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PACIFIC ISLANDS

M O N T H L Y

JANUARY 1994

Election 2

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- ★ Josevata Kamikamica
- ★ Mahendra Chaudhry
- ★ Jai Ram Reddy
- ★ and all eligible voters

Starts in Fiji at the end of next month

RATU SIR PENAIA GANILAU DIES



Fiji loses beloved leader — p21

- Uncle Sam says goodbye — p13
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VANUATU GAMES



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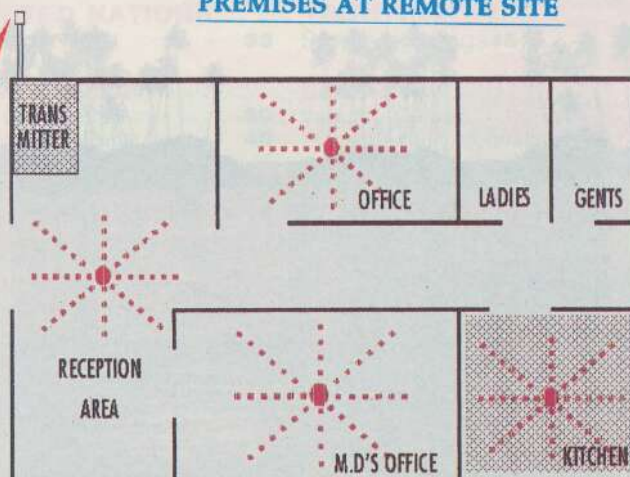
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PACIFIC ISLANDS

M O N T H L Y

Vol 64 No. 1

THE NEWS MAGAZINE

JANUARY 1994

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

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Hawke's Vanuatu punt
Land of the falling yen

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Bikini's investment strategy

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FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Poisoning paradise

Many reports filter through *PIM*'s head office in Suva. After a quick analysis they are either put aside for later reading, filed for reference purposes or passed on to the relevant person. Very few reports are stopped in their tracks for immediate scrutiny.

Poisons in Paradise was one report that came to a dead halt when it reached *PIM*. We feel it deals with something that needs to be looked into now.

The Greenpeace report has revealed South Pacific islands are being slowly poisoned by pesticides which are banned and not registered in more developed countries.

The report, prepared in collaboration with the Pesticides Action Network, also shows that a lack of knowledge of the effects of pesticides on the fragile ecosystems of Pacific islands has led to contamination of drinking water wells, soils, rivers and the marine environment.

While numerous human deaths from exposure to toxic pesticides have been reported, the limited data available suggests the actual rate of exposure and related health problems may be much higher, according to Greenpeace.

The report cites alarming cases of DDT being used in some areas to catch fish. In another case highlighting the vulnerability of Pacific

island ecosystems, a cyclone in Tokelau in 1966 swept the pesticides dieldrin and DDT into a lagoon killing all surrounding coral, which are only now beginning to grow back.

There are at least 286 pesticide active ingredients available in the Pacific islands region and 57 of these are regarded as being particularly hazardous. Yet, according to the report stores of obsolete pesticides lie scattered through-

out the region. Some have been lying around for more than 30 years.

The US government's wartime supply of the pesticide malathion is still decomposing on Kiribati and discarded DDT is stored in disintegrating village sheds in Papua New Guinea.

The 160-page report also shows how international codes of conduct, such as that of the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation have failed to protect public health and the environment from harm by the imports of dangerous pesticides into the region. Effective implementation of the FAO code in the Pacific island countries has been very limited, with key provisions on packaging, labeling, the use of protective clothing, and the provision of technical advice all routinely skirted.

According to the head of Greenpeace's Pacific Campaign, Bunny McDiarmid, the report gives dramatic proof of the need to base all agricultural development in the region on a new mix of traditional systems and modern methods enhancing natural biological pest control.

It's a report that needs to be read and taken heed of. □



Poison: leaking cartons of DDT in an old shed in Milne Bay Province, PNG

LETTERS

Vanuatu Issues

Sir,

YOUR explicit news coverage of various issues on Vanuatu in your October issue reveals to the world the ruining economic situation manocuvred by the present Union of Moderate Party-led government. The coverage highlights vital issues which rather leads to topical matters, especially the economic handling, logging mysteries and media restriction.

It is not surprising though that Willie Jimmy (Minister of Finance) is intending to raise two billion dollars of foreign loan because he is being obsessed with taking the country's economy into a gloomy direction. In addition, the Prime Minister, Maxime Carlot Korman, having realised how hot the issue was, took every opportunity to travel the world over (an average of one trip per month since becoming prime minister 22 months ago) to Asia, United States and Europe begging for aid packages in a non-diplomatic manner. The reality is that the Union of Moderate Party's (UMP) illusive and immature economic policy, together with their dream promises in the 1991 national election campaign, is bouncing back on them embarrassingly. Their mismanagement of the country's economy also counts a great deal. As a result, the inflation continues to increase at a disappointing rate, the Gross Domestic Product continues to drop and the economy is barely growing. However, the phenomena of servicing that billion dollars worth of debt (if the loan gets through) is to a large extent unrealistic and in the long term scenario will undoubtedly leads to uncompromising consequences.

The logging issue is a more pathetic one. More and more people in Vanuatu are becoming aware of the vulnerability to their natural resources and the importance of sustaining them. Thus,

they expect the government to enforce a practical policy toward this particular area as they have already learnt from previous mistakes of environmental destructions occurring both in Vanuatu and overseas by various logging operations. Instead, the three mentioned prominent ministers (Willie Jimmy, Ohnen Tah and Paul Telukluk) contradict by travelling all the way to Malaysia merely to negotiate deals with a private logging company which already has a bad reputation in other neighbouring countries in terms of causing major environmental damage during logging operations.

It is even more unusual to note that apart from one single minister who should be travelling for such a deal, there were three of them who went to negotiate the deal — apparently demonstrating once more how Mr Money is blinding them by using them to deprive 99.9 per cent of Vanuatu's population.

Finally, not only that the UMP-led government restricted sensitive news from opposition parties from being aired on radio Vanuatu, they have also misused the country's official newspaper, the *Vanuatu Weekly*, since the party came into power. Their stereotype of misusing official resources appear in the *Vanuatu Weekly* under the heading **Mr Wanuwe**, where they did not address any authentic information to the general public. However, the articles are confusing and full of bizarre bits and pieces of childish ideas. This downgrades the image of the newspaper and affects the whole official media system in the country.

The euphoria among the citizens of Vanuatu is constantly eroding every day while anxiety and frustration are taking place instead. In fact, the population is witnessing the worst situation in its country since becoming independent 13 years ago.

WARRY LALA

Point Cross, South Pentecost
Vanuatu

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LETTERS

Tuvalu election

Sir,

I FEEL that I have been let down by an old friend, for which I hold you entirely responsible.

Regrettably, the only items about the island countries of the Pacific which receive media coverage in the United Kingdom are those like major hurricanes or a military coup. So in order to keep abreast with what is happening in your part of the world I have subscribed to *PIM* for the past 25 years ever since I had the good fortune to work in the then Gilbert & Ellice Islands colony. Whilst I fully accept that the magazine's role has had to change over the years — as you outlined in your editorial in the last August issue — I do feel that you are in danger of devoting too much space to the larger nations at the expense of the smaller ones.

To judge from the coverage — or rather the lack of coverage — given to the subject in *PIM* during the past four issues, one could be forgiven for including that you, sir, were unaware that there was a general election in Tuvalu at the beginning of September. Surely in view of the amount of political coverage you are now including, a general election warranted a paragraph or two in the August or September edition — but not a word.

Then, at the end of September, there was the extraordinary situation when the 12 newly-elected MPs failed to agree on who should be the new prime minister — each of the two candidates, the outgoing prime minister, Bikenibeu Paeniu, and his predecessor, Dr. Tomasi Puapua, apparently receiving six votes each in three ballots, with the result that it was decided to hold a new general election at the end of November. Surely an event like that deserved some mention in *PIM*?

I appreciate that that extraordinary affair occurred too late to be covered in your October edition but as a journalist myself I expected it to be one of the main stories in the November edition. But again, not a word.

Certainly since the demise of the informative *Tuvalu Echoes* it has become extremely difficult for people outside the region to have any idea of developments taking place in that country. I had assumed, though, that any major story would still receive a mention in *PIM*, as it has done in the past. Having just renewed my subscription for a further year I hope that you will be able to

reassure me and other readers that the smaller island groups are not to be forgotten in the "new-look" *PIM*.

GUY SLATTER
Cornwall
United Kingdom

EDITOR'S NOTE: it was not the intention of *PIM* to ignore the Tuvalu election. It was a genuine oversight that occurred basically because of lack of information coming out of Tuvalu. I wish to assure you and all our readers that the smaller island groups are an important part of the Pacific and will not be forgotten.

What's in a name

Sir,

IN the October issue of *PIM* you carried a news item, 'Deals under scrutiny', by Craig Skehan. The news item mentioned that the funds of a loan to Vanuatu would be delivered by Hannes Lenz Gesmbh and Co. based in the Philippines.

It should be pointed out that the term Gesmbh in all probability comes from "Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung" (German for "Company with limited liability"). This is usually abbreviated in German as GmbH. So, there is some likelihood this Philippine based company represents German and/or European interests.

ROBERT SILBERSTORF
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Colombia

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NAURU



Nauru President Dowiyogo: had resigned

Dowiyogo ... out for a few hours

THE government of Nauru fell for a few hours in September, and promptly bounced back later that day. It all started in a dispute over a small item in Nauru's A\$96,583,000 budget. Despite the island's phosphate wealth, the budget showed a deficit of about A\$34 million.

Kennan Adeang, a member of parliament and the former finance minister, moved to strike the salaries of the three people in Nauru's New Dehli office (presumably on the grounds that they were not needed now that Nauru had sold its interest in an Indian phosphate mill). He also wanted to eliminate A\$14,300 for a new automobile. He carried the vote eight to seven in the 18-member House.

President Bernard Dowiyogo promptly resigned. The House then held an election for a new president between Dowiyogo and another parliamentarian, Buraro Detudamo. Voting by secret ballot the House chose Dowiyogo 10-6, meaning that at least two members who had voted against the government on the New Dehli issue switched to the government on the presidential ballot. At sundown that day the new cabinet was sworn in by chief secretary Kelley Emiu; there were no changes in the cabinet. □

HEADLINES

AUSTRALIA



Democrats call for PNG military aid suspension

There has been a call for the suspension of Australia's military aid programme to PNG. The Australian Democrats have called for the complete suspension of the US\$20 million military aid programme because of human rights abuses on Bougainville, the scene of a secessionist uprising.

The demand came as Australia's Pacific Island Affairs Minister Gordon Bilney admitted he had cancelled a planned visit by an aid inspection mission to the island over fears for its safety.

The PNG defence force has been blamed for human rights abuses on the island, although an Amnesty International report also found the rebel Bougainville Revolutionary Army responsible for several incidents.

Democrats foreign affairs spokeswoman Vicki Bourne says the bottom line is that military equipment supplied by the Australian government to PNG has been and continues to be used in human rights abuses. Bourne says the aid should stop.

Foreign minister Gareth Evans says Australia will urge the PNG government to seek a political, rather than a military solution to the Bougainville problem. Evans has also asked the PNG government if a delegation might go to Bougainville as there had been many inquiries from Australian MPs who were concerned about the Bougainville issue.

PNG's foreign minister John Kaputin said PNG had already issued an invitation to the Joint Assembly of the ACP-EU (African Caribbean and Pacific-European Union) so a parliamentary group would be consistent with this. He says an Australian parliamentary delegation can visit Bougainville in the new year, subject to the cabinet's approval.

TONGA



One killed in Nuku'alofa shooting

A shoot-out in Nuku'alofa on December 7 has left one man dead and another in a critical condition at Vaiola Hospital. The shoot-out occurred at the Tonga Cooperative Society's head office in the centre of town.

Although police had not released any information about the incident by the time *PIM* went to press, *Radio Tonga* said the man hospitalised is understood to have done the shooting. No reasons for the killing have been given and police are investigating.

Dr Talia'uli Afeaki of Vaiola Hospital reported the person under their care was fighting for his life as his brain was badly damaged from a bullet wound. Reporters were not allowed to view the scene of the shoot-out nor get any information from the police.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA



Opposition criticises 1994 budget

The PNG opposition has branded the 1994 budget of US\$1.8 billion as one that will continue to bring failed promises to the majority of Papua New Guineans and benefit the well-off urban communities. Opposition leader, Chris Haiveta in his budget reply in parliament in November called on the Wingti-Chan government to apologise for what he called the failed 1993 budget which the new budget will complement.

Haiveta said the government owes the people an apology....claiming the country is now worse off and as a result the 1994 budget must be approached with plenty of suspicion. The opposition has also predicted that the budget deficit for next year may reach \$400 million if the government does not plan its fiscal policy properly.

Haiveta said the 1994 budget is being diverted to financing deficits and that the country was facing inconsistent economic policies that would effect economic performance and development.

NORTHERN MARIANAS



CNMI Governor names Stillwell

Marianas Governor-elect Froilan C Tenorio has appointed Roger G Stillwell, an old Pacific hand, as his personal representative in Washington. Stillwell, who had worked with Tenorio, a Democrat, when the latter served as the elected Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands' Washington Representative, will also continue to serve as editor of *Micronesian Investment Quarterly*. Stillwell will handle a series of specific tasks for the Governor, and will coordinate with Juan Babauta, the Republican who was re-elected CNMI's Washington Representative at the same time that Tenorio was elected Governor.

Stillwell served for many years as the Administrative Assistant to the late Antonio B Won Pat, (D Guam) who was that island's first delegate to the US House of Representatives.

NEW ZEALAND



Maori party to be launched

A new Maori political party will be launched early this year. Maori Council executive member Maanu Paul said the party, to be called the Aotearoa Party, would seek to give disillusioned Maori voters a vehicle to express their desire for self-determination.



Pacific Diary



JANUARY

18-26

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FEBRUARY

07-10

Achieving Sustainable Growth Through Clean Production Processes, World Congress Centre, Melbourne, Australia

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South Pacific Organisations Coordinating Committee (SPOCC) Meeting, SPREP headquarters, Apia, Western Samoa

14-18

Customs Heads of Administration Regional Meeting, Noumea, New Caledonia

MARCH

14-15

Forum Regional Security Committee, Forum Secretariat, Suva, Fiji

16-18

APEC/PECC Regional Energy Meeting, Beijing, China

APRIL

11-22

Energy Database and Information Workshop, Forum Secretariat, Suva, Fiji

11-22

Third Session of the Preparatory Committee for ICPD, UN, New York

26

Energy Ministers Meeting, Forum Secretariat, Suva, Fiji

27-28

Regional Energy Committee Meeting, Forum Secretariat, Suva, Fiji

★

Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Countries, Barbados

JULY

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Note — a ★ indicates dates have yet to be confirmed. Also some dates are provisional and may be changed.

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POLITICS ROUND-UP

TUVALU

Laatsi is new PM

The 12-member parliament of Tuvalu on December 10 elected Kamuta Laatsi as the new prime minister. Laatsi defeated Bikenibeu Paeniu by seven votes to five. Paeniu has been prime minister since 1989.

Opposition leader Dr Tomasi Puapua, who has twice challenged Paeniu for leadership, did not contest the prime ministership. Sources said in return for not contesting Puapua was likely to be made speaker of the parliament.

Laatsi was a backbencher in the former Paeniu government and a former private secretary to Tuvalu first prime minister, Sir Toaripi Lauti, and later the country's first high commissioner to Fiji. More recently he has been general manager of BP Oil in Tuvalu.

In addition to prime ministership Laatsi will hold the foreign affairs and economic planning portfolios.

Laatsi's selection follows two national elections in three months. The first was in September but a new poll was called after parliament remained deadlocked on choosing the prime minister. A second election was held on November 25.

NEW ZEALAND

Richardson dumped in new lineup

Prime minister Jim Bolger has dumped Ruth Richardson from the finance portfolio. Announcing his new lineup after the November 6 general election Bolger said Richardson had been offered a cabinet position but preferred to go to the backbenchers if she did not get finance. Bill Birch becomes the new finance minister, Don McKinnon remains deputy prime minister, minister for foreign affairs and Pacific island affairs, Jenny Shipley is the new minister for health and Doug Kidd is minister of labour and minister for fisheries. John Banks has been stripped of his police responsibilities but keeps tourism and sports.

The National team has 20 cabinet ministers, three ministers not in the cabinet and three under-secretaries.

Meanwhile opposition Labour Party leader Mike Moore has been replaced by his deputy Helen Clark.

SOLOMON ISLANDS

Former minister wants to rejoin government

A Solomon Islands government minister who resigned and defected to the opposition has applied to rejoin the government. Allan Paul who resigned as minister of culture, sports and tourism in November (see *PIM* December issue) when two other ministers, Dennis Lulei and Eric Seri, also defected in the belief the government would be toppled and the opposition would form the new administration.

In early December the acting parliamentary leader of the People's Alliance Party, the health and medical services minister, Nathaniel Waena confirmed Paul had applied to rejoin the party.

According to the regional news service *PACNEWS* at least one of the other two ministers who defected to the opposition has also made approaches to the government.

The opposition had earlier refuted claims by the government that more opposition MPs are expected to switch sides. The government made the claims after the MP for Small Malaita, William Haomae said claims of more defections were pure speculation. He said Maetia's decision to defect to the government had been circumstantial and the opposition respects it.

Following the High Court disqualification of the May election of East Honiara MP and opposition member Charles Dausabea in November and the defection of Maetia, it now appears the government has 24 MPs and the opposition 22.

VANUATU

Korman sidesteps political crisis

Vanuatu's Prime Minister, Maxime Carlot Korman, averted a political crisis in December and had the 1994 budget passed by bringing into his cabinet one of two supporters who had earlier resigned.

Cecil Sinker, who resigned as leader of government business was sworn in as minister for posts and telecommunications, replacing Onnyn Tahu who resigned on the same day as Sinker. Tahu had resigned saying Korman's government was dishonest, disloyal and irresponsible. Both men were members of former prime minister Walter Lini's

National United Party and belonged to the faction supporting the Korman government.

Sinker in his resignation letter also accused Korman of lying, saying the prime minister had offered him the post of minister of agriculture and forestry but did not honour it. However, when offered the posts and communications portfolio Sinker accepted it immediately and was sworn in by the chief justice.

The government also survived a no-confidence motion when it went undebated. The motion was filed on November 30 and needed seven clear days notice before it could be put to the floor. When parliament passed the budget and adjourned early on December 6, the motion lapsed.

The government now has a two seat majority in the 46-member parliament.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Challenge to Wingti thrown out of court

On November 25 the National Court threw out the opposition challenge to prime minister Paias Winti's resignation, re-election and re-appointment as prime minister in September.

National Court Justice Maurice Sheehan ruled that Wingti's resignation, re-election and re-appointment were constitutional. He dismissed all three declarations sought by Opposition Leader Chris Haiveta in relation to the events of September 24 (see *PIM* November 1993). He said that Haiveta had failed to prove that the prime minister resigned on September 24 and not September 23 as Haiveta alleged. Sheehan said that he was satisfied the time for appointment of a prime minister arises when the vacancy occurs. He said the occasion arose on the evening of September 23 when Wingti handed his letter of resignation to the governor general and that there was nothing in the constitution which shows (as Haiveta contended) that the vacancy arises when parliament is told of the resignation.

Wingti described the court decision as a constitutional landmark which will guarantee long term government stability in PNG. "The people of Papua New Guinea are entitled to see properly elected government run their full term," said Wingti.

Wingti said that a fascination with power plays and dramatic court manoeuvres orchestrated by inexperienced leaders such as Haiveta could only damage the nation.

BUSINESS BULLETIN

Tonga set to control shipping company

A SHIPPING company formed jointly by the Tongan government and the Columbus Line 15 years ago is about to pass totally into Tongan control. The Shipping Corporation of Polynesia held its last joint annual general meeting in Nuku'alofa on December 1.

Since the company's incorporation in 1978 the Tongan government has held 60 per cent of the shares in the line. Columbus Line has decided to sell its shares to the Tongan government and its involvement ended on December 31. The Shipping Corporation of Polynesia manages Tonga's shipping fleet and generally assists in the development of shipping activities in the kingdom.

