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PACIFIC ISLANDS

M O N T H L Y

JUNE 1994

Cashing in on NUCLEAR WASTE



Marshall Islands considers
giving up one of its atolls
as a dumping ground
... in return for cash

BARBADOS CONFERENCE



SMALL ISLANDS, BIG ISSUES - p6

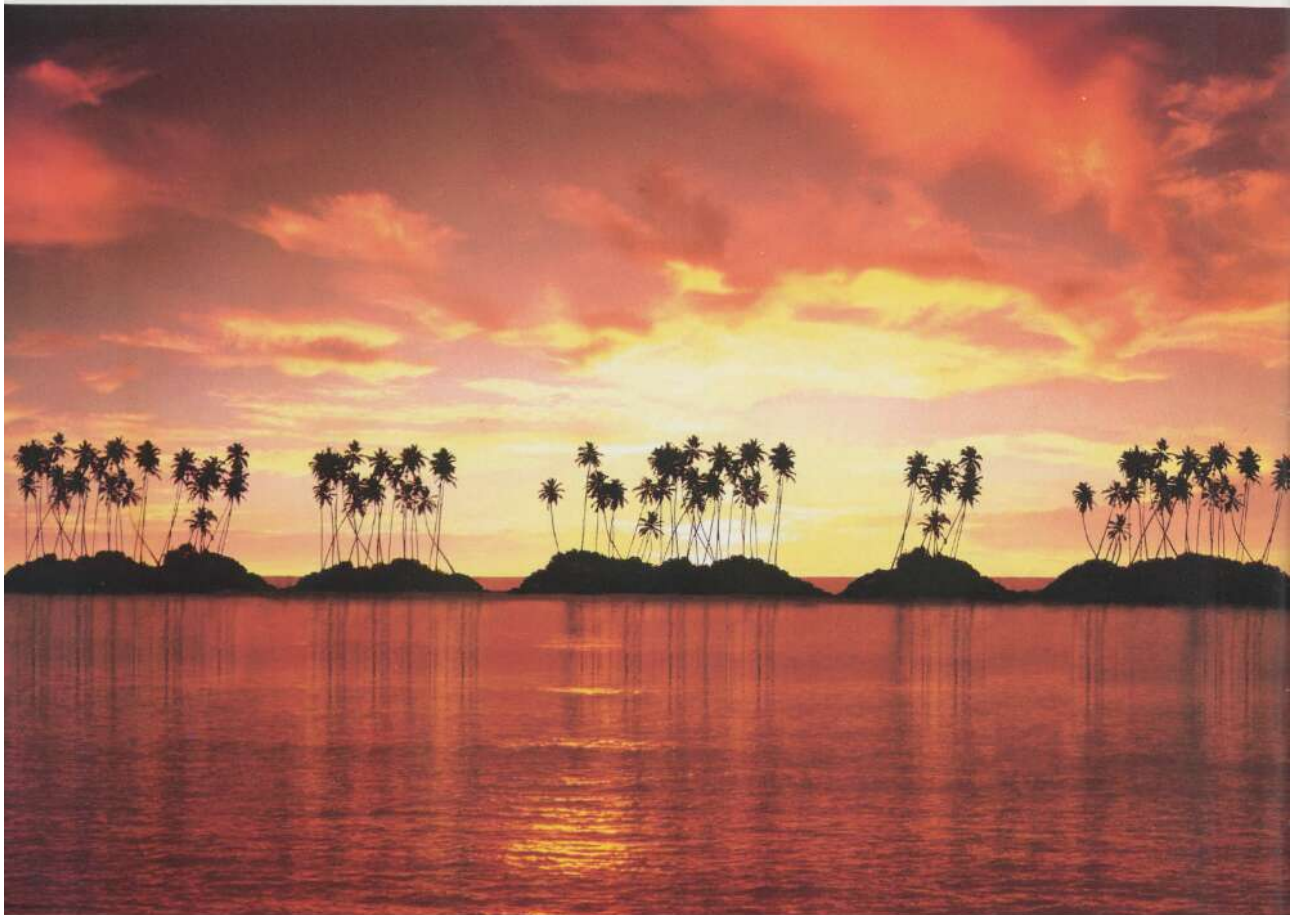
HAWAII



Dalai Lama on a
mission - p26

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Facsimile: (852) 868 5195

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PACIFIC ISLANDS

M O N T H L Y

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IAN WILLIAMS

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Publisher: Brian O'Flaherty

Acting Editor: Arvind Kumar

Senior Writer: Fiona Phillips

Correspondents:

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

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

Advertising Sales:

● Regional Sales (South Pacific): Salendra Narayan, Tel (679) 304111, 303244, Fx (679) 303809

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

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

● Adelaide: Hastwell Williamsons Representatives, Tel (61-8) 3799522, Fx (61-8) 3799735.

● Melbourne: Brown Orr Fletcher Burrows (Aust) Pty Ltd, Tel (613) 8265188, Fx: (613) 8265644.

● Auckland: McKay & Bowman, International Media Representatives Ltd, Tel (64-9) 4190561, Fx (64-9) 4192243.

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LETTERS

Saving the coral

SIR,
I WOULD like to correct some inaccuracies in the article 'Saving the Coral' (*PIM*, May). The author refers to the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) commissioning "...the creation of guidelines for coral exploitation", that the guidelines had been completed but they were not being released by SPREP, and that the document was "creating difficulties for member countries".

The document referred to is the recently completed 'Environmental Guidelines for Coral Harvesting Operations' (36 pages long, not 12 as mentioned). The purpose of the guidelines is to provide SPREP Pacific island member countries with the information necessary to assess coral harvesting proposals. If countries decide to allow harvesting, it provides guidelines for evaluating and managing the coral harvesting operations. SPREP's position, however, is clearly stated in the

booklet. "Overall, it is strongly recommended that coral harvesting not be allowed (page 22).

When your magazine contacted SPREP it was told that the document was in draft form, being layed out for printing. The reason for not releasing the guidelines at that stage were the same as why *PIM* does not release its magazine in draft format. SPREP has a policy of assessing all reports internally before they are released to ensure that information and recommendations in them are sound. The guidelines have now been printed and are freely available from SPREP.

The statement that the guidelines are creating difficulties for our member countries is news to us. No member country has contacted SPREP with any such comments. In fact, the guidelines were developed in response to member countries' requests to more information on how to assess coral harvesting proposals. I trust that this clarifies any concerns of your readers about SPREP's position on coral harvesting.

Dr VILI A. FUAVAO,
Director, SPREP

HEADLINES

HAWAII

Hawaiians try to arrest mayor

TWELVE Hawaiian sovereignty activists burst into Honolulu's City Hall and tried to arrest the mayor.

The group called the Re-established Kingdom of Hawaii says it wants to put Mayor Frank Fasi and other state leaders in chains because they are not Hawaiians and are illegally occupying office. In addition to being mayor of Honolulu, Fasi is also seeking election as governor of Hawaii this year. Police arrested eight men and four women for causing a disturbance and impersonating public officials. One of them was an old Hawaiian woman in a wheel chair, Lenore Kaawan, who claimed she was Hawaii's new queen.



COOK ISLANDS

Witnesses angry with police

WITNESSES in the Cook Islands capital Rarotonga to police shooting of stray dogs in public have expressed dismay at such incidents and have expressed a hope that officers involved are penalised.

The public sentiment was expressed after an incident in which police officers shot at two dogs in the business area of Avarua town. One of them was injured by gunfire, but both managed to run away as police carried out the shooting in front of witnesses who described the event as "sickening". Witnesses said the use of guns in public is dangerous and officers involved should be reprimanded. Cook Islands News reports the incident follows a series of shootings last month in a police drive to reduce the number of stray dogs.



PAPUA NEW GUINEA

About 4000 seek compensation

SOME 4000 people in Papua New Guinea's East Sepik Province will ask for US\$100 million compensation from the United States, Japan and Australia for World War II damages



to their land and environment. The *National* says this threat to seek compensation is the third among the hefty money claims for land and environment damages sought by local people against foreign companies or countries.

The first was the US\$10 billion compensation demanded by landowners of the giant Panguna mine in North Solomons Province against Australian company CRA.

Malaysian firm to get big stake of project

THE Malaysian Mining Corporation is set to grab a significant stake of PNG's rich Lihir gold project after the withdrawal of Canadian listed Venezuelan Gold.

The Canadian company was to become a joint venture partner in a company controlled by the project manager, Britain's Rio Tinto Zinc, which would control 40 per cent after the first round of restructuring was completed. VenGold was expected to gain about 10 per cent direct exposure to the project which is now up for grabs following its withdrawal.

Executive director of Niu Gini Mining Ltd, Gavin Thomas, says negotiations on the eventual ownership of the project are continuing behind closed doors. But, Thomas says progress in gaining a special mining licence has been disappointingly slow.

Government office to be demolished

PAPUA New Guinea's department of works has ordered the immediate closure and demolition of the country's Central Government Office complex at Waigani in Port Moresby.

But the one-thousand-odd public servants who work in the building are not likely to move until alternative office space is found for them. Some of the departments are reported to be already looking for space elsewhere. The building is home to 12 departments including the departments of foreign affairs and trade, village services and provincial affairs, environment and conservation, justice and the national disaster and emergency services.

HEADLINES

VANUATU



Government stops deductions

THE Vanuatu government has stopped the automatic fortnightly deduction of subscriptions from teachers salaries to their teachers union. The salary section of the department of finance was directed by the government to stop the deductions, beginning April.

Vanuatu Teachers Union president Obed Massing described the government's decision as another deliberate move to undermine the union. He said the deductions were legal because they were authorised by the members and he could not see any reason for the government's action. Massing said he has written to the ministry of education urging it to re-consider the decision. The VTU has 713 financial members. In February members joined a strike called by the Vanuatu Trade Union Congress in support of striking civil servants demanding a 16 per cent pay rise. A hundred and seventy-nine teachers were suspended for taking part in the strike.

Ministers expelled from party

THREE ministers in the Vanuatu government have been expelled by their political party.

The annual congress of the National United Party approved the expulsion of three breakaway MPs and their political secretaries. The three are the deputy prime minister, Sethy Regenvanu; health minister, Doctor Edward Tambisari and communications minister, Cecil Sinka.

They have continued to defy the NUP leadership, led by former prime minister, Fr Walter Lini, by remaining in coalition with the Union of Moderate Parties-led government. The fourth NUP People's Congress also decided not to recognise the agreement by Regenvanu and his faction and Prime Minister Maxime Carlot Korman forming the basis of the present coalition government.

Korman makes stand on nuclear issues

VANUATU'S prime minister Maxime Carlot Korman says his country has taken an independent stand on nuclear issues, and has advised both the United States and France of its position.

Carlot Korman made the statement after the French president, Francois Mitterand, announced France would halt its nuclear testing programme at Murorua Atoll in French Polynesia. The prime minister says Vanuatu is committed to a clean environment and is totally against nuclear testing.

Diplomats concerned about logging

DIPLOMATS of European Union countries based in Vanuatu have called on the prime minister, Maxime Carlot Korman, to express their concern on expanding logging operations in his country, particularly on timber-rich Erromango Island.

The call has come from the French ambassador, Jean Mazeo, who is also president of European Union member countries in Vanuatu; acting British high commissioner, David Miller; and the resident representative of the European Union in Vanuatu, Hangjorg von Bieler. They reminded Carlot Korman of their financial commitments to the country's reforestation projects as well as Vanuatu's own outstanding reputation as a firm defender of the environment and sustainable development both in the region and internationally.

SOLOMON ISLANDS



Bank governor issues warning

THE governor of the Central Bank of Solomon Islands, Rick Hou, says the country's dependency on log exports is a major weakness in the national economy and warns that this weakness will get worse if the situation is allowed to continue.

Hou made the remark while releasing the Central Bank's 1993 annual report in Honiara. He said log production rose by another 20 per cent in 1993 following a huge increase of 80 per cent in 1992. Hou said exploitation of logs in the country is now running at well over twice the sustainable rate, while prices for round log exports doubled in 1993.

He said during the year, Solomon Islands exported logs worth \$69 million, accounting for well over half the country's total export value. This was the first time since the 1960s that the export base has been dependent on a single commodity. He said this clearly runs counter to the longer term aim of establishing diversified export base which is capable of providing sustainable export growth. Hou added the main problem with the present level of logging activity is in the long term damage done to the forestry sector itself.

181 public servants made redundant

THE Solomon Islands government is prematurely retiring the 181 public servants in what used to be the government printery, government supply department and the water unit.

The three organisations have been corporatised under the government's privatisation and corporatisation policy.

Solomon Islands Broadcasting Commission says the new corporations, namely the Solomon Islands Water Authority, the Solomon Islands Supplies Limited and the Solomons Islands Printing Limited, could offer employment to employees they may wish to retain. The Solomon Islands government information service says those who are not offered any employment with the three new corporations will get redundancy payments.

NEW ZEALAND



Bolger comes under attack

THERE'S mounting criticism of New Zealand prime minister Jim Bolger's acceptance of Indonesia's reasons for occupying East Timor.

Bolger raised the occupation with the Indonesian government during his visit to Jakarta. After the meeting he said he accepted Indonesia's reasons and that the Indonesian foreign minister knows more about the situation than New Zealand's MPs who are critical of the occupation. That angered Labour MP Phil Goff, who is accusing Bolger of being an apologist for Jakarta.

KIRIBATI



Call for women in high office

A KIRIBATI member of parliament has called for women to be elected to high public office. The MP for South Tarawa, Roniti Teiwaki, made the call while opening a church workshop for women. Teiwaki, said women should be elected to public offices and to parliament, be appointed cabinet ministers and be elected to the country's highest office, the presidency.

There are times in your life when you feel your friends have been missing out on something good. Now's your chance to do something about it and share with them one of the good things you have. Buy your friend a subscription to Pacific Islands Monthly and let him or her join you and thousands of other people worldwide who are kept informed of the latest political, social and cultural changes taking place in the Pacific.

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CITY _____ COUNTRY _____

While Caribbean delegates, brought up in a more confrontational culture, have often been some what dismissive of the lack of militancy by delegates imbued with the "Pacific Way", the AOSIS communique was much blander than the proposals put forward by the Pacific group. This perhaps reflected genuine cultural differences. The Caribbeans tend to go for grand sweeping statements on general issues while the Pacific delegations combined an urge for consensus with a leaning towards practical details rather than empty rhetoric. So the final AOSIS communique "noted and concurred with the assessment made by the Eminent Persons Group that implementation of Agenda 21, had lost momentum and consequently they urged the international community to fulfill its commitments made at Rio". In contrast, the Pacific delegations had sought clearer

— the Barbados Conference

small islands to drown

commitment calling for example, for the "early negotiation of binding protocols which will recognise the real costs of adverse environmental impacts. These protocols should address, in particular, the issues of targets and timetables for the reduction of carbon dioxide and the greenhouse gas emissions". Equally, the Pacific called for the implementation of the Basel Convention which bans the transport of hazardous waste, welcomed the implementation of the Law of the

The expanded agenda allowed the donors to point out that most small islands get far more aid per head of population than land-based developing countries, and so, to some extent, gave them the excuse they sought to renege on their Rio commitments. That was fairly apparent from the beginning. The industrialised countries sent no heads of state, and only a few, like Australia, New Zealand, Germany and Canada, sent ministers. Organisers had been hoping

tion they no longer have that cover, and the Europeans in particular are revealed to be the dogs in the manger.

This is particularly perfidious in that many of the small islands are former colonies of France and Britain, who have shamefully neglected them since independence. For example, Britain sent only an under secretary of the department of the environment, the Earl of Arran, while France merely sent its local ambassador to Barbados, who was so



Ian Williams

Opening of the conference: dancers put on a show to entertain the delegates

Sea, and called for specific attention to trade policies that took into account the special needs of SIDS.

All these specifics were vetoed in favour of a general and ineffectual statement. One reason perhaps is the price of success. AOSIS was launched with an appeal based on the vulnerability of small islands to sea level rise. As the alliance gathered momentum, it expanded its horizons to address the whole complex of development issues affecting the islands, and to some extent lost the clear and emotionally grabbing focus on the physical obliteration of the islands.

that vice-president Al Gore, who has made much of his green credentials, would come. He did not, perhaps for fear of being overshadowed and embarrassed by the other star of the conference, Fidel Castro, president of Cuba, whose party swept in, to much excitement, on two Ilyushin jets.

But the US sent former Senator Tim Wirth, and there was a noticeable change from such conferences in years past. Then, other donor countries could rely upon the often obtuse hostility of the Republican administration in Washington to cover their own curmudgeonly policies. Under the Clinton administra-

well informed that he told local TV that the South Pacific Forum had representation from French territories.

In contrast, Australia's ambassador at large for the environment, Penelope Wensley, who chaired the Main Committee where the serious horse trading was done, made many friends by being pragmatically honest about the lack of commitment by donors from the very onset. She cut through the diplomatic waffle to reiterate the message that there would be no new money available, and she was instrumental in securing the compromise Programme of Action that, at least repeated, although it did not

implement the pledges made at the Earth Summit. "Australia," she pointed out to *PIM* at the beginning of the conference, "had funded some of the delegates, both to the Preparatory Committee and here. We have worked closely with AOSIS as a group. But I think we are unlikely to reach agreement on new and additional resources. Things have changed since Rio; governments have changed, and there has been a surge of demands on donors, Rwanda, Somalia, Sudan, and Bosnia, for example. And donors do not consider SIDS to be in dire need, so there will not be new money, but we will go for more effective spending."

As Annette des Isles suggests, perhaps the most tangible benefit of the conference is the sense of cohesion it gives the islands. "We have become a family, and we intend to remain one," she says. They form a significant minority in the regional groups like Asia/Pacific and Latin America, and their overall strength in the UN and the 'Group of 77' developing countries, gives them additional leverage. For example, New Zealand's success in winning a Security Council seat against Sweden in 1992 was widely credited to the influence of Pacific states over their colleagues in AOSIS. Indeed, even the fact that the conference attracted over 120 states to a small Caribbean island is a tribute to their influence.

But the conference also shows that relying on promises, or on justice, is not enough. The islands will need to get tough in return for their votes on occasions when donors want something. □



Honest: Penelope Wensley

Small islands cut off by telecom companies

UNITED Nations Development Programme (UNDP) officials identified island governments and the telephone companies as a major obstacle to the development of SIDS/NET, a proposed small island electronic media network. Gus Edgren, UNDP assistant administrator, expressed pessimism that governments and telecommunications companies were prepared to reduce the huge costs of overseas communications to make contact with the Internet possible.

Edgren told *PIM* that non-governmental organisations and educational institutions who would most benefit from such a network are a "weak constituency, and may not have enough political clout to get charges reduced". Ironically, delegates representing the same governments that have often collaborated with telecommunication companies to give the latter an expensive monopoly, agreed to give UNDP the task of organising a feasibility study, in co-ordination with the small island developing states and relevant sub-regional organizations, for SIDS/NET.

Edgren explained that the idea for SIDS/NET grew out of an existing UNDP project, the Sustainable Development Network which connects some 20 national development networks. "There is such a lot of information that's relevant to small islands, but you have to index the information relevant to SIDS, so that the volume is not overwhelming. Secondly it is facilitate communications, so the countries concerned can talk to each other. So they have to have computers and connections to Internet or other



Natural beauty: Barbados boasts magnificent scenery

networks. And thirdly, it is important that they should be able to communicate with each other directly."

A prototype of SIDS/NET, funded by UNDP Barbados, was working on the conference site and uses UNDP's own communications network to link with the TogetherNet and Internet computer networks. It offered on-line data bases of conference documents and UN documents to delegates, NGO's and journalists at the conference, as well as providing E-mail services and on-line conferencing facilities. Adam Rogers, co-ordinating the project, pointed out that electronic conferencing was no substitute for face to face meetings, but bringing people from around the world was highly expensive. After Barbados, delegates and other participants could continue building on the relationships they had established in a much cheaper way. UNDP consultant Peter Meincke, who briefed delegations about the proposal pointed out that E-mail is the cheapest form of communication, and so could provide a bridge to cross the increasing information gap between the rich and the poor countries.

But while cheaper, it is not free. On isolated islands it could cost anything from \$100,000 to \$500,000 to establish a satellite hub link and a dedicated circuit could range in cost from \$200 to \$4500 per month. □

Nauru walks away from meet \$50m richer

By Ian Williams

AT least one small island walked away from Barbados richer than when it went. At the newly-opened Australian High Commission in Barbados, Australia's Development and Pacific Affairs Minister Gordon Bilney and President Bernard Dowiyogo of Nauru signed an agreement pledging A\$50 million over

the next 20 years. The agreement follows last August's South Pacific Forum in Nauru, where the two countries announced a total \$107 million out of court settlement of the three-year case brought by Nauru at the International Court of Justice. The case claimed damages for environmental damage caused by phosphate mining on the island while it was under Australian administration as, first a League of

Nations mandate and then as a UN trust territory, until it gained independence in 1968.

Canberra has already paid 40 million and will pay an additional A\$17 million by August 31 this year. Earlier this year the blow for the Australian Treasury was softened when the UK and New Zealand agreed to contribute A\$24 million of that. □

— the Barbados Conference

Niue wants to increase population

BEFORE the Small Island Conference took place, there was a three-week-long meeting in New York in preparation for the International Conference on Population and Development to be held in Cairo later this year. In New York, Niue was the smallest nation state represented, apart from the Vatican City which has a population of 800 celibates. However, the two smallest nations together shared a similar perspective — albeit from different angles. The Vatican would like everyone to eschew family planning methods and thus increase population, and while most other nations want to reduce population growth, as Niuean Finance Minister Sani Elia Lakatani explained to *PIM*, his government wants to increase the population of his island, at least.

"We have a target of 5000 by the end of the century, and at the moment we have just over 2300." However, he candidly admits that this goal is unlikely to be met. Emigration is the major problem so that New Zealand's last census recorded six times as many Niueans as the island itself — 14,400. Lakatani admits that previous governments have tried to persuade emigrants to return, but without success. "I believe that people want to come back — it's just that there are no jobs for them to come back to," he said. The minister was in New York "so we can find out what's happening elsewhere. In the past we have been isolated from events in the rest of the world, but by coming to meetings like this, we can find out how to improve things back home. At least we can understand the problems of the world, expose ourselves to what is happening out there".

Of course, in some ways, the island has been over exposed to the outside world. The emigrants don't leave because they dislike their homeland, but because with such a small economic base, the island cannot provide the jobs and salaries which its people want. "Ninety-nine per cent of Niueans want to work for money," he points out, "so a subsistence-based economy holds no attractions for them."



Niuean minister: Sani Elia Lakatani

UN boss shows commitment

ONE clear commitment was made by UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros Ghali, who attended the opening ceremonies and made a stirring speech about the special needs of the islands, their isolation, and their vulnerability. His attendance was surprising to some since the Secretary-General is not known for underestimating his own importance. People expected small islands to be beneath him, but his appearance signalled that the UN system itself takes the issue very seriously.

Indeed, Rafeedin Ahmed, his special representative confessed that the SG "has asked us all to redouble our efforts for the small island states". Boutros Ghali himself said that his concern was



Committed: Boutros Ghali

not the conference itself — but the follow up. He added — "And unless there is a lobby from the Small Island States, we will not pay the necessary attention."

Indeed, when *PIM* asked Boutros Ghali to reconcile his liking for small states with his horror two years ago at the proliferation of United Nations members, he was careful to explain his total support for any small territory or existing state that wanted to join, mentioning San Marino, Andorra and Monaco in Europe. His objections were, he said, solely to the balkanisation of existing states on the grounds of ethnic nationalism, and he pointed to what would happen in Africa alone if the existing states were to break up on ethnic lines.

