September 6

At dawn a red copra barge was outside the pass. When the sun came up it entered slowly and chugged across the lagoon. About a hundred people were on board with all their belongings - ukeles, mattresses, dogs, chickens, skiffs, outboards, compressors and dive gear for pearl farming.

All five foreign yachts left that morning for the Cook Islands. □

POLITICS

PRESIDENT-ELECT Bill Clinton's Democratic allies swept the US flag elections in the Pacific in early November.

All the major offices in American Samoa, Guam and Hawaii were won by the Democrats.

Bounced out of office were long-time American Samoa Governor Peter Tali Coleman and General Ben Blaz, the Republican delegate from Guam.

The island winners included: American Samoa's re-elected delegate to the House of Representatives, Eni F.H. Faleomavaega; Eni's running mate, A.P. Lutali, a former Governor of the territory, elected again to that office, and Robert Underwood, the Chamorro college professor who upset Blaz. Guam's Democrats fattened their usual majority in the territorial legislature.

Meanwhile, in Hawaii, there was no serious opposition for Senator Daniel Inouye, Congresswoman Patsy Mink and Congressman Neil Abercrombie, all Democrats, all winners. Governor Clinton carried the state handily, it being the only US jurisdiction in the Pacific with a vote for president.

The sitting Republican Governor of Guam, Joe Ada, was not up for election this year, and there were no elections in the staunchly Republican Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands — CNMI holds theirs in odd-numbered years.

While it is true that the Democrats swept everything in sight, the island elections were separate from each other and, to some extent, reflected different dynamics.

American Samoa. Furthest from the US Mainland, geographically, culturally, and politically is American Samoa, the only US territory below the Equator. Here party labels are relatively new, but the animosities among the players go back a long time. Lutali and Coleman, for example, had run against each other repeatedly in the past with Lutali's first victory over Coleman coming this year. Faleomavaega, now with a large political following of his own, has been Lutali's ally (and once served as his Lt. Governor).

Coleman, despite his close ties to President Bush, had been in political hot water for a long time. Often absent from the island, either attending to Governor's business in Washington, dealing with his own health, or attending the numerous gatherings of island leaders that are so attractive to politicians, Coleman faced the steady (and often detailed) criticism of the *Samoa News*.

The *News* often complained about the

territory's constant financial crisis. While the mainland government can, and does, run up colossal deficits, its checks do not bounce, it pays its bills, and provides the day-to-day services of government.

It has been different in Pago Pago. In order to avoid reducing the number of government workers, the Coleman Administration has been slow to pay its suppliers. As a result drugs at the hospital are sometimes in short supply, and the roads do not get fixed.

Coleman's administration, according to both the Federal Department of Interior's Inspector-General, and the General Accounting Office (GAO), a Congressional watchdog agency, routinely spent money it did not have and failed to collect taxes with vigor.

It all lead to a 6554 to 4462 victory for Lutali over Coleman, with two other candidates drawing about 1500 votes between them. Lutali's running-mate, and Lt. Governor-elect, is Tauese Sunia, younger brother to former Congressman Fofu Sunia who was forced from office by a financial scandal in 1988.

As compared to political leaders in other islands, Coleman had two strong structural advantages, and two substantial disadvantages; he held a fixed, four-year term, and did not have to worry about maintaining a parliamentary majority; further, he had near total control of the government's finances, contracting authority and personnel. On the other hand, he, unlike many Pacific leaders, faced a fiercely critical daily newspaper, and overseas auditors and investigators that he could not control.

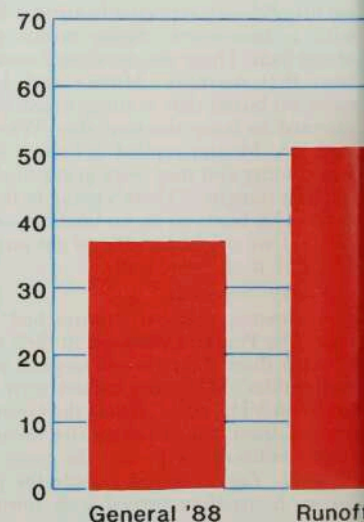
Coleman's defeat will cause the departure of two of his relatives from government employment: his son, Dyke Coleman, who had served as his chief of staff in recent years, and his son-in-law, Fred Radewagen, whose handsome salary as the territory's representative in Washington was criticized during the campaign. Radewagen will continue to

As Democratic President-elect victory on US mainland, offices in American Samoa, Guam

edit his sprightly newsletter, Washington Pacific Report, and his wife (and Coleman's daughter) Amata Radewagen, will remain in her unpaid position as a member of the Republican National Committee.

It will be interesting to see how Lutali deals with the financial mess that he has inherited, one that Coleman claims stemmed, at least in part, from Lutali's earlier administration (1985-1989). Will Lutali reduce the bloated payroll? Raise taxes? Those are the difficult questions. A less difficult one: will he close the territory's Washington office, as he did before, thus ousting Radewagen? Probably.

Eni's Inc (percent



Votes cast for Eni Faleomavaega, American Samoa delegate, 1988-1990

Clean sweep elections

Il Clinton swept to a landslide
Pacific allies won all major
and Hawaii. David North reports.

What will the new Governor do with Aleki Sene, the government official who runs the telephone system? Both the Inspector General and the GAO have been highly critical of some of his purchasing tactics — he had created a situation in which his phone system had to buy equipment from a firm owned by the Sene family. If someone were caught doing something like that on the mainland he would be lucky if were just fired, as opposed to being fired and sent to jail.

Finally, what will Lutali do with the government-owned golf course, that is famous for losing money? It is said that it is over-staffed and that playing fees are collected only sporadically. Golf, after

all, is not a traditional game of the South Pacific; most of the players are Asians and Mainlanders.

Faleomavaega's campaign drew less press coverage than the gubernatorial contest, but he won far more votes than anyone else seeking office in American Samoa this year. With more than 7900 votes he walloped his principal opponent, Attorney-General Tautai Aviata Fano Fa'alevao. Tautai, Coleman appointee, drew a little over 2200 (these are nearly complete, but not final totals). Two other candidates collected about 2000 votes.

The Congressman's prowess as a vote getter has grown steadily over the last four elections. In 1988 Faleomavaega came in first in the initial election with 37 per cent of the vote, but lacking an absolute majority had to go into a runoff, which he won with only 51 per cent of the vote. By 1990 it was 55 per cent, and there was no need for a runoff, and this time it was 65 per cent. The runoff provision is also used in Palau but not in most US jurisdictions.

Meanwhile, on the mainland it was widely proclaimed as The Year of the Women, with women winning a stunning four additional seats in the US Senate, and picking up 19 seats in the House of Representatives.

Nothing quite comparable occurred in American Samoa, but it seemed for 24 hours the number of women in the lower house of the Fono (the legislature) would be doubled. The only woman incumbent, Fiasili Haleck, was re-elected, and it appeared Faga S. Fuala'au had won her first term, but only by one vote. Then two more ballots (both against her) were found in another ballot box.

There was one first for women, however, and that came before the election and following the death of the sitting Lt. Governor Paramount Chief Galea'i Poumele. Governor Coleman appointed his widow, Gaoioi Tufele

Galea'i, to fill out the last few months of her husband's term.

No woman had held the position previously. Coleman selected his legislative ally, Senate President Letuli Toloa, to be his candidate for Lt. Governor, and they went down to defeat together.

There will be no women, however, in Senate. Although Western Samoa has dropped its practice of limiting the vote to matai (men, usually older men, with chiefly titles) this system is still used to select the upper house in American Samoa.

While women are not formally barred from holding matai titles, they rarely do, and, as a result no woman has ever served in the Senate.

Were a lawyer to sue, and take the case on appeal to the federal courts on the mainland, matai voting would probably be eliminated as contrary to the US Constitution. The US granted women the right to vote more than 70 years ago.

Guam. Because Typhoon Elsie was threatening, Guam's election was postponed for four days, which probably did not help Blaz.

Some voters, in the wake of Clinton's victory, probably decided Guam would be better off with a Republican delegate. Underwood got 17,911 votes and Blaz 14,522. Blaz, rounding out his fourth term, is a generation older than Underwood, and was a less comfortable campaigner.

Underwood walked the villages, pressed the flesh, and spoke at countless small ("pocket") meetings; Blaz tended to use the media. On substance Underwood is a more vehement Chamorro nationalist than Blaz, and criticized his opponent for lack of progress in Washington on the issues of Commonwealth status, war reparations and disposition of surplus military land.

The Democrats picked up a net of three seats in the legislature, which they will control 14-7.

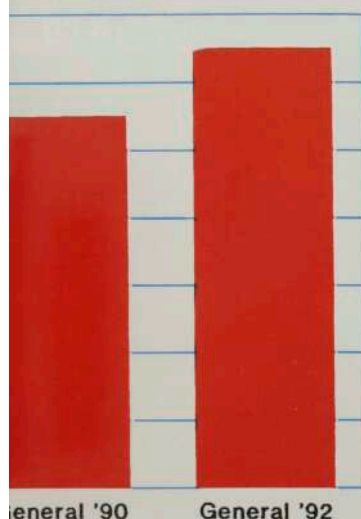
As usual, there will be a high proportion of women among the senators; all six seeking re-election won, while a seventh, Republican Martha Ruth, did not run again.

Leading the polls for the legislature was newcomer Thomas Ada, a Democrat. Though a first cousin to the Governor, he belongs to the other party.

The Democrats now have a veto-proof majority in the legislature, if they stick together on a given issue.

□

ng Votes otes cast)



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POLITICS

Royalty under threat

By Martin Tiffany

A PRO-DEMOCRACY conference scheduled to be held in the Tongan capital Nuku'alofa late last month marked a milestone in the destiny of the tiny island kingdom. The four-day conference should prove an important turning point in the struggle between the pro-democracy campaigners in parliament and the noble-dominated government. The conference, November 24-27, was organised by the country's pro-democracy movement to discuss ways of amending the present constitution — written in 1875 — to allow for a more democratic style of government.

At present the Tongan parliament comprises nine commoner members (people's representatives) — representing the 100,000-odd population — nine nobles representing the 33 noble families and 12 cabinet ministers appointed for life by the country's near-absolute monarch, King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV.

The King has been resisting calls for greater democracy from church leaders and the pro-democracy group founded by four of the nine people's representatives. In October the pro-democracy parliamentarians failed in their attempt to have the constitution amended so that all members of the legislature are elected by the people and all ministers appointed by the King from the elected members.

Illustrating how important Christianity is in the life of the Tongans, the Roman Catholic Church played a key role in the three-day conference. Catholic priest Seluini 'Akau'ola headed the conference organising committee with commoner MPs Viliami Fukofuka and Akalisi Pohiva. Pohiva, a long-time crusader against corruption and law-breaking in Tonga's political scene, is arguably the main force behind the push for a more democratic parliamentary system. Speaking to *PIM* Pohiva said the country's present constitution did not meet the aspirations of the majority of Tongans and did "not help meet the needs of the day".

While he did not specifically list point by point what he hoped to achieve, Pohiva is certain of one thing. He wants a government not dominated by royalty — allowing it to out-vote motions. The present political structure, especially the constitution, he says, has not prepared Tonga to adapt to the money-based economy of modern world.

Pohiva is confident his pro-democracy movement has "majority support" from a cross-section of the population. He is

The winds of change begin to sweep across the Pacific's only remaining kingdom, endangering its elite ruling class



The King: sheltering under an 1875 constitution

"very positive" that within two years changes will come about to the constitution to give them the democracy they are striving for. Pohiva does not see himself or his movement as anti-monarchy (he still refers to King Taufa'ahau as His Majesty). Rather, he feels the people should have a say in who governs them. He sees the King and the royal family as having limited powers and becoming mere constitutional monarchs. He feels the role of the monarchy is better suited to the country's traditional subsistence economy. But he does not rule out the possibility of a split between nobles and commoners brought on by this push for democracy.

Pohiva sees the conference as an important first step in this thrust. All that he hopes to gain from this conference is to get participants' views and opinions on the constitution. He said this would provide a platform for dialogue and open

the way for future discussion and, ultimately, for a national referendum.

The government is not making things easy for the conference organisers. On October 19 Tonga's Prime Minister, Baron Vaea, told the pro-democracy movement his government would take part in the conference. This marked the first time the government had indicated a willingness to publicly debate democracy issues. Just two days later, on October 21 Tonga's Immigration and Police Minister 'Akau'ola (who is no relation to the Catholic priest) wrote a letter saying the government would have no role in the conference and warned Tonga would deny visas to foreigners trying to attend the pro-democracy conference.

The letter sent to conference organisers said Tonga's constitution was a matter entirely to be left to Tongans to who should chart their own destiny and "non-Tongan interference is unwelcome". Minister 'Akau'ola, a noble, said immigration officers had been told to deny visas to anybody "in any capacity whatsoever" for the conference. A number of international constitutional law experts from Australia and New Zealand had been invited.

On November 3 the government reiterated 'Akau'ola's statement saying they would boycott the constitutional reform conference and confirmed the ban on foreign participation despite efforts by the pro-democracy to have it reversed. According to 'Eseta Fusitu'a, deputy chief secretary and deputy secretary to cabinet, the government "was working on its own consultations concerning constitutional revision".

In Tonga it is hard to gauge the support for the pro-democracy movement. While many feel the may want a change, they find it hard to put their finger on just what they want. There is also the underlying loyalty and reverence for the King almost second nature to Tongans and based on the centuries-old belief that he is the link between mortals and the realm of the gods.

In February, general elections are to be held in Tonga and Pohiva is confident he and his pro-democracy campaigners will get in again. But only time will tell if the man and his movement are a force ahead of their time.

□

THE REGION

WAR ON

IT WAS in the wee hours of one morning in 1990 when a combined special Australian Federal Police (AFP) and Australian Customs Service taskforce swooped on an unsuspecting yacht moored in the calm waters of Whitsunday Passage in far northern Queensland.

On board were five people - three women and two men. Unknown to the crew the yacht had been under surveillance for months as it made its way through South East Asia, Papua New Guinea and then to Australia.

As the yacht sailed into the Whitsundays, the taskforce put together in Townsville, swung into action. A 24-hour surveillance was put into force.

Taskforce members - all in plain clothes - took turns at night, using an array of sophisticated equipment, including binoculars equipped with infra-red night vision, to watch the movement of the yacht's crew members.

As dawn was breaking, the taskforce struck. Using a high-speed boat and one other craft, they stormed the yacht and ordered its crew to lie low while a search was conducted.

They found nothing.

The yacht even had a clearance from Papua New Guinea Customs when it had berthed at the northern town of Madang a month or so earlier. (A Supreme Court jury in Brisbane later heard the yacht also visited Lae and Port Moresby).

As the search continued, it seemed everything was in order. Until they came to the yacht's water tank, that is.

"Come and have a look," one officer yelled out.

At the bottom of the tank were tonnes of compressed powdered cocaine in sealed plastic bags. Street value — \$A10 million.

These details were later related to a trial which lasted several months, starting in the Brisbane District Court and ending before a Supreme Court jury which found the two men (of German extraction) guilty. They are serving lengthy jail sentences in Brisbane.

In November last year Papua New Guinea fishermen stumbled on what authorities said was the country's largest

drug haul while digging for turtle eggs on a remote atoll off PNG's New Ireland Province.

The 1.5 tonnes of hashish resin were found buried in the sand. Wrapped in sealed plastic bags, the number 777 embossed in gold seals was clearly stamped at the top of each carton.

Each of the 66 cartons also bore the letters RR at the bottom. Authorities estimate the street value of this 1.5-tonne consignment at between \$F31.4 million and \$F78.5 million.

Although no one was arrested, police and other government officials believed the huge consignment was brought into PNG from Asia by foreign vessels.

As the couriers failed to make connections quickly, they decided to bury the "cargo" on Hawaii Island in the Nuguria group of islands, about 190km north-east of Rabaul.

A week before, an unidentified yacht was reportedly seen leaving Hawaii atoll by people from nearby islands. Hawaii atoll is a popular fishing and turtle-hunting ground.

Former PNG Prime Minister Rabbie Namaliu later told Parliament foreign vessels had been entering PNG waters and ports illegally with guns and drugs.

It was difficult, he said, to monitor the movements of these yachts and ships because the monitoring system lacked the financial and manpower resources to carry out the task effectively.

PNG has asked Australia and New Zealand to help in its surveillance on drug smuggling.

The story of the PNG drug haul is similar to another drug find in Solomon Islands (further east of PNG), in 1990.

It was reported a yacht had left the consignment on a sandy, uninhabited island to be picked up later by a foreign fishing boat. Among the stories circulating in Honiara at the time was one that an expatriate pilot working for the country's national airline, Solomon Airlines, would give the fishing boat the direction to the island to make the pick up.

Instead, stranded fishermen found the drug, believed to be hashish resin, buried in the sand in large containers. It was

said to have been destined for Australia. Again, there were no arrests.

In Fiji earlier this year, authorities seized 12 gas cylinders buried in the sand on an uninhabited island in the Southern Lau Group.

Inside was hashish resin in paste form. Its street value — \$F30 million. Hashish resin is a tar-like substance which can be smoked or mixed with drinks and taken orally. It is a concentrated form of processed marijuana and is said to be 12 per cent more potent.

Experts say drug trafficking is a megabuck industry whose operation is growing in sophistication and approach almost everyday.

The South Pacific is being increasingly used as a transit point. "It is a menace of global proportion and one which requires a global response," one expert says.

School children are among those most vulnerable. A broad program to educate them about the dangers of the illegal use of drugs and its severe penalty is urgently needed. In Australia, for instance, penalty for drug trafficking can land you in jail for life, a \$A50,000 fine or both.

In some countries in South East Asia, punishment for drug trafficking is death by hanging.

Drug trafficking is a world-wide, multi-billion dollar industry, although no one can place a firm figure on its value. Its perpetrators are among the most powerful in the world because of the huge amount of money at their disposal.

In extreme circumstances as evident in recent events in Central America, the drug trade can directly threaten the international peace and security.

In the South Pacific, there is growing fear that with governments declaring war on drug barons in countries such as Italy and Colombia, the region could become easy prey for drug smugglers using legitimate business as covers.

Ease of travel and modern sophisticated telecommunications facilities add to the fear the South Pacific may soon lose its paradise label.

Indeed, the recent drug hauls in Australia, Fiji, PNG and Solomon Islands brought home this stark reality. So what now?

DRUG TRAFFICKING

In recent years, governments in the South Pacific, including Australia and New Zealand, have been working on ways to combat this growing threat. Already a study has identified a program of action which the Forum Regional Security Committee (FRSC) recommended to this year's Forum in Honiara, Solomon Islands.

This comprehensive law enforcement package is seen as the blueprint which will provide the edge needed to combat the growing threat of transnational crimes, including drug trafficking.

The package — Declaration by the South Pacific Forum on Law Enforcement Co-operation — was given the seal of approval by the recent 23rd Forum.

Among other things, this document outlines priority areas for co-operation by Forum member countries in a wide range of law enforcement issues.

Because of widely-held fears that the scale of criminal activity could accelerate, the Forum declared law enforcement co-operation remain an important focus for the region.

Leaders of the 15-nation body noted that balanced economic and social development, the primary goal of all countries in the region, could not be achieved without the assurance of safety and security.

They have agreed there is a need to tackle the problem head on. According to the declaration, priority has been given to putting in place "satisfactory legislative arrangements" covering extradition, mutual assistance in criminal matters and forfeiture of proceeds of crime.

How long this will take depends to a large extent on the willingness and the seriousness of each Forum government to tackle the problem.

What this will mean in the long run, however, is that there will hopefully be standard legal framework in place in Forum countries before the problem sets in.

At present there is little or no legal framework at all to help law enforcement agencies wage an effective war on drug traffickers and other notorious criminals (such as conmen). This problem is



Seized: *Fiji police officers with marijuana*

compounded by lack of trained manpower and financial resources in most, if not all, the Forum Island Countries.

The 15 members of the Forum are co-operating in such areas as —

- **Mutual Assistance in Criminal Matters** — Co-operation in this area means law enforcement agencies in Forum countries can assist one another in identifying persons, in searching for and seizing evidence and in arranging for witnesses to give evidence either in their own countries or in the country in which the trial takes place;

- **Forfeiture of the Proceeds of Crime** — It has been suspected, and in a

number of cases proven, that criminal gangs derive large profits from organised crime. These profits which are often ploughed into legitimate businesses, provide an incentive to further criminal activity and the capital to develop criminal organisations large enough to operate on international scales.

Under consideration is the strengthening of national and international legal networks to ensure governments have the powers to trace, freeze and if need be, seize the agencies and proceeds of crimes.

Banks' secrecy laws which are often used by criminals as shields for laundering criminal profits will be targeted. This means banks operating in the South Pacific may in future be required by law to "open" their books so that law enforcement investigators searching for evidence of crime can have access to bank accounts and other documents.

Other matters under consideration include extradition arrangements within Forum member countries.

In a way, South Pacific countries still have the time to put into place a legal framework which will make the work of law enforcement agencies easier than it is now. But it will require more than just political rhetoric.

Indeed, the war on drug traffickers has barely begun in the South Pacific. Like a storm, it is still gathering strength, as drug traffickers and their masters look for safe havens.

The question which needs to be asked now is whether Pacific leaders have the resolve and the political will to declare war on drug traffickers.

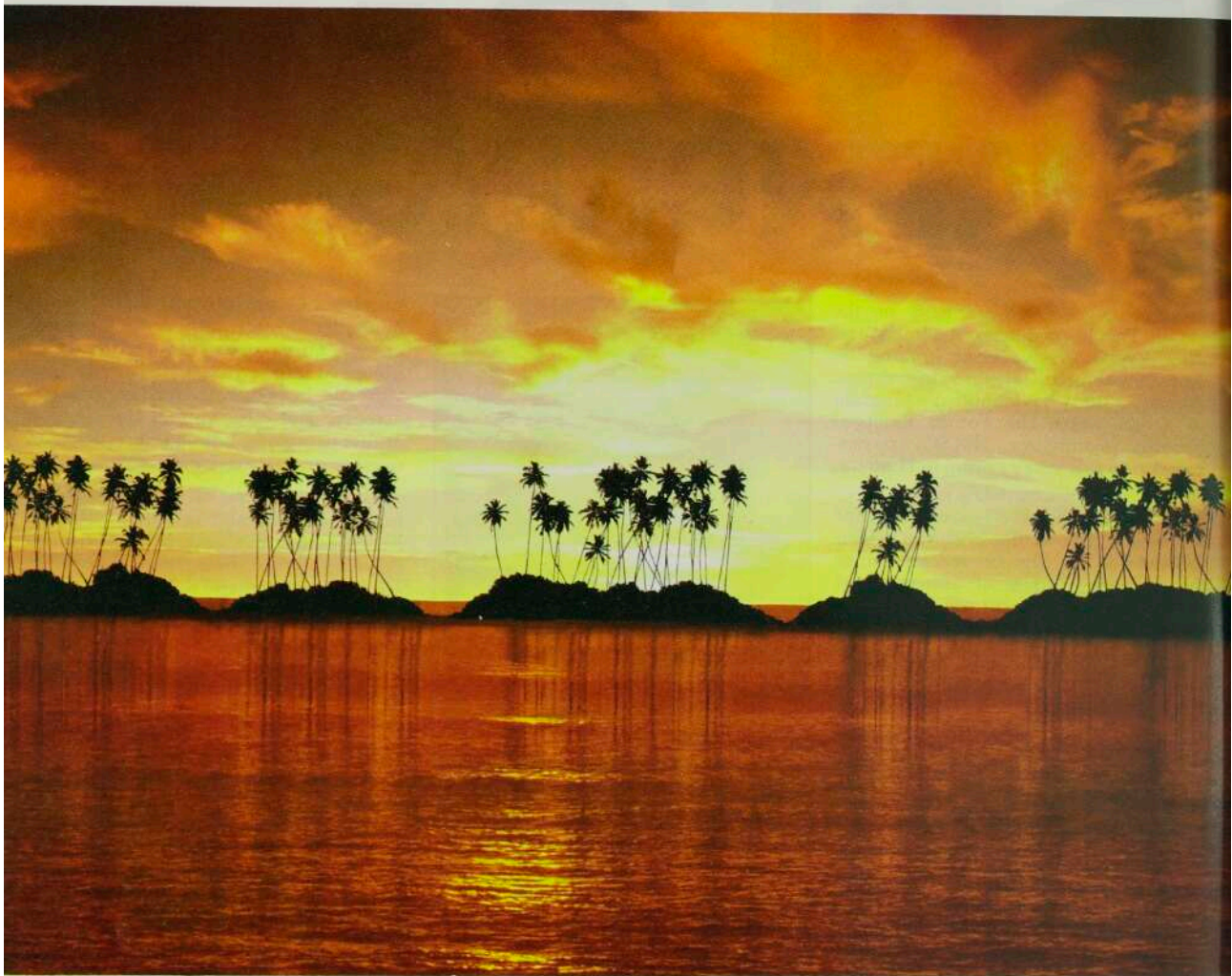
A lot is at stake.

Not only are the tranquility, peace and security of the South Pacific at stake, the lives of hundreds of thousands of innocent youngsters are as well.

Preventing this scourge is easier than trying to deal with it once it has set in. The South Pacific Forum Declaration on Law Enforcement Co-operation is but only a beginning.

□

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Clinton's new agenda

ONE THING is certain about the new Clinton administration — foreign policy is off the hit parade. Back when there was a Cold War (was it just three years ago?) and Washington used to be the capital of the Free World, international politics was this city's prime currency.

But the fact that George Bush became known as the "foreign policy President" was a key reason why he lost the election.

President Bill Clinton is going to spend his first year focussing on reviving the American economy and other aspects of domestic policy that voters believe Bush neglected. That means the islands states of the South West Pacific will attract even less attention.

"Foreign policy was not even talked about in the election. The South Pacific is regarded as a sideshow," observed a South Pacific official in Washington.

But the new administration poses no threat to the region. Its catchery in foreign policy has been "continuity".

"There will be no fundamental changes," said Dick Baker, with the Hawaii-based East-West Center. "Just don't expect policy initiatives."

A South Pacific official agreed: "It remains in their basic strategic interest to keep the sea lanes open and to deny the region to others — although of course no one really wants to move into there anymore."

There will be, however, an automatic and comprehensive review of all State Department policies. And that provides several opportunities for President Clinton and his new foreign policy team to re-orient US policy.

For instance, they will be more likely to sign the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone treaty.

The US already complies with the treaty's principles, Clinton supports a Comprehensive Test Ban and the end of the Cold War has diminished the resonance of many opponents.

"It won't be a front-burner but there is no political cost," said Jim Baker.

But they are unlikely to rush to repair the security alliance with New Zealand, according to Dick Baker.

"For a couple of reasons. First, I'm not sure what they could do anyway. And they will want to reaffirm the principle (of no-confirm-no-deny regarding nuclear weapons).

"Second, if the Clinton administration comes in with any negative baggage in foreign affairs it is that Democrats have to fight perceptions of being too soft," he said.

Thus, the new White House is unlikely to "kiss and make up" with New Zealand's Beehive because it won't want to incur any political cost.

New Zealand is hoping, however, a brand new team at State Department headquarters at Foggy Bottom will replace many of the personalities involved in the original dispute with New Zealand.

That could provide the best chance in years to improve defence relations even if it means meagre efforts to establish some form of joint training and military exchanges. But it remains just a chance.

Regional officials also speculated the Joint Commercial

WASHINGTON



MARGOT
O'NEILL

Commission initiative under former President Bush, designed to promote increased American investment and business in the South Pacific, could be ditched.

"I don't think Clinton will be interested in pursuing this. There was nothing in it anyway. It was a hollow shell all along," said a South Pacific official.

But the new regime may be more inclined to sign the Law of the Sea Convention and formally accept the expanded territorial boundaries coveted by island nations — although there would still probably have to be some resolution of US opposition to provisions for deep seabed mining.

There is at least one other key indicator of how the Clinton regime will treat the Pacific islands.

Who will President Clinton appoint as Assistant Secretary For Territorial and International Affairs in the Interior Department, a position responsible for Pacific territories?

It covers Guam, American Samoa, Palau, the Northern Marianas and the Compact Nations, the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia, both of which are members of the South Pacific Forum.

Whoever occupies the job is at the coal-face of US-Pacific policy-making and is appointed by the President.

A South Pacific official complained that during the Reagan/Bush years, the job was usually given to a minority, i.e. a woman or an ethnic minority, to boost the administration's appearance of being an equal opportunity employer.

"It has been tokenistic," the official said. "Competence was not" the main criterion.

But Pacific leaders have at least one powerful and emphatically close ally to the White House. Hawaii Governor Waihee is good friends with Clinton and was among his early backers in the presidential race. They forged strong ties when Clinton was Arkansas Governor.

Governor Waihee, whether he joins the Clinton administration or remains in Hawaii, will be a vital advocate for the Pacific and will become a powerful channel through which the island states can get to the White House.

At the time of writing there was also some speculation about whether former congressman Stephen Solarz, a proven friend of the region, might also be given a key post in the administration.

Some regional officials also see exciting opportunities for the Pacific via the new Vice President, Al Gore. He is an ardent environmentalist who could be attracted to the increasingly prominent green agenda of the South Pacific.

But in the meantime, the Pacific has to get used to the new agenda in Washington.

□

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CONCEPT COMMUNICATIONS

Focusing on the year ahead

IT'S kind of hard to accept that, given a few more weeks, we will have stepped out of 1992 and into 1993. But it is true. The festive season is just around the corner.

This had been a rather remarkable year. It is a remarkable year of unprecedented changes — some better, some for worse.

It was remarkable for a number of reasons. On a global scale, there have been unthinkable changes. Take, for instance, the decimation of communism, the decision by France to suspend its much-opposed nuclear testing program in the South Pacific.

These would have been almost unthinkable, say a few short years ago. But it did happen.

After 26 years of nuclear testing in the Pacific, Paris decided on a temporary halt until the end of this year with an undertaking that if other nuclear testing countries followed its lead, France would extend its moratorium.

The United States government has since joined France in what could culminate in a global treaty banning nuclear testing. President George Bush this year signed into law legislation limiting nuclear testing and that future nuclear tests by the US are dependent on actions of other nuclear powers.

On the downside, people are suffering and dying endlessly on the African continent and in what used to be Yugoslavia in eastern Europe due to ethnic rivalries. The list goes on.

We, in the South Pacific consider ourselves rather fortunate in many ways. Apart from hiccups here and there, our shores have been relatively trouble-free since World War II.

Institutionally, regional organisations have been strategically established to deal with some of the pressing problems associated with economic development, trade and so on — thanks to the foresight and wisdom of the region's statesmen.

But whether we in the South Pacific like it or not, we are part of the revolution sweeping the world as people demand change in the quest to do better for themselves, their children and for future generations.

These "people revolutions", present not only an opportunity to reflect on the deeds of the past, but on how new opportunities and challenges can be dealt with.

One of the challenges facing Pacific people and leaders is how the untapped resources of the South Pacific can be harnessed to best serve the interests of the region. And perhaps, how the shrinking aid dollar can be best used to achieve maximum results.

The Secretary General of the South Pacific Forum Secretariat, Hon Jeremiah Tabai, touched on this in a statement to the recent Forum Official's Committee's 1993 Work Programme/Budget in Suva.

"As I have been saying since assuming this post, I am particularly interested in establishing how the Secretariat can best serve the interests of our member governments.

"And in this context, of major concern has been to ensure that we are strategic in what we do and that we use our resources effectively," Tabai said.

The Secretary General also cautioned against too rapid an expansion.

THE FORUM



ALFRED SASAKO

"...in keeping with what I said in Honiara (the venue of the 23rd Forum), the Secretariat believes this is not a time for expansion but consolidation and that is reflected in the budget which in aggregate terms is below the real level of 1992.

"Our interest is in doing our existing job well, rather than growing," Tabai told committee members.

The Secretariat's 1993 core (regular) budget of \$F2,512,000 reflects an increase of just over four per cent in nominal terms over the previous year, but when inflation is taken into account, there has been no real increase in the last five years.

The extra budget to fund the Secretariat's 1993 work program and activities rose by 31.1 per cent in nominal terms to \$F8,831,000 compared with last year's figure.

An additional \$2,084,000 has been set aside in this budget for the Secretariat's new conference centre to be funded by a private Japanese donor.

The Secretary-General has assured member governments the Secretariat can continue to deliver its comprehensive work program for next year.

The Secretariat's extra budget is funded each year by contributions from donor countries including Australia, New Zealand, Japan, France and agencies such as the European Community (EC) through its Lome programs.

According to the Secretary General, two dominant themes have been establishing a more strategic approach to the Secretariat's activities and formulating the most effective linkages within the region and with the broader international community.

One area of priority for improved linkages in the region next year is the flow of information on the Secretariat's activities and opportunities for involvement (by Forum Island Countries) in its programs. Relevant Secretariat divisions will continue to make direct contacts with their counterparts in individual island member countries to "sell" the Secretariat's programs and activities next year. This will be followed up with senior level visits to member governments.

Tabai, who has undertaken official visits to member governments in the region since taking up his appointment last February, said, "... I think travel throughout the region is very important for the Secretariat — we must know what the concerns of our governments are."

Tabai has also held top level talks in Asia, Canada, Europe and the United States of America to keep abreast of the global roller-coaster changes.

"As well, we find more and more, there are demands for us to know about what is happening on the global scene to ensure that our region can respond to change and receive the most effective support from its major partners in development of the region," he said.

Well, it's probably fitting to say *adieu* to 1992. It has been a great year, but we expect 1993 to be even better. The Forum Secretariat's services and resources will continue to be available to member governments.

Have a well-deserved Christmas/New Year break.

□

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PROFILE

'No difference between Anglophone and Francophone'

By Ian Williams

AS *PIM* interviewed the Prime Minister in his New York Hotel room, in English, he alternated between French and Bislama in talking to his colleagues. When asked if the change of government implied a change of Foreign Policy from its independent and non-aligned position, he emphasised continuity. "At the moment, we are not changing everything — but there has been a change of government, so of course, there will be some changes of policy.

"For example, we will give priority in our foreign affairs to external trade. In the past we have done lots on the political and human rights level — and we will continue to do so, but we will add to that a concern for internal and external trade. We have established relationships with some countries and we will maintain them, but others we will build strong commercial relations with".

When asked if he was referring to Taiwan, he replied, "Well not only that — we first moved to Grafton in Australia. We have relationships with business people, and we are trying to build commercial relations between Australia and Vanuatu. It is not easy but at the moment we are trying to negotiate for direct shipping. And we have started talks with the New Caledonia provinces and New Zealand."

But does having trade relations with Taiwan imply diplomatic relations? "No, we already have relations with the mainland of China, and we will continue those. They give a lot of help to Vanuatu and they are very important in our grouping in, for example, the United Nations. Our ties with Taiwan are only at the commercial level."

Vanuatu is the only Forum country which joined the Non-Aligned Movement — but you were not represented in Jakarta at the recent NAM summit — why? "It is simply that we were a new government, just come in, and we faced many decisions, we had a lot to do in

internal affairs. It was too early for us, so we decided not to go this time."

New Zealand had apparently hoped Vanuatu would be canvassing on its behalf for the Security Council seat among the non-aligned, but Carlot says,

VANUATU'S new Prime Minister, Maxime Carlot, is sending mixed signals to the world. He attended a World Anti-Communist League meeting in Hungary — but denied rumours he would antagonize China by recognising Taiwan. He signalled clearly Vanuatu's foreign policy would follow the bottom line more than any political line in future. He also told *PIM* the Francophone/Anglophone divide was an artificial creation of expatriates — but insisted his first speech to the United Nations General Assembly should be in French.

"We have not been informed about that. But we will take it as trade — we will trade with them for votes. If they support us, we will support them. We have candidates in our regional organizations — and we will look for New Zealand support."

And why did he go to the World Anti-Communist League conference? "When we were in opposition, our party, and myself, were members of this body, so I was invited to go, and I took the chance to visit Hungary to see what it was like following the collapse of communism there".

Will there be any change in the attitude of Vanuatu to the Kanaks in New Caledonia. "It depends on what you are talking about. Our links with the New Caledonia people are stronger than ever. Our Foreign Minister works closely with the French government and of course also closely with the two provinces.

"We have strong ties now, and the provinces are ready to make investments in agriculture in Vanuatu. This is our priority, and we are not interested in talk, about more Kanak, more Melanesian, and so on. That's not our priority. And I think we are gaining the support of island leaders, because they can see how important it is to build up our economies — which are worsening throughout the Pacific islands.

"If I can make a comparison, the previous government was doing well in production in Vanuatu, but less so in selling our products. That is why we are giving priority to looking for partners. For example, we have near 100 per cent imports from Australia, but now we are sitting down and talking and there are Australian businessmen interested in buying products from us. There are

problems about customs and so on, but we hope to resolve them."

Has the new government changed its attitude to French nuclear testing if they were to resume? "We signed the letter at

the Forum, not just about the testing but about nuclear fuel shipments and war material. Automatically, the people in Vanuatu do not want these things. We sent that message not just to France, but Japan, Britain, China and Russia".

On the environmental field, Vanuatu has achieved a high standing internationally, particularly because of the role played by Robert Van Lierop, your UN ambassador as chairman of the body. Are you going to maintain the same stand? "Well we support the environment — we are for development without spoiling the environment. We will continue to support it — and we will do more in that field. Vanuatu wants the UN to be serious and quick about setting up the commission on sustainable development. We think the UN has been a little bit slow in this sphere".

On domestic policies, you have members of both Anglophone and Francophone parties in your government. Do you think you will be able to take politics in Vanuatu away from the linguistic divide?

"Yes, this is expatriate politics in Vanuatu. There is no problem between Anglophone and Francophone. The expatriates for 11 years have been bringing about a conflict, setting one side against the other. When we came into power, both communities took their place in the government. Before, the Anglophones would not promote Francophones in the government.

"When we came to power the expatriates, from Australia, France and elsewhere, said it was impossible to do what we did. But it is normal in Vanuatu. Even in the former government the Minister of Health for example was a Francophone, but they never mentioned it".

So what compromise did you reach about languages? "There is no compromise necessary. The languages are our property, they are put in our constitution. The expatriates never got that. There is no difference between Francophones and Anglophones for local people."

Boutros Boutros Ghali gives his

'This is expatriate politics. The expatriates for eleven years have been bringing about a conflict, setting one side against the other.'

will you do for your speeches half in English, half in French. What will you do for your address to the General Assembly? "In the country we speak Bislama, I speak French and some English. In the UN I will speak in my traditional language, which is French. Sometimes the UN forgets the French language".

How are your relations with Father Lini, has the relationship worked? "He's our partner! He's in the government! Many people said when we were elected that the UNP and the NUP will move away from each other. But we formed a coalition government and we have a memorandum of understanding signed.

"If one of the parties disagrees, it is stated that either party can leave the coalition. When we formed the coalition last December, the expatriates especially said it wouldn't last more than three months — and then they kept extending the deadline — now they are saying it cannot last more than one year," he laughed dismissively adding, "We have done a lot on fields like health, and either party would not be responsible if it pulled out now".

Did he think the opposition had been constructive — what the British call the "loyal" opposition? "When we have our session in parliament, they say they want to be an effective opposition — and of course we say they are destructive opposition. But this is politics! At the moment we are the majority side, we have the duty to protect majority rule — but also the rights of the minority".

When asked what his government had done differently from its predecessors, he was quick with the examples, "In two



fields. In education, we have introduced free primary education for children, where before parents had to pay. It took a lot of effort — for the two parties, since we had no money. On the health side, we introduced some free medical services. One big change, was that we compensated the customary land owners of our two capitals to become the property of the national government. We have raised the price of copra and we are trying to lower the prices of foodstuffs like rice and sugar in the shops. We have started television in Vanuatu. People outside made a big fuss but we feel that it is important for our culture and religion — Vanuatu is a Christian country and we think television can help. It is only a few hours a day now, but we hope that from December we will start our own programs."

It is intriguing that the policies described here would be regarded as left wing in America, while most outsiders considered the Prime Minister's party to be right wing. Did he see things in this way? "That's not our way of thinking. We are two parties in the government. These two in one. I suppose you could

call us centre right, but apart from such labels, we think it is important to elevate the human being.

Sometimes people talk about development, sustainable development. But when they talk about it, they think money, of the economy. But we think the development of human beings is important as well. So the World Bank, and the Lome Convention, they put the money where it will earn money. But when we try to put it into development of youth, sports, for example, they do not want to help.

We are trying to make all of the countries that try to help us understand that we are working in the level of human development, and that is important. In future we will submit lots of programs on that. Like UNDP's Human Development Report — the concept is there — but the practice isn't. In work for youth we have a lot of work to do. If they put money in this, it would help us develop future citizens of Vanuatu — citizens of a united country" he concluded.

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PAFCO was established in 1964, with shareholdings divided between the large Japanese trading concern, C Itoh, another Japanese company, Nichiryo Ltd, the Fiji government and a few individuals.

Initially the venture operated as a tuna transshipment depot, based on a 2000-tonne freezer. It serviced a fleet of Taiwanese and Korean fishing vessels whose catch was stored prior to shipment to Japan for canning.

Local employment then was mainly for men who unloaded and loaded ships, loaded bait, and stacked the fish. The government then began to envisage development of an integrated tuna catching and processing industry.

A pilot cannery was opened in 1970, with a larger cannery coming into operation in 1975. Two more canning lines were commissioned in 1980 and 1981.

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Asahi Lave

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Can Co Ltd, subsidiary of a Japanese packaging equipment manufacturer. The government held 20 per cent of the shares. Pacific Packaging Ltd, a subsidiary adjacent to the main PAFCO cannery, has replaced Fiji Can Company as the supplier of cans.

Guests from overseas and Fiji gathered at Levuka in November, 1989 for the

inauguration of Pacific Packaging Ltd and to celebrate the 25th anniversary of PAFCO.

Nichiryo Ltd sold its shares in PAFCO to C Itoh in 1982. After trading profitably for a number of years, PAFCO was hit by an international price decline. It made losses from 1982 to the end of 1986.

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PAFCO to government. The government became the majority owner — about 98 per cent — and a financial restructuring created a sound base to continue and expand operations.

In the 1990 and 1991 annual reports, the directors reported a total turnover in excess of \$50 million, four per cent higher than 1989. Sales for the last five years totalled \$230 million.

The company today has shareholders' funds of \$12 million compared to about \$500,000 in January, 1987. Current assets exceed current liabilities by \$5.7 million.

The company initiated major capital improvements, particularly in canning equipment, to enhance profitability. Pacific Packaging Limited, a subsidiary of PAFCO opened in 1989, has created additional reductions in production costs.

The PAFCO extension commissioned on September 26 this year by Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka, is funded by the Australian government. The \$17 million package has special significance as the largest single aid project ever undertaken by that government in this part of the Pacific.

The expansion, funded under the auspices of the Australian International Development Assistance Bureau (AIDAB), includes major wharf development, a new 3000-tonne capacity freezer, batch processing facilities, roll-on-roll-off loading facilities, container

storage, office complex, forklifts and 3000 special aluminium fish bins.

AIDAB appointed a joint venture between Riedel & Byrne and Irwin Alsop Pacific as project managers, engineers and architects, after an exhaustive selection process. Both joint venture companies have extensive experience in the Pacific. Riedel & Byrne were responsible for the marine engineering activities, Irwin Alsop were responsible for the building and associated works.

Head contractor for the land reclamation and wharves was McConnell Dowell (Fiji). Head contractor for the building and paving work was Fletcher Construction Co (Fiji) Ltd.

The implementation of the project involved a number of separate contracts, including —

- ★ The land reclamation and wharves and roll-on-roll-off facility.

- ★ The construction of three very large freezer rooms, offices and site services, including hydraulic works to collect all waste.

- ★ The fish unloading, loading, sorting, binning and weighing system.

- ★ The supply of 3000 one-tonne aluminium fish bins.

- ★ The supply of special forklifts to operate in the freezer rooms.

- ★ The provision of navigation equipment for shipping.

The extensions have provided PAFCO with increased capacity and efficiency in all aspects of unloading, storage, processing, canning and shipping.

They also allow the company to supply its markets consistently year-round, provide better stock control and reduced handling costs, and lower port and berthing charges.

PAFCO tuna is regarded as among the best in the world. It is sold mainly to customers in Britain and Canada.

The company has a "no nets", "dolphin friendly" policy.

The cannery annually processes about 15,000 metric tonnes of tuna supplied by boats from the government-owned Ika Corporation, and vessels fishing in Kiribati and Solomon Islands waters.

A fleet of 16 vessels chartered to PAFCO from F.C.F. Fishery Co. Ltd of Taiwan also supplies the cannery.

The cannery provides direct employment for up to 1000 people, with another 150 to 200 employed indirectly on Ovalau. At peak production, the number employed represents 50 to 60 per cent of the total working population of Ovalau and Moturiki.

The company has its own internal training scheme, which provides on-line training of production employees in food handling, training of local technicians and machine operators, management training, in house-specialised courses and customer-service training. □

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Sample fish are taken for cooking and organoleptic testing for flavour and quality. The cooked samples are tested for salt content and any forms of contamination.

Also at this stage the fish is checked for bruising and blood-spotting, which indicates poor quality, or that it was caught with a net. Since PAFCO cans no tuna caught with nets, any fish which fails this test is rejected.

Since fish is a highly perishable product, storage and cooking temperatures are of critical importance, and these are closely scrutinised. The fish must be stored frozen to minus-20 degrees Centigrade, and thawed prior to cooking. A fine water mist sprayed at timed intervals provides consistent and rapid cooling.

Once in the can, weight checks and visual inspections are made, ensuring that each carries the correct amount of fish. The hermetically-sealed cans are tested for safe, secure seaming before final sterilisation takes place. Again, temperature is vital and this is monitored throughout the process.

Once the final product is screened and labelled, further random checks are made to ensure cans are properly sealed and undamaged. Selected cans are opened and the contents subjected to further rigorous testings.

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Salendra Narayan

The expansion: includes wharf area, freezer and processing facilities



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ENVIRONMENT

Tourism's balancing act

By Martin Tiffany

Firstly, what is eco-tourism? That was one key question a conference at Auckland University in October, "Eco-Tourism Business in the Pacific — Promoting a Sustainable Experience", tried to answer. While many came up with similar explanations — it was nature-based tourism which did not threaten the natural environment or culture — there was no clear-cut explanation.

Trying to find an acceptable definition for this new buzz word was a major discussion point. Alas, given the vastness of what eco-tourism covers, or can cover, there was no success in coming up with a definition. Perhaps the best comment came from Donald Kudu, head of planning at the Tourism Council of the South Pacific. He said, given that basically all tourism in the Pacific was based on nature, then maybe it is all eco-tourism. Kudu said perhaps the best way to define it was to ask what is not eco-tourism.

Countries represented at the conference included Australia, New Zealand, the United States, Japan, Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, China, Germany, the Solomon Islands, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Palau, Tonga, Vanuatu, Kosrae, and Pohnpei.

What did the conference — promoted as one of the first of its kind to be held in the South Pacific — achieve?

After the 225 participants listened to 44 speakers, a number of panels and worked in discussion groups, the Auckland meeting came up with 164 points to be used as guidelines to prepare a draft outcome of the meeting. Points ranged from keeping business aspects in mind to understanding peoples' cultural values. But of what benefit was the conference to the island nations of the region?

Considering the conference ambitiously tried to look at eco-tourism in the vast Pacific, it fell short when it came to taking into account the vast differences between the regional nations and their peculiar problems. From tiny Tuvalu with very little infrastructure to huge Papua New Guinea with its untamed rainforests and major natural resources to the Marshall Islands where a booming population on a small land mass is the main concern.

As Dr Vili Fuavao, the director of the Apia-based South Pacific Regional Environment Programme, pointed out, many things taken for granted in Australia



Martin Tiffany

Fuavao: "the diversity is phenomenal"

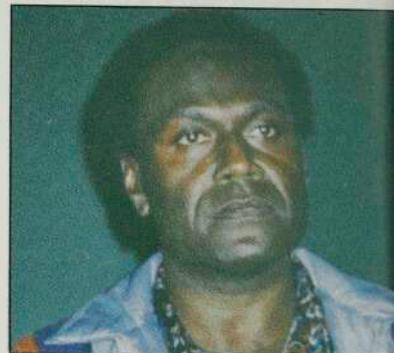
and New Zealand are not so in the Pacific. He said with the South Pacific spread across 30 million sq km — and divided into Micronesian, Melanesian and Polynesian peoples — it would be hard to develop guidelines for such diversity.

"The diversity is phenomenal, you would have to develop specific development plans for each country," Fuavao said. He identified other problems — poor infrastructure in many Pacific countries like water supply, and the population explosion which is causing over-use of the limited resources. Fuavao said there was a dilemma in the South Pacific as the resource base was not going to increase in the near future. Land, he said, was another difficult issue as land tenure systems in the region are complicated.

The conference basically presented a New Zealand and Australian — and to some extent Hawaiian — view of nature tourism with specific experiences of operators in these countries. Only eight of the 44 speakers were indigenous Pacific islanders and an "Ecotourism in the Pacific Workshop" was held to give the Pacific conference a Pacific angle.

This workshop focussed on a hypothetical Pacific island where there was an interest in eco-tourism development. While this workshop looked at what could be done on this island in terms of eco-tourism development it did not fully consider many realities.

For example, there was discussion on setting up a boat tour which included going through the mangroves. In most cases in the Pacific, mangroves belong to a village or clan. Permission would have to be sought before boat-loads of tourists could be taken through. Also getting things done in the Pacific, generally, takes a lot longer because of their traditional and cultural links.



Kudu: "all tourism is based on nature"

However, the conference — after all is said and done — was a step in the right direction. It was a starting point for Pacific people and people from the Pacific Rim to discuss how to manage this fledgling industry to ensure it develops and succeeds.

The conference was realistic in pointing out developing eco-tourism would not be easy. And eco-tourism development in most cases would have to go hand-in-hand with the development of conventional tourism.

While many of today's tourists are looking for something more than the traditional holiday — sun and sand, etc — they would not necessarily visit a country solely for an eco-tourism experience.

As Dave Mazey, general manager of Ruapehu Alpine Lifts in New Zealand, observed, "How do you define an eco-tourist? Some eco-tourists are only eco-tourists for a certain time, as part of their other holiday, and this may only mean a 30-minute walk in a forest."

When developing eco-tourism many aspects have to be taken into consideration — cultural, environmental, conservation, business and many others. Balancing the often conflicting demands of tourism industry growth and environmental protection will not be easy. Hopefully October's conference is the beginning of finding a formula to do this and a beginning for the region to look seriously at developing eco-tourism properly.

Perhaps these words of wisdom from John Marsh from the New Zealand Maori Arts and Crafts Institute can be kept in mind by nature tourism developers, "We did not inherit our land from our ancestors, we borrowed it from our future generations. People belong to the environment, not vice versa."

□

What of environmental refugees?

"EVERYONE talks about the weather, but no one can do anything about it". At one time, this statement may well have been true. But today, it is regarded as "utter nonsense". So says the world's scientific community, thanks to whom we now know so much about how little we know about the human impact on the global climate and environment.

One thing we do know is that if the current levels of atmospheric pollution continue, we are likely to experience significant changes in the earth's temperature. We have also been warned the resulting "greenhouse effect" will contribute to increases in sea levels — so that over time much of the earth's land area will be submerged.

As we await scientific confirmation of the date of the projected cataclysm, we might as well consider some of its catastrophic effects in our region. Among the first casualties of this cataclysm will be those hundreds of thousands of Pacific islanders inhabiting the low-lying islands, islets and atolls dotting the Pacific Ocean. It is feared the rising tides will engulf several low-lying Pacific islands, including Kiribati, Tuvalu, Marshall Islands and Niue.

Facing the extinction of their communities and perhaps even, their countries, Pacific islanders inhabiting these imperilled lands will be cast adrift on the Pacific Ocean as refugees — not victims of political or economic persecution but displaced by the excesses of modern civilisation. They will be environmental refugees.

Futurology is not a subject which lawyers are generally comfortable with. But, given the future plight of the Pacific's environmental refugees, I'd like to think we would adopt a more responsive attitude and take a more active role in formulating legal measures to avert the impending disaster and to alleviate its tragic consequences.

International lawyers have reacted much more positively to the ominous signals flashed by the climatologists by creating a new regime of international environmental law. The major thrust of recent initiatives in global regulation is to control the casual factors. This preventive approach with its emphasis on "control and conserve" is quite sensible. It was recently endorsed in the communique issued at the Honiara Forum.

Without distracting legislators whose attention and efforts are presently directed towards controlling the root causes of the greenhouse effect, let us consider, for the moment, the situation of those Pacific islanders who will be transformed into environmental refugees. What will happen to them? Where can they go? Who will look after them?

PACIFIC LAW



**JULIAN
MOTI**

Sadly we do not know the answers to these questions. There is no concrete body of international law dealing with "environmental" refugees.

When "natural" disasters have occurred in the past, their victims have been rescued and treated on an ad hoc and emergency basis, mainly under the auspices of the office of the United Nations Disaster Relief Co-ordinator (UNDRO) and other humanitarian bodies. Apart from the mandate of the UNDRO to render emergency assistance in disaster-stricken areas, there is virtually no other international instrument providing for the protection of refugees fleeing "natural disasters".

The Magna Carta of international refugee law — the 1951 UN Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, supplemented by the 1967 Protocol — also omits persons fleeing "natural disasters. Protection is extended only to the "political" or "social refugees, i.e. those who have a "well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion".

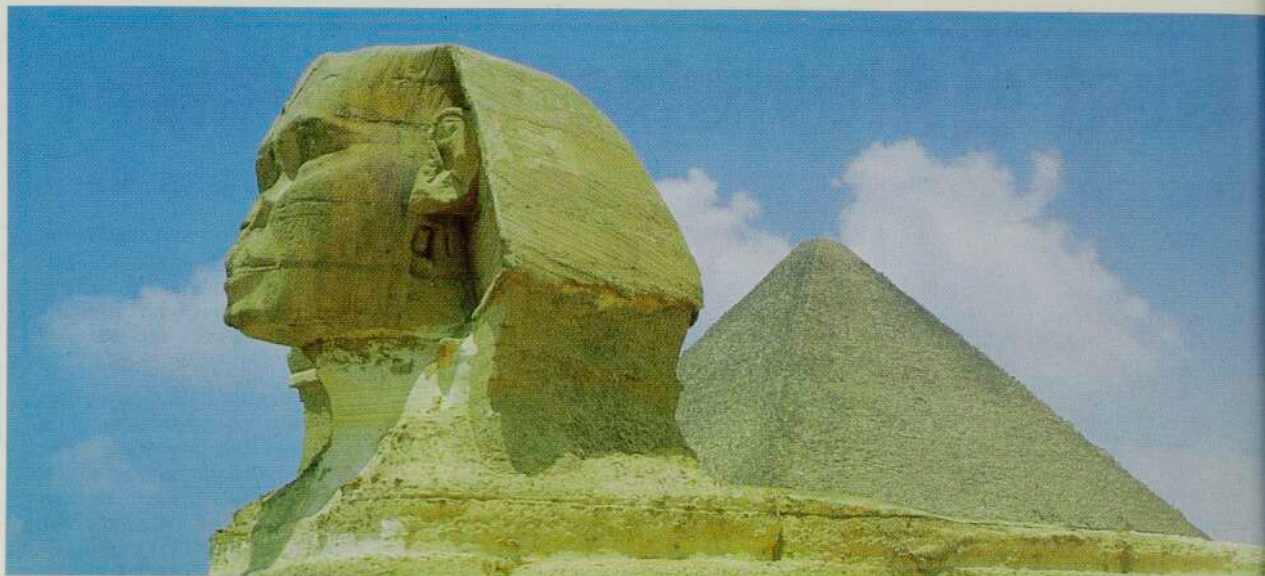
While there may be compelling moral or humanitarian obligations on neighbouring countries to provide sanctuary for the Pacific's environmental refugees, there is no specific legal obligation to do so. Left to their own devices, all that these islanders can do is build strong and durable canoes before setting sail on their uncertain journeys. Hopefully, some passing ship will come to their rescue. International law requires all ships to rescue any persons in distress at sea and to disembark them at the next port of call.

Failing rescue at sea, the voyagers can arrive on the shores of another country confident in the knowledge they won't be turned away. Coastal states are obliged to receive a vessel in distress and to relieve that distress by enabling the vessel to become seaworthy before despatching it out to sea again.

Beyond these transitory arrangements, international law does not offer much solace to the environmental refugee. Whether this position will change depends on the commitment of the international community to search for durable solutions to the potential problems of environmental refugees. Pacific nations cannot afford to take the back seat in such initiatives — surely not when the very survival of their citizens is at stake!

□

* Julian Moti is Adjunct Professor of Law at Bond University, Queensland.



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MIGRATION

Control migrants or promote tourism?

By David North

SEVERAL Pacific island governments are struggling with the question — shall we insist visitors have visas issued in advance (to better control migration) or shall we waive such requirements (to encourage tourism)?

Papua-New Guinea has opted for tighter controls, Guam for easier ones, while New Zealand and American Samoa squabble over who's eligible for easy passage through international airports.

PNG's Foreign Affairs Department has ruled all aliens, including tourists, have to secure a visa before they arrive in the nation. (Visas used to be routinely available at air and seaports.) Further, if a tourist in PNG gets a job offer, he will have to leave the country to apply for an employment visa — there will be no more of the adjustment of status (to the work visa) as there was in the past.

Guam has a different set of priorities. Its principal economic activity is tourism, and its principal customers come from the newly prosperous nations of East Asia, all of whom used to have to go to a US consulate to get a visa. And the US does not issue visas casually.

With some prodding from Congressman Ben Blaz (R. Guam) the US Immigration Service has begun to let people from certain nations come to Guam as short-term tourists without visas; in a highly statistical manner, the Immigration Service has calculated which nations had the history of the least abuse of tourist visas, and started letting residents of those nations come to Guam (and elsewhere in the States) without visas.

People from Japan were the first to be allowed to arrive in Guam without visas, then Koreans, and most recently Blaz announced residents of Taiwan were about to obtain the same deal. The announcement came as particularly good news to struggling Continental-Air Micronesia, the only airline with direct service between Taiwan and Guam.

Meanwhile a controversy, or maybe just some confusion, has broken out over tourist visas between the Congressman from American Samoa, Eni F.H. Faleomavaega (D), and the government of New Zealand.

New Zealand, like Japan and Great Britain, has a good record for not abusing US tourist visas, i.e. its people are unlikely to stay illegally after being admitted as tourists. So they can come to the US without a need for a visa. Part of the deal is that Americans wanting to go to New Zealand are treated the same way — and there's the rub.

New Zealand has long figured it had an immigration-control problem, and people from its former mandate, Western Samoa, were at the head of the list of those who settled permanently in New Zealand without getting permission from the local authorities.

The New Zealand government evidently decided residents of American Samoa were more like Western Samoans than they were like other people travelling on US passports, and it decided to make a distinction based on a little-known element in US nationality law — Wellington decided no visas were needed by US citizens but they would be needed by US nationals.

It so happens the only US nationals are people from American Samoa — a historical accident. Everywhere else under the US flag the native-born and the naturalised are citizens.

The Congressman, in late September, protested the situation to Acting US Secretary of State Lawrence Eagleburger and to the New Zealand government.

What the Congressman did not point out is that American Samoa has its own very tight immigration laws; and while it is easy enough for a foreigner to get a tourist visa, it is extremely difficult for the same alien to get permission to settle in American Samoa permanently. And, unlike PNG, there is no provision in the law for that foreigner (unless off Samoan extraction) to convert his or her status to that of a US national.

The government of American Samoa handles its own immigration policy, and it is a tough one. Guam would like to have these powers, but Congress has not agreed.

□

Three visa policies

By David North

ISLAND nations have three potential visa policies — no visas required, visas issued at the ports-of-entry, or visas issued overseas.

Often two or more friendly nations, with similar levels of prosperity, will agree to waive visas for each other's citizens, on the grounds the migration poses little risk to the nations involved.

Canada and the US, and the nations of Western Europe operate this way; the US and poverty-stricken Mexico do not.

Issuing the visa at the port of entry is usually a formality, and the result is about the same as the no visa policy — very, very few people are denied entry as a result.

If there is one plane a week arriving from a given direction, what does the immigration inspector do with the suspect visitor from that plane, particularly if the plane has already departed?

In extremely serious cases, jail is the only answer.

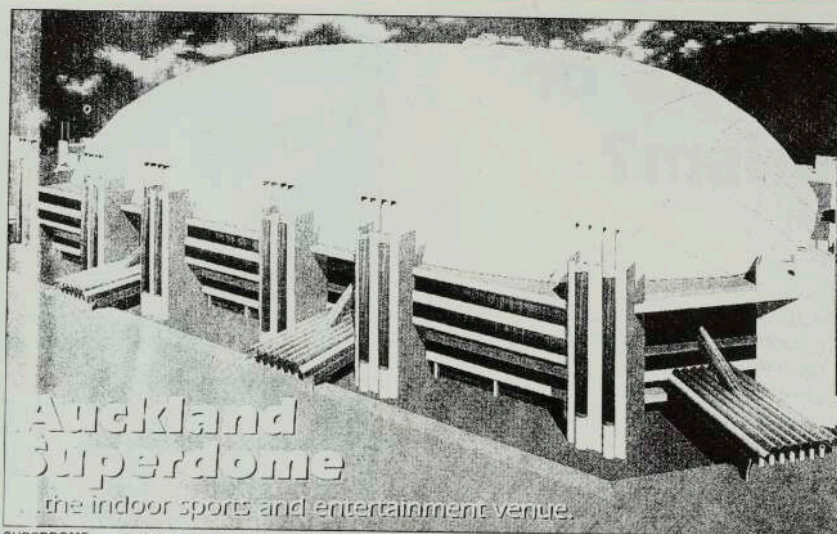
Small island nations, such as Tuvalu and Kiribati, lacking a network of visa-issuing consulates and embassies, usually have no choice but to issue visas at the air and sea ports of entry.

Demanding that a visa be issued outside the nation before entry is the only way a nation can begin to exert control of aliens wishing entry. The nation has the choice of issuing visas freely, or being careful in their issuance.

Papua-New Guinea (see article) has decided it is important to make visa decisions overseas.

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WESTERN SAMOA



SUPERDOME... a glamorous project that was in reality a risky dud for investment

Cultural centre controversy erupts

By Martin Tiffany

AUCKLAND'S Western Samoan community has slammed proposed plans by the Western Samoan government to pour money into a cultural centre in Manukau City in South Auckland.

Each week South Auckland's Western Samoan families send thousands of dollars and food to their home country to support unemployed relatives and repair damage from Cyclone Val. This repatriation often puts a strain on the budgets of the Auckland Samoans.

Val ravaged Samoa in December 1991 destroying crops, homes, and businesses and leaving the economy in tatters with the estimated destruction put at \$WS662 million. When Val struck, the country was still trying to recover from Cyclone Ofa which hit in February 1991 leaving a trail of destruction to the tune of \$WS306 million.

Western Samoans in South Auckland say their government has got its priorities wrong and should use their limited finances to help boost the island nation's ailing economy.

In October Western Samoa's finance minister and the consul general in Auckland met with the Manukau city council in Manukau to discuss taking the tender for the site of the proposed

cultural centre. The council earlier called for tenders for the 15ha site after a proposed "Superdome" sports venture project fell through.

The Western Samoan government approached the council within weeks of advertising according to Manukau Mayor Sir Barry Curtis. A nine-hole golf course project is the only other proposal that has been put forward for the site.

A spokesman for the Samoa Tofautasi Trust in Otara, South Auckland, Seiuli Seiuli, said he could not understand his government's reason for putting money into Manukau when the funds were badly needed back home. He said while it was good the Western Samoan government wanted to promote Samoan culture in New Zealand people back home needed the support first.

According to Tofautasi president Letele Amani the Manukau Samoan community and church groups help promote Samoan culture to their youth — especially those born and raised in New Zealand. He said he could not see how the Western Samoan government could justify financing a centre when families in Western Samoa were so hard up.

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TRADEWINDS



**BILL
McCABE**

Knowing your market

A LEADING Japanese businessman whom I got to know when I was working in Japan was involved, among many other things, in overseas land development, and I was often impressed by the amount of money he was prepared to sink into a scheme without any hope of a quick profit.

On one occasion the money he was spending on a development was obviously so big that I asked him how he justified it commercially. He said he had no problems with it — the development would begin to return a profit in 20 years. This I found fascinating, not because 20 years is a long wait, but because he was then aged 86!

As I got to know him I learnt that his religion had a strong influence on his business philosophy. Although he certainly didn't expect reincarnation would enable him to return and enjoy his profits, he took a longer, more philosophical view of life. Time was relative and in the order of things, 20 years was not so long.

When I worked in Africa I used to have my car maintained by a Siamese mechanic, who was very good but whose estimate of when the job would be finished was very unreliable. If I told him I wanted it that afternoon he would assure me there was no problem — but I never ever got it when he promised. I eventually realised he was telling me what I wanted to hear because he didn't like to pass on the unpalatable truth that I had no hope of getting the repairs that afternoon.

It was rather an unfortunate way of running a service business, but I knew well enough to learn he was merely practising, in his own way, a strong religious philosophy he had of being considerate to others. It was part of him.

Every religion includes a personal code of ethics, or philosophy, about how adherents should live their daily lives, and my experience is that we are not always aware of how many people really live and work by that code — in their business dealings as well as in everything else.

While experience of different religions and cultures is usually something people have to acquire for themselves, in some ways we can benefit from good specialist advice without having to learn the hard way. For instance, I frequently stress in these columns the South Pacific Trade Commission can make specialist advice available to island business people to help them resolve just about any problem, but export marketing, which involves being conscious of different religions and cultures, responds to help non-specialists particularly.

Competent designers of marketing materials, such as packaging, will, for example, advise on the significance of colours in religious symbolism. This can be an important influence on sales in these areas. That black signifies death in most religions and white is the symbol of purity and joy, is well known; but, of course, white signifies charity; green, symbol of nature, will represent the earth of eternal life, and blue, the symbol of heaven, will signify truth. Among different cultures and religions this can be significant.

The rule is that nothing should be marketed in a culture which an exporter is unfamiliar with without planning advice, for there are many hidden traps. I was once involved with Eta brand products, which we planned to introduce to the Japanese market — and did. But they weren't sold under that name, because research showed us in Japan it had connotations of class that would make it unsuitable.

Sometimes any importer with strong roots in the country will be able to tell straight away whether your product is likely to be unacceptable in the local market. Often, though, products may need deeper research and perhaps some marketing.

If you are in doubt or need advice, contact us.



How Tahiti Sold \$2 Million Worth Of Products In One Night.



The Tahiti Exportation Board wanted to promote French Polynesian products in Sydney. Everything from chocolates to beer to black pearls.

The Board enlisted participants, arranged shipment of their products and funded the displays.

The Trade Commission, in turn, put together a mailing list of people likely to be interested and sent out invitations to a gala evening in the ballroom of the Regent.

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\$2 million had been sold.

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SCIENCE

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World's SCIENCE

By David North

30 OCTOBER 1992
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THE hooded pitohui is a common bird in Papua New Guinea, brightly coloured and about eight inches from beak to tail — but a graduate student from Chicago has just established it is the world's first known poisonous bird.

Biologists have long known some reptiles, amphibians and insects carry poisons, but no scientist had suspected birds of having that quality until the story broke in the prestigious American publication *Science*. Suddenly Papua New Guinea and the hooded pitohui (pronounced

PIT-o-hooey) were

front page news in the *New York Times* and many other newspapers, as well as attracting attention on radio, television and the news wires.

Unlike spiders and some snakes which use poison to kill their prey, the hooded pitohuis, as a group, employ the poison in a defensive manner. If a predator takes a bite of the bird, the predator immediately senses the poison and spits it out. Predators thus have learned to ignore the bird, and the otherwise defenseless

pitohui survives and prospers. It is a common sight in the lowlands and as high as 5000 feet above sea level; it is not found on the off-shore islands.

As is the case of many scientific discoveries, this one came as an accident while an observant scientist was doing something quite different.

Jack Dumbacher is a graduate student at the University of Chicago; like other would-be PhDs in ornithology he has spent his summers looking for exotic birds in exotic places. His mentor is Dr Bruce Beehler, of the Smithsonian Institution, who has a grant from the National Geographic Society to study the spectacular bird of paradise. That

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The hooded pitohui (bottom), a PNG songbird, made headlines around the world when an American graduate student identified it as the world's first known poisonous bird. The other two birds are less poisonous, variable pitohuis. The illustration is by John C. Anderton, and the student-author is John P. Dumbacher; the article appeared in *Science*, Vol 258, October 30, 1992, pp 799-800 under the heading — "Homobatrachotoxin in the Genus Pitohui — Chemical Defense in Birds?"

First poisonous bird

study and others have taken Dr Beehler to Papua-New Guinea 14 times in recent years.

Working in PNG's first national park, Varirata National Park, a 45-minute drive from downtown Port Moresby, Dumbacher was busy trapping the bird of paradise. From time to time the nets caught hooded pitohui as well. Sometimes Dumbacher's hands were scratched during these experiences, and he licked the blood from the cuts, finding, to his surprise, his mouth felt numb. At first he and his colleagues figured he had encountered a poisonous plant (and not being botanists had not pursued the matter.) Eventually, Dumbacher suspected the experience might have related to the pitohui, so he brought back to the US some feathers, skins, bones, muscle and internal organs of the little birds, all prepared as laboratory specimens.

All these items turned out to have poison in them, a neurotoxin which produces paralysed muscles, and if enough is injected in a mouse, quick death. The outer parts of the pitohui, however, the skins and particularly the feathers, were much more toxic than the inner parts of the bird — as if the birds were sending out warning signals to would-be predators.

"How did this system work to protect the hooded pitohui?" Dr Beehler was asked. "Well, like so much in nature, it's a messy system. Some pitohui die before predators know what they are doing, but usually the snakes and the raptors (birds of prey, like hawks) learn to leave the birds alone," he replied.

He went on to say he thought, though he has never seen it in the wild, snakes lick what they eat before they kill it, and a snake licking a pitohui would get a taste of the poison and would slither off for other prey.

Further, and this may be one of the major secondary findings of this discovery, it may well be the pitohui's colourful plumage, with much strongly contrasting black and brick-orange, is not just designed to attract birds of the other sex, the traditional interpretation of bright colors in birds.

Maybe the reason for the colours is to let predators know here is a nasty mouthful — so go bite something else! (All of this having been worked out over the aeons through a specialised form of evolution and of the survival of the fittest, or, in this case, the survival of the most

obviously poisonous.) Elsewhere in the animal kingdom there are brightly colored beasts laden with poison; there is the beautiful but toxic monarch butterfly, the coral snake, and in the jungles of South America, the brightly coloured poison-dart frog, so named because the indigenous population has long used a poison from the frog on the tips of the darts they shoot from their blow guns. (No one has yet reported a similar use, by the people of PNG, of the pitohui poison, but it is a large country and a question no one has researched.)

The South American frog has something else in common with the hooded pitohui — each carries the same poison which goes by the name of homobatrachotoxin; it appears no where else in the world. Scientists speculate the two creatures, so distant from each other both geographically and in the evolutionary scheme of things, must have independently arrived at the utility of the poison.

As a matter of fact, the poison in the frog is much more concentrated than it is in the bird. There is a phenomenon in nature called "visual mimicry". For example, there is the viceroy butterfly which looks very much like the monarch, while it is not poisonous to eat, predators do not know that, and the viceroy profits. Something similar to that has occurred among the pitohui in PNG, according to Dumbacher.

There are also the variable pitohui and the rusty pitohui, close cousins of the hooded pitohui, but with only a fraction of the latter's poison. Many variable pitohui look very much like the hooded variety, and presumably are avoided by snakes and hawks as well.

Dumbacher and Beehler are enthusiastic about the level of co-operation they have secured for their work in PNG. Both the government and the University of Papua New Guinea must endorse scientific expeditions, or they do not occur. According to Beehler both Iamo Ila, the ranking civil servant and secretary of the PNG Department of Environment and Conservation, and Dr Ian Burrows, chair of the University's Department of Biology, have been quite supportive of the bird of paradise and hooded pitohui studies.

Similarly, Dumbacher spoke of the detailed assistance the ornithologists received from two residents of the Kokoda region, Rodney Gaga and Michael

Lucas. Both gave the visitors detailed information on birds and plants, and were the first to identify the hooded pitohuis as "rubbish birds," i.e. those which should not be eaten.

Dumbacher has also worked with residents of the East Sepik Province who had established, on traditionally-owned lands, their own nature preserve, the Mojirau Wild Life Arrea.

When an Asian-owned logging company started cutting down trees in the Wild Life Area, and the residents' efforts to secure assistance from the PNG government came to naught, they enlisted Dumbacher's help. He got some journalists in Port Moresby interested in the case, they poked around, and soon the illicit logging ended. Dumbacher regarded his involvement in the matter as just a part of his relations with the property owners.

On a different note the American ornithologists, when asked, reported their own brushes with crime in the bush. A group of them were spending the night in Varirata Park; each was in his or her own tent, sound asleep. The tents of two of the women were invaded by burglars; one of the women slept through it, and found later her camera and other valuables had been stolen. The other woke to find a strange man in her tent, screamed, and he ran away. Neither woman was touched by the burglars.

The research on the pitohui is far from complete, and much of it is now in the hands of scientists working in or near the field of medicine. They are curious about how the hooded pitohui (and the poison-dart frog) manage to acquire the toxin — do they generate it internally, or do they, through some chemical process, harvest it from their surroundings and then concentrate it in their bodies?

More importantly, how do they keep the poison from killing themselves?

Were scientists to know the answer to the last question, they probably could use the information to help treat arrhythmias (irregular heartbeats) in humans, and/or to develop reversible anesthetics, i.e. so that doctors could use drugs to move people both into and out of consciousness.

And all because an American graduate student, with a habit of licking cuts on his hands in the PNG bush, stumbled on a scientific discovery. □

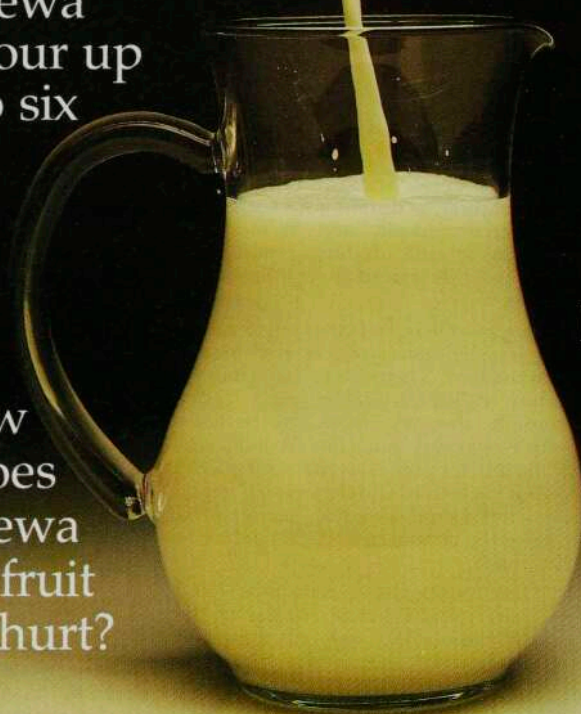
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FI 037

Across the cultural divide

NOT MANY people have heard of Vaka Moana. Hopefully that will change in the next couple of years, for it could do wonders for bringing together the peoples scattered all over the Pacific and creating a sense of regional identity that has long been lacking.

It could also put the Pacific and its island states on the world map in a way that will hasten the economic development they so desperately need.

These are ambitious aims and whether they come about will depend to a large degree on whether Vaka Moana can capture the imagination of people in the region and attract the necessary backing — yes, that means money — from further afield.

To explain. Few people may know it, but since 1988 we have been living in a period the United Nations has dubbed the "World Decade for Cultural Development". The UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) was charged with implementing a program over the following 10 years that would advance the economic, social and cultural development of member countries and their regions.

It sparked a major and fascinating European/Asian program, dominated by scientific research but funded largely by European and Japanese television companies, known as "The Integral Study of the Silk Roads", and a handful of other projects around the world. But the decade was well under way before anybody got around even to thinking about doing anything in the Pacific which, after all, is by far the world's largest ocean and contains a variety of island states that need "development" as much as any on this earth.

Then, last year, Professor Tony Hooper, of Auckland University, came up with an idea for a regional project using the Pacific Ocean as an integrating theme. The ocean was seen as the generative source of resources throughout the region and the common link between its islands and their people.

Vaka (a common word for canoe throughout the region, and in many Pacific languages also denoting a social group linked by common descent and migration) Moana (understood all over the Pacific to mean ocean) — the two words together translated as "The Ocean Roads", was chosen as the title of the project.

A number of goals were nominated, including —

- Reinforcing links between Pacific peoples through better understanding of their common historical links and dependance on the ocean; and
- Promoting traditional and scientific knowledge of the sea and its resources, and their conservation.

The UNESCO conference in Paris in October, 1991 approved the project and the world body has come up with \$US35,000 to fund detailed planning. A number of countries, including New Zealand, Australia, the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Western Samoa, Niue, the Solomon Islands, Tokelau and France, have supported it in principle.

But it remains to be seen where it goes from here.

Former Foreign Minister Russell Marshall, who is chairman of the New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO and one of this country's most ardent advocates of Pacific co-operation, has been pushing the idea along.

He sees it as a wonderful opportunity to help Pacific island

WELLINGTON



DAVID
BARBER

nations recognise their common heritage and interests and to present the region to an outside world that still knows little of the Pacific and its peoples.

But he says to do anything worthwhile is going to take money, more money than governments, whose aid budgets are increasingly under pressure, are likely to be able to provide.

"Sadly," he says, "there is no gravy train to ride on. The major funding will need to come from the private sector, and largely from sources on the Pacific Rim and further afield."

He has his eye on various foundations in Europe and Japan, and is canvassing the embassies in Wellington for advice as to how best to tap this source. He also thinks the Silk Roads example

could interest regional television organisations.

A UNESCO Asia-Pacific regional conference in Canberra this month will afford an opportunity to discuss the issue and he plans to convene an initial Vaka Moana planning meeting in Apia, to which Culture Ministers or their representatives will be invited, early next year.

He wants the widest possible involvement in the project, including non-independent states like Easter Island, Guam and the French Pacific territories, the South Pacific Commission, the Forum Secretariat and the University of the South Pacific.

Professor Hooper has produced a three-part outline of his ideas for the project —

- Studies of the region's linguistics, archeology and biological anthropology;
- People exchanges to discuss genealogies and traditions and re-enactment of canoe voyages, as was done for the October Festival of South Pacific Arts; and
- An economic development component focussed on marine resources, tourism and conversation.

Marshall says the precise nature of what might be included is wide open but some lasting economic development benefit is fundamental to the success of the whole project.

"If, for instance, we can find some funding which enables people to have a realistic look at the geological undersea resources of the region and how they could be used to help the peoples of the Pacific, that would be of incredible potential benefit."

He says with the Pacific states becoming increasingly subject to developed country influences in the form of the video explosion, for example, the time is right to focus on the traditionals and history of the region and to recognise the island peoples' cultural coherence.

He sees himself as merely "baby sitting" the proposal in its early stages and wants it taken over by a Pacific islander to give it regional and international credence.

It is a grand idea, perhaps, but anyone who loves the Pacific would want to see it brought to fruition. It would be a pity if a golden opportunity to bring the Pacific island peoples closer together and to trumpet the region abroad failed for lack of interest or money.

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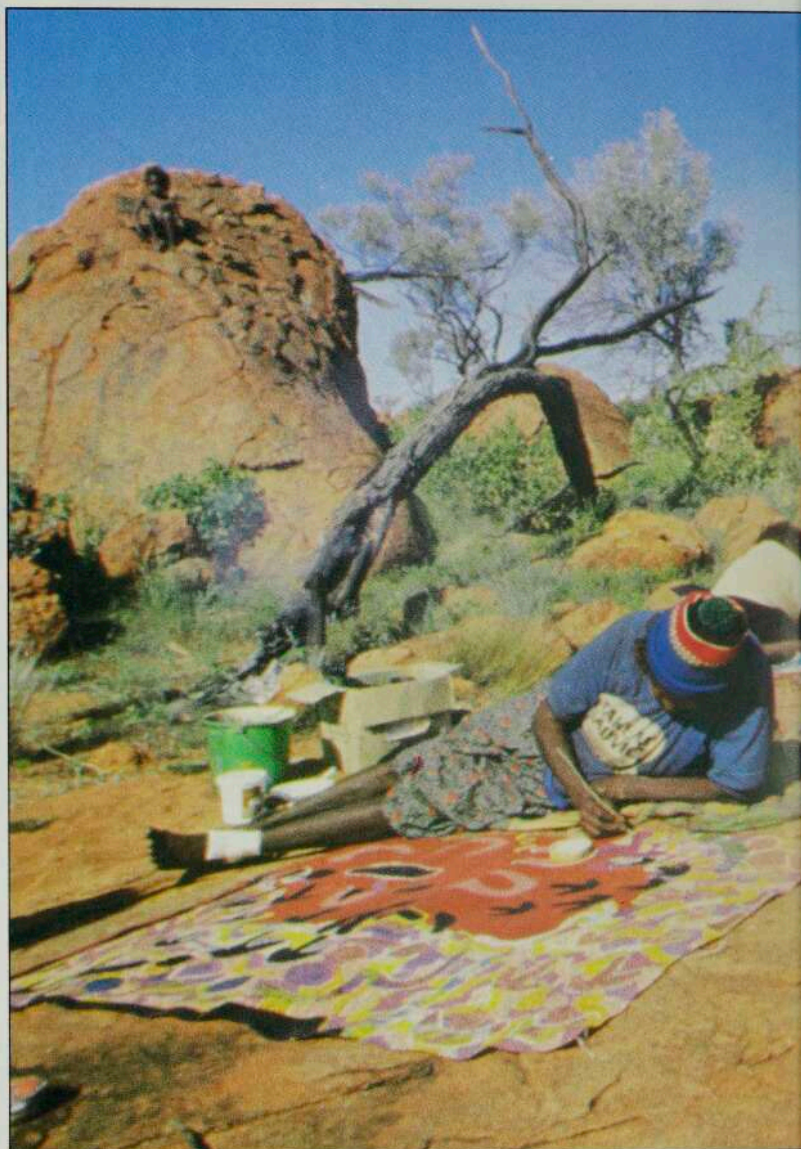
ARTS

By Liz Thompson

DREAMING stories spread thick across the under face of the rainbow cave. Rust red rocks erupt from the earth's surface, rearing and surging upwards and towards a common centre as though gathering momentum in their convergence. Night sleep is rich with dreams and every now and then you are woken by the coldness of early morning hours. Reaching from the warmth of the swag to push logs further into the central embers of the fire. Smoke rises from camps scattered amidst the trees, the moon is full and casts a white light across the spinifex humps, leading you towards the horizon. We are camping at Kata Kutara, one of the Warburton communities rock painting sights. The place is filled with magic and the strength of an unbroken spirit stretching thick across the land. Embracing you and enriching you and linking you, even if you're not aware of it, with the warm earth beneath your feet.

Kalka kutjarra sits somewhere between the Gibson and Great Victoria Desert, the land is dotted with waterholes and laden with secret and sacred stories. It is the sight of a stunning contemporary rock art work produced by Aboriginal artists of the Warburton community. Warburton is the home of a unique and explosive contemporary art event assisted by the Warburton Arts Project Coordinators, Albie Viegas and Gary Proctor. Community artists are painting their stories onto both acrylic and two extraordinary rock artsights. They are not concerned with lining the walls of commercial galleries with their work. Instead the Warburton community council scrapes money together from grants and various sponsors and purchases the majority of the work as part of the rapidly evolving Warburton collection. Already containing over 95 works, the collection stays in and remains 'held' by the community.

This is inspiring on many levels. Almost all the visual imagery produced by artists in Warburton is related to the Tjukurpa, what many Europeans have mistakenly translated as the Dreamtime. The Tjukurpa in fact has little to do with the European notion of dreaming, but, on the contrary, forms the basis of reality, outlines the laws and religious and social beliefs for Aboriginal people. The Tjukurpa embodies stories describing the events which took place during the time of creation, the travels of ancestral spirits, or creation hero's, who journeyed across the landscape in the form of animals and humans. As they travelled they brought



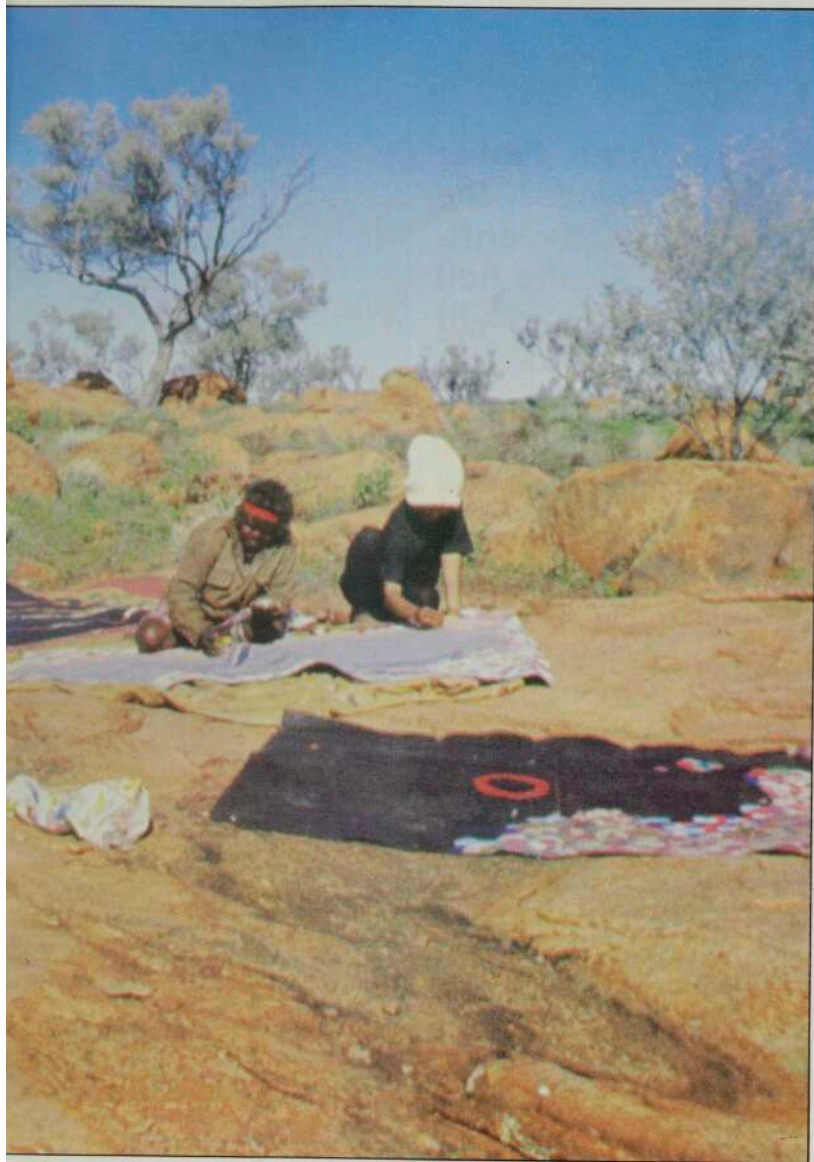
Warburton ladies: painting at Kalka kutjarra

This is th

features of the natural landscape into being, often singing them into existence. Many of these stories are secret, sacred, known only to those in the community considered appropriate to hold them, those trusted by law to manage them properly. Other stories are public and more widely known and there are many layers in between. Paintings describe these stories using iconographic signs and symbols. Given this management of knowledge and the concept of 'holding' secret and sacred information, often

described through visual symbols, it is entirely appropriate that paintings are held within and by the community.

The paintings, says Tommy Simms, a member of the community, "are about stories, stories people want to tell, stories that are important to them. Painting is like a stamp, dead people all finished up we take over, look after things here, pass it on. When Mr Davies doing a painting like he's writing a big letter, talking about the place that's his place, talking about all of this law and everything,



Liz Thompson

Yarnangu

business and stories and everything". The Warburton collection has an extraordinary vitality, often rich with colour, symmetrical, alive and vibrant, filled with an energy that shifts it and places it firmly in the contemporary domain. Whilst drawing on tradition, it is a tradition which is alive and continues to evolve, just as the relationship with the land and the journeys of the ancestral spirits depicted within them.

Women stretch their canvas across the rocks beneath the Mulgar trees and look

across the landscape as they map out their stories. I was fortunate enough to travel to Kalka Kutjarra and Mitila, the two rock painting sights with several of the communities' artists who were patient with my inquisitiveness and searching questions. I had yet to learn that information is not provided on demand. That I had to spend time and be interested outside journalistic ambition, forming relationships with people.

As we walked across land looking for honey ants and goanna, Tinuka and her

husband Cyril constantly pointed things out to me. Beneath the blazing sun and between the tiny eruptions of vibrant desert flowers they showed me animal tracks. They explained that a rockhole marked the resting place of an ancestral spirit who had traveled this way. Cyril, an 'early days man' as he described himself tucked tiny pink daisies behind his ear.

He began to tell me the tips of stories that took place "when he was nothing". Stories from the time of creation. As he drew a pyramid in the air he explained that the things he told me came from the top, that it was a pyramid of knowledge and I would never know all that which was underneath the tip. All the deep, secret things. You never give the story away, and every painting, says Tommy Simms, "got a top and all this other stuff underneath".

As Tommy wets a lump of ochre and paints circles onto cave face he talks to me about how important the continuation of the work and, through it, the maintenance of stories are. As people continue to paint their land and the travels of the ancestors they continue not only to believe in it, but keep it alive. The spirits and their travels and creations, and so the land itself, is kept alive by people being in it, touching it, feeling it, walking in it and living off it. The paintings strengthen the stories for the artists themselves and ensure their continuation, passing them on and strengthening the culture. Younger people, both black and white, will, says Tommy, "see the paintings and it will open their eyes and their minds and they'll think about the country". He insists on the importance of white and black joining together to understand and properly care for the land. For a people who have fought for ownership of their land and live in the knowledge the lease they sit on will one day expire, it is fundamentally important that their children retain the deep and spiritual connection they have with it. "I was born here, in this, not in hospital," Tommy tells me letting the red earth he holds in the palm seep between his fingers, "The land is the body of the people. This is the Yarnangu."

The paintings describe the land, they describe the spirits which created it and the process of creation and they are part of keeping it all alive. They remain controlled by the people to whom they belong, strengthening the culture from which they emerge in future years. Part of the collection may be hired to galleries for temporary display, reaching out and touching the general public of Australia. But it will be revealed and withdrawn, back to its owners, continuing to strengthen the community to whom it belongs. □

FESTIVAL

The fastest canoe

By Angela McCarthy

IN LESS than 30 hours a sleek *walap* (canoe) from Enewetak made history for the Marshall Islands and the sixth Festival of Pacific Arts by being the fastest traditional canoe to sail to the festival.

With three other traditional style canoes, *Waan Aelon Kein* sailed 250km from Aitutaki to Rarotonga as part of the Pacific Arts Festival held in the Cook Islands in October.

Low-lying and fast the 50-foot single-hull *Waan Aelon Kein* quickly left the Polynesian double-hulled canoes behind, taking only 29 hours to arrive in Rarotonga.

Waan Aelon Kein's escort vessel was the 156-foot, three-masted yacht *Tole Mour*. She had to use her engine to keep up with the *walap* which reached speeds of 10 knots as it dipped and rose in six to eight-foot swells, that often looked like swamping the canoe.

After a wet night during which the mast end broke, *Waan Aelon Kein's* six-men crew radioed to *Tole Mour* for hot coffee, to supplement the fruit, water and many cigarettes they had stored in the single hull.

Navigator Toshiro Jokon found his way using the waves and currents, unlike the Polynesian navigators in the other canoes who mainly followed the sun and stars. Twelve hours into the journey he reported to *Tole Mour* he had begun to feel the waves reflecting off Rarotonga. Land was not sighted for 11 more hours.

The canoe was steered by the sail and a single paddle tied to the side of the two-foot wide hull. A crew member sat each end of the hull and when they wanted to change direction the paddle was thrown through the water to the person at the other end of the hull to use.

By the time they arrived in Rarotonga the crew was exhilarated but exhausted as none of them had done trips longer than 60 miles before. Twenty nine hours of sitting in the two-foot single hull or perched on the eight-foot outrigger platform watching the sea had taken its toll.

Shaped like a bird's wing with its brown sail adorned with a 26-point star representing the Marshall Islands' atolls, the *Waan Aelon Kein* surprised festival participants in Rarotonga with her swiftness and shape.

She surprised the Marshallese even more!

"This is a historical experience for our people, and one which we can be very

With no large timber on the islands, the builders used driftwood logs for the hull and old douglas fir telephone poles for the mast and sail booms. The hull was lashed together by twisted coconut fibre strands.

proud of," said Carmen Bigler, Alele Library, Museum and National Archives chairperson who was representing the Marshall Islands at the festival.

The Marshall Islands consist of a series of atolls in Micronesia which have been used for American missile and nuclear weapon experiments since World War II. They are a strategic trust of the United States.

Better known as Pacific bomb test victims it has been a long time since Marshall Islanders have used the seafaring skills they were traditionally famed for. In the 1800's Marshallese travelled up to 500 miles in canoes over 100-foot long which were reputed to be among the fastest in the Pacific.

But *Waan Aelon Kein's* boat builders Lowbwe Mark and Hertes John, both nearing 70, cannot remember seeing a sea voyaging canoe built or used in their life-time in the islands. The last fishing outrigger built on their atoll, Enewetak, was in 1964.

Nowadays western dinghies and outboard motors have taken the place of outriggers on most Marshall Island atolls. These modern boats end up littering the shores once they break because the islanders do not have the expertise or technology to fix them.

In the four months the *walap* took to be built it was watched with both interest and scepticism. With no large timber growing on the islands the builders had to use driftwood logs for the hull and old douglas fir telephone poles for the mast and sail booms. The hull was lashed together by *ekkuwal*, twisted coconut fibre strands. The rest of it was made from

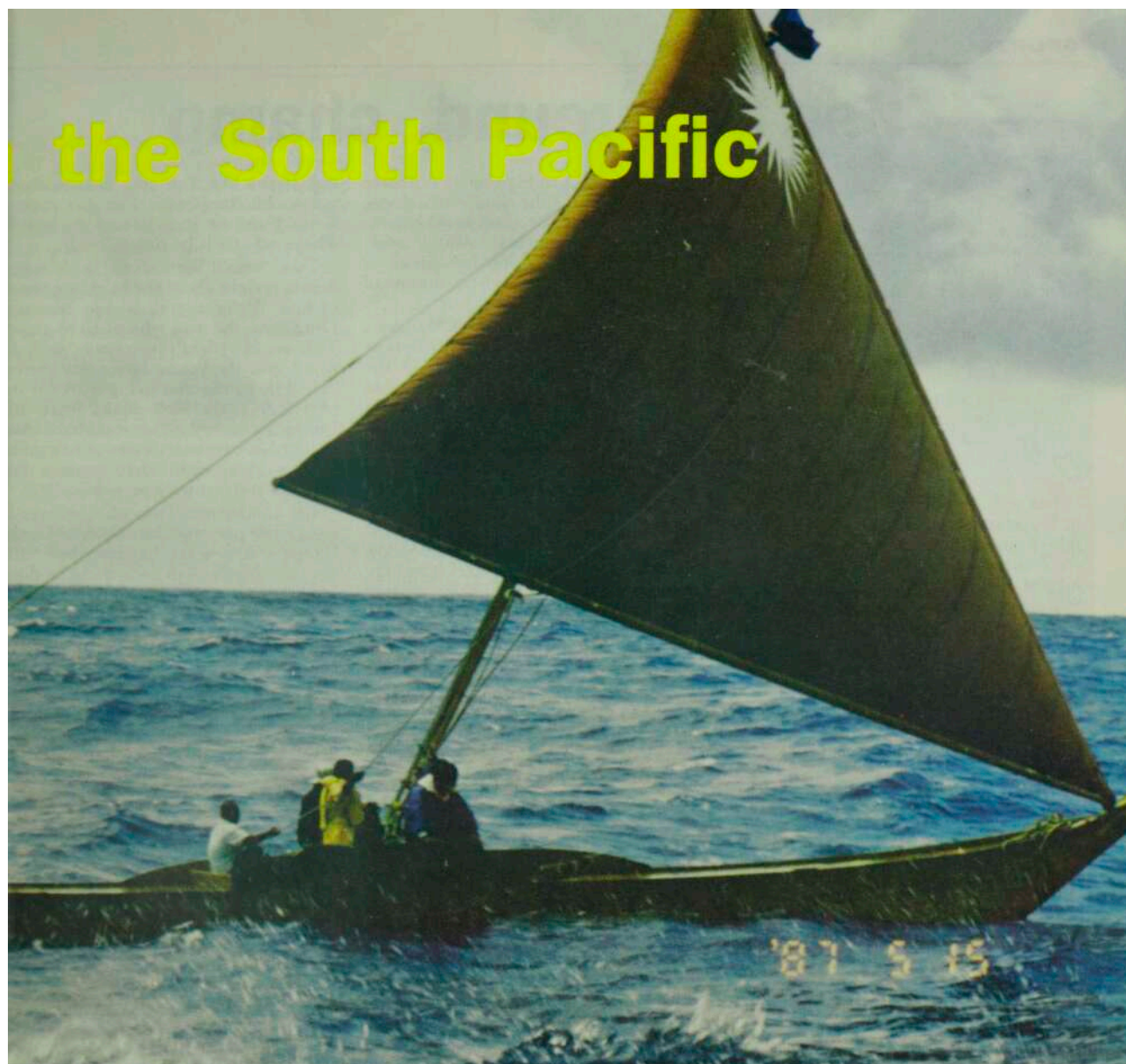


Waan Aelon Kein: sleek, low-lying and fast

modern materials. It was a time for remembering old skills with the modern help of museum documentation on canoe construction.

In the past the fishing outrigger technology was passed down through the family. A four-year-old boy would sit at his grandfather's knee and watch him work on a canoe. At 10 he would be learning to sail with his father, and by 12 years be able to go fishing to bring home food for the family.

It is this lack of use of traditional skills that the *Waan Aelon Kein* project has challenged. "This *walap* has brought a lot of pride and identity to the Marshallese people, who are realising they have got something to offer of their culture still," says American Dennis Allesio, project planner for canoe documentation for



Angela McCarthy

le Library, Museum and National
hives.

Alessio says *Waan Aelon Kein* is very
streamlined, and less rigid than the
double-hulled canoes which was what
made it faster and more stable.

For the last four years he has been
documenting the construction of
Marshallese canoes, and in doing so has
set up five canoe building projects,
Waan Aelon Kein being the latest one.

The Alele museum wants to make sure
knowledge of Marshallese canoe making
doesn't die out with the old people.

To prevent that Alessio has docu-
mented information from people such as
79-year-old, one-armed man who
folded pandanus leaves into canoe shapes

to work out the design he wanted and
then carved a model of it before making
the actual canoe.

Alessio says there is a mountain of
knowledge in the Marshall Islands about
canoe construction and sailing that
hasn't been recognised by the
Marshallese or the rest of the world. He
hopes this will change with the success of
Waan Aelon Kein.

"The Marshallese had developed the
hydraulic engineering of their canoes to
an amazing level.

They are the only islands I have been
to that have a shock absorber system on
the outrigger," he says.

He believes modern designers do not
look enough at the Pacific canoes to see

what has been done successfully before.

"Traditionally knowledge is import-
ant because we can learn so much from
it, but to often colonising countries like
America have been too quick to show all
the wonders at their world and not
stopped to see what the other country has
to offer. That is what has happened in the
Marshall Islands."

However with *Waan Aelon Kein* being
the most talked about of the 16 tra-
ditional style canoes at the Pacific Art
festival, Marshallese sea-faring expertise
has been seen and acknowledged again.

Two private buyers and the New
Zealand Maritime Museum have all
shown interest in buying *Waan Aelon
Kein*, or having a similar canoe built. It
could be the beginning of a major revival
of Marshallese *walap*.

□

SPORTS

See ya around, champ

By Lito Vilisoni

HE used to duck for cover when his mates wanted to spar, and cry when his sister got him on the nose. Now, he runs from no one, has an Olympic medal under his belt, and is touted to be the next world heavyweight champion.

He's David Tua, the glove-shy youngster from Faleatiua, Upolu ... the Western Samoan who came from nowhere to snatch a bronze medal at this year's Olympic Games, winning the hearts of thousands and catching the eye of the biggest promoters in the world.

Just months after that awesome debut in Barcelona, Tua's continuing his fairy-tale climb to the top. Only 19, he's scored the contract of a lifetime with one of the biggest boxing stables in the United States, a distinction no other Kiwi boxer has ever won.

Tua recently signed a four-year deal worth \$NZ2.03 million (\$US1.1 million) with promoter Lou Duva, the man behind current world heavyweight champ, Evander Holyfield, making him the best paid boxer in Kiwi history.

For Tua, a former kitchen-hand, the

opportunity to earn big money is hugely attractive. But it's the chance to achieve the ultimate — to become world champ — that is all important. And if what they're saying in the boxing circuit is anything to go by, it's just a matter of time.

A small street in the heart of Mangere, Auckland, and the light blue house next to the alleyway is well known in the neighbourhood. It's where David Tua lives. Inside, the sitting room walls and cabinets are packed with medals and trophies. Outside, a small garage with an old punching bag and a bike that's had it. "That is where it all happens," says the champ with a grin.

On first impressions, he's small, almost slight (he's five feet 10 and 200 pounds, tiny for a heavyweight fighter), certainly not the solid and mean looking slugger we've seen on television. But, yes, this is the boy wonder they dubbed "David the Destroyer" in Barcelona, and whom they are hailing the new Mike Tyson. He's handsome and very confident with a goliath way of looking at life.

"What's it going to be like for the next four years? It'll be tunnel vision ... boxing, boxing, boxing and more box-

ing. If you like, I'm on a mission that's got to be completed. I've got to stay focused and do it right and do it well. That's what I'll be doing."

Tua, who'll be based in Virginia Beach, is right about the hard slog ahead of him. Veteran trainer and manager Lou Duva, the man who plans to groom Tua as Holyfield's successor, says he won't give the young boxer any mercy. "He'll be eating and living work for the next four years. He's gonna work and I'm gonna make sure he works hard. And it's not just two hours a day ... he's going to be working eight to 10 hours a day, whether it's mentally or physically."

It's a challenge Tua, who believes in giving 100 per cent (his talisman for the Games was a perky hat inscribed "100 per cent Samoa") to everything he does, is more than ready to accept. "I'm going to be dedicated and it will be because I want to become world champ, which I will be." If he sounds egotistical, it's hard to damn him or fault his use of words which never includes "if" — only "when". The world's best have told him he's got the right stuff, and if he's to pull it off, he's got to believe it too. Tua is confident of reaching the top. It's evident



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in the self-assured way he handles himself and his matter-of-fact attitude towards his ability to box well. It's a confidence drawn from the barrage of offers to turn professional even after he failed to take the gold medal at the Games (Duva's offer was just one of three from the United States), and the fact that of all Duva's proteges, including seasoned Pernell Wittaker, he's been chosen to take over the mantle from Holyfield.

"He's got it here (pointing to his head), and here (pointing to his hands)," said George Benton, Holyfield's trainer, after sizing up the young boxer during his two-week trial in Houston recently. "He's going to be a good fighter." Said Holyfield, "I believe David can become a world heavyweight champion."

It's a lot of responsibility for a 19-year-old, and the expectations to succeed, amidst all the hype, must surely weigh heavy on his young shoulders. If he's feeling pressured, Tua doesn't show it, or any fear of moving to fiesty Houston, thousands of miles from Auckland and Faleatiua. Ever the optimist, he says, "You just have to believe in yourself and God."

The young boxer's togetherness is a result of being very close to his family and a Christian background, an influence which has had some sceptics saying he's too soft for the aggressive world of boxing. An unapologetic Tua says he's every bit a bruiser as his non-secular opponents, and points to the success devout Christian Holyfield has enjoyed as a boxer.

"You don't have to 'win' to be a winner," he says. Indeed, millions witnessed his good sportsmanship at the Games when he gave rival David Izonritei a victory lift minutes after the Nigerian robbed him of a chance at the gold with a hefty blow to the stomach.

It's a philosophy Tua's tried to impress on young fans, and young people in general. He's saddened that many of the young today lead aimless lives on the streets, or take to crime, and sees similarities between New York and South Auckland, home to a huge chunk of New Zealand's Pacific island population. Tua's toyed with the idea of joining the police force as a community constable, but with his boxing taking precedence, he's doing what he can to provide a positive role model through sparring sessions he runs at a nearby school for the kids in his neighbourhood.

