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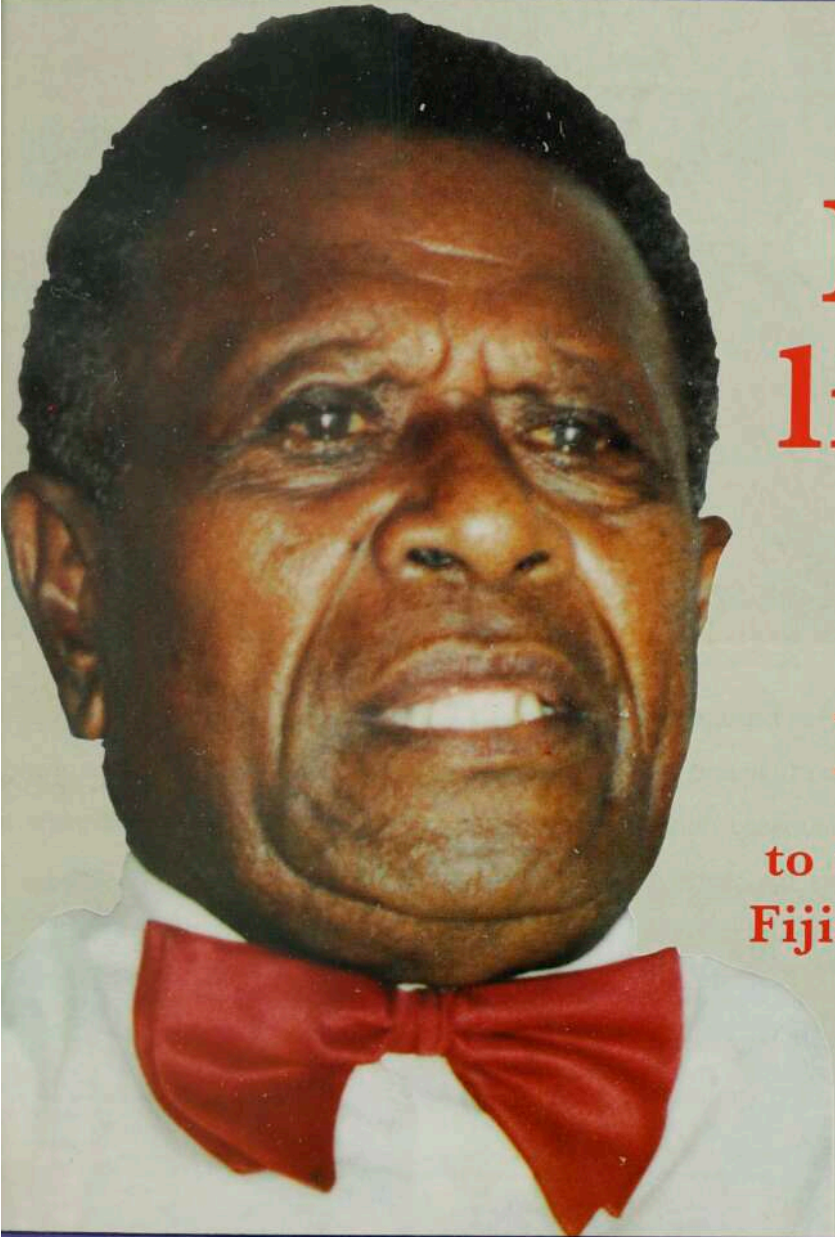
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PACIFIC ISLANDS MONTHLY

APRIL 1993

INSIDE:

- Special report on Pacific media;
- Papua New Guinea's mining dilemma;
- New Zealand — a Pacific partner

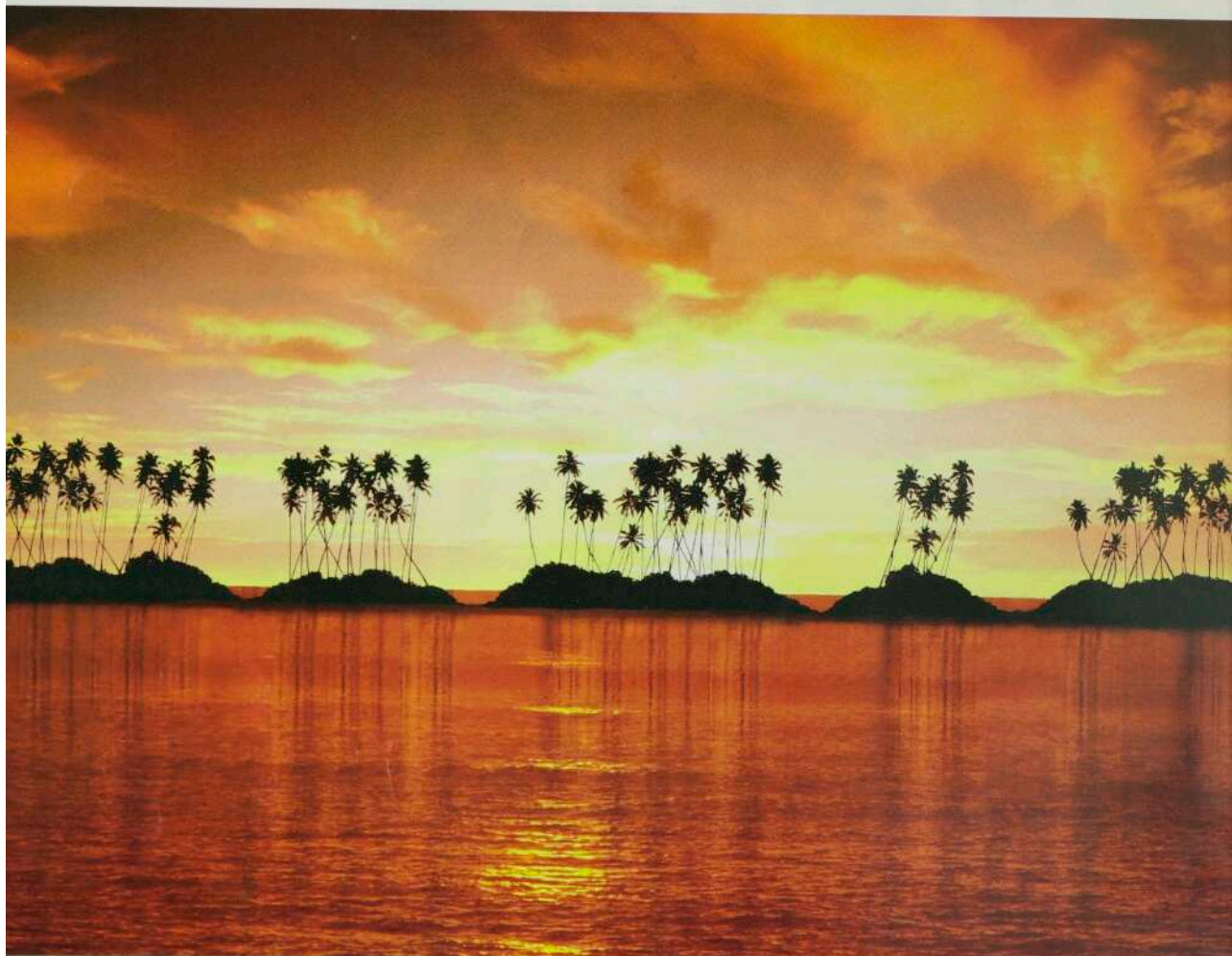


Buta lights the fuse

to the explosive
Fijian land issue

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Facsimile: (852) 868 5195

Australia
Cable and Wireless
(Australia) Pty Ltd
PO Box 675,
Double Bay NSW 2028
Sydney
Australia
Tel/Fax (61-2) 362 3625

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Suva
Fiji
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P.O. Box 148
Honiara
Solomon Islands
Tel: (677) 21576

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Nuku Alofa
Tonga
South Pacific
Tel: (676) 23499

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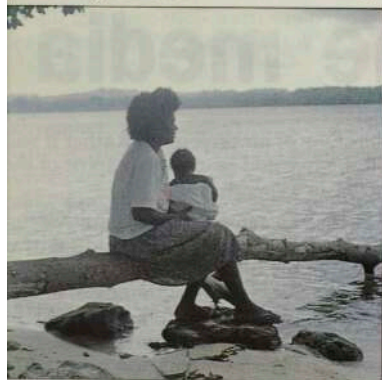
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Publisher: Brian O'Flaherty

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 Lambohn.

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

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

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SAMOAN GOVERNMENT
GAGS JOURNALISTS

OKAY, NOW YOU JOURNALISTS ARE GOING
TO LEARN HOW TO WRITE "HAPPY NEWS"!



FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Growing pains for the media

IN February media freedom in Western Samoa came under threat with the passage of two bills in parliament — the Newspapers and Printers Act and the Defamation Bill. Both these bills, which are now law, seriously hamper the work of journalists and jeopardise the independence of the media.

One of the bills requires journalists to reveal their sources in libel cases or face a fine or imprisonment. The justification for this, according to the Western Samoan government, is that the "aggrieved party" (that is, the person who has been defamed) has a right to know where the defamatory statement originated.

The Defamation Bill forbids journalists from publishing defamatory statements uttered in court when they refer to someone not a party to the proceedings. It further requires a publication to print an apology when it has made a generalised statement about a group, and a member of that group interprets it to refer to him.

By all accounts, Western Samoa's existing laws on the media had provided ample safeguards against defamation.

The clause which has received most criticism from journalists is that requiring them to reveal their sources. No self-respecting journalist would ever contemplate doing so — it would be tantamount to professional suicide. Not only would he be ruining his credibility, but his chances of ever again getting a "scoop"

would be destroyed.

Aside from that, there are also concerns raised on how forceful the media could be in getting the truth, if sources were not protected.

All this seriously undermines the role of the media — to provide the truth — no matter how unpalatable it may be to the authorities.

The Western Samoan government, however, is not alone in trying to make the task of the journalist that much more difficult.

Similar pressures have been placed on the media in other Pacific countries, as well — be they direct interference by the authorities or in more subtle forms.

Tonga, Fiji and Papua New Guinea have all undergone phases where the government appeared bent on limiting the powers of the press.

The question that is raised is — why are our leaders overly sensitive to media criticism? Do they honestly believe they are beyond reproach? Or are their attempts, as some of them claim, merely a means of safeguarding against unprofessional and careless journalists who invariably get their facts wrong, causing more harm to the "national interest" than good?

To gag the media, as a means of addressing this problem, is hardly a solution. It will not bring about any improvement in the standards of journalism; nor will it provide an incentive for the journalist fulfill the

objectives of his profession. Rather it will kill the free and enterprising spirit of the media in general.

Perhaps a reason for the sensitivity of our leaders is steeped in cultural traditions of the islands. Traditional leaders of the Pacific — be they the chiefs, nobles or *matai* — have been accustomed to unquestioning loyalty and respect from subjects. Their positions and actions are undisputed.

Political leaders of today seem to take their cue from these traditional leaders and hence the reluctance to grant the media a free rein.

This reinforces the belief that a free media in the Western concept is detrimental to the preservation of cultural values — the Western media corrupts and casts aspersions on accepted cultural principals; local customs cannot be viewed from the Western perspective.

But as the Pacific media grows away from being largely government-owned or government-controlled entities and assumes its new responsibility as the watchdog of the nation, the governments are perhaps retaliating in an attempt to check the trend.

But the clock cannot be turned back. The public have begun to expect the media's new role — of being the voice of the people in demanding greater accountability from the governments.

□

LETTERS

Tides of change

Madam,

I have only been here a few weeks, barely enough time to unpack. But in this short time I have been a witness to events that have had a profound effect on me. It is a daunting task to be the representative of our people here in Washington, and it is a task that evokes both great honor and frustration. I listened in frustration to the debates during my first week here on allowing the delegates to vote in the House Committee of the Whole, and I knew then that we have a long way to go in achieving our goals as a people.

On the steps of the Capitol on January 20, I could see and feel in the 800,000 people gathered there a sense of hope and optimism that President Clinton's inauguration embodied.

A tide of change swept the nation in November, and a sea of people testified to the strength of the tide. For a long time Americans waited, and, as the President said, "Our time has come, let us embrace it." It is a change so deep and wide that it is called generational.

One person who longed for the change, and lived just long enough to see it, was Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall. His life's work was to effect change in the way Americans view minorities and the less fortunate among us. His monumental arguments against racial segregation in schools and public institutions forever uplifted the lives of millions.

His unwavering defence of civil rights and individual liberty was the cornerstone of a new social fabric in America; a new relationship between the races and ethnic groups that make up this great country.

The people of Guam are asking for no less than a change of the same magnitude. We are asking to be viewed differently; in a new light; in ways that break the old stereotypes. We are asking for a relationship with the federal government that uplifts us as a people and empowers us with the dignity of self determination.

Like Justice Marshall's work, the progress may be slow, even at times imperceptible. The tide comes in slowly, but when it crests, the high tide is

overwhelming. We must not lose our commitment and we must not give up the fight for our dignity when difficulty arises. We must be the agent of change because, ultimately, our time will come too.

Robert A. Underwood,
Guam Delegate,
United States Congress
Washington, DC

Marshall's status

Madame,

I enjoyed very much reading about "The fastest canoe in the South Pacific" in your December 1992 issue. We at the Institute have been following this project for some time and are delighted that it has not only succeeded but has received the recognition it deserves.

The publication of this article certainly voices your acknowledgment of the importance of maintaining island cultural identities, an area which is among our highest priorities.

We were distressed, however, in the

reference to the Marshalls as a "strategic trust of the United States". Yes, from 1947 until October 1986 it was indeed a strategic trust territory of the United Nations administered by the United States. In 1986 the Compact of Free Association came into effect, recognising their international status in free association with the United States. We were very pleased — and we were there — when the Republic of the Marshall Island became a member of the United Nations in the fall of 1991.

We very much appreciate *PIM*, and find it useful in keeping up with what's happening in the Pacific.

Patricia Luce Chapman,
Chair,
The Micronesia Institute,
Washington DC,
United States of America

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PACIFIC ISLANDS MONTHLY

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HEADLINES

NIUE



Vivian returned

The Premier of Niue, Young Vivian, has been returned to the Legislative Assembly in a general election.

Vivian and his chief opponent for the premiership, former Cabinet minister Frank Lui, both won their village constituency seats with comfortable majorities.

Reports from Niue say Vivian is tipped to continue as leader of the country.

In other results, Lady Patricia Rex, the wife of the late Premier. Sir Robert Rex, failed to win another term in office. But Lady Rex's son, Robert Rex junior, won a seat on the common roll.

The Niue constitution provides for an assembly consisting of 20 members — 14 elected from village constituencies and six from a common roll.

An ex-public servant made redundant last year, Michael Jackson, topped the poll for the common roll with 543 votes.

A major loser was Terry Chapman, the secretary to the government since self-government in 1974 who resigned to contest the election. Chapman was ranked eighth out of the 24 candidates who were contesting the six common roll seats.

And, for the first time in Niue's history, a palagi (European) was elected to the assembly. Terry Coe, former principal of the Niue High School, was ranked third in the common roll.

One village constituency remains undecided with the two highest scoring candidates polling an equal number of votes

PAPUA NEW GUINEA



June trial for Namaliu

The national court in Papua New Guinea has nominated the first two weeks of June for the trial of former Prime Minister Rabbie Namaliu and his finance minister Paul Pora. They face corruption charges relating to an incident in mid-1990 when they allegedly tried to buy the support of four government members of parliament.

The four had threatened to cross the floor in a vote of no confidence which would have brought down the government.

Namaliu, who lost power in last July's national elections, faces 14 counts of misappropriation and misuse of public funds while Pora faces eight similar charges.



Namaliu: faces corruption charges

NEW ZEALAND



Dairy board wants end to barter

New Zealand's dairy board says it wants to end its long running barter agreement to sell Russian Lada cars in payment for dairy exports. Its subsidiary, Lada New Zealand, last year sold 370 vehicles taking it to 13th position on the country's internal market. It also started exporting cars to other Pacific countries including New Caledonia, Vanuatu, Fiji, Western Samoa, Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea.

Dairy board spokesman Neville Martin says the board is also reviewing its involvement in Sovenz, its subsidiary set up to trade with the former Soviet Union. Martin says Sovenz was established at a time when the Soviet Union, with its centrally planned economy and single-agency buying system, was the world's largest importer of butter. He says a very different marketing situation exists in the present Commonwealth of Independent States.

The board is still owed more than US\$100 million on its last butter and milk powder deal with the Soviet Union's central buying agency.

TVNZ buy Asian shares

Television New Zealand has taken a 36 per cent stake in a Singapore-based company formed to launch Asia's first business television news channel later this year. The other shareholders in the company are Singapore International Pty Ltd with 10 per cent, Business News Network of Hong Kong with 18, and Tele-Communications Inc of the United States with 36.

The company will broadcast a channel to be known as Asia Business News by satellite in English (and later in other languages) to Hong Kong, the Philippines, Thailand, Taiwan and Indonesia. The channel will be based in Singapore and will be financed by advertising. It will operate 18 hours a day during the week and six hours on Saturday.

David Nicholson, a Television New Zealand representative said the company would send staff to establish the channel and then to train locals to operate it.

Kiwi success in New Caledonia

New Caledonians are flocking to buy New Zealand boats and boating products, according to figures revealed by the Marine Export Group of New Zealand and TRADENZ. For the year to December 31, 1992, exports of boats and boating products totalled US\$3.9 million, up from just over US\$1 million in 1991. Boating exports now account for 33 per cent of all New Zealand manufactured goods exported to New Caledonia and 13 per cent of all New Zealand's exports there for the year.

Peter Rachtman, director of the Marine Export Group of New Zealand, said reasons for the success in New Caledonia included a favourable exchange rate, a reduction in import duties and the recognition of the quality of New Zealand boats.

HEADLINES

AMERICAN SAMOA



Cost cutting operation slows

The American Samoa Cabinet has failed to reach a decision on the next course of action to take to implement the second phase of Operations Reduction in Force (RIF). The operation is aimed at cutting costs to improve the government's cash flow problems.

The *Samoa News* says it appears the Lutali administration is losing steam in its budget cutting initiative, a sharp contrast to the haste with which it implemented the first phase of the operation in January.

After the termination of 429 employees in the second week of January, the administration announced the second phase would follow shortly.

But a meeting on February 19 of Governor Lutali and selected members of his Cabinet failed to come to a decision on the next step to take.

A shorter work week, rolling back salary increases given after the 1989 freeze on hiring and pay rise, and the termination of short term contracts were the three alternatives under consideration.

However, the Governor's chief of staff, Aleni Ripine, says Governor Lutali has given the cabinet members more time to review the three alternatives and to report back to the chief executive on February 25 with "solid figures" on how much the government stands to save and how many people will be affected.

Meanwhile, the government is delaying issuing pay cheques to its employees under what has been described by acting Treasurer Aitofele Sunia as a "very tight" financial situation.

Sunia said the department was "scraping the bottom of the barrel" to pay its employees' fortnightly payroll bill.

He said the new administration's collection of revenue owed to the government was very strong when it came in early last month, but it has now slowed down as the rest is not easy to collect.

As the Governor and his cabinet study the next step to take in reducing government spending, the acting Treasurer is withholding the release of tax refund cheques.

Sunia said only under extra-ordinary circumstances, such as funerals, would tax refunds be disbursed, but added these would first have to be verified to make sure recipients were telling the truth.

CHILE

New flight planned

Chilean airline Lan Chile plans to start a flight between South America and Australia with the Cook Islands along the way. Rarotonga would be one of the three stop-overs on the proposed four-stage 11,300km trip.

The route would see a Lan Chile 767 leave Santiago stopping off at Easter Island, Papeete and Rarotonga before landing in Sydney.

FIJI



Government sells shares

The Fiji government plans to sell off shares in companies it holds equity in or owns. The move is part of a plan for further reform of public enterprises to begin this year.

A statement from the Prime Minister's office says the plan is based on an acceptance that public enterprises generally have performed poorly compared with their private counterparts.

The statement said the aim would be to prepare public sector enterprises for privatisation.

Government presently owns or holds shares in 29 companies, enterprises or financial institutions.

Those most likely to be divested first are public shares in enterprises where government is a minority shareholder, such as Fiji Air and Home Finance Ltd.

The statement said the government was also seriously considering corporatising and then selling its shipyard and slipway in Suva.

But some public enterprises which enjoy dominant or market monopoly positions, such as Fiji Posts and Telecommunications Ltd, may not be privatised.

It says private enterprises not destined for privatisation will be required to run as commercial operations.

The government will also look at contracting out services. This means government departments may choose to buy services from outside if they are cheaper and more efficient than those provided by the government.

SOLOMONS



Airline managers face the chop

A number of senior managers of Solomon Islands' national airline, Solomon Airlines, may lose their jobs under the current review of the airline. This was indicated by the airlines chairman, Reuben Natowan, in reference to media reports which singled out the airline's general manager, John Baura, as one of those to be axed.



Martin Tidbury

Baura: to be axed?

Natowan said some of the senior managers may have to go, not because they hadn't been doing a good job, but as a cost cutting measure. Natowan said it had been tough on the state-owned airline to meet managers' various financial remunerations.

The airline has been seriously in debt since it started its international operations in 1990. In February the government-owned airline put 70 per cent of its shares on offer. Hong Kong-based company Golden Springs International was the only applicant for the shares.

Scope for the islands

NEW doors can open unexpectedly for those on the lookout for trading opportunities. Vanuatu and New Caledonia are benefitting from the opening of a new doorway into Australia — at the small port of Yamba, on the east coast between Sydney and Brisbane. Through it, the islands have established direct links with Australian business that could bring abundant returns for everybody.

Yamba is a small resort town with a population of only a few thousand at the mouth of the Clarence River, northern NSW. But the surrounding Clarence Valley is a rich agricultural area, with growing industrial and business development. Nearby is the small city of Grafton (pop. 17,000) spreading out on both sides of the river, and Sydney, Newcastle and Brisbane are easily reached by road and rail. This part of NSW north coast is one of Australia's fastest growing regions because of its equable climate and the increasing movement of people and business north, away from the crowded cities of Melbourne and Sydney.