Foreign reserves hit record \$38m

TONGA'S foreign reserves reached a record US\$38 million at the end of June 1993. This was an increase of more than US\$4.2 million from the previous quarter ending March 1993. The Reserve Bank said the increase was due mainly to the build-up of unspent funds received by the government. There was US\$1.4 million held for the construction of the Queen Salote Memorial Hall and \$750,000 was transferred from trust funds for the repayment of government debt. The June quarter external transactions rose by \$5.3 million over the March quarter to nearly US\$24 million.

The Reserve Bank predicts better economic growth in 1993/94 based on improvements in the squash, construction and tourism industries.

Fiji becomes member of GATT

FIJI has been formally accepted as a member of the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). It becomes the 12th member of the agreement. Fiji's membership became effective on November 16 after GATT director general Peter Sutherland received an application from Fiji to join GATT. GATT's objectives of liberalising world trade is consistent with the Fiji government's present economic policies of creating an open and competitive economy.

Solomons to revive livestock industry

SOLOMON Islands plans to revitalise its livestock industry. During the industry's initial stage in the early 1970s, there were 25,000 cattle in the country but the cattle population has since been reduced to 8000.

Solomon Islands' ministry of agriculture and lands says it's looking at possible

ways of ensuring self-reliance in the livestock industry, a reduction in prices and an improvement in production, marketing and distribution.

In the new cattle development drive, smallholders will not be involved because they have failed previously because of marketing and management problems. But cattle farmers, who either abandoned or poorly managed their farms can be helped under the proposed livestock rehabilitation programme.

Dome Resources seeks more funds

DOME Resources will invite Papua New Guinean institutions to take up equity to help fund the small, high-grade Tolukuma project, 100 kilometres north of Port Moresby. Chairman John Boyer says additional funds will be needed to develop Tolukuma which is due to start production in late 1994.

He says as Dome's main activity is in PNG, they will invite major PNG institutions to take up some equity in the company. The project has an estimated six-year life with an annual production of 50,000 ounces of gold from the current proven resource. Boyer says a landowner agreement was signed in mid-November and the company is confident of being granted a mining lease early in the new year.

Rarotonga resort up for auction

RAROTONGA'S Pacific Resort is among 36 waterfront properties in the Cook Islands, Fiji and New Zealand with a total estimated value of US\$43 million put up for sale by a New Zealand real estate company. The Pacific Resort is up for sale by auction in Auckland on March 16. The New Zealand-based Bayleys Real Estate is marketing the property internationally.

Other properties being auctioned by Bayleys include three in Fiji including the 12-acre Naigani Island Resort. The remainder of the properties are situated in the North Island of New Zealand. The properties are being marketed with advertising in New Zealand, the United States, Asia and Europe.

FSM to expand fishing industry

THE Federated States of Micronesia is taking steps to develop its fishing industry. President Bailey Olter has announced a visit by a national government delegation throughout the four FSM states to discuss on a range of topics in fisheries development. He said it was hoped that discussions would focus on how best to maximise the total stream of benefits from the country's 200-mile exclusive economic zone.

Olter said the delegation would be most interested to discuss with the governors in the states of Yap, Pohnpei, Kosrae and Chuuk the ways and means of improving current fishing operations and optimising future returns. He said it was anticipated that long-lining, purse seining and fish processing along with related infrastructure would be the specific topics of discussions.

Call for review to PNG sales tax

THE Papua New Guinean government has been asked to reconsider its decision on the two per cent sales tax imposed on all provincial governments. Chairman of the islands region premiers council and premier of West New Britain Bernard Vogae says the decision will result in a loss of revenue and negative cash flow effects within the provincial budgets for 1994. He estimated the total loss to be around US\$4 million for the islands region.

More seats on Air New Zealand

AIR New Zealand increased the number of seats on its long haul Pacific routes for the third time in November. Air New Zealand is adding 34 services between Auckland, Honolulu and Los Angeles, providing and additional 6500 seats over the summer months.

General manager Grant Lilley said the increase was necessary to cope with strong demand, as well as filling a void created when Continental Airlines ended its South Pacific services last month. Air New Zealand is also adding another 10 trans-Tasman services, between Auckland and Brisbane and Auckland-Melbourne.

Lilley said the extra trans-Tasman flights would meet Asian demands. Air New Zealand has obtained a Boeing 767 on short-term lease from the northern hemisphere.

Fiji to launch special cruise

AUSTRALIAN tourists will be flown into Fiji in three chartered jumbo jets later this year to mark the launching of a special island cruise that will see the liner *Fairstar* based temporarily at Lautoka in Fiji. The first flight is planned for May when 1250 Australian tourists will fly in to board the *Fairstar* for a multi-island Fiji cruise. The cruise is being organised by Burns Philp Shipping (Fiji) Limited and P & O. Burns Philp Shipping general manager Hari Narayan said the cruise resulted from research conducted by the company which revealed that tourists were interested in eco-tourism rather than the normal sun-and-sand holiday. □

AID

Goodbye Uncle Sam

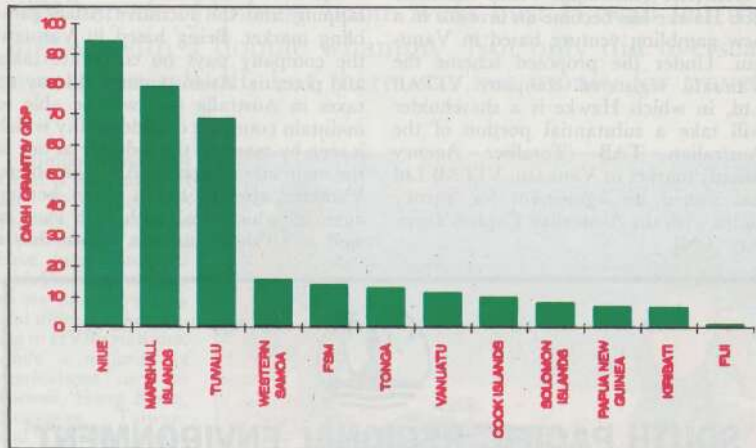
By Roman Grynberg

THE short announcement that the United States Agency for International Development had given a list to the State department that its Suva office as one of the many that it was intending to close sent shock waves throughout the Pacific in October. While it was not yet clear whether the US government also intended to close its aid projects down or at least continue them temporarily was not clear but for many within USAID the announcement meant preparing their departure from Fiji.

The departure of the USAID from the region was just one in a series of blows to the region. What is not widely understood in the Pacific is that the region's biggest business is not mining or fishing or copra but soliciting aid from the international community. Some of the countries of the region receive in grants in any year an amount equivalent to the value of the final goods and services they produce, that is their Gross Domestic Product. (Source — South Pacific Regional database, Australian National University. NB — based on last year available which varies from 1988-1990. Some countries figures are based on estimated GDP).

However, the chart does not give an entirely fair estimate of the total amount of aid that is coming to some of the most aid dependent countries. The reason is that much of the official development assistance does not come in the form of cash grants. There are certainly several countries, including Tuvalu, Marshall Islands, Niue and FSM where total aid has been greater than GDP throughout much of the decade. In fact in most Forum Island Countries aid is much more important than exports as a source of foreign exchange. Whether most of the islands like to admit it to themselves or not what they have been most successful in selling is sympathy.

The departure of USAID from the region is a body blow mostly to the private sector which was strongly supported by USAID programmes. In several crucial areas of private sector development programmes, such as trade and agriculture its programme has been extremely important. However, in all the USAID programme totalled no more than US\$8 million per annum. The departure represents something symbolic to many Pacific islanders who maintain a deep political empathy for the US. Many older Pacific islanders still fondly



recall their encounters with American GI's during World War II. There are few in Washington who appreciate, or apparently care about, the deep reservoir of political support that exists for the US in this part of the world.

The departure of the US from the region, however, is far more profound than just the closure of the USAID office. The US is also planning to drastically curtail its economic assistance to the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia once the current the Compact of Free Association expires in the year 2000. According to one senior director of the Asian Development Bank the US intends to cut its budget to the FSM and Marshall Islands by as much as 2/3 after the year 2000. The director, who asked to remain nameless, said "the US is desperately short of funds and while US\$200 million didn't look like much a few years ago it now looks like a lot of money".

It is not just the recession that has caused the shift in policy. Since the fall of the Berlin Wall leaders in the region have known that the US as well as the major western powers have been concerned with matters in Eastern Europe. It was widely felt that European and US aid would over time shift to the beleaguered economies of Eastern Europe.



USAID office: in downtown Suva

However, paradoxically it has not been the developments in Eastern Europe but rather the Middle East that are putting greatest immediate pressure on the US. With the signing of the peace agreement between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation there will be for several years to come an inflow of enormous amounts of aid from the US to Israel, which has traditionally been the US government's main aid recipient.

If the departure of USAID was not frightening enough, it was followed by an announcement by the British government at the recent South Pacific Commission that it was intending to leave the organisation. The shock announcement was accompanied by a pronouncement by the UK about maintaining its support to the region but through other multilateral organisations. Few believed that UK assistance would continue to be forthcoming in a region where its vital interests were microscopic.

The reaction of regional leaders to the UK announcement was predictable. Headed by Tuvalu, Prime Minister several of the islands are actively and openly pushing for the acceptance of Japan as a full member of the South Pacific Commission. Several years ago Japan expressed an interest in membership. Japan has an enormous aid budget which it has extreme difficulty in spending in sums of less than US\$2 million and many countries would like to see it join the commission, for very obvious financial reasons.

In the end the writing is on the wall for the region. With the departure of the Canadian earlier this year and now the British and the Americans it is clear that the very soon, and not 10 years from now, the islands will have to face the reality of diminished aid budgets and greater reliance on their own ability to generate foreign exchange earnings. □

BUSINESS

Hawke's Vanuatu punt

FORMER Australian Prime Minister Bob Hawke has become an investor in a new gambling venture based in Vanuatu. Under the proposed scheme the Vanuatu registered company VITAB Ltd, in which Hawke is a shareholder will take a substantial portion of the Australian TAB (Totaliser Agency Board) market in Vanuatu. VITAB Ltd has signed an agreement for agency rights with the Australian Capital Territory TAB.

The company is also interested in tapping into the lucrative Asian gambling market. Being based in Vanuatu the company pays no corporate taxes and potential Asian punters will pay no taxes in Australia and will be able to maintain complete confidentiality which is seen by many in the industry as one of the main advantages for Asian gamblers. Vanuatu already has a three betting agencies which deal both with local as well as off-shore punters. It also has a

branch of the Victorian TAB.

The game plan for the new Australian company is to attempt to capture some of the huge \$10 billion per annum Australian gambling market. In particular the company is reported to be aiming at the professional punters which constitute 5 per cent of the Australian market. The scheme works by punters placing bets in Australia by phone or computer link-up. The great advantage is that VITAB would, because of its links through the ACT TAB, have access to the huge pools of prizes and income in the Victorian, South Australian and Tasmanian TABs.

The company is considered a sufficient threat to the Australian TABs that the state TAB heads in Australia are to meet soon to consider strategy options. The fear of the TABs is that VITAB will offer inducements to capture the large Australian punters and thereby decrease the profitability. VITAB chairman Daniel Kolomanski is reported to have said that he would not be offering inducements to Australian punters but he would certainly be looking to attract possible punters from the lucrative Asian market. The company will also be looking to expansion to the emerging Chinese and Vietnamese markets.

In Vanuatu the company pays no corporate tax as the country has no direct taxes but does pay a turnover tax equivalent to 1.08 per cent of sales. The company is expected to have a turnover of \$20 million in the first year and this is expected to rise to \$50 million by the second year of operations. This will mean a substantial boost for the strapped Vanuatu government which if predictions of revenues are correct stands to earn in the vicinity of \$500,000 at end of the second year operations of the company.

The potential loss of revenue from the totalisator business of such concern that the Vanuatu based business arrangement with the ACT TAB was raised recently in the ACT's Assembly. The ACT Minister for Sports, Wayne Berry, admitted that the agreement between VITAB and the ACT TAB "is silent on the issue of inducements".

He went on to say to the ACT Assembly "Members should appreciate that the offering of substantial inducements to investors is purely a commercial matter and TABs are like any other business, are not precluded from using such methods to attract business." Meanwhile, in Vanuatu sources close to government indicate that the investment is by no means entirely complete. Existing TABs in Vanuatu, which include a subsidiary of the Victorian TAB may not be pleased to see further completion. VITAB like other betting shops and totalisators in Vanuatu will not be precluded from taking bets from ni-Vanuatu and will not be restricted from trading on-shore. □



SOUTH PACIFIC REGIONAL ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (SPREP)

VACANCY — Library/Information Center Manager

Applications are invited for the position of Library/Information Center Manager with the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), based in Apia, Western Samoa.

The South Pacific Regional Environment Programmes (SPREP) depends largely on accurate reporting and reliable information for the success of its working programme. An information service to support the research and information needs of all programme is therefore vital.

The Library/Information Centre Manager will be responsible to the Director, through the Deputy Director for organising, developing and administering the SPREP Library/Information Centre (SLIC).

Candidates must have appropriate tertiary qualifications from a recognised institution and at least five years' work experience in a field related to this position. Other essential requirements are the ability to work as part of a small, interdisciplinary team, to manage the work of consultants, and to meet project deadlines.

Appointment will be at Project Officer level and will be for three years in the first instance, renewable for a further term by mutual agreement. An attractive remuneration package and other employment benefits will be offered, with commencing salary dependant on qualifications, experience and current salary in country of recruitment. For non-Western Samoan citizens, salary will be tax-free in Western Samoa.

Applications must be accompanied by detailed curricula vitae containing full information on qualifications and experience for the position as well as names, addresses, telephone and/or fax contact numbers of three referees associated with the applicant professionally and who would be prepared to provide necessary references.

Applications should be addressed to:

The Director
South Pacific Regional Environment Programme
PO Box 240
APIA, Western Samoa
Telephone: (685) 21 929 Fax: (685) 20 231

Further information, including a full duty statement and schedule of terms and conditions of appointment, can be obtained by contacting SPREP's Senior Administrative Officer, Mr Ueligitone Sasagi, at these numbers.

Applications close on 28 February, 1994.

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Land of the falling yen

When the Japanese boom went bust Hawaii felt the impact with a double whammy. Not only did overseas investment fall off, but there was less money for travel.

HAWAII'S tourism industry has been troubled since the Gulf War. Honolulu newspapers routinely print headlines like — "June a big bust for tourism; Arrivals and length of stay plummeted from a year ago." Of particular concern is the dramatic decline of Asian visitors. In June, there were 16.4 per cent less eastbound tourists (originating in Asia) in Hawaii than there were last June. During the same period, westbound travel to Hawaii (originating in North America) dropped by 8.5 per cent. Lengths of stay are also significantly down.

In particular, the decrease in Asian travellers for more than two and a half years means Hawaii's number one industry is in crisis. Why are hundreds of thousand less Asian tourists coming to Hawaii? A Japan expert from Osaka, of the State and private sector funded Hawaii Visitors Bureau, who asked that her name not be used, says — "Tokyo's economy went down... After the bubble burst, people said, 'Oh, we shouldn't spend money.'"

By the late 1980s, Japanese investment in real estate, resorts, golf courses etc, was so extensive that a Honolulu bank claimed 45 per cent of Hawaii's economy was Japan-generated. Tokyo businessmen literally knocked on the doors of local homes asking owners if they wanted to sell their houses for hefty profits. Hundreds of millions were spent per resort. Honolulu Mayor Frank Fasi asked a \$100 million "impact fee" (tax) per golf course. Japan Inc.'s investment was so widespread that Hawaii was called an "economic colony of Japan." Six million tourists a year visited, many from Japan - which had a yen for Hawaii.

Inevitably, when the Japanese boom went bust Hawaii felt the impact with a double whammy. Not only did overseas investment radically fall off, but there was less money for travelling. HVB's Osakan says after the downturn, "Japanese tended to travel shorter distances to closer, cheaper destinations. 'Why go all the way to Hawaii?' they asked. Going to Hawaii was a travel trend 10, 20 years ago; it was a major place to go. Now, many places compete with Hawaii."

Indeed, for sun, sand, and surf about a million Japanese per year now turn to Saipan or Guam. Micronesia is becoming to Japan what the Caribbean is to East Coast USA — tropical isles on the doorstep. For a quick - and less expensive - sunny getaway, many Japanese, as well as other Asians, now turn to the Marianas - much closer to home than distant Hawaii.

Compounding this trend is that many of the 13 percent of Japan's population which travels abroad have been saturated with Hawaii and want to see something new and different. According to HVB's statistics, while a majority of destinations such as Hawaii, Hong Kong, Singapore, Taiwan, and Korea have decreasing number of Japanese tourists, newer locals like China, New Zealand, and Australia mark gains. Recently, Down Under tops Hawaii in Japan preference polls.

Other factors contribute to this trend.

"Our job is to make travellers happy, to show them 'Aloha Spirit,'" asserts Richard Liberato, sales and marketing vice president of Jack's Tours, a Big Island tour operator specialising in motor coach, limo, etc, tours for Asians. "But sticking our hands into our Asian brothers and sisters' pockets and taking out all of their money is not Aloha Spirit," contends Liberato, who has 20 years of visitor industry experience.

High prices are another reason why Hawaii has a steep tourism downturn. Except for French territories like Tahiti, Hawaii is the most overpriced island in the Pacific. Isle prices generally are one third higher than Continental US costs. A top business magazine has dubbed Hawaii "a tax hell." Tourists feel the big squeeze with even higher prices than locals pay, and, as Liberato points out "a hotel tax, airport landing fee, etc." With the average rate per day per hotel room about US\$150, Liberato warns — "We've got to stop gouging our Asian brothers and sisters... Hawaii is pricing itself right out of the market."

All is not dark; Hawaii tourism has bright spots. Although numbers dwindle from Japan, Singapore, and Hong Kong, Taiwan and Korea are on the rise. Shin Chul Kang, Honolulu General Manager of Asiana Airlines, which opened a Seoul-Hawaii route in July, explains the increase in Koreans to the Aloha State is due to the fact that "Korea is the latest country to liberalise overseas travel for the public. Before 1988, the year of the Seoul Olympics, all passports were strictly controlled



Japanese tourists: many now turn to Guam and Saipan

by the government. But now anyone can get a passport."

Visa requirements slow the rate of visitors, but Kang adds "because of the US influence, many Koreans believe America is the best country. Since many Americans dream of vacationing in Hawaii, Koreans believe Hawaii is the best paradise in the world." Maybe so, but even if the number of Koreans visiting Hawaii climbs as expected (from 85,000 in 1992 to 100,000 in 1993) this is still less than the 1.6 million Japanese Hawaii grew accustomed to. Hence, there's still trouble in paradise.

The State is in disarray as it attempts to grapple with the depression in its number one industry. There have been shake-ups at HVB, and a new director was appointed to the Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism. In July 1992, Mufi Hannemann, a young, Harvard-educated politico of Samoan descent, promised to energise Hawaii. Hannemann speaks of playing Hawaii's cultural card, of enticing visitors with Polynesian culture. But the fact is that Hawaii is extremely Americanised — and Asianised — and native Hawaiians, now a landless minority, battle to preserve their rights and way of life. The Hawaiian sovereignty movement — like most locals — dislike tourism.

The powers that be gravely damaged Hawaii's ecology and indigenous people, yet now expect the same eroded beauty and culture they defiled to save tourism. But not even the best public relations campaign on earth can trick Asians and other travellers into believing the goose that laid the golden eggs hasn't been killed. □

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COVER STORY

Fiji: back to the future ... again

Govt budget defeated, PM Rabuka calls for snap national election

FIJI Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka's calling of a snap election for February is a high risk strategy. At stake are not only Rabuka's personal political future but the prospect of further schisms in the indigenous Fijian community and the ramifications of a struggle between Fiji Indian leaders Jai Ram Reddy and Mahendra Chaudhry.

Rabuka came to the prime ministership after national elections in May last year amid a power play with leadership aspirant Josevata Kamikamica. When his government in November crashed on the rocks of internal dissent, Kamikamica was again the focus of rebellion. While the catalyst was an unpopular budget — which saw increased duty on some basic food items as well as a blow-out in the deficit — underlying tensions had been building for some time. The Prime Minister got himself into a terrible mess over the so-called Tony Stephens Affair.