One of eight children (he's the third oldest boy of four girls and four boys), Tua himself started boxing at an early

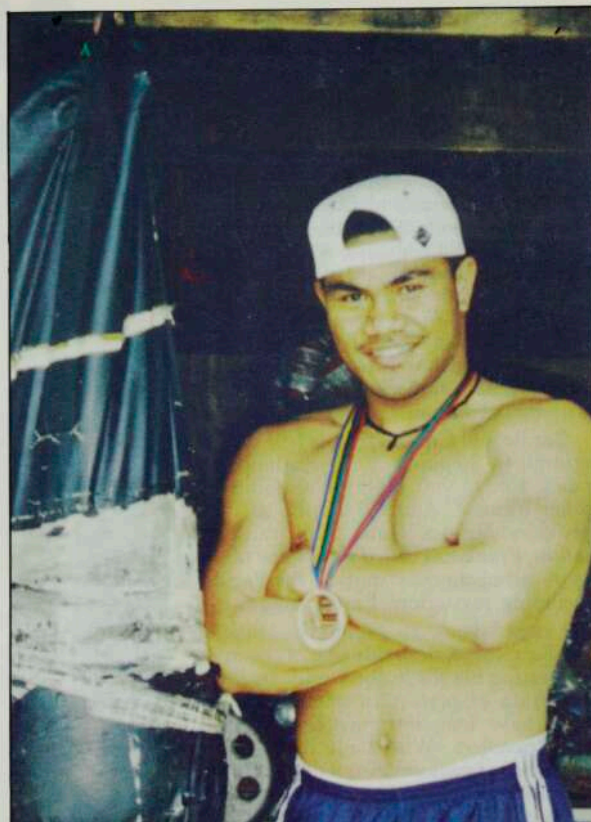
age under the tutelage of his father, Tuavale. He got his first set of gloves when he was five, but didn't take to the sport — or the bleeding noses his older sister Fasi used to give him — until his early teens when his father urged him to as a means of keeping out of mischief.

Tuavale himself was a reputable boxer as a young man, but gave it up because of the demands of working a plantation which he says never left him with enough energy to train at the end of the day. It's with some amusement that the family recalls his earnings — \$3 when he beat his opponent, \$1.50 when he lost and \$5 for major bouts.

Being so close to his family, Tua is sad to leave them (he was to fly out last month), but is cheered by the knowledge his contract allows for his *aiga* (family) to visit him four times a year. He'll also be returning to his home turf for at least three fights.

"I'll be a little sad, but I won't be lonely. It's a new life for me, a new beginning and they understand that I have to do it if I'm to become world champ. This is my big chance and I'm going for it. I don't mind admitting it, I come from a very poor family, and this is my chance to set them up." The family intends to buy a home and donate some money to their local church, the Mangere PIC, with David's first pay instalment.

Tua's earnings have been a source of much talk around the community, and it's just one of the aspects of his meteoric rise his family have had to get used to. Tuavale and Noela have been accommodating about requests to talk about their son and television crews camping in their sitting room, but Tua's worried his success might take a bigger toll.



Lito Vilioni

A champ in the making: David Tua

"There's already a lot of pressure on them," he says. "It'll get worse when I become champ. People will try to get to them, but they don't realise that our family is private. I can do favours for people but my priorities are my boxing and my family." Tua's arranged for his manager to ensure the family aren't pestered in his absence.

He's too nice to say it, but since his triumphant debut in Barcelona, people have been clamouring to get close to him. More so, since his million-dollar deal and the publicity regarding his future as the world champ. In the first hour alone of our visit, the phone rang continuously ... friends, would-be-friends, and would-be-business-partners all seeking an audience. A street-wise Tua handles them deftly.

Three o'clock and a gaggle of kids spill out from the nearby primary school and down the alleyway. Murmurs of "There's David Tua" reach us before some bravely approach to ask what time training is, and to hustle an autograph. Tua gives them his "100 per cent Samoa" trademark and they wander off calling "See ya champ."

□

YACHTING

Stepping off the

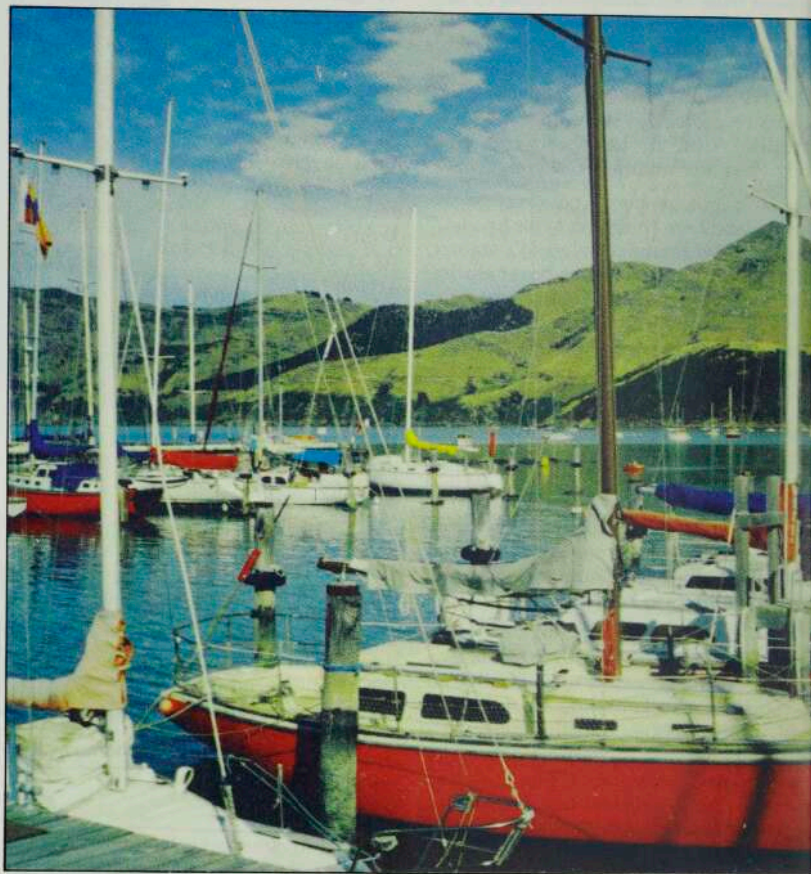
By Sally Andrew

BARDIE Holmes and Clive Jenkyn left their home port of Bristol, England in September 1985 aboard a bilge-keeled Alan Buchanan-design called simply *Frank*. One of the smallest yachts cruising in the Pacific, *Frank* measures only 6.95 metres (23 feet) on deck. Bardie and Clive have safely sailed *Frank* across the Atlantic and the Pacific Oceans, but not without adventure.

Bardie and Clive agree the best part of cruising is "stepping off the treadmill and being able to visit places inaccessible by other means." And *Frank*, tiny as it is, provides both a home and transportation. *Frank* has called in at some of the most out-of-the-way spots in the Pacific, including mysterious Easter Island.

Easter Island, at 27 degrees south of the Equator, is probably one of the most interesting islands in the world. Its large collection of prehistoric monuments or *moais* have long intrigued archaeologists and travellers. Who built them? How were they transported from the quarry to their platforms? Why were so many of them toppled and damaged? Both traditional archaeologists and other dreamers have evolved a number of theories to explain these mysteries.

It took tiny *Frank* 26 days to make a landfall at Easter Island. The distance from *Frank's* last port of call in the Americas, Ecuador, was about 2200 miles. Frustrating calms just south of the Equator in the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) were later replaced by southeast trades and fine sailing. Very few yachts sail to Easter Island, in part because it's far off the traditional "Milk Run" through French Polynesia, and in part because the wind follows you around from bay to bay. A stay of any duration is limited to moderate weather



Lyttleton, New Zealand: a natural harbour and home of Banks Peninsula Cruising Club

conditions. Mataveru Airport has made Easter Island more accessible, but it is still a very long way from anywhere.

The ancient statues of Easter Island are fascinating. And there are so many of them that they are now used as gateposts, built into homes set up in the harbour.

Their origin is still a mystery. Residents of the island include 500 Continentales or Chileans (including about 50 policemen and 20 Chilean navy personnel) and about 1600 indigenous Polynesians or Rapanui. Bardie and Clive hired trail bikes to take in the sights — hard work

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nce the terrain is like an assault course. Horseback riding is the most practical way of getting about the island, and they spotted the Rapanui galloping across the countryside with their long hair and red bandanas flying.

Sailing 1100 miles west of Easter Island, Pitcairn Island rose on the horizon. One of the most remote inhabited places on earth, there is no harbour or airport and the few ships which call in to Pitcairn stand off or anchor in the lee of the island and move as the wind shifts.

Pitcairn is home of the descendants of the crew of the famous *Bounty*. Fletcher Christian and his mutineers arrived at Pitcairn over 200 years ago on January 17, 1790 and founded a colony which today numbers about 53 inhabitants.

It is the last remnant of the British Empire in the South Pacific. Bardie and

Clive were invited into the islanders' homes and made most welcome since only a dozen yachts per year visit Pitcairn.

The island is tiny, about two square miles, most of which is fertile ground supporting a variety of fruits and vegetables. Truly a tropical paradise.

Except for one thing. Because there is no safe harbour, visits are often cut short by unfavourable sea and weather conditions. With sad hearts Bardie and Clive weighed anchor and sailed to Fiji via the Gambiers, Mangareva and Tonga.

Landfall in Fiji was unexpected. Sailing through the reefs and islands between Tonga and Fiji, *Frank* was set up on a reef off the island of Totoya in the Lau Group late one night.

The sound of roaring surf as the swell broke over a nearby reef was tardy notification of impending trouble. Almost before they knew what was happening, *Frank* was picked up and carried over the reef and deposited on the other side.

But for the grace of God, the voyage of *Frank* might have ended there. As luck had it, only the rudder broke.

The encounter with the reef could have been far, far worse — *Frank's* rudder mounted on the transom could have easily ripped off the whole stern and sunk them when they hit the reef, but a weak weld gave way instead.

Locals appeared at sunrise and brought Bardie and Clive to the village so they could radio Customs and Immigration authorities in Suva. Bardie and Clive stayed a week in Udu Village making repairs to the rudder. Questions and answers flew back and forth between the warm and welcoming villagers and

the crew of *Frank* — names, ages, number of children. Because there were no children on board *Frank*, there were questions regarding contraception. And since they had sailed all the way from England, everyone wanted to know if Bardie and Clive had met Queen Elizabeth.

Frank returned to Fiji again this season after an extended stay in Lyttelton, New Zealand where they made repairs and replenished their "cruising kitty".

Their voyage to Fiji was less exciting this year, thanks in part to the purchase of a GPS, a modern electronic positioning system. With a GPS, navigation is simplified and more exact.

Although nothing will ever replace traditional navigation by sextant and tables, most cruisers these days have an electronic supplement which greatly reduces the chance of error or miscalculating due to currents or overcast weather.

Frank is spartan in size and amenities but a Sony all-band receiver lets Bardie and Clive keep in touch with the weather and world news and programs, including the BBC World Service — a little touch of jolly old England.

They hope to return home to Great Britain one day, but seem to be in no hurry. *Frank* is now headed for Australia and after that...only the wind knows.

Other U.K. yachts sighted in Fiji this season include *Blackjack* of Lymington (Poole), *Papa Kilo* (Hull), *Faith of Norfolk*, *Ocean Quest* (Poole, Dorset), *Aquila Nova* (NRSA), *Dancing Wave* (Ipswich), *Suleika* (Shoreham, Sussex), *Teraki*, *Sussex Warrior*.

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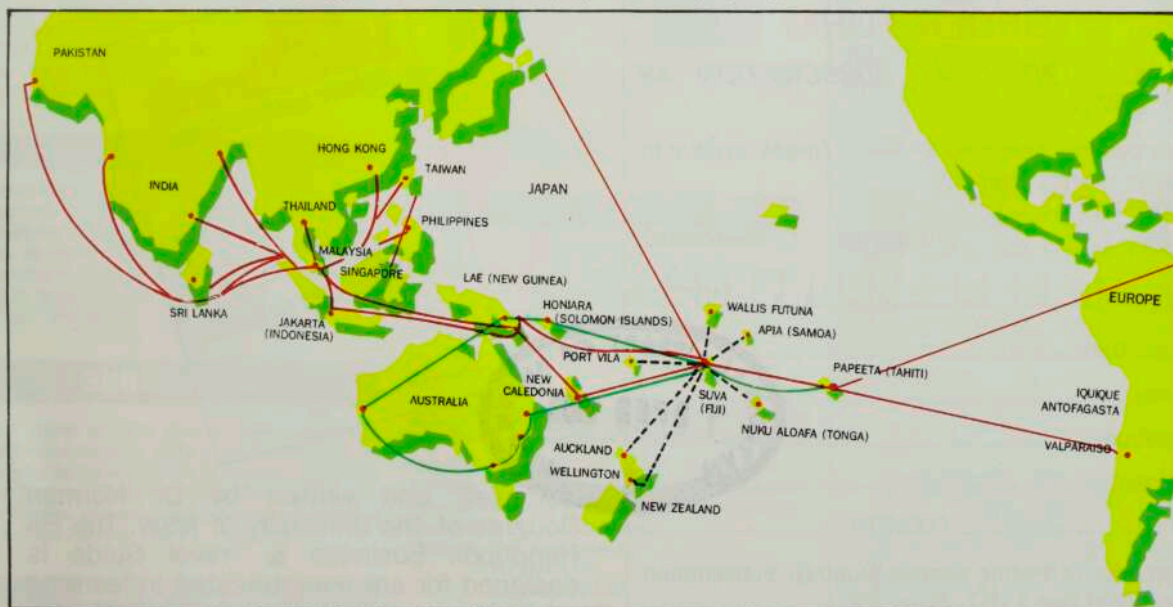
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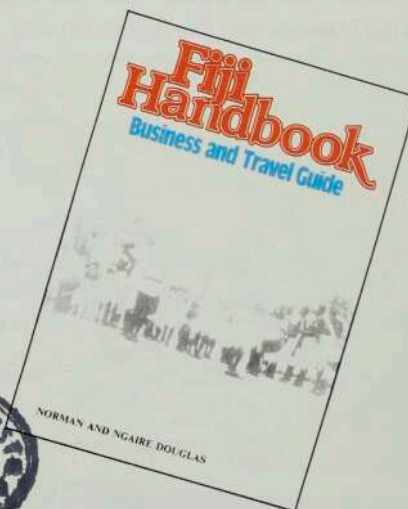
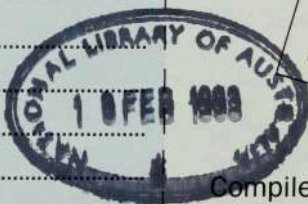
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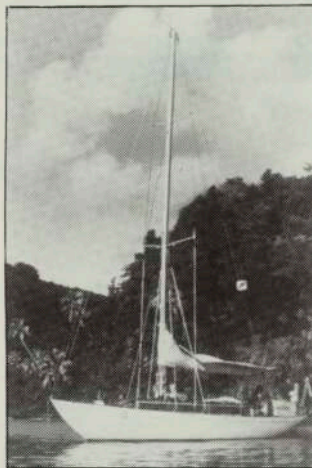
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