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PACIFIC ISLANDS

M O N T H L Y

SEPTEMBER 1994

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The Forum



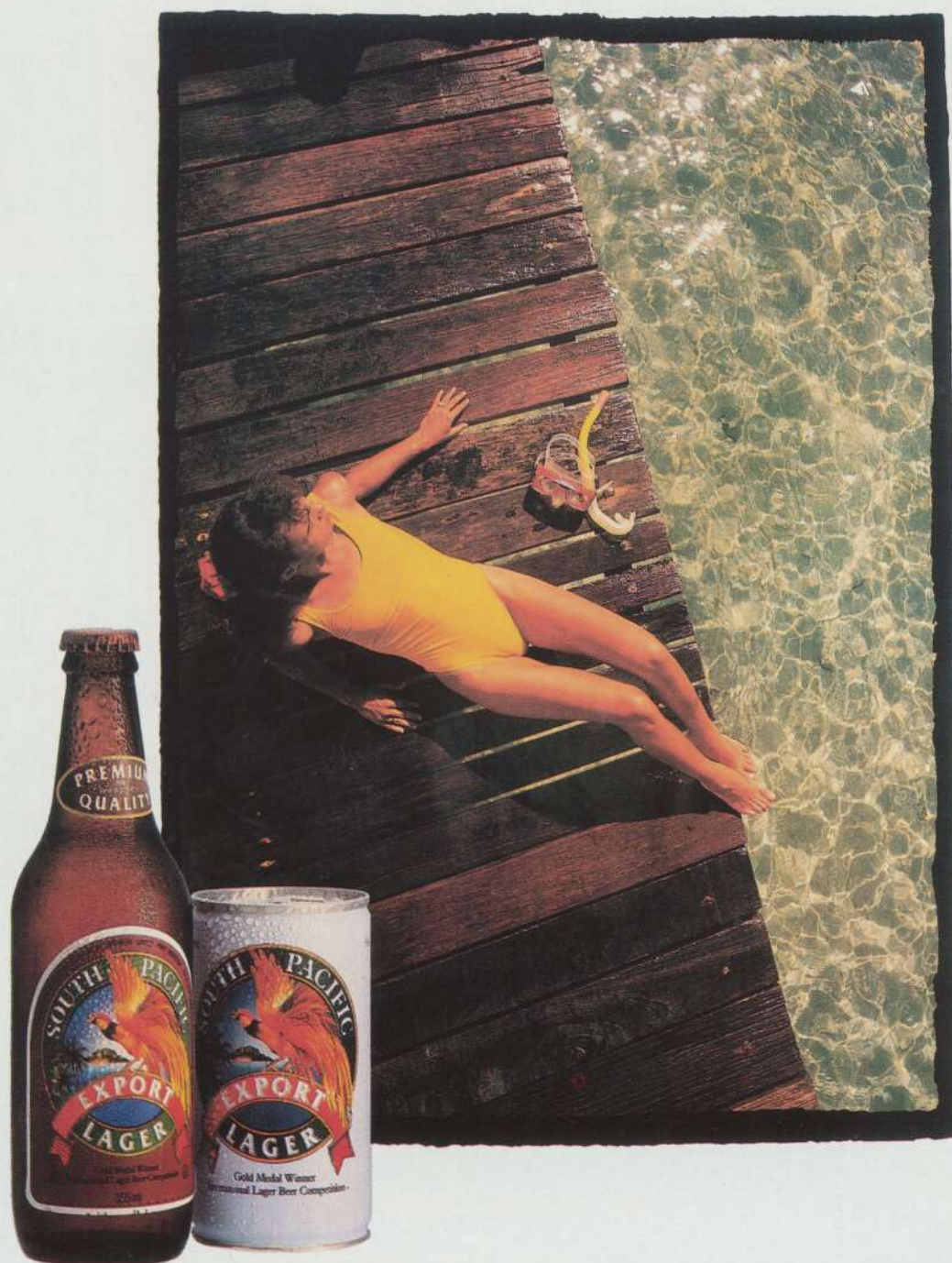
■ SPARTECA changes

■ Managing our resources

**Just how successful was
the meeting in Brisbane?**

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THE BEER OF PARADISE...
SOUTH PACIFIC EXPORT LAGER

PACIFIC ISLANDS

M O N T H L Y

Vol 64 No. 9

THE NEWS MAGAZINE

SEPTEMBER 1994

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LETTERS

Cooks govt clarifies report

Sir,

WE refer to your article "Pearls '94" which appeared in your July issue.

The many inaccuracies therein and negativity directed at the Cook Islands prime minister, Sir Geoffrey Henry, KBE, has made it necessary for this office to respond and register our strong objections. After consulting by telephone with *PIM* Acting Editor Arvind Kumar, we would like to clarify the following points:

With regard to paragraph four, author Ed Rampell has distorted the facts about booths at the pearl expo. The Cook Islands government fully supports and encourages the country's pearl industry. To this end, the government purchased one booth for the exclusive use of the country's private sector representatives. At no time was the booth operated or controlled by government officials attending Pearl Expo '94.