A commission of inquiry found that Rabuka had acted improperly and *prima facie* illegally in agreeing to pay compensation, for claimed wrongful imprisonment, to Stephens — a businessman with a criminal history. An inexperienced cabinet was at times wracked by indecision, typified by a long drawn out saga involving reversal after reversal on choosing a consortium to run a permanent television service. Personal conflicts in cabinet and strains over allegations of corruption — on the waterfront and in the government owned telecommunications sector — complicated the political landscape.

Defenders of Rabuka maintain he was not given a fair go because he always had to watch his back. They blame a lack of firm government on what they see as destabilising tactics by the Kamikamica group. When the 1994 calendar year budget came to a vote in parliament, shockwaves were felt on the government side. Kamikamica, one minister, a min-



PM Rabuka: political future at stake

ister of state and six backbenchers defected. It appeared the dissidents hoped that acting president Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara would see the loss as a no-confidence vote in Rabuka and appoint a new prime minister who could command majority support in the House of Representatives.

At one stage, there was a plan to put forward long-serving MP Ratu William Toganivalu as a compromise PM. The hardline Taukei Movement, emerging from a long period of dormancy, implied that there would be civil strife if Rabuka was unseated. This followed earlier warnings by the Taukei Movement — when notice was given of a parliamentary no-confidence motion — that Rabuka supporters could be moved to try and burn down the parliament building.

When it came to the crunch, Rabuka went to Mara and sought the dissolution of parliament so new national elections could be held.

Arguably, it was the first occasion for some time that Rabuka had made a smart political decision and moved decisively on it. Ratu Mara accepted constitutional advice that he had no practical option other than to grant the request. Ratu Mara, in doing so, enhanced his status by being seen to act impartially despite the fact that Kamikamica had always been his preferred choice as prime minister.

One evening, following the budget defeat and a televised announcement of new elections, Rabuka was sitting outside the National Video Centre in Suva relaxing with colleagues around the kava bowl. "On well, these things happen," he said in a classic piece of understatement. Rabuka likes a bit of drama, and has a former military man's passion for the heat of battle. Critics might feel that this preference contrasts with a lack of enthusiasm for the hard slog of day-to-day government, with its need for careful evaluation and attention to detail.

In effect, in the lead-up to the February elections, two major battles will be fought, and several smaller ones. On the one hand, there will be a struggle for support amongst the indigenous Fijian community. There are already signs of deepening splits — something which poses a threat to wider stability. For a start, the dissidents — who have been expelled from Rabuka's Soqosoqo ni Vakavulewa ni Taukei Party (SVT) — are taking about forming a new political grouping. And an old political warhorse, Apisai Tora, has re-emerged with his All National

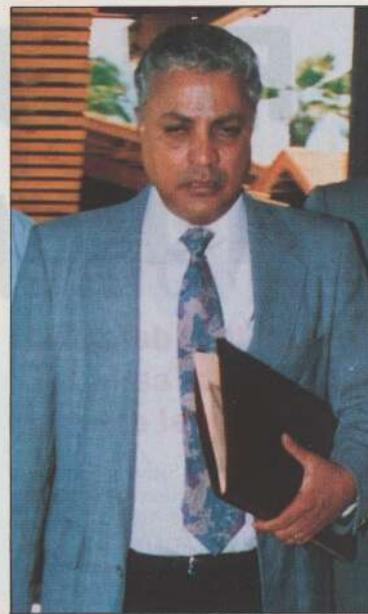
COVER STORY



Reddy: opposition leader



Mara: acting president



Chaudhry: Labour leader

Congress (ANC) to campaign on a platform of multi-culturalism (despite Tora himself have a very mixed past record on such issues). Before the last elections, which were the first since Rabuka's 1987 military coups, Rabuka had raised high expectations among the Fijian community.

Now he will be judged on his record in office. While that record has been very much up and down, Rabuka can fairly lay claim to having been a moderate leader. Anti-Indian witchhunts, envisaged by the most pessimistic, did not materialise.

Early in December, Rabuka re-raised the spectre of a post-election unity government. And he signalled a willingness to look towards opposition leader Jai Ram Reddy's National Federation Party (NFP) as a coalition partner. Reddy's political foe on the Indian side of politics, Labour Party Leader Mahendra Chaudhry, was quick to go on the attack. He accused Reddy of effectively becoming an ally of Rabuka and warned that, during the campaign, he would pursue the NFP on this basis.

Reddy sought to neutralise this strategy by stating publicly that Rabuka had not broached an alliance with him, and added that the prime minister's floating of the idea through the media was not a good start to developing greater cross-racial unity.

Rabuka has called meetings of his party, the traditional Great Council of Chiefs and provincial councils to discuss his unity government plan and related

issues. This comes at a time of doubts over future viability of the relationship between the Great Council of Chiefs and the SVT, which the chiefs created with the failed aim of fostering greater indigenous unity. The post coup constitution's assigning of a central role in party affairs to provincial councils is also under something of a cloud. The effect of this link has been to encourage regionalism in national politics, something which has been a thorn in side of the Rabuka government.

Once the elections are out of way, manoeuvring will intensify. It appears likely, that the SVT will form the core of any new government. But partly because of division on the Fijian side of politics, the party created to rule is unlikely to have a majority in its own right. The present government has been comprised of 30 SVT members, two nominal independents and representatives of the General Voters Party (GVP), which in the last elections won all five of the seats reserved for ethnic minorities such as Europeans, Chinese and other Pacific islanders.

There are a total of 37 seats allocated to Fijians, but last year the hardline Fijian Nationalist United Front (FNUF) led by veteran firebrand activist Sakeasi Butadroka took five of these seats. Moderates in the SVT, including Kamikamica, would not tolerate an alliance with the FNUF, even though Rabuka was favourably disposed towards them. With the dissidents presently expelled, the possibility of a new coalition including Butadroka can't be ruled out. The

Indian community would grimace at the prospect. Alternative combinations, might include an alliance with Reddy or the Tora's ANC, if he can win a few seats. The GVP, which has traditionally sided with the Fijian side of politics, faces the unhappy prospect of losing one of two of its seats because both Labour and the ANC are going to field candidates in general voter constituencies.

So, the May 1987 coup which ousted the Fiji Labour/NFP coalition of the Late Dr Timoci Bavadra failed to simplify Fiji's politics. Big questions remain unanswered. By the mid-1990s land leases of thousands of Indian cane farmers will start running out. Unless there is some sort of realistic powersharing, dealing with the inherent sensitivities of this issue will be greatly complicated. Sugar remains a central pillar of the nation's economy. And as Chaudhry pointed out in a speech earlier this year, investment has remained largely stagnant. "We have not yet succeeded in providing either political stability or investor confidence," he said. "As a result, liquidity levels continue to be high in the banking system and the economy is not moving." In a recent interview with Australia's Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) Dateline television program, Rabuka was asked if potential investors would still come to Fiji despite the political upheaval arising from the budget's defeat. "Well, I think this whole episode would make me come here because the constitution is workable," he said. "We have taken the constitutional way. The country has remained calm. How many parts of the world can you have a

political crisis such as we have had and continue as if nothing had happened."

Rabuka predicted that the NFP would increase its Indian seats in parliament, currently 14 compared with Labour's 13. This followed a period in which Reddy, an urbane lawyer, has apparently benefited from pursuing a moderate political line. Labour was trounced by the NFP this year in local councils elections as well as in a national by-election. "We must do away with that failed style of politics which is based on destructive and confrontational urges, which seems to thrive on dispute," Reddy told a luncheon organised by the GVP. He sought an end to constant verbal warfare and insistence that only one kind of agenda was right.

Ironically, it was Chaudhry who after the last election quickly jumped in to back Rabuka for the prime ministership when Reddy preferred Kamikamica, given that the constitution insists that leadership of government go to an indigenous Fijian. Chaudhry fell out with Rabuka over the slow pace of reviewing the post-coup constitution, which restricts Fijian Indian rights. The forthcoming elections will test the popularity of Chaudhry's return to a more confrontational approach. Labour did

It's likely that the SVT will form the core of any new govt. But partly because of division on the Fijian side of politics, the party created to rule is unlikely to have a majority in its own right

better than expected in the last elections, winning virtually all the western cane-belt seats. There remains a divide between the concerns of rural Indian voters and their urban counterparts, throwing yet another wildcard into the island nation's political fabric.

There is also a widening gulf between the perceptions of urban and rural Fijians. In hundreds of scattered villages, what goes on Suva political circles often seems remote. Bread and butter issues are what count. Failure to achieve a more workable system of government can only exacerbate the problems of a widening disparity between services available to city dwellers and what is on offer to people in outlying areas. Urban drift, combined with high overall population growth and low economic growth inhibiting the creation of new jobs, leads to social tensions and disillusionment. Such dynamics in turn challenge preser-



Dissident: Ilai Kuli



Dissident: Josevata Kamikamica



Political warhorse: Apisai Tora



Nationalist: Sakeasi Butadroka

vation of traditional values. These values, including communal problem sharing and inter-dependence, have helped Fiji in the past to overcome divisive forces of the kind which had ripped apart other nations. As Reddy noted recently, Fiji in its first year's of nationhood was a tinderbox, with enough flammable material to engulf people of all races.

Unfortunately, election campaigns always produce sparks. A saving grace of what has turned out to be a largely failed post-coup constitution is that it tends to concentrate tensions within ethnic communities rather than intensify strains between them. This is because voters are restricted to casting ballots for candidates from their own ethnic communities. And the demands of elections can on occasion pressure disparate blocs to regroup. For example, it may yet be that the split in



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COVER STORY

Ratu Sir Penaia dies

FIJI'S head of state, President Ratu Sir Penaia Ganilau, died on the 16th of last month, in Washington, after a long illness. Ganilau, 75, was being treated for leukaemia and related medical complications at the Walter Reed Memorial Hospital. A traditional Fijian high chief, Ganilau was also served with distinction as a soldier, sportsman, administrator and political leader.

Ganilau was appointed governor-general of Fiji in 1983. He became president in 1987 when Fiji became a republic following two military coups that year. Before his appointment as governor-general, Ganilau served as minister in several portfolios with the Alliance government and became deputy prime minister in 1977.

Paying tribute to Ganilau, Acting President Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara said Ganilau had endured his illness with grace, fortitude and courage which were the hallmarks of this remarkable man. Mara said from his youth Ganilau was prepared for a life of service. "As a soldier, administrator and political leader, Ratu Sir Penaia went beyond the call of duty. He was always there when he was needed," Mara said. "He was loyal, able and dedicated. Ratu Sir Penaia was a man of kindness, wit and humour, and he lived life to the full."

Mara said Ganilau exemplified the qualities of a chief — honest, diligent and kind. "He was loved and admired by citizens from all communities. They had confidence in him. They respected him," he said. Opposition leader Jai Ram Reddy said — "Ratu Sir Penaia was truly a great man by any standard and in any language. Ratu Sir Penaia has assured a permanent and honourable place in the history of Fiji." Ganilau was married with five sons and two daughters. The Great Council of Chiefs is expected to meet this month to appoint a new president. □

Rabuka's SVT will be papered over until after the elections. That would mean a repeat of the situation before the last elections. Then, the question of SVT leadership was put-off until after polling when the numerical situation in parliament was clear. In this way, respective public support for Rabuka loyalists and the dissidents, as well as of the competing Indian political parties, would be on the table for all to see.

Rabuka notes that Fiji has been the lowest regional receiver of foreign aid

Chiefs back Rabuka

By Wainikiti Waqa

FIJI'S powerful Great Council of Chiefs (GCC) met in Suva for two days last month and later announced its unwavering support for the ruling Soqosoqo Vakavulewa ni Taukei and its leader, Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka. The emergency chiefs' meeting was called following the country's most recent political crisis which saw the defeat of government's 1994 budget and the announcement by the prime minister that parliament would be dissolved and a snap election to be held late next month.

The budget defeat was made possible by seven dissenting members of government who did not vote for the budget, fueling speculations of division among the ranks and more so, the fragmentation of the indigenous Fijians. In an appropriate address to open the chiefs meeting, acting president and former prime minister Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara called for unity among the indigenous Fijians.

Mara called on the chiefs to be wary of those they chose as candidates for the chiefs-sponsored SVT party in the snap election. He said the chiefs should choose candidates with integrity, vision, force of character and trustworthiness, in the face of uncertainty and confusion brought about by the defeat of the budget.

Ratu Mara, who was Fiji's PM for the past 22 years (17 years as an elected leader and five as head of the interim government), said unity among SVT parliamentarians was paramount if Fijian interests was to be pursued with vigour. "I regarded the defeat of the government budget Bill as a crisis situation," Rabuka later told the 56 members of the GCC. "This is not only because it is a major legislation — so that a vote against it is in effect, a vote of no-confidence in the government — but also because the budget Bill was

defeated with the help of the dissenting group from within the governing SVT/General Voters Party coalition — it is this which made it all the more serious."

Rabuka told the chiefs that the vote against the budget by the dissidents was more a personal vote against him than anything else. "Was their personal hatred for me so deep that they were prepared to sacrifice their duty and obligation of loyalty to the SVT and GVP and to the Fijian and Rotuman communities as a whole and to hand over effective control of the national government of this country to the 26 Indian members of the Opposition?"

Rabuka presented a book size account of what had happened in parliament. At the end of their deliberations, the chiefs gave Rabuka their blessings to amend the SVT constitution, enabling the party to have a clearer agenda. Under the present constitution, SVT cannot discipline any of the seven dissenting parliamentarians who did not vote for the budget.

The seven dissidents, who have since been expelled by the SVT management board, have threatened to take SVT to court on the issue. Rabuka clarified in a press conference after the meeting that the seven could stand again as SVT candidates but it would be up to their constituency councils.

Rabuka said names proposed by the councils would have to be endorsed by a party selection panel, as the former practice which saw councils endorsing their own candidates has dramatically failed to hold in one piece the much required party unity.

He later predicted a comfortable majority for the SVT which should see him back in Fiji's highest political office. Mara is expected to dissolve parliament on the 19th of this month with the election to be held within 37 days. □

assistance per head of population. He maintains also that Fiji, in relative terms, has shown the best overall economic performance of Pacific island countries during the past five years. "We should all be proud of this because it tells us that our success in progressing and moving our country forward in its economic and social development is to a very large degree through our own efforts and resources," Rabuka said. Fiji, with a large educated workforce and well developed administrative network, certainly

does have potential for future advancement. And at times an underlying reasonableness belies the sort of high blown rhetoric demonstrated in a recent Taukei Movement advertisement branding government dissidents as traitors. The coming election campaign will be a test of Fiji's maturity as a nation. The country is at the crossroads. Future generations may look back to the 1994 elections as a watershed in a unique South Pacific experiment in multi-racialism. □

INVESTMENT

By David North

BIKINI and Nauru have a lot in common. Both have a long series of colonial masters, both islands were severely damaged to serve colonial interests, and both received a great deal of money to remedy the damage. Further, both sets of islanders are largely dependent on these payments for their day-to-day livelihood.

The difference is that the Bikinians (residents of the Marshall Islands) are quietly building its investments while Nauru has lost much money to con artists, bad real estate investments, and, most recently, a failed fling in the London theatre.

Further, Bikini's finances are an open book — while those of Nauru are shrouded in self-imposed mystery (see *PIM's* cover story, August, 1993).

Bikini benefits from three principal trust funds (and some lesser ones) and all are doing quite well. But, unlike Nauru's financial ventures, Bikini has chosen a supremely dull approach — working through corporate money managers, and banks, and lawyers, and putting everything in writing.

Bikini also chooses dull investments, no Broadway shows, no skyscrapers, just a solid collection of stocks and bonds.

But dull means that there will be money for Bikinians or decades to come.

The finances work as follows —

1. The first of the three funds is the Marshall Islands Nuclear Claims Fund, a master fund established by the US

Congress to take care of various damages done to the Marshall Islands by the US military when it tested its atomic weapons there between 1946 and 1958. Established with a grant of \$150,000,000 in 1986, and told to disburse \$18,000,000 every year to various organisations coping with the atomic damage, it has been able to meet its obligations largely out of its earnings, and still has \$126,000,000 in its coffers at last report. Or, stated another way:

- the fund started with \$150,000,000;
- it spent \$112,000,000, and;
- it still has \$126,000 remaining.

The US Congress set this money aside under the Compact of Free Association in 1986 to take care of the claims arising out of the atomic damage in the Marshalls. The fund is managed by Smith Barney, Shearson, a major Wall Street firm, and the moneys are invested in stocks and bonds, with quarterly reports issued on profits and losses.

Of the \$18,000,000 paid out by this fund annually, \$5,000,000 comes to the Bikini Claims Trust Fund. Other significant annual payments are made to:

- the Eniwetok trust fund, \$3.2 million;
- the Rongelap trust fund, \$2.5 million;
- the Utrik trust fund, \$1.5 million; and;
- the RMI government, \$3.25 million.

Some other smaller payments are also made annually.

Eniwetok and Bikini, both outlying atolls in the Marshalls, were sites of atomic bomb blasts — 23 in the case of Bikini, while Rongelap and Utrik are populated islands on which atomic debris fell, particularly after a hydrogen bomb,

Bikini's

175 times as deadly as the one dropped on Hiroshima, was exploded in Operation Bravo in 1954.

The damage to the islands — and their people — was monumental and about a generation later the US Congress decided to make amends through the payment of federal funds.

2. What has happened to the \$5.0 million a year that has gone to the Bikini Claims Trust Fund? The Bikinians' Washington-based lawyer, Jonathan M. Weisgall, worked out a deal between the islanders and the US government that \$2.4 million is paid annually to the islanders for community expenses, and \$2.6 million is invested for future use in the Bikini Claims Trust Fund.

In the seven years that the latter fund has been in operation, it has received about \$18.2 million (seven x \$2.6 million) in payments from the master fund, and, as of September 30, 1993, had a total of \$21,795,000 in holdings. There will be eight more annual payments into the fund of \$2.6 million each.

3. Meanwhile the island leaders and Weisgall have convinced congress that it was not enough to just compensate the islanders for the taking of their land —

What will the money buy?

By David North

BIKINI is building up its reserves — and is seeking another \$300,000,000 from the US Congress to restore the island to its pre-atomic bomb status — but what will the money buy?

The former residents of Bikini want to back to their island home, and want to use their money to remove the nuclear threat to their health that lingers there. The objective is clear, Congress and the islanders agree but how is this to be accomplished? There are two broad approaches: one is to remove, at great expense, the top soil from the island and replace it with fresh, nuclear-free soil. The second is to give the entire island a series of sprinklings of potassium.

The second approach relates to the nature of the radiation, and its principal anticipated impact on people living there. The radiation does not do much damage, the experts say, if you stay on the island, and eat canned food from

somewhere else. But if you eat food grown on the island, you will consume a lot of radioactive cesium-137, which is drawn from the soil into the fruits and vegetables.

It is, however, possible to block the movement of the cesium-137 into the foodstuff by spreading the potassium, if it is available the plants will pull this harmless commodity into the fruits and vegetables instead of the cesium-137. The two substances apparently have somewhat similar chemical properties, and given a choice, the plants prefer potassium.

The islanders, however, are not convinced that the potassium solution is an adequate one — "they point out that the radiation is still in the ground, no matter how much potassium is distributed," says Jonathan Weisgall, the islanders' Washington-based lawyer.

The alternative preferred by the island council is to remove the top soil, dump it in the ocean, and replace it with good dirt brought in from somewhere

else. This is not only very expensive, but it runs counter to the anti-nuclear-waste dumping laws and treaties that are currently complicating the former Soviet Union's attempts to dump nuclear waste in the Sea of Japan.

While their leaders are trying to work out this puzzle, the people of Bikini have not returned to their island. (They did so for a few years in the 1970s when the US government seriously underestimated the extent of the island's dangers). Most of them live on the smaller, less attractive island of Kili, where the fishing opportunities are considerably less attractive than they were on Bikini.

Meanwhile, with each passing year, the funds set aside for Bikini must be shared by a constantly growing population, as the Bikinians have one of the world's highest birthrates. It is estimated that are now 1500-2000 Bikinians, all descended from the 167 removed from the home island by the US Navy back in 1946. □

investment strategy

to which they have not returned because of continuing radiation — but Congress should pay for the restoration of the land to something like its prior condition.