Korman defends small islands

VANUATU Prime Minister Maxim Carlot Korman attended and made a strong speech in defence of small islands — and of the French language. He complained that the AOSIS press conference was to be conducted in English and remarked caustically that "French is a working language of the UN. It is not a small island among the world's languages". The local newspaper, the *Barbados Advocate*, had reproduced an article from *PIM*, asking where Robert Van Lierop, the former Vanuatu ambassador and first chairman of AOSIS was. The article attracted some considerable attention, with even members of the US delegation saying how much the former ambassador was missed.

Korman referring to press reports, claimed credit for Vanuatu for Van Lierop being the first chairman, and said that although, "now internally we made a change, but we feel AOSIS must continue".

More members?

WILL more Pacific states join the UN? Both Niue and Nauru are actively considering membership. Nauru president Bernard Dowiyogo told *PIM* that one problem in the past was that when they had attended the Trusteeship Council before independence, they had seen political points being made by Cold War opponents "and they had nothing to do with us, even though it was our case being discussed", he complained. To some extent, their decision would depend on the outcome of the conference. But, he pointed out on behalf of the Forum at a press conference on the launch of the AOSIS communique, "AOSIS is a wonderful opportunity for non-members of the UN to participate and to work together with members".

Indeed, non-UN members attending the conference included almost all the Pacific states. Apart from Niue and Nauru, Palau, Tuvalu, Kiribati, Tonga and the Cook Island had delegations.

Small nations use sovereignty

PERHAPS symbolic of the type of leverage that diplomatic presence can give is that the conference took place in a centre built with help from China to Barbados, while in neighbouring St Vincent, a highly prominent Tiawanese mission helps with road building projects. St Vincent also votes on the International Whaling Commission for

allowing Japan to continue with "scientific" whaling.

Tokyo sends a cheque with its orders. In the absence of a "Soviet" card to play, and effectively abandoned by former colonial powers, one can hardly complain of small nations use of one of their few assets — their sovereignty — to help develop.



Pacific Diary



JUNE

- Annual Miss Tahiti and Miss Heiva I Tahiti contest, Tahiti.
- International Black Pearl Festival, Tahiti.
- Annual East Sepik Women's Festival, Papua New Guinea.
- Ha'apai Tourism Festival, Tonga.

01-03

Western Samoan Independence Celebrations

7-13

ESCAP Asia/Pacific Trade Fair, Beijing, People's Republic of China

APEC trade Promotion Training Course and Seminar, Beijing.

NAFTA Seminar, Suva, Fiji.

9

Launching of the Tourism Council of the South Pacific's Visit South Pacific Year '95 campaign, Melbourne, Australia.

15

Launching of Visit South Pacific Year '95 in Sydney.

26-30

Pacific Islands News Association Conference, Apia, Western Samoa

27-28

Forum Regional Security Committee, Forum Secretariat, Suva

JULY

- International Marathon, New Caledonia.
- Women's World Cup Soccer, Port Moresby, PNG.
- Annual International Pro-Am Surfing Open, Tahiti.
- Heilala Festival, Tonga.
- Independence Day celebrations, Vanuatu.

10-16 Musika (music) Extravaganza, Western Samoa

30

Le Tausala Samoa Pageant (beauty contest), Apia, Western Samoa

Jul/Aug

Forum Officials Committee Pre-Forum Session, Brisbane, Australia

Jul/Aug

Twenty-Fifth South Pacific Forum, Brisbane, Australia

Jul/Aug

6th Post-Forum Dialogue Partners Meeting, Brisbane, Australia

AUGUST

- South Pacific RIM Rugby Tournament, Fiji.
- International Outrigger World Championship, Western Samoa.

03-06

Conference on Violence and the Family, Port Vila (Hosted by the Vanuatu Women's Centre)

08-19

Third Pacific Women's Documentation Workshop, Port Vila (hosted by the Vanuatu Women's Centre)

SEPTEMBER

- Regatta Week, Musket Cove, Fiji.
- South Pacific Games, Tahiti.

22-29

23rd SOPAC Annual Session, Majuro, Marshall Islands

late 7th SPREP IGM, Tarawa Kiribati

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COVER STORY

Cashing in on nuclear waste

By David North

THERE'S an old saying, "if you have a lemon, make lemonade". In other words, make the best of a bad situation.

Some major forces in the Republic of the Marshall Islands want to do just that — take one or more of the nuclear-damaged islands, and rent them to the world as sites for atomic waste.

Bikini would be a logical location for such a dump, argue some Marshallese, while others are adamantly opposed to even entertaining the notion. The amounts of money mentioned in connection with such a development are staggering. The *New York Times* suggested US\$50 million a year for 20 years, or \$1 billion. RMI's ambassador to the US, Wilfred Kendall, told *PIM* that the annual income could be more than all of the republic's current revenues, from all sources, now some \$70 million a year. He cautioned, however, that conversations are currently at a "very preliminary phase".

Floating around Washington, however, is an unsigned document, dated February 1, 1994, marked "confidential" dealing with this subject. I was told on good authority that it had at least passed through the hands of the RMI embassy.

The smoothly-written, carefully-worded document seeks funding for a feasibility study on the question of locating a nuclear storage facility on one or more uninhabited or nuclear-damaged islands in the Marshalls. No island names are specified. The heading for the 16-page paper is "Long-term Storage and Permanent Disposal of Nuclear Materials — a Proposal for a Feasibility Study in the Marshall Islands." As one who is familiar with both island and Washington writing styles, my assumption is that it was written by mainland lawyers or consultants. It is clearly intended to persuade a mainland source of money to put up an

unspecified, but substantial sum of money to conduct a sophisticated, three-part feasibility study. Speculation is that the study alone, would cost \$1 to \$2 million. Ambassador Kendall, while not discussing the cost of the study, said that the potential sponsor of the study would be "in the private sector".

The potential financial structure is laid out in some detail (see illustration); this would be a for-profit activity, involving a US\$1.5 billion outlay for a single site

way of compensating the Marshalls for the damage to its environment, and for its (presumed) willingness to accept the waste.

Alternatively, such a waste site could conceivably be built without giving the Marshalls a share in the equity, instead, RMI and perhaps some other Marshallese interests (like landowners) would be paid a multi-million dollar year fee for the use of the site. Or perhaps some combination of both approaches could be used.

A blessing for the nuclear industry

As the anonymous writers of the document make clear, there is a very strong demand for nuclear waste sites. Not only is there the still dangerous spent fuel from hundreds of nuclear power plants, there is the enormous amount of surplus atomic waste coming from the end of the Cold War.

It is all very well (and of course commendable) for the leaders of the world to decide to reduce the number of nuclear warheads, but someone has to remove the explosives, and the remaining nuclear material has to be stored someplace.

There are severe technological and political complications to nuclear storage. First, the stuff has to be carefully packaged and placed in deep, secure vaults. The area should be free of earthquakes, and the facility must be protected from would-be nuclear terrorists. Second, for all practical purposes, the storage has to be arranged from here to eternity. The principal element in highly enriched uranium (HEU) is uranium-235, which has a half-life of 700,000,000 years. Plutonium-239, a weapons-grade fuel, has a half-life of a mere 6500 years (approximately three times as long as the period since the time of Christ).

But most important, no one wants an atomic waste site anywhere in their region — and the jurisdiction that accepts the stuff can make a fortune as a result.

Confidential (Illustrative and Preliminary) Potential Financial Structure NUCLEAR WASTE CORPORATION					
Estimated Project Cost One Site Disposal US \$1.5 billion					
Debt: 70%	\$1.05 billion	IFI	IFI-Led Syndicate	ECA Loans	Others Loans
			(Millions)		
		\$55	\$370	\$300	\$325
Equity: 30%	\$0.45 billion	Host Country	30%		\$135
		IFI	10%		\$45
		Others (Sponsors plus EBRD, ADB, investment banks)	60%		\$270
IFI - An international financial institution ECA - Export credit agencies (e.g., Exim Bank)					

to be run by a presumably not-yet-created Nuclear Waste Corporation. The preliminary suggestion is that the host nation (RMI) would have a 30 per cent interest in the equity, worth \$135,000,000, and that other investors would have \$315,000,000 in equity. Meanwhile, 70 per cent of the cost of the project (\$1,050,000,000) would be provided by IFIs (international financial institutions) and other banks.

It is not clear whether RMI would be expected to put up any actual cash; probably not. The \$135,000,000 worth of stock allocated to it might simply be a

COVER STORY

Some US Indian tribes are said to be interested in this prospect — and they do have ownership and some political power over thousands of square miles of barren territory in the American West. The tribes, unlike RMI, however, do not have sovereignty and American state governments would have to agree to the dump locations as well.

So there is a major, continuing market for an atomic waste site, if the setting is right, and if the politics are right at the time of shipping the waste. (Second thoughts are not a factor; if the waste is buried someplace, it is highly unlikely ever to be moved away.) The US has made a major effort to find a spot within the Continental United States to store nuclear waste. This has led to vigorous battles between Washington, on one hand, and state governors and legislators on the other.

The likeliest location, although the politics are not yet clarified, is an extremely remote location in the Nevada desert, where a large abandoned mine is being converted for use as a nuclear storage facility. If agreement can be reached, it would take care of only a portion of America's atomic waste, and so far no storage has begun. Meanwhile, substantial collections of spent nuclear fuel and other waste sit in temporary locations around the US, near the power plant or bomb factory from whence they came. The situation is similar in other countries, but siting an atomic waste facility is always easier in a dictatorship than in a democracy.

The confidential proposal is quite clear on one related point. While it encourages thinking about the Marshalls as a site for short and long-term storage of nuclear materials, it is opposed to the presumably dangerous process of dismantling nuclear weapons in the islands. That is to be done elsewhere. (Currently the US Army is dismantling nerve gas and other chemical weapons on Johnston Atoll, a US military island in the Central Pacific, some 1500 miles east of the Marshalls.)

The controversies among the Islanders

Meanwhile, the politics of nuclear waste within the Marshalls has become a complex, potentially high-stakes game. At one end of the spectrum are those pressing for the creation of such a facility as the obvious way to end the Marshalls financial problems for decades; and, at the other, there are the staunch environmentalists who do not want to even think about the issue.

The Marshalls also has some of the leading world experts in the dangers of nuclear fall-out. These are families of those people who died of various forms of nuclear-related cancer after Operation Bravo spewed atomic particles on Rongelap and Utrik and many other atolls after the big blast back on March

1, 1954. It carried 750 times the explosive force of the bomb that wiped out Hiroshima. But the struggle over a possible waste site is not just between those interested in the green of the environment and those who favorite green is that found on US bills. There are disputes or potential ones between village and national government, between mainland advisers to the Bikinians, and between (we are told) the Marshalls' two ambassadors in the US.

While no island has been designated for an atomic waste facility, Bikini would be one of the logical choices. It is currently uninhabited except for a few people working on its reclamation; the



Interested: President Amata Kabua

Bikinians have taken a position that they will not return to the island until the current earth is removed, dumped somewhere, and replaced by nice, new, non-radioactive dirt. This is said to be a \$200,000,000 task (even if a dumping ground could be located) and Bikini, despite generous payments from the US Congress, has only half that much money. So Bikini is likely to remain uninhabited for a long time.

Further, Bikini is larger than some of the alternative, uninhabited islands, and there would be few surprises to waste site managers. Bikini is as well mapped as any spot on earth. But, from the point of view of RMI's government, there are several disadvantages to Bikini, all of them political. There is a village council (the people now live on another island, the 200-acre Kili) and the villagers have been making many of their own decisions

for years; dealing with the Bikini Council is not like dealing with an uninhabited island.

Further, Bikini and its Washington lawyer, Jonathan Weisgall, have managed to keep the islanders' funds intact by both a very conservative investment strategy and by keeping their trust funds out of the hands of the RMI government. (See *PIM*, January 1994, page 22). President Amata Kabua's reported interest in promoting Bikini or some other island as a waste depot clearly relates to the needs of his government's treasury and perhaps to those of his own family, not to those of Bikini's trust fund which is beyond his control.

According to a story in the *New York Times Magazine*, published on May 1, several weeks after *PIM* secured the earlier mentioned document, Kabua managed to push a bill through the Marshalls legislature in February which:

- recognised Kabua and several other tribal chiefs as the owners of Bikini; and
- declared that these chiefs would receive a third of the income derived from the use of the island. The *Times* said that the legislature's decision had slowed, if not stopped, the Bikinians' consideration of the island as a waste site.

Meanwhile, the village elders, picking up a trick from other politicians in other lands, have been holding their quarterly business meetings in places like Las Vegas' Stardust Casino, where Jeffrey Davis caught up with them for the *Times*. Davis found them uninterested in the prospect of earning \$50,000 to \$100,000 a year from low-key tourism (playing to divers who would explore the battleships sunk in the Bikini Lagoon) and indecisive about going into tourism in a bigger way.

He also said that there was a clear struggle between the islanders' two principal mainland advisers, Weisgall and his "pragmatic opportunism" and ex-Peace Corps volunteer Jack Niedenthal and his idealism.

Weisgall has encouraged the council to think about tourism and about the atomic waste possibility, and has led Bikini's struggle over the last 19 years to secure guilt money from the US Congress. Davis says he is highly regarded by his island clients.

Niedenthal, came to Kili to teach English, stayed, married a Bikinian, had some children, and is now a full-fledged member of the community. He serves as its resident adviser to the islanders on the rest of the world, while Weisgall, a Washington lawyer, copes with the Bikinians' relations with the US government, and, with their handsome trust fund. Niedenthal is flatly opposed to a waste facility, and would like to see the islanders return to something like their traditional life style.

While Bikini would be the most intriguing site (from the point of view of local politics and history) Ambassador

Kendall made it clear to *PIM* that no island has been selected for a possible site, and that several are under consideration. He mentioned three other islands, all in the northwest corner of the Republic: Enewetak (the site of atomic testing), Alinginae and Rongerik.

Meanwhile, we gather in Washington that the Marshalls' ambassador to the US, is more interested in exploring the prospect of a waste site in the Marshalls, than is the Marshalls' ambassador to the UN, Carl Heine. We could not talk to the latter, as he was attending a world-wide island conference in Barbados while this was written.

What happens next? It probably will

be a slow process. First, the authors of the confidential paper need to find someone willing to fund the feasibility study — and once that is under way perhaps the Bikinians will opt for using their island as a waste site. If they do not, there are other islands, in the Marshalls, and elsewhere. (If the seas are not impossible, and harbours exist, why not France's uninhabited Kerguelen Islands in the colder part of the Indian Ocean, or Norway's Bouvet Island or Britain's South Georgia Islands, both in the frigid South Atlantic?)

I suspect that we will be reading about where to store atomic waste for the rest of our lives. □



A cause for concern: boats anchored in the harbour

ARVIND KUMAR

Fishing boats cause concern

By Stuart Parker

CONCERN is growing in the Marshall Islands that Chinese fishermen are damaging fishing stocks and crowding local boats out of the Pacific nation's fledgling tuna industry.

The tuna catch in the Marshall Islands has boomed since the first of about 60 Chinese longline fishing boats began arriving late last year under an economic co-operation deal. Recent figures show Marshall Islands waters are on course to produce almost 726 tonnes of tuna this year — more than twice the catch last year. However at the same time, catches by the current fleet of seven Marshallese-owned fishing boats are down almost 50 per cent.

The 60 Chinese vessels arrived after a memorandum of understanding was signed last June between the Marshall Islands Development Authority (MIDA) and the China Shanghai Corporation for Foreign Economic and Technological Cooperation. More Chinese vessels are expected this year. MIDA general manager Justin deBrum admitted the Marshall Islands was worried about its fishing stocks following the arrival of the Chinese.

"We are carrying out an assessment study on fishing stocks and we are also looking at limiting the number of Chinese boats to about 80 for at least the rest of the year," he told AAP.

Because the tuna industry was so new, it was not known how many fishing boats it would support. DeBrum further agreed there was concern local fishermen may be put out of business by the Chinese. A chief reason for higher Chinese catch is that each boat alerts its foreign colleagues when a school of tuna is found. "That has yet to happen with the domestic fleet," deBrum said.

Another worry is the poor state of many of the Chinese fishing boats, compared to the more modern local craft. "There are concerns about environment and pollution which we are addressing," deBrum said.

When the deal was signed with China last year, deBrum said it would boost the one-year-old local industry, and earn vital income for the fishing base in Majuro and for Air Marshall Islands, which exports the tuna to Hawaii and Japan. Many Marshallese complain that the Chinese boats have failed to provide much of a boost to local employment and income, as expected.

However, deBrum said their arrival had had a big impact on Majuro's economy and had created up to 40 jobs at the base. Chinese and Taiwanese fishing boats also are moving in growing numbers into the Federated States of Micronesia, which has no established tuna industry. AAP □

Greenpeace slams move

GREENPEACE has called on South Pacific countries to remind the Marshall Islands of the region's nuclear free commitment following news that the islands have offered themselves as a dump site for the world's nuclear waste.

"It is hypocritical that at the same time as South Pacific Forum countries, including the Marshalls, are negotiating a regional treaty to prohibit the import of hazardous waste into the region, the Marshall Islands government is pursuing such a proposal," said Bunny McDiarmid of Greenpeace.

"The treaty's aim is to prevent the Pacific from becoming the world's garbage bin and this proposal by the Marshalls opens the door for just that to happen. It's true, as the Marshall Islands proposal states, that there is a desperate problem worldwide with the storage and disposal of nuclear waste but sending it to a coral atoll in the South Pacific is not solving the problem," McDiarmid said. "It's dumping it on a country that has neither the capacity nor facilities to deal with it."

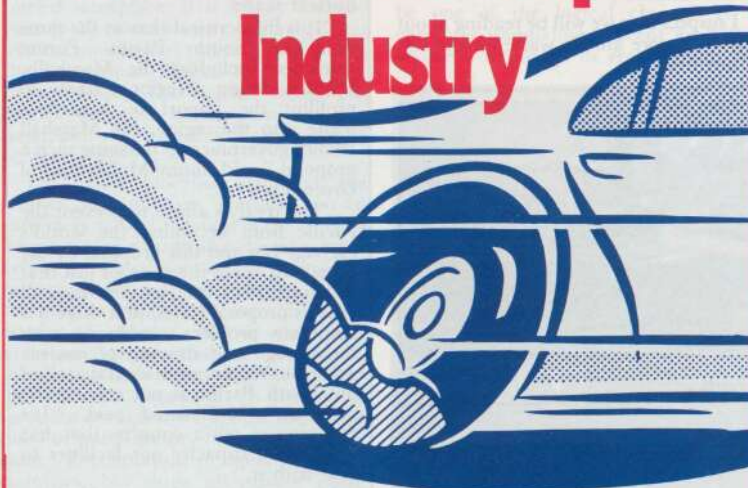
Many of the northern atolls of the Marshalls are already contaminated by radioactive fall-out from US nuclear tests in the 1940s and 1950s. The proposal claims that storing nuclear waste in the Marshalls "would gain revenues that would help its people achieve economic self-sufficiency", but McDiarmid says this is an "economic and environmental time bomb and the best contribution to economic self-sufficiency in the Marshalls would be to stop this in its tracks".

McDiarmid said the proposal would mean shipping high level radioactive waste, including plutonium, through the South Pacific Ocean for permanent storage and was contrary to the international trend towards dealing with waste where it is generated.

Meanwhile, the Pacific Concerns Resource Centre has also slammed the proposal. Director Lopeti Senituli said the Marshall Islands offer was the forerunner of things to come.

"At the Barbados Conference on Sustainable Development for Small Island Developing States, the industrialised countries were not willing to offer new and additional financial assistance to small islands in their pursuit of sustainable development. So the only viable option left for the islands is to become the toilet holes for the industrialised world," Senituli said. □

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NORFOLK ISLAND

More women in after poll

THERE will be more women and probably more harmony in government following a general election on the remote Australian territory of Norfolk Island, the returning officer says.

A record three women were elected to Norfolk Island's nine-member legislative assembly in a poll held in April — three more than in the previous legislature, said returning officer David Rodgers. There are nearly 1200 registered voters on Norfolk Island, where around half the population are descendants of the Bounty mutiny families, who moved there from Pitcairn Island in 1856.

The assembly called the election one year early because of deadlock and inertia among the island's four-person executive. The government had no chief minister and the four executive members were divided down the middle on many key issues, Rodgers said. One executive member was even the unofficial leader of the opposition, although there are no political parties on Norfolk.

"It was unworkable," Rodgers said. Voters reacted to the deadlock and administrative bickering by dumping two ministers from their seats. One of those defeated, Ric Robinson, has been campaigning for self-determination for the island, about 1600 kilometres east of Brisbane. "I think there will be a lot more harmony in government now," Rodgers said.

The legislative assembly will meet on May 4 to choose a new president, or speaker. It also must select an executive, although the size of the "cabinet" has yet to be determined.

Rodgers said unlike the last assembly, the new legislature may decide to pick a government leader. "There seems to be a consensus there is a need for one." Twenty-seven independent candidates contested the poll in a single electorate. Under the island's electoral system, voters had nine votes each and were able to cast up to four votes for one candidate. **AAP**

Violence in BOSNIA, SOUTH AFRICA, RWANDA,

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NZ, Aust defence ties under debate

IF there is one thing that has provided continuity and stability in the Pacific over the years it has been the closeness of the New Zealand-Australia relationship.

The two countries' governments — and particularly their prime ministers — have not always seen eye to eye, even on Pacific affairs where their interests are so alike. But in the main they were always mates when it counted.

"It is hard to think of two countries in the world with closer ties," Australia's Governor-General Bill Hayden said a few years ago. "I cannot foresee circumstances in which we will not have close relations — including defence ties — with Australia," New Zealand's then prime minister David Lange said in 1986. This co-operation, especially in the area of defence and security, was a comfort to the Pacific Island states, particularly in the bad old days of the Cold War when all that was certain was uncertainty and the Soviet Union was doing its utmost to seed dissent and expand its influence in the region.

Anzac co-operation even survived New Zealand's anti-nuclear legislation, which cost it its long-time ally status with the United States and strained the trans-Tasman relationship. The Australian government did not like New Zealand's move — any more than one or two Pacific Island countries — but it agreed to maintain defence ties, even at substantial cost to itself. This provided continuity for New Zealand and Australian links with the Pacific and a united response to natural disasters or civil unrest should an island government request Anzac intervention.

It is significant then that a number of influential New Zealanders have begun to question the defence relationship with Australia. The crux of the debate is whether New Zealand should stick with the Anzac alliance or put its faith in the United Nations to protect its interests should they ever be threatened. The main issues are the cost of defence self-reliance and the need for New Zealand politicians to find the middle ground in a new political environment. Spending on defence is not popular and the politicians will need popularity more than ever if they are to share in power from the next election, which will be held under a new system of voting that makes coalition governments inevitable.

There are already signs that they see defence spending and the cost of the security relationship with Australia as soft targets. The opposition Labour Party is reviewing its entire foreign and defence policy. Former Prime Minister David Lange, who once said: "We cannot regard our interest in Australia's security as confined to this side of the Blue Mountains," says openly that he wants this country to distance itself from Canberra's defence planning. Having

WELLINGTON



DAVID
BARBER

already decided to move away from bilateral alliances in favour of a multi-lateral defence strategy, Lange says the party debate is now centred on the relationship with Australia. The New Zealand Alliance, which increasingly looks certain to figure in a future coalition government, is already committed to a non-aligned foreign and defence policy.

But the debate is not confined to the opposition. It has spread to the ruling National Party which has embraced the anti-nuclear policy and is now showing signs of questioning ties with Australia.

Cabinet minister Doug Graham and prominent National backbencher John Robertson have both openly questioned the contemporary value of Anzac defence co-operation. Graham, the Min-

ister for Disarmament and Arms Control, went to the heart of "middle" New Zealand when he cast doubt on the trans-Tasman defence alliance, saying: "It is becoming increasingly difficult to justify diverting money from hospitals to hardware for defence forces designed to provide some self-sufficiency."

And Robertson tapped New Zealand chauvinism when he told Parliament New Zealand was providing "an increasing contribution to the defence of Australia and an increasingly dubious contribution to the defence of New Zealand".