Yamba's new significance to the islands is that it has become a first port of entry, with shipping links to the Pacific. The islands can thus tap into Australian markets without having to do business in the big cities with their crowded ports. The easier pace and atmosphere in Grafton, which is the business centre of activity in the Clarence Valley, is friendly "country style", which is the style of the islands, and island visitors doing business there say they immediately feel at home. And business can be conducted much more efficiently, more cheaply and with greater speed than in the case of, say, a city the size of Sydney with its greater distances and transport problems.

As far as I know, this is the first time that a particular region has initiated direct and independent business links with the islands. Grafton and Port Vila have established a sister city relationship.

Trade groups from New Caledonia, Western Samoa and Vanuatu have in recent months visited Grafton, and one of the latest visitors was the Premier of Niue, Young Vivian, who had preliminary talks on likely opportunities. Grafton business leaders are planning their own familiarisation trip to Western Samoa soon, and may include Niue on the schedule following Vivian's visit.

Vanuatu's Finance Minister, Willie Jimmy, was in Grafton at the end of February leading an important government delegation from the republic, which included Father Gerard Leymang, first secretary, Prime Minister's office; Nicholson Worek, second secretary, Ministry of Finance; John Simbolo, Director of Customs and Waimini Perei, recently appointed Director of Tourism for Vanuatu.

The Clarence region has been buying copra, timber and

TRADEWINDS



**BILL
McCABE**

beer from Vanuatu, and the region has shipped sugar (it's a cane growing area), aluminium boats and fire trucks. The first experimental shipment of Vanuatu's Tusker beer was very well received in the Clarence and it is likely to be marketed in the area as a boutique beer. Timber sales include old and unproductive coconut palms, which will be turned into furniture in Australia. The palm timber is very hard, with a beautiful grain, and requires special processing. Pioneering work on this timber has been done by the Pacific Green Furniture Company, which has been making furniture from it in Sigatoka, Fiji, for the past two years and is also using it as a lightweight building material.

The Vanuatu delegation also discussed with the Grafton & District Business Development Board Ltd the possibility of shipping copra in through Yamba. This is worth examining, but there may be greater opportunities for a joint venture between Australian and island businesses that would result in the copra being crushed on the spot in Vanuatu and only the oil exported. Crushing can be a fairly simple process that doesn't require highly sophisticated or expensive machinery to extract most of the oil, and the residue could be marketed locally as stock feed.

Jimmy told a gathering at Grafton that both island and Australian governments could help the growing trade relationships with the area — Australia by being more flexible on immigrations and quarantine laws.

Among the advantages for Australian entrepreneurs of another direct link with island groups such as Vanuatu and New Caledonia is the springboard into Europe through Lome and the Common Market. New Caledonia's recent increased trade activity has followed the political conciliation that has come from the Matignon Accords. France sees the strengthening of New Caledonia's economy through improved trade and investment as a vital way of ensuring that the territory will become more fully integrated into the region and its long-term dependence on France reduced. I discussed this development in some detail in my report in *PIM* last month. As I said then, the New Caledonian government is serious about making it easier to do business there, and that means Australia's ability to do business more easily with France and with the Common Market. The EC will recognise a product as coming from new Caledonia if it has between 20 and 60 per cent added value, depending on the product, put on it in New Caledonia.

The Vanuatu delegation also took the opportunity of looking at Australia's racing and casino industries, although not in Grafton. They spoke to Victoria's Totalizator Agency Board, which manages race betting, about the possibility of the TAB setting up operations in Vanuatu. The government, of course, would get its cut.

Charting a growth pattern

From a New Zealand perspective, the Pacific trade scene looks good. New Zealand exporters hiked their sales to the region by more than 18 per cent last year and Trade Negotiations Minister Philip Burdon is preparing to lead a mission to Fiji and Papua New Guinea in confident search of a further export boost.

From the viewpoint of the Pacific island states, the outlook is less than rosy — in fact, New Zealand's 1992 trade figures paint a downright dismal picture and one that should be seriously worrying their leaders.

Total exports to New Zealand from 24 island states and territories during the year crept up marginally over 1991 to \$133.5 million, but remained \$20 million below the figure of four years previously and \$36 million under the peak reached in 1990.

Almost one-half of that \$133.5 million export total came from just one country — Fiji.

Despite the overall increase in 1992, nine of the 24 sold less to New Zealand last year than in 1991. In many of these cases, the drop in exports was substantial. Another five sold absolutely nothing at all. Only four posted what might be called reasonable increases and two of these rises were due to major purchases of a single product — phosphate from Nauru and petroleum oil from Papua New Guinea.

Such was the state of affairs 11 years after the South Pacific Regional Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreement (SPARTECA) came into effect and four and a half years after New Zealand allowed duty-free and restricted access for all Forum country goods and opened an office in Auckland to encourage and facilitate their entry.

Clearly SPARTECA, signed with such hope at Tarawa in 1980 and containing provisions for development assistance aimed at enhancing the export capabilities of the Forum Island Countries, has not worked.

In most cases, that is — Fiji is the exception. And Fiji, in the eyes of many people, is an outstanding example of what a Pacific island country can do, given the will to shake off traditional economic thinking and chart a pattern of growth.

The island leaders seem to know this. The 1991 Forum communique from Pohnpei endorsed the view that programs of economic structural adjustment were needed at the national, as well as the regional, level.

Last year's Honiara communique said, "(The Forum) again stressed the importance of putting in place effective domestic economic policies, with recognition of the vital role that an effective private sector should play in ensuring economic growth. A sound investment strategy was vital for ensuring the maximum development of local resources and for encouraging foreign investment into Forum countries."

But with very few exceptions, the leaders have done little to translate those words into action.

It remains clear that the island nations' economic problems and lack of export growth have little to do with access to markets and everything to do with outdated inward-looking policies, retention of a dominant public sector and some sort of obsessive conviction that economic development is best left in the hands of the government.

They remain short of export capacity, investment capital and

WELLINGTON



DAVID
BARBER

the sort of entrepreneurs — local or foreign — who can give their fledgling economies the shot in the arm they need.

Simply put, private enterprise has not been given a chance throughout much of the Pacific and this is stunting the island countries' growth.

Their leaders seem paralysed, despite the evidence of New Zealand's export-led recovery and the example of Fiji, which has followed New Zealand in radically liberalising its economy. As far as SPARTECA is concerned, Fiji's textile industry, which has had such spectacular success that it attracted quota restrictions from the United States, was virtually built on duty-free access to New Zealand, and this remains probably the biggest single SPARTECA achievement.

Now when New Zealanders say this, it is simply not a matter of promoting their own policies.

The World Bank, among others, has tried to encourage the island states to drop their long-standing inward-looking, highly-protective, economic policies to promote growth that will not only generate more two-way trade but improve living standards.

The most recent World Bank study (of six member countries, Fiji, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu and Western Samoa) showed growth rates in the 1980s averaged less than two per cent a year. Per capita GDP in four of them actually declined because of population growth.

The bank said island country exports would grow, and their economies generally improve, only with more outward-looking policies based on attaining international competitiveness, deregulation and less government intervention.

Additional keys to success, the experts say, are for the islands to cast their eyes further afield than New Zealand and Australia — as Fiji has done, making the United States its biggest single garment export market — and firstly perhaps, cutting their teeth by expanding the woefully small trade between themselves.

Finding other overseas markets will require, in many cases, inviting overseas investment, and that in itself is often a problem. Steve Houlihan, who heads the South Pacific Trade Office in Auckland, tries to promote investment from this country into the islands, but says it is frequently difficult to get accurate details from some states on their investment regulations. If he has problems, imagine how hard it would be for a potential northern hemisphere investor.

After 12 years of SPARTECA, it has to be said time is running out for the island states to get their economic acts together. They are losing their trading advantage in New Zealand and Australia as both countries lower their import barriers against the rest of the world.

If there is a GATT agreement, the margins of preference they enjoy in Europe under the Lome Convention will also diminish. In the long term, they will lose what international competitiveness they already have.

The writing is on the wall and the island leaders owe it to their people to read it and act upon its message. □

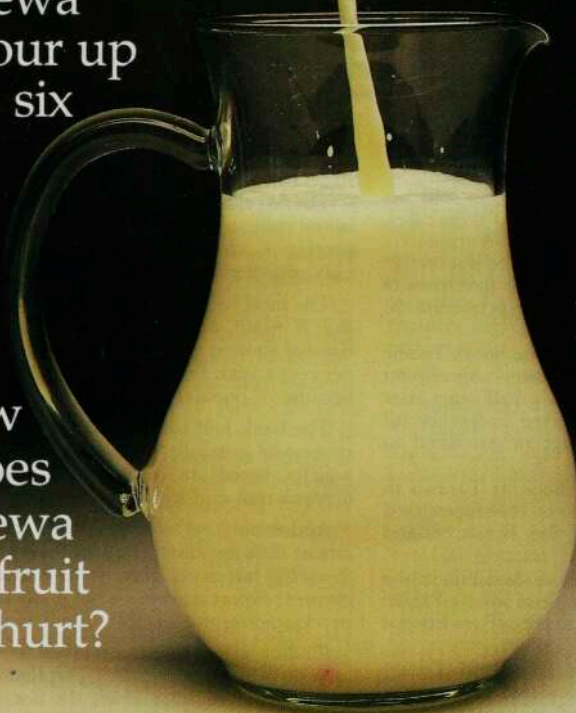
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BUSINESS

Measuring up debts

By David North

WESTERN Samoa is rapidly heading into deeper debt.

The independent nations of the Pacific have far fewer debt problems than most of the rest of the developing world.

Both of these conclusions can be drawn from the most recent burst of debt statistics from the World Bank.

One of the key measures used in the new publication *World Debt Tables 1992-1993* is the ratio between total external debt and a nation's gross national product (GNP), the sum total of all economic activity within a nation. These ratios, using standardized World Bank data systems, are shown in the accompanying chart for the six nations in the Pacific tracked by the World Bank.

In the 1990-1991 period, the latest covered in these statistics, Western Samoa plunged further into debt, with the ratio moving from 50 per cent in 1990 to 93.3 per cent in 1991. In absolute terms that debt increased from US\$92 million to US\$140 million and the interest rate on the new indebtedness increased from a modest (and heavily subsidised) 0.8 per cent in 1990 to 3.8 per cent in 1991.

In contrast, the

1991 was not a good year for Western Samoa

other five nations in the chart showed either steady levels for their new interest payments, or declines.

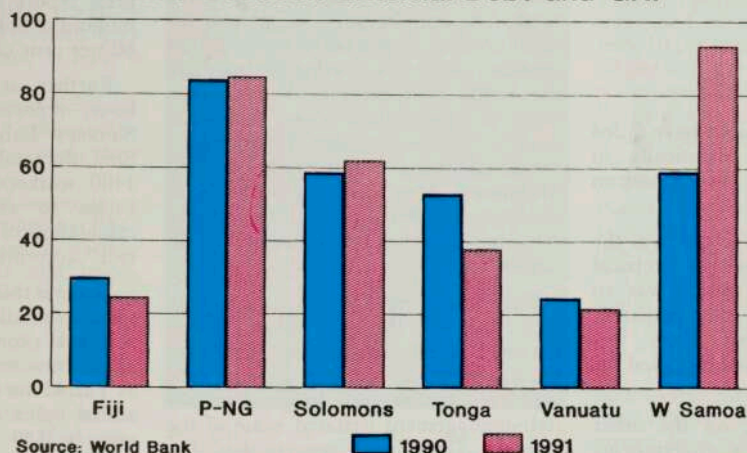
In terms of the illustrated ratio, PNG and the Solomons showed mild increases, while the other three nations recorded decreases. Tonga, with its sale of passports and other economic activity, managed to reduce the measured debt ratio sharply from 52.9 per cent to 37.8 per cent, while

reducing its absolute external debt from \$61 million to \$51 million.

The general picture in the Pacific, however, was much more favourable than in the rest of the developing world. The World Bank has five categories of levels of debt, in this decreasing order of concern — severely indebted low-income countries, severely indebted middle-income countries, moderately indebted low-income countries, moderately indebted middle-income countries, and other developing countries (i.e. those under the least pressure.) Only PNG, as a moderately indebted middle-income country was on any of the cautionary lists, with the other five nations were placed in the last, least-worrisome category along with such sturdy economies as those of Portugal and Thailand.

The period 1990-1991 was not kind to Western Samoa on any financial measure, according to the detailed World Bank statistics. Between the two years GNP was down about \$5 million, exports were off by \$14 million, imports were up by more than \$20 million, and international reserves were off by another million. 1991 was not a good year.

WESTERN SAMOA'S DEBT SOARS
Ratio Between External Debt and GNP



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SPUTTERING UNIONS

Two Samoas, two union actions, but two different approaches to worker disputes

By David North

TWO efforts to form unions have failed in the Samoas, more drastically in Western Samoa than in American Samoa.

In Western Samoa the object was the Yazaki plant which assembles electrical harnesses for autos, the action was an attempted strike, and the persistent strikers have been fired; there was virtually no off-island resources used for the workers.

In American Samoa, on the other hand, the action was a government-managed election on whether the workers wanted to be represented by the Mainland Teamsters union, which fought a hard, expensive and ultimately losing battle. But no one lost his job, and management's margin of victory was tighter than in previous, similar battles.

There are some similarities in the situations, and some differences. All the firms involved are owned by off-island interests; Yazaki by Japanese investors, and the two tuna canneries by United States and Thai corporations. The firms have come to the Samoas not to process local products, but seeking low wages. (In the case of the tuna packers low wages within the US customs shield, as canned tuna is protected by a US tariff). Further, in both places Western Samoans

do the work, and in both, the political establishment came down hard on the side of management.

The principal difference is the wages; Western Samoans working for Yazaki get about 62 US cents an hour (1.24 tala), while in American Samoa their countrymen earn close to US\$3.00 an hour.

The Yazaki strike was not well planned, or perhaps not planned at all. According to Patrick Fepulea'i, the attorney brought in by the strikers after some of the workers had been arrested, neither he nor the government saw the strike coming. It was voted upon, almost spontaneously, at a meeting of about half the 1400 or so member Yazaki work force. No professional union organisers (like the Teamsters) were on hand when the strike started, and unlike the US Mainland, there was no strike fund established to help workers through the economic pinch that accompanies all strikes.

There is virtually no tradition of factory work in Western Samoa (Yazaki is a relative newcomer to the island), and the specific duties required are said to be vigorous; further, the tough Japanese style-management irritated some of the workers. There were reports that if a worker spent too long in a toilet stall, a foreman would bang on the door and demand the worker get back to the assembly line. All this and the low wages set off the work stoppage. (Management refused to return *PIM's* repeated phone calls about the strike.)

The strikers found they had few friends in high places. The Prime Minister, Tofilau Eti Alesana, criticised the strike as evidence of "foreign ideas"; the police roughed up the strikers and arrested seven of them. After the strike was underway, and losing supporters daily, two *palagi* union officials, one from Australia and one from New Zealand, appeared on the scene, in an effort to minimise the damage. Soon thereafter the strikers who had not returned to the

assembly line were fired by the company. In the course of the dispute much was made of the significance of Yazaki to the Western Samoan economy, claims which shrink upon careful examination. For example, the statement was made repeatedly, by Western Samoan government sources, that Yazaki accounted for "more than 80 per cent of the nation's exports".

According to the World Bank, Western Samoa exports of goods and services were running at the US\$94 million level in 1990, before the arrival of Yazaki, dropping to \$80 million the following year. We were told the auto parts made by the company were worth about \$30 million by the Western Samoan Department of Economic Development, while a press report put the figure at "tens of millions of dollars". Thirty million is not 80 per cent of 80 million.

Further, at the wage of 62 cents an hour, reported to *PIM* by Western Samoa's Labour Commissioner, Tate Simi, the total wage bill for the reported 1400 workers, at 2000 hours a year, comes to about US\$2000,000. This calculation of *PIM's* was "roughly correct" according to Simi.

If one is thinking in terms of economic value to a nation, the size of the wage bill is Yazaki's contribution to the islands, as all the raw materials are imported, and as Yazaki has a 10-year tax holiday. The actual value of the electrical harnesses may be \$30 million as they arrive in Australia, New Zealand and Japan, but much of that value has no bearing on Western Samoa, as it relates largely to raw materials imported into Western Samoa, and profits, if any, that remain in Japan.

Labour Commissioner Simi is preparing a report for his boss, the Labour Minister, on the strike and its aftermath. While he would not share his findings with us, he did indicate there was no pre-existing legal framework for such a dispute in Western Samoa. In contrast, in American Samoa the National Labour Relations Board managed a representation election for the workers, using precedents dating back more than 50 years.

□

BUSINESS

The mines are rumbling

By Wally Hiambohn

As cyclones were ripping through parts of the Pacific over Christmas and New Year, a storm of a different kind was brewing in the region's west, threatening to cause irreparable damage. Fortunately, it has lulled and is made to look more like a "storm in a teacup".

This concerned resource development in Papua New Guinea — the lucrative mining and petroleum projects which have boomed over the last four years.

Hopefully the calm remains, or the much prided "mountain of gold floating on a sea of oil" land might blow its top and boil over. The lull was mainly due to the main players in this resources controversy who raised the storm have now receded to boardrooms to fight it out.

A conference in Sydney mid-February discussed key issues which concern the government and industry and their relationship.

Top ranking government and industry officials talked on such issues as PNG government's direction in equity participation, key developments and implications of a proposed Gas Act; implications of PNG legislative changes on the implementation of projects; resource taxation in PNG; and understanding the critical issues of the landowners.

Having learnt and recovered from the nightmare of losing revenue from the Bougainville mine, the government and the resource sector had till then been dealing delicately and respectfully with each other.

In every project from the billion-dollar old mine and Porgera and the Kutubuil to the humble Misima gold mine, issues of sensitivity were thrashed out in all and involved every necessary party — from the prime minister and the chief company executives to the provincial governments and landowners.

Apart from the controversies that surrounded the small but promising Mount Kare alluvial gold mine (see separate story), all was rolling along well until the new government of Prime Minister Paias Wingti dropped a bombshell in December.

He wanted to review and increase state equity and local participation in resource

Papua New Guinea's proposed changes to resource development threaten 'the mountain of gold on a sea of oil' to blow its top



Wingti: the man causing the rumbles

projects so that Papua New Guineans were "owners of their resources" and playing a major role in their development.

It is a long established government policy that it be granted an option of up to 30 per cent fully paid up equity in mining projects and 22.5 per cent carried equity in petroleum and gas projects.

The new move, which to some amounted to likely expropriation, shocked investors and tested their confidence. Wingti also moved fast to attract and try and bring in investors from the fast-growing Asian region (see separate story).

Many existing investors until then had — apart from the nagging law and order problems — no reason to fear for their investment.

The government preceded its announcement with a serious allegation against developers of the giant Porgera gold mine.

Minerals and Energy Minister Masket Iangalio announced publicly that Placer Pacific, operators of the giant Porgera mine had misled the state into buying only 10 per cent equity instead of the full 30 per cent it was entitled to. He said the state was misled on the ore reserves at Porgera which only in November were revised and increased by 27 million ounces.

The other partners in the project — Placer, Highlands Gold and Rennison Goldfields Consolidated — each holds 30 per cent shares.

The claim, made following the announcement of the discovery of increased reserves at the mine, was denied by the other partners. Soon after, Wingti said in an Australian television interview that his government wanted to "break away" from a "club" of Australian investors and attract new resource from North America and Europe.

"This is Australia's territory as far as they're concerned. There is a club which wants to see PNG as a country that comes under the Australian mining influence ..." he told Channel Nine's *Business Sunday*.

Iangalio said in Australia the PNG government would review "some of the more questionable arrangements".

In a more recent address Wingti told an oil and gas conference in Singapore in January there was still widespread dissatisfaction among landowners, although they received royalties, some compensation and took part in spin-off benefits from resource projects.

"The state will endeavour to see that the people of Papua New Guinea gain maximum benefit from the development of its renewable resources. At the same

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time the state will ensure the investors enjoy a stable investment climate and get a reasonable return on investment. "I do not wish to see my beautiful country become another one of those countries that have lost out when their resources were exploited. I refuse to submit my country to be part of historical statistics. The last thing I would want for my nation is to be left without a huge hole in the ground and a population spoilt by money after all the mineral and petroleum has been drained from the land.

"Our landowners do receive royalties, some compensation and partake in certain spin-off business activities but still there is wide-spread landowner dissatisfaction," Wingti said his government was directing its energies towards other means and ways of ensuring the nation benefits from resource development other than taxation revenue. The government was now actively pursuing equity participation in major projects, either by the state but preferably by individuals and corporations owned by Papua New Guineans.

He said the government was also looking very seriously at downstream processing of raw materials. "It is quite understandable that a consortium that has just completed a \$1 billion oil production facility will be somewhat uneasy about developing a further billion dollar refinery," he said. "Still the state would like to invite and enter into partnerships with other firms which can build and operate a refinery profitably.

"The intrinsic benefits to the nation of such an arrangement are obvious — jobs, more money retained on-shore and the development of our industrial base. At the end of the day it is not a question of whether we can squeeze 90 per cent tax out of a barrel of oil but what we do with the money."

At the conclusion of his Indonesia visit in February Wingti foreshadowed major changes to the petroleum equity shareholding where the government currently is entitled to 22.5 per cent in any petroleum project. He hinted the state may increase its equity participation, after studying Indonesia's highly successful state-owned oil company, Pertamina.

Debate raged on the resource ownership question.

"There is no doubt things are getting worse," a senior mining executive was quoted as saying at the time. "It is a good place to tread gently." The executive described Wingti as a "man in a hurry" who would get into trouble sooner or later.

In an analysis of the issue, director of the private sector funded Institute of National Affairs, John Millet summed, "All of this matters not only because of the international principles of fair-play which are at stake but also because the

Courting the Asian tigers

IN early February Paias Wingti made his second visit to Indonesia since becoming prime minister in July, 1992. He had also visited Singapore and Malaysia in that period and wants to include several more Asian countries on his overseas itinerary this year. It is part of his government's new "Look North" policy, to attract investment and create new markets for exports. "In the coming months there will be an increased drive to get closer to our Asian neighbours," Wingti said when visiting Indonesia. The new approach, taken right after a run-in with Australian mining companies, may have signalled that Wingti wanted a better deal, and believed the Asians would be the best. He made this plain when he visited Singapore and Indonesia.

"The state will endeavour to see that the people of Papua New Guinea gain maximum benefit from the development of its non-renewable resources. At the same time the state will ensure investors enjoy a stable investment climate and get a reasonable return on investment."

Wingti said it would be in the area of economics that PNG stood to reap the greatest benefits in increased relationship with Asia. "Each of the Asian tigers is increasing its industrial base. Not only can PNG learn from their experience, the same industries could be the destination for certain PNG raw materials which cannot be processed locally."

The Port Moresby-based Malaysian Business Council welcomed the Wingti government's initiative. Council president Timothy Lim said, "An increased economic and trade alliance with nations in the Asia region is the right step in the interest of PNG whose economy is young and fast growing." Lim said the Look North policy should not mean PNG should do away with its traditional and long time trading, and business partners, it should look actively towards "large supermarket" of countries in Asia."

At an oil and gas conference in Singapore in January, Wingti made his first attempt to sell PNG to Asian investors. He spoke of the great resource potentials and explained in detail his government's policy on mining and the country's tax regime. "We are seeking to create the circumstances which will provide long term stability for your investment in Papua New Guinea. In 1993 we will be looking at ways to create major incentives in oil and gas exploration and development."

The following excerpts from a newspaper article by Australian Trevor Kennedy, a member of the PNG Holdings Corporation — the government company charged with privatising publicly owned corporations — very well summarises the implications of such a move to mining companies in PNG.

"It would be tragic if the current difficulties between some Australian resource companies and the government of Papua New Guinea escalated into the sort of dispute which permanently impaired our relationship with our closest regional partners — but it shows every sign of doing that. While re-orientation of our foreign policy priorities towards the "region" in preference to our traditional ties and markets in Europe is commendable there is a real need to ensure that our small Pacific neighbours are not forgotten in the rush to develop relationships with established and emerging Asian Tigers.

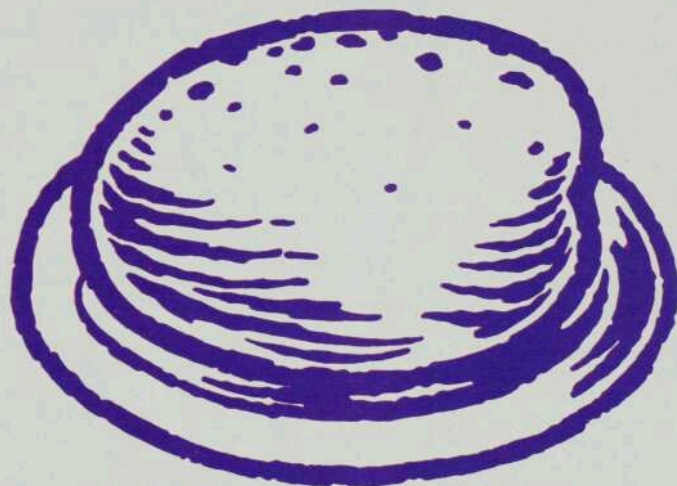
"At the moment the Australian mining industry, or a section of it, has decided to take on the government of PNG with all the insensitivity and insouciance this sector has brought to the environmental issues and issues involving indigenous peoples worldwide over the decades. Clearly in the current dispute there are rights and wrongs on both sides. The issues are complex and emotionally charged — as inevitably, so many issues involved with the land become — to the extent to be left to the dispassionate judicial system to resolve.

"Currently the face of Australia is represented most forcefully by a group of major resource companies (which may have the balance of right on their side) of whom the overwhelming perception is of arrogance and greed (and there is at least some evidence that they have overplayed their hand). The danger is that Australians will be perceived to have changed from paternal to patronising, from helper to exploiter.

Already the recent dispute between CRA and Mount Kare landowners, which has dragged in the government and the Porgera partners has reached a crisis point it threatens to poison the relationship between Australian resources companies and the PNG government irreparably. Some leaders took the view that Australians had formed themselves into a tightly knit club, uninterested in the long term future of the country and its inhabitants — just bent on exploitation.

"There is no doubt there are vast resource riches which still await exploitation in PNG — and the Malaysians, the Japanese, the Koreans, the Taiwanese and the Chinese are aware of it. The preference of the powers in PNG at this stage is to stay with devil they know. It is obvious to them that a major shift in some investment will bring other problems that Australia and other Western investors do not burden them with. But it would be incorrect to continue believing that PNG's foreign investment will founder if Australian investment dries up. □

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country's future development depends crucially on what happens in the mining and petroleum sectors."

He had earlier recommended the state sell rather than buy equity in resource projects. "All of this makes the sell option look increasingly attractive. The prime minister could proclaim victory for the broad national interest, for imaginative and pragmatic policy and for decisive leadership," he wrote another time.

To Millet's reference to "international fair-play" one Papuan New Guinean wrote describing it as "more fatuous nonsense". The so-called Third World has been bled, suppressed and dictated to by the north for a very long time. If Papua New Guinea lied through its collective teeth for the next 200 years that wouldn't balance past (and present) errors".

To coincide with the controversy, Finance and Planning Minister Sir Julius Chan commissioned a review of the government's equity and tax regime. The review, begun in January by the International Monetary Fund and government officials and expected to last several months, was welcomed by mining companies. Sir Julius has said he does not expect to make any important new decisions on particular taxation or equity matters until the study is finished.

Industry sources say the review will clear the air, even though few concrete decisions are expected. But government officials say the review is designed primarily to provide an independent evaluation of the tax/equity regime covering the mining and oil sectors and to establish the basis for a separate policy for gas.

One industry official says the review should show the present regime compares well internationally, and will be especially valuable because it will be independent. "It would be very beneficial to us because it would show from an independent body that the state gets a fair share. It does very well out of us," he says.

As well as the equity issue, the petroleum sector is involved in an argument about the basis on which tax is calculated, and industry in general would like a more liberal regime for writing off exploration costs.

There are also indications the result of the survey may be to provide the basis for creating a gas equity and tax policy. At present gas comes under the country's petroleum policy, which is entirely unsuited to the long-term, multi-billion dollar investments required for production that the country hopes to attract. The Department of Minerals and Energy estimates the country has recoverable reserves of about 22 trillion cubic feet, almost all within a region stretching from the central Gulf of Papua New Guinea to the Highlands. □

Giving landowners equity

By Wally Hiambohn

CRA's Mt Kare alluvial mining project, in which local landowners have 49 per cent equity, is unique in the history of PNG mining. It is the only mining project with such a high level of landowner participation. The following is a summary by CRA of issues surrounding this controversial mine.

THE small alluvial mine was born of unusual circumstances set up to recover what remained after a gold rush in the late 1980s. CRA exploration has held a prospecting authority over the area since 1985, and soon after the company discovered traces of alluvial gold in late 1987, the previously uninhabited Mt Kare area became the scene of a huge gold rush.

At its peak in mid-1988 there were 10,000 people panning for gold in the creek bed and surrounding areas, and law and order was a serious problem. It is estimated that up to K150 million worth of gold was taken off before the supply of easily won nuggets started to dwindle.

The gold rush on CRA's prospecting authority interrupted the company's exploration program, the main objective of which was to find a hard rock source of the alluvial gold. CRA negotiated with the leaders of 6000 local landowners (identified in a series of genealogical studies) in order to establish a project which would both satisfy the landowners' interests and allow hard rock exploration to resume once the gold rush tapered off.

The result was a joint venture company to build and operate a small alluvial mine for the remaining alluvial gold. The company, Mt Kare Alluvial Mining (MKAM), is managed and 51-per-cent owned by CRA, in partnership with the landowners' umbrella company, Kare-Puga Development Corporation (KDC), which owns 49 per cent.

CRA's aim was to stabilise the area of its prospecting authority and establish goodwill with the landowners. From the outset, CRA indicated its intention to transfer its 51 per cent share of the mine equity to the landowners when they became able to financially support and manage the project.

The joint venture was granted a

CRA negotiated with the leaders of 6000 local landowners in order to establish a project which would both satisfy the landowners' interests and allow hard rock exploration to resume once the gold rush tapered off.

special mining lease and began alluvial mining, recovering around 20,000 ounces of gold annually. And 80 per cent of the mine's 120 employees were local landowners, who worked at the mine on a fly-in-fly-out basis.

Exploration work carried out on the alluvial deposits since the special mining lease was granted has shown that earlier estimates of the alluvial resources were too high. These earlier estimates were made during the gold rush when limited access made it impossible to conduct a thorough exploration program. Revised estimates suggest the volume and grade of the resource are at best only 10 to 15 per cent of the original estimates.

CRA Exploration's hard rock exploration program carried out in the adjacent prospecting authority has drilled 32 holes to date, but has also so far to indicate an economic resource.

CRA is committed to continuing hard rock exploration in the area and will seek to have its prospecting authority renewed in September 1993. To date the company has spent approximately K21 million on exploration and development at Mt Kare.

Since August 1992 the mine has been managed, through a management contract, by a subsidiary of Placer Pacific (PNG) Pty Limited.

From its inception, the Mt Kare project has been dogged by controversy. CRA's mining and exploration leases and the partnership with the landowner company KDC have been persistently

challenged by a small group of locals.

This group, which has financial backing from small Western Australian companies, Ramsgate Resources and Menzies Gold, has waged a sustained campaign of litigation, political lobbying and public accusations against CRA.

The operations of the mine have also been disrupted by a series of violent physical attacks. The third and most serious was an armed raid in January 1992 which cost the project K3.5 million in damage and closure cost, and shut the mine for the first eight months of this year.

The litigation, which consists of four principle areas of dispute encompassing eight different cases, is being conducted on behalf of CRC's and KDC's opponents by a Port Moresby legal firm, Warner Shand, run by expatriates.

CRA has defended the legal actions against it with some success and has in turn mounted a legal challenge to the involvement of Ramsgate and Menzies Gold in Mt Kare dispute by seeking to have the case against the special mining lease dismissed on the basis of champerty, which is the practice whereby outside parties (in this case foreign mining companies) without a legal interest in the dispute, seek to fund a case on behalf of another, with the object of gaining an interest in the matter under dispute.

Since early 1992, two of the main litigants opposing the Mt Kare venture have claimed to be directors of KDC. Proceedings in the National Court disputing these claims have been recently concluded in their favour. CRA said this decision may be appealed.

In October 1992 CRA offered to accelerate the transfer of its 51 per cent interest in the mine to the legitimate landowners, on condition that no outside interests were involved and that CRA's tenure of the prospecting authority in the area be secured. Despite assurances following negotiations with CRA, Iangalio, has made conflicting public statements on the Mt Kare issue, some of which have been in support of CRA's opponents.

CRA's efforts to expedite a resolution of the conflict are continuing.

□

Keating's Miracle

THE headline 'Keating's miracle' said it all.

After 10 years in government with Australia in its worst recession for 50 years and with one million of our 17 million people unemployed Prime Minister Paul Keating and the Labour Party have won, what at the early stage of the campaign for the March 13 election, seemed an impossible victory.

Behind the victory was voter scepticism about the radical plan being offered by John Hewson's conservative Liberal/National Party Coalition.

For the Pacific islands the victory means expected cuts to the overseas aid budget will not go ahead and foreign policy and immigration will continue pretty much along the same lines.

Former Liberal leader, John Howard, described the Coalition's loss as "immensely disappointing". "We clearly lost the debate about the GST (goods and services tax) and that was why we lost the election," he said.

But it was not just the Coalition's inability to allay people's fears about their planned 15 per cent across the board Goods and Services Tax. It was also radical plans to restructure Australia's universal health care system Medicare, Industrial relations legislation which would make individual contracts between employee and employer the order of the day and massive public sector cuts which would have seen big losses of both jobs and services, which scared voters.

On election night an elated Keating told the nation — "It will be a long time before an Opposition party tries to divide this country again. The public of Australia are too decent and they are too conscientious and they are too interested in their country to wear those sorts of things."

"This has very much been a victory for Australian values," he continued, "because it was Australian values on the line. The Liberal Party wanted to change Australia from the country it's become — a cooperative, decent, nice place to live, where people have regard for one another. "I give an assurance this victory won't go to the heads of the government, of the Labour Party. We will take it seriously, we will take it thankfully and we will do a great deal with it."

The hint of humility which came across in Paul Keating's election night speech will be something voters will be glad to see. Long criticised for being arrogant, the man who said "this is the recession we had to have" has had trouble overcoming both his own profile as a remote, uncaring politician and the ill-will created by his party room leadership battle with popular former Prime Minister Bob Hawke.

In pulling off this victory and winning a historic fifth term of office for Labour, Keating has emerged with a new stature and most importantly a mandate, as Prime Minister, gained in his own right. He will now get down to the task of implementing a \$3-billion package of spending on public works and traineeships which he hopes will create 900,000 jobs in four years. He has also promised an ambitious plan to expand childcare places, \$720 million to increase places available in technical and further education colleges and cuts to personal income tax.

AUSTRALIA



JEMIMA GARRETT

The South Pacific did make an appearance as an election issue with Coalition foreign affairs spokesman Senator Robert Hill, launching a stinging attack on Labour's handling of its relations with the region.

Both government and Opposition made major statements with the Coalition also putting out weighty Foreign Affairs Trade and Defence blueprints. While those blueprints will now be gathering dust they did offer some suggestions the government might do well to take up and also a deal of insight into how half the house is thinking.

Speaking to the Foreign Correspondents Association in Sydney, Senator Hill castigated Foreign Minister Senator Gareth Evans for "a succession of unnecessary strains

in bi-lateral relations with South Pacific neighbours". He said Senator Evans had found himself an unwelcome visitor in Fiji, he reminded his audience the acting head of the Australian mission had been expelled from Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands had refused visiting rights to Australian naval vessels and landing rights to Australian Airforce planes and made much play of Senator Evans' dispute with PNG's Foreign Minister over the deportation of two Africans to Port Moresby.

Essentially the Coalition said it would pay greater attention to the Pacific with the emphasis on the economic well-being of the island states. In aid that meant some welcome initiatives. In particular the Coalition's plan to reform DIFF (the Development Import Finance Facility) is one of which the government should take note.

The Coalition thinking of the promotion of strong island economies, however, could well smack of the very paternalism it claimed to be trying to avoid.

Despite touting its emphasis on trade as one of its big differences with Labour the Coalition did not manage one mention of the South Pacific in its 30-page trade blueprint.

On its aid policy Senator Hill said, "Australia should be far more concerned with the lack of performance in these economies than we have been". Senator Hill said the Coalition would spell out "what we believe to be the important policy pre-conditions for economic growth".

The Coalition's blind spot on South Pacific trade could well be mirrored in the new Keating government, albeit in not quite such an extreme form. Paul Keating has no history of links with the Pacific and his focus, like the Coalitions, is firmly and increasingly fixed on Asia.

It's a trend which is now so strong in Australia, Austrade (the government's Trade Commission) fears many Australian companies are missing out on opportunities in the Pacific. Perhaps more aware than the political parties that most of Australia's \$1.5 billion in exports to the region is in those high value added products which create jobs, Austrade has just launched a new export assistance package for would-be exporters available only in the South Pacific. Behind the scheme is Austrade's belief that the Pacific is a good place for new exporters to learn the ropes before tackling more difficult export markets further afield.

□

BOUGAINVILLE

A WINDOW OPENED

By Johnson Honimae

ROSEMARIE GILLESPIE, the 52 year-old Australian lawyer and human rights campaigner, re-emerged in Honiara on February 28, four months after she made the dash into Bougainville with medical supplies.

She had lost several kilos, her skin was sunburnt and her hair looked very untidy. She had been fleeing from village to village because the Papua New Guinea soldiers wanted to catch her.

Nobody really knows how she got in or out of Bougainville but there is word she was escorted by members of the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) across the treacherous few kilometres that separate Solomon Islands from the troubled island of Bougainville.

As she stepped out on to Honiara's main Mendana Avenue to board a taxi, Gillespie was spotted by the watchful eye of an immigration officer. A warrant for her arrest was still in force when her visitors' permit was cancelled in October after she tried to persuade some Solomon Islands women to join her on her humanitarian mission to Bougainville.

She was arrested by the immigration officer and with the help of her local lawyer, Francis Waleilia, Gillespie volunteered to spend a night in the cell room of the Central Police Station in Honiara, in exchange for the lifting of deportation procedures against her and warrant for her arrest. Charges would also not be laid against her.

But a few hours before her flight to Australia, and much to the surprise of her lawyer, Gillespie was standing, wearing a borrowed shirt and *lavalava*, in the docks of the the Solomon Islands High Court.

She was being charged with illegally entering Solomon Islands. But because of her lawyer's sharp cross-examining of prosecution witnesses, the charge was changed to one of unlawful presence in the Solomon Islands. Gillespie pleaded guilty to the charge and was fined US\$100.

That was not the end. Gillespie was not going to leave Solomon Islands with her name blackened. Minutes before check-in time for her flight on March 2,

Four months after she disappeared into Bougainville, Gillespie returns to tell her story



the deportation proceedings and the warrant of arrest were lifted in the Honiara Magistrate's Court.

But as she boarded the Solomon Airlines flight to Brisbane, which was delayed by a few minutes because of her, it is still not clear whether she is a prohibited immigrant.

The Director of Immigration, Stephen Siapu, is firm that she is a prohibited immigrant since her visitors' permit was cancelled last October. Her lawyer, however, maintains she is free to come back to the Solomon Islands. Only the courts will decide her fate. The *Solomons Voice* newspaper posed the question,

"Can Gillespie Return?", on its front page.

One person who will definitely answer in the negative is PNG High Commissioner in Honiara, Frank Miro. Two days after Gillespie left, Miro handed a strong protest note from his government to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Honiara. Port Moresby had wanted Gillespie extradited to stand trial, but because there is no extradition arrangement between the two countries, this was not possible.

"PNG respects the laws of the Solomon Islands," said Miro, "but we thought she was dealt with leniently."

Gillespie lost little time getting her message through the media. As she was driven to the airport in an immigration department vehicle and escorted by her lawyer, immigration and police officers, she told a reporter she had achieved what she had wanted to. "I have opened a window on Bougainville for the world to see the human rights abuses by PNG soldiers and the shortage of medicine on the island." She said she had stayed longer than she had wanted to on Bougainville because of the "lies" PNG was telling on the situation on the troubled island.

Gillespie did not agree she was a heroine — "The heroes and heroines are the men and women on Bougainville who have the courage and endurance in the face of hardship.

"They are fighting for their independence, to protect their land rights and traditions."

She accused Australia of supplying PNG with helicopters and patrol boats which are now being used to take innocent lives on Bougainville.

Gillespie claimed PNG soldiers were occupying only 15 to 20 per cent of Bougainville and had a very small part of Arawa town which was turned into a battle ground after the villagers had fled to the mountains.

Gillespie called on PNG to allow journalists into Bougainville, even to the BRA-controlled areas because "I have been there and nothing has happened to me".

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COVER STORY

Land of

WHILE some see Fijian nationalist Sakeasi Butadroka as a dangerous extremist, others regard him as a social pressure valve, allowing steam to be let off from time to time by bringing village-level Fijian concerns out into the open. In 1975, he provoked a bitter debate by moving in Parliament that all people of Indian origin in Fiji be deported to India at the expense of the former colonial ruler Britain. Then Prime Minister Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara accused Butadroka of peddling a "pernicious doctrine". Now Butadroka, the man with the steely stare and trademark bow-tie, is stirring the pot on the extremely sensitive issue of land ownership and control. And he is threatening to stage protests, using tactics such as what he calls "human roadblocks". With the country facing a dilemma on the future treatment of indigenous land currently leased to Fiji Indian farmers, Suva based journalist **Craig Skehan** looks at central issues underlying the debate.ql



Butadroka: the force behind the land debate

Martin Tiffany

THE Fijian man with the steely stare and the trade-mark bow-tie, Sakeasi Iliesa Bakewa Butadroka, has stirred the political pot on the vexed issue of indigenous land ownership and control.

Some optimists believe there is still potential for a negotiated sharing of land which would form the basis for a wider political consensus in the still divided nation. But others see only a social time bomb ticking away and nobody determined and capable enough to defuse it.

Butadroka, in his 60s, sits in the parliamentary Opposition with several others, at times less hardline, Fijian nationalists. But he is surrounded by Fiji Indian MPs — men who represent the community that Butadroka from time to time says should all be deported back to India. After elections held last May, Butadroka wanted to form a governing coalition with 1987 coup leader Sitiveni Rabuka's Fijian Political Party (FPP), which embraces the country's conservative Fijian chiefs. But this chiefly elite — together with representatives of minorities such as Europeans, Chinese and people of mixed race — would not tolerate an alliance with the nationalists. Butadroka now tends to view Rabuka as a captive of the moderates.

Away from the limelight, brooding and fighting to maintain a popular power base, Butadroka attacks the majority indigenous government for not radically challenging the status quo. He sees that status quo as an historical legacy under which land acquired by European settlers last century is alienated from the original owners. And, even worse from his perspective, bureaucratic structures set up before 1970 independence from Britain continue to control other native lands in terms of leasing and development decisions — usurping involvement by ordinary native Fijians.

"It would be better if government had boiled a large pot of water and killed all the Fijians in it," Butadroka says. He laments "betrayal" by traditional chiefs of the past. "We have been looked down upon, here and throughout the world, because we are spoon fed, and waiting for things to be done for us in order to earn our living in the world," he said recently.

discontent

He unsuccessfully moved a motion in Parliament demanding that all issues related to control of natural resources be resolved before commencement of a review of the post-coup constitution enshrining Fijian political dominance. As well as extensive acquisition of alienated freehold land for traditional owners and payment of rents for Crown land, Butadroka's nationalists want village proprietary rights on fishing grounds and royalties for mineral resources. Fellow nationalist Kolinio Qiqiawaqa says that if land and economic control issues were not resolved "we are on course for another explosion in the near future".

In Fiji there are 1,822,921 hectares of land spread over several hundred islands in the Koro Sea. Some 1,519,956 hectares is native land, of which 431,186 hectares is leased and 149,081 hectares is freehold. Bureaucratic red tape, and the fact that the government's Native Lands Trust Board (NLTB) takes 25 per cent of lease payments to cover its own overheads, are specific sore points. Some people also question the fairness of regional hereditary chiefs getting a large slice of collected rents. But the really big underlying issue revolves around what will happen from 1996 onwards, as thousands of 30-year leases held by Indian farmers expire under the Agricultural Landlords and Tenants Act (ALTA). If indigenous Fijians resume control of developed agricultural lands - including sugar producing areas which are Fiji's biggest source of foreign earnings - will productivity levels be maintained? There is past evidence that land returned to Fijian control has often been either less efficiently utilised or not used at all.

Freed from sugar plantation servitude by the 1920s, Indian indentured labourers pressed for access to land. "I would say that the usage of land, not so much ownership in Fiji's context, is in the blood of the Indians," Opposition MP Ali Hussain says. "What use is it having a continent of land if you can't utilise it in a productive manner?"

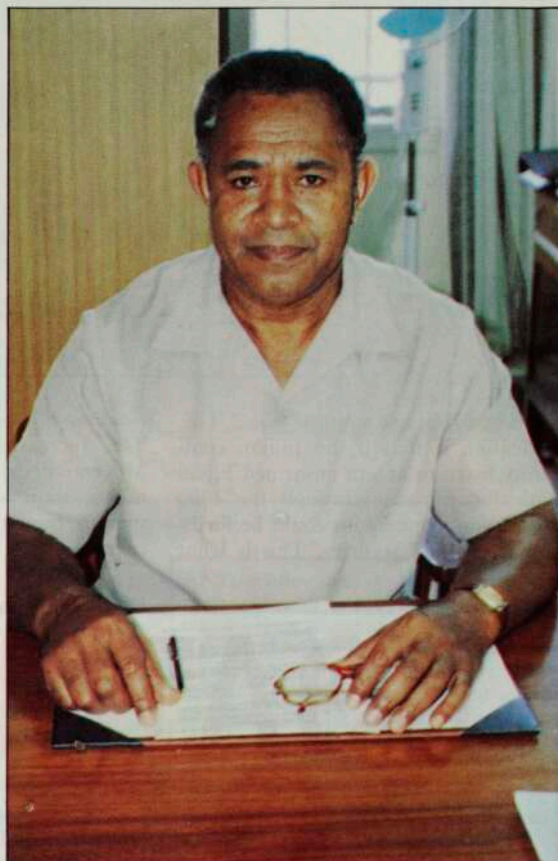
A former head of the NLTB and longtime internal government rival of Rabuka, Josevata Kamikamica, says the existing system had ensured greater stability in rural Fiji than many other developing countries. He points to the advantages of a system ensuring that

leasehold land was available for efficient farmers and public infrastructure.

(Butadroka maintains that countries such as Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu are better off than Fiji because of greater grass roots control over land. But he generally ignores major associated problems, particularly protracted and at times violent compensation disputes over mines and other developments).

Deputy Prime Minister Timoci Vesikula has warned that any violation of freehold property rights would scare off foreign investors. He said since June 1992, about 36,000 hectares of Crown land had reverted to indigenous claimants, with plans for more transfers. In 1992, rents received by the NLTB, including royalties on forestry and gravel, totalled F\$17.2 million — compared to only about F\$1 million 19 years ago. Vesikula says if it had not been for ALTA, Fiji would not have prospered as it has. On a conciliatory note, Vesikula said the government was exploring the possibility of providing for clans to actually own reefs and river beds. The problem here is that the extremely slow pace of conducting necessary surveys has potential to exacerbate frustrations.

Rabuka says that when he's asked about retracting freehold land rights of current non-Fijian owners, he replies, "Would you like the government to come and take off your shirt and give it to the person next to you?". He holds that the proverbial horse has bolted and the only option was to buy back freehold land. Rabuka quotes from the Bible, "Whatever you do about the land, let oppression be not the motive." But Ra-



Martin Tiffany

Kamikamica: existing system ensures stability

buka, who at some future time might need the nationalists' support, is careful to keep cordial relations with Butadroka.

The pro-indigenous Taukei Movement, which was a major player in Rabuka's 1987 coups deposing an Indian-majority coalition government, has called for an increase in land rents in line with a World Bank report suggesting that rents are artificially low. This raises the whole question of the long term viability of sugar farming. With cane farms averaging a meagre four hectares, the income in thousands of cases is only equivalent to US\$2,500 a year or less. Even that remuneration is dependent on the fact that Europe pays substantially above world market price for Fiji sugar in an arrangement which constitutes a form of foreign aid. Some indigenous

COVER STORY

Fijians suggest that Indian sugar farmers don't appreciate the extent of this assistance. Such artificial support, however, can't last forever. If the sugar industry eventually collapses, economically viable alternatives will need to be urgently found. And it is difficult to predict at this stage just what the implications might be for already strained landlord/tenant relationships.

On the wider political front, there have been hints that Rabuka and those close to him perceive potential for the whole issue of land to be used as a political tool. This implication is that if the Indian community learn to accept enshrined Fijian political dominance through the 1990 constitution, concessions could be forthcoming on land security. This is what

might be labelled a carrot and stick approach; a reward for co-operation, economic punishment for intransigence. Butadroka, on the other hand, wants the future of land sorted out before consti-

On March 10, Fiji's elderly President, Ratu Sir Penaia Ganilau, accused the Taukei Movement of sowing seeds of disunity. He defended the NLTB and urged a renewal of ALTA leases except where indigenous Fijians had well thought out development plans of their own. "We must carefully assess all issues relating to land and decide wisely since land controls are the lifeline of our nation and our future generations," he said.

Meanwhile, Opposition Leader Jai Ram Reddy said he, along with the rest of the Fiji Indian community, accept the principle of traditional Fijian land ownership. But he added dryly that other constitutional rights became a bit meaningless if at the end of the day Indians were left with no land to live on. He also talked about the possibility of future national government subsidisation



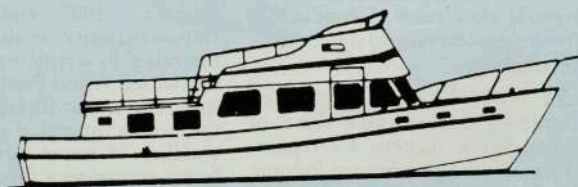
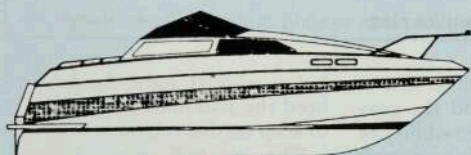
NLTB office in Suva: administering native land

Martin Tiffany

tutional questions are even looked at. The increasing stridency of Taukei Movement calls for return of land or hiking rents does not bode well for smooth resolution of communal differences.

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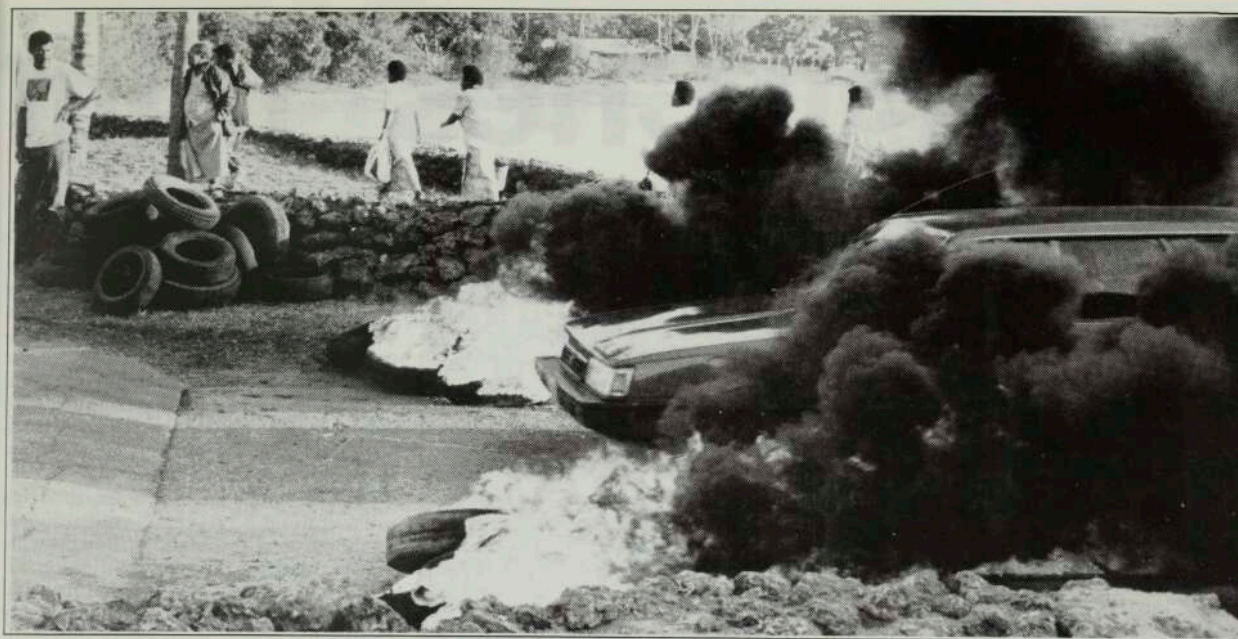
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A land dispute on Fiji's Yanuca Island: triggered off roadblocks last year

of farm rents in order to protect the economy and individual families. Any tenant farmers forced to vacate their farms would need to be covered by some sort of resettlement program, he warned. Governments of regional countries such as Australia and New Zealand follow the Fiji land debate closely. They understand that if things fell apart here in terms of arrangements for land security, there could be a tide of would-be refugees to rival the estimated 30,000 Indians who left Fiji after the 1987 coups.

One of the factors that makes the current social, political and economic mix dangerous is that ethnic Fijian expectations were raised by Rabuka becoming Prime Minister. After all, he was the man who, with purported 'divine' inspiration, said he wanted to establish a new era of Fijians controlling their own destiny and resources. Butadroka suggests that if legitimate demands can be met, a sort of utopia will prevail. "Once the Fijians are given rights over their resources, land and fishing grounds, then we shall find a new Fiji," he said. The non-Fijians will be more comfortable and the Fijians will become happier. Everyone will be thankful and no one will be sad." However genuine Butadroka is in expressing such sentiments, the reality is that land is embroiled in the at times dirty business of politics. And even some people who allied themselves with Butadroka politically have been involved in controversies over alleged attempts to use influence to

gain control of land for personal advantage. Ironies abound. For example part-European businessman Tony Stephens, who was Butadroka's election campaign manager last year, caused a political furore over a behind-the-scenes negotiated government compensation payment which if implemented would have seen him secure huge land estates. When it comes to land, there is no shortage of vested interests.

Looking for a brighter side to all this, there is a widespread acceptance that Fijians deserve every opportunity to develop skills necessary to expand their commercial use of land. This would arguably involve getting away from the partly inherited paternalism of the present land administration system. Fijian statesman Ratu Sir Lala Sukuna once said, "At heart the Fijian may still be a subsistence agriculturalist, but with his head, often not so poor a head as some think, he see that he must be more."

Land that forms islands — its boundaries clearly defined by the sea — imbues a special psychological and emotional attachment. This emotional factor could complicate the search for solutions in Fiji if political and community leaders seek to exploit underlying sensitivities rather than sooth tensions. Fiji will pay a high price if efforts are not stepped up to find an equitable way of enhancing Fijian interests without unfairly disadvantaging hardworking Indian farmers.

ANY mention of roadblocks brings back memories of the 1987 military coups when Fijian nationalists — led by the Taukei Movement — used this form of protest to intimidate opponents. Last month, Sakeasi Butadroka said he might be forced to bring back the tactic to reinforce his calls for greater grassroots control of land, fishing grounds and mineral wealth.

What's more, he said such action could be staged to co-incide with a scheduled May meeting of Fiji's Great Council of Chiefs. His idea was that roads on the main island of Viti Levu could be cut by "human roadblocks" comprised of groups of people physically stopping the passage of vehicles.

Former deputy Prime Minister Josevata Kamikamica, speaking to *PIM* from the Australian National University in Canberra where he has been researching a paper dealing with regional land policy issues, expressed disappointment over the protest stand. "It is quite irresponsible for Butadroka to make such a threat. It does not help the cause of the Fijians." He said the Native Lands Trust Board (NLTB) was carrying out studies on how to deal with the expiry of land leases. Politicians should not try and "destabilise" this process for their own ends. "Land issues are always very sensitive and, if handled the wrong way, could lead to violence," Kamikamica said.

WOMEN

Cries from

**For many, the
blockade has
delivered nothing
short of a death
sentence**

By 'Atu Emberson-Bain

WAR exposes in the crudest possible way the destructive potential of human beings. Indeed, throughout history, military offensives and armed struggles have often generated human suffering and oppression on a scale that is difficult to comprehend, still less to reconcile with any kind of social values that acknowledge the sanctity of human life.

Today, in the Pacific region, the crisis that continues to engulf the 160,000 inhabitants of the island of Bougainville underscores the human destruction associated with war and the political and economic calculations that commonly spawn it.

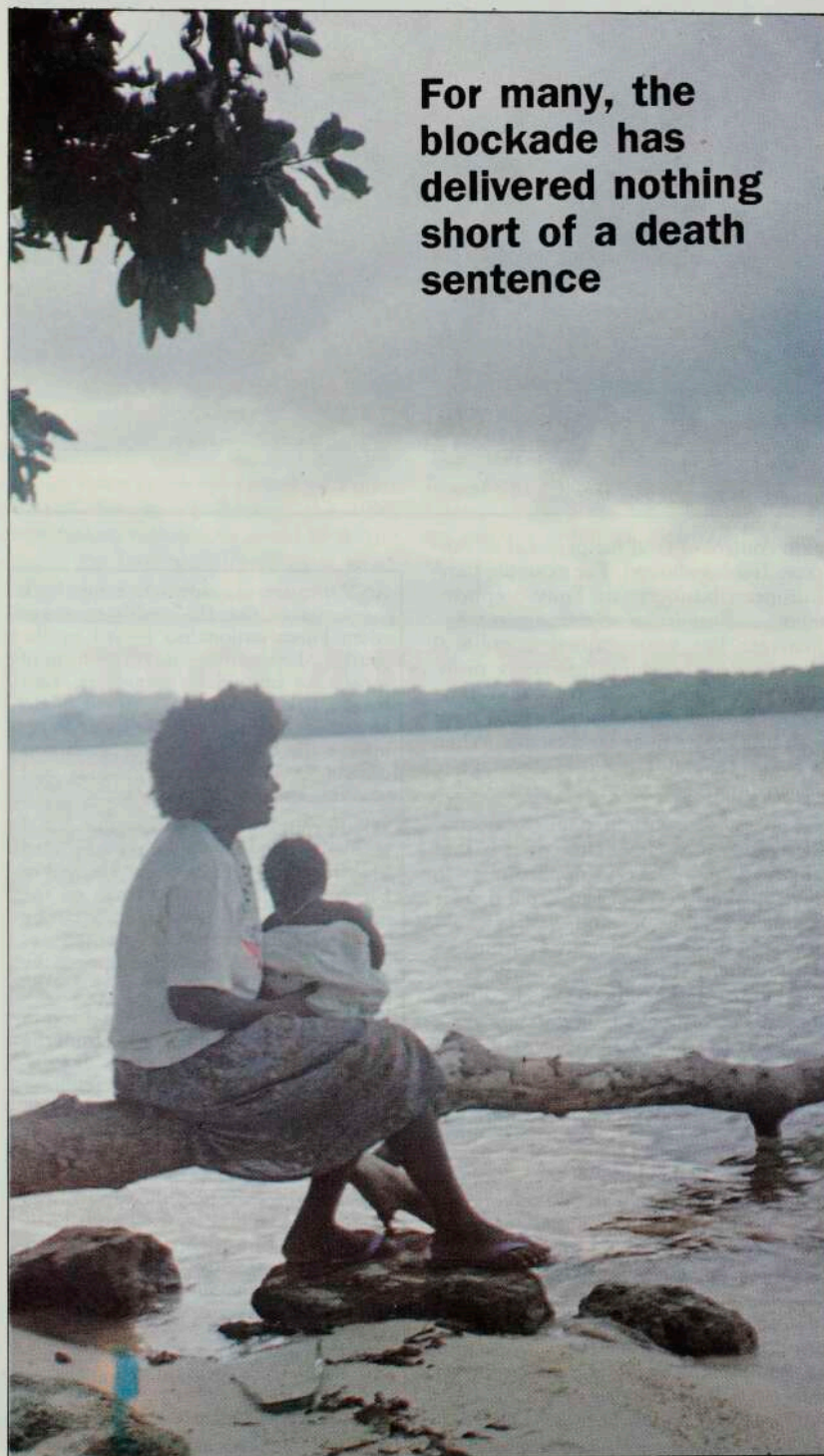
But there is also an obvious irony in that the price for war is commonly paid by those who have little, if anything, to do with the decision to engage in it. For example, rarely do women make war, but all too often they pay dearly for it.

Bougainville is no exception. The insistence on a military solution continues to threaten the livelihoods and welfare of ordinary Bougainvillean people.

The chosen course of a military offensive by the Papua New Guinea government, and the economic and medical blockade, have brought social dislocation and deprivation of unprecedented proportions. Hundreds of lives have been lost and families have been split apart.

In the sleepy coastal town of Gizo in the Western Province of the Solomon Islands, refuge to the many Bougainvilleans seeking medical treatment, Catherine, a young woman from Buin, in Southern Bougainville, frets over the fate of the four children she had to leave behind. "I don't know where they are. I hope one of my relatives has taken them safely into the bush, but I don't know."

It is a predicament shared by many Bougainvillean women. Sharon, also from Buin, has similarly braved her way to the Shortlands, then to Gizo, crossing treacherous waters heavily patrolled by the PNG Defence Forces. She came to give birth to her second child, leaving her three-year-old daughter with her grandfather hiding in the bush. The only news she has had — six months ago — is that they were captured by the army and taken to one of the military-controlled "care centres".



mothers of the land

Julie, a nurse on the island, has parents and siblings all in care centres controlled by the PNG military. She has seen none of them since 1989.

Probably the most deadly weapon for thousands of Bougainvilleans has been the blockade. The blockade has meant no electricity for the hospitals and health centres, critical shortages of life-supporting drugs and medicines and a dangerous depletion of qualified medical personnel.

The blockade has meant a lack of facilities to deal with anything from childbirth to emergency cases. It has meant pregnant women have died needlessly in childbirth and that babies and young children have died from easily preventable diseases. No babies born after late 1989 have been immunised against killers like TB, measles and whooping cough. For many, the blockade has delivered nothing short of a death sentence.

The war has delivered other human horrors. One of them is the ubiquitous "care centre", which for Bougainvilleans is cynically called *haus kalabus*, a *tok pidgin* term which literally means prison house. An estimate of the World Council of Churches in October, 1992 puts the number of people living in the centres at around 40,000, which represents a quarter of the total population.

Stories abound of rapes of young women and resultant pregnancies, food shortages, controls on people's movements, human rights abuses, pay-back killings, and poor health services in the centres. For one young Bougainvillean mother currently in the Solomon Islands, "It is not safe to go back to the care centres. That is why many of us are running away because we have already felt the cruelty of these soldiers."

The atrocities have hardened the women against the grief of losing their young men to the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) and created an ever stronger sense of commitment to the independence struggle.

According to a BUKAN woman whose husband is a church minister, "before when the BRA went out fighting and after the young men died, there would be a lot of crying and tears. But today, I think we're running out of tears. We are seeing the loyalty of the young people who are dying in order to protect our land. They are making sacrifices for our freedom."

Another woman echoes these senti-

ments. "We are proud of our young men because they are fighting for our country. I mean when they die, it's a reward for our boys there in Bougainville ... We feel sad but when the reality comes, we just accept it because for us, it's been going on a long time."

There are other hardships to face, among them learning to walk the tight rope of life in the jungle. Bougainvilleans are not a nomadic people and they don't normally live in the bush. They are used to cultivating gardens close to permanent homesteads. The physical difficulties and trauma of being continuously on the run from an enemy over the last four years is hard to imagine. Families leave with only what they can carry with them, and it is especially hard when they have to move with young children.

When the PNG forces landed at Tunuru mission, close to Arawa in central Bougainville in November 1992, Anna fled with a young two-year-old daughter. "We women faced a very hard time then, carrying children on our backs, and our luggage, running up further into the mountain. We had to move further from Arawa town because they were just throwing mortars, and helicopters were just spraying cars or any object moving around in town if they see. It really happened there. ... I tell you my tears came out when we were running because it was really hard for me, carrying my child and all my things."

According to Marilyn, a health worker from Arawa who has accompanied a woman patient to Honiara, life in the humid and densely forested environment of the jungle poses health hazards, not the least of which is a higher incidence of malaria and chest infection. The problem is compounded by the difficulties of building houses that are warm.

Marilyn explains, "The higher you go, the temperatures get cooler. Bougainvilleans are used to living in warmer places. And many people are now moving around with less clothing. At the same time, the huts are not suitable — just roofs and maybe no walls. Water is also a problem and people are either using the river or stream and bush for sanitary purposes. In our own environment, we would have pit latrines or flush toilets in our own houses."

Another problem for those living in the bush is getting access to food gardens and, in Marilyn's view, a rising incidence of malnutrition amongst children ap-

pears to be linked to this. "It is not that there is a shortage of food. It is just that women are frightened to go to their gardens."

When they do manage, women must make hurried visits just to collect food. Food has to be cooked on open fires under cover of darkness to reduce the risk of coming under fire from PNG Defence Force helicopters.

So what of the future? Is there a way ahead?

Marilyn believes the intervention of a peace-keeping task force would be a constructive move towards ending the war and resolving the crisis. "I believe where there is tension, it is always wise to have somebody with neutral feelings to come in and maybe become a coordinator, provider or mediator of services, to maintain dialogue between the parties. Through common understanding and dialogue, we should be able to bring peace, harmony and unity among Bougainvilleans, between Papua New Guinea and Bougainville, and between our neighbouring countries, like the Solomon Islands."

For Catherine, the lifting of the blockade and the restoration of health and other services represents the bottom line — indeed the life line of her people. Her voice trembles with emotion as she says, "You know, PNG has cut us off from services for such a long time, so they have to realise that ... even without them, we have been surviving ... they have punished us for so long ... and they should stop."