Bikini Atoll surrounds what had been a large, fish-filled lagoon, which historically was the source of most of the residents' protein; the islands around the fringe were rich in coconut palms and breadfruit trees, allowing the residents a healthy subsistence economy, without the need for cash crops.

Congress made a series of annual payments, in recent years, totalling \$100,000,000, to restore the island to its prior condition; this sum was in addition to an earlier fund of \$20,000,000 for a total of \$120,000,000. Moneys from this, the third fund, are to be used for the benefit of Bikinians only, not the residents of the other atomically-effected islands.

This fund, the Resettlement Trust Fund, pays out \$8,000,000 a year to meet the current needs of the islanders (it essentially supports the community) and to restore Bikini to its pre-bomb status. The Bikini Council, not the Republic of Marshall Islands, manages both the Resettlement Trust Fund and the Bikini Claims Trust Fund.

Despite the drain of \$8,000,000 a year, the Resettlement Trust Fund was worth \$107,771,000 on September 30, 1993.

How do the leaders of the Bikini islanders, notably the mayor, Tomaki Juda, and the members of the council, manage to have so much money left after so much has been spent on their behalf?

The answer is a textbook example of careful management, and, as suggested, a basic decision to follow the plodding course of sensible investments made through sensible channels. In addition, the US Department of Interior looks at the books from time to time.

"Sure we have suggestions that all the money should be divided among all the residents, and the trusts closed out; sure there's the guy who says 'let's invest in my brother-in-law's business'," Weisgall told PIM, "but that's not how it is done."

Mayor Juda and the council sits atop a complicated mainland financial structure which is full of checks and balances.

The peak of this structure is Wm. M. Mercer & Co., of Denver, the investment adviser. The organisation figures out an appropriate balance between bonds (safe but usually incapable of growth) and stocks (less safe, but capable of growth.) Mercer also helps the island leaders

choose its money manager (more on this later) and audits all the books. Mercer handles NO money directly, and make no decisions on specific investments.

Then there are the two trustees, both old established American financial institutions, NaitonsBank for the Resettlement Trust Fund and Signet Trust Company for the Bikini Claims Trust Fund. Their role, when everything is in order, is to write out cheques for investments and disbursements. With Mercer's help, the island leaders have

The answer is a textbook example of careful management, and, as suggested, a basic decision to follow the plodding course of sensible investments made through sensible channels

chosen seven money managers, each given responsibility for between \$6.5 million and \$35 million. These are the people skilled at making investment decisions but, to avoid conflict of interest, again, most are not stock dealers, and they do not consummate the stock sales and purchases they recommend and thus they can not generate excessive commissions for themselves at the islanders' expense.

Mercer keeps track of how well each of the money managers do on a quarterly basis, and compares these track records to standard Wall Street indices, such as the changes in the Dow Jones index or that of the Standard and Poor's 500. Every quarter Mercer sends the island leaders and Weisgall a report, showing how everyone is doing. In the most recent report, for example, using two-year averages, one of the money managers (GAMCO) had an average return of 23.8 per cent, while another, at the other end of the spectrum, came in with only a 4.3 per cent return.

On average, for the two years ending September 30, 1993, the Resettlement Trust Fund showed a return of 13.3 per

cent per year, while the Bikini Claims Trust Fund did less well, at 11.0 per cent per year.

If a money manager does badly over a substantial period of time, it can be fired. For example, Morgan Stanley & Co., one of the financial institutions established by America's ranking tycoon of 100 years ago, J P Morgan, did not perform well for Bikini so it was fired by the mayor and the council. (Unfortunately no Stateside writers or social critics knew about the decision at the time — they would have had a field day with the implicit real estate investments. Of the \$100,000,000 plus in its various portfolios, there is \$370,000 invested in one real estate venture, an apartment complex in the American Midwest (which has worked out well, according to Weisgall.)

Given the formal financial structures devised by Bikini's leaders and Weisgall, and what in money circles is called the "fiduciary relationships," Bikini not only does not get taken by con artists, or invest in dubious ventures, it virtually can not do so.

This makes life dull for journalists like me, but keeps the money flowing to where it should flow, to the islanders.

■ **BIKINI remains largely uninhabited. There are a few Bikini males on the island now, working on its rehabilitation. The bulk of the population remains on another Marshalls island, Kili. Bikini was cleared of people in 1946 by the US; there was a movement back to the island in the '70s (in the wake of inaccurate news about its safety) and then the Bikinians left again shortly afterwards. Bikini's 36 islands are six times larger than Kili in land area; rat-infested Kili doesn't even have a protective lagoon, and fishing is often impossible because of weather conditions. Other Bikinians live on Ejit Island, near Majuro.**

When the bikini was invented in 1946, it took the name of the denuded island, an apt choice considering the garment's explosive effect on men. From 1946-1958, 23 nuclear blasts in the atmosphere shook Bikini Atoll, at a cost of \$91 billion in today's dollars. They are feared to have left behind a legacy of contamination, cancer, leukaemia, thyroid problems, miscarriages, "jellyfish" babies, and irreversible genetic damage. □

POLITICS

Palauans approve Compact

By David North

VOTING for the eighth time on a controversial and long stalemated defense and foreign aid treaty with the United States, the voters of the Republic of Palau have approved the Compact of Free Association by more than a two-to-one majority.

By a 68 to 32 per cent margin, the Palauan electorate on November 9 voted to end more than a decade of impasse with the United States over the terms of the agreement. Only a simple majority was required to approve the pact because a constitution-required 75 per cent majority requirement had been amended last year by a voter initiative. The compact provides about US\$450 million in aid in the first year funding.

According to complete returns, 4956 voters opted for the Compact, while 2309 cast ballots against it. There are 11,562 registered Palauan voters, about two-thirds in Palau and the others on Guam, Saipan, Hawaii and the US West Coast.

Located about 500 miles east of the southern Philippines, Palau has been administered by the United States since 1947. The island is the last of the UN's 11 original trust territories and the sole remaining part of the US Trust Territory of the Pacific, which had included the Marshall, Caroline, and Northern Mariana Islands. The first two groups became sovereign states in the mid-1980s, through similar Compacts of Free Association. The Northern Marianas opted for US Commonwealth status.

"Palau's journey to sovereignty has been long, and at times extraordinarily difficult," said Palau President Kuniwo Nakamura. Though he had opposed the agreement a few years ago, he strongly endorsed it during his campaign for the presidency last year. "As a democratic nation of laws, it is incumbent upon all Palauans to respect this decision made by the overwhelming majority of Palauans."

Nakamura expects opposition to continue and believes there will be further court tests of the vote. "I know many Palauans have had real and serious doubts about what an independent future under the Compact will bring," he said. "I honestly believe that this was, given the totality of the circumstances, the best decision for Palau."

The "circumstances" Nakamura was referring to include the end of the Cold War and dissolution of the Soviet Union, as well as the US withdrawal from its Philippines bases. Two decades ago, when Palauan and US leaders began negotiating the pact, the United States

'Palau's journey to sovereignty has been long, and at times extraordinarily difficult'

considered Palau a possible contingency basing site for some of the US defence missions in the Philippines.

With the US military presence and defence spending in the western Pacific dropping steadily and the closing of several US defence facilities on Guam, many Palauan leaders no longer believe the United States has either the means or the desire to use Palauan islands for defence installations.

US budget cutting and "economic revitalisation" left some Palauan leaders fearful that if the Compact was opened to renegotiation, the US Congress would be not be able to significantly increase financial aid to the island. Some even feared that because of the current pressure on the US Congress for spending reductions, compact aid on the US.

If the November 9 results survive expected legal challenges from groups opposed to the Compact the vote will officially close out the era of US trusteeship for the Western Pacific Islands and launch Palau into the international community as a sovereign nation, much as earlier US compacts did for the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

The pact provides that the United States will be responsible for Palau's external defence and regional security. That provision had caused the greatest controversy because the Palau constitution bans all nuclear material in Palauan territory, a prohibition that would even have prevented US nuclear-powered ships from transiting the islands' waters.

The November 9 voting victory was almost anti-climatic for those groups that had successfully fought to lower the required approval majority to a simple majority. A voter initiative in the November, 1992 general election placed the amendment to the constitution (to lower the majority) on the ballot and it was approved by a 60 per cent plus majority.

In the seven previous votes, majorities ranging from 60 per cent to 73 per cent approved the pact but the previously-required 75 per cent threshold was never reached. The Nakamura administration also had fought off legal challenges to

those results that could have prevented the November 9 vote.

The opposition, led by 49-year old paramount chief Ibedul Yutaka Gibbons, filed several law suits to block the vote and lobbied the electorate right up to the polls. The Compact could destroy traditional values, Gibbons told voters the day before the election. As traditional head of Koror state, site of the main seaport and interim capital of the islands, Gibbons warned that the United States would continue to dominate Palau's affairs. "My last appeal to Palauans everywhere is not to sell out our rights, our land and don't let our dignity and integrity be compromised."

Ibedul and other opposition leaders lost two major court appeals just days before the vote. On October 29, the Palau Supreme Court Appellate Division upheld an earlier Palau court ruling that said the English language on last year's initiative was not significantly different enough from the Palauan version to invalidate the vote. The court also ruled that the burden of proof concerning the validity of signatures on the initiative petition was on the those appealing the vote and not on the Palau government. The Appellate Court agreed that the plaintiffs had failed to establish that any of the signatures were not genuine.

In another court test, filed on behalf of 10 Palauan women, the opposition had charged that the law setting up the November 9 referendum had required that the Palau government to receive a "favourable response" from the US government on Palau's requested modifications of the compact. The September 24 suit argued that the Palau government had not received a favourable response. The Palau Supreme Court, just three days before the vote, ruled that it was the responsibility of the Nakamura administration and the Palau National Congress to decide if the response had been favourable. It was not the court's prerogative to decide such political issues, the court ruled. A related suit filed in US District Court for the Northern Marianas is not expected to be decided until late 1993. The ruling will not alter the November 9 vote, however.

The attorney for the Ibedul and the Palauan harassment. He was released on bail, pending his trial. Palau police said his Filipino maids had charged he was abusing them and told local authorities about the guns. A search of Wolff's residence then turned up the illegal weapons. Palau's Constitution prohibits the possession of all such weapons and requires a mandatory 15-year jail sentence for anyone convicted of the crime. □

ENVIRONMENT

Takaku's mission

By Liz Thompson

WILLIAM Takaku looks quite extraordinary in this tiny village school near Bury St Edmunds in England. A very dark Bougainvillean man from Papua New Guinea, he wears his hair in long dreadlocks, a sign of mourning for his island which continues to be in a state of crisis. The small English children have never seen anything quite like it and they stare wide-eyed as Takaku tells them traditional legends from his country.

In England working with Rick Edmunds and Nigel Hughes of Greenlight Productions who write and put on environmental awareness theatre, Takaku, who is passionately committed to promoting greater awareness of the need to protect of our environment, is communicating his concerns internationally.

Director of Papua New Guinea's National Theatre Company for many years he is currently on leave but continues to work closely with the company. Trained both in Papua New Guinea and at National Institute of Dramatic Arts in Sydney, Australia, Takaku has written and performed in numerous environmental awareness performances. He believes that theatre was used traditionally to communicate, convey ideas and messages and educate the community and that it should be used today for similar purposes.

He suggests that people relate far more readily to this, a medium based on oral traditions, rather than to reading newspapers. In the midst of the massive resource exploitation that is taking place in Papua New Guinea and the frequent social problems that follow in its wake, Bougainville being a tragic example, Takaku is concerned that people know more about what is going on around them in the course of development.

He is concerned that people do not really understand the long term implications when approached by logging and mining companies to sell their land. Landowners who now need money in a monetary economy to send their children to school, pay for roads and vehicles and tin fish and rice which has become increasingly popular, don't appreciate the land degradation that comes with large scale logging. Frequently companies promises to replant are not followed through, the money landowners earned is quickly spend and their land is gone.

Takaku is critical of the west and of development, believing that it brings with it great imbalance, social upheaval and ultimately a deterioration in the quality of life. He believes that in process



William Takaku: out to protect environment

of development there is little respect for the environment and that nature and culture the intrinsically bound; if you lose nature you lose culture which he believes is essential if life is to have any real value. Takaku's idea of progress is a return to the villages. A situation in which people return to their gardens and become less dependent on overseas imported food products. "Reclaim your gardens," he tells people, "China has become our garden, we import all our rice from China, let's get rid of this dependency." He believes that the only way forward is to go back to a more traditional situation.

Bougainvillean goes international with his concerns to create an awareness to protect the environment through the theatre

Takaku is aware his people have new economic needs having entered into a monetary economy and he is unsure as to how to address this reality. Landowners are critical of environmentalists who come to Papua New Guinea and suggest alternative sources of income such as butterfly farming or cassowary farming and yet, in the landowners' opinion fail to follow through with management strategies which will encourage the successful establishment of these alternative business pursuits.

Takaku does not necessarily have solutions when asked what will replace the income gained from selling land for logging and mining activities but he has a vision which is inspirational and is

critical of the greed and ideas of progress which see us destroying our environment.

Through his plays and talks he hopes to communicate some of these issues, particularly, among people who are currently being approached by large multi-national companies wishing to buy land. He runs workshops on occasions bringing together landowners who have sold their land and those about to be approached so that they can discuss their experiences. He insists that people must be better informed and equipped to make the important decisions that they are being confronted with today.

He tells his people of environmental dangers which, living in remote villages, they are unaware of, he tells them of the Ozone layer, of the expanding deserts and diminishing forests, he teaches them of the oxygen provided by trees and attempts to raise awareness of the global implications of this path of destruction.

Travelling overseas he communicates his ideas internationally not only telling people about the problems his own country is facing but about the global environmental tragedy he seeks taking place. At this tiny school in England he plants a tree for these small children. After placing it in the ground each child scoops a spade of earth around its roots. As they do this he asks them to care for the tree, to water it and to love it.

He reaches his arms up towards the lead-grey English sky and recites some words in his own language, asking the elements to bless and care for the tree. He hopes that this will be the first of many trees planted by the children. There is no doubt that he has touched them and will be remembered and that this small tree will take a special place in the eyes of the children. As he sits on the grass telling them legends and tales, of the animals and trees on his island, he creates a radically different impression to that of most media coverage of Papua New Guinea which focuses on the country's continued law and order problems.

He illustrates the richness of the country's cultural traditions and respect for the environment and in conveying these traditional attitudes not only among his own people but overseas he shows some of the magic that Papua New Guinea has to offer. Even if unable to offer economic alternatives, there is no doubt that he raises awareness as to the real and long-term implications of the kind of resource exploitation that has been going on in his country and, in so doing, leaves his people a little better equipped to make decisions. □

BRIDGING THE PACIFIC

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Illustration: G. Taylor '95

POLITICS

Moore Stephens report rocks Vanuatu

BY the rough and tumble standards of Vanuatu politics the November session of parliament began inauspiciously enough. The Minister of Finance rose to present his budget and, unlike neighbouring Fiji, the usual balanced budget was presented.

True enough the minister had to pass an extra appropriation of 291 million (under 1.5 per cent of GDP) to finish off 1993 but by comparison with Fiji where the deficit for 1993 was a projected 4.8 per cent of GDP the raised eyebrows among some of Port Vila's accountants seemed hardly justified. Fiji had used cyclone Kina to justify its present situation. Vanuatu by way of contrast had three major cyclones in the 1992-93 season.

However, the budget was extraordinary if only for the fact that the Finance Minister, Willie Jimmy, was on the verge of rejecting his own budget. When the finance minister rose to speak in the house on December 3 after the Moore Stephens report had been circulated to parliamentarians the day before Vanuatu politics entered an entirely new domain. The minister had been implicated by the report in the purchase of a property for the Vanuatu National Provident Fund at twice the market value.

The minister said in open session of the house that he would find it difficult to support the government's budget if the Prime Minister Maxime Carlot Korman would permit a report that would in effect sully his name.

Jimmy wanted the commissioner responsible for the report, Clarence Marae sacked and there was no doubt what was going to happen to the budget if the minister did not get the commissioner's head. And he did get the commissioner's head. Following a one-hour interruption of parliament the NUP's Minister of

Justice Sethy Regenvanu rose to tell the house that the commissioner was sacked. Even in Port Vila, a town where over the past year the population has grown to accept a clear diminution in public morality of their politicians the move by the justice minister shocked most people.

The sacking, however, is not without precedent. In Vanuatu the government has embarked on a policy of political sackings of public servants who are believed to be opposed to the government.

There was much about the sacking of the commissioner that had a very political ring to it. The report was surprisingly circulated in parliament without first being presented to the council of ministers (cabinet). The prime minister, according to commissioner Marae, who granted *PIM* an exclusive interview immediately following his sacking, had the report for at least two months. "The fact that he chose to circulate the report to parliamentarians just when the South Pacific Mini Games is on and the city is full of the region's media must surely be an indication of what Korman is up to," Marae said.

Sources close to the prime minister indicate that the PM has long wanted to get rid of his finance minister but with his shaky coalition has never felt in a position to do so. He has always felt that if you give Jimmy enough rope he will hang himself — said one of the PM's close confidants.

Just like China in the Maoist period it was possible to judge official views of government in Vanuatu from reading between the lines of the highly censored press. The fact that the normally bland *Vanuatu Weekly*, the official government newspaper, ran a front page report the next day on what the finance minister had done was in itself sufficient proof that the Jimmy's head was on the block. The newspaper must submit all its articles to the PM's office for approval before publication. Clearly the PM has had enough of his finance minister.

Between all the politics the actual content of Commissioner Marae's report on the Moore Stephens affair can be easily lost. The report is a scathing attack on the handling of the purchase of Moore Stephens house in Port Vila. The

waterfront commercial property was owned by Thi Than Goiset, sister of prominent Vanuatu businessman Dihn Van Tan. According to the report the minister of finance had sacked the board of the National Provident Fund for political reasons. The minister then in the absence of a board, and in contravention of the NPF Act, authorised the purchase of the property for 120 million vatu. There was no independent valuation of the property, according to the commissioner; and the actual value of the property was between 61-70 million vatu, according to two private valuations done for the commissioner.

The commissioner also said Goiset had offered commissions to those who would help her purchase the property. According to the report Goiset offered commissions as well as protection from politically inspired sacking to Mr Ailelee, the General Manager of the Vanuatu NPF if he assisted her in selling the property.

Some two months following the minister's agreement to buy the property at twice the market value the minister received a loan from Dinh Dominique of 2.25 million vatu to pay off the minister's



Marlin Tiffany

Port Vila: capital of a troubled nation

mortgage on his home. Dihn Dominique is the brother of Goiset. The commission could find no direct evidence of bribery of minister. The commissioner did recommend that the prime minister consider sacking Jimmy for his part in the affair.

And the upshot of the affair? There is a pending vote of no-confidence in the government (see update on page 11) and thus the outcome will have to await on the moral authority of the numbers game. And the commissioner Clarence Lawry Marae-is he about to roll over and play dead? Not according to him. "I will challenge the legality of the sacking. What is more there are at least two other investigations I want to complete one into the transactions surrounding Santo stevedoring and the contracts for the construction of the stadium for the South Pacific Mini Games."

Marae may yet have a lot of work ahead of him. □

TRAVEL

Island hotel costs

Per Diem Rates Around the Pacific (US \$ per night)

By David North

YOU want to take a short trip to Kiribati or Tonga, for example. You know what the plane trip will cost, but what can you expect in the way of hotel rates? It is a familiar question, and three well-known organisations will help you answer it.

No, they are not travel agencies. They are the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the US government. Each maintains extensive data systems on how much they will reimburse their employees when they travel overnight or longer. Give or take US\$10 a day, these rates, on average, will usually get you a room (not a suite) at a plausible hotel, and will buy you three pretty decent meals. If you are frugal, particularly at meal time, you can get along on less than the quoted rates.

We say "on average" because setting maximum per diem rates (as they are called) is not an exact science, and, as one can see in the chart, the three entities do not always agree on what is a reasonable amount to spend in say, Guam. The United Nations thinks you can get along on \$110 every 24 hours; the US government, which probably knows the island a little better, says it is \$230 a day.

The three entities agree that PNG is very expensive, with the maximum acceptable expenditures rates running from \$190 to \$223 a day — but not as expensive as Tokyo, where the rates run as high as \$424 a day. Tokelau is at the other end of the scale, with the UN setting the rate at \$54 and the US at \$38. IMF, which only travels to capitals of sovereign nations, has no published rate for Tokelau and for many other non-independent jurisdictions.

Generally, if you have a choice, travel on Uncle Sam's nickel. In the nine island jurisdictions where a direct comparison can be made, the average US reimbursement comes to \$136, IMF sets it at \$134 and the UN says it should be \$132, not much of an average difference, given some of the place-by-place discrepancies.

The rate shown in the chart in many cases is the only rate for the jurisdiction listed (such as for New Caledonia, the Solomons and Western Samoa in the US table) but in many places the UN and the US set different rates for different places. For example, the US will pay the following per diems in Vanuatu — \$148 in Port Vila, \$116 on Santos, \$111 on Tanna, and \$33 for other places. Similarly, the UN lays on three levels of acceptable expenditure in Kiribati — \$120 on Christmas Island, "other" (presumably including Tarawa) \$73, and "outer islands" \$30.

Island Rates	UN*	US Govt*	IM Fund
American Samoa	\$99	\$132	—
Cook Islands	\$138	\$107	—
Easter Island	—	\$148	—
F.S.M.	\$154	\$139	\$105
Fiji	\$130	\$126	\$135
Guam	\$120	\$230	—
Kiribati	\$120	\$116	\$115
Marianas	\$207	\$169	—
Marshall Islands	\$123	\$143	\$110
Nauru	\$77	\$74	—
New Caledonia	\$163	\$152	—
Niue	—	\$62	—
Palau	\$141	\$212	—
PNG	\$209	\$223	\$190
Solomon Is.	\$85	\$97	\$110
Tahiti	\$199	\$185	—
Tokelau	\$54	\$38	—
Tonga	\$98	\$96	\$105
Tuvalu	\$57	\$72	—
Vanuatu	\$139	\$148	\$160
Wallis & Futuna	\$155	\$137	—
Western Samoa	\$127	\$136	\$135
Pacific Rim Rates			
Sydney	\$148	\$152	\$175
Tokyo	\$424	\$343	\$275
New Zealand	\$148	\$158	\$180
Hawaii	\$160	\$167	—

* Rates shown for UN and USG are the highest rates allowed, usually in the Capital; sometimes UN rates are for a specific hotel, like Aggie Grey's in Apia. International Monetary Fund rates are for capital cities of sovereign nations; IMF has no transactions with other entities.

Another complication — in some places the UN will pay the traveller more if he or she stays in a specific hotel; the islander and the Port Moresby Travel Lodge get this special billing in the UN regulations — if you are UN staff, and stay there, you can get as much as \$209. Stay somewhere else in Port Moresby, and the reimbursement is lower.

Looking over these expense schedules one comes away with a bland feeling about the IMF and the US government but with a negative reaction to the UN on two grounds — 1) lack of sensitivity to political developments in the islands, and 2) lack of egalitarian treatment of its traveling employees.

I was working on the phone with a pleasant and bright young woman in the UN; we were stumped because she could not find any reference to either the Republic of the Marshall Islands or the Federated States of Micronesia, both full-fledged members of the United Nations. And we could not find the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas under either "C" for Commonwealth or "M" for Marianas.

It turned out that all three jurisdictions — close to a decade later — were still lumped under the Trust Territory of the Pacific. (Palau was there, too, but that is, for the moment, still correct.)

One last item — Papua New Guinea plays a starring role in one part of the IMF travel guide. IMF notes the first class and business class round-trip air fares from its headquarters here in Washington to every nation on earth. (It apparently rarely uses coach travel.) And the absolutely most expensive first class round-trip ticket anywhere in the world is to Port Moresby (from Washington) for a whacking \$10,154. Also very expensive, Uzbekistan, in the depths of the former Soviet Union, (\$8882) and Western Samoa (\$8283). Both first and business class fares are, of course, much more expensive than coach. IMF listed a round trip to the Czech Republic at \$5390 (first class) and \$2674 (business); I just returned from a coach trip (Washington-Prague-Washington) which cost about \$800. □

BOOKS

The remaining French empire

By W Marvin Will
(University of Tulsa)

PROFESSORS Aldridge and Connell have authored an outstanding and comprehensive study of the "confetti of empire", the overseas departments and territories of France. These departments *d'outre-mer* (DOMs), primarily Caribbean DOMs plus Reunion, and territories *d'outre-mer* (TOMs), principally islands in the Pacific, are carefully examined regarding their role vis a vis metropolitan France. Economic historian Aldridge and geographer Connell are colleagues at the University of Sydney.

Since 1978 they have authored seven books, individually or in collaboration with others, including Aldridge's *The French Presence in the South Pacific, 1842-1940* (1990), and Connell's *New Caledonia or Kanaky?* (1987). They co-edited *France in World Politics* (1989).

Findings in *France's Overseas Empire* are that it remains French policy to expend considerable treasure to preserve the prestige of maintaining an empire that is among the palms, for the most part; and that "overseas France ... provides a mirror, albeit sometimes grossly distorted, of the mother country" (6) or, as de Gaulle once said of Martinique, "*Mon Dieu, comme vous êtes français* [my God, how French you are]" (247)! The authors also note that being archipelagos or islands — except for Guyane and the French section of Antarctica — makes insularity a characteristic of the DOM-TOMs.

Perhaps the most controversial point for readers of *PIM* is the relatively high standard of living enjoyed in DOMs and TOMs and the metropolitan funding that makes this lifestyle possible. French funding of each DOM and TOM surged dramatically after 1946, the authors correctly note, with an increase of at least 30 per cent in subsidies of budget since 1945. After 1953 civil servants in DOMs-TOMs saw sharp increases in salary plus extra compensation for distant postings.

Public servants benefit from a salary is 40 per cent greater than that of their metropolitan colleagues and they enjoy various other advantages. In French Polynesia basic public service salaries, already much higher than in the private sector, are swollen by particular load-

ings, including an 84 per cent supplement to the metropolitan base salary, a million CFP (French Pacific francs) allowance for a distant posting and six month's paid leave after three years of service, with free transport to Parish (144, also 133).

The resultant high income not only produces enormous standard-of-living gaps with neighbouring states and between European and native peoples in such TOMs as New Caledonia but also contributes significantly to curbing pressures for independence.

By 1885, the readers learn, many in France considered colonialism to be the daughter of metropolitan industrial polity and aimed at promoting France's alleged superior race/culture. This "golden age" of empire appeared to peak by 1931 when a large exhibit of empire was organised in Vincennes. This "peak" ironically coincided with the rise of nationalism in the French (and other) dependencies, movements often led by soldiers returning from World War I. The overseas empire had sacrificed dearly in the War, with more than 60 per cent of the 52,000 from the older or *vieilles* colonies being lost in action.

"If the DOMs before 1946 were (defacto) colonies of France," one "colonial" critic is quoted, "they have subsequently become colonies of the administration" (145). The authors might have said much the same for the TOMs of the South Pacific. By 1960 all *de jure* French territories except three Pacific territories — plus Mayotte, Austral and the French claims in Antarctica — had gained independence, albeit independence for Algeria and Indo China emerged only through serious warfare. The end of World War II had brought an end to second class status of *vieilles* colonies. This was timely considering that these entities had been French longer than Corsica, Nice, Savoy and Franche-comte; that their citizens had been French citizens for a century and had sacrificed greatly in French wars. Independence movements had developed in almost all DOMs and TOMS. In most, however, the movements have not had high visibility and, as noted, have been largely defused by French finances. Significant legal status problems are presented by Mayotte, which is neither a DOM nor a TOM, and by Clipperton Island off the Pacific coast of

Mexico, which has no permanent population.

The development of local resources in the DOMs and TOMs almost never is aimed toward benefiting native populations, the authors conclude. Currently France also experiences problems in providing uniform services throughout its "empire". In Noumea, New Caledonia, for example, virtually all households have piped water, while in other French Pacific Islands this service may be minimal or non-existent.

Tourism also is viewed as an uneven inducer of economic growth. Although not well analysed, tourism is seen both as the source of income and of cultural costs. With tourism increasing sharply in French Polynesia (where 1472 visitors in 1959 expanded to 78,000 by 1973), in New Caledonia (which has seen tourism expand from 16,000 in 1969 to nearly 100,000 by 1984), and in Fiji and Tahiti (which rank one and two as tourist attractions in the Pacific), perhaps a rule developed by the Maltese government has relevance: if the economic gains are not significantly above the social and cultural costs, tourism should be rationed. Guyane, the home of the European Space Center (Kourou) on the shoulder of South America, for example, is becoming a ghetto of white expatriate technicians guarded by French Legionnaires. This is not a future many DOMs-TOMs desire. Without independence, however, tourism policy and the influx of Europeans is very difficult to regulate. And the only conceivable scenario for independence for any of the TOMs or DOMs, according to the authors, would be economic recession and the development of anti-foreign sentiments in metropolitan France. Just possibly an expanding and increasingly viable European Community (EC) could further the development of a new European consciousness and abate France's sentiments for maintaining a foreign empire. To conclude, this well-argued, well-written, and well-edited book is probably the best review in print that deals with the remaining French "empire". It is highly recommended.

● Aldridge, Robert and John Connell; *France's Overseas Frontier: departments et territoires d'outre-mer* (Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, and Sydney: Cambridge University Press, 1992, X, 357. □

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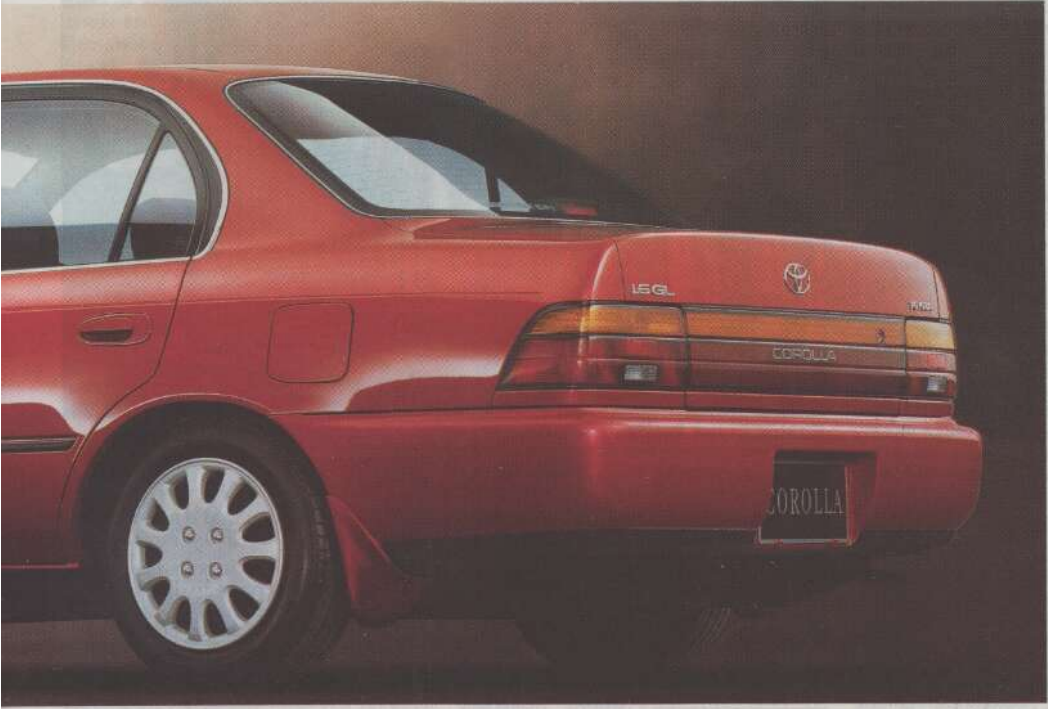
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Depositing

By Ian Williams

The key to essential knowledge about Pacific Islands is to live with the people who have been doing it for centuries. By Bill Morton

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FISHING

Fishing tales

The key to essential knowledge about Pacific islands fishing lies with the people who have been doing it for centuries

By Bill Morton

EACH year Pacific governments and overseas aid organisations spend vast amounts of money on fisheries research and development. Local and overseas "experts" use the funds to find better ways to increase yields while preserving the precious marine environment.

Australian marine biologist Dr Bob Johannes has a different approach to fisheries in the region. He believes the real "experts" are old, often illiterate Pacific island fishermen. These fishermen have developed "encyclopaedic knowledge" about their marine environment because their livelihood, and often their meal, has depended on it.

Johannes describes small-scale fishermen as those whose average investment in boats and fishing gear is less than \$2500. He states, "It surprises many people to learn that these fishermen account for almost one half of the world's catch of food fish, and that there are roughly 12 million of them — about 25 times as many as there are engaged in large-scale fishing. One doesn't hear much about them however, because they are usually poor, live in small third and fourth world villages and lack the political clout to call attention to themselves and their needs."

Dr Johannes' experience with small scale fishermen spans most corners of the Pacific islands. He has been in Papua New Guinea, the Solomons, Guam, Pohnpei, the Northern Marianas, Kiribati and Western Samoa. In these places he has worked directly with the local fishers, sometimes living with them. He says these people have taught him knowledge "previously unknown to science". This includes such things as seasonal migrations, and the precise locations and the timing of the spawning of many important food fish.

This knowledge has implications both for the scientific community and for Pacific Island nations. Johannes says when he began his work with small-scale fishers some of his colleagues thought he had "gone troppo". Now their scepticism is waning as they realise that through local fishermen they can discover information about bio diversity, rare or endangered species and fish behaviour.

For Pacific island nations the real



Fishing in the Pacific: many islanders depend on it for their living



Dr Johannes: marine biologist

importance of this work is in the area of fisheries management. Small-scale fishers have successfully achieved the fine balance modern-day fisheries still strive for — to realise high yields while protecting marine resources for the needs of the future. Dr Johannes

says the limits of these resources became obvious to the islanders hundreds of years ago. "They responded by devising almost all the basic fisheries conservation measures that we employ in the west today. These included closed seasons, closed areas, size limits, and, most importantly, traditional fishing rights."

The message from Dr Johannes' studies is clear — the key to essential knowledge about Pacific Islands fishing lies with the people who have been doing it for centuries. With this knowledge, however, comes a warning. It is that this specialised knowledge is being lost as young islanders move from village to town and lose interest in their traditions. "Fishing knowledge is not taught at

school in the towns, so young people don't see the relevance of it. There's also the implied assertion that if its not taught at school, its not worth learning about."

The problem continues when young people travel overseas to further their education. "Tomorrow's influential people in the Pacific are getting their education away from home", says Dr Johannes. "When they come back they are dismissive of local knowledge." There needs to be more concern for traditional knowledge in school curricula. And universities need to make students more aware of its value."

New fishing methods also spell bad news for traditional knowledge and methods. Use of the Japanese-manufactured "gillnet" is one example. Dr Johannes states — "It is a very effective way to catch fish so old methods have dropped off." He recognises the gillnet can be a useful resource for islanders when used properly and in moderation. On the other hand when it is used indiscriminately and small mesh sizes catch small as well as large fish, fish numbers will suffer. Use of gillnets in locations where fish spawn has "decimated" populations. Dr Johannes reports this has been the case in Kiribati where bonefish

THE UNITED NATIONS

populations have dwindled because of use of gillnets in spawning runs.

While the gillnet has undermined traditional fishing methods and conservation measures, the effect of other modern fishing approaches can be even more destructive. Use of dynamite and "Chlorox" (a type of bleach) kills small as well as large fish. More seriously, they also damage the coral head, on which the regeneration of fish populations depend.

Dr Johannes says Pacific islands governments have varied widely in their response to the loss of traditional knowledge and the inappropriate use of new fishing methods. "There is an increasing awareness by governments but in many cases it is too little too late. Funding needs are always faced with competing demands in areas such as education and health. Environmental branches of government have previously been weak with little influence. This is changing and things are getting better because there is a recognition that too many people rely on marine environments."

Dr Johannes also believes central governments are starting to realise that it is villagers who are best placed to make decisions about the environments they live in. "Governments are now acknowledging the need to recognise local law and to shore-up local authority. In some cases, though, it has been the villagers who have had to prompt government to legislate to restrict the mesh size of the gillnets they use."

Changes also appear to be occurring in the overseas aid area. Previously aid funding has favoured offshore fishing such as tuna for export markets. Dr Johannes believes organisations such as the World Bank and AIDAB have an increasing awareness of local issues. On the regional front he says the South Pacific Commission and the Forum Fisheries Agency are now "very much aware" of the knowledge and expertise small scale fishers can offer and the need to ensure these are not lost.

Dr Johannes' extensive work with small-scale fishers was recently acknowledged when he was selected as a "Pew Scholar" in Conservation and the Environment. The award recognises his leadership in conservation and research and his commitment to scholarship and environmental action. He will return to Palau to monitor spawning aggregations. He will also undertake a project in Vanuatu in conjunction with local marine biologist Moses Amos to investigate villagers' interest in a marine management programme. If his past efforts are anything to go by, the results of his work will reaffirm that Pacific island fishermen are the best teachers he could ever hope for. □

Van Lierop dismissed

By Ian Williams

AFTER a year of speculation, at the beginning last month, Vanuatu Prime Minister Maxime Carlot Korman has finally dismissed Robert Van Lierop, Vanuatu's long standing ambassador to the UN. Whatever the domestic reasons, the decision could not have come at a worse time for the Pacific and other small island states. Van Lierop has played a key role in representing the islands on the Commission for Sustainable Development, and above all as chairman — and the guiding hand behind AOSIS, the Alliance of Small Island States.

It was AOSIS which secured the forthcoming UN Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island States in Barbados next year, and unless some type of arrangement can be made quickly, Van Lierop will be sadly missed at the preparatory committee meeting which reconvenes in Jamaica this month. Some of the Pacific diplomats expressed their regret, since they felt that Vanuatu had made a commitment not to change until after the Small Islands Summit.

Indeed some of the island envoys wonder whether the decision to remove him may not have been inspired by Paris, since his effective advocacy at the talks on restructuring the UNDP/World Bank Global Environmental Facility. Certainly his seeming replacement is a Francophile as well as a Francophone.

Jean Ravou-Akii has spent the years since the Santo rebellion in New Caledonia. When, in preparation for his posting, he was sent to Britain for an English course he never actually arrived. It is believed that he spent the time in Paris. Other Pacific diplomats report that during the months Ravou-Akii has spent at the United Nations, he has showed little or no interest in the South Pacific Forum Group's regular meetings.

As a result, it is difficult to get clear information, since he was in Vanuatu when the change was announced although it seems very likely that the

Melanesian Spearhead will be somewhat blunted by the move.

It also seems likely that one early move would be to move the Vanuatu mission to Mid-Town Manhattan, in a move allegedly financed by the French. At present, it is Harlem, the African American quarter of Manhattan, a sitting which has hitherto earned the gratitude of the influential congressmen from the district.

Van Lierop himself was philosophical and restrained when *PIM* spoke to him. "*Je ne regrette rien*," he quoted the famous French son by Edith Piaf, adding "Countries change ambassadors all the time, and I had offered to sign several times before to let someone else from Vanuatu take over. I think he's a very intelligent and capable person — I wish him and the country the very best."

It is not surprising that Korman, a fanatical Francophone and a member of the World Anti Communist League, should have been unhappy with Van Lierop, an African American of liberal politics recruited originally by Walter Lini. But the timing of his dismissal and the short notice has left the islands in confusion. Some of the island diplomats

have begun to consider ways to maintain Van Lierop's diplomatic credentials and the continuity of AOSIS. It has been suggested that he could be accredited to the UN as ambassador in order to see the Small Islands Summit to a successful conclusion.

December saw another loss for the Pacific, and indigenous people everywhere, with the announced departure of Bishop Paul Reeves. The first Maori governor general and archbishop of New Zealand, Sir Paul is leaving his position as head of the Anglican communion's mission to the United Nations to return to New Zealand where he will head St John's seminary. It is possible that he will keep his hand in since his name has been mentioned, along with Fetaui Mata'afa as a possible member of the Panel of Eminent Persons for the Small Islands Summit. □



Van Lierop: no longer Vanuatu's envoy to the UN

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Marketing island fruits, vegetables

WHEN, in December, I made my annual review for the Forum Secretariat of the work we did at the South Pacific Trade Commission's office in Sydney during 1993, one thing was pretty clear — the number of enquiries that came into the office continued to run at a high level. They arrived thick and fast by mail, fax, phone and by people simply dropping in.

Answering queries, checking or preparing information and advice for those who seek it, is a major part of our activities, and it would keep us busy even if we had nothing else to do. But we encourage it, as anybody who reads this column regularly would know, for information and advice are vital to people in business.

Queries cover every kind of product and business matter imaginable, with an increasing demand for the kind of information that can be supplied by our computer data bases. This includes finding answers to queries from island countries about the standing of Australian companies they plan to deal with. That's a check we've always advised anybody to make before giving serious attention to a business proposal.

But among all the various types of queries there is one that is a hardy perennial. That is, "What are the opportunities for selling fruit and vegetables to the Australian market? How can I break into it?" The inquirer usually has particular fresh produce in mind, and our answer quite frequently is that he can't export it because Australia's quarantine laws forbid its entry.

That's simple query with a concise answer that stops it dead, you'd think. But in fact there are opportunities in the produce business and the whole question has far more facets than might appear, so I intend to start the new year with a summary of the situation that potential inquirers should find useful.

To begin with, the fruit and vegetable needs of Australia's 17 million people (most of whom live in the capital cities and are thus accessible) are satisfied by suppliers from within the country. There is nothing surprising about this, for it is also true of the Forum Island Countries. Nevertheless, Australia still imported more than A\$49 million worth of fruit and vegetables in 1991-92. This was a 13 per cent increase on the import figures for 1989-90, and they continue to grow.

One important reason for this is that tastes in foods stuff have changed considerably in recent years as Australia's migrant population, including the Asian and islander components, continues to grow. Changing eating habits have opened up opportunities for increased supplies of foodstuffs that were once thought as "exotic" and are now being used by the whole community. Asian restaurants abound.

Island suppliers do have opportunities, but the best ones are for processed fruit and vegetables (cooked, dried, frozen, packaged, tinned etc.). Processed produce comprises most of Australia's imports specifically because of the quarantine restrictions on much fresh produce which apply to other

TRADEWINDS



**BILL
McCABE**

countries besides the islands of course. Fresh yams, taro, cassava, pawpaw, coconuts, chillies, mustard leaves, okra can be imported from the islands subject to quarantine inspection and treatment. Asparagus can be imported but is subject to inspection and fumigation. Mangoes can be imported from Fiji only. Kiwifruit, garlic, stone fruit, snow peas and avocados can only be imported from New Zealand and Norfolk Island (an exception for avocados is that they can be imported when grown on plantations from certified stock). But these restrictions, and others like them, do not apply to processed fruit and vegetables, which also have the advantage of entering from the island duty free.

Canned coconut cream from Western Samoa is already selling well in Australia, and canned rourou, duruka and palusami from Fiji are also popular. There is growing demand for individually frozen and puree tropical fruits in Australia. Items in strongest demand are mango and passionfruit — frozen, canned, puree and concentrate — which is used in the food industry. Australia is an important importer of spices, with over 70 per cent of the imports sold to food processing or catering industries, and there are some opportunities there.

Information on these and other opportunities — and things to avoid — are contained in a marketing report, *The Australian Market Potential for Fruit and Vegetables*, which was prepared by John Harden at our request and funded by the Australian Trade and Investment Promotion Service. (TIPS in turn is funded by the Australian International Development Assistance Bureau.) John is a private consultant, with former Trade Department experience, and his very detailed, no-nonsense report, prepared specifically for island suppliers, is available from us on request. It deals with every aspect of the trade — detailed quarantine requirements on virtually every likely item, the distribution system, packaging and labelling, prices, trading terms, agents' address, and prospects and comments on every kind of fruit, vegetable and spice.

John points out that the Australian market for both fresh and processed fruit and vegetables is sophisticated, extremely quality conscious and very price sensitive. Australian importers will insist on competitive prices, consistency quality, suitable and attractive packaging and regular supply before they will buy from a new supplier. There is also strong competition from New Zealand and Asian suppliers. But, he adds, the prospects for Pacific islands suppliers are "quite reasonable", with the best prospects in the area of processed fruit and vegetables. As I said, the trade has many facets but we're here to help.

● *Bill McCabe is senior commissioner of the South Pacific Trade Commission, Sydney — an arm of the South Pacific Forum.* □

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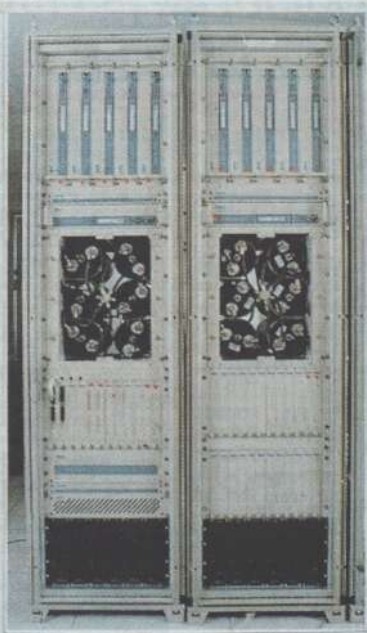
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The purpose of education assistance

TALKING about overseas aid — as I was last month — I learnt that New Zealand had initiated a searching review of its education and training assistance policy to South Pacific island states.

It's an issue of enormous importance, both to New Zealand taxpayers who foot the bill and to the recipient nations whose future depends to a large degree on the skills and abilities of their young people.

Human resources development (which is education and training in the jargon that now calls aid Overseas Development Assistance) is rightly regarded as a crucial element in economic and social development.

New Zealand has long recognised this. In 1992, education took 30 per cent of all ODA to South Pacific Countries, about the same amount as budgetary support, emergency assistance and donations to voluntary agencies and well above the 17 per cent devoted to the next highest sector, agriculture.

There is no question that the priority is right. But over the year, doubts have mounted as to whether New Zealand — and the recipient countries, for they are always consulted — have been going the right way about spending this money (a not inconsiderable \$27 million in 1992).

For it has become clear that the bulk of the funds has gone on tertiary education in New Zealand. That means a lot of it has come straight back to this country, instead of being spent locally. It has thus been used to educate a Pacific island elite, too many of whom, having experienced the bright lights of the city, are reluctant to go home and put their education to use in the place where it was intended and is most needed.

It would be cheaper (or more economic is perhaps a better phrase) if those students had gone to the University of the South Pacific instead of coming to New Zealand. (An Australian study showed that for the cost of one Pacific island student going to that country, four could have been educated in Fiji or eight in Vanuatu. There has been no comparable study in New Zealand, but the ratio is probably not very different.)

The problem is, of course, that the island states themselves have attached more mana to a tertiary education in New Zealand or Australia than to one in the islands. "Overseas experience" in New Zealand or Australia has afforded the same prestige that young New Zealanders or Australians attach to study in Europe or the United States.

Now it could be argued that New Zealand and Australia can afford that kind of elitist approach. What is clear is that the island nations cannot.

So when people start questioning whether New Zealand's human resources development aid money would be better spent in the islands, and a greater proportion of it at lower

WELLINGTON



DAVID
BARBER

levels of the education system, it seems to me that they have a good argument.

It's not a question of whether New Zealand is spending too much on education and training in the Pacific, but rather whether that money is being put to good use — not from New Zealand's point of view but from that of the recipient nations themselves.

What worries some people here is that they see as something of a post-colonial assumption in many of the island states that education aid money should be spent on tertiary courses overseas. They ask, and I think with good cause, what is wrong with spending more of that money on primary education in the Pacific countries.

They may not end up with as many people with initials after their names, but they would produce more youngsters with a better basic education and

thus better equipped to make a contribution to their homelands.

I'm told that when this scenario was put to officials in a number of the island states they responded very favourably, saying no other aid donor had suggested that.

Now New Zealand, still struggling out of recession with the added uncertainty of such a close election result in November, is not out to turn down the chance of getting back a good part of the aid money it gives away by rejecting Pacific island students.

But it does have a real interest in seeing the island states develop and prosper and it knows they will best do that by educating their young people in the most productive way.

There is a feeling here that some of New Zealand's money would be better spent on courses at the University of the South Pacific, at Samoa's fledgling university, at the Solomon Islands Institute of Higher Education, at Papua New Guinea's forestry school or Port Vila's proposed law faculty.

Apart from its own evaluation of education and training aid spending, New Zealand has given money to the World Bank and Asian Bank Development Bank to assess the value and effectiveness of its contribution.

I'm told that despite the consultations that have already taken place, the New Zealand government would still welcome input from the island states and their people. It wants to know what the local people want.

I'm happy to pass on this message. But don't write to me. The people dealing with this issue are in the Development Cooperation Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Wellington. □

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NEW CALEDONIA

'We'll set out together'

THE Union Caledonienne, the oldest party in the territory and the largest component party of the pro-independence umbrella group FLNKS (Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front) likes symbols. It, therefore, decided to hold its 24th annual congress on November 12-13 in the tribe of N'de, near Noumea. It was there that, in 1988, it had approved then FLNKS leader Jean-Marie Tjibaou's decision to sign the Matignon accords peace process two weeks earlier in Paris with anti-independence leader Jacques Lafleur. Name chosen for this year's congress — *Ke Te Ve Taa* ("we'll set out together") in the local vernacular language).

After two days of debates, the "UC", as it is referred to, whose 220 delegates worked on six different political options for the territory's future, spelt out a platform for a negotiated independence for New Caledonia in 1998 and a timetable for the transfer of responsibilities".

The congress also repeated the UC's definition of the Kanak people, according to its draft constitution tabled at the United Nations in 1987 — "a national and multi-racial community, free, united and sovereign based on the solidarity of its different elements".

This congress was seen by many observers as a turning point in Caledonian politics, since it clearly indicated precise choices for the future, after a long period of internal problems and uncertainties within the UC and within the FLNKS, following the "provincialisation" of the territory after the signing of the Matignon Accords.

It ended speculations that Lafleur's 1991 call for a "consensus solution" to be found in order to avoid the 1998 "referendum guillotine" had found a very warm response within the UC, and was a clear answer to more radical members of the FLNKS who raised doubts about the fact that the UC was still pro-independence. Two weeks earlier for instance, the PALIKA

(Kanak Liberation Party, a smaller, more radical component party of the FLNKS) had criticised the UC leaders — "the consensus that they advocate," said its spokesman, "has more to do with a strategy of *status quo* which doesn't bring any hope."

The Union Caledonienne is in fact ready for negotiations with the RPCR, but "things have to be wrapped up before 1998", in order to "accurately define the question which will be asked for the referendum", said Francois Burck, the re-elected president of the UC. (under the 1988 Matignon peace accords, a referendum is to be held in 1998, whereby Caledonians will decide whether they want to remain French or become independent).

At the press conference following the congress, Burck declared — "in 1998, we say 'the country in sovereign' which



Jean-Marie Tjibaou:

Lafleur's reaction was moderate — the UC's choice for a negotiated independence "didn't outrage" the founder of the RPCR. "It can't possibly be taken seriously," he said, "because (the UC people) are attached to the Matignon Accords ... this choice for independence is still not mine. No doors have been closed for further discussions.

On the contrary, they give dialogue a priority." For the anti-independence leader, timetable is the biggest difference between him and the UC — "I am willing to talk about a solution of consensus after the provincial elections of 1995. They want to talk about it before".

■ Jean-Marie Tjibaou was both president of the UC and the FLNKS.
■ Leopold Joredie and Richard



New Caledonian capital: downtown Noumea

means it is internationally recognised by the United Nations as a sovereign state." Burck added that this timetable "still had to be defined" with the French state and with anti-independence RPCR. The UC is now waiting for the other partners to react — "we shall oblige them to bring their contribution so that discussions can start from now on. We all must have made progress by 1995."

Kaloi, both UC leaders, preside over of the two pro-independence Northern and Islands Provinces, whereas Jacques Lafleur is president of the anti-independence Southern Province.

■ Paul Neaoutyine, one of the leaders of the PALIKA, replaced Tjibaou at the head of the FLNKS after his assassination. □

NEW CALEDONIA

An empty seat in Paris

ON Jean-Marie Tjibaou's request, the three partners who had just signed the Matignon Accords in Paris in June 1988 (which ended violence in New Caledonia and paved the way for a transitory 10-year period leading to a referendum on self-determination in 1998) agreed to meet every year in the French capital for a *Comite de suivi* (monitoring committee) *des accords*.

The Kanak leader wanted to make sure that the implementation of the

rebalancing measures in favour of his community, agreed on by the French state, anti-independence RPCR and pro-independence FLNKS, would really take place as planned.

This year's Fifth *Comite de Suivi*, the first to be hosted by the conservative government of Edouard Balladur, took place on Dec 6-9. A totally new situation this time — Paul Neaoutyine, the president of the FLNKS (an umbrella group of four different pro-independent parties)



FLNKS president: Paul Neaoutyine

had said two weeks earlier that he would not attend the meeting.

In November, the PALIKA, Neaoutyine's radical party, had decided not to go to what has been described as a "routine reunion". But the president of the FLNKS was given a free choice by his fellow militants. Three days later, his decision was taken — "I cannot accept to attend a reunion where I will not see any political evolution of any kind and where I will only have to discuss technical, administrative and financial issues, which are all unproductive," he said. But he didn't call into question the meeting itself, and later asked Rock Wamytan, FLNKS's vice-president (and member of the Union Caledonienne) to replace him. Finally, 11 delegates left for Paris (along with 13 members of the RPCR), representing three of the four component parties of the FLNKS. A 12th man joined the group — Nidoish Naisseline, big chief of the island of Mare, and leader of the LKS (Kanak Socialist Liberation), a small party which doesn't belong to the FLNKS. Naisseline was a signatory of the Matignon Accords in '88. He is a harsh critic of both the new "Kanak bourgeoisie" and the RPCR's grip on local economy.

Neaoutyine is mostly critical with the implementation of the Matignon Accord which, he said, is falling behind schedule. According to him, a year and a half has been wasted in the programmes of *reequilibrage economique* (economic rebalancing). This delay, he explained, was mostly due to the fact that the French state was often late in financing projects.

Another reason which angered Neaoutyine was the UC's reluctance to organise a FLNKS congress before the Paris meeting. Neaoutyine's PALIKA wanted the umbrella group to meet and the clarify a number of issues. Francois Burck, the UC president, turned down the idea, saying such a meeting could not possibly be organised in such a short time.

At the beginning of December, Neaoutyine somehow softened his position. He made known that he had written to the French prime minister. In that letter he asked for a meeting with Balladur after the next FLNKS congress at the end of January. He also stressed "the importance he gives to the political meeting between the government and the political leaders and signatories of the Matignon Accords which take place every year". □



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POPULATION

Battle of the bedroom

By Alfred Sasako

JULIETTE'S second child was barely two when she fell pregnant again. John, her husband of three years, just lost his job. In most Pacific countries, there are no unemployment benefits nor is there child endowment. The chances of finding another job are slim indeed.

Although the couple, now in their late 20s, has lived in the urban centre for many years, they have never been to a family planning clinic. Chances are that their third child is not too far behind unless they can be told of the importance of making an informed choice about the number of children they want to have. This anecdote epitomises the plight of young people in the region.

As politicians, social scientists and representatives of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) discovered during the Pacific island countries' ministerial meeting on population and sustainable development in Port Vila, Vanuatu, population throughout the Pacific is growing at an alarming rate — rate that far outpaces economic growth in the past 10 years.

The two-day conference funded by the UNFPA, an UN agency responsible for family planning matters, was told that except for the tiny nation of Niue, island countries were experiencing a population boom, with some countries registering an annual increase of up to eight per cent in rural-to-urban migration, exerting further strain on already stretched government services.

The outlook for economic growth to cushion the effects of population growth on each country is not so promising. For instance, population growth rate in the region now averages 2.3 per cent per annum. The region's population will double to 12.6 million in 20 to 30 years. At this rate it means that about 72 babies are being born hourly throughout the Pacific. Financial implication to support this booming population is phenomenal.

This is more so when the performance

of the region's economies was taken into account. According to World Bank studies of its Pacific member countries (PMCs), the island nations' economies grew by a mere 0.2 per cent in the past 10 years — hardly sufficient to support the extra mouths being born. These population statistics have to be put into perspectives as these vary from country to country. In the Marshall Islands, for instance, urban population is growing at 8.2 per cent annually, resulting in a -0.6

growth. The battleground — the bedroom. As the world starts into the 21st century, for Pacific countries, the battle of the bedroom is only beginning.

But as the old saying goes, old habits die hard, so will be the road ahead. Many islanders have a deep-seated belief that to have more children adds to a man's macho status, hence a man's place in both the family and society. They and some of their women folks will have to be convinced of the need for family planning.

Critical to the success of this long unfought war is the need to motivate the region's populace to get involved in specific programmes addressing the issue. As well, there is a need for a critical look at family planning programmes that have been in place for so many years without the expected result. For instance, why have these programmes failed to convince people of the need to plan their family properly?

Was it because these family planning programmes were used as a pretext for "a nice holiday in the sun" for those running them? Whatever or whoever the culprit, time is running out for all the past rhetoric to continue. It is time to get right down to real business.

The battlelines for this war have been drawn. There is no doubt that it will be a protracted war. The ministerial meeting in Vanuatu was in preparation for the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo, Egypt next year.

Staff of the New York-based ICPD Secretariat and the Suva-based South Pacific Forum Secretariat provided support to the Vanuatu Government in hosting the meeting.

If statistics given at the Vanuatu conference on population and sustainable development were anything to go by, then the region faces a grim future, unless remedial actions are taken now. Vanuatu Prime Minister Maxime Carlot Korman left no doubt about the grim reality facing his country of 140,000 people when he officially opened the two-day ministerial meeting. Growing at around two per cent



Children: a population boom in the Pacific is becoming a concern

per cent decline in its rural population.

Similar trends have emerged in Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea and American Samoa where urban population increased at a rate three times faster than that of their rural people, according to a paper given at the Port Vila Conference. The paper titled, *Population in the Pacific — Situation and Outlook*, was given by a demographer with the Noumea-based South Pacific Commission (SPC), Gerald Haberkorn.

High fertility and improved infant mortality rates have added considerable costs to governments. "With less infants dying before their first birthday, these improvements are readily translated into higher life expectancies, with the highest level currently found in Polynesian countries," Haberkorn said. Alarmed at this rather frightening trend, Pacific countries are taking up arms. By all accounts, governments of the region, backed by non-governmental organisations, are on a war footing.

The common enemy — population

POPULATION

a year, Vanuatu's population is set to reach 300,000 by the year 2010. Korman warned that "action or non-actions by politicians about population problems will have significant repercussions on the lives of those who will succeed us."

"Unfortunately, I know as you know, that unless (Vanuatu) completely reverses current trends, then we are heading straight for disaster," he said. Population problem is not unique to Vanuatu. Threatened by urban drift and the need to provide adequate social services, many island countries with higher population growth rates are calling for concerted efforts to prepare appropriate plans and policies.

Papua New Guinea's ambassador to

Fiji, Peter Tsiamalili, who represented his country at the gathering, told delegates it would be a mistake if PNG failed to implement bold policies to reduce population growth. At least 97,000 new people are added each year to PNG's 3.9 million population. An estimated 44 per cent of the population are under 15 years old.

Tsiamalili said for PNG to maintain basic minimum health and education services at sustainable level would require 4000 primary school teachers and 18,000 nurses. He urged delegates "to work hard now to ensure that the future is one of our choosing and not one forced on us by circumstances we are too lazy or complacent to control."

The impact from over population is felt even more by island countries with smaller land masses. The republic of Kiribati is one. With a population of around 70,000 and growing at two per cent per annum, the republic is taking drastic measures to address population issues. To their dismay, some of these steps as physically relocating some government departments on outer lands have not worked.

According to Inatoa Tebania, the minister responsible for health, family planning and social welfare, the ministry of health is now advocating a two-child per couple policy. How this is going to be implemented, Tebania did not say. There is no doubt that this policy will be met with stiff opposition by Kiribati's predominant Catholic population.

Not all island countries have population problems. The tiny nation of Niue is suffering from the effects of depopulation and is desperately trying to lure the bulk of its 12,000 Niueans living in New Zealand to return home. The government in Alofi has already launched an appeal to donors to help make Niue an attractive place for its former citizens to return.