He was referring to the former Labour government's decision to spend NZ\$1.2 billion on two new frigates being built as part of a major Australian Navy re-equipment programme. Rubbing it in, Robertson, a former chairman of Parliament's foreign affairs and defence select committee, added: "We are in danger of becoming trapped in the jaws of the Australian military machine."

Nobody is talking about cancelling the frigate order, but there is little prospect of any party buying the two extra ships the government has on option. All sides agree that the global situations has changed dramatically since the contract was signed. Lange says the defence interests of Australia, a country with middle-power pretensions, a growing military-industrial complex and a continuing nagging fear of invasion by Indonesia, are very different from New Zealand's.

Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating and Foreign Minister Gareth Evans have both made explicit warnings in the last year that New Zealand must maintain its defence spending (which had been cut by nearly a third over the past six years to 1.6 per cent of Gross Domestic Product) to make a "realistic" contribution to regional security.

The tensions are bound to increase. The implications for the Pacific are not yet clear, but it's a situation that bears watching.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Control needed: Wingti

THE Papua New Guinea government will consider introducing legislation to place a limit on the aggregate of claims for damages by landowners.

The decision comes in the wake of legal action taken by Fly River landowners who are claiming damages for alleged environmental destruction by an Australian mining company.

In a statement issued last month, Prime Minister Paias Winti said the legislation would establish a compensation tribunal with the exclusive power

to deal with all compensation claims by the landowners. He said it would also have the resource project developers establish a fund progressively over a period of time or alternatively put up a bond from which all compensation claims are to be met. The legislation will give the state power to sue resource developers for environmental and other damage. Winti said it seemed that the writ had been filed at the Supreme Court of Victoria and that the claim was for 2.75 billion kina.

He said his government was concerned about the potential adverse effect which substantial claims by landowners against resource developers could have on investor confidence in PNG.

"At the same time, I recognise the need for achieving a proper balance by ensuring that landowners who are adversely affected by environmental or other damage are fairly treated and compensated and the national interest is protected in that investor confidence in Papua New Guinea is not destroyed by numerous or excessive claims for compensation or by the threat of such claims." The prime minister said he would not comment on whether the claim was justifiable or not. He said his country was a developing one and needed substantial investment capital if it was to develop its resources for the benefit of the nation. "It is in the national interest and in the interest of our people, including the Fly River landowners, that my government take reasonable steps to ensure against loss of investor confidence in Papua New Guinea." But he said he recognised the need to ensure that landowners were fairly treated and adequately compensated.

Wingi said other aspects relating to the recently filed writ, which were of concern to his Government were:

- that a foreign court would be deciding on a claim which could have far reaching consequences on PNG; and
- the involvement of a foreign law firm which was reported to have undertaken the case on a success fee basis and which therefore stood to profit substantially from the proceeds of the compensation claim should the claim be successful.

"In relation to a foreign court deciding the claim, my government will seriously consider under the proposed legislation, whether to abolish common law claims by landowners for compensation and instead give landowners claims a statutory basis under the legislation. My government will also consider making the legislation retrospectively effective. I am advised that this will raise serious doubts on whether the Supreme Court of Victoria or any other foreign court will have jurisdiction to hear the current landowners' claim. My government's intention is to ensure that all such claims are brought before a compensation tribunal set up in Papua New Guinea and comprised of people competent to deal with local issues.

"In relation to the involvement of any foreign law firm in any legal matter in Papua New Guinea, my government is concerned to prevent foreign law firms, whether through agreed fee structures or otherwise, from unreasonably enriching themselves at the expense of our citizens and especially at the expense of our grassroots people from remote areas." □



FORUM SECRETARIAT VACANCY — PETROLEUM ADVISER

Applications are invited from suitably qualified and experienced persons, who must be nationals of a member state of the South Pacific Forum*, for the position of Petroleum Adviser in the Energy Division of the Forum Secretariat, based in Suva, Fiji.

The Energy Division implements a comprehensive regional energy development programme that covers all key energy subsectors. The Division provides policy and technical advice to Forum Island Countries covering energy policy and planning, petroleum, electric power, renewable energy technologies and environmental issues.

The Division also undertakes a comprehensive regional training programme directed at increasing the national capacity of Forum Island Countries to plan, manage and maintain their national energy sectors.

The Division's petroleum related activities include providing technical assistance and advice to Member Governments on petroleum demand and supply issues, such as; price surveillance and monitoring; supply contract arrangements; shipping operations; engineering, safety and environmental standards for petroleum storage and distribution facilities; and trends in global and regional oil markets. The Division also undertakes a comprehensive training programme in petroleum related areas and provides an on-going oil market information advisory service.

The successful applicant, will plan and participate in studies concerning the supply of petroleum and petroleum operations in the South Pacific particularly in relation to safety and the environment; advise Member Governments as requested on issues relating to petroleum, especially petroleum product price control and supply contract negotiation issues, but also technical operations areas; represent the Secretariat on committees and meetings and maintain liaison with other groups working on petroleum issues in the Pacific; plan and direct training programmes for Forum Island personnel; be involved in the formulation of regional petroleum strategies and initiatives; work with other officers of the Division in collecting, collating and publishing regional petroleum data.

Applications should have relevant tertiary qualifications in economics, engineering or management with a minimum of ten years experience in the petroleum industry, preferably with some involvement in the Forum Island Countries. Candidates must have the ability to relate to people from a wide range of backgrounds, be able to train Forum Island personnel and must have good written and oral communication skills. The position will entail travel throughout the region.

The appointment will carry an attractive remuneration package, payable in Fiji dollars. For non Fiji citizens this is tax free and includes housing assistance, education and child allowance. Other benefits include superannuation payments and medical, life and travel insurance. The appointee will be based in Suva at the Secretariat Headquarters. Appointment would be for three years initially, subject to a six month probationary period, with the option to renew for a further three years by mutual agreement.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Applications, which close on **15 July 1994** should contain full information of education and career background and should include names, addresses and telephone numbers of three referees with whom the applicant has been associated professionally.

Applications should be addressed to:

**The Secretary General
Forum Secretariat
GPO Box 856, Suva, Fiji,
Telephone 312-600 Telex: 2229FJ Fax: 305-573**

Further information is available on request from Mr Tiu Livino, Administration Officer, on 312-600 Extension: 335.

* Member states of the South Pacific Forum: Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu and Western Samoa.

1011204

Another Bougainville?

By Wally Hiambohn

HAS another Bougainville reared its ugly head? That is the question many would be asking now following a law suit filed in the Melbourne Supreme Court last month.

The suit, filed by members of the Miripiki clan of PNG's Western Province, is against Australian mining giant Ok Tedi mining company, in which Broken Hill Minerals Propriety Company Ltd (BHP) has a majority stake of the Ok Tedi copper mine in the Star Mountains near the PNG-Irian Jaya border. The landowners are claiming damages and compensation for the alleged destruction of the Ok Tedi and Fly River systems by the mine which began production in 1984.

Clan leader Rex Dagi, days before filing the suit on May 6, said the Fly River environment issue was another Bougainville. Although both issues involve mining and environmental concerns, while Bougainville's Francis Ona claimed for US\$10 billion in compensation and is fighting a bloody guerilla war with guns, Dagi has resorted to using the courts as the battleground. Dagi claims his village on the floodplains of the Ok Tedi River has been one of the worst areas affected by "tonnes of rock being deposited on the river bed and caused floods in the area".

"It might happen like Bougainville and I'm scared because I'm the only key person who's been stopping these people not to do any action, until we tried the legal proceedings," he told the media in PNG. "Everybody down the river, especially the Ok Tedi river, are very angry about what's happened. Francis Ona has gone to a far extreme to take everything into his own hands. I'm only trying to settle it peacefully ... (so) all parties are happy — the investors, the PNG government as well as my people."

Dagi said his people did not want the mine to close but wanted Ok Tedi to give them more financial compensation and put in place environmental restoration programmes. "The river must come back as it used to be ... the forest and the fish and people's lives have been totally destroyed." The likelihood of such a court case was indicated in May of 1992, when a group of Western Province leaders, including premier Isidore Kaseng arrived in Port Moresby, camped at a motel for a week and waited in vain to meet with government officials to discuss the environment and trust fund arrangements. After the long wait Kaseng had this to say — "I am totally fed up." Kaseng said then that his (Fly River provincial) government was in the process of seeking international support

to press a claim of "hundreds of millions of kina" in compensation from Ok Tedi Mining Ltd for polluting the Fly River system. Kaseng, before leaving for Daru, threatened to close the Ok Tedi mine if the government failed to respond by May 29. This ultimatum was later extended to June 13. The government reacted strongly to the threats and ordered the arrest of Kaseng for making threats. He was released on a K200 bail.

Then Prime Minister Rabbie Namaliu said Kaseng's attempt to force the closure was illegal. Namaliu said government officials had gone to Kiunga to meet representatives of the provincial government in a bid to sort out the dispute but Kaseng and his cabinet had decided to go ahead with the push for the mine closure. "I cannot imagine a worse

PNG landowners have filed court action claiming damages for the alleged destruction of the Ok Tedi and Fly River systems by the mine. They say the forest, fish and people's live are completely destroyed. But the mining company concerned insists the long-term importance of the mine outweighs its environmental effects.

example of leadership and responsibility," Namaliu said. "I don't believe his concern about the environment is genuine." Ok Tedi defended itself against criticisms saying the long-term importance of the mine outweighed its environmental effects. It said the mine operated to environmental standards based on "one of the most comprehensive monitoring and research programmes ever undertaken on a tropical river".

It said the monitoring began in 1981 and now covered 1000 kilometres from the headwaters of the Ok Tedi to the Fly River delta and the Gulf of Papua. This work was carried out by the mine's own scientific staff and in collaboration with internationally recognised authorities on tropical river and soil research, and it was continuously reviewed by government regulatory authorities, the company said. "Fly River water remains completely safe to drink and the fish are safe to eat." The company said the local people were benefiting from royalties, a

community trust, small business development programmes, infrastructure development and improved medical health and education services. Local people who lost garden areas along the river system are also being compensated.

A press conference called by Kaseng but which he did not attend was told by his deputy Gonene Kurokuro that the impact of the tailings dumping into the river had a serious impact on the river. Independent research, he said, showed fish stocks or the quality of water had been adversely affected. "Independent studies show there is a serious problem. Our people have been told to start preparing because the problems will get worse over the next 10 years. The fish are dying and the crocodiles are going into the tributaries and out of the main river system."

PNG's current Environment and Conservation Minister Parry Zeipi, who is from the Fly River area, in a statement issued on July 5 when he was in opposition supported Kaseng and criticised the government's actions to arrest Kaseng. He said the government had pressed the panic button "too soon". Last month, when the claim was filed, Zeipi expressed surprise saying he did not expect the issue to go that far, and blamed foreigners of influencing his people. In July 1989, the government of Namaliu had to decide between the country's economy and the environment when it was confronted with the choice of building a tailings dam or for the mine to discharge sediments directly into the river system. It was presented with options to either force the company to build a tailings dam, or shut down the mine altogether. It opted for the former.

Namaliu said the discharge of sediments down the Fly River had been continuously monitored and studied by world-renown environmental scientists from a number of countries. These experts, he said, had advised the government that there was no evidence of reduction in fish catches in the Fly River below Kuambit, a village just below the junction of the Ok Tedi and Fly Rivers. The landowners' lawyer in the Melbourne case, Nick Styant-Browne, said the villagers' subsistence lifestyle of thousands of years had been wiped out by an "environmental catastrophe".

"The forms that clan leaders have been asked to sign specify in detail the costs to which the lawyers are entitled to be paid from settlement or compensation monies received by or on behalf of each member of the clan," BHP said in a statement. Ok Tedi's environment spokesman Murray Eagle said there has been very little effect on the environment until about 70 kilometres downstream of the mine. □

PNG - Bougainville

By Wally Hiambohn

A plea for peace

"THE time for weapons and firepower in Bougainville is now long past. It is a time for discussions between the parties to the conflict, leading ultimately to a negotiated political settlement," wrote Australian politician Senator Stephen Loosley in April following a visit to Papua New Guinea's strife-torn Bougainville Island. He had led a delegation of five parliamentarians to government-controlled parts of Bougainville and came away moved by destructions and suffering he saw.

He wrote that peace could not be delayed any longer because of the intensity of the sufferings of the people

and the number of killings that took place. Senator Loosley's delegation was allowed in after the PNG government took a significant step in its approach to Bougainville by allowing foreign observers to the island. Many others from the Pacific region have also been invited to go in and see for themselves. Said Senator Loosley — "While the government appears to have steadily broadened its support, the Bougainville Revolutionary Army still controls significant areas.

particularly in the central and southern parts of the island. About 45,000 Bougainvilleans, of a total population of around 150,000, still live in those areas."

Senator Loosley said neither side could win the war, although both sides retain an easy capacity to inflict casualties on the other. "Unfortunately, ordinary civilians suffer the consequences, becoming refugees on their own island. The view of the Australian delegation is that Australia may have contributed, at different times and in the colonial past particularly, to the current problems. This may have been the result of inadvertence or neglect but the perception is widespread on Bougainville that Australia has an obligation to the people there as friend and neighbour." He said Australia could assist by offering to host peace talks and/or make it clear that Australia was not only committed to the peace process but stood ready to accelerate "our humanitarian assistance and our infrastructure programmes in the wake of a peace settlement".

"Our delegation saw far too much destruction on Bougainville but not once did we confront any sense of hopelessness among the Bougainvilleans, who are a deeply religious and spiritual people. Only the war is hopeless. The people have been damaged in their communities but their lives seem far from broken. We urged the leadership of PNG to open Bougainville to more visitors and more organisations. This can only serve to reinforce international interest in a positive way, while providing broader, additional humanitarian assistance and skills training for rebuilding across the island." Australian Associated Press PNG correspondent Lucy Palmer who accompanied the Australian delegation filed this report after the visit:

Peter is 16, and he's in hospital with a nervous breakdown. Around him are some of the casualties of Bougainville's bloody and divisive six-year war. Young men in plaster rest wearily on stretcher beds in gloomy makeshift tents, confused and shaken by their horrifying gunshot wounds. At the other end of the island, more than 60 former members of the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) from the Motuna region are clasping hands and exchanging beads in a reconciliation ceremony with the villagers of Kaparo. Even the brightly-dressed widow of Tony Anugu, a former MP killed by the BRA last year, stands tearfully in line, still grieving but willing to forgive the young men, and accept them back into the community. Nothing is more striking than the human face of the Bougainville crisis.

The Australian delegation, which only went into government-controlled areas, were greeted with the same refrain everywhere they went — "Bougainvilleans want peace. They want to move out of the crowded government "care centres" and go back to their villages.

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on Bougainville

They want to tend their gardens without fear of being attacked. In fact, they want what most Australians want — to raise and educate their children in peace. "The people here, we have all suffered and many people are bitter. But the people also know that if they do not forgive everything that has happened, the war will go on for generations even if the fighting stops," one elderly chief said.

Theresa Jaintong, once the mayor of the provincial capital Arawa, is an impressive woman. She has only just emerged from four years of hiding in the dense and mountainous jungle which surrounds her home town. When the government security forces pulled out of Bougainville in March 1990, Jaintong fled into the mountains with her four young children. "At one stage my little girl's name was on a list to be raped but we found out and we called a meeting. We said we would march to (BRA leader) Francis Ona and tell him to control his guys," she said.

"When the BRA heard this, they said if we don't stop the meetings we'll rape the mothers too. It will be a long time before we forget experiences like that." The Bougainville crisis began in late 1988 when landowners, angry at the lack of benefits from the giant CRA-operated Panguna copper mine, began sabotaging the plant. After the PNG government sent in the troops, the dispute escalated into a full-scale campaign for secession by the BRA, and despite several attempts to make peace, the war

has since continued unabated. Peter's family is hiding somewhere in the bush in central Bougainville. He hasn't seen them for over a year, but he can't go and look for them because he's frightened the BRA will kill him. He now lives in Buka, a government-controlled island just north of the Bougainville mainland.

"Sometimes I get very upset very quickly especially when I think about it all," he said, quietly understating the tremendous psychological impact of the war. A few hundred kilometres away, Amos, also 16, expressed similar feelings. Sitting on the floor in the cardboard-partitioned care centre at Loloho, he said he felt very angry a lot of the time.

"When I can, I want to fight. I want to join the resistance. I am angry with the BRA, they are spoiling my country," he said. The Australian delegation, which heard many of these stories, was advised not to go to BRA-controlled areas, mainly in the centre of the island, because of concerns for their safety. The BRA did invite them, and has, through its interim government, expressed a desire for peace and a willingness to negotiate with the PNG government. Last month, after calling on the BRA to negotiate, Prime Minister Paias Wingti announced a nine-fold increase in the budget for the security forces operating on the island. The message this sent, as far as the Bougainville Interim Government was concerned, was that the PNG government was preparing for further assaults on BRA

strongholds. "The extra funding can only cause more bloodshed and suffering. Wingti's declaration will send them (the BRA) back into the field to fight," an interim government spokesman said.

As if to balance what the delegation did not see, the Catholics Bishops Conference of PNG and the Solomon Islands held their annual general meeting in Port Moresby on the week after the visit and made some alarming claims of the situation on the island. People were being "killed like pigs and buried like dogs" by resistance fighters working alongside the Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF), the bishops said. In a nine-page statement, the Catholic Bishops Conference said untrained resistance fighters, armed by the PNGDF in the six-year war against the BRA, were carrying out brutal murders as "payback" against BRA killings.

From eyewitness accounts in southwest Bougainville, an area that the Australian parliamentary delegation visited the bishops said one resistance fighter, the younger brother of a BRA commander, was dragged into a Catholic mission post by the army and other resistance fighters, after he disappeared into the bush for several hours without explanation. "There, without any trial, he was brutally beaten, cut with knives, hit with fence posts and finally shot in the chest. Still bleeding, but not yet dead, he was dumped in a hole and covered with soil. All this took place in the presence of relatives, school children and others," the statement said. The bishops said many resistance fighters were using their powers to settle old scores, "with the blessing of and armed by the army". □

Party leader hopes to end war

By Wally Hiambohn

A NEW mediator has appeared on the scene with the hope of bringing an end to the war on Bougainville. Joseph Onguglo, leader and sole member of the Blacks Action Party in the local sense has the remotest connection with Bougainville, but being a Papua New Guinea nationalist whose political party's principles mean Papua New Guinea for Papua New Guineans he has made very radical suggestions to solving the Bougainville crisis. His party is offering that if it gets into government it will grant amnesty to Francis Ona and his band of rebels who started the armed conflict, grant 100 per cent ownership of the Panguna copper mine to landowners who would then contract developers (the same would go for any other resource projects in the country), and the party would push for the immediate full involvement of the United Nations in bringing normalcy to the island.

While Port Moresby took a passing interest or ignored it as another poli-

tician seeking publicity, those with connections with the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) seized the opportunity and took Onguglo into their confidence.

Within a week Onguglo was in the Solomon Islands capital Honiara to hold talks with BRA representatives, those of the self-styled Bougainville Interim Government, and even members of the Solomon Islands government, including Prime Minister Francis Billy Hilu to seek a way to rekindle the hope for renewed dialogue for peace which had been lost since the Endeavour Accord and the Honiara Declarations of three years ago.

The talks led to Onguglo speaking to BRA commander Francis Ona by radio.

In their discussions Ona indicated his endorsement of Onguglo's party policies for certain members of the Bougainville insurgency to be granted amnesty from prosecution, that the Panguna mine be owned 100 per cent by landowners who would then contact foreign developers, and that the United Nations take full charge of the peace process on the

island, as being the first step in the right direction and "only realistic way" to establishing dialogue between the two disputing parties — the PNG government and pro-secessionist rebels.

Ona also agreed to Onguglo leading a delegation of Pacific parliamentarians to visit the rebel-held areas which was, for security reasons, avoided by an Australian parliamentary delegation which toured the government controlled areas the same week. In a statement Ona issued after speaking with Onguglo he said — "We are most encouraged by the fact that we have had this chance to talk directly with a parliamentarian from PNG after all these years. We fully endorse the principles being proposed by Onguglo and his Blacks Action Party.

"We still believe that it is a matter that we Bougainvilleans need to sort out among ourselves before we talk formally with PNG about a political settlement ..." Ona said a lot needed to be done to bring peace to Bougainville and that he welcomed Onguglo's fresh initiatives as "a promising start". □

ISSUE

Pacific leaders focus on

By Ed Rampell

AT the same historic moment South Africa voted in its first non-racial, one-person-one-vote election, Pacific Island leaders holding a South Seas summit in Hawaii elected as their vice-chair and press spokesman Major-General Sitiveni Rabuka — the coup-plotter-cum-Prime-Minister-of Fiji — who presides over one of the world's last apartheid-like constitutions, created at gunpoint. Prime ministers, presidents, and other high ranking Oceanic politicians crossed the picket lines of striking government workers struggling for the rights of a small island people to hold the 21st meeting of the Standing Committee of the Pacific Conference of Leaders at Honolulu's East-West Centre (E-WC).

The largely US taxpayer-funded meetings were held behind closed doors, in apparent violation of Hawaii's "sunshine law", which guarantees the media and others access to public facilities used for political and other purposes.

Besides Rabuka and his security detail, participants in the April 26 to 27 Hawaii summit included Cooks prime minister Sir Geoffrey Henry, Papua New Guinea deputy prime minister/foreign minister Sir Julius Chan, Nauru president Bernard Dowiyogo, Tonga prime minister Baron Vaea, Federated States of Micronesia vice-president Jacob Nena, Vanuatu deputy prime minister Sethy J. Regenvanu, French Polynesia representative Alexandre Moeava Ata, New Caledonia observer Gerard Bauchdon, and Hawaii representative Palani Vaughan. Guam governor Joseph Ada was among the no-shows.

Despite the media ban on the working sessions, this reporter managed to attend one of the meetings held in E-WC's Pacific Room of Jefferson Hall (named after a great champion of a free press). In fact, the discussions among the summitters proved to be substantial, informative, and devoid of rancour or anything else to be secretive about. To a large extent, the standing committee reviewed the research and training activities of the E-WC's Pacific Islands Development Programme (PIDP), which serves as the secretariat and research arm of the Pacific Islands



Japan donation: Japan's consul-general Kensaku Hogen presents PIDP chairman Sir Geoffrey Henry with the US\$150,000 cheque

Conference, an organisation of heads of government (the standing committee is composed of their representatives). The conference last met in June last year in Tahiti. For two days, the summit ran smoothly and ahead of time. The Cooks' Sir Geoffrey was elected standing committee's chair, Fiji's Rabuka was elected vice-chair and spokesman. Much discussion centred around the concept of sustainable development, which chairman Sir Geoffrey succinctly described as "how to make money without exhausting the pool". In his cogent, complex presentation called 'Harmonizing Re-



Concerned: Sir Julius Chan

sources for Sustainable Economic Development in the Pacific Islands Context', PIDP director Dr Sitiveni Halapua went on to define this important idea as "meeting the needs of the present without compromising or undermining the ability of future generations to meet their own needs".

Prime Minister Sir Geoffrey praised Dr Halapua's report, complete with charts, because it "puts ideas into paper, with a practical way to pursue sustainable development. It's one of the most important works PIDP has done". The standing committee was so impressed with Dr Halapua's work that it transmitted a related resolution to the UN Confer-

ence on the Sustainable Development of Small Island States held in Barbados last month, and will send one to the South Pacific Forum when it meets in August in Australia.

In his analytical framework, Dr Halapua, a Tongan, stressed the importance of respecting culture, which has often been displaced by development. This prompted Rabuka to say, with understatement — "Fiji had a series of development plans. Something happened in 1987 (then-Colonel Rabuka's two military coup d'etats that overthrew democratically elected, pro-labour, anti-nuclear governments with broad Indian support) that put an end to the plans (laughter from participants) ... Our cultures have suffered in development. Our forefathers believed development turned away from culture. Only recently we've reoriented our thinking, that culture can optimise development."

The Fiji prime minister cited two examples of how he thought development impacted negatively on indigenous traditions — industrial jobs brought womenfolk into the workplace and out of their homes, where custom believes they belong. In an interview, Rabuka added that the 19th century British introduction of indentured laborers from India to work in the sugarcane plantations, supposedly on a short term basis, caused big changes in Fijian culture.

Another important matter considered by the standing committee is the closing of the Pacific's two USAID offices at Suva and Port Moresby.

sustainable development

The possibility of the transference of USAID (America's key donor agency in the South Pacific) into PIDP was raised, if funding for PIDP's additional workload was forthcoming. Part of this initiative involves a database on Pacific Island trade the Joint Commercial Commission (JCC) has been working on. JCC is a trade programme initiated by former US president George Bush and 13 Pacific nations to further import-export activity between Oceania and America. The database, with comprehensive information on commerce which could be accessed by governments and the private sector, could come under PIDP purview if USAID is incorporated into PIDP.

In addition to the above changes, the committee also discussed pending restructuring of the E-WC, a US

Congress-funded academic institution based in Honolulu, that is often a bridge between America, Oceania, and Asia. Under new leadership, E-WC has more islander students than ever before, but is now re-evaluating where PIDP will fit in E-WC's new structures.

At a luncheon, the consul-general of Japan in Hawaii presented a US\$150,000 contribution to PIDP to chairman Sir Geoffrey. Over the years, Japan has donated about US\$1.5 million to PIDP.

PIDP is an Oceanic-oriented think tank that performs research at the request of Pacific leaders. It is then up to members to implement the PIDP-derived policies in their respective islands. PIDP is now studying population, but Dr Halapua says it has initiated private sector orientation in the Pacific, and PNG's Sir Julius cites "rural electrification" as a PIDP programme that has benefited his nation. Small isles like Kiribati donate US\$4000 per year while larger islands like PNG donate US\$25,000 annually (France's overseas territories, New Caledonia and French Polynesia, recently joined the highest

paying category voluntarily). But most of the PIDP's activities are paid for by US taxpayers and Japanese donations, which raises the question of outside influence.

During one summit session, the representative of French Polynesia (controversially identified again, as in the June, 1993 conference, as "Tahiti-Nui") said, "If the standing committee decides to do research, is the final decision with E-WC?" France, of course, has a long tradition of independence, and

does not want to be dominated by the US or anyone else. Director Dr Halapua conceded that PIDP "has a fiduciary responsibility to the US Congress ... But it pays close attention to the standing committee".

Sir Julius, a member of the Non-Aligned Movement, attended the summit during a swing through Oceania to meet his counterparts, and complained in an interview that "the US has little link with the South Pacific", but did express concern that Washing-

ton could try to influence Oceania through PIDP and its funding. During the meetings, Sir Julius expressed a wish to compel the major industrialised nations not to exploit Pacific resources, like fishing. But Rabuka, who went to Washington after the summit, denied that the US unduly tries to influence the Pacific via PIDP.

Rabuka made these comments as the committee's elected spokesman during a press conference largely ignored by Honolulu's press corps, which often ignores news of their "little black and brown brothers". During the press conference, this reporter asked Fiji's PM — "Today, in South Africa, they're having these historic events, multi-racial elections for the first time, one-man-one-

vote. As you well know, you're a very controversial figure. What would your response be to critics of you who would say that it's very ironic that today, of all days, that a prime minister of a country where they have a constitution that racially allocates voting, that you'd be vice-chairman of this international meeting and its spokesperson? And how would you respond to critics who would say this is inappropriate, given what's happening in South Africa?"

"I'm not worried about those critics. All I'm saying is that things change — change perhaps is not the word. I'd rather use the word evolve. And the constitution in Fiji should be allowed to evolve. In 1987, when racial tensions were very high, we needed to bring in a constitution the indigenous Fijians could be happy with. They have been happy with this one. Although in the last five years there have been areas that they have focused on to say, 'Well, we believe we can give some in that area, we need a bit more in this.' And the Indians, on their part, have responded favourably. And also the minority groups.

"How long has it taken South Africa to come to this one-man-one-vote system? In the last constitution of Fiji, one man had four votes. We now have one man voting for his own people, either three or two of his own people. Give us time, give Fiji time to also evolve. The current trends in demographic composition, and the demographic changes, show that, in time, Fiji will have the demographic picture that will either justify the current allocation of seats in parliament (37 seats are set aside for indigenous Fijians, 27 for Indians, and six for Europeans, Chinese, Rotumans, etc) or demand a change. And also, the cultural interaction in our schools. I don't want to say now what my granddaughter should be governed by during her time. It should be allowed to change. And our constitution is written in such a way that the first review must be completed by the 25th of July, 1997. And thereafter, every 10 years. So it will be a growing document that will change with the times, or evolve with the times."

Committee chairman Sir Geoffrey called the meetings — "Great. The best yet." But out on the picket line the Pacific leaders crossed to enter the E-WC, their fellow islanders were less upbeat. "We do not have control over this picket line," claimed a native Hawaiian representative of the Hawaii Government Employees Association. "The police control the picket line," she said, as police intimidated the mainly female strikers. □



Spokesman: Fiji's PM Sitiveni Rabuka

AID

Population debate heats up

By Bill Morton

THE Australian government's overseas aid funding for population programmes came under the spotlight once again last month with the release of an independent 'Inquiry Report into Population and Development'. The report examined the link between population growth and the economic growth and well-being of developing countries.

In its 1993/94 budget the Australian government announced a trebling of funding for population programmes to the tune of \$30 million for that year and \$130 million over four years. But in October last year the government attracted criticism from international aid organisations when it froze part of the funding pending the outcome of the independent inquiry. The move was the result of a deal struck with Independent Senator Brian Harradine to win support for the budget. Harradine, who holds the balance of power in the senate, is a devout Catholic and is opposed to population control programmes.

Part of the budget allocation included an extra \$2.5 million for family planning programmes in the South Pacific. Since the release last year of the first editions in the *Pacific 2010* series, the issue of population growth in the region has become hotter than ever. These reports found that if present growth rates persist in the Pacific Islands, in 20 years time there will be a dramatic shortfall in the number of jobs available for those who need them. They also found that Pacific Island governments will have considerable difficulty in properly educating its citizens as well as in providing adequate services and infrastructure.

The Australian government's decision last year to stall part of its funding for population programmes underlines how much clout one independent senator can wield in Australia's parliamentary system. More importantly it has ensured the debate on the relationship between the population and development is alive and well. At the heart of the debate is the question of whether slowing down population growth assists development and whether funding for family planning programmes should be increased.

Australia's Minister for Development Co-operation and Pacific Islands Affairs Gordon Bilney says the importance of population and family planning programmes to sustainable development cannot be overstated. He says family planning services benefit the lives and health of women and children and access to family planning greatly reduces infant and maternal mortality rates in developing countries.

The Australian government's aid arm,

Australian International Development Assistance Bureau, provides funding for population programmes in the South Pacific at a number of levels, including policy formulation, population education, training for family planning service providers and programmes for marketing contraceptives. Specific programmes include Project Excel, a joint programme with the USA funded for \$3.6 million over five years. The project aims to improve the quality and level of family planning services in Fiji, the Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu through the private and public sectors and through non-governmental organisations.

Russell Rollason, executive director of the Australian Council for Overseas Aid, says it is "extremely important" that the Australian government continues to provide support for family planning pro-

'The crucial thing in the population and development argument is access to resources. If all the families in the world who wanted to plan their children had the means to do so, all population targets would be met.'

grammes in the Pacific Islands. "Population growth means governments are going to find it more difficult to provide basic services. Family planning programmes are needed which are non-coercive, and which focus on education and provide basic resources for families." Rollason says the crucial thing in the population and development argument is access to resources. "If all the families in the world who wanted to plan their children had the means to do so, all population targets would be met."

Harradine, however, remains highly critical of the Australian government's aid funding for population activities in the Pacific Islands. He says the government's attitude is one of "cultural imperialism" and is "predicated on the assertion that there are too many Polynesians and Melanesians". He claims a proposal by the government involves using Indonesian population control operatives to train Pacific Islanders. He says Indonesian programmes have been coercive, and have operated on the basis of incentives including offering credit for villagers to become sterilised and for farm labourers to have vasectomies.

When compared to international consensus on population and development, Harradine appears to represent a minority view. In April at the final meeting before September's International Conference on Population and Development, 140 countries agreed to spend more money on population programmes. Harradine's own credibility came under a cloud last year when he suggested aid money could be better spent on milk biscuits for women in developing countries. He referred to the link between breast feeding and family spacing and claimed the milk biscuits enhanced the lactation process.

The findings of the 'Independent Inquiry into Population and Development' would also seem to confirm what the supporters of aid funding for population programmes have been saying. It found that slowing population growth is advantageous to economic development, health, food availability, housing, poverty, the environment and possibly education, and that effective family planning can reduce infant and maternal mortality. Bilney said the report supports his view that family planning programmes are an important part of Australia's aid budget. Rollason said the report "provides conclusive evidence to support increased expenditure on family planning programmes", and said the government should restore all suspended family planning funding.

Harradine, however, maintains a close reading of the report shows that "population growth is not the problem many people think it is". He claims the contributors to the report "conceded that poverty, environmental damage, educational inequalities, poor housing etc are caused by factors other than population growth per se", and says an urgent assessment should be made of the costs and benefits of alternative policies in achieving development.

No matter what the outcome in Australia is of the squabbles about population and development, the issue will continue to be of vital importance for Pacific Island nations. It appears clear that family planning programmes can provide regional governments with one means of addressing the demands which growing populations place on precious resources. They also represent an opportunity for governments to enhance the health of women and children. And for the people of the region, the availability of family planning resources represents something the average Australian perhaps takes for granted: the freedom of choice to decide whether or not to actually make use of them. □

NEW CALEDONIA

Nickel drivers up in arms

VIOLENCE erupted twice in Noumea during the last week of April and the first week of last month as angry nickel truck drivers destroyed police cars, damaged the Southern Province building and later the gates of the High Commission. Three policemen were injured and eight demonstrators were arrested, then released. This was another episode in the long protest of a threatened profession in the crisis-ridden nickel industry.

The relief that followed the agreement signed on March 23 was short. The arrival from Europe of four large new trucks imported by a subsidiary of SOFINOR, a company owned by the pro-independence Northern Province, to operate at a new extracting site, created a furor among the members of the truck drivers' union (formed of small contractors operating their own trucks nickel extracting sites). They immediately drove down to Noumea and parked

dozens of heavy vehicles at the entrance to the city and at the harbour. They claimed that the importing of these four trucks was contrary to the agreement reached in March to restrict the number of operators. This had been negotiated in order to maintain a minimum level of activity for the profession. They argued that they were in the red because they had to pay for their trucks, while contracts were getting scarce due to the nickel crisis.

The truckers had also realised that some of the other stipulations of the protocol accord, for example, tax exemption on fuel tyres and spare parts, required legislative approval by the Territorial Congress. An appointment was arranged with deputy Jacques Lafleur, president of both the Rally for Caledonia in the Republic and the Southern Province, to ask him to expedite the process. The night before the appointment, without any warning, several dozen truck drivers dumped soil in front of the province building, broke gates and windows and damaged police cars, slightly injuring three policemen. Eight of the demonstrators were arrested

and later released. The appointment was nevertheless maintained between Lafleur and a delegation of the truck drivers led by their president Max Fouchet. During the meeting gendarmes and armoured vehicles were placed between the building and 60 or so nickel trucks which had been stationed in the huge parking lot in front of the building as a demonstration



Cause for protest: a nickel smelter in Noumea

of force. Fouchet said he was "not very proud" of the truckers' violence, but explained they felt they were being "ignored".

The president of the Territorial Congress, Senator Simon Loueckhotte, who had just returned from abroad, met with the truck drivers, but their demand for an immediate meeting of the Congress would not be met because of the lengthy procedures required. □

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Banking on development

WHEN I was growing up, I remember learning that you weren't supposed to hide your money under your bed. You had to move it all to the bank. Once there, all manner of miracles would be performed and the money would 'grow', just like you. Chances were, of course, that by the time you had enough money to open an account, you'd stopped growing. Or, that you spent it before it had time to grow. But the moral of the story was that banks deserved a special kind of respect, rather like policemen. They were trusted benefactors that protected your interests and even sprinkled some kind of magical fertiliser on your savings.

To some extent this generous view of banks still holds for many of us in the Pacific. And it extends, moreover, to the biggest and most powerful amongst them, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, which out of the goodness of their hearts are currently 'helping' numerous island states get into the fast (ie growth) lane of the global market economy en route to 'development'.

One person who has no illusions about the World Bank as a beneficent situation, and who recently did a magnificent hatchet job on the myths that still surround it, was well known author Susan George. In the year of the bank's golden anniversary, her latest book (currently at press) is a critique with a rather provocative purpose — "I hope to give them an unhappy 50th birthday!" Not exactly the most conventional of birthday sentiments, but the point was well taken by an enraptured audience enjoying one of two public lectures in Suva, Fiji, recently.

The ideological fuel that drives the massive World Bank machine are powerful and (for some) persuasive arguments about economic growth and, to coin Ronald Reagan's term, the 'magic of the market'. Market-friendly thinking and the growth bug are proving quite contagious in the Pacific as many a national or regional development report will confirm. A case in point is Fiji's historic (she loves me, she loves me not) 1994 Budget which is positively bursting at the seams with bank initiatives, rhetoric and zeal.

Amongst the hallmarks of the new economic fundamentalism (much of which crystallises in carbon-copy structural adjustment programmes) are policies of deregulation and export promotion, government expenditure cutbacks (on health, education etc), privatisation or corporatisation of public enterprises, concessions to private investors, so-called tax 'reforms', and some stringent wage and labour controls. All told, the private sector is having a field day.

But one of the major handicaps of the economic growth model and its market policies is that the environment, along with the human beings who depend on it, have become visible casualties. Indeed there is a long list of environmental and human catastrophes associated with bank projects around the third world. The destruction of subsistence

NOT THE MAINSTREAM



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EMBERSON-BAIN

agriculture, deforestation, forced migration, rising poverty levels and plunging health standards are amongst the destructive by-products of a runaway (growth) rollercoaster. As George puts it, the watchdog of the World Bank is 'grow now and protect the environment later'.

In our own region, we are already beginning to see some of the same writing on the wall (witness the fall-out from mining and logging, the Bougainville crisis, the female sweatshops that sustain some of our booming export manufacturing sectors, and the rising levels of urban poverty). All that plunder and production mania may be doing wonders for our foreign exchange and GDP ratings, but at what human and environmental cost? (More on this another time).

Probably the most persuasive feature of George's eloquent critique is that she tackles the economic growth/market economy ideology on its own terms, exposing in laconic, dispassionate and quite humorous ways, its internal contradictions and flaws. The trouble with the bank, she says, is that it confuses natural capital (ie our natural environment and resources) with income, treating the former as if it were expendable or renewable, and implying that you can get around to 'protecting' the environment after all that growth has been achieved. The bank's philosophy effectively "assigns to the environment a value of zero. And if you do this, your equation will be that the destruction of the environment doesn't cost anything".

As for the market, this can work fine for some things, George concedes, but once you seriously begin to consider people's needs and interests, it can be woefully inadequate. For one thing, "the market tells you too late when costs on natural capital are excessive. It can only give you a snap shot today. Therefore counting on the market to do the job of looking after the environment is contradictory". Similarly, if decisions about public expenditure are to be based on an anticipated rate of return, then you might as well say goodbye to education, housing and just about anything else that offers to improve people's livelihoods.

As George puts it, "If you believe that the market will provide education, health care, employment etc for everyone, you are wrong. It is not the task of the market to do this. If it does provide jobs, this is a by-product of its basic aims of accumulation and profit. The market if left to its own will naturally tend to increase the gulf between the rich and the poor". Despite her biting criticism of bank policies, George does not believe that there is anything inherently wicked about the institution. "The bank is not a collection of moral monsters. They are members of a religious organisation, a medieval church. They have the truth and they are damn well going to ensure that everyone accepts this truth."

But the truth, even decked out in the most seductive garb, can be a pretty relative thing. As my father has often chided me — "It all depends on where you sit!" □

Yet another claim

LANDOWNERS downstream from the giant Ok Tedi copper mine in Papua New Guinea have launched one of Australia's biggest ever damages case seeking an unspecified sum of money from the mine's major stakeholder, BHP, for environmental damage.

The case, which has the potential to set a history making environmental precedent, has sparked a flurry of activity at the highest political levels in Canberra and Port Moresby and even prompted claims that it is threatening the future of mining in PNG. The Ok Tedi mine is set high in the remote Star Mountains in PNG's Western Province. Each day it dumps a staggering 100,000 tonnes of waste water, rocks and sediment into the Ok Tedi river.

Rex Dagi, a landowner from the Miripiki clan, whose village of Yogi lies 60 kilometres downstream, says the damage caused by waste dumping has ruined his people's way of life. Before mining the river was the centre of the villagers' life. It provided water for drinking and washing, fish and other marine life for eating and a highway for canoes visiting other villages and the port of Kiunga. Village gardens were planted on its rich flood plain. Now, according to Dagi, all that is gone. Gardens on the flood plain have been silted up forcing people to move them to less fertile ground in the mountains.

Streams have choked with sediment turning them into swamps, fish are no longer able to survive in the river; nor are crocodiles, which used to provide a good income from the sale of skins. The river has risen up to five metres since mining began in 1984 and in places is so silted it is not always navigable by canoe. "People are living in fear," said Dagi.

In the fast flowing parts "canoes have overturned and people have lost their properties", he said. A report prepared by the Australian Conservation Foundation last year found sediment from the mine contained heavy metals such as cadmium, lead, zinc and copper.

It said high sediment loads and metal contamination had rendered the first 70 kilometres of the Ok Tedi "almost biologically dead" and "dramatically reduced species biodiversity over the next 130 kilometres". Research by Ok Tedi Mining Limited (OTML), the company which operates the mine, shows there have also been significant reductions in fish stock in the Fly river which carries water from the Ok Tedi to the sea. Behind this devastating environmental damage is OTML's failure to build a tailings dam to hold the waste.

The landowner's Melbourne-based lawyer Nick Styant-Browne says he doesn't know of any similar mine built in the 70s or 80s which does not have a tailings dam or similar containment system. Back in 1983, before the mine began operation, the PNG government insisted a dam be built but after a landslide collapsed the dam while it was still under construction the government bowed to OTML's claim that building a dam in such steep terrain was not economic.

The 7500 landowners who have joined the case so far are seeking damages and an injunction to force OTML to build a tailings dam. BHP says it will vigorously defend the action and points out the Ok Tedi mine "operates in compliance

AUSTRALIA



JEMIMA
GARRETT

with PNG law and with the full support of the PNG government". Already the case is causing a storm.

Ok Tedi, which is 50 per cent owned by BHP and 30 per cent owned by the PNG government, is a mainstay of the PNG economy. OTML's deputy general manager Kipling Uari says the legal action is insulting to the PNG government and the landowners. He told Radio Australia the Australian lawyers involved "seem to think that the government of Papua New Guinea cannot handle the business of making sure that the mining companies comply with its requirements in terms of managing its environment" and he accused them of having "purely mercenary interests".

Styant-Browne rejects the claim. He says action has been taken in Melbourne because it was at BHP's Melbourne headquarters

that most of the crucial decisions have been made. Landowner Dagi says he wanted the case to be heard in Melbourne, as well as in PNG, so it would attract international attention. Before taking the case to court, Dagi says he spent five years trying to get people in Port Moresby to respond to his grievances. "Everytime we tried to talk to the government or Ok Tedi (OTML) they never had time for us so that is what led us to take proceedings," Dagi said.

Back in the villages along the Ok Tedi, Dagi says people are so frustrated they want the mine closed but he stresses this is not his objective. He wants the mine to stay open and for landowners problems to be addressed before they get any worse. The company has made some moves setting up a 2.5 million Kina Ok Tedi Development Trust. Dagi says it is not enough. "They set up two water tanks in each village plus community halls but what I am concerned about is basic needs. We don't need a community hall, we need something to live on," said Dagi. The most interesting aspect of the case is not whether OTML has breached a particular statute but whether it had a common law duty not to damage other people's land.

Former PNG judge Brian Brunton, now director of the Port Moresby-based Individual Community Rights Advocacy Forum, says if the case goes to court it will deliver a major precedent. Mining companies "can't do in Australia what they have been doing in PNG", Brunton said.

"The politicians have sold the country short by agreeing to lax environmental standards," he said. Brunton rejects claims that the case could jeopardise the future of mining. "I think mining will go ahead in PNG but the government will have to take into account the true environmental and social cost," he said. "These large scale open pit projects which use the natural resources of this country, namely the river systems, for waste disposal will just have to reconsider their methods of operation." There is no doubt the stakes are high.

If the Ok Tedi landowners win, landowners affected by mines at Porgera and Bougainville are also likely to lodge claims. If the court were to decide the landowners have the right to sue in Melbourne, rather than PNG, Australian mining companies could face suits from disgruntled landowners all around the world. More than that, any decision based on common law is likely to have applicability in all countries with a British legal tradition. □

HAWAII



A solemn moment: Dalai Lama places a white, silk prayer scarf on a controversial stone altar

Ed Rampell

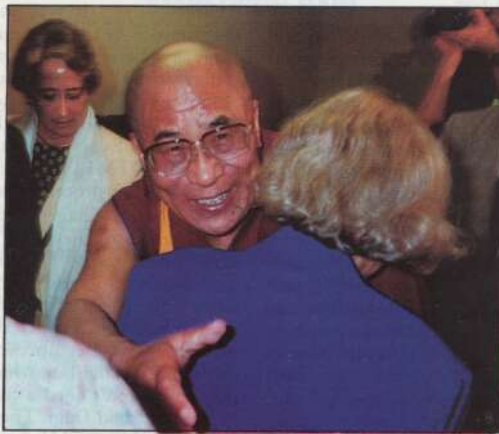
Dalai Lama visits Hawaii

By Ed Rampell

THE Dalai Lama visited Hawaii from April 14 to 18 on the first stop of a Compassion for World Peace tour, bringing Tibetans and Hawaiians together in solidarity, for a people-to-people communion supporting indigenous self-determination.

His Holiness addressed a packed joint session of the Hawaii state legislature on April 14, stressing the Buddhist themes of non-violence and forgiveness. Tibet's spiritual leader said — "I believe human nature is gentleness." Many were impressed with the Dalai Lama's merriment, which broke with the protocol of a visit by a head of state (albeit a deposed one), as he made Hawaii's usually somber state capitol offices resound with laughter.

In a press conference immediately after his speech, Tenzin Gyatso spoke about similarities between the Tibetan and Hawaiian sovereignty movements, as Tibet was occupied by China in 1950 and the Dalai Lama was ousted in 1959, while America overthrew the Hawaiian monarchy in 1893 and annexed Hawaii in 1898. The 1989 Nobel Peace Prize winner said: "Nowadays, independence is fashionable ... my advice is preserve your own cultural heritage ... I have heard that in New Zealand, Australia, and mainland America people are concerned with sovereignty. Keep your own native names." The Dalai Lama pointed out differences between the struggles of Tibetans and indigenous peoples in the West. "Here, there's freedoms and democracy, which is much different in our case." Tibetan resistance is often met with brutal repression by China, which



Meeting the press: Dalai Lama greets a reporter

regards the Dalai Lama as "feudalistic".

The man followers believe is the 14th incarnation of Buddha went on to say: "I can't be clearcut on sovereignty. Tibet was historically a separate nation ... we're not demanding independence (from China). My main consideration is Tibetan culture, which is more important than politics."

As actions speak louder than words, the Dalai Lama went directly from the capitol in downtown Honolulu to nearby Iolani Palace for a native *Ho'okupu*, or offering ceremony. America's only royal palace symbolises Hawaiian resistance, as this is where US troops toppled the independent kingdom of Hawaii. Amidst much Polynesian pomp, pageantry, and protocol Tibet's spiritual leader took part in sacred rituals. Traditional *kahunas* (priests practicing pre-contact religion) and *na koa* or warriors surrounded a controversial *ahu*, a rock altar with

religious significance. Chants and conch shells rang out as traditionally clad Hawaiians in sarongs and loin cloths formed a procession to welcome and give flower and leaf *leis*, taro plants, *poi* pounders, and other gifts to the Dalai Lama. He, in exchange, gave white prayer scarfs to the representatives of the 27 native groups the Tibetan received at a sacrosanct portion of the palace grounds, near a burial mound for high chiefs and the *ahu*.

This altar was built near the palace in January, 1993, as part of the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the US-backed overthrow of the Hawaiian monarchy. Since the centennial demonstrations — the largest political protests in Hawaii's history — the state government has demanded removal of the altar, against the will of aboriginal activists. Towards the end of the Hawaiian ceremony, His Holiness placed a white prayer scarf atop the flora festooned altar.

Participants in the Tibetan-Hawaiian "love fest" at Iolani Palace included the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (a state agency involved in indigenous issues), trustee Kamaki Kanahele, Ohana Council (an activist group advocating independence from the US), leader Kawehi Gill, Owana Salazar and her young son Noa, designated *Alii Nui* (high chief) of Ka Lahui Hawaii, the Sovereign Nation of Hawaii nationalist group that seeks a nation-within-a-nation status for Hawaiians, with government-to-government relations with Washington similar to that held by American Indian tribes. Mililani Trask, the *Kia Aina*, or governor of Ka Lahui Hawaii, led the procession and is a key leader in the

THEATRE

Hawaiian sovereignty movement which seeks native self government with land, cultural and religious rights. In an interview Trask said: "The Dalai Lama's visit here, the way he has done the ceremony with us, is very positive for us. He's a great world leader, and when he comes here to recognise the Hawaiian people, the Hawaiian nation, he is an indigenous person and is also a refugee from his own land ... By his coming here he endorses and shows support for the struggle of indigenous people and self determination. That's why all indigenous leaders from all over the islands came to be with Dalai Lama today to honour him. Because we know that he, like us, is fighting for self determination, but fighting in a peaceful way."

Trask, who has previously heard His Holiness speak at United Nations conferences on native rights at Vienna, said that Ka Lahui Hawaii was co-operating with Tibetans in a UN-linked organisation. "The Dalai Lama and his supporters created an organisation in 1991 called Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organisations (UNPO). Tibet and Dalai Lama were, of course, charter members, but over the years other indigenous peoples and nations that are not recognised were added to it, including the Kurds ... Aboriginal organisations from Australia, and, in 1993, Ka Lahui Hawaii became the first of the indigenous nations of the Pacific basin to be admitted. They provide facilitation in the international arena, at Geneva and elsewhere, and they provide a bridge for communications with nations that do not wish to recognise indigenous peoples."

As for the issue of repression, Trask, an activist attorney, contends: "The oppression of our people by America is different than what the Chinese are doing to Tibet. The Chinese armed forces are visible on all the streets. Here, we have more American military in Hawaii than in any other state, but they're not as visibly oppressive as they are in China ... Hawaiians are being arrested every day. The night before Dalai Lama came, police forces came and tore down the home of one of our sisters (Marie Beltran) living on the beach with her family. All over the islands Hawaiians are arrested and taken to jail in the same way China arrests people in Tibet and takes them to jail. So in civil disobedient practice we have a common thread."

After the convocation of two peoples, His Holiness spoke to large crowds at a number of Oahu and Big Island forums, on Local Identity in the Global Community — Creating Peace in the 21st Century, Compassion for World Peace, Is a Non-Violent Society Possible?, and Compassion and Wisdom — A Teaching and Ceremony for Generating the Mind of Enlightenment. On April 18 he left Hawaii for a US tour after leaving behind a strong spirit, and that white prayer scarf on the stone altar, making it harder for authorities to remove the altar. □



Sell-out play: Vilsoni Hereniko dressed as an ancestral spirit dances with the cast

Sex comedy plays to packed house

By Ed Rampell

LAST *Virgin in Paradise*, the new play by Fiji playwright Vilsoni Hereniko, opened in April to sell-out crowds in Honolulu, and may be the best play about South Seas sex since Somerset Maugham's *Rain*. Like *Rain*, *Virgin* has a wicked sense of humor about sexuality, although *Virgin* is more lighthearted. And as with Sadie Thompson, major characters are Pacific-based expats (sexpats?), although *Virgin* is written by an indigenous author, not a British spy on a secret WWI mission.

Virgin is about Helmut, a German, alcoholic, retired psychology professor in his fifties, who is drawn to the South Pacific because of its "free love" reputation, but is so crazy that he's been travelling from island to island, seeking to marry a virgin. At the fictional isle of Marawa, a marriage is arranged between Helmut and the reputed virgin Hina. Other characters include Temanu, a part-Islander who has returned to Marawa from America in order to find her roots and spread feminism. Jean is an Australian anthropologist in a Margaret Mead mode, studying the sex lives of "savages". Jeke is a Polynesian playboy.

The comedy explores and spoofs the contradictions of contemporary sex in the South Seas, where Pacific promiscuity has often been replaced by Europe's missionary imposition, so that Western tourists after a lost uninhibitedness are disappointed by religious repression now. Hereniko has a reportorial instinct in that the playwright is able to look at an issue from all points of view — if not impartially. For Hereniko, a Rotuman, definitely has an indigenous take on the characters and story.

Hereniko is very much the star of *Virgin*, which is loosely based on a true story told to him by Banaban/African-American Teresia Teaiwa. (Hereniko

refuses to tell where the actual incidents took place.) Hereniko wrote, co-directed (with Kumu Kahua Theater's Gene Shofner), and acts in the play. Hereniko displays comedic gifts as an actor, as well as a playwright, and (conveniently) gives himself *Virgin's* best line. Playing an ancestral spirit, Hereniko says he prefers living in hell "because there are no missionaries there". Surely, this is one of the Pacific's wittiest gems of dialogue since Sadie Thompson's, "Men, you're all pigs!" line (also inspired by a missionary). *Virgin* is raucous, bawdy, and incorporates Pacific styles, such as Rotuman clowning. Although generally original enough to set Malinowski spinning in his grave, Hereniko does steal a line from a Woody Allen movie, when Helmut complains that his wife left him for another woman. But the play's weakest point is the poor performance of Ke'alaonapua hinano Campton as Temanu. Like her character, Campton — who has come back from the Continental US to Hawaii — is, to paraphrase Hereniko's mentor Albert Wendt, "a daughter for the return home". But she overacts terribly and is very grating as the confused feminist.

The cast features Pacific Islanders from Fiji, the Cooks, Hawaii, and Tonga, giving Honolulu theatre a rare Oceanic ambience. Langakali Halapua (daughter of Pacific Islands Development Programme director Steven Halapua) is fine in her debut as the tall, slim, long haired cafe-au-lait Hina (a reference to a mythic Polynesian beauty). The 15-year-old merely laughs uproariously when asked if she's a virgin in paradise. Hereniko, who lectures on Pacific literature at the University of Hawaii, is quick to point out that *Virgin* is about much more than just sex, a theme, he says, which "Western plays deal more earnestly with". □

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The spin-offs for Fiji

FIJI'S business and industrial leaders, together with government, have a chance to be in on the ground floor as the economic benefits of the Sydney Olympics begin to flow, says Australia's senior trade commissioner for the Pacific Islands Steve Ryan.

The reason for such optimism is based on the forthcoming Fiji/Australia - Australia/Fiji Business Councils' joint conference at the Regent of Fiji Resort from June 22 to 24. The title theme for this year's conference is Let's Get Fair Dinkum. The business councils have planned the 1994 joint conference in anticipation that the South Pacific will gain tremendous economic benefit not only from the tourism spin-off but from the first hand experience that some of the visitors will gain of the economic potential of countries such as Fiji.

A keynote speaker will be a top personality, a person whose successful track record has been seen by all the world, the man behind Sydney's successful Olympic bid, Rod McGeoch. "McGeoch will be speaking on not only the opportunities for tourism but also the vast linkages the Sydney 2000 Olympics present for trading opportunities, beginning right now in 1994," Ryan said. "I believe that any business or commercial undertaking in this country needs to look further than the confines of Fiji if it is to remain viable in the competitive world of

trade. Many of the visitors to the Olympics will be businessmen and industrialists who will take the opportunity to see the commercial potential of the South Pacific while they are in the region. Already there are visitors connected to the Olympics arriving in Australia.

Fiji and the South Pacific stand to gain tremendous economic benefit not only from the tourism spin-off but from the first hand experience that some of the visitors will gain.

"It is not too early to establish those links — indeed it is vital to get in on the ground floor and establish an early rapport with Australian companies who will be an integral part of what will become, for want of a better name, an olympic associated industry."

In an associated measure the councils have secured as a further keynote speaker R V Cole. Cole, a previous financial secretary for the Fiji government, will present a paper entitled, 'Broadening the Australian-Fiji Trade Relationship'.

This is seen as being a critical component for the future and is designed to look beyond the current trading relationship between Australia and Fiji and is in recognition that a fresh look needs to be taken.

At the business working level, a number of Australian companies from the Rockhampton area would be exhibiting throughout the joint conference with a special invitees day on June 25. They include designer groups specialising in crocodile leather products, sapphires and precious stones, architects who featured designs for the tropics, an auto accessories firm, a nursery/landscaping exhibit highlighting tropical plants, and an educational stand from the University of Central Queensland. Tourism, investment and export credit insurance and export finance, the latter by Derek Hill, the secretary-general International Union of Credit and Investment Insurers and an acknowledged authority in this field, are also on the agenda. "We believe we have a conference equal to any that has gone before with a relevance to the times and conditions the Fiji industry and business face right at this moment," Ryan said.

"At the same time, we have planned that this is a forward looking conference, preparing delegates for the scenario for the region until the end of the century, that is Olympics 2000." □

Trade group to lead Queensland

THE Rockhampton-based IBECQ (International Business Exchange Central Queensland) will lead a group of central Queensland participants to the Fiji/Australia business council meeting.

IBECQ is an organisation which was founded to establish direct trade, educational and cultural link ages between central Queensland and similar regions in the Pacific. IBECQ is supported by a wide range of businesses, government agencies and educational institutions. The chairman of IBECQ is Professor Geoff Wilson, vice chancellor of the Central Queensland University. IBECQ has worked in close association with Austrade in developing linkages in the Pacific Islands.

Central Queensland lies in a tropical zone and has many similarities to countries within the Pacific Islands region. The capabilities of central Queensland companies and institutions are diverse. The direct development of trade linkages gives many of the smaller regional-based companies an oppor-

tunity to enter international markets on a scale which would be denied them in more distant markets such as Japan and Europe.

From a geographic perspective major central Queensland centres such as Rockhampton, Mackay and Gladstone are in some instances located closer to Pacific Island nations than they are to the major southern cities of Australia.

Chief executive of IBECQ Robert Armstrong represented central Queensland as part of a Queensland government trade mission to New Caledonia last November. This initiative has already led to the development of direct trade opportunities and has resulted in a return visit to central Queensland by several senior New Caledonian delegations. Leopold Joredie, president of the Northern province, visited Rockhampton in April.

Armstrong said that IBECQ was looking forward to creating a similar focus in Fiji to the mutual benefit of both Fiji and central Queensland. He said he

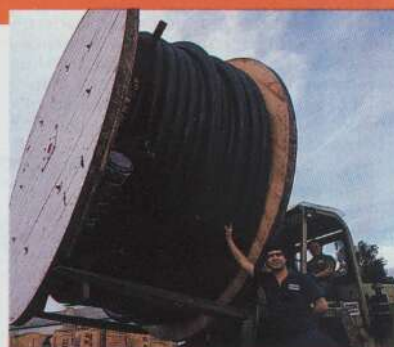
was confident that the visit would assist in developing long term linkages with the region and that central Queensland companies were becoming increasingly keen to focus opportunities in the Pacific.

Apart from Armstrong the team led by IBECQ will consist of Professor Kevin Fagg, dean of the faculty of business, Central Queensland University; Paul Bell, mayor of the Emerald Shire; John Lever, proprietor of the Koorana Crocodiles Farm; and Jean Mc Gruvie, manager of the Central Highlands Development Bureau.

IBECQ will also mount a display of central Queensland product and services. These will include crocodiles skin products, education and training services, gemstone, agricultural products and manufactured goods.

IBECQ was initially established over two years ago after research identified a need for a regional-based organisation capable of both developing export awareness and assisting regional businesses to develop international markets for their goods and services. □

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An MM facility: meeting the needs of both the local and export markets

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Are Tonga's MP's under persecution?

WHENEVER the subject of political persecution in the Pacific is mentioned, many people would think that reference is made to the situation in Fiji, and specifically of the fate of the Bavadra government, its members and supporters. Or they would point at the case of Jimmy Stevens in Vanuatu, and episodes in PNG and the Solomons. But no one would believe there is political persecution in Tonga. Recently, however, that belief was rudely jolted by overseas media stories which led to a high-powered debate and wide public controversy in Tonga.

It all started in March when Mike Fields of AFP reported from Paris an interview he made with Akilisi Pohiva, People's Representative in the Tonga parliament and leader of the Pro-democracy movement. In the interview Pohiva was asked whether, in view of recent legal actions which he lost and was heavily fined in, he considers the crown prince (the plaintiff in one of the libel suits against Pohiva) and the government are out to destroy him and his career by dragging him to court on every thing he publishes (in his news broadsheet, *Kele'a*) that distantly smacks of libel against the authorities and thus to cause his bankruptcy. Pohiva claims that he answered that this is not at all impossible though he would not vouch for it, adding that there are other issues of far greater importance which should concern the authorities more than playing watchdog on his broadsheet. But other news networks picked up the interview and rephrased here and there that in the end Pohiva's answer to the question was possible of being interpreted as a categorical affirmative full stop, specifically that the Royal Family and Tonga government are systematically persecuting him.

When those newspaper reports reappeared in the local media, the Tonga deputy premier went public to deny any government plan of persecuting Pohiva implying that this never was nor is or ever will be part of government policy. This brought Pohiva out to criticise the government-owned Tonga Radio for not offering him an opportunity to comment on the reports when it broadcasted the deputy premier's reply. One or two more exchanges between the chief protagonists drew a lot of public attention and a public controversy ensued conducted not only through the print media but also within more traditional outlets like *kava* parties and village meetings. The source of all this excitement was a series of lawsuits — three in all — brought against Pohiva by first the speaker of parliament, who is a noble, and second by the executive group (headed by a prince) of a squash pumpkin exporting company and, lastly, by the crown prince. They all alleged that Pohiva's broadsheet *Kele'a* printed libellous matter against them which were not only false but defamatory of their reputation and public

THE ISLANDS



FUTA
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image. The Supreme Court judgments were against Pohiva in all three lawsuits, and the accused was sentenced, in total, to the tune of almost \$80,000.

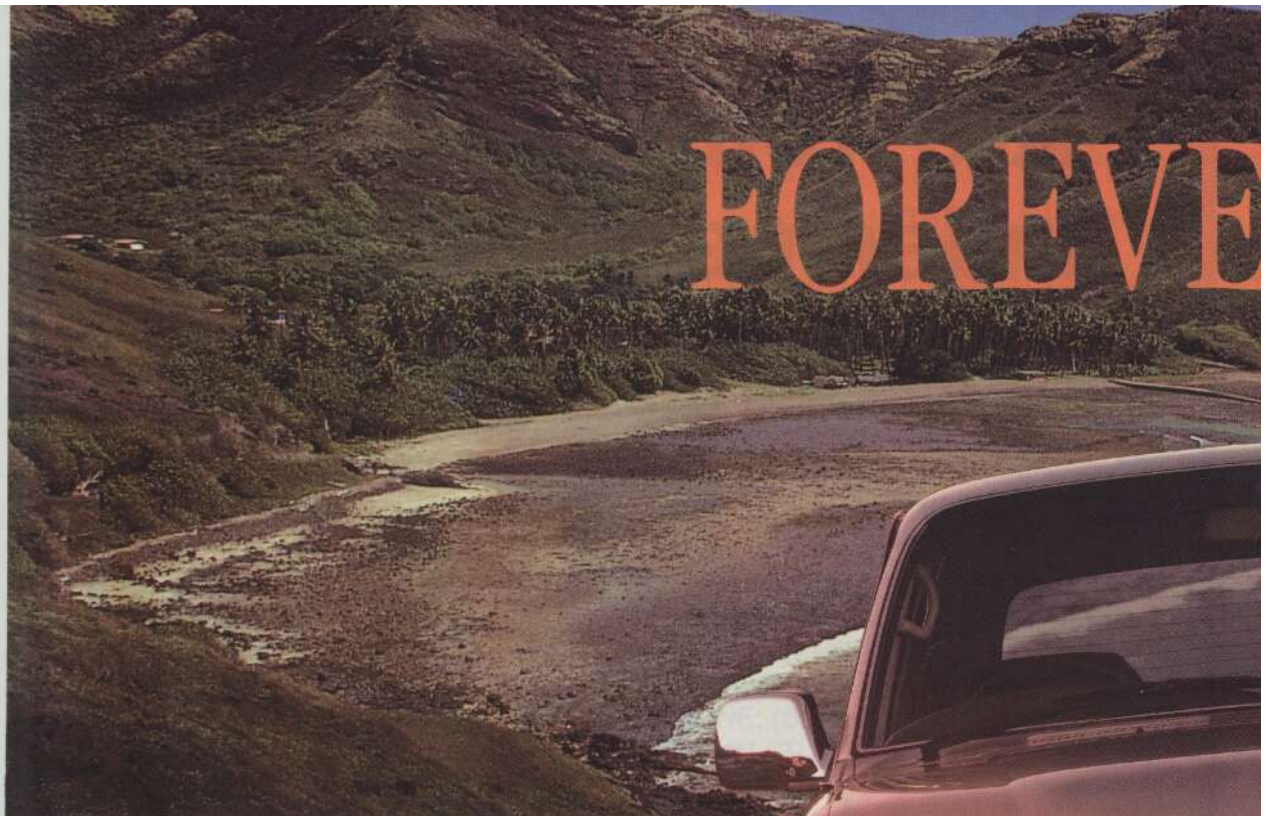
The circumstances of the court cases were of public interest also. In the first two cases, Pohiva claims, facts that were crucial to his defence were either not admitted or not taken into account. The result was that he was found legally liable, being unable to substantiate to the court's satisfaction that the libellous statements at issue were factual. The case with the crown prince was heard while Pohiva was absent abroad, first in Taiwan with a group of Tonga MPs on a parliamentary exchange visit then tarrying in Hawaii and Fiji for a week or so on his way back. Pohiva did not have any form of representation at this hearing, but this did not stop the court

from going through the customary motions. On his return Pohiva asked the court to set aside the first trial and a retrial be heard so he could present his case. This request was unsuccessful.

The court did announce the date of the last action. Pohiva says that because the waiting was going to be fairly long he lost track of his record and went to court to enquire again after the date. He was told by the court clerk that this information was not at hand but that he would make it available soonest. This meeting took place just before Pohiva left for Taiwan, and the court some days before the hearing told Pohiva's wife of the pending trial. Pohiva was at the time spending a few days on Hawaii's big island. And so the case was tried without the accused's presence or a representative.

All the above information must have been available to at least some of the foreign journalist who dealt with the original interview. One can surmise that they concluded from appearances — a line up of the plaintiffs, a noble and speaker of parliament, two princes with one being the crown prince and minister for foreign affairs — that there is a conspiracy by the Royal Family and government to destroy Pohiva who has been for long the leading light in a group of pro-democracy critics in parliament urging broad changes to the form of government and major reduction of traditional privileges. What Pohiva & co. have to remember is that to really fight big fish one must be prepared to take a lot of beating — and survive it.

And although the deputy premier's words could not be questioned, especially in terms of the fact that the foreign media could never prove that Pohiva is being persecuted, the actions of people, unbeknown to them, can still have persecution effect. The law of persecution, implicit in Machiavelli so long ago, is: all politics must involve some form of persecution. Its converse is also true: all persecution is ultimately political. □



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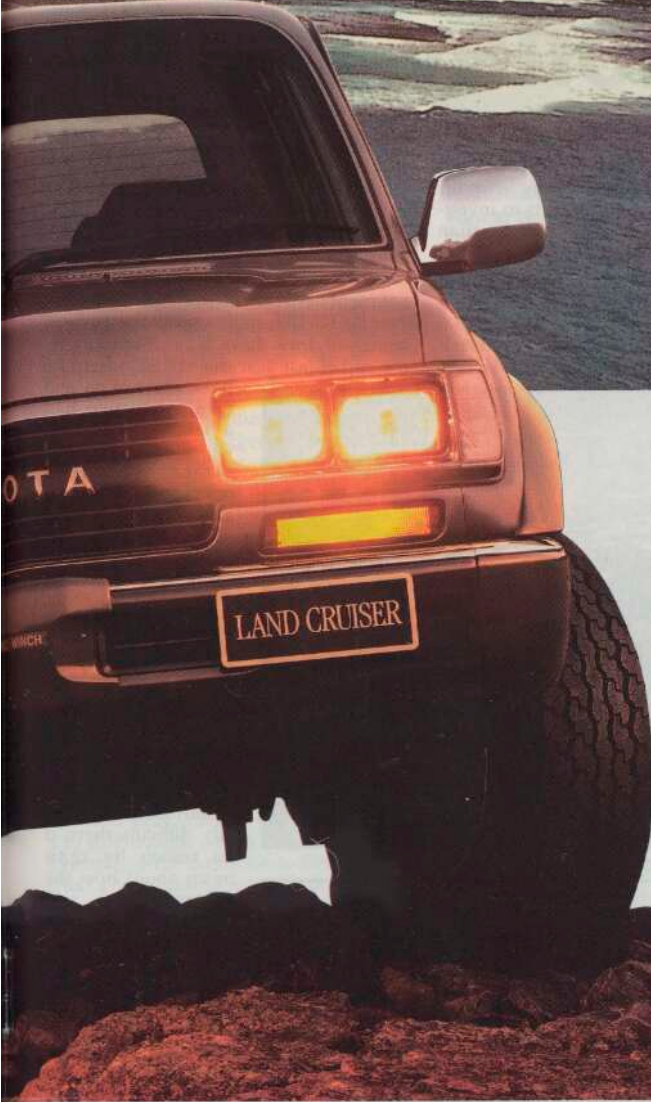
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PACIFIC

BUSINESS



Where the minerals and oil money went

By Roman Grynberg

ONE of the most predictable and distressing facts about the oil and mining boom in Papua New Guinea was how the revenues were spent. What the government should have done with the non-renewable revenues was hotly debated in PNG for years before the boom began. While there was no agreement among

economists on whether the money should be taken offshore or invested in the agricultural sector, everyone wanted to avoid what has now happened — namely the oil revenues hitting the government and ending up in a massive increase in government recurrent spending.

The results of the short lived boom were depressingly predictable. Last year the Wingti-led coalition government lowered the highest marginal rate of personal income tax to 28 per cent from 45 per cent. The rate of company tax was lowered from 30 per cent to 25 per cent. The strategy was aimed primarily at making PNG a low tax area. In fact it now has one of the lowest rates of direct tax in the Pacific region. The then Finance Minister, Sir Julius Chan, when introducing the tax reduction argued that it would stimulate investment and job creation. It is extremely doubtful that the level of taxes in PNG as they existed before the 1993 budget were the principle or even major constraints to its economic development.

There were others such as the perceived law and order or problems with landowners which are perceived by investors to be much greater constraints to investment and economic development than taxation.

In the 1992 budget the government budgeted for a deficit of Kina 51 million, the actual deficit was K233 million (5.6 per cent of Gross Domestic Product). Last year the situation was also serious

destroyed due to changes in legislation that occurred under the previous Wingti/Chan government in the late 1980s. The government is now able to virtually draw down as much of the MRSF as it wants. This year the projected injections into the MRSF will peak due to lagged payment of dividends and taxes from last year at K318.6 million and the government will draw down K193.8 million. By the end of last year the MRSF, after two

peak years of oil and gold production had a balance below that which existed in 1989 — the last year of operation of the Bougainville mine. It is difficult given PNG's past history of fiscal prudence to conclude anything other than the fact that government has mishandled the revenues from the minerals boom. Given that the peak of the mineral boom has already passed and government cutbacks in expenditure are generally difficult there is no reason for optimism about how the government will handle the mineral revenues for the remainder of the decade.



Before its closure: Bougainville copper mine

with a budgeted deficit of K162 million which is now estimated at K235 million (4.7 per cent of GDP). The 1993 actual deficit is forecast to be as high as K315 million. This year the projected budget deficit is estimated to be K242.8 million (4.7 per cent of GDP).

Moreover, the Minerals Resource Stabilisation Fund (MRSF), which was originally intended to buffer the economy and the budget from the type of revenue fluctuations that have occurred as a result of the oil and minerals boom of the past two years has effectively been

handle the mineral revenues for the remainder of the decade.

Expenditure in the budget has increased by 9.4 per cent for 1994 and is projected to be K163 million. Expenditure as a proportion of GDP is expected to rise from 30 per cent in 1993 to 31 per cent in 1994. Expenditure by national departments will increase from K564 million in 1993 to K684 million in 1994. While increasing its own spending, the national government will at the same time drastically cut provincial government spending from K160 million to

BUSINESS

K125.8 million. What is perhaps the most disturbing trend in government expenditure patterns is the decline in the proportion of capital expenditure to total expenditure. In 1992 projected capital spending was expected to be 16.6 per cent of total expenditure or K196 million but the actual expenditure was K165 million or 12.1 per cent of total expenditure. Thus in a year where the deficit blew out to 5.6 per cent of GDP the government could not institute its capital expenditure to reach budgeted levels. The government has also instituted a free school subsidy which will cost K33 million this year, which is in part funded by a K9 million reduction in existing school programmes.

Capital expenditure is projected to decline as a percentage of total government spending to 13.1 per cent this year from a 1993 budgeted level of 15.3 per cent of total government expenditure. What this indicates is that less of the mineral wealth is being devoted to capital spending and more to recurrent expenditure within the government.

Direct budgetary support from Australia is also declining and is estimated to constitute 11 per cent of total revenues and grants in 1994. It is expected to decline further to K95 million by 1997 or six per cent of revenues and grants. The issue of direct budgetary support has become a hot subject of debate between Waigani and Canberra. At the recent Aid Forum held in Brisbane in November last year Sir Julius Chan expressed his displeasure at what he saw as direct

Australian interference in the PNG economy through the tied budget scheme. What became apparent was that given the massive size of the government deficit blow-out the PNG government would prefer to return to united grants.



Former finance minister: Sir Julius Chan

However, given that the shift is now enshrined in treaty form it is unlikely to ever return to free handouts from Canberra. The relationship between PNG and Australia has taken a definite turn for the worse as a result of the dispute over aid funding.

The government has introduced several tax measures in the 1994 budget which include a three per cent increase in the export tax for logs. The system of forestry taxation is scheduled to change to a stumpage basis from this year. The

government has also repealed the gold export tax and has relaxed import duties for the import of mining exploration equipment. This is designed to give encouragement to mining exploration which has been in decline over the last few years. The government has raised excise on locally produced spirits so that eventually excise on spirits will be in line with beer. The specific gains tax which is raised on large share transactions has also been eliminated.

The PNG government's handling of the mineral's boom has not been prudent by anyone's definition. The government has spent far more than it has earned, it has drawn down the MRSF to pay tax decreases which will be of doubtful effect in terms of stimulating investment and beyond free education has done little to assure that the mineral wealth serves anyone but the bureaucracy in Waigani.

Several years ago the government of PNG was planning to take its oil and mineral revenues off-shore and invest them in a trust fund — this would have stopped exactly what happened during the last two years and what will continue to happen throughout the remainder of the decade. What PNG should have done is what it promised to do and what Kiribati did with its phosphate revenues and Fiji has promised to do with its minerals wealth from the Namosi copper and gold mine — take it off-shore and only draw down the interest. It is not too late to learn the lesson of the last two years — that no man has the wisdom and strength to handle such a rapid increase in wealth. □

Cooks considers tourist controls

THE main Cook Island of Rarotonga is as saturated with tourists as Hawaii, but Prime Minister Sir Geoffrey Henry warns limiting their numbers could cool the economy.

Last year, there were 52,868 visitors to Rarotonga, which is home to 10,000 people — the same one-to-five ratio that has given Hawaii a reputation of being overrun with tourists. And their numbers are estimated to reach 55,000 this year.

The country, however, gives the impression of coping — the long-awaited Italian-funded Sheraton Hotel is due to open this year with 180 luxury rooms. Henry told the Chamber of Commerce in a speech recently that the country could welcome a lot more tourists without flooding the market. "If that appalls some, remember that there are ways to quickly and deliberately slow down the growth, just as there are

ways to cool the economy should it ever become inflationary," he said.

Tourist numbers could be controlled through limiting air rights and restricting hotel licences. However, that would be premature, as the outer Cook Islands that choose to be involved in tourism need to be satisfied first, he said.

Henry said that although Hawaii was saturated, the tourists there were spread across the numerous islands, whereas here it was only on Rarotonga. He said many new activity facilities needed to be built here.

"Surveys have shown that although our visitors have budgeted to spend money here, they rarely find enough reasons to do so and depart with half of their cash intact," he said. He said tourism industry growth did not need to be maintained by increasing the numbers of visitors, but by getting the

existing number of tourists to spend more. He has previously said the Cook Islands should discourage budget backpacking tourists from coming.

"Much has been made of my suggestion that we should cater to big spenders versus backpackers, but, think of it, would you really suggest the converse of that approach?" he said.

Although he acknowledged that it may be true that backpackers stayed longer he said the big spender could also be induced to do that. "It is achieved through a better total travel experience. Greater opportunity for outer island travels is one strategy towards this end." Tourist Authority director Chris Wong director said the high rate of tourist growth could not be taken for granted.

"We have to be conscious of the fact that percentage growth we have enjoyed is going to be increasingly difficult to maintain," he said. **AFP**

BUSINESS

Aust to maintain aid to Pacific

AUSTRALIA has no intention of shifting its focus away from the Pacific. And neither will it follow the United State's lead and axe aid projects in the region.

The assurance came from Australia's Pacific Islands Affairs Minister Gordon Bilney in April while on a two-day visit to Fiji for talks with Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka. The discussions centred on aid, trade, the South Pacific Regional Trade and Economic Co-operation Agreement (SPARTECA) and other issues. He also met with Fiji's Opposition leader Jai Ram Reddy; and a textile, clothing and footwear delegation led by Suva businessman Jim Ah Koy.

Bilney said he had come to Fiji from talks with Australia's Foreign Affairs Minister Gareth Evans and there was no suggestion that aid to Fiji would go backwards. This not only applies to development assistance but to Australia's defence co-operation programme to Fiji. Rabuka was in Australia at the invitation of the government to take delivery of a naval patrol boat given to Fiji under the defence programme. The handover took place on May 28.

Australia's aid programme to Fiji includes the provision of Australian experts and technical personnel to fill senior professional, technical and administrative positions in the public sector until nationals have acquired the necessary training and experience. Amongst other things, it has undertaken a project in Fiji's old capital Levuka where it is assisting in expanding the capacity of fish processing and canning.

Constitution review

On the talks' agenda was the review of Fiji's racially-biased 1990 constitution, and Bilney said Australia would only play the role of a bystander. But he has offered legal and constitutional expertise if requested by Fiji. Bilney said he believed the Fiji government had moved quickly and decisively to set in place a process for the review of the constitution. Fiji's opposition parties are demanding a review of the document which ensures Fijian dominance in parliament. A panel was appointed at the end of last month to oversee the process.

"There's been a clear willingness on the part of the government to involve the political opposition and other communities. It looks to me as though it's proceeding with goodwill with the co-



Bilney: at a Suva press conference

operation of the opposition and at this early stage, it's well on track," Bilney said.

SPARTECA changes

The textile, clothing and footwear delegation presented a submission proposing changes to SPARTECA's Rules of Origin. These proposed changes were:

- to increase the list of allowable local costs to include factory administration costs, insurance and local and regional freight costs;
- to amend the 50 per cent local content clause under the Rules of Origin so that it is in line with the reduction in Australian tariffs;
- to apply a derogation clause to SPARTECA for at least a three-year period; and
- to change the substantial transformation rules so that the Forum island countries can improve efficiency and productivity without worrying about the 50 per cent local content.

Bilney told the delegation he didn't believe their requests "were on".

"We've made our position very clear and we believe SPARTECA has been of considerable benefit to the development of the garment industry here," Bilney said that the Rules of Origin were not negotiable although there was one of two

aspects which related to the Rules of Origin which he'd undertaken to examine. One area he had agreed to look at was the question of local costs — what could be included in the local costs for the purpose of calculating the 50 per cent. He said he accepted the fact that the more efficient producers here became, the harder it was to get their local content up.

"The basic message I had for the textile, clothing and footwear delegation was that we believe that the trading world of the future will not be a world which depends on preferential trading arrangements of the kind that SPARTECA represents. In other words, all of us, including my country, need to focus on becoming more competitive in the world market rather than take advantage of preferential arrangements," Bilney said no country more than Fiji had gained greater benefit from SPARTECA.

Land deal

Bilney told the Fiji government that as far as the Agricultural Landlord and Tenants Act was concerned, it was his view that there was a good deal of uncertainty being caused by the fact that the ALTA leases started to run out within a short space of time.

"That can't but have a disquieting effect on investor confidence on investment in the sugar industry in particular and I get the impression from the government that is well aware of these concerns and is moving to resolve the problems."

Commonwealth

On Fiji's return to the Commonwealth, Bilney said Australia would welcome this under the mechanisms the Commonwealth itself had. It has offered to act as a broker for Fiji's re-entry into the Commonwealth. However, the Fiji government did not make the request of the Australian government during Bilney's visit.

Meanwhile, training for women within the region was given a massive boost with a huge increase in aid to the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre. The Australian government has increased financial assistance for 1994 by \$100,000 and the centre's co-ordinator Shamima Ali was reported as saying that the increase in funds would be used to employ more skilled workers and to train workers within the region. □

BUSINESS

Guns: a tourism niche market

By David North

TOURISM is full of specialised sub-markets. People gawk at nude beaches, lose money in gambling casinos, or go backpacking in environmentally-correct locations depending on their whim and the tourist business caters to them.

Guam, with a long record of attracting middle class Japanese tourists, has worked out a new niche for a subset of them — legal access to guns ranging from pistols to assault rifles. Japanese civilians are not allowed to own firearms, and, as a result, the nation has one of the lowest murder rates in the world. But the yen for playing the role of cowboy or gangster is very much alive in Japan, and Guam is making the best of it.

For example, one of the island's tourist publications, *Guam Today*, carries an advertisement in colour showing a Japanese man wearing a camouflage bush hat; he is seen firing a pistol at a watermelon at the point of impact — and its bits of bright red (watermelon) flesh fly in all directions. The dominant language in the ad is Japanese.

But the thrill of shooting does not come cheap. The Top Gun Shooting Range, for example, will charge you \$35 for firing 36 rounds from a .38 revolver at a snarling image of a gun-toting soldier. If you prefer the .44 Magnum (of the detective stories) those three dozen shots cost you \$45, and it's \$50 for using either a Uzi or the Thompson submachine gun.

Elsewhere along Tumon Bay, where the high-rise tourist hotels catering to the Japanese look out at the Pacific, one can find galleries offering indoor shooting experience with a wide variety of weapons. There are, among others, the M-16 and the AK-47 assault rifles, which are outlawed on much of the US mainland. The tourist also has his choice of various pistols, rifles and shotguns, bearing well-known names like Colt, Glock and Smith and Wesson.

Similar gun galleries can also be found on nearby Saipan, which also specialises in Japanese tourists. Saipan and Guam, both held by the Japanese for varying periods of time earlier in this century, are the closest tropical islands to Japan, and are, by Japanese standards, relatively inexpensive. In March, for instance, Guam entertained some 110,000 tourists, most of them middle-class Japanese. Tourism is the largest industry in Guam, accounting for an infusion of about one billion dollars a year into the local economy. □

AT&T phone service available from Fiji

USADirect Service has now made it faster and easier for the estimated 30,000 travellers from the United States who visit Fiji annually to keep in touch with loved ones and business colleagues back home.

AT&T's USADirect Service was made available in Fiji from last month. AT&T USADirect Service provides immediate access to an English-speaking AT&T operator or automated English-language voice prompts, making it simple to place a call to the United States, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

To use the service from Fiji, callers dial the USADirect access code 004-890-1001. Calls can be charged to the AT&T Calling Card, AT&T Universal Card and most local telephone company cards, or placed collect. The cost of a call from Fiji is US\$3.75 for the first minute and US\$2.35 for each additional minute. There is an additional US\$2.50 charge for a calling card call and a US\$2.75 charge for a collect call.

Hawaii bank looking at expanding into Solomons

THE Bank of Hawaii is planning further expansion in the South Pacific. It is already established in Micronesia, Polynesia and Fiji. A few months ago it bought Banque Indosuez, in Vanuatu, and now it is looking at moving into the Solomon Islands. Bank vice-president William Ord was in Honiara last month to look at the possibility of setting up a branch there.

Ord has also announced plans for extensive renovations and expansion of the Banque Indosuez building in Port Vila and modernisation of its operations. He said the bank was also looking at setting up a branch in Lugainville, on the northern island of Santo.

Solomons gets new conference centre

THE Solomon Islands is expected to benefit greatly from the new Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) conference centre which opened in Honiara last month. The centre has been funded by the European Community for US\$1.2 million. EC delegate in Honiara George Gwyer said the purpose of the building was to provide a place where the FFA meetings can be held.

PNG urban growth rate among highest in region

PAPUA New Guinea's urban growth rate is among the highest in the 19-member group of Pacific island nations, excluding Australia and New

Zealand. With an urban growth rate of 4.4 per cent per year, PNG ranks fourth after Solomon Islands (5.3 per cent), Tuvalu (4.8 per cent) and Vanuatu (4.5 per cent).

In terms of population growth, PNG and Kiribati are both in sixth place among the 19 island nations at 2.3 per cent per year. The Marshall Islands, with a 4.2 per cent population growth, tops the table, followed by Federated States of Micronesia (3.6 per cent), the Solomon Islands (3.5 per cent), French Polynesia (three per cent), Vanuatu (2.5 per cent), and Guam and Palau (2.2 per cent).

Swiss invited to invest in PNG

THE Papua New Guinea government would like to see Switzerland invest in the country. Acting governor-general Bill Skate said last month that Swiss investment in PNG was welcome and would strengthen bilateral relations between the countries.

He said PNG would welcome investment from Switzerland in areas like forestry, fisheries, marine, mineral, petroleum, agriculture and infrastructure development. Skate extended the invitation when he received credentials of Swiss ambassador Peter Niegerberger.

Financial support for Tonga Development Bank

THE Tonga Development Bank is to receive more financial support from the European Investment Bank (EIB). The EIB has granted approval for its fifth line of credit to the Tonga Development Bank of US\$2.4 million. The EIB loan is intended for small and medium sized enterprise in Tonga in the industrial, manufacturing, agro-industrial, fisheries, tourism, transport and production infrastructure sectors. The EIB has now granted the Tonga Development Bank five loans totalling US\$6.6 million since its first line of credit in 1981.

Fiji's US sugar quota safe, Rabuka told

FIJI Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka has been told by senior United States officials that his country's sugar quota was secure. The assurance came after the US signed a new trade agreement with Canada and Mexico, called the North American Free Trade Agreement. Rabuka was in Washington last month for talks with US officials.

Acting Secretary of State Strobe Talbott told Rabuka that Fiji's allocation of 0.9 per cent of the American sugar market was not threatened. He said the special payment granted to Fiji under the generalised system of preference would continue. □

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Air New Zealand's ties with the region

Air New Zealand's drive to establish the South Pacific on the international tourism map reflects a long standing partnership between the airline and Fiji. This association with Fiji's tourism development goes back to when the first New Zealand National Airways Corporation (NAC) aircraft began services to Fiji in 1947.

The development of the Coral route, first served by the Solent flying boats in the 1950s, reflected Air New Zealand's early commitment to assist tourism to the South Pacific. These links have been personified by chief executives like Kaiviti John Wisdom, who led the airline between 1981 and 1982, and was a long-serving manager for Air New Zealand in Fiji. While other airlines have come and gone, today Fiji remains an integral part of Air New Zealand's international network, bringing in thousands of tourists each year.

Air New Zealand's belief in healthy competition in the marketplace has been matched by a commitment to co-operation with Fijian airlines and tourist operators to promote development. A good example of this co-operation can be found in Nadi's new airport hangar, where Air New Zealand engineers work regularly with Air Pacific technical crew to service the Fijian carrier's leased 747 aircraft.

In August last year, Air Pacific leased an Air New Zealand 747 for three years. An important part of the contract was an agreement to co-operate on aircraft maintenance and carry out the work in Nadi to better utilise equipment and infrastructure at the new hangar. Air New Zealand engineering teams work with Air Pacific crews to service the aircraft and provide certification checks. Engineering co-operation is just one example of Air New Zealand's commitment to developing tourism in Fiji, says the airline's regional manager Pacific Islands, Ric Macgillicuddy.

"We see Fiji as an important hub within the South Pacific, as well as a premier destination in its own right." Air New Zealand's Destination South Pacific strategy continues the airline's commitment to the region and is dedicated to developing the South Pacific as a leading international tourist destination. Tourism is today the world's largest industry, and largest generator of jobs. The industry is forecast to double in size by the year 2005, with the Asia Pacific region expected to be a focus of growth.

In 1992, tourism generated \$328.4 million in the Fijian economy, with indications that 1993 will surpass this. The Fiji tourism industry currently employs about 40,000 workers. The

tourists to Fiji from long haul markets like Europe and North America, as well as New Zealand, which is Fiji's second-largest tourist-origin market and is enjoying steady visitor growth. Air New Zealand's services to Nadi bring in visitors from North America and Europe. Air New Zealand is one of the largest international carriers at Los Angeles's Tom Bradley international terminal with its North American services conveniently linked to its flights from London and Frankfurt. The Fiji government's recent decision to allow Air New Zealand to launch three weekly services to Nagoya, Japan, will further boost arrivals from this important Asian market. Macgillicuddy says that Fiji benefits from Air New Zealand's experience in international markets.

A former regional manager in North America and Europe, Macgillicuddy was instrumental in establishing Air New Zealand's advanced, computerised marketing system which enables the airline to target key travel agents and tailor its services to particular market niches. Ten years of experience in these markets makes

him adamant that Fiji can leverage off Air New Zealand's investment in these markets by recognising the role which strategic partnerships with international carriers can play in developing tourism.

"Through Air New Zealand, Fiji's travel trade has access to much bigger markets than it would otherwise have," he says. "We've been in North America for 30 years and have a well-established distribution system in Europe and Japan. We are actively promoting Fiji in those markets, which is bringing in additional visitors to the destination." Promotions like 'Project Pride', which saw hundreds of European travel agents invited to Fiji on a familiarisation visit, represent Air New Zealand's multi-million dollar marketing investment in promoting Fiji as a destination.

Air New Zealand is a major source of



Assisting tourism: an Air New Zealand aircraft

intensive labour requirements of the industry make it a growth area for new jobs. A 1990 report by the Tourism Council of the South Pacific confirmed tourism's "highly positive" contribution to Fiji with a wide cross section of the economy benefiting from tourist expenditure. As tourism's contribution to Fiji's economy becomes ever more vital, the industry and government policy-makers will need to give greater attention to policies which stimulate growth and attract visitors, says Macgillicuddy. "Quality infrastructure like the new Nadi airport development is one important factor," he says, "but just as important are liberal aviation policies that allow airlines to operate expand services."

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Mr Peter Greensmith
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AVIATION in the Pacific

advertising feature

The airline featured Fiji in five recent marketing initiatives conducted within New Zealand, including the \$1 million 'Come and Get It' campaign, the 'Itchy Feet' promotion, a direct mail campaign, discounted fares and a special 'Visit Friends and Relatives' package. Fiji is also being promoted on Air New Zealand's in-flight video show *Blue Pacific*. The programme *Fiji Feast* has been translated into Chinese and Japanese and will soon be shown on all Taipei and Japan services.

Macgillicuddy says it's wrong to think that if Air New Zealand didn't operate to these markets, another airline could bring in the visitors. "It's not an 'either/or' situation," he says. "If we didn't operate to Nagoya, for example, those visitors would be lost because those slots and those rights don't exist for other carriers."

"Aviation policy is not about dividing up existing traffic, but about encouraging new players to tap new markets." The 80,000 tourists which Air New Zealand brings into Fiji annually, represent an economic contribution to Fiji's economy of around \$166,571,745. This translates into around 4516 full time jobs.

Given that 21 additional visitors support an additional job, Air New Zealand's new services to Japan alone are likely to create nearly 300 additional jobs, based on projections of around 6240 new visitors from Nagoya each year. Macgillicuddy says Nagoya is a distinct market within Japan, currently untapped, and complements Air Pacific's flights to Osaka. Both carriers operate to Tokyo. "Nagoya accounts for about 5.5 per cent of Japan's outbound traffic," says Macgillicuddy. "It's quite distinct from Tokyo or Osaka. Experience shows that holiday-makers want direct services to destinations." Travel agents in Fiji and Japan have welcomed the Nagoya services as a chance to expand Fiji's tourism opportunities in this huge market.

Macgillicuddy says Air New Zealand hopes the tourism industry and government officials continue to expand opportunities for airlines in Fiji. "International experience shows that destinations with liberal, open skies policies reap the benefits in terms of tourism growth." Meanwhile, Air New Zealand's Boeing 747-400 aircraft last month completed the fastest time crossing the Tasman in a record one hour 54 minutes. This beats the fastest time recorded almost three years ago by an Air New Zealand B747-200 of one hour 57 minutes.

The crossing was aided by very strong winds of 190 knots. Cruising at an altitude of 39,000 feet the aircraft was able to travel in excess of 700 miles an hour. Commenting on the crossing, Captain Mike McLeay said it was not unusual to get exceptionally strong winds at this time of the year. □



Air Vanuatu: the airline is more profitable

Dedication works for Air Vanuatu

THE chairman of Air Vanuatu, Kalpokor Kalsakau, has credited the positive financial results of Air Vanuatu during 1993 to hard work and dedication by the airline's board; the managing director, Jean-Paul Virelala; executive directors; senior management staff; and company staff at all offices and locations.

At a meeting of the board in March when the 1993 accounts were approved, Kalsakau said the mandate given to the current board, and particularly to him as chairman to make the airline profitable, had been achieved.

He said while the change in aircraft and the total repayment of government loans had been major factors in the reduction of operational and financial costs, the overall management directions taken by the company particularly towards marketing, fare structuring and flight scheduling had assisted greatly in promoting and maintaining Vanuatu as an attractive tourist destination in a very competitive market and despite the global economic situation.

Kalsakau advised that the company had set its operational and promotional programme for this year towards improving tourist numbers, and said there would also be some major policy de-

cisions to be considered during the year towards the airline's future direction. These developments are in line with the government's broad development plans for the tourism sector in the improvement of Bauerfield and Pekoia airports, and the diversification of tourism projects to Santo, Tanna and other islands.

The chairman of the national airline would like to extend his board's appreciation to government, the National Tourism Office, private and aid institutions, and individuals who had provided support to Air Vanuatu in its efforts to promote the airline and also the country as a destination. However, Kalsakau called on the tourism industry to strive towards consolidation and improvement, particularly the development of additional hotel rooms.

"In these changing times where tourism, the world over, is becoming a major economic force at national and international levels, I would like to see the National Tourism Office and vested interests in our local industry come together to create an annual convention to discuss tourism in this country."

Kalsakau added that Air Vanuatu would be taking the initiative to assist the tourism office in planning for such a convention later in the year. □

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The airline's combination of unique destinations and its attention to passenger comfort and convenience should ensure that it plays a significant aviation role for some time to come. Throughout its history, this small airline has unfailingly put its faith in the modern jet. Nauru believed the passenger wanted a swift and safe service from the metropolitan centres to the Central Pacific — needs that could only be provided by modern jet.

During the 1970s and 1980s Air Nauru took passengers directly out of Sydney, Melbourne, Auckland and Hong Kong to Guam, Nauru and Tarawa. While not currently flying to Hong Kong, it is still possible to connect with Asia either at Manila or Guam. This is an airline born and bred in the Central Pacific and devoted to the region's development. Constantly Air Nauru is looking at new possibilities which can assist both business and tourism in the area. Recently, in co-operation with the Kiribati government, a new route opened from Tarawa to Honolulu via Kiritimati (Christmas) Island.

Air Nauru flies the modern and efficient Boeing 737-400. It is rationalising its air services using two of the aircraft. The airline has an unequalled safety record and its 737-400 aircraft are maintained by the first class maintenance services of Qantas. While the Tarawa airstrip is being renewed, Air Nauru will continue to use one of its proven 737-200, specially equipped for gravel strips.

The in-cabin service is provided in a pleasant and welcoming Pacific style in first, business and economy classes. For business travellers in Australia, New Zealand and Fiji, Air Nauru offers direct unparalleled services to the centres of Guam, Nauru and Tarawa with connecting flights to Hong Kong through Manila, Japan through Guam and to mainland USA and Canada through Honolulu.

But Air Nauru offers to the holiday traveller a world of delight and mystery. The airline brings a veritable kaleidoscope of islands offering the traveller a wealth of interest. Micronesia is a haven of islands of great beauty, from the majestic Pohnpei and its secrets of Nan Madol, to the diving wonders of Chuuk (Truk), accessible through interline on-



Nauru: awaiting the tourist

carriage from Pohnpei or Guam. Nauru, the home of Air Nauru, presents a busy industrial island and some of the most remarkable island landscape in the Pacific. The newly refurbished Menen Hotel, overlooking glorious Anibare Bay, offers international standard facilities

with the unique flavour of traditional Pacific hospitality.

At the other end of the Micronesia group stands the large island of Guam with its magnificent resort locality of Tumon Bay and Nauru's very own five star resort, the Pacific Star Hotel.

One of the best kept secrets of Polynesia is the island of Niue. Air Nauru has a weekly flight to this unique and picturesque destination direct from Auckland. Visitors to Auckland or in transit there will appreciate the beauty and serenity of New Zealand while staying in luxury at one of its international standard hotels, such as the Sheraton owned by Nauru. With twice-weekly flights, Melbourne-Nauru and Nauru-Melbourne, Pacific travellers have ample opportunity to sample the cultural, historical and gastronomic delights of the city, while having a choice of fine Nauru-owned hotels to stay at, from the personalised style of the elegant Savoy Park Plaza to the well-known Melbourne landmark, the Southern Cross. Air Nauru's sales agents throughout the Pacific are there to meet the individual requirements of each traveller. □

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Reaching new heights

THIS year, Polynesian Airlines is consolidating its activities following the completion of an 18-month expansion programme. The airline will continue to be available to do charters which currently include 107 Trans-Tasman flights to secondary airports in Auckland, New Zealand; Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne flights into Invercargill; Brisbane flights into Hamilton and Auckland flights into Townsville. These charters will operate from this month to October this year.

Polynesian Airlines will also operate eight charters between Apia and Nagoya next month and in August. Polynesian Airlines has had a 12-month introduction of the Boeing 767 service and is now aware of the market variations and changes. The United States market is now the largest market for Polynesian Airlines with Australia and New Zealand competing for second position and Western Samoa holding fourth.

Polynesian Airlines plans to consolidate the gains made in various markets and intends to continue efforts to reduce costs and increase yields. Revenues are

currently running at three times the last financial year and passenger numbers have also increased by the same amount. Staffing numbers have only increased by 15 per cent. It is intended that this level

Polynesian Airlines plans to consolidate the gains made in various markets and intends to continue efforts to reduce costs and increase yields. Revenues are running at three times the last financial year and passenger numbers have risen by the same amount.

will be maintained and more sophisticated computers used to cope with the workload. Productivity per staff member has risen dramatically as a result.

Average yields over the last nine months have increased by 30 per cent

and the passenger-seat-kilometres flown have increased by 300 per cent. The average load factor in the past nine months rose by 15 per cent and is now running at 58 per cent.

Access to the US market has improved dramatically as has the inter-island flow, thus improving the viability of connecting services between islands. This is particularly vital for the development of Pacific Island co-operation, trade and communications. Polynesian Airlines' focus is regional rather than national in nature.

In the interim period, the airline has also welcomed Royal Tongan Airlines aboard and has commenced training Royal Tongan flight attendants to enable them to become part of Polynesian Airlines crew. This welcome partnership will improve transport links for both countries.

An additional service — Wellington to Melbourne — has commenced and Polynesian Airlines looks forward to providing this service to Pacific

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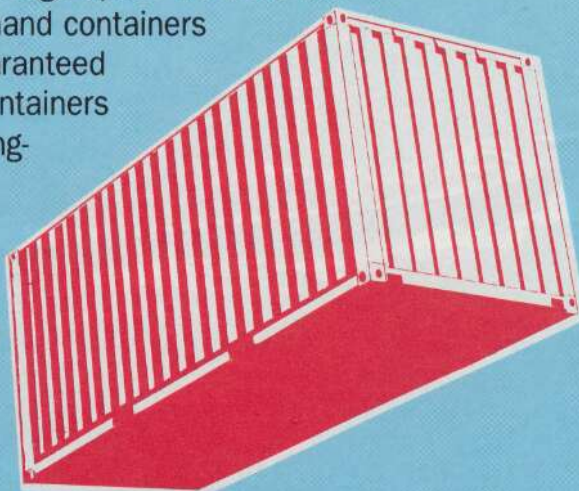
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AVIATION in the Pacific

advertising feature

Islanders living in the lower half of the North Island of New Zealand and the South Island. The withdrawal of Continental Airlines and the increased demand for stop-over tourist traffic will assist the aspirations of island nations in developing tourism.

Polynesian Airlines foresees some stability in Pacific Island markets with South Pacific carriers providing the bulk of transport needs into and through the region. Fuel savings have been achieved at major ports. However, in the island nation ports, it is noticeable that despite the downward trend in fuel prices worldwide, prices have remained firm because of the monopoly position enjoyed by the fuel suppliers.

The airline feels there is a need for governments to ensure that vital transport links are supplied at as low a cost as possible.

Freight revenue for Polynesia Airlines continues to remain strong and has increased dramatically in the last year despite reductions in scheduled cargo capacity. The backlogs of freight which have been common prior to the introduction of the Boeing 737QC (Quick Change) cargo aircraft are no longer apparent.

This has assisted in the development of

manufacturing through the ability to immediately and readily transport goods and, of course, the ability to meet the short term needs of the nations. This added flexibility has enhanced Western Samoa as a nation for investment.

Polynesian Airlines secures 90 per cent of its revenue offshore. This is in sharp contrast to 12 months ago when seven

The airline expects that as the US economy continues to move out of the recession, passenger numbers and yields will increase. As New Zealand continues to solidify gains made in the last three years, it expects to see improvements out of there.

per cent of its revenue was secured offshore. The introduction of the Boeing 737 in the first quarter of the 1993/1994 financial year (July to June) saw revenues increase 225 per cent. In the second quarter, revenues were up 300 per cent and the third quarter was greater again. The fourth quarter has started

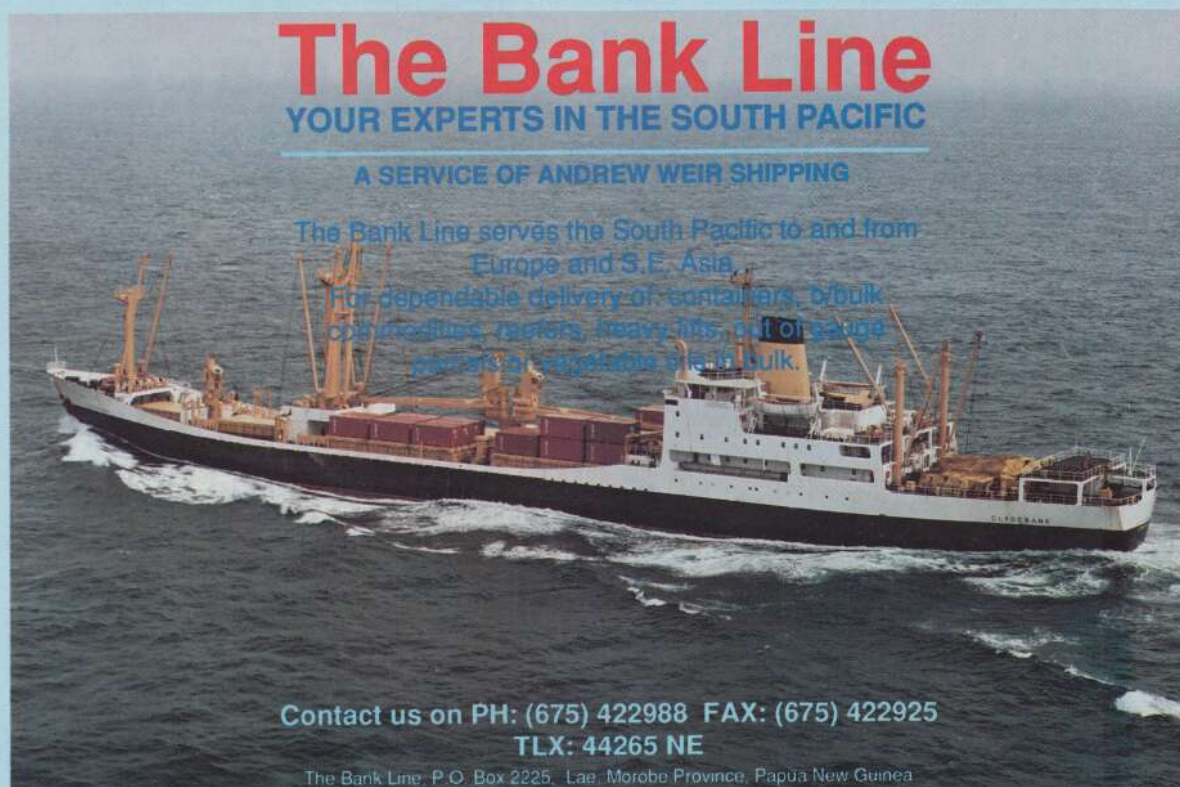
with a higher seat load factor while yield and passenger numbers continue to increase. So Polynesian Airlines is very confident about the airline's performance in the fourth quarter.

Polynesian Airlines expects that as the US economy continues to move out of the current recession, passenger numbers and yields will increase. As New Zealand continues to solidify gains made in the last three years, the airline expects to see improvements out of there.

As Australia improves as well, Polynesian Airlines expects to see Australia become its second major market after the US with overall increases of 400 to 500 per cent. In the last 12 months, Polynesian Airlines has taken advantage of trading opportunities created by increased free market access to New Zealand. This has enabled Polynesian Airlines to provide greater frequency to its core markets.

In its cost cutting exercises, Polynesian Airlines has selected a replacement Boeing 767 for the current Boeing 767. This has realised savings of 50 per cent on lease charges and additional savings on maintenance and pilots costs.

These savings will be translated into very profitable operations for the airline. □



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The Flightline companies are thus part of a large stable organisation with a proven solid trading history, and enjoy the benefits of strong financial backing.

Based at Ardmore Airport, South Auckland, and with branches throughout New Zealand plus one in Brisbane, Australia, Flightline Aviation is this country's largest supplier of light aircraft, engineering services, and parts support to the general aviation industry. The company's comprehensive aeronautical engineering facilities cover avionics and instruments, engines, fuel systems and electrics, hangar, helicopter componentry, propellers, and turbine engines and are the only such operations in New Zealand to carry both US Federal Aviation Administration, and NZ Civil Aviation Authority certification. Flightline's reputation and commitment to quality is illustrated by many exclusive distributorships for the Australasian and South Pacific region, such as the prestigious McDonnell Douglas Helicopter Company.

Also located at Ardmore Airport, Flightline Aeronautical College is the largest pilot training academy in New Zealand and is fully approved by both the NZ Civil Aviation Authority and NZ Qualifications Authority. Comprehensive training programmes are provided for both aeroplane and helicopter pilots, and with unparalleled experience and expertise the college is held in very high regard by airlines, the general aviation community, and by the military both here and overseas.

While the training school started, and to this day remains an academy run by New Zealanders, it is gaining increasing international favour and reputation with airlines, the military, and with private individuals for professional pilot training. College graduates are competent aircraft commanders, not just pilots with good flying skills. To date students from Indonesia, England, Korea, Vanuatu, Tonga, Western Samoa, Oman and Japan have enrolled and trained with the



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 **air new zealand**

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AVIATION in the Pacific

advertising feature

college, plus the many, many New Zealanders over the years as well. Recent times have seen expansion and business improvement within Flightline. The Brisbane branch of the aviation company was established several years ago to capitalise on closer Australian trading opportunities, and further expansion is planned. The college won contracts to train pilots from both Merpati Nusantara Airlines in Indonesia, and from the Royal Oman Police Force, in the face of stiff international competition.

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for the facts and professional advice.

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Flightline Aviation's engineering operations include the most comprehensive service facilities for general aviation in New Zealand. The operations are both New Zealand Civil Aviation Authority, and USA Federal Aviation Authority, and USA Federal Aviation Administration (Repair Station GQ4Y215M) approved to carry out maintenance and overhaul of all general aviation aircraft, fixed wing and rotary wing up to and including turbine powered.

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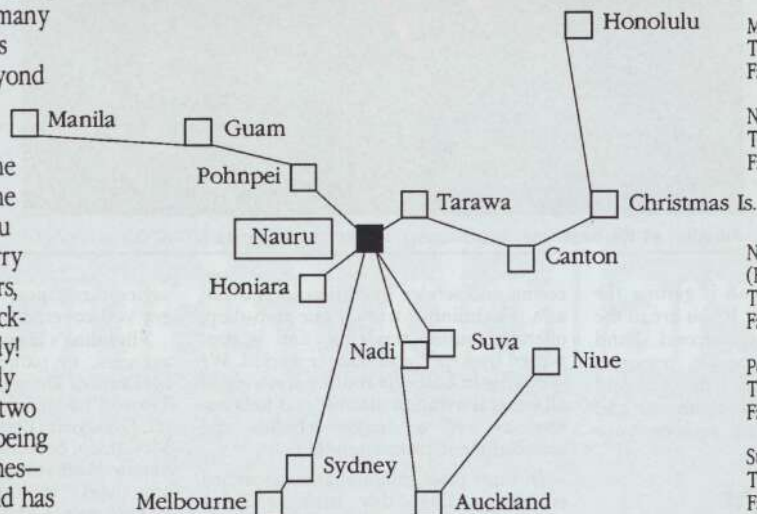
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Flightline lineup: a recent squad of graduates

Cessna to celebrate with tour

THIS year is marking a very important milestone for US aircraft manufacturer, Cessna Aircraft Company. The company is celebrating 10 years since the introduction of its Cessna Caravan aircraft, and in conjunction with Flightline Aviation, will be bringing a special commemorative Cessna Caravan on tour throughout the South Pacific region.

"The first decade since FAA certification and launch of the Caravan has been very successful," explains Brian Sutherland, business development manager for Flightline Aviation. "Over 600 Caravan aircraft have been sold worldwide with logged flight hours easily surpassing one million hours," Sutherland points out.

The Cessna Caravan is the world's largest single engine turbo-prop aircraft, and carries up to 14 people. Alternatively the aircraft has cargo capacity of up to 3500lb. "The Caravan's great versatility and rugged construction has made it very popular with many operators who do a wide variety of work, and who work out of and in some rather harsh and inaccessible environments," says Sutherland.

Flightline's college earlier this year confirmed details of its new reduced hour commercial pilot licence syllabus and training programmes. The training programmes are for both aeroplane and helicopter pilot licences and can save students considerable time and money in their training. Flightline had NZ CAA dispensation for quite sometime, allowing it to offer the reduced 150-hour commercial pilot licence (aeroplane)

versus the normal requirement for 200 hours of flight time. Now the college is able to offer the achievement of a commercial pilot licence (helicopter) after 125 hours total flight experience compared to the normal requirement of 150 hours. Savings for students in both time and money are therefore significant.

"Over the years, many students have trained and graduated from Flightline with full professional pilot licences, and saved both time and money along the way," points out Michael Young, general manager of the college. "Quite a number of these students have come from the South Pacific region," he adds. In fact, Flightline has developed quite an international reputation for the training of student pilots from outside New Zealand.

"Part of the reason for our success internationally is our attention to detail for students who are non-native English speaking. We run specialist English language courses, and place great emphasis on cockpit management pilot decision-making and leadership," says Young. In addition to professional flight crew licences, the college offers private pilot licence training for recreational aviators.

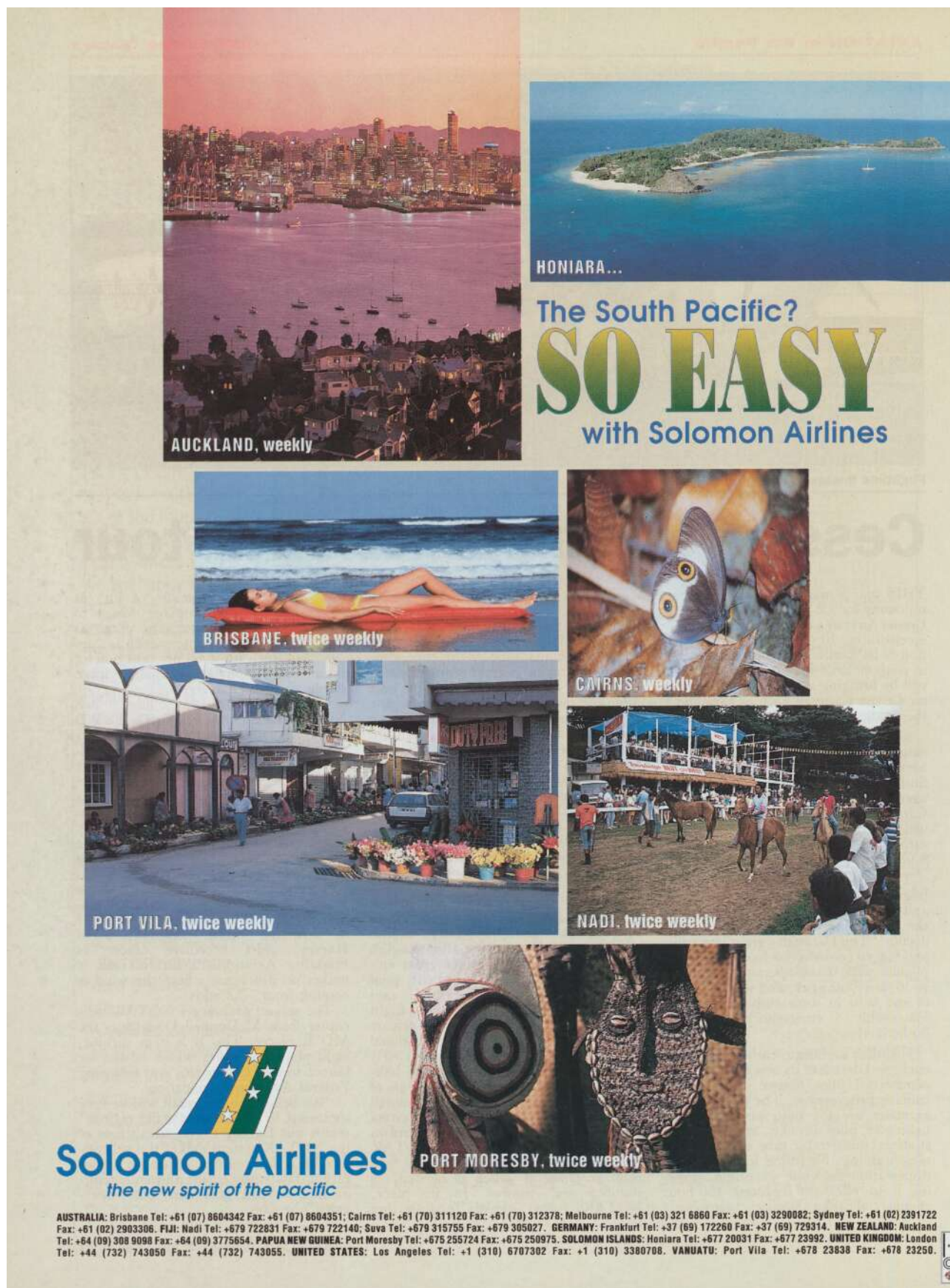
Meanwhile, revolutionising the helicopter industry, the result of 17 years of research and development, is McDonnell Douglas' NOTAR (no tail rotor) system for anti-torque and directional control on helicopters. Put simply, the NOTAR system replaces the conventional tail rotor mechanism which is needed for stability and control. In its place, NOTAR uses clever engineering,

airflow, and the principle of lift (as generated by an aeroplane wing) to control the helicopter. The result is impressive — a helicopter which is safer (no tail rotor), up to 50 per cent quieter than conventional helicopters, more stable and easier to fly.

McDonnell Douglas have two NOTAR helicopters. The first is the MD 520N, (a single turbine, five seater machine) which was launched throughout New Zealand and Australia late last year by regional distributor Flightline Aviation. The first MD 520N has just recently been sold to Queensland property and construction company, Peachey Constructions. The helicopter will be used for a variety of tasks including power line survey and stringing work. "The stability and controllability of the helicopter, thanks to the NOTAR system, makes it ideal for the sideward flight in stringing work," explains Will Harvey, chief executive officer of Flightline Aviation. "With NOTAR it makes no difference where the wind is coming from," he adds.

The second and larger NOTAR helicopter from McDonnell Douglas is the MD Explorer. This is a twin turbine, eight-place helicopter which is due for launch in the US later this year following Federal Aviation certification.

"We believe both aircraft will be very successful in the South Pacific region," points out Harvey. "The advantages of the NOTAR system makes the helicopters ideal for tourism, off-shore exploration, law enforcement and emergency medical services, plus many other operators," he says.



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Promoting business and investment

THIS is my last Tradewinds column for *PIM* for I will soon be retiring from the South Pacific Trade Commission. I have naturally been thinking of the commission's work over the 12 years I've been its senior commissioner, and what strikes me is how I have seen a hackneyed, tired old phrase — one that usually means little to most people — come to life and to actually mean something specific and worthwhile.

The phrase I am talking about is "regional co-operation". As an arm of the South Pacific Forum, the South Pacific Trade Commission's task is to promote business and investment opportunities in all island member countries. But in doing that, we are at times in conflict with a country's own objectives in attracting as much trade as possible for we must work as enthusiastically for all Forum countries as we do for any one of them. While all are entitled to feel that we are even-handed in our assistance, they can't expect our activities to be exclusive to them.

With such a role we shouldn't be surprised if from time to time we are accused of playing favourites. Yet that doesn't happen. My experience has been that those we help accept our efforts as being genuinely regional. The islands display no selfish, dog-in-the-manger attitude. They appreciate that improvement in trade must bring benefits to the region, even if one group or other draws the short straw sometimes. This enlightened attitude particularly prevails at government level.

I have found all this greatly encouraging. This is the kind of co-operation that the founders of the South Pacific Forum had in mind when they launched it in Wellington in 1971. It's the way I hoped things might develop when, in 1972, I returned to Australia from Kenya, where I had been Australia's trade commissioner for three years, with particular responsibility for Zambia, Zaire, Tanzania and Malawi, and was sent to Suva to take over as Australian trade commissioner for the South Pacific. That post had been established 18 months earlier, following Fiji's independence. In Suva I was asked for help and advice by many Australian businessmen selling to the islands, but I was contacted by very few island businessmen hoping to sell to Australia. This was because islanders assumed my job was confined to drumming up more sales for Australian products and services and that I would have no interest in their problems.

But trade is a two-way street and they badly needed help and advice about the market opportunities in Australia. I received official permission from Canberra to spend more time helping local traders, or any island business people I could reach from Suva.

TRADEWINDS



BILL
McCABE

Believe it or not, it took 12 months before the local people were finally comfortable about seeking help from me. They thought there must be strings attached — that it was some Australian business ploy to dupe them. It was not, of course. I had, as I still have, a genuine commitment to the mutual benefits of two-way trade.

By the time I left Suva at the beginning of 1978 to take up a posting as Australian consul-general in Osaka, Japan, the need to help develop island business and investment was so well recognised (and I claim some credit for helping achieve this) that the South Pacific Forum had decided to establish the South Pacific Trade Commission to concentrate on it exclusively. This was done in 1979. It was set up with financial help from Australia, and operated from an office in Sydney. I

took over its direction in 1982. From the commission's inception, its annual budget has been provided by Australian aid, and Australian government agencies also continue to pick up the tab on many additional and joint activities.

The fact that the SPTC operates from Sydney, is managed by an Australian, and uses Australian aid funds channelled through the Forum, has resulted in misunderstandings about its purpose, although less so these days. But there is still an attitude in the islands that the people in Canberra spend their time plotting to take advantage of them over some trade matter or other. Nothing could be further from the truth. Contrary to these suspicions, I often have to fight hard to persuade Canberra people to focus on specific island trade issues for more than five minutes at a time! I doubt if my successor, wherever he or she comes from (nobody has been named yet) will find it any different.

Sydney was chosen for the SPTC 15 years ago because it was an efficient base from which to co-ordinate necessary contacts. It also provided an office and facilities for visiting island business people, as it still does. I was given the job in view of my experience in Pacific trade, but I was left alone to get on with it the way I thought it should be done.

Of course we have had our failures as well as our successes, but when I look back on the past decade I can see very significant changes, most of them for the better, although there is still much to be done. I owe a great debt of gratitude to many people who have assisted — or at times made possible — the modest progress in trade development that we can claim. I haven't space to list them all, but my thanks are genuine. The list includes *PIM*, which in support of regional co-operation, has made this regular space available to me since October 1991. I look forward to contributing to development in the region from time to time as we all continue to strive for better things. □

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Competition ahead

THE managing director of Post and Telikom Corporation, Isikeli Taureka, has said that Telikom faces possible competition due to the deregulation of the telecommunications market. He also called on senior Telikom managers to draw up strategic plans to fit an achievable business plan.

Taureka said this when he opened a week-long strategic planning workshop for senior Telikom managers at the Port Moresby Travelodge Hotel in April. The workshop was conducted by strategic planning experts — Doctor Noel Lindsay and Owen Tilbury from Bond University, in Queensland, Australia.

Taureka warned his officers when he said: "The government has re-established the Department of Information and Communications, the development of the policy on information and communications which does not recognise PTC as the sole carrier." The policy, he said, did not recognise ownership by Papua New Guineans. Instead, Taureka said, it intended to liberalise the telecommunications network by people or entities who could provide services efficiently and at a competitive price. He said the possible introduction of a second cellular mobile carrier or a second international gateway

Telikom boss urges preparedness for changes in industry

gave emphasis to the government policy that they meant business.

"In fact, it's the government's policy to commercialise and corporatise PTC as

a carrier and policy regulator or both. The notion that has been ingrained that PTC has the complete monopoly on communications services owned by the people of PNG is out the window," Taureka said.

"I would suggest that there is nothing to stop Hitron or EMTV from introducing voice or data," Taureka said.

"Our strategy must recognise these competitive threats and take them into account and accommodate an objective to be preferred carrier. I say this because change is inevitable," he said.

"The unbundling of regulation which constraints us from reacting to competition will be affected with the corporatisation process which is slowly gaining momentum." He said that instead of reacting to competition in a negative and confrontative manner, Telikom should respond positively in re-assessing its business strategies.

On whether Telikom should look at joint ventures in areas of a network where it was vulnerable to lack resources and expertise or whether it should establish wholly owned departments such as data services, pay phones, and information technology, adequately funded and autonomous and take on the market with an aggressive stance, Taureka said:



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"Frankly, as I see it, that in an industry perspective and the community requires access to freedom of information and communication."

The managing director said the government or PTC could not deny the people this basic human right.

"In these circumstances, there might be partial dismantling of the network and the corporation may only hold a dominant position in the trunk routes and external plant because of the substantial up front investment on ongoing maintenance of these networks and anything else would be up for grabs."

Taureka told the senior Telikom managers that there was no room for complacency and internal conflict and that they must plan strategies which should be linked to an achievable business plan. □



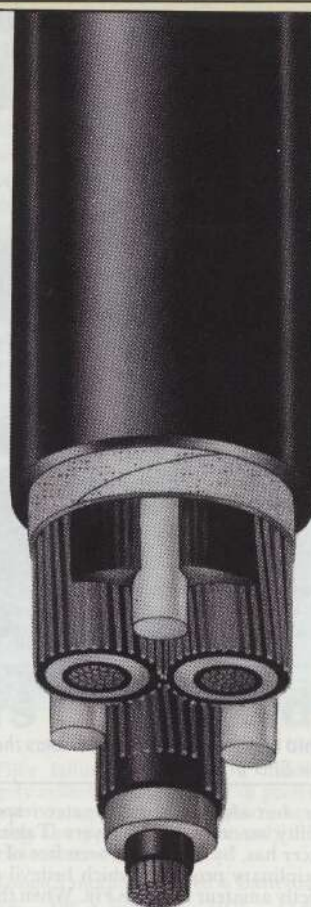
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SPORT

Tahiti boasts proud

By Atama Raganivatu

ON the face of it, the recent South Pacific Mini Games in Port Vila was disappointing for French Polynesia. Its tally of 30 medals languished well behind the totals achieved by the region's other major powers — Fiji, New Caledonia and Papua New Guinea — which won 56, 40 and 37 respectively. However, the games produced far more smiles than frowns in Papeete, for Tahiti won the soccer tournament by beating arch rival Fiji 3-0 in the final.

Soccer has long been the great sporting passion of Tahitians. The sport was well established at informal levels even before an administering body was constituted and an organised competition, the Coupe de Polynesie, launched in 1938 (curiously, the same year also saw the start of the Fiji Football Association and its Inter Districts Championship). The Tahitian League Championship commenced immediately after World War Two — a full 32 years ahead of its Fijian counterpart.

For a quarter of a century, Tahitian soccer cruised along in blissful solitude. Geographical isolation severely restricted international contacts until 1963 and the advent of the South Pacific Games. The first games, in Suva, brought an immense shock to Tahiti. It finished third, behind winners New Caledonia and Fiji. This inaugural tournament set the tone for the next seven, with the francophone teams vying for the gold medals and Fiji the most tenacious of those following in their wakes.

The 1966 event in Noumea ended with Tahiti winning its initial title by defeating the hosts. Three years later, the New Caledonians gained revenge at Port Moresby. Tahiti appeared set to redress the balance when staging the fourth SPG in 1971. During warm up matches, the Tahitians claimed their biggest scalp by defeating a Welsh FA XI composed of full time British professionals 1-0 and twice beat Chile's touring national amateur selection. But, at the games, Tahiti could do no better than finish third behind New Caledonia and New Hebrides (now Vanuatu). This initiated a total metamorphosis of the local association, the Ligue Regionale de Football de Polynesie Francaise.

Under the visionary leadership of LRFPPF president Napoleon Spitz, Tahitian soccer progressed rapidly over the next 20 years. The most important move was the introduction of semi professionalism. This not only attracted prominent players from New Zealand, Vanuatu and New Caledonia; considerably enhancing the standard of domestic



YAD SINGH

Tahiti in action: a Fiji player shields the ball against Tahiti in a match during last year's Mini SPG in Vanuatu

fare, but also promoted greater responsibility amongst local players. Tahitian soccer has, by and large, been free of the disciplinary problems which bedevil the strictly amateur set up in Fiji. When their incomes are likely to be affected, players usually refrain from missing practices, breaking curfew when in training camps or embarking upon shoplifting sprees while on overseas tours — breaches of conduct for which Fijian internationals are currently serving suspensions.

Spitz remains a dominant figure today to the extent that the administrative body's official address includes the line "for the attention of M Napoleon Spitz"! Tahiti was extremely lucky to also have,

for almost two decades, the services of a player who was just as influential on the pitch as Napoleon Spitz was off it. For 10 successive seasons, Erroll Bennett was the Tahitian league's leading goal scorer and his club, Central Sport, maintained a near stranglehold upon domestic trophies throughout the 1970s and well into the next decade. Spearheaded by Bennett, Tahiti claimed a hat trick of South Pacific Games successes between 1975 and 1983. It was also runner up at the Oceania Cup tournaments of 1973 and 1980 (which featured both Australia and New Zealand). There was absolutely no dissent when, in 1985, *The Fiji Times* dubbed Bennett "The King of South Pacific Soccer".

soccer tradition

Such was Bennett's standing that when he joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints in 1977, the Tahitian League switched its fixtures from Sundays to mid week dates and prevented his retirement due to Mormons' refusal to play sport on the Sabbath. Spitz also persuaded the South Pacific Games Committee to reschedule its soccer programme to accommodate his captain!

However, the slightly built policeman failed in his attempt to become a full time professional in Europe. Homesickness led to Bennett's early return to Papeete after a short, unproductive, stint with the now defunct FC Paris in 1971. The next outstanding product of Tahitian soccer fared better.

Pascal Vahirua, an "old fashioned" left winger blessed with superb ball control joined one of Papeete's Cinderella clubs, Mataia, when eight just as his father and elder brother had done before him. By the time he was 16, Vahirua's goals were keeping Mataia in the league's top section, the Honours Division. After starring for the Tahitian side that won an international youth tournament in Corsica, Vahirua was signed by French first division outfit AJ Auxerre in 1983 and, in the intervening years, played a major role in the little provincial club's establishment, for the first time, as a real power.

In 1990, Vahirua became the only Tahitian to ever represent France when gaining the first of a handful of caps against Kuwait. Cynics claim his call up was in membership to FIFA, the governing body of international soccer, in the same year. Once selected for one FIFA

member, a player is ineligible to appear for another.

Tahitian soccer administrators are notoriously independently minded. For many years, the most apparent indication of this was their sides going into battle under the banner of Tahiti rather than the government-preferred and officially correct (although very few

Tahiti has established itself as a force to be reckoned with on the soccer field. Free of disciplinary problems which plague other countries, the Tahitians have grown from strength to strength

players from the outer islands groups have ever been included) French Polynesia.

France has been averse to permitting her colonies to become visible separate entities and, although Macao, Hong Kong and several British and Dutch territories in the Caribbean have been part of the international soccer mainstream for a long time, Paris only reluctantly permitted Tahiti to become a FIFA member in 1990 after a protracted battle. Membership enabled Tahiti to make its World Cup debut two years ago when Australia was given a couple of hard games. Kingpin of the current team is gifted linkman Reynald Temarii. In 1990, he followed in the footsteps of

Bennet and Vahirua and spent two seasons with leading French club FC Nantes but failed to make an impact there. Nor did Temarii achieve much during a short stint at Brisbane United of Australia's national league. He has never let Tahiti down though and his dominance of midfield was instrumental in Fiji's downfall at the Mini Games.

Fiji's triumph at the 1991 SPG in Papua New Guinea was, at the time, regarded as a major turning point in regional soccer. However, it must now be recognised as merely an aberration. With Spitz's hand still firmly on the organisation now known as the Federation Tahitienne de Football and the domestic structure as strong as ever, Tahiti is well placed to continue producing players of the calibre of Bennett, Vahirua and Temarii. Add to this the turmoil that appears to be the norm now in Fiji as well as the state of the game in New Caledonia, which has yet to overcome the lengthy disruption to domestic competitions caused by civil unrest in the mid 1980s and nobody can blame the Tahitians for being ultra-confident of success at the SPG it will host next year. On the broader front, Tahiti is intent upon overtaking a seriously-on-the-wane New Zealand as Oceania's second best team before too long. The future certainly appears to be bright for Tahitian soccer.

■ The team last month completed a three-match tour in Fiji with games in the capital Suva and two of the main towns. The first was held at Labasa on May 19, with the others in Suva and Lautoka on May 23 and 25 respectively. □

W Samoa boxers grab gold

WESTERN Samoa broke Australia and New Zealand's traditional stranglehold upon the annual Oceania Amateur Boxing Championships by capturing two gold medals at this year's tournament in Port Vila; light middle-weight Bob Casio and super heavy-weight Emelio Leti both gaining decisive points decisions over Kiwi and Aussie opponents in their respective finals.

Host Vanuatu was delighted to capture a first ever silver medal and the young, inexperienced Solomon Islands squad fully deserved the same reward after a series of impressive showings. Papua New Guinea took home two silvers, but must have felt it should have done better.

Fiji's failure to provide a finalist largely reflected the strength of professional boxing there with fighters now joining the paid ranks after only the briefest amateur experience.

Tonga's morale received a battering when the highly rated Peaa Wolfgramm was declared ineligible to compete on the tournament's eve due to "residential ineligibility". He had not lived in the Kingdom for the previous six months. Nonetheless, the team's Australian coach, Cameron Todd, had every reason to state on the finals night that he was "encouraged by the boys' performances and thrilled we got a bronze medal". Disappointingly, Cook Islands, Guam and American Samoa were unable to send teams. □

Poaching days over

THE days of New Zealand poaching Manu Samoa players are over. A ruling by the International Rugby Board that any player wishing to switch from one country to another must stand down for three years has effectively slammed down the door on "dual internationals". Previously, a gentleman's agreement existed between the Western Samoan and New Zealand rugby unions which allowed players until February 15 of each year to declare the nation they would represent if eligible for both. Upon learning of the ruling, Western Samoa's technical director Bryan Williams observed, "It practically stops any player from appearing for a second country because, at international level, players can't afford to wait for three years." □

SPORT

Maori setback

By Shailendra Singh

A REQUEST by the New Zealand Maori's to be included in the 1995 South Pacific Games (SPG) has been knocked back once again. The issue, originally raised in 1981, was more thoroughly discussed and defeated in Apia, Western Samoa in 1983.

Australia and New Zealand are deliberately excluded from the SPG because of concern they may swamp island countries. But recently there had been suggestions to include all Australians and New Zealanders to add more prestige to the games.

Supporters of the move say the competition would benefit rather than be detrimental to island athletes, especially with the 2000 Olympics in Sydney. The latest request by the New Zealand Aoteroa Sports Federation was however still voted down 13-9 at the South Pacific Games Council meeting in Papeete in April, although some countries abstained. The underlying reason was that participation in the SPG is based on residence in a country without any consideration given to race, creed or politics.

Said one delegate: "If Maoris are included in the South Pacific Games, there must presumably be a definition of the race. The implications for Hawaiians, Aborigines, Chinese, Indians, Europeans or Micronesians in the Pacific must also be considered." Some Maori delegates in Tahiti were the same ones who had been pushing the issue in 1983. They had actually submitted their recommendations for amending the games charter to include them even without being members.



Striding out: Guam at the opening of last year's games

The Maoris' perseverance highlights the question of whether it is now timely that all Australians and New Zealanders be included in the SPG. Discussions in the last 12 months have floated the idea so that racial representation would lapse but its clear there is still some time before the bigger neighbours will be allowed in.

Meanwhile, Tahiti is well on its way to hosting the 10th SPG from August 12 to 26. Council delegates were taken on a tour to inspect facilities and came away impressed. Tahiti, which also hosted the fourth SPG in 1971, has agreed to host 22 sports. The organising committee agreed to include four other events, namely netball, squash, surfing and powerlifting, on the understanding that competitors and officials be limited to 3000.

The other sports are athletics, soccer, basketball, swimming, tennis, boxing, golf, bodybuilding, judo, archery, triathlon, volleyball, table tennis, underwater fishing, cycling, Tae Kwan Do, outrigger canoeing, karate, rugby union, shooting and netball. The council has accepted Guam's bid for the 1999 SPG ahead of Western Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu.

Manu Samoa ends Auckland's reign

WESTERN Samoa ended Auckland's 13-year unbeaten run against international touring rugby union sides with a magnificent 15-13 win at Eden Park on April 23. Western Samoa was simply too fast, too strong and too good for a game Auckland team in their Super 10 competition encounter.

Auckland last lost to an international side at Eden Park in 1981 when beaten by South Africa. Western Samoa's two-tries-to-one victory followed a 50-point loss to Auckland two years ago and 12 months ago it lost to the New Zealand provincial champions 18-10. Both sides began tentatively until Auckland scored the first points when Western Samoa was penalised for a ruck infringement and Shane Howarth landed the penalty. Four minutes later the Samoans conceded another penalty and Howarth was again on target.

The home side extended its lead after right winger John Kirwan fed Lee Stensness, who fired out a cut out pass which centre Martin Stanley grabbed to score a converted try. Down 0-13 Western Samoa soon replied. Captain Peter Fatiafalo was again prominent as he launched another bruising run on the right flank to splinter the Auckland defence. Halfback Tu Nu'uali'itia spun the ball to the right and winger Brian Lima went in under the crossbar to score a try converted by five-eighth Darren Kellett.

The visitors were quickly on attack again when prop George Latu was hauled down short of the Auckland tryline and Nu'uali'itia scooped up the ball and dived over. Western Samoa went to the break trailing by just one point at 12-13. Kellett had earlier failed to kick three penalties within his reach but finally gained some confidence with a 30-metre drop goal in the 52nd minute to give Western Samoa a 15-13 lead.



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YACHTING

'Don't mention Rainbow'

Wallis hosts Bastille Day celebrations

By Sally Andrew

"DON'T mention the Rainbow," he told me, "even if you see one in the sky!" Foster was referring, of course, to the *Rainbow Warrior*, flagship of the Greenpeace Organisation. The reason for his anxiety — we had been invited for lunch aboard the French naval warship *Jacques Cartier*, tied up alongside Mata-Utu Wharf. The *Jacques Cartier* was in port to help celebrate Bastille Day at Uvea, in Iles Wallis.

On the day of the fete, we struck up a conversation with a handsome man in white who we assumed was off the warship. Like us, he was ashore watching the traditional sailing pirogue races. When I asked him what he did aboard the ship, he modestly said, "I am the captain". I invited him to tour our "ship", and Captain Oger kindly reciprocated with an invitation to come for lunch and a tour aboard his. Starting with escargots and a glass of French wine, we conversed through french fries, prime rib, cafe noir, sorbet and biscuits without international incident.

Aboard the *Jacques Cartier*, the tri-colour whipped in the wind. From the afterdeck, we could see *Fellowship* anchored three miles further south, off the village of Gahi, along with five other boats — *Larocca* (USA), *Rino Atu* (New Zealand), *Quenah Guen* (Canada), *Hibiscus III* (New Zealand) and *Teal* (France). All of us had come to Wallis to take part in the Bastille Day celebrations.

The anchorage at Gahi is pretty with high green promontories to the south and west, and multi-hued waters and reefs around the well-marked entrance to the east. It is protected from most wind directions. Gahi itself is a tiny



Anchorage at Gahi: traditional and modern craft

village of Polynesian *fales* facing the bay. It has its own shrine, the Oratoire St Vincent de Paul, and every morning at seven o'clock the local ladies, arms filled with offerings of fresh red flowers, stroll down the road and visit the waterfront shrine. Pigs wander free through the village, and at low tide they venture out onto the reef and dig deep holes with their noses. I almost fell in one when I went ashore to join the women doing laundry at the freshwater spring. A pick-up truck, loaded with baguettes, comes down to the village every afternoon at three-thirty and honks his horn. We often rowed ashore to get a fresh baguette for dinner.

Walking around the island we were impressed with the tidy homesteads,

houses surrounded by flowering shrubs, gardens edged in hedges of croton and hibiscus, plantations crowded with banana and taro. Men and women wore garlands of flowers or single blossoms in their hair. Along the main road, we stopped to watch a game of bowls and were offered a drink of Pastis. Half a mile later, a lady hailed us, fished around in her bag and gave us four oranges!

South along the main road the church of St Joseph dominates the village of Mu'a. A large cathedral built out of black volcanic stone with contrasting white mortar lines, it is remarkable. A European oddity on the outside, it hints of the islands inside. Behind a one-handed statue of Christ, a halo-like *kava* bowl is painted on the wall. Flowers,

mats, and Wallisian motifs throughout lend a colourful aura. In the cemetery, crucifixes hang around freshly white-washed headstones while green coconut palms stand like sentinels nearby. Flowers, fresh and dried and crammed into Anchor Milk tins, and unusual "meniscus of a moon" crosses embellished the headstones.

While walking in the hills trying to find Lake Lanutavake, a



Bastille Day celebration: dancers in full swing during a competition

YACHTING



Celebration gets under way: pirogues and windsurfers off Mata Utu wharf

church bell rang. The bell turned out to be a recycled World War II acetylene tank. By following the sound we found an open air chapel, Chapelle St Pierre Chanel, named for Polynesia's only saint. The view of Uvea's blue lagoon and fringing reef was spectacular. The shrine was decorated with bright *lavalavas* and fresh flowers, the floor covered with mats.

I was dying of thirst and nearly crippled by blisters, so when two fellows invited us to sit down and join them, we did. Despite the heat of a noon day sun, they husked some coconuts. These were welcome — it was a warm afternoon and we had become carried away in our explorations. We had a long walk back to the anchorage at Gahi and on the way we passed a chimerical church that, up close, looked like a wedding cake of many layers. From the lagoon we had mistaken it for a lighthouse.

On the evening of the fete we hitched a ride into town. On the waterfront at Mata Utu, across from the palace and the severe Church of Notre Dame and next to the Fale Fono Royal Handicraft Centre, a dance competition erupted between groups representing Hihifo in the north, Mu'a in the south and Mata Utu. Groups of dancers of up to 40 strong men and women entertained hundreds of onlookers. They were elaborately dressed and put on a good show. Food stalls were set up, and afterwards there was a concert of electrified music. As the night wore on, the music grew louder. We headed off back to the boat.

On Bastille Day, La Jour de la Fete, dancing groups performed on the wharf and aboard the ship. Young girls wearing *tapa* outfits, bodies smothered in oil and faces painted orange, descended the

ship's gangway after their performance smiling, with sodas in hand. Boys bedecked with purple bougainvillean head dresses took a turn at traditional dancing, and received heaps of encouragement from admiring relatives. On the water, Wallisian sailors hoisted their canvas sails and raced traditional pirogues from the causeway at Mata Utu wharf to the anchorage at Gahi where they ran onto the beach to tack their sails before heading back.

Adding a touch of colour to the scene, windsurfers flitted back and forth like waterbugs in the southeast trades, concentrating on their own race. With Bastille Day celebrations over, we left the anchorage at Gahi and headed to Faioa, one of many small and idyllic islands sprinkled in the lagoon and sheltered by Uvea's barrier reef. □

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NZ - Fiji

Translink Pacific Shipping Fiji Agents are: Campbells Shipping Agency Ltd, Ph 314189 Fax 300144 Suva; Ph 662231 Fax 662251 Lautoka. Auckland Agents: McKay Shipping Ph (9) 390229 Fax (9) 3032931. Tauranga Agents, seatrade agencies Ph (75) 754989 Fax (75) 758380.

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