The cries of Bougainville's women, the innocent victims of war, ring out. But will their cries be heard? Are peace and the restoration of a life line too much to ask for?

For Pacific island governments, the question must surely be asked whether there is not a moral obligation to respond constructively and humanely to the Bougainville crisis. To stare human suffering and violation in the face, and then to walk away, under the comfortable umbrella of minding one's own business or respecting the crisis as an "internal problem", is surely tantamount to acquiescence.

Certainly, there is more than a touch of irony in the fact that in a part of the world where Christianity rules the regional waves, finding the Good Samaritan among the region's power brokers should appear to be such a tall order. □

SPECIAL REPORT

The media in the Pacific has recently been put under pressure making it difficult to maintain its independence and probing stance. Western Samoa passed two new laws in parliament curtailing the freedom and inhibiting the work of journalists. Papua New Guinea is considering drawing up government's policy on the media and Tonga's Akilisi Pohiva has a record five cases before the courts for articles published in his magazine, Kele'a.

PIM takes a look at how the media is faring under this pressure.



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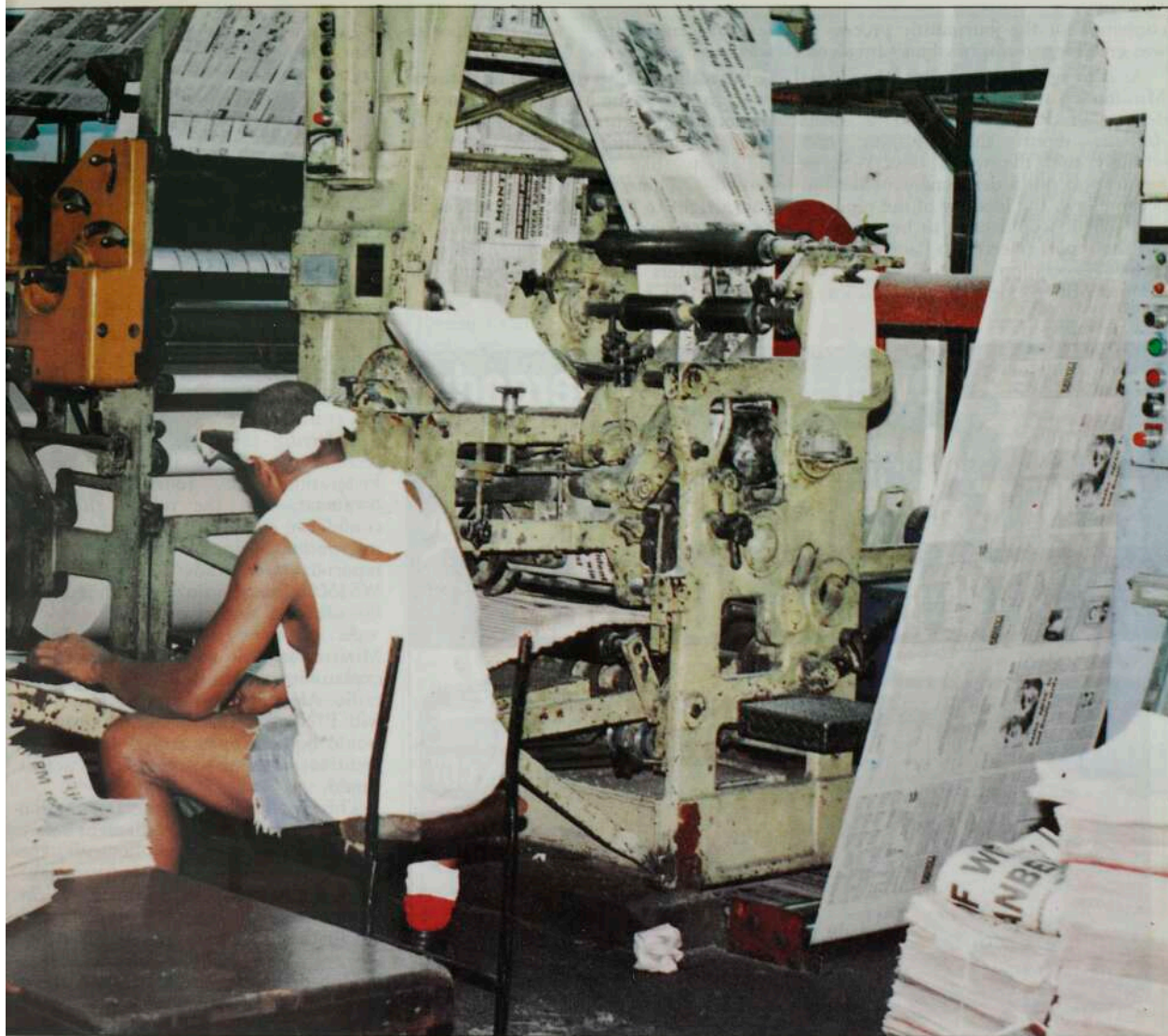
A blow

By Alan Ah Mu

WESTERN Samoan reporters came under siege in early February when Prime Minister Tofilau Eti Alesana introduced the Newspapers and Printers Act and, with a big majority in Parliament, had it passed two days later.

Stunned and then outraged, reporters focussed on one clause — clause 10 — which required them to reveal sources of information in libel cases.

Scepticism greeted Agriculture Minister Misa Telefoni Retzlaff, a lawyer and



to free press

former attorney-general when he said New Zealand and Australia had laws similar to the bill. As it turned out, New Zealand's Newspapers and Printers Act 1955, clause 10, allows a plaintiff to discover the "name of the printer or publisher of any newspaper or of any matter relating to the printing and publishing thereof, in order to enable him more effectually to bring or continue an action for damages".

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.Zealand and Australia had laws similar to the bill. As it turned out, New Zealand's Newspapers and Printers Act 1955, clause 10, allows a plaintiff to discover the "name of the printer or publisher of any newspaper or of any matter relating to the printing and publishing thereof, in order to enable him more effectually to bring or continue an action for damages".

The Samoan version adds after

"thereof" the words, "including any correspondences, written materials or other sources of information whatsoever, in order to enable him more effectually to bring or continue an action for damages".

The country's two major newspapers responded at the earliest opportunity. The *Samoa Observer*, which comes out thrice-weekly, said, "Let us clear this up now, this publication will defy this requirement...no matter the consequences to us".

In less direct terms, the twice-weekly *The Samoa Times* said the same thing and added that either the government held

SPECIAL REPORT

contempt for the journalistic process or was grossly ignorant of what it involved.

As if to support the latter, the Prime Minister on the second day of the bill's debate in Parliament, said a *Radio Australia* report that morning had wrongly told the world that Western Samoa was not a democracy. If the bill became law, the identity of the reporter who sent it would have to be revealed. But the report referred to Pacific Islands News Association (PINA) president, Monica Miller's view that the bill was a

form of censorship — who the reporter was, was immaterial.

Regarding clause 10, the main cause of concern, the Prime Minister explained it protected the rights of those defamed by letters-to-the-editor published under *nom de plumes* (like "Trouble" or "Concerned"). Those thus wronged, he said, had a right to know who had made the defamatory statements so they could be sued. The *Samoa Observer* contended such letter writers preferred anonymity for fear of "fear of reprisals".

But an independent MP Le Tagaloa Pita, publisher of *The South Sea Star*, argued a newspaper had recently been fined W\$20,000 for defamation (a decision now being appealed) before the bill was passed, so the rights of those who felt wronged were already protected.

Opposition MPs accused the government of intimidating the press, with former Cabinet minister Ulualoifaiga Talamaivao Niko, urging fellow MPs not be afraid of criticism — "we're not angels".

The bill was not referred to the bills committee to allow members of the public to express opinions on it and led to *Samoa Observer* publisher Fata Sano Malifa describing it as an "unprecedented swift passage".

Referring to clause 10, the deputy secretary-general of the International Federation of Journalists, Neal Swancott, said the refusal to break confidence imposed by sources was an international principle of journalism. Yet reporters were now faced with a W\$5000 fine or a three-month jail term for adhering to that principle.

As criticism mounted, the Prime Minister felt the need to broadcast an explanation of the bill on government radio. Alesana also said after a meeting with PINA the "lines of communication" would be kept open and if the government saw a need to change the act, it would.

This applied also to the Defamation Act which went before Parliament before the meeting. This time, however, the media was given the opportunity to make submissions on it. JAWS argued against two clauses, which were "original" and not in the NZ statute it was based on. One of them made it an offence to publish defamatory statements made in court about someone who was not a party to the court proceedings. JAWS argued it was up to the judges to decide whether or not statements should be suppressed and the journalist's job was to report what happened in court. Furthermore, evidence was presented under oath and any false statements may be taken care of by existing laws against perjury.

The second clause deals with matter printed about a member of a group when the member is unidentified. Any member of that group who feels "aggrieved", by the report and has "reasonable grounds" for believing others "may suppose that the words are intended to apply to him", can demand a written "disclaimer" saying the published words did not refer to him. JAWS submitted the clause was too vague because, for example, if a story reported carpenters generally were careless, it could result in hundreds of carpenters demanding disclaimers.

The Defamation Bill was passed by Parliament unaltered and, like the Newspapers and Printers Act, is now law. □

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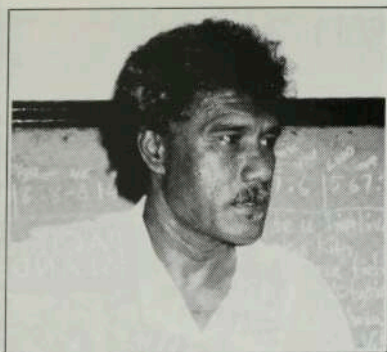
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Pohiva sued

By Bill Morton

AKILISI POHIVA is Tonga's best known politician. Recently elected for his third successive term as a People's Representative to parliament, he is also the government's most outspoken critic. Pohiva's career as an activist and critic began in 1981 when he had a program on local government-run radio. The program content resulted in its termination and Pohiva's dismissal from his government employment (he later won a court case against the government for unlawful dismissal.) In 1986 Pohiva began the monthly newspaper *Ko e Kela'a* ("the conch-shell").

Pohiva now faces a staggering five court cases. All of them are a result of reports in *Kele'a*. Three of these are libel cases involving a total damages bill of TS\$180,000. The other two involve attempts to prevent him from publishing information considered to be "confidential".

The government has already failed in an attempt to win a temporary injunction pending full trial of the case. In his defence in this hearing, Pohiva referred to section 7 (as amended) of the Tonga constitution which states "... There shall be freedom of speech and of the press forever, but nothing in this clause shall be held to outweigh the law of defamation, official secrets, or the laws for the protection of the King and the Royal Family." In refusing a temporary injunction and setting the case for trial the Chief Justice noted that it would be the first in which Section 7 of the Constitution would be a "crucial determining factor". The testing of the material published in *Kele'a* against this clause of the constitution will therefore mean Pohiva's case will become a yardstick for what the Tongan media can and cannot publish in the future. □

What is the media

THE ISLAND



FUTA HELU

MEDIA freedom in the islands is on the balances at this very moment. Papua New Guinea with its Mass Media Tribunal Bill and Fiji's intimidation of the news media with threats of licensing and gagging writs were, a year ago, the principal offenders in this area of Pacific life. But in February this year Western Samoa's Parliament passed the Newspapers and Printers Act and another defamation bill. These laws require journalists to reveal their sources in libel actions.

And, as if following suit, the Tonga government later in the same month sought injunction on Tonga's newspaper *Kele'a*, but was unsuccessful. Today, however, a case is being heard at Tonga's Supreme Court — one that promises to decide the fate of media freedom in Tonga. The government is suing the editor of *Kele'a*, Akilisi Pohiva, for publishing government "classified" material.

There is widespread confusion as to what really is this thing, the media, and what to do with it. Thus Vanuatu's deputy Prime Minister S. Regenvanu in an address to the Pacific Journalists Association in 1991 said that media principles must be adapted to cultural conditions. He called this balanced reporting! Even the president of the PJA, Frank Senge, and Ambie Bulum, secretary of PNGJA tend in this direction. They believe media should first help to build "a resilient political and economic structure" and only after to stand watchdog over it. In the event of the politico-economic structure being well-built, however — and sufficiently resilient — the watchdog function of the media would be superfluous and cannot be sustained.

But the important point is that the media is an institution with a distinct morality and set of values of its own. These values are part of the morality of liberal democracy, for modern media culture is an institutional embodiment of freedom of expression and the right to be well and truly informed. This is a point overflowed by Mr Tofilau Eti Alesana, Prime Minister of Western Samoa, when he asked for the reporter who told the world Samoa was not a democracy in his comments on PINA's Monica Miller's communication on media legislation in Samoa. And it is this very character of the

media that grates on local cultures whose values are directly opposed to media values.

Viewed against this cultural backdrop the prospects for media freedom in the islands is very bleak indeed. The situation in Vanuatu has not really improved since the expulsion of Coombe in 1983, the print and electronic media in the

Cooks are gripped by self-doubt and an identity crisis; Tahiti operates with a media governed by the Bomb and the Satellite; and everything in the Solomons is kept in place by the iron hand of the Solomon Islands Broadcasting Commission, etc, etc.

So media freedom is going to have a rough ride for quite a while, and may never eventuate at all as long as the state and traditional privileges mean the same thing in the island world. What has to be recognised is that the road to a free media in the islands is for media to be privately owned.

New Zealand in 1991 contributed massively to the erosion of liberal values and media freedom by her Employment Contracts Act which demolished trade unionism and the right of association and collective bargaining. In passing this law, New Zealand was setting a bad example for the islands which doggedly follow whatever she does. But being a society with withering sentiments, she just can't help it.

The other important question in this connection is that of censorship. The King of Tonga in a 1969 interview with government newspaper *The Chronicle* said of censorship that if it was suppression or slanting of news because it is awkward or revelatory of malpractice then that would be a bad thing. This, however, is not the only kind of censorship that is the curse of a journalist's life. There is also legalism, the presumption that lawyers — who do things mostly by custom — are perfect, comprehensive arbiters who can prescribe for all questions. International opinion is increasingly aware that law can be quite deficient in censorship where it relates to the question of moral goodness and evil. Censorship is invariably the replacing of the good by the bad. □

SPECIAL REPORT

Greater freedom

By Martin Tiffany

MEDIA freedom is alive and well in Fiji although its record in the six years since the coups has been far from exemplary. The 1987 coups had obviously cast a dark shadow over the country in the eyes of the international community. And the hard-line attitude during the time towards the media and journalists did little to help — with journalists getting thrown in jail, newspapers closing down — *The Fiji Sun* never reopened — and radio news being censored.

Following the coups the interim-government shook the proverbial big stick at the news gatherers and publishers, threatening annual registration of newspapers and/or the annual licensing of the news media. Thankfully, after much opposition and debate the plan was finally dropped.

Under Freedom of Expression, Chapter Two, Section 13, of the new constitution of Fiji, media freedom is guaranteed and protected. It gives the government no legal authority or official policy to control the news media or to muzzle it.

However, a criminal libel decree, proposed just before the May 1992 general elections, did little to prove the interim-government supported media freedom. It was seen as its parting shot at the media. The decree the interim-government wanted to promulgate would make libel a criminal offence carrying penalties of up to two years in jail or a F\$2000 fine.

Again opposition to the proposal probably resulted in it being abandoned.

Indeed Fiji's current situation has the country's four main news sources — *The Fiji Times*, *The Daily Post*, Fiji Broadcasting Commission and *FM 96* — praising the new administration. And as Suva lawyer Barrie Sweetman points out the laws that govern Fiji's media are basically the same as those of Britain, Australia and New Zealand.

Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka, the new Prime Minister, has declared his administration is open and accessible to the media. Apisalome Tudreu, permanent secretary for Information, Broadcasting and Television, looks at the media as a sounding-board and government's link with the people even though it will not always be kind to the government.

William Parkinson, managing director of Communications (Fiji) Limited which runs the FM96 radio station, says the arrival of Rabuka saw the arrival of free media. He suggests one reason for this is that Rabuka is comfortable with the media and likes the spotlight. Rabuka is a modern Pacific

island leader, one who knows how to handle the media. *The Fiji Times* editor Jale Moala, too, has a similar opinion of Rabuka. "Rabuka is open, he has never sued anyone and he never retracts anything he has said," said Moala.

Government-owned Fiji Broadcasting Commission's acting news and current affairs editor, Francis Herman, explains, "The stigma remains. Many of our journalists joined when we had restrictions so they practise self-imposed self-censorship, which is the worst kind of censorship," said Herman.

But Herman is quick to tell of their newfound freedom. Under the previous government, he said, there were directives for news content from the Ministry of Information, such as the Minister for Information, Ratu Inoke Kubuabola, bursting into the studio in his jogging attire one morning and confiscating a story he did not approve of. (The story was about a satellite receiver dish that had been put up at government buildings.)

While the Broadcasting Act empowers the Information Minister to control program content, there has been little interference since Rabuka's administration.

There has been criticism, however, of the content of the nightly *News Focus*, compiled by the ministry's video centre and broadcast on "temporary" television service Fiji One. Tudreu agrees this is not a proper independent news service but an information service for the government.

Moala and *Daily Post's*, Nemani Delaibatiki, say they have no outside pressures on them when it comes to deciding what goes in the paper.

Delaibatiki, Moala, Parkinson and Herman all however mention one thing that does affect story content — culture.

"Compared to other Pacific islands, Fiji is in a more difficult position as they have two major races (Fijians and Indians) and three major religions (Christianity, Hinduism and Islam)," said Moala. "So you have to be sensitive to some issues." However, he said the people had to be educated to accept more criticism of these sensitive issues as the "world was opening up" and people were being exposed to more outside influences.

Tudreu assures us there are no plans in the pipeline to try and control the media, although there are plans on the drawing board for a media commission. There has been some apprehension expressed, especially from the media, on the setting up of such a commission. Tudreu said the idea was the commission would advise rather than police the media. □



A selection of Pacific publications

Ownership

By Wally Hiambohn

PAPUA New Guinea media's freedom has only once been seriously threatened. That was in the form of a Media Bill initiated by Prime Minister Paias Wingti's first government in 1989. The bill was the brainchild of then Communications Minister Gabriel Ramoi — now serving a three-year jail term for misappropriating public funds.

The purpose of the bill was to come up with a unified legislation to be administered by a quasi-judicial body, the Mass Media Tribunal. Under the proposal all media organisations would require a licence, granted by the Tribunal, to operate and licensing criteria would take into account national interest, fairness and effective ownership and control by Papua New Guineans.

The licence, valid for six months, would be renewed at the discretion of the Tribunal. The tribunal would also have the powers to direct or prohibit publication of material it considered, among other things, to be of "national importance".

Many saw it as a definite attempt by the government to restrict the freedom of the media in PNG. The Bill was eventually shelved and has not seen the light of day since.

The current Wingti government has made moves to address the issue of communications with the aim of introducing a communications policy. As a



concerns

first step, a seminar was held early January to gauge views from people within and outside of the industry. While the government's own views for a policy were vague, the media representatives took the opportunity to forewarn against any moves to curtail media freedom. *Post Courier* editor Oseah Philemon stressed from the outset there were already sufficient laws to control the media.

"Freedom of information and expression is guaranteed under the PNG constitution and the people of PNG cherish it," he said. "If this freedom is curtailed, then you can kiss goodbye to democracy in the country."

He said the media was already subject to existing laws regarding libel and defamation. Philemon submitted that a national communications policy must protect the independence and freedom of the media from any form of government control. Philemon is also a member of the committee now formulating the communications policy.

"I don't think the government wants to curtail freedom of the media in the country but there is an increasing feeling in government on ownership of the media. The media in PNG enjoys freedom not enjoyed by comparable developing countries in the world but that freedom has a qualification in that we have a responsibility. It would be irresponsible to abuse that freedom. It is the right of the people to be informed but we must also know our responsibilities."

PNG Journalists Association representative Neville Togarewa claimed had learned the government wanted to set up

a Journalists Registration Board. The JRB, he said, would have powers to set standards of performance and professionalism for journalists, register all journalists, receive and consider complaints against journalists and deregister journalists performing below a certain standard.

He said it was contrary to the constitution which guaranteed freedom of expression and freedom of the media. "It is not in the best interests of the media, it is not in the best interests of the government, the national and the people; and it is not in the best interest of democracy."

On the question of media ownership Communications Secretary Lindsay Lailai said, "Papua New Guineans must own these (media) organisations or have greater equity in order that what is produced, broadcast, televised or printed represents our true aspirations as a nation and not pursue the objectives of pure monetary gain. The policy must address the issue of media ownership in the country with proper government assistance and support."

PNG has five newspapers — Rupert Murdoch's *Post Courier*; the weekly *Times of Papua New Guinea*; *Wantok*; *Weekend Sports* and the monthly *Business Times* owned by the mainstream churches; one television station, *EMTV* owned by Australian Kerry Packer; two national radio stations — the *Karai Service* and *Kalang FM* run by the government's National Broadcasting

Commission.

Bound by a code of ethics, and laws of defamation, contempt and sedition, the media in PNG, however, has always been free and vibrant, reporting on the good as well as the ills of its society. Stories on corruption, mismanagement of public funds, conduct of leaders and crime are reported on widely and prominently alongside reports on development and occasions of national importance. The media is free to comment on most issues, except of course those that are *sub judice*.

In November media freedom was threatened when PNG's Censorship Board's banned the Australian current affairs program *60 Minutes* from the local *EMTV*. The program, which has popular following on prime time television, was banned a segment featuring a video-clip of pop star Madonna was considered in bad taste and portraying sex. The clip showed Madonna in a semi-nude pose while performing.

Newspapers were flooded with letters, mostly criticising the ban. Communications Minister Martin Thompson said, "I have been fully briefed on the events leading up to the banning of the program and I fail to appreciate such a move on grounds that *EMTV* relaying matters of sex." He said *60 Minutes* had proven to be highly informative and should not be censored because of the one "sex-related" episode.

Finally, the board relented and authorised the program's return.

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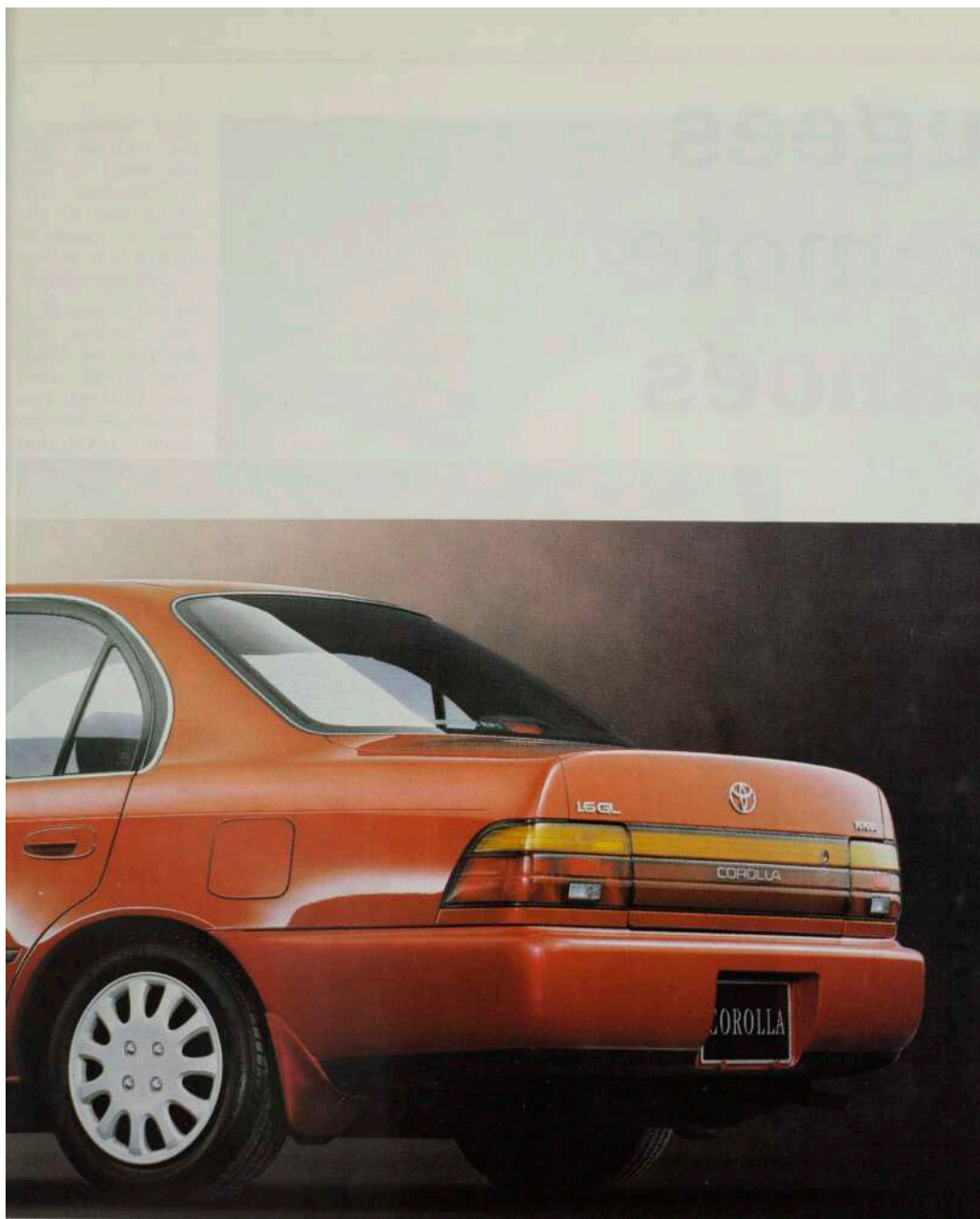
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 **TOYOTA**

SCIENCE

Refugees on remote volcanoes

By Dieter Rinke

NIUAFO'OU, equidistant from Western Samoa, Taveuni, and the Vava'u group of Tonga, is the home of an un conspicuous, though highly remarkable species of bird — the Tongan Megapode (*Megapodius pritchardii*), locally known as the *malau*. It is drab brown, not much bigger than the ubiquitous banded rail, but has a most unusual breeding behaviour.

Unlike all other birds, megapodes do not sit on their eggs to incubate them, but leave this task to external heat sources. In the case of the Tongan megapode, it is the heat from volcanic ducts which incubates and hatches the egg. So what the *malau* lacks in dramatic appearance is certainly made up for in its behaviour.

On Niuafo'ou, megapodes are now largely restricted to the caldera of the volcanic crater, an area not extending 10 km². Thus, the *malau*, has the smallest range of any species of bird of similar or larger size. Their favourite habitat is the dense rainforest surrounding the lake within the crater, where they spend most of the day searching for food in the leaf litter. Insects, worms, and small fruit of forest trees are taken, possibly also small lizards and some seeds.

Tongan megapodes are monogamous, with a pair defending a territory all year round. A duet song, which is almost always initiated by the male, keeps the pair bonded.

The nesting grounds are distributed around the crater lake (Vai Lahi), and on the islands on the lake. Established sites have been used for generations, and each area is visited by several hens. Egg laying usually starts early in the morning. It is a laborious task to dig a burrow, sometimes two metres deep. After having laid the egg, the burrow has to be filled up again with soil.

Megapodes, especially the hens, pay a high price for not actively incubating the egg, and for not having the sometimes



A megapode chick: emerging from its natural incubator

nerve-racking task of caring for a bunch of curious chicks. The hen produces an egg which is about 1/5 her weight. Only the New Zealand kiwi lays an egg which is proportionately heavier. The *malau* egg needs to have enough protein to produce a chick, that is fully ready to fly and completely independent — it is ready to cope with all the challenges of life in a tropical rain forest, without any parental guidance upon emergence from the soil. The production of an egg keeps the megapode pair permanently busy searching for protein-rich food. The male supports the female by providing her with the most nutritious food items he

finds. During the egg laying season, every hen has a personal peak of laying, and lays an egg every 10 to 12 days. It is still not known how many eggs are produced by an individual hen each year.

Malau chicks hatch after an incubation of about 50 days, depending on the temperature of the soil, which has to be around 35 C. This is considerably lower than in all other birds, which incubate their eggs at a body temperature of about 40 C. The hardships of life begin with the process of hatching. The chick has to burst the egg which is entirely enclosed in soil. But evolution provided it with extraordinarily big feet (the scientific

megapodius literally means "big foot"). These are also necessary to dig its way up to freedom, a procedure which may require two days.

During its way to the surface, the quills are stripped from the feathers, and the chick emerges as a feathered bird. It has nothing in common with the downy neat chicks of pheasant, partridges and fowl, the *megapodes*' closest relatives. Without any form of parental guidance, it needs to know from the very beginning what to do to cope with the challenges of living in the rainforest.

Barn owls and feral cats are preying on *megapode* chicks, but probably the most severe threat comes from the attacks of long-legged ants. Recent studies have revealed, that in the same moment as the chicks reach the surface, these ants try to get attached to the chicks' eyes, which are immediately blinded. Once the ants succeed, the chicks, handicapped in this way, fall easy to prey to the carnivorous predators.

While Tongan *megapodes* became extinct throughout the rest of Tonga during the times when humans arrived, they co-existed on Niuafo'ou for about 3000 years. Over-exploitation of eggs from the nesting grounds and excessive hunting resulted in the loss of most *megapode* populations. On Niuafo'ou, *megapodes* may have survived because some of their nesting sites are almost inaccessible. Alternative explanations are possible: volcanic eruptions, of which nine occurred during the past 200 years alone, may have given rise to temporary emigrations of the inhabitants. During such times, the *megapodes* could recover. There are also reports of a prohibition by local chiefs to collect eggs after volcanic eruptions, when the number of *megapodes* was very low. The topography of Niuafo'ou also seems to have been important for the persistence of the birds — the islands in the large crater lake were, and still are, rather safe refuges.

Thus, over the centuries, a balanced relationship between humans and *megapodes* must have developed. Some disturbing factors must have been introduced recently, because there is a slight



A pair of megapodes: in the dark forest of Niuafo'ou

decline in *megapodes*. In the 1970s, 800 *megapodes* were estimated to live on the island, while an ongoing study revealed the existence of 600 to 700. There is little evidence about the causes of the *malau*'s decline, but this is reason enough to implement a conservation program for a species of less than 700 individuals on 10 km² of suitable habitat.

There are many examples of intensive management of rare species in their natural environment. All such programs require the intensive engagement of trained personnel over long periods. The costs involved easily surpass \$100,000, in a few cases reaching some million dollars. Considering the number of species, which are threatened with extinction, in the Pacific alone, long-term management does not seem to be the adequate solution. We would have to focus on a few selected species, but leave the others to vanish.

The crucial clue for the preservation of rare species in the Pacific comes from recent archaeological and paleontological studies. The present distribution of birds in the Pacific is an artifact of human impact.

Most species, which are now very restricted in range, had a much wider distribution in pre-human times. The *megapodes* are no exception, and the biogeographical mystery of the existence of the *malau* on Niuafo'ou now becomes clear.

It is the only Polynesian survivor of a once wide-spread group of birds, which probably lived on every island eastwards to Samoa and Tonga.

The technique of translocation, the transfer of birds from islands, where they are exposed to uncontrollable threats, to

islands, which appear to be safe refuges, has been developed to perfection by the New Zealand Department of Conservation.

Tonga has several islands, mainly remote and almost inaccessible volcanoes, which seem to be suitable new homes for the *malau*.

At present, Tofua, Late and Fonualei are being surveyed with regards to the most important requirement for

megapode survival, volcanically warmed soil, where they can dig their eggs.

Ann Goth and Uwe Vogel from the Ruhr University in Bochum, Germany, are currently investigating what should be transferred — eggs, young chicks, or adult *megapodes*.

Their study is part of a conservation program for the *malau*, conducted by the Brehm Fund South Seas Expedition. The transfers will commence in early 1993, hopefully resulting in the successful establishment of a *malau* population on at least two more Tongan islands.

● The Brehm Fund for International Bird Conservation, based in the Federal Republic of Germany, started this project in 1989. It is by far the most expensive and extensive venture of this non-profit organisation so far. The aim is to develop a comprehensive strategy for wildlife preservation in the tropical Pacific, targetting birds such as the *malau*. The first part of the project is concentrating on Tonga.

The activities involved are manifold, including surveys of remote islands, studies of rare species and the cause of their rareness, and activities to guarantee the survival of endangered species. Work in the mostly remote and otherwise inaccessible islands would not be possible without 70 feet yacht *Breum* which has been donated to the Brehm Fund for this purpose.

An exhibit of live birds and conservation issues has been set up on Tonga-tapu to create awareness of the critical situation of the islands' natural heritage.

The project is directed by Dr Dieter Rinke, co-author of the *South Pacific Regional Bird Conservation Programme - Plan for Action*. □

PROFILE

The Sunias' rise from

By David North

FAMILIES play important roles in the politics of all islands, but the recent ups and downs of the Sunia family in American Samoa may be without precedent.

Four years ago the head of the family was in a Mainland prison for mis-using federal funds — now Fofo Sunia and his three siblings all hold powerful positions in the American Samoan Government (ASG).

Tause Sunia was elected Lieutenant Governor on A.P. Lutali's Democrat ticket in November.

Soon thereafter Lutali appointed Aitofele Sunia to what is probably the most important position in his Cabinet, that of Treasurer.

And then their sister, Vaoita Savali, an experienced radio broadcaster, was named by Lutali to run the government-owned television station, and, as such, serves as head of the of ASG Office of Information.

Meanwhile, their eldest brother, Fofo, is the ranking staff member of the *Fono*, Samoa's legislature.

Although the positions are important, the immediate tasks for the Sunias are not pleasant:

● Tause, as acting Governor, was given the job of running a major reduction in workforce — wiping out the jobs of 1000 of ASG's 5000 employees — while Governor Lutali was off in Washington, helping to celebrate the inauguration of Bill Clinton.

● Brother Aitofele, as Treasurer, had to try to scrape together enough money to meet the payroll; which consumes a

remarkable 84 per cent of ASG's expenditures. (The departing Republican Governor, Peter Tali Coleman, had left an empty treasury when he left office.)

● And sister Vaoita had to try and explain all the bad news through the ASG information office and its television station.

All in all, a rough challenge for the family.

But the Sunias had seen tougher times in the past.

Fofo, the oldest brother, was born in 1937 into a powerful family which had roots in both Samoas. For example, his mother's brother, Taofilau Eti Alesana, is the Prime Minister of Western Samoa; his mother was born to Western Samoan parents while they were missionaries in Papua New Guinea. The young Fofo studied at high schools in American and Western Samoa and then went to the University of Hawaii where he secured a BA in economics.

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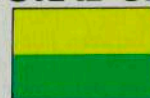
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BORAL GAS



the ashes

He became, fairly early in life, both a high chief and a talking chief (or orator) in Samoa's *matai* system, and 10 years after leaving university he was chosen (by the other *matai* in his village) for a seat in the territorial senate. He had both a modern education and the ancient titles, as well as the skills to move ahead in Samoan politics.

In 1980 he became the first delegate from Samoa to be seated in the US House of Representatives and was re-elected to that post in 1982, 1984 and 1986. He fared well in Congress, and by 1987 had become a chairman of a congressional sub-committee that dealt with non-island affairs, the first island delegate in American history with that distinction.

Meanwhile, with a salary of close to \$100,000 a year, Fofu ran a nearly \$1 million-a-year enterprise — his office in the US House of Representatives. (The other members had similar salaries, of course, but each of them had 10 times as many constituents as Sunia.)

Just why the delegate defrauded the taxpayers is not totally clear, but how he did it, and how he got caught are matters of record.

Press speculation at the time (in 1988) was that Fofu felt a need to entertain — and entertain lavishly — the many Samoans who came to Washington. It was within the tradition, but there was no provision for it in the congressional budget.

According to leaked reports from the prosecutors, what he and his then administrative assistant did was to add several residents of Samoa to the payroll and then cashed the paychecks. As these things go, it was neither a sophisticated nor fool-proof scheme; although the names and salaries of the "ghost employees" appeared in a public document which rarely finds its way to Pago Pago, there was no outcry.

But one of the "ghosts" later found that the federal tax system planned to assess taxes on him for moneys he never received. He complained, and soon federal investigators broke the case.

Fofu Sunia did not have the option of trial in the friendly courts of the islands; since the cheques were signed in Washington, he had a choice of pleading guilty or facing trial in the District of Columbia. He pleaded guilty, was given a fine and a short sentence in prison, and resigned his seat in the House.

Days after finishing his sentence and returning to Pago Pago Fofu Sunia was hired by the *Fono* as a ranking staff

member. Despite his problems with the law, no other Samoan (with the possible exception of the alternating governors, Coleman and Lutali) had his depth of experience with territorial and federal government, and so he was put to work by his former legislative colleagues. He has spent the recent years working quietly, largely out of the limelight.

But in 1992 the Sunia family surged forward.

First there was the selection of Tauese Sunia by A.P. Lutali as his running mate, for the office of Lt. Governor. (In Samoa, as in many Mainland states, the voters select among slates for these offices; if you wanted to vote for Sunia then you had to vote for Lutali, and vice versa.) Tauese had a very special, very Samoan occupation; he worked as a lay advocate (sort of a lawyer-substitute) handling *matai* claims before the High Court of American Samoa.

Lutali and Sunia defeated the Coleman-Tolosa team by a wide margin in the November elections, and were sworn into office in early January.

On the last day of 1992 Lutali announced a number of Cabinet appointments including that of Aitofele Sunia as the new ASG Treasurer. The job is roughly comparable to that of the British Chancellor of the Exchequer or the Australian Treasurer; the incumbent supervises the development of budgets, the collection of taxes, and the payment of wages and other government bills.

There was some criticism of this Sunia appointment on the grounds that the new Treasurer was a lawyer, not a money man. Lutali's spokesman replied the new governor wanted someone with a background in the law "to ensure that the law is followed at all times".

Aitofele had previously served as Chief Legislative Counsel to the *Fono*, and, in more recent years had been in private practice with Ward and Associates. Ironically, earlier in 1992 he had made headlines by successfully defending the former vice-speaker of the island House of Representatives on a fraud charge. Moananu Va had been charged with taking government travel vouchers (for off-island travel), not using them, and converting them to cash. Aitofele had argued not that the act did not happen, but that no crime was involved because ASG did not give Moananu adequate opportunity to return the funds once he was caught. This presumably, is a line of reasoning Aitofele will not use in his new position.

The Sunias, of course, are not the only families involved in American Samoa politics. The appointments of former Governor Coleman's son as his chief-of-staff, and of his son-in-law as Washington representative had been highlighted in earlier issues of *PIM* as was the selection of Coleman's daughter to the non-paid position of American Samoan member of the Republican National Committee. And, more recently, it was learned that Governor Lutali's daughter, Josephine, had been working for the ASG Treasurer's office in an unannounced capacity, but apparently not that of deputy Treasurer.

Meanwhile, Savali Alesana Sunia, mother of the four office-holding Sunias and several other children, is in an odd situation. While she must pay taxes to Aitofele, and can watch Vaota's television, she has never been able to vote for either Fofu or Tauese.

No women and few men in Samoa can vote for representatives in the Samoa territorial senate where Fofu served for so long, as these selections are made by the *matai*. But male and female nationals can and do vote for both Lt. Governor and for the delegate to congress but Ms Sunia is not a national and never can be. Although she has lived most of her life in American Samoa, and her children (born there) are national and prominent ones at that, there is no naturalisation process in American Samoa, so she will remain an alien in her children's country for the rest of her life. □



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artworks

Going an extra mile

UNTIL last year, Australia and New Zealand did not have a firm policy on their aid-funded projects in the South Pacific to ensure maintenance costs (known as recurrent costs) on these were adequately covered. As a result, the issue had been approached on an ad hoc basis. Over the years, the same approach has been adopted by most donors.

The downside of this arrangement was that recipient governments had often not allowed or budgetted sufficiently for maintenance or on-going costs after donor funds have been used, resulting in large expensive capital projects falling into disrepair.

Recurrent costs are a very important component of any aid package. Whatever the argument for and against the affair, it has been one which has caused hiccups in bilateral relations between some Forum Island Countries on one hand, and Australia and New Zealand on the other.

As recent as last year, the Pacific Island Countries/Development Partners' Meeting held at the Forum Secretariat Headquarters in Suva echoed Forum Island Countries' call for understanding and a clearer policy on the issue by Australia and New Zealand.

Finally, it seems, the persistent calls by leaders and officials from Forum Island Countries for understanding by the two developed neighbours have paid off. Australia and New Zealand decided to address this very issue in a joint study last October with a view to formulating an overall policy framework on recurrent cost financing in the South Pacific. A "Joint Australia/New Zealand Policy on Recruitment Cost Finance in the South Pacific" study has found that full consideration of the recurrent or on-going costs of aid projects improves their performance and that donor support for recurrent costs can be a very effective form of aid.

"Australia and New Zealand have decided that they will realistically evaluate and assess all projects in order to identify all recurrent cost implications and ensure that all responsibility for these is properly identified at the commencement of any project," a statement from said.

Hence, recurrent cost support is now Australia's and New Zealand's official aid policy for the South Pacific.

"Community development activities and activities that assist the poor will be particularly targetted and this joint initiative will be funded from within existing bilateral allocations," the statement said.

Australia and New Zealand made it clear though that recurrent cost financing support would not be provided for income-generating projects.

Forum Island Countries which receive millions of dollars in bilateral aid from Australia and New Zealand every year have hailed the initiative as a breakthrough.

Australia and New Zealand ought to be congratulated for their understanding of the complexity of the issue, especially in the face of hard economic times.

This is hardly surprising because their willingness to go an extra mile, so to speak, perhaps underlines the special and unique relationships that both countries enjoy with their

THE FORUM



ALFRED SASAKO

island neighbours.

No doubt, Australia's and New Zealand's leadership in this area will serve as a model to strengthen bilateral relations that Forum Island Countries want to encourage with other donor nations of the world.

In a way, it is a new phase in the ever-revolving donor-recipient aid relationship. Some donor countries may find adjusting to this new arrangement difficult, because of the cost implications, but this adjustment is only temporary because once the recurrent cost financing component is included in the aid package, there will be no misunderstanding by either party in terms of their shared responsibility.

One area Forum Island Countries may have to seriously consider is whether this new arrangement encourages aid dependency - something that many island nations are trying to escape.

This, of course, raises a number of questions. For instance, what Forum Island Countries should do, if they feel the new arrangement does encourage aid dependency.

At the same time, however, any increased commitment by donors to cover maintenance costs for at least an initial period following the completion of the project should not rob Pacific Island Countries of their commitment to self reliance.

This means Pacific Island Countries must increasingly judge the need for projects against their ability to eventually pay the maintenance and on-going costs.

It is, perhaps reassuring to know that Australia and New Zealand are extending their ever-helping hand to island members of the Forum.

The welcome announcement by Australia and New Zealand is expected to be endorsed by the next Pacific Island Countries/Development Partners' Meeting being held at the Forum Secretariat Headquarters in Suva later this month. The April 19-23 donor-recipient get-together is the third since the Forum Secretariat's Economic Development Division organised the first one three years ago.

It serves as a useful avenue for consultations and dialogue on largely aid matters between officials of Forum Island Countries and those representing donor countries and agencies.

One of its main targets is to foster greater levels of consultations, coordination and policy dialogue aimed at more effective aid delivery and increased investment.

Although it is relatively new, the usefulness of this medium has earned it a place in the Forum Secretariat's annual calendar.

Last year's consultation attracted some 90 participants representing Pacific Island Countries, regional organisations, development partner countries, international aid agencies and observers from United Nations agencies.

This year's consultations will cover several main areas including a regional economic review, effective implementation of environmental programs in the South Pacific, human development and population in the region and the way ahead. A draft on the South Pacific Regional Strategy is also expected to be presented to delegates for discussions. □

ARTS

An explosion

By Martin Tiffany

AS A LONELY, recently-married and pregnant young woman Glenise Clelland spent many hours sitting and chatting with women in Suva Market in Fiji. That was in the early 1960s. Those images of carefree and happy women and the vibrant colours of their dress were so strong that 20 years later she decided to paint these "mind pictures". What resulted was an explosion of colour in her bold, almost haunting, style.

But it was quite by accident that she began painting Pacific images. As she

explains, it was not as though she one day planned to paint the images in her head. It just happened. So began her love affair with Pacific painting — what she calls her "Pacific Journey".

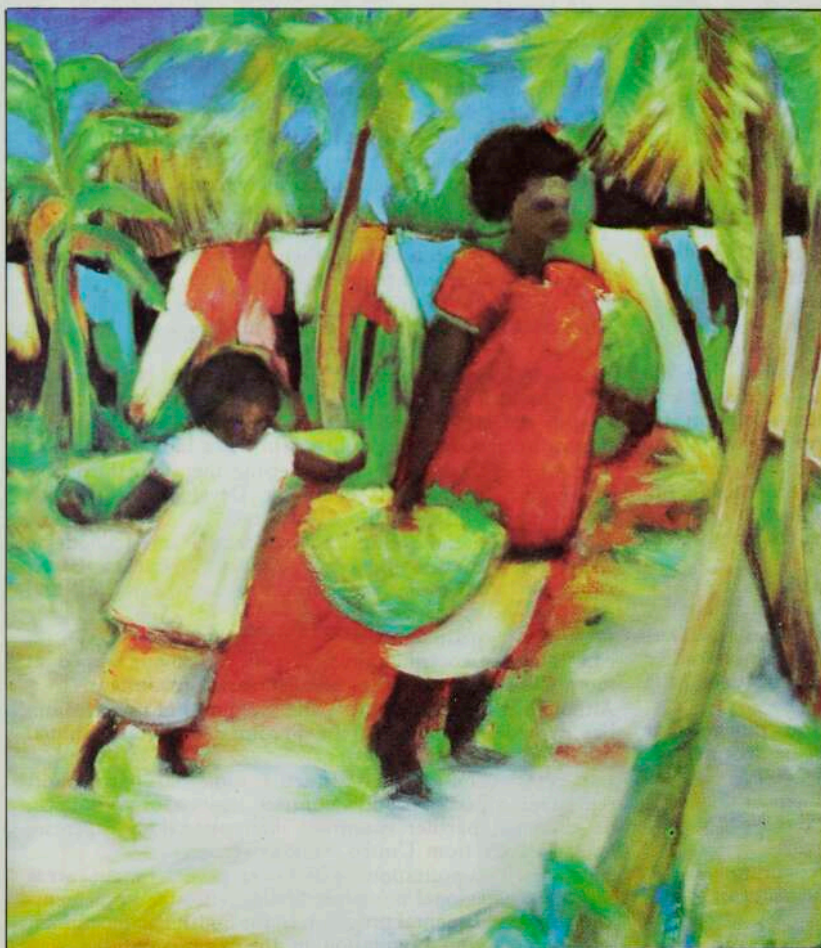
In the early sixties her husband's job took them to Fiji where they lived for a time. Finding herself at a loose end she would wander around Suva and, more often than not, her meandering found her sitting among the seafood, vegetables, root crops, handicrafts and other items on sale at Suva Municipal Market. She would chat to the women as they sold their produce and scolded their children who played around them. She absorbed the sights, sounds and smells of

her surroundings.

These images of gaiety, contentment and colour imprinted on her mind and years later she would often find herself lost in her Fiji experience. But it was not enough to have these memories stashed away in her head. She had to express them visually.

She had an advantage. She had what perhaps could be described as a creative pedigree. Born into a family wedding fashion business, Clelland attended art school and then joined the family firm. This resulted in her winning a gold in the 1976 Queensland Fashion Awards.

Her development as an artist began from her early exhibitions of "tasteful" nudes, to designing wedding dresses for Brisbane socialites, then a six year period in costume design for the Brisbane Arts Theatre at the old Her Majesty's Theatre. She also wrote and illustrated a



'Going Home': part of Clelland's Fiji collection



Glenise Clelland: surrounded by her work

of colour

successful series of children's books, in association with the Queensland Cancer Fund. The books provided messages on sun-health and resulted in several merchandising off-shoots. She says she wrote the books out of boredom but they provided an important step forward in her artistic growth.

About six years ago the Fiji images in her mind could stay locked away no longer. They had to come out. She had to express how she felt. Although she has re-visited Fiji in recent year it was those early images that formed her early work.

Out came images of Fiji with depth and understanding of her subject matter. It is no surprise that women and children are the subject of many of her Fiji

paintings. Portrayed in the lush tropical colours of the Pacific (most of her work is oil paint or pastel on canvas). Her women are not some mystical sexy, slim South Pacific beauty but real women — amply built — and true to life.

Her husband's work also took them to Tonga, Vanuatu, Western Samoa and New Caledonia. This enhanced her passion for the Pacific and many of her paintings depict these countries and produce what she describes as a "visual feast of exotic tropical delights".

Although she only began painting seriously six years ago she, already has a number of Australian art awards to her credit. In 1989 she was highly commended by the Gatton Regional Gallery and in 1991 she was commended in the

Sunshine Coast Art Awards. But the most important award to date is the prestigious Iain Fairweather Memorial, one of Australia's most esteemed art awards.

Over the years Clelland has held a number of exhibitions in Australia, Fiji and New Caledonia. As a result of her more recent exhibitions in Fiji many of her Pacific — mainly Fiji — works now hang in the big hotels and resorts in Fiji.

Clelland's artistic talents include sculpting, carving and three-dimensional work. She also finds time to work three days a week in a travel agency.

Although it is obvious Clelland's art is much more than a hobby, she explains it is far from being a profession. Her paintings range from A\$250 to A\$2500 but taking into account the cost of paints, canvas and frames, she is left with little in her pocket after a sale.

For the future she will continue with her painting — very much influenced by the Pacific.

"People keep asking me when I will get over this Pacific thing. I tell them 'I don't know'," says Clelland. She smiles. "I hope it's never."



'Morning Walk': a Vanuatu "mind picture"

NEW ZEALAND - A PACIFIC PARTNER



Opening up trade with the region

Message from Hon Philip Burdon, Minister for Trade Negotiations.

PACIFIC Islands Monthly is a distinctive voice on the region and I am pleased to contribute to this supplement on New Zealand.

The Pacific has always been important to New Zealand. Pacific island countries are our closest neighbours and since the sixties many Pacific island people have chosen to make New Zealand their home, thus reinforcing the ethnic links of earlier generations.

Conversely many New Zealanders have benefited from living and working in other South Pacific countries. For many decades now, there have been significant business and trade linkages between New Zealand and our neighbours in the region.

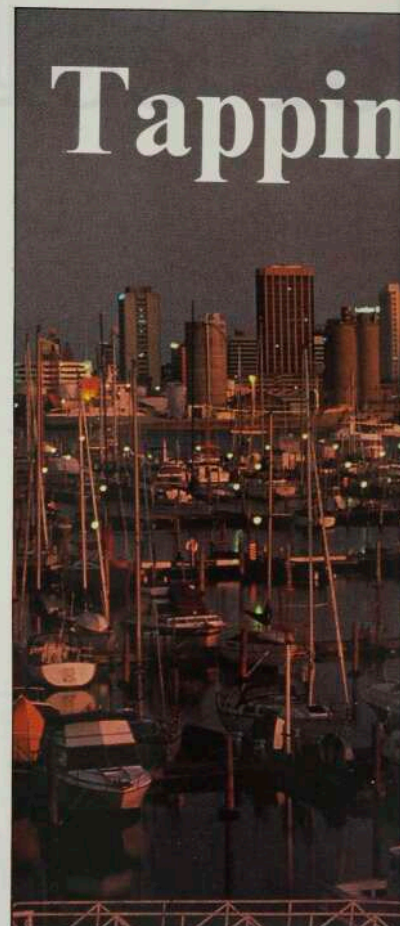
Indeed the South Pacific is now assuming a new economic importance for New Zealand. New Zealand has undergone fundamental economic change in recent years and our economy, particularly our manufacturing sector, has become

vastly more competitive. Many of our manufacturers are looking to expand their exports and Pacific island countries — along with Australia — are often the first markets they look to.

It is for this reason that I will be leading a trade mission to the region in May this year. The mission will be made up mostly of representatives from the New Zealand private sector and will visit Papua New Guinea and Fiji.

The purpose of the mission is clear. We will be unashamedly promoting New Zealand as a competitive supplier to the region. We will be challenging importers in the region to check out the prices and quality of products and services available from New Zealand. We would like *PIM* readers to get into the habit of looking first to New Zealand to supply, just as our exporters should have the Pacific at the forefront of their minds.

□

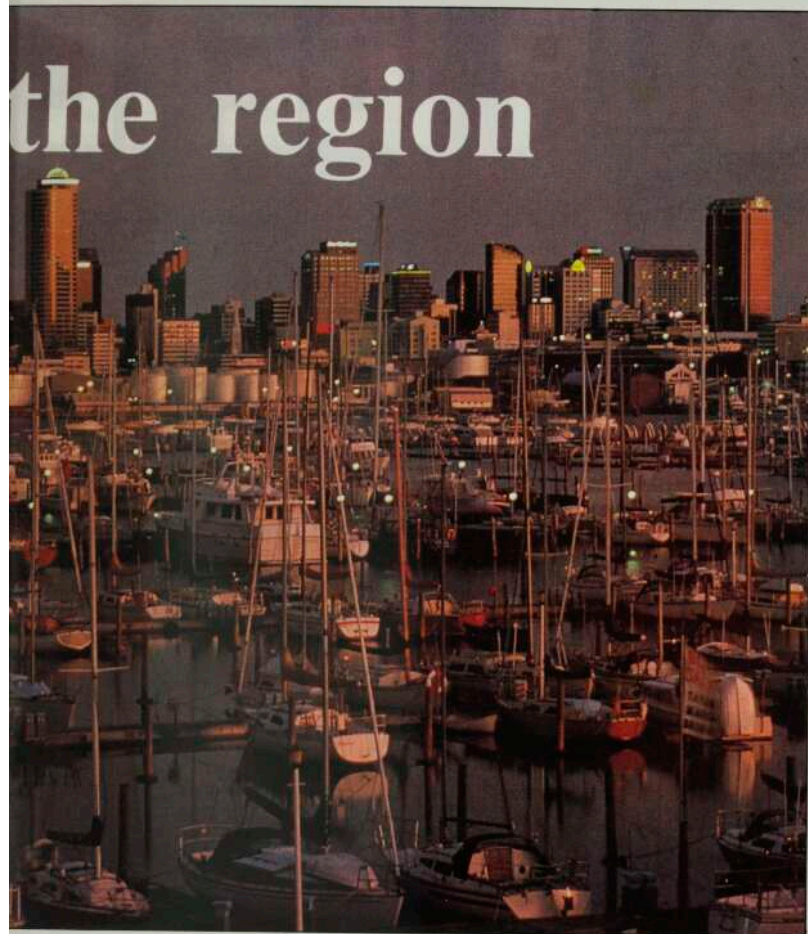


The Auckland skyline: from Westhaven

IN MARCH 1991, New Zealand's Foreign Minister, Don McKinnon, delivered a speech on New Zealand in the South Pacific to the Institute of International Affairs. It charted a new emphasis in New Zealand's policy in the region.

McKinnon began by saying, "Open access and willingness to listen are fundamental. We are not about preaching or lecturing or claiming special insight or moral superiority. We don't like being treated this way ourselves and we won't be dumping it on others. And we are not — I might add — getting ourselves caught up in a long and circular review process. Instead we are getting on with the job of bringing New Zealand's South Pacific policies into a more contemporary focus. And it's not before time — an injection of realism is long overdue".

McKinnon admitted New Zealand had made some mistakes in the past. "By the



d of the eighties", he said, "it was clear that our perceptions of the South Pacific ... had not kept pace with change in the region. Change had taken us by surprise. I believe that part of the answer lies in a longstanding inclination to see the South Pacific as a region apart — separate and immune from the forces driving change elsewhere in the world."

Much of the rest of the speech centred on two themes — first that New Zealand had to get to know the region better and second that it was important for New Zealand to pursue its own interests in the region. McKinnon included by restating, "... New Zealand's deep commitment to the well-being of the South Pacific. While the majority of our people may look back to roots of origin beyond the South Pacific, this does not negate New Zealand's distinctive South Pacific presence. We don't look at the region as a fixed template where everyone should fit into a prescribed pattern and place. Rather we see all people as individuals from each country — New Zealand

included — as having its own outlook and ambitions."

New Zealand's current approach to the region — focussing more on its own interests — is particularly evident in the field of trade. New Zealand's Minister for Trade Negotiations, Philip Burdon, will be leading a trade mission to Papua New Guinea and Fiji next month. "We will be unashamedly promoting New Zealand as a competitive supplier to the region", said Burdon.

New Zealand is recognising its South Pacific markets, worth a total \$631 million in the year to June 1992, are important for a number of reasons. In that year, New Zealand exports to the region grew by 18 per cent, a faster rate of increase than exports to the rest of the world. Furthermore, these exports accounted for 3.67 per cent of total exports making the South Pacific a larger market for New Zealand than some much higher profile regions further afield. Among these were the Middle East (3.35 per cent of total exports), Latin America (2.85 per cent)

and Eastern Europe (0.62 per cent).

Even more significant is the fact that while three quarters of New Zealand's export receipts (from goods) are still derived from primary products, the South Pacific is emerging as a major market for manufactured exports. Fiji, the biggest single Pacific market with exports worth \$156 million last year, is New Zealand's fifth largest market for manufactured products after Australia, Japan, the United States and Singapore.

New Zealand is now keen to capitalise on the increased competitiveness of its exports, particularly its manufactured exports, in the region. Last year when in Fiji, Burdon argued there was no reason why New Zealand could not double, even treble its exports to that country in coming years. He challenged importers to check out the prices and quality of New Zealand suppliers if they were not doing so already.

New Zealand exporters have already made some gains in the region. In the year to June 1992, markets where significant increases in exports occurred over the previous year included Papua New Guinea (which rose by 27 per cent to \$92 million), French Polynesia (which rose by 34 per cent to \$97 million) and Western Samoa (which rose by 76 per cent to \$76 million).

But Burdon is keen to show New Zealand exporters the potential of the region is only beginning to be tapped. He points to the fact that the Papua New Guinea economy has been enjoying growth rates in excess of 10 per cent per annum and argues that if Australia can achieve exports to Papua New Guinea in excess of A\$1 billion per annum, New Zealand exporters should be able to do better than their existing \$92 million.

It would seem the New Zealand business community is starting to agree with Burdon. A New Zealand/Fiji Business Council has been operating out of Auckland alongside its counterpart organisation in Fiji for some years now. The two organisations will be holding their joint annual meeting at the Sheraton hotel in Nadi to coincide with the Burdon-led trade mission to the region in early May.

In addition, a New Zealand/Papua New Guinea Business Council has just been formed in Auckland to join the Papua New Guinea/New Zealand Business Council which was formed in Port Moresby several months ago. Members of the new body see the Burdon trade mission as providing an early boost to the council's work.

New Zealand is paying increasing attention to the access conditions for its products to the markets of the region. It has consistently welcomed Fiji's moves to lower its protectionist barriers by reducing tariffs and by dismantling

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NEW ZEALAND - A PACIFIC PARTNER

import licensing. At last year's Fiji/New Zealand Business Council, Fiji's Trade Minister, Harold Powell, promised to look into "reciprocal" access for Australian and New Zealand products where there was no domestic Fiji manufacture. This was also seen as a step forward.

At the same time, Wellington is watching with interest the evolution of economic development policy in Papua New Guinea. Burdon says that during his time in PNG he will want to talk over with his counterparts what New Zealand has learned about the costs and risks involved in providing too high a protection for local enterprises.

While there is a lot of interest in New Zealand exports to the South Pacific, the position of South Pacific imports into New Zealand is disappointing. In the year to June 1992, these fell by \$4 million to \$124 million. However, if phosphate imports from Nauru are excluded, imports from other countries fell by \$19 million. Fiji is the main source of imports from the region at \$67 million or 53 per cent of the total. Garments make up the vast bulk of New Zealand's imports from Fiji.



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NEW ZEALAND - A PACIFIC PARTNER

A step ahead

SIMILAR in size to Japan or Italy and somewhat smaller than PNG, New Zealand combines high mountains with extensive hill country and lowland plains. Snow fields, swift flowing rivers and a long coastline add to the variety. New Zealand is renowned internationally for its landscape and beauty. Reflecting its South Pacific location, the sea is a key factor in New Zealand's temperate mid-latitude climate. Sun and

rain are plentiful and winters are not particularly cold. But in any one place at any one time, the weather can change quite quickly.

The New Zealand economy is also undergoing rapid change — perhaps more rapid than any other economy in the region. The changes stem from a realisation that New Zealand can no longer rely on the production of bulk

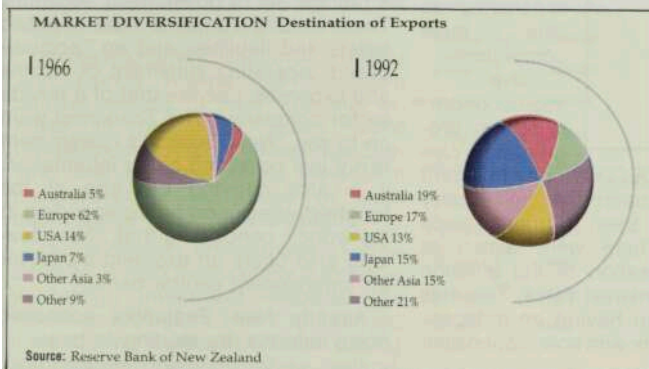
prosper, New Zealand must produce competitive and high quality goods the rest of the world wants.

A fundamental and far-reaching set of reforms was initiated when Labour came to power in 1984. The current National Government has continued these reforms. The consistent thrust has been to enhance the international competitiveness of the economy, and a more market-oriented approach has been used to obtain this. Restrictions in a number of areas, particularly transport and communications, have been removed and deregulation has taken place in other service sectors such as financial services and retailing.

Reform of state-owned enterprises has significantly increased the competitiveness of the economy. Since 1987, a number have been privatised, including the telecommunications network and national airline. Overseas parties have acquired controlling interests in some of these privatised companies. Privatisation of other enterprises such as the railways is currently under consideration.

The labour market has also been thoroughly deregulated, particularly since the Employment Contracts Act came into force in May 1991. Under the Act, employers and employees are

farm products to send to its traditional markets in Europe and North America. Sheltering New Zealand's domestic producers from international competition is not a viable option either. To survive and



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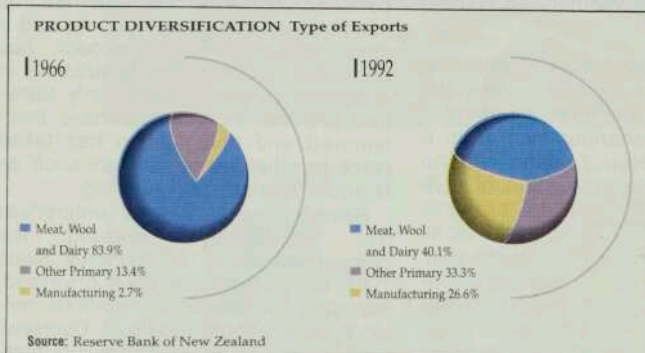
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NEW ZEALAND - A PACIFIC PARTNER

granted a great deal of freedom to negotiate collective or individual contracts. Collective bargaining usually takes place at the level of enterprise or workplace. Employees have the right to choose their representation for contract negotiation and union membership is not compulsory. Already the types of

them is increasingly positive. Comalco's managing director, Kerry MacDonald, argues, "The Labour market reforms have allowed key Comalco productivity measures to improve by more than 30 per cent and have encouraged a more innovative, enthusiastic and committed workforce."



arrangements reached between employers and employees have changed under the act and significant gains in productivity have resulted from the removal of outdated restrictive working practices.

The labour market reforms have not been without controversy but reaction to

carried out by any OECD country in recent decades". But macroeconomic policy reform has also been a priority since 1984. Reforms here were aimed at achieving stabilisation of the inflation rate to reduce interest rates. This has been based upon having an independent Reserve Bank with sole responsibil-

The Paris-based Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has described the New Zealand experience as "the most comprehensive

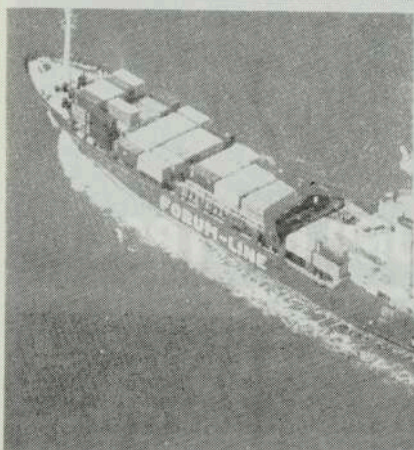
microeconomic reform programme carried out by any OECD country in recent decades". But macroeconomic policy reform has also been a priority since 1984. Reforms here were aimed at achieving stabilisation of the inflation rate to reduce interest rates. This has been based upon having an independent Reserve Bank with sole responsibil-

ity for ensuring this. The results have been impressive, with rates of inflation amongst the lowest in the world. Efforts have also been made to reduce government expenditure, but recent recessionary conditions have made the attempt to balance the budget difficult. Government departments have been reformed, and a comprehensive reform of taxation policies has been carried out. This latter has included the introduction of a broad valued-added GST tax system.

The Economist in October 1992 commented on the New Zealand approach saying, "Britain should take a tip from New Zealand, the first country to publish a rational set of government accounts. These include a balance sheet of public assets and liabilities and an "accrual-based" operating statement of income and expenses, just like that of a private sector company." *The Economist* went on to say, "New Zealand's Government is not just collecting better information, it is also carrying out one of the toughest attacks on public spending in the world," concluding that, "New Zealand also offers an excellent model for an independent central bank."

Already New Zealand's economic policy reforms are starting to bear

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fruit. New Zealand has, for example, been successful in substantially lessening its dependence on a narrow range of agricultural exports by diversifying its product range while increasing the level of value added in its products. Whilst it is still a world leader in the efficient production of dairy products, wool and meat, less than half its export earnings now come from these product areas. Instead, exports of other products have increased rapidly, including manufactured exports which today account for more than a quarter of the total.

New Zealand's main export markets have also been diversified, today being spread through Asia, North America, Europe and Australia. Around 22 per cent of GDP is exported.

Increasing diversification of products and market reflects the increased competitiveness of New Zealand exports. In fact, last year's world competitiveness report ranked New Zealand first in terms of its long term competitiveness — ahead of such countries as Japan and Germany.

The economic environment in New Zealand is also increasingly conducive to foreign investment. Recently the American food giant, Heinz, announced it was buying Watties Foods and basing a substantial operation in New Zealand. In announcing the purchase, Heinz's chairman, Tony O'Reilly said, "We are making the largest single investment the Heinz company has ever made outside of America here in New Zealand. New Zealand is probably the best equipped low cost operator base to approach the entire Asian market. We think that New Zealand of all places is the right place to be."

New Zealand is posing a double challenge to the rest of the South



Source: World Competitiveness Report 1992

Pacific. On the one hand it is inviting the region to look again at New Zealand as a source of goods and services which combine high quality and competitive prices. On the other, it is challenging the rest of the region to keep up with its reforms. It is saying it is in the interests of all South Pacific countries to keep in step with these rapid changes so that the region as a whole is an open and attractive place to do business. □



New Zealand apples being loaded for export

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NEW ZEALAND - A PACIFIC PARTNER

Transforming food exports

NEW ZEALAND'S biggest export earners in the food and beverages sector are sheep-meat and beef, dairy products, fish, kiwifruit and apples. However, considerable growth exists in the sales of venison, wine and other niche products because of increasing demand.

The buoyant economies of Asia and the single market in Europe offer strong potential for New Zealand food suppliers to carve out new markets. Even the approach to exporting traditional pastoral products such as meat and dairy products is changing.

Take meat for example. Meat is still New Zealand's largest export earner, bringing in \$1 out of every \$5 earned overseas. However, the markets New Zealand meat goes to have shifted dramatically. In 1975, Britain took 90 per cent of New Zealand's sheep-meat exports but in recent years about 30 per cent has been exported to Britain, about

30 per cent to other EC countries and the balance to the Middle East, Asia and Pacific Rim countries.

International lifestyle trends have also significantly changed the way New Zealand meat exporters operate. Exist-

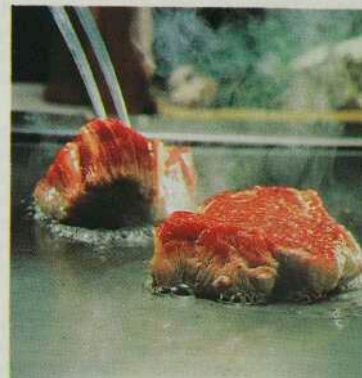
ing markets have been developed to take value-added processed meat cuts and a substantial move to market-led production has occurred.

In 1966, 100 per cent of lamb exports left New Zealand in carcass form. Today's exports comprise 55 per cent of processed cuts and 45 per cent in carcass form and part of the latter has further processing overseas by joint venture operations involving New Zealand companies. Virtually all beef exports now take the form of boneless manufacturing beef or beef cuts.



Layer-packing fish fillets

NZ Fishing Industry Board



New Zealand beef

NZ Meat Producers Board



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development as well as N.Z. companies looking to expand production in the Pacific.

Some of the services include market research, marketing plans, data bases, office facilities, product promotion and assistance with locating joint venture business or financial partners.

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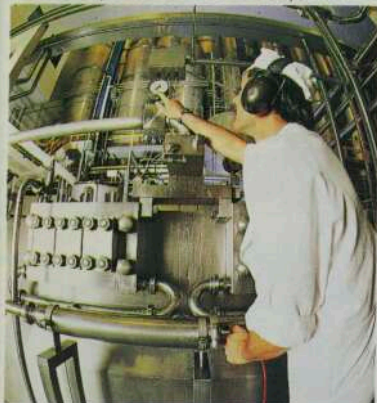
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MADISON 4265

Aside from meat and dairy products, New Zealand is now developing a whole new range of food exports. Fish is a prime example. Seafood exports have grown over the space of 15 years to become the third largest component of New Zealand food exports. More than 200,000 tons are exported to over 40 countries with annual income exceeding NZ\$1 billion.

There has been rapid growth in value added exports of both deep-sea fish



high-tech dairy manufacturing

NZ Dairy Board

and aquaculture products. A large tuna resource is harvested annually and includes albacore, skipjack, yellowfin and bluefin. Greenshell mussels are now the most successful aquaculture product and a major export earner. There



Royal gala premium variety

has been further success in exporting rock oysters. Salmon producers have developed overseas markets for exporting fresh, cold smoked and wood roasted salmon.

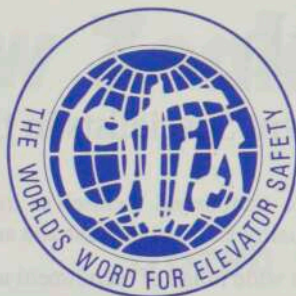
Many years of New Zealand horticulture are also booming. Apples are a case in point. Apple export today have

grown to over \$500 million per annum with New Zealand leading the world in the development of new varieties such as braeburn and royal gala. Other new varieties currently under development are expected to increase growth in the future as New Zealand maintains its image as a premium supplier of top quality fruit.

Perhaps the most exciting fruit of all is not used for food but is made into wine. In recent years New Zealand has discovered that it has one of the best environments outside of France for production of premium cool climate grape varieties such as sauvignon blanc, chardonnay and pinot noir. But there is a quantity problem with New Zealand wine — there is not nearly enough of it to satisfy world demand. All this augurs well for the New Zealand wine industry to grow significantly in future.

Food is another area where life in New Zealand has changed significantly. New Zealanders still enjoy the traditional roast of lamb with mint sauce. But they are just as likely today to sit down to a meal of fresh fish with a premium white varietal wine.

□



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NEW ZEALAND - A PACIFIC PARTNER

Manufactured exports —

ONE of the most surprising aspects of economic change in New Zealand is that with the lowering of border protection in the form of tariffs and licensing, manufactured exports have increased sharply. In 1966, for example, manufactured exports accounted for a mere 2.7 per cent of total exports. By 1992, they had risen to 26.6 per cent of the total. What is more, New Zealand manufacturers export their products almost entirely without subsidies and assistance.

Some of New Zealand's main export manufacturers are largely involved in processing New Zealand's primary products, with forestry being the most obvious example in this area. This is an exciting area for New Zealand as at a time when there is an increasing shortage of wood supplies worldwide, the sustainable production capacity of New Zealand forests will double by the year 2010.

New Zealand's largest exporter of manufactured goods is in fact Tasman Pulp and Paper, a subsidiary of Fletcher Challenge, and it earns over NZ\$400



Aluminium production: at Tiwai Point, Southland

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million a year in export receipts. Carter Holt Harvey, another big New Zealand industrial group, controls 450,000 tonnes of capacity at its Kinleith mill, a pulp and paper manufacturing facility which is the largest of its type in Australasia.

But other New Zealand exporters of manufactured products are from industries that many said would not survive the lowering of protective barriers. Take the garment industry — it has not only survived but exports are booming. In an increasingly competitive environment, New Zealand manufacturers are proving successful in working with locally produced or imported fabrics in finding markets overseas. There is a high emphasis on the quality of design and on finding niche markets for specific products. Australia is the most important market but New Zealand-made fashion items are now being exported as far afield as Paris and London.

Garment companies that have set the export ball rolling are growing fast,

including some that have an overseas joint venture partner. The Employment Contracts Act has brought labour flexibility and deregulation has removed protection from trading companies. The Apparel and Textile Federation argues that the industry enjoys a unique team relationship with the Combined Apparel Union.

As the New Zealand manufacturing sector is becoming increasingly exposed to international competition, its exporting base is becoming increasingly diverse. New Zealand has significant international corporate manufacturers in such areas as steel, whitegoods, carpets, cement, electrical equipment, machinery, scientific equipment, fencing, plastics, electrical cables, boats and yachting gear, scientific equipment and so on.



Timber harvest: to reach 25 million cu.m. per year by 2005

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If you would like more information about New Zealand goods and services, contact a New Zealand Trade Development Board office in the South Pacific.



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Action sking: at Whakapapa Skifield, Mt Ruapehu

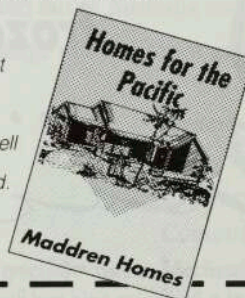
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INTERNATIONAL tourism is now rivaling any of New Zealand's major export industries as the country's largest earner of foreign exchange.

The country's tourism industry is now looking back on 1992 as a year in which it set new records. Overseas visitor arrivals grew 10 per cent and, for the first time, topped one million in 12 months.

The New Zealand Tourism Board estimates that foreign exchange earnings from overseas visitors in 1992 will top NZ\$2.8 billion, another record. By comparison, New Zealand's largest export — meat — generates just over \$2.7 billion a year.

The government-funded Tourism Board, with strong industry support, is working to a growth strategy that sees New Zealand in the year 2000 earning NZ\$9 billion a year and employing at least an extra 120,000 people as a result of a trebling of visitor arrivals to 3,000,000.

A group of board members with extensive business experience was es



Bungy jumping: at Queenstown

—on a growth path

established at the end of 1991 to take over the resources of the old Tourism Department and give it a new marketing focus.

new joint venture projects.

On a global basis, New Zealand's tourism marketing effort is focussed on

new development phase. Currently, the country has more than NZ\$2.2 billion worth of tourism related development either in construction, or ready for serious consideration by investors.

At the same time as it restructured its tourism agency, the New Zealand government created a new NZ\$10 million per annum Tourism Marketing Joint Venture Fund. The Tourism Board can draw on the fund to go into new marketing activity with industry partners who are prepared to match its investment. The private sector has been investing about NZ\$2 for every NZ\$1 the Tourism Board has put into new joint venture marketing activity. The expansion of marketing activity through these new joint ventures is the major driving force behind New Zealand's latest visitor arrival record.

More than 83 per cent of the growth in visitor arrival during 1992 was from additional travel bookings generated by



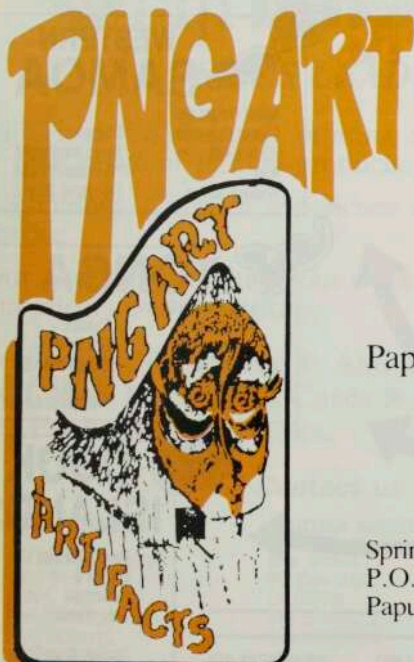
Pohutu Geyser: at Rotorua

six key regions — Australia, Japan, North America, the United Kingdom, Central Europe, and Asia.

With a record year behind it, the New Zealand tourism industry is entering a

Tourism is on a growth path in New Zealand, and the Tourism Board is strongly committed to the concept of cooperative action by Pacific island nations to promote the tourism attractions of the region on a joint basis in major international tourism markets.

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NEW ZEALAND - A PACIFIC PARTNER

Sweet, sweet- corn

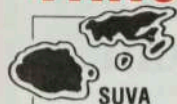
THE corn to be harvested this month from 65 hectares of Maori land at Tolaga Bay (on the North Island's east coast, north of Gisborne) is likely to be some of the sweetest available anywhere in the world.

The 900 tonnes of sweet corn is the result of an organic cropping partnership development with Wattie Frozen Foods. The company has identified a growing export market for organic frozen vegetables in Japan, Europe and the United States.

The sweet corn will have the Bio-Gro label, which is an internationally recog



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nised organic standard with very strict rules about what is clean, green and organic.

There is a lot of land on the east coast which has had little or no chemicals applied to it, which means it has great potential for Bio-Gro production. The land that will yield the sweeter corn in Tolaga Bay is administered by the Paripoupou Trust on behalf of 1000 landowners. Bounded by steep native bush on one side and the Hikuwai River on the other, the two adjacent blocks had been leased for grazing for 50 years. The land was flood damaged in 1988 by Cyclone Bola. In 1992 the owners decided they would manage their own asset and farm the land themselves.

They were not alone, however, in seeing the potential for their land. Private contractors who had worked with Wattie Frozen Foods approached the Trust with a proposal for growing organic sweet corn. The partnership with Wattie's evolved when the company approached Te Puni Kokiri (New Zealand Ministry of Maori Development) with a proposal to process and market the corn.

Rei Kohere, Te Puni Kokiri service broker in Gisborne, says from that

point the whole project became an important learning experience for everyone involved.

"The landowners were quite clear about the role they wanted to play in relation to their land, but knew they needed advice and resources to develop it and improve its productivity."

The contractors had the knowledge and expertise in Bio-Gro and Te Puni Kokiri's MANA scheme provided establishment finance. The Trust could not use the land as security for a private sector loan because of the terms of the Trust Deed.

Te Puni Kokiri also helped with project development. "Our focus was always with the landowners," says Rei Kohere. "We had to make sure the project met everyone's requirements but the landowners' position was, and still is, our priority. Our task was to make sure the owners had what they needed to make informed decisions and be there whenever it appeared that their position was being overlooked."

Today the landowners' position is one of strength.

"We have a direct involvement in a well developed asset that promises to be both productive and profitable," says Trust chairman Nolan Raihania. "We're

looking forward to obtaining Bio-Gro status for ourselves. And we're excited by what this means for the whole region."

For Wattie's, the project is also exciting. Wattie Frozen Foods agriculture manager in Gisborne, Dr Stuart Davis, says that Wattie's have made the Bio-Gro market a strategic priority in recent years.

"Producing Bio-Gro vegetables is good for Wattie's, and good for New Zealand's frozen vegetable market. Here on the East Coast there's great potential for New Zealand to trade on its clean green image."

Overseas buyers are prepared to pay a premium for Bio-Gro vegetables, and because growers of organic vegetables run greater risk and incur added costs, they also get paid double the price they would receive for conventional vegetables.

For the landowners, Bio-Gro is also a label they're very comfortable with. As Nolan Raihania points out, "From our perspective Bio-Gro is what traditional Maori cultivation techniques have always been about. What's important now is to make organic farming profitable."

(Reproduced from the *Te Puni Kokiri Newsletter*)

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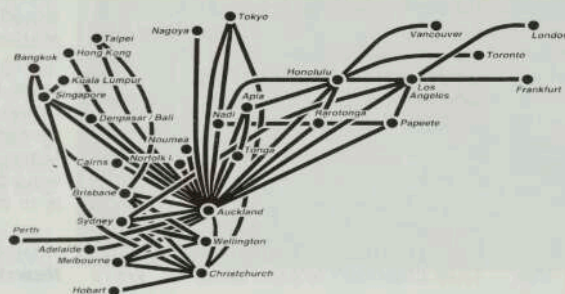
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...
CONQUERING ISOLATION Neil Rennie

LINKING New Zealand with Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, the Cook Islands and the Society Islands, the Coral Route, as it has become affectionately known, was the backbone for securely establishing Air New Zealand's international route expansion.

The "coral" route created a fund of goodwill among the peoples of the Pacific islands, providing regular communication links and a unique tourist experience which no other carrier could emulate.

Today, Air New Zealand, building upon the strength and uniqueness of the South Pacific islands, operates six services beyond Fiji to North America (Honolulu, Los Angeles, Vancouver and Toronto), one service terminating in Nadi and one B747 service beyond Nadi

to Narita, Tokyo a week.

The services through Fiji are indicative of a strategy pursued to link all the islands of the Pacific served by the company with North America.

A once-weekly service operates beyond Tonga and Western Samoa and beyond Rarotonga to Honolulu and Los Angeles. Bi-weekly services are provided beyond Papeete to Los Angeles. The Coral Route links the destinations of Fiji, the Cook Islands and Tahiti together once a week.

Eventually, through the Air New Zealand network, all services operated to Los Angeles link with almost daily services to Europe (four times per week to London and twice weekly Frankfurt services).

Air New Zealand links coral atolls with other European destinations by taking advantage of strategic alliances established with SAS and Swissair. Even though Air New Zealand may not fly to Zurich it is possible to link any destination on the Air New Zealand network with Swissair operations. (All services are operated by B767 or B747 aircraft.)

This opens up enormous potential for the islands of the Pacific to penetrate all the major inbound markets of Europe and attract visitors to the South Pacific.

Neither should we overlook the potential to transport high value freight to these markets of North America and Europe.

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YACHTING

Ranthe Vua!

OUR Vanuatu courtesy flag waved red, green, black and yellow from the starboard spreader as we flew along at five knots under jib alone. With flat seas and tradewind skies, we headed for Pentecost Island in the northern Vanuatu group.

Across the Selwyn Strait, we ghosted slowly along Pentecost's western coast sailing past waterfalls, caves, cliffs and valleys. A tall dark island, Pentecost is long and narrow with a mountainous spine running up its centre. We followed the range markers into the anchorage at Lolong where several village children paddled out to greet us. On board one of the outriggers was Phillip, a ni-Vanuatu with two children. Phillip became our friend and guide.

Travellers encounter the challenge of language and communication in all the islands of the South Pacific but in Vanuatu the problem is different. Vanuatu has the most languages per capita of any country in the world and there are still more than 100 distinct traditional languages spoken in Vanuatu. The national language, Bislama, is an English-based pidgin which has evolved and is used throughout the archipelago as the lingua franca. Until 1980, Vanuatu was jointly ruled by a "condominium" government operated by Britain and France. Bislama allows those who have been educated in French language schools to communicate with those who have studied at English speaking institutions. Most ni-Vanuatu are multi-lingual.

We carried our dinghy ashore and placed it in the shade of a *nabanga*, or banyon tree. Villagers came out of their homes and handshaking was non-stop as men, women and children welcomed us to northern Pentecost. "*Ranthe vua!*"

We went *wokbaot* — our top priority when we are travelling. We took a long walk along a high ridge overlooking the bay for a spectacular view. Gently tugging at her anchor rope, *FellowShip* was pro-

Sally Andrew continues her adventures in Vanuatu, 'one of the most interesting places in the South Pacific, on board *FellowShip*

tected on three sides by the light luminescent blues of coral reefs. To the west was a misty silhouette of the island of Ambae, and to the south were the well-kept grounds of the local Catholic mission and French-language school.

On Friday we ambled along the coastal path and visited two nearby villages. We walked along the shore, Phillip showed us inside the *nakamals*, pointing out the utensils used for making *kava* — long wood, coconut shell cups and coral pestles used for crushing *kava*. We discovered that ni-Vanuatu often use the palm of their hand as the mortar.

In the evening, Phillip invited us to his home to drink *kava* or *aelan bia*. *Kava* roots were dug up, washed and peeled. We sat on a bench in a small two-room house and watched. Phillip sat on a mat on the coral floor surrounded by an assortment of *kava*-brewing paraphernalia. The scraped *kava* roots were washed again, arranged in the palm of his left hand, then hand ground onto a wooden platter with a pestle made of shaped and fluted coral. The grated *kava* was kneaded with a little water, formed into a ball, wrapped in coconut gauze and squeezed — first into two primary thick-shelled *bilo* then *melitta* flitered into a thin drinking coconut shell cup. After a short blessing, the first cup was offered to us. Bottoms up. I closed my eyes as the thick earthy drink went down. It tasted good. I passed the cup back to Phillip and thanked him. Later we learned to go to the door, yell *Paaaaa*, cough, spit, and shout an epithet to stop the rain. In between trips to the door, the conversation flowed quietly. It was nearly two o'clock in the morning when we got back aboard *FellowShip*.

All too soon it was daybreak. In the village, a cock began crowing. The cry sounded more like *Ranthe Vua* (the indigenous "good morning") than the five-syllable "cock-a-doodle-doo" of my childhood. A barking dog joined in the serenade and the village began to stir. The sky slowly lightened, and the smoke of cooking fires rose in the bush, along the shore, in the hills, along the ridge.

Saturday is sports day in the outer islands of Vanuatu and entire villages turn out to play or cheer-on the local athletes. At Lolong, the soccer game was exceptionally well-played, with a high level of enthusiasm and competitive spirit. On the edge of the playing field, women sold fried cakes (*gateaux*), drinking coconuts and Vanuatu's national dish, *laplap*. *Laplap* are packages of grated manioc, taro roots or yams tightly wrapped in taro leaves, often seasoned with bits of meat or fish, and cooked in an underground oven. After the games we toured the local mission with Father Jean.

In northern Pentecost we had been welcomed with open arms and leaving was sad. As a parting gift, Phillip and his family gave us a gift of fresh fruit and vegetables, and a hand-woven five-colour pandanus basket and traditional purple-dyed *kastom* dance mat.

Vanuatu is linguistically and culturally one of the most interesting places in the South Pacific. Traditions vary from island to island, and we found that Pentecost is still a very *kastom* oriented island. People believe in doing things the ni-Vanuatu way, and that made our visit to Pentecost especially rewarding.

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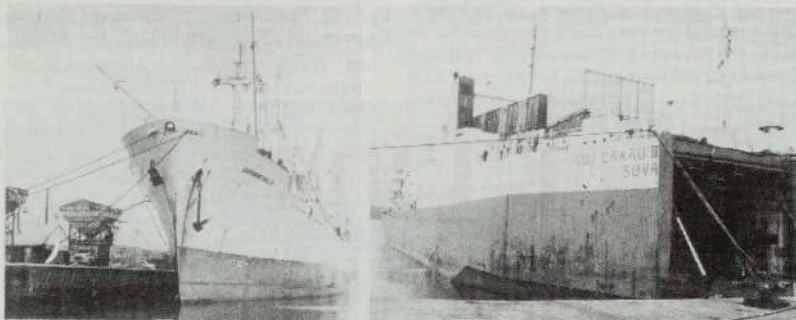
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