Exactly what future the region wants for its people will depend very much on how much the people themselves are prepared to shoulder. Fiji's Minister for Women, Culture, Social Welfare and Multi-Ethnic Affairs Ratu Jo Nacola made the point when he told delegates that "what the future will be depends very much on our actions today".

"It is therefore very important that we understand clearly the dynamics of population and its inter-relationship with the use of resources," Ratu Jo said. Population is central issue to development, he said. "Our people are therefore, not only the objects of development, but also the subjects of development."

The outcome of the preparatory meeting in Vanuatu was one of success. But no sooner than two weeks after the meeting had concluded that the Noumea-based SPC fired a broadside at the Suva-based Forum Secretariat, accusing the latter of "dirty tactics and ungentleman-like behaviour."

In a letter to his Forum Secretariat counterpart, Ati George Sokomanu threatened to withdraw SPC's membership of the South Pacific Organisations Co-ordinating Committee (SPOCC) as well as from any involvement in the preparation for the Cairo conference.

The row was over a decision by the Port Vila Conference to pick the Forum Secretariat over SPC to be the lead regional organisation in co-ordinating Pacific countries' participation at the Cairo conference in September. Both men later met over lunch in Suva on October 8 and were said to have ironed out the differences. Despite the rivalry, the ministerial meeting in Vanuatu has adopted a document which will be taken to the Cairo conference. □

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The 'Trade Match' pilot

A WESTERN Australian Department of Commerce and Trade managed pilot aimed at linking regional Asia-Pacific Chambers of Commerce recently announced by department supremo Bruce Sutherland may bypass many regional chambers.

Aimed at eventually providing a live link between the databases of Chambers of Commerce in the Asia Pacific Region the WA pilot stage will see the databases from six Asian Chambers repackaged on CD-ROM for use by commerce and industry across the region.

In his Hanoi press release Mr Sutherland said the region was experiencing economic growth at a faster rate than world average. The results of a recently conducted study showed chambers processed around one million trade enquiries a month or around 100 per working day minute.

The recent 18 members Conference of Asia Pacific Chambers, of Commerce and Industry held in Hanoi gave the go-ahead for the pilot project. Pacific involvement only encompasses Australia, New Zealand and PNG. No other regional Pacific Chambers will be involved in the "Trade-Match" pilot. Given the very high reliance of regional economies on Tourism and export of primary products and the potential for market and investment opportunity such up-to-date information can provide it seems this time regional Pacific Chambers of Commerce have missed the boat.

Now that President Clinton has given his public support to Prime Minister Paul Keating's proposed regional Asia-Pacific trade alliance small economics will need to be fast off the mark and positioned with as much information as they can lay their hands on. Trade Match is industry talking to industry.

With the GATT round seemingly nearing its culmination, albeit with France being dragged reluctantly to the table. Europe with the UK are now having agreed to Maastricht, an even closer union, however a union with a defunct common currency policy, NAFTA maybe in for a rough trip with a new government in Canada and the Cairns group gnashing its collective teeth there appears to be no middle road for the Pacific.

Economies will need to pragmatically evaluate where their markets and futures lie. The 18 member Asia-Pacific Chambers of Commerce Group (if one excludes China) represents around 50 per cent of the worlds consumers. Trade Match offers a cost effective market tool and means to access this market. □

Perfecting Wordperfect

THE most popular software in the world, for those who use



computers as souped-up typewriters, is WordPerfect.

Those writing about the South Pacific on WordPerfect, however, find it unfriendly. This is because if you type "Pago Pago" or "Mali Mali" or "Dora Dora" in WordPerfect and then check the spelling in your document (a nice feature, generally), WordPerfect sends you an error message — "Double Word," it says. Then the writer has a choice — either disable (kill) the double word checking mechanism, which is a disadvantage, or tell the machine to skip the double word in question.

A typist writing about American Samoa may have to use Pago Pago several times on a page, and it is a nuisance to have to convince the machine, each time, that the writer is

right and the machine is wrong about what it thinks is an error.

This is the kind of problem that should be readily fixable, if the software manufacturer feels it is worth the time and money. *PIM's* Washington correspondent, David North, called WordPerfect and wrote to the firm but to no avail. The problem was too obscure, apparently, for them to bother with. Since he first wrote to them, a couple of years ago, a new version of Word Perfect has appeared called 6.0, and the problem remains as before.

What *PIM's* man initially failed to do was to consult his own wife, Ruth Blau, who was then in the software business for another firm. She subsequently solved the problem by using an obscure part of the software that was apparently unknown even to the WordPerfect Technicians.

So, if you are writing about American Samoa in WordPerfect and want to mention "Pago Pago" without being zapped by the machine during a spell check, this is what you do — first type "Pago", then touch and release the Home key, then hit the space bar, and then type "Pago" again. In the jargon of WordPerfect you have just inserted a "hard space" in the middle of the words. But, "Pago Pago" even the first part of it, will stump the spell check the first time it appears; so when the machine questions the spelling you press 3 ("add") to tell the machine, for future reference, that this is an acceptable word.

Having to insert a hard space each time, however, is a bit of a nuisance. If you are going to type a double word several times a day, Ruth Blau suggests that you create a "macro" for it. This is a system by which one creates a little bit of computer programming; after doing this one subsequently touches a couple of keys and "Pago Pago", complete with hard space in between, appears in your text. The spell check mechanism will accept it every time. One could instead, in violation of current usage, simply make Pago Pago — or Bora Bora — one word, but that would be cheating. □

FARMING

Back to the land

By David and Ursula Chappell

ON July 21, a brief notice from the Frangi juice company in the classified ads of the *Cook Islands News* informed orange growers, "due to the closure of Kia Orana Foods Co., no fruit will be processed for concentrate this season. It was hoped we could get it together, but it proved beyond us." Neil and Christine Willis, of Frangi, had tried for a month to get the juice-maker working at the now bankrupt KOFC but the machine needed so many new parts that they finally had to import frozen concentrate instead of helping Cook Islands orange growers market a harvest worth an estimated NZ\$30,000.

That same day, panelists at the Avarua branch of the University of the South Pacific discussed the prospects of the Cook Islands in the year 2000. National advisory representative Kato Tama admitted that the government was putting "all its eggs into one basket", namely tourism. He recommended greater community participation in decision making because some projects have been focused too much on making money in the present and not enough on providing for future generations. "Development," he said, "is how to better what we have today and that means making the best of what we have." Another minister in the audience predicted that everyone might become millionaires someday when the technology was developed to mine undersea manganese nodules within the Cooks' exclusive economic zone.

Local development is problematic in the Cook Islands. Because it is freely associated with New Zealand, its people enjoy New Zealand citizenship, so about two-thirds of them now live outside the Cook Islands — and half of those were born overseas. Nearby Niue, which is

also freely associated with New Zealand, is suffering an even greater population drain. More than 14,000 Niueans live in New Zealand, compared with 2000 at home. In July, Premier Frank Lui proposed what amounts to a kind of population swap — offering 60-year leases to New Zealand pensioners who might want to retire in Niue. Both Niue and the Cooks reserve ownership of all land for the indigenous people (or their government) but despite the economic slowdown in New Zealand and the relegation of Pacific island migrants there to generally low-level jobs, most Cook Islanders and Niueans obviously prefer the "bright lights" to farming at home.

"Papa" Solomon o Solomon, of Aitutaki, a former official in the Cook Islands Ministry of Agriculture, remembers that things were different before self-



Southern Rarotonga: gardens in Titikaveka. INSET: Teava Teavairo

government in 1965. It was hard to find workers to employ in those days, he says, because so many already had jobs producing, processing and shipping fruit. He was sent to outer islands to start up growing projects. There was more regular shipping then, he recalls, which took oranges, bananas, copra, and pineapple to New Zealand. But since the 1970s, exports have mostly declined. Now so many Cook Islanders go to New Zealand, and so many New Zealanders come to the Cooks, he says, that the population is becoming more and more mixed, and linked to tourism. In addition, foreign aid and remittances from relatives in New Zealand subsidise the Cook Islands economy.

There are exceptions to this picture, however. The many well-tended gardens on Rarotonga and outer islands show that Cook Islanders still know how to produce, and not only for subsistence. In

Titikaveka, on the south side of Rarotonga, Teava Teavairo has applied his green thumb to a host of commercial crops, from papaya to vanilla. He says he once lived in New Zealand as a boy but found the lifestyle there too fast and cash-oriented. He remembers eating a whole bag of oranges one day, thinking that there was a free supply as there had been at home on Rarotonga. But his uncle scolded him for eating up so much hard-earned money. Though he has nothing against New Zealanders, he eventually decided to return home to farm.

Teava says he likes being his own boss, setting his own time schedule, and making things grow. For example, he heard about vanilla from a government lecture and remembered seeing that same plant up in the hills behind his home. Sure enough, after searching the bush, he found vanilla growing wild there. A vestige, he thinks, of some earlier crop experiment. So he studied its cultivation, got help from the Ministry of Agriculture and planted a whole field of it. He has a papaya orchard, fields of manioc, taro patches, orange groves and of course coconuts, which he sells to hotels and to whoever else will buy them. He is always looking for new things to plant and even grows tomatoes in the sand near the shore. His good-humoured, friendly manner seems quite in harmony with all the ingenuity and hard work he has applied to his flourishing gardens.

"Things have changed," he says. "Young people today want to play videos and have motorbikes, people buy canned food in the shops. But there is land and food enough here for anyone to have what he needs."

Teava is perhaps an example of how to learn from the outside but still remain a Cook Islander, close to the soil that fed his ancestors for many generations. It may be a question of weighing real needs against artificial wants, a challenge that people around the modern world are finding hard to address. At the USP panel, agriculture planning officer Ngatokorua Mataio said, "To know where we want to go beyond 2000 we have to go back and assess where we went wrong so we don't make the same mistakes in the future." Entrepreneur Hugh Baker was more pessimistic. He doubted that the Cooks would even get to the year 2000 because dependency on imports is piling up debts. "Going back," he felt, required more than talk, it required hard work if the people were to feed themselves again. He quoted an old Maori saying, "You have land, you are somebody. You have no food, you are nobody." Maybe they should have held their meeting in Titikaveka. □

VISIT MALAYSIA YEAR '94

Magnificent Malaysia

THERE'S more to Malaysia than swaying palm trees against a tropical sunset and endless pristine beaches. The country is an amalgamation of all the fascination and mystery of the East. It's rich mix of unique culture, history and natural attractions make it a destination unrivalled by any other in the world. And its superb location at the heart of South-East Asia has made Malaysia a magnet for travellers from around the globe for centuries.

Renowned in the days of old as "the British East Indies" and "the Fabled

Spice Islands of the East", Malaysia today has retained much of its splendour-filled cultural heritage. Malaysia's multi-racial and cosmopolitan population of close to 18 million is made up mostly of Malays, Chinese, Indians and numerous indigenous people.

And their ability to live in perfect harmony is truly something to marvel at. Ultimately, Malaysia's success in social integration has resulted in a peaceful environment and political stability much applauded around the world. Coupled with its natural attractions of lovely sandy beaches, legend-shrouded islands,

unspoilt rain forests, magnificent mountains and bewildering array of flora and fauna, Malaysia makes the ideal destination for travellers in search of a truly unique experience.

And visitors will find it a fascinating land of contrasts; from 130 million-year-old rain forests to sparkling city centres, from dreamy beach-side huts to international class hotels, from serene village lanes to modern super highways. All of these make Malaysia a once-in-a-lifetime experience that promises to be uniquely fascinating to every traveller.

Malaysia is an endless adventure. Each state has something special to offer. **Perlis**, the northern-most state in Malaysia, is a well-known for its quaint villages. It is famed for its mangoes. Of special interest is the Snake Farm which houses a large collection of poisonous and non-poisonous snakes. Gua Kelam, Kai Bukit in Perlis is a 370-metre long limestone cave at the small town of Kaki Bukit. Of special interest is the tin mine located inside the massive cave.

In **Kedah**, there is the Bujang Valley. It is believed that the valley was an important trade centre between the fifth and eighth centuries AD. Next, we have **Penang**. With its wonderful beaches, temples, shops and resorts, there is much to see and do. Little wonder then that they call Penang the "Pearl of the Ocean". But Penang is not just sun and surf. There is Penang Hill with its cosy bungalows and hotels. The refreshing air up here is a nice change from the humid temperatures down below.

Down the coast side is **Malacca**, recently declared an historical city. It is one of the oldest towns in the country and is rich in culture and history. Colonised by the Portuguese, Dutch and British, there are plenty of architectural remains around the city. There are many interesting things to see and savour here - a Famosa (an old Portuguese fortress), the Portuguese Square, The Stadthuys (an old Dutch building), St Paul's Church, Tranquerah Mosque, St Peter's Church, Christ Church and many more historical buildings.

Getting to Malaysia — getting to Malaysia is easy with more than 20 airlines serving the country from all over the world. Gateway cities are Kuala Lumpur, Penang, Kuantan, Johor Bahru, Kota Kinabalu, and Kuching if you come by air. By sea you will arrive at Penang, Port Kelang, Kuantan, Kuching, or Kota Kinabalu. A road network from Singapore to Thailand allows you to drive from either of these points into Malaysia.



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VISIT MALAYSIA YEAR '94



Government — Malaysia enjoys a parliamentary democracy. The supreme head of state is the king, a constitutional monarch elected for a term of five years at the Conference of Rulers. The head of government is the prime minister of the party which commands the majority of seats in parliament.

Language — The national language is Bahasa Malaysia but English is widely spoken as it is taught in all schools. English is also commonly used in business transactions.

Climate — Generally warm throughout the year with temperatures ranging from 21°C to 32°C. Humidity is high all year round. The rainy season of the coast of Peninsular Malaysia and the north-eastern part of Sabah is during the months of November to February, April, May and October are usually the wet months of the west coast of Peninsular Malaysia.

Currency — The unit of currency is the Malaysian Ringgit which is divided into 100 sen. Currency notes are issued in denominations of 1, 5, 10, 20, 50, 100, 500 and 1000 ringgit. Coins are issued in 1, 5, 10, 20 and 50 sen. Travellers cheques can be exchanged for ringgit at any bank, hotel or authorised money changer. Major credit and charge cards such as American Express, Visa, Diners Club and Master Card are accepted in hotels, shopping complexes and restaurants.

Clothes — Light, cool and casual. Some establishments require long-sleeved shirts with ties or a batik shirt for the evening. You may need a jacket or

cotton sweater for evenings in the highlands.

Business Hours and Banks — Generally shops are open from 9.30am to 7pm while supermarkets and department stores operate from 10am to 10pm. Banking hours — Monday to Friday

10am to 3pm; Saturday — 9.30am to 11am.

Economy — The country has one of the most dynamic economies in the world. Massive inflow of foreign investment has been one of the major forces behind the development of the Malaysian economy. Foreign investment has been attracted by the relatively good infrastructure, low wages, and policies more favourable to foreign investment since 1986. Foreign investment increased dramatically in 1990.

In the first 10 months of 1990 alone, \$12.9 billion worth of investment was approved; slightly more than half was foreign investment, with investments from Taipei, China and Japan accounting for about 60 per cent. Investment from the United States, particularly in oil exploration and financial services, was also substantial.

High investment and growth in the past provide the country with the resources to address development problems such as regional income inequality while the industrialisation process continues.

By pursuing pragmatic, growth-oriented policies, including further development of infrastructure and promotion of small and medium sized industries, post-New Economic Policy (NEP) strategies will continue to attract private, direct and foreign investment. □

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We'll pick you up from your hotel and take you to the airport for your 60 minute Vanair flight, which normally offers superb views of many islands en route. On arrival you'll be met by our guides who'll take you for a tour to Champagne Beach — described by many as the most beautiful in the South Pacific. Here you'll be treated to a picnic lunch. There's also superb scenery along the way — don't forget your camera! Or your swimming gear.

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Tanna has the distinction of being the host to one of the few live volcanoes remaining. Yasur is eerie, majestic, colourful and continually changing. This natural phenomenon leaves visitors from all over the world speechless.

However, Tanna is not just "volcanic territory", this island of contrast has many other attractions including the Whitegrass plains, Lake Siri, Blow Holes, superb beaches, a mini "mountain range", and hot springs.

Your tour begins with a pick up from your Port Vila accommodation and transport to Bauerfield airport for your morning flight south to Tanna's Lanakel Airport. We'll meet you on arrival, and one of our knowledgeable guides will be at your service to show, drive, and explain the wonders of Tanna for the rest of the day.

A day on Tanna offers the renowned Volcano tour, a visit to island villages, a picnic lunch with refreshments and custom village tour.

At the end of a full day it's back "home" to your Vila accommodation, and the pleasant flight that will take you there.

OPERATES: DAILY



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This is a great opportunity to ask questions about Vanuatu's life, culture and other facets. We'll also be more than happy to stop for you to get some superb scenic photographs.

Your tour includes: morning tea at the "White Sands Country Club", a swim at Eton Beach, a visit to the Soap factory, lunch at a Melanesian-style restaurant and refreshments at Uadine Bay, and of course, pick-up from all hotels.

Do bring: swimming gear, hat, sunglasses and your camera. The price includes all meals and refreshments as noted above.

OPERATES: DAILY (except Cruise ship days)

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YACHTING

By Sally Andrew

LATE in the afternoon I searched the horizon, anxious to catch a glimpse of land before sunset. *Fellowship* was approaching Vanuatu after a seven-day passage from Tuvalu and the chart was not much better than the one Captain Cook made in 1774. With some relief, we sighted the northern tip of Maewo and confirmed that our course would miss the island.

In the moonlight we sailed across the inner sea towards Santo and at sunrise spotted the island of Ambae — her silhouette looking every bit like a huge upturned canoe. Often shrouded in mist, the island appears and disappears like Michener's Bali Hai. At midday we arrived at Luganville, our port of entry, and anchored off the old French school.

We were hungry, and had been told that the Natangora Cafe was the best place for an outstanding lunch and a good cup of coffee. So after clearing in with Customs and immigration, we headed straight for the Natangora. In the heart of the downtown Santo, this sidewalk cafe is a great place to sit and watch the world go by. We sipped our cappuccinos and laid back. It felt good to be in Vanuatu.

At times, Santo is a beehive of activity, like in 1942. During World War II US forces turned Santo into a huge camp for more than 100,000 servicemen. Five airfields, four hospitals, dozens of cinemas, and hundreds of kilometres of roads were built. Quonset huts were erected and used as offices, stores and workshops, and for accommodation. But the departure of the servicemen in 1945 left Santo a ghosttown.

Today, at lunchtime, Santo still resembles a ghost town. But in the morning Santo comes alive. Women in their mother-hubbard dresses, streamers streaming and arms full of children, come to town to shop in Santo's covered market. Everyone bustles in and out of the Chinese shops on main street, looking for bargains and ingesting big, juicy mandarines from nearby Malo Island. Best buys include local produce and handicrafts, and specialty products

Santo sightings



Sally Andrew

Santo's Blue Hole: clear, fresh water as blue as its name

like Venui Vanilla and Valetteruru Coffee.

There are two good anchorages close to town — one in front of the old French school just west of the Sarakata River and another more protected spot at Palikulo Bay, a short taxi-ride distance away. Many boats stop at Santo to reprovision or renew visas, and this year we met the crews of *African Queen* (USA), *Journeyman* (USA), *Infinity* (USA), *Slow Lane* (Canada), *Queeneh Guen* (Canada), *Vagus* (Australia), *Windmere* (New Zealand), *Shantung* (New Zealand) and *Shalimar* (Ireland).

In the bush 15 miles outside Luganville is the village of Vanafo where people wear little more than loin cloths and grass skirts. Men and boys hunt pigs and birds with bows and arrows, and women cook food using stones heated by fires often made from rubbing two sticks together. Continu-

ing to live a back-to-nature, commune-like existence is a conscious choice for these people whose huts, clothes and tools are fabricated from their natural environment.

Vanafo was a political hotspot in the 1970s when Jimmy Stevens and his Nagriamel movement denounced the condominium government and promoted a reactionary return to a *kastom* lifestyle. In 1980, Stevens led a mouse-that-roared type revolution and installed a shortlived provisional government in Santo. Arrested and sentenced to jail for nearly 14 years, Stevens is now back at Vanafo. He enjoys visitors and loves to reminisce about the Americans coming to Santo in the '40s.

Lots of yachties visited Vanafo this year. *Adamite* from New Zealand, *Bumble Bee* and *Ringoe* from Germany, *Babajaga* from Switzerland, *Islandia* from USA and *Fellowship* went with Martha from Gudfala Tours and received a warm welcome at the village.

Diving in Santo is great and one of the best and most accessible wreck dives in the world, the USS President Coolidge, lies close offshore in 20 to 80 metres of water. A massive luxury liner turned troop carrier, the *Coolidge* sank in 1942 and still has old ammunition, guns and helmets strewn all over the decks. Bigger than the *Fairstar*, local divemaster Allen Power says that even after 25 years he hasn't see it all. Helen and Colin Bell off the Australian yacht *Truant* did several dives on the *Coolidge* and in the coral garden at the top of the wreck where divers do their decompression, they met "Boris".

Boris is a friendly fellow, about 7 feet long and 450 pounds, and has been hanging around the *Coolidge* for over 25 years. "There are lots of big fish — tuna, barracuda, manta rays, and, like Boris, they all seem to be in proportion to the ship." Thanks to the concerted efforts of Allen Power, all the artifacts, coral and fish in the area are protected as a marine park.

There's good cruising all around Santo. On the east coast, anchorages near the Blue Hole (a huge fresh water spring) and beautiful Champagne Beach offer great swimming. To the south, Malokilikilu and Aore Islands offer protection from the tradewinds and are set in the tropical blues of a sandy, shallowing bottom. Each anchorage is as lovely as the next. Santo is a sleepy place. She moves at her own relaxed pace and exudes her own special charm — a charm that will entice us back. □

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SPORT

Fiji wins Games

FIJI created history when it won the Fourth South Pacific Mini Games which ended in Port Vila, Vanuatu on December 16. The first time it has topped the medal tally at a South Pacific Mini Games. The last time Fiji tasted victory was in 1963 at the inaugural South Pacific Games in Suva when it won 14 gold medals.

At last month's Vanuatu games Fiji won 16 gold, the same number as runner-up New Caledonia. However, Fiji won a total of 56 medals (16 gold, 19 silver and 21 bronze) compared to New Caledonia's 40 medals (16 gold, 13 silver and 11 bronze). In third place was French Polynesia with 14 gold, seven silver and nine bronze while the winners of the Ninth South Pacific Game in 1991, Papua New Guinea, was in fourth position with six gold, 13 silver and 18 bronze. Hosts Vanuatu were in fifth place.

In all 15 countries competed. They were Fiji, New Caledonia, French Polynesia, PNG, Vanuatu, Tonga, Western Samoa, Solomon Islands, Cook Islands, American Samoa, Norfolk Islands, Guam, Nauru, Niue, and Northern Marianas.

In the close finish, Fiji on the final day secured glory by picking up five of the eight athletics gold medals on offer, three silvers and a bronze. Fiji's men's and women's relay teams won all four gold, broke three Mini Games records and bettered three SPG records. Fiji's fifth gold was won by marathon runner Binesh Prasad.

Overall Fiji won more athletics medals than any other country with 15 gold.



Dancers: at the the opening of the Games in Port Vila

New Caledonia won 14 gold in athletics. It was the best performance ever by any Fiji athletics team at a South Pacific Games. Their performance was attributed to a development programme activated after the 1991 SPG. This covers coaches, administrators, technical officers and athletes. Also contributing to their success is overseas training and competition, government support and corporate sponsorship — notably the Mobil Elite squad programme. This entails the cream of Fiji athletics picked for special treatment.

Fiji officials say this programme must be continued and there must be an increase in funding if Fiji is to be on top at the 1995 SPG in French Polynesia. The Fifth South Pacific Mini Games will be held in American Samoa in 1997.

The only thing to dampen Fiji's celebrations after their win in Vanuatu

was the death of Fiji's President, Ratu Sir Penaia Ganilau at 1pm that afternoon. However, most of the Fiji camp were unaware of his death until later that night.

All rivalry was forgotten at the closing ceremony of the Vanuatu games at the Korman Stadium as competitors and officials from all participating countries danced and sang together. The dancing and the

singing went one for a good one hour following the formal closing ceremonies and cultural items.

HERE's the final medal tally

	G	S	B	T
Fiji	16	19	21	56
New Caledonia	16	13	11	40
French Polynesia	14	7	9	30
Papua New Guinea	6	13	18	37
Vanuatu	5	3	4	12
Tonga	4	4	4	12
Western Samoa	3	1	5	9
Solomon Islands	2	3	4	9
Cook Islands	1	0	0	1
American Samoa	0	2	1	3
Norfolk Island	0	1	0	1
Guam	0	1	0	1
Nauru	0	0	0	0
Niue	0	0	0	0
Northern Marianas	0	0	0	0
Total	67	67	77	211

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SPORT

Vanuatu takes on pressure

By Shailendra Singh

VANUATU Prime Minister, Maxime Carlot Korman's government worked hard to make the Fourth South Pacific Mini Games become a reality. But it had little time to sit back and savour the moment.

Political opponents of Karlot and striking Vanuatu Public Service Association made the Mini Games seem more like a nightmare than a dream come true. Right from the opening day of the new 300 million vatu sports complex on December 6, life was made difficult for the ruling coalition. If the government thought the 600 million vatu sporting extravaganza was going to allow them some breathing space from the two crises which had been festering for some time, it was mistaken. In fact, the bullets came faster than ever when the Games opened.

The strikers, ignored by the government-owned *Vanuatu Weekly* newspaper and Vanuatu radio pounced on the opportunity provided by hordes of journalists in Port Vila covering the games to highlight their grievances. They got both plenty of air time and newspaper coverage. Two senior members of the government also resigned just days before the opening of the games, placing the coalition in a very vulnerable position against a no-confidence motion scheduled for later that week.

Some clever manoeuvring by Korman took care of the political crisis. Cecil Sinker, who had resigned as leader of government business just days ago was lured back into the coalition with the Posts and Telecommunications Ministerial portfolio. He replaced Onnyn Tahy who had resigned on December 4, the day Korman opened the new sports complex which is named Korman Stadium after him. It was built in just 18 months.

With a two seat majority in the 46-member parliament, government passed the 1994 budget. The no-confidence motion passed undebated as it didn't have



Yad Singh

Island style: Nauruans in a colourful dance at the opening of the Games

the seven clear days notice required for it to be put to the floor. Just when government thought it could sit back, relax and enjoy the Games reports of poor conditions at the Games village started filtering in. Embarrassing reports. Some teams moved out of the games village into hotels.

The Suva-based *Fiji Times* carried a report about problems with food in one container of water and scores of diarrhoea cases. Other media organisations picked up the cue. The VPSSA strikers chimed in, saying the water works employees were on strike and the Port Vila water supply was risky for consumption. Bottled-water sales in Port Vila soared after this. Food also became a problem for athletes because of the strike with some containers held up at the wharf and a number of chefs designated to the games village kitchen not turning up.

The medical services in Port Vila were attacked by none other than Port Vila Central Hospital's John Kalsakau who claimed vital services were being operated by untrained and retired staff. Kalsakau had been chairman of the games medical commission before he served notice to join the strikers. They are after a 16 per cent pay rise. Government, which gave itself a hefty pay rise recently, says it's unaffordable.

The media's free movement inside the games village was restricted. Team general managers stopped athletes from talking to the press on any matter except their events and that after permission had been granted from section managers.

Despite the storm, the games rolled on. Whatever problems there may have been, the competition work went on uninterrupted except for the usual protests against this team and that player which is a feature of every SPG. Since independence in 1980 the Games was the biggest event in Vanuatu, sporting or otherwise.

More than 1000 athletes, officials and government ministers from 15 nations were in Port Vila for the 10-day event which had six sports — athletics, soccer, boxing, tennis, golf and netball. Perhaps the best thing about the games is that after it's all over, the people of Vanuatu will have modern, up-to-date sporting facilities which have been long in coming. Despite the flak it endured during the Games, Vanuatu has bid to host the 1998 South Pacific Games. This year's organising committee chairman, Joe Carlo said by then, all stages of the sports complex would be complete, including volleyball courts, basketball courts and a swimming pool. □

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Vanuatu PM Korman: on his way to open the Games



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Sevens giants have to qualify

By Andrew Kacimaiwai

THE South Pacific superpowers of the Hong Kong Sevens will have to play each other to qualify for the 1997 World Cup Sevens tournament in Hong Kong. Defending Hong Kong champion Western Samoa and perpetual favourite Fiji will both have to qualify, as will the New Zealand All Blacks and giant-killer Tonga.

The comment was made by a director of Rugby World Cup Ltd, Marcel Martin, on a fact finding visit to the British colony in late November. The only country from the region that qualifies directly is Australia, the beaten finalist from the inaugural Sevens World Cup held in Scotland in April. Official World Sevens champion England, Australia and host Hong Kong will be the only teams to qualify directly; England defeated Australia 21-17 in the final of the Sevens World Cup. Martin pointed out that at the April World Cup, 20 teams qualified directly. "Fiji, Western Samoa and Tonga may end up playing each other — it is the same in other sports."

The top seeds at the inaugural Sevens World Cup fared very poorly, with England staging an upstart win in a tournament whose three-day format was criticised by commentators and players. Apart from the three qualifiers, another 21 spots will be up for grabs between 58 teams. "Qualification will be on a zone basis, which means you might not get the best 24 teams," Martin admitted.

The Hong Kong Sevens tournament has been dominated by Pacific teams for about 10 consecutive years now. Only Tonga has failed to win the tournament. Fiji holds the record with seven wins, including unprecedented consecutive wins in 1990, 1991 and 1992 at the expense of the All Blacks. Fiji's sevens maestro Waisale Serevi has been voted Player of the Tournament for two years back-to-back.

Samoa won the title for the first time last year in a 14-12 win against the Fijians. Fiji coach Ratu Kitione Tuibua has slammed a Rugby Football Union decision not to send the national England side to the Hong Kong tournament next year. He said England did not deserve its champion status if it was not prepared to defend it.

Martin said a decision would be made next year whether to hold the 1997 World Cup on the traditional March dates of the Hong Kong Sevens or during October after the territory reverts to British rule. □

Thunder loses

By Brian Finn

JIMMY Thunder Peau was a clear and obvious favourite going into his first World Boxing Federation heavyweight title defence at Auckland in November. And why not. He was in top shape. He was fighting at home on one of the biggest boxing cards ever assembled in New Zealand. And in beating American Melton Bowen for the relatively-new WBF belt in September, he had shown signs of new-found form and vigour.

So on November 19, his challenger — British cruiserweight Johnny "The Entertainer" Nelson was expected to be another living example of a good small guy being beaten by a good big guy at Auckland's Mt Smart Supertop.

He wasn't. And by the end of the night, the small guy had lifted the WBF crown and with it, much of Peau's new-found confidence, on the strength of a convincing 12-round unanimous points victory. While Nelson was soaking up the limelight and a possible return visit to New Zealand, Peau was left alone to ponder another frustratingly poor performance at home. On the night, Nelson proved he was a better boxer than many gave him credit for. The former WBF cruiserweight champion gave away a 10kg weight advantage to Peau but made the most of a six-inch reach advantage.

Nelson scored easily from the outside, tied up Peau's normally-lethal inside punching, and used his speed to stay clear of the sluggish home fighter. The conclusion became obvious well before the end of the fight — even to Peau's trainer, Ces Waters. Peau, who had been trying to land a knockout punch from round one, looked unlikely to land even a fairly damaging blow before round 12.

Peau admitted afterwards he abandoned the pre-fight tactics to go for a knockout to try and please his home crowd. But that has now placed his relationship with Waters — who he credited earlier for his boxing revival — in jeopardy. Says Waters — "I felt I was looking at the Jimmy Thunder of five years ago. "There was no power in his punching, no snap. I couldn't believe I



Jason Dorday

Thunder defends: Nelson scores with a left jab

was looking at a fighter I trained." Waters says while Peau had lost his WBF title, he too has lost some of his prestige as a trainer and will need to reassess his relationship with Peau.

Now, Peau is left again with the prospect of resurrecting his professional career. Ironically, it could begin with a title fight in Auckland. But the Samoan Aucklander is reluctant to fight at home again.

"I really feel the pressure here," he says. Peau says he expects too much of himself at home in Auckland and would prefer to fight Nelson in Britain or possibly elsewhere. Regardless of the

David Tua's camp ready for Thunder

OLYMPIC boxing heavyweight bronze medalist David Tua will front up to Jimmy "Thunder" Peau when the time is right, his manager Lou Duva said in Auckland. The Tua entourage had arrived in Auckland on November 16 to prepare for his fight with Miami's Russ Watson, known as "the Florida Fist", on November 26 at the ASB Stadium.

Duva said his camp was not avoiding Thunder; he would not put his boxer up against the more aggressive former Commonwealth Games gold medalist until he was ready. "We'd like to go and have a look at him (Thunder)," Duva told NZPA. "Sure we'll fight, we'll fight Jimmy Thunder there is no problem with that." Thunder, on reputation, was the sort of fighter they wanted to pit Tua against. — NZPA

rumble

venue, Peau believes he can come back.

"I'm still on a mission," says the man who aims to make the world's top 10 rankings. "I'm doing it the hard way but the road is still there and I'm still going." Surprisingly, his aspirations are backed by the world famous trainer of fellow manager boxer David Tua. Lou Duva, who was an interested spectator at the fight together with Tua and the rest of his entourage, says Peau is a better prospect than he showed.

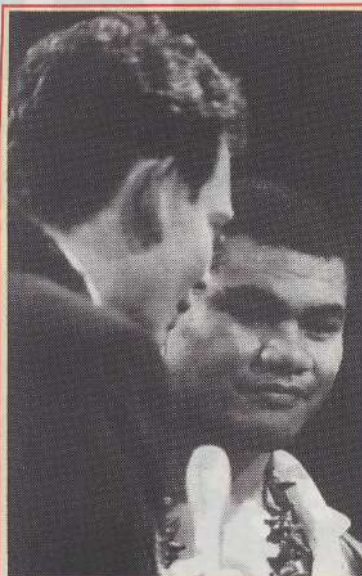
"He's got the attributes to be a good fighter. He's fast, he's got a good punch but he needs to put it together." Says Duva — "One fight can turn it right around." Peau — who now sports a record of 16 wins and five losses — must hope that one fight is his next one.

On the undercard, Samoan Auckland-based boxer Dennis Leui'i scored an upset majority points decision over former Englishman Ted Cofie from Australia to take the Australian cruiserweight title. That was the first of four wins for former Fijian Brij Sain's Ringside Gym.

Based in Otago, Sain's fighters won him a perfect record with Alberto Ma Chong scoring an unanimous points decision over Sililo Figota to retain his New Zealand light middleweight title.

Ma Chong, in the best contest of the night, was industrious throughout and maintained a punishing work rate against the former Olympic Games representative. In another light middleweight encounter, Fa'a ititi Seufale — who fought as Seve Timani — scored a third round knockout over New Zealand toughman champion Tony Watson.

And to round out Sain's successful night, former New Zealand champion August Tuanavasa KO'd replacement opponent Rocky Thompson in the fourth round of their heavyweight contest. The only fight — other than Peau's title fight — that didn't go to Sain's gym was the South Pacific heavyweight title bout between defending champion Fijian Mitieli Navuilawa and New Zealander Lindsay Christensen. Navuilawa, who has come under the guidance of Ces Waters, retained his belt with a sixth round TKO for his second win over Christensen. □



It's all over: Tua being interviewed by the press after the fight

By Brian Finn

IN less than a minute Samoa-born boxer David Tua revealed what his camp had been attempting to hide all week — that replacement opponent Michael Acey was out of shape. Acey, a Pennsylvania prison guard, was hustled back from a pig hunting trip and flown to New Zealand as a last minute substitute for Miami boxer Russell Watson who was injured in training.

And while Tua's handlers maintained all week that Acey was a tougher prospect than Watson, the capacity crowd at Auckland's ASB Stadium was left thinking the opposite. Because it only took Tua 57 seconds to despatch Acey to a record of 13 wins and nine losses. Still, Tua was in good company. Acey had also suffered first round

Tua wins ... in 57 seconds

knockouts at the hands of former world champions Riddick Bowe and Tommy Morrison and a second round defeat to WBC champion Lennox Lewis.

It was a focused and super fit Tua who took the ring though, against an opponent whose disrobing immediately revealed an underworked, flabby body. And only 22 seconds into the bout, Tua had showed up his opponent's lack of preparation — landing what should have been an expected heavy left hook square on target.

That opened the way for a punishing combination and after surviving a standing count, Acey was under fire again. Tua settled the brief clash with a huge left which floored Acey — and referee Bevan Weir immediately declared Tua the winner. After the fight, the Tua camp was quick to defend the value of the bout despite its shortness.

Veteran trainer George Benton — a former trainer of world champions Evander Holyfield and Joe Frazier — says Tua proved he can hit as hard as anyone in the heavyweight division. "David showed out there he is a hell of a puncher. If Acey had been able to get up, David would have killed him."

Tua, who celebrated his 21st birthday only a week before the fight, says he could have kept the fight going for a couple of rounds "but this is business". "I just thank the Lord for helping me fight the fight".

Meanwhile, an embarrassed Acey slipped out of the arena and later out of the country without speaking to the media. Tua may have advanced his bid for world heavyweight title by more than six months, according to his manager Lou Duva. Next year, all Tua's fights will be over 10 rounds with the first bout likely to be in either Puerto Rico or Cardiff, Wales, in the New Year. □



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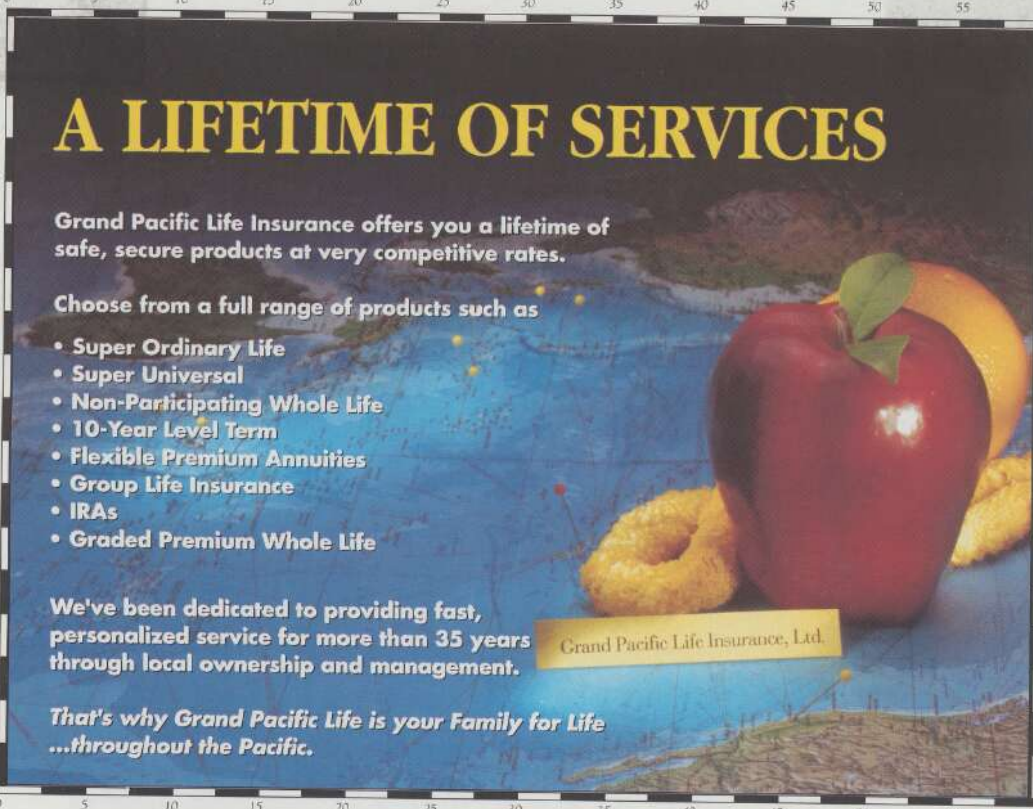
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