Secondly, Rampell writes "but despite an excellent speech and thousands of taxpayer dollars to send Sir Geoffrey and his courtiers on their junket to an expensive Waikiki Beach suite, the prime minister proved to be a poor spokesman for the Cooks. Despite repeated interview requests, he failed to find a few minutes to talk with the media and present the Cooks' case."

This paragraph is grossly inaccurate, denigrates Sir Geoffrey and illustrates a lack of professionalism and basic journalistic ethics.

We make the following corrections: Sir Geoffrey was returning from a month-long trip to an Asian Development Bank board of directors meeting in France. He

was passing through Honolulu on his way back home to the Cook Islands, therefore, no tax-payer money was spent for his attendance at the pearl expo. The use of "courtiers on their junket" we find very offensive.

Sir Geoffrey's Hawaii delegation consisted of the Minister of Marine Resources Tepure Tapaitau, Marine Resources Biologist Ben Ponia and government projects analyst (specialising in the pearl industry) Teanaroa Paka Worthington.

Of the 25 Cook Islands delegates, only these three were government officials, the remainder representing the private sector who travelled at their own expense. Furthermore, the prime minister stayed at the Waikiki Sheraton courtesy of the hotel. The rest of the delegation stayed at budget accommodation.

By the time the prime minister arrived in Hawaii, he had just completed a gruelling electoral campaign and an intensive one month trip to Europe. He then delivered the keynote address at the Pearl Expo '94. Given the psychological and physical demands of such a heavy schedule, Sir Geoffrey was understandably exhausted. Worthington, also acting as aide to the prime minister, cancelled several important scheduled appointments.

The prime minister held only one interview, with a local Honolulu television station. Rampell fails to accept that the Cook Islands prime minister was not obligated in anyway to hold media interviews during the 2½ days in Hawaii.

We also point out that Manihiki pearl farmer, Peter William has expressed strong objection to being described as a millionaire by Rampell. While at the pearl expo, William at no time stated nor insinuated that he is a millionaire. In addition, the article claims that "Williams had to resort to 'firearms' to protect their pearl farm from theft etc." William has clarified this matter by stating that his family issued a verbal warning and did not "resort to the use of firearms".

Given that *PIM* is a leading Pacific publication, it is most unfortunate that this damaging and inaccurate article was printed at all. In our view, Rampell's negligence and disregard has discredited a reputable magazine.

F STYME-BUCHANAN
Media & Information Services
Office of the Prime Minister
Government of the Cook Islands

Racial taunts

Sir,

MAY I respond to an article in the July issue of *Pacific Islands Monthly* under the heading "Islanders allege racial taunts".

It would be unfortunate and indeed unjust if as a result of the article in question, any of your readers were left with a diminished opinion of Warringah Rugby Club or Sydney rugby generally.

Players from all backgrounds are welcomed by Sydney clubs with only the individual player's performance and behaviour on and off the field the criteria by which they are accepted by supporters, officials and fellow players.

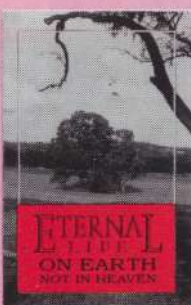
The recent irresponsible allegations of racism by UTS Drummoyne against Warringah players should be seen for what it is — a desperate tactic by a club in an equally desperate situation. In an attempt to defend the behaviour of one of its players and minimise any possible suspension, UTS Drummoyne saw fit to smear others as a diversion. It is worth noting that Jack Noble, the UTS Drummoyne player at the centre of the fracas when playing Warringah, has subsequently been sent from the field again for fighting.

Everyone involved with rugby understands the international nature of the game and the friendships and support thus formed. Warringah Rugby Club in 1994 is host to players from countries as diverse as Brazil, Scotland, Italy and the Pacific islands. Among these individuals is your own outstanding young Fijian player Manasa Bari, a highly respected and much loved member of Warringah Rugby Club.

R J HEFFERNAN
Secretary
Warringah Rugby Club
Narrabeen, Australia

LETTERS to the Editor must include the writer's full name, address and home telephone number. All letters may be edited for purposes of clarity and space. Letters should be addressed to:

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HEADLINES

PAPUA NEW GUINEA



Cabinet approves constitution proposals

THE Papua New Guinea cabinet has approved the controversial constitutional reform proposals aimed at provincial and local government systems, the *National* reported last month. Sources told the newspaper the reforms, submitted by the Constitutional Review Commission (CRC), were approved on August 15 "with some changes".

Prime Minister Paias Wingti was expected to announce the reform proposals soon. The approval gives CRC chairman Ben Micah the go-ahead to introduce a new Bill in the September sitting of parliament to replace the Organic Law on Provincial Governments. The new Bill, to be called the Organic Law on Provincial Assemblies and Local Level Governments, will replace the original Bill which was heavily criticised by various sectors of the community including the New Guinea Islands Premiers Council and led to threats of secession.

★ ★ ★

Floods hit 50,000

RAGING flood waters have destroyed the homes and food gardens of more than 50,000 people in the Wau and Bulolo areas of Papua New Guinea's Morobe province and parts of Central province, the *National* reported last month. National director of emergency services Leith Anderson said in Central province alone, more than 20 villages near Kwikila and nearby areas were under water. Anderson said they did not have funds to provide assistance to the victims.

★ ★ ★

Chan on Bougainville crisis

DEPUTY prime minister Sir Julius Chan says the Bougainville crisis cannot be resolved by military force alone. In a statement last month, Chan said there was still hope for a South Pacific peacekeeping force and reaffirmed the government's "commitment to resolution of the Bougainville crisis through negotiation for peace settlement".

FIJI



Govt denies Placer report

THE Fiji government has denied giving Placer Pacific the go-ahead for the Namosi Copper Mines, as reported by Radio Australia last month. The radio quoted local authorities saying "they're anxious Fiji doesn't experience similar problems to Papua New Guinea where landowner dissatisfaction closed the giant copper mine on Bougainville in 1989.

Fiji's assistant director of mines Abdul Rahiman told the *Daily Post* that Placer Pacific had in fact been given a fresh exploration licence for the area surrounding the copper deposits, the future site of the mines.

★ ★ ★

Indian parties end rivalry

FIJI'S two main opposition parties, the National Federation Party (NFP) and the Fiji Labour Party (FLP), have ended years of bitter rivalry to jointly fight a by-election. Following talks between NFP leader Jai Ram Reddy and FLP leader Mahendra Chaudhry it was announced that the two parties would jointly field a retired school teacher, Munsami Chinnakannu, to contest the Labasa Indian seat.

★ ★ ★

TUVALU



India offers to help women

INDIA has offered help for the advancement of women in Tuvalu, Radio Tuvalu reported Monday. The Tuvalu Association of Non-Government Organisations (TANGO) says the International Centre for Entrepreneurship and Career Development in Ahmedabad, India, has offered places for women from Tuvalu.

TANGO says women will have the opportunity to participate in international programmes for furthering women's development activities with emphasis on economic empowerment. Four places in different programmes will be offered between November and March next year.

HEADLINES

WESTERN SAMOA

Three expelled from university

THREE Western Samoans, who attacked a Fijian student at the University of the South Pacific campus in June causing him to lose his left eye, have been banned and expelled from the university's Fiji facilities until 1999. USP registrar Sarojini Pillay said Siaumau Faasavalu, Ulupefosi Fa'aloga and Eroni Sitanieli were expelled for "breaching university regulations" in the June 25 attack.

However, the three can resume their studies at any regional USP centre from 1997. The decision was made during the USP's disciplinary committee meeting. Last month, when the trio appeared before Fijian chief magistrate Sakeo Naqiolevu charged with intent to cause grievous bodily harm, he gave them a conditional discharge.

Faasavalu, Fa'aloga and Sitanieli attacked Fijian Saimoni Tuiqali, 21, with a broken beer bottle in his dorm room. Surgeons had to remove Tuiqali's left eye after the attack. He is currently undergoing medical treatment in Australia.

★ ★ ★

COOK ISLANDS

New judge appointed

THE Cook Islands has a new high court judge. Justice Ron Gilbert, of the Auckland District Court, has been appointed to the Cooks High Court.

Although he retired last year, Justice Gilbert has been a temporary judge of the Auckland District Court since his retirement. His three-year term in the Cook Islands started on July 27.

★ ★ ★

NEW ZEALAND

Radio station gets the squeeze

THE only broadcaster in New Zealand controlled and operated by Pacific islanders, Radio 53 PI, is under pressure to live within its means.

The Auckland station is getting the squeeze from New Zealand on Air, which wants the station to live within its allocation from public broadcasting fee revenue. The station, which is almost a year old, receives NZ\$200,000 per year but at present is losing more than that. Radio 531 PI's acting manager Sefita Hao'uli said they needed time to get on their feet.

He said if people only wanted them to play "jukebox" music they could live within their means. But he said they had a social function and this was not only to entertain. Hao'uli said their income was growing and was now earning about \$20,000 a month — but this still left them in the red. He said if income was to grow the station had to be given more time to build and gain more listeners.

★ ★ ★

TONGA

Polynesian problems hit Royal Tongan

TONGA is trying to restore confidence in its national airline after serious disruption to flights caused by the financial problems of partner carrier Polynesian Airlines. Royal Tongan Airlines said last month it was looking for another airline to carry its passengers on key Pacific routes, and also said it wanted its own international aircraft within five years.

Royal Tongan currently does not have its own aircraft, and relies mainly on Polynesian — Western Samoa's national airline — to service its routes. Royal Tongan's name is also carried on the aircraft. Following an ill-fated expansion plan, Polynesian had by May built up debts of A\$28 million and last month was said by Western Samoa's chief auditor to be in a "chronic state of insolvency".

Polynesian's financial problems have now forced it to hand back two of its three aircraft and to halt services to the United States, plunging its schedules into disarray. These problems are understood to have cost Royal Tongan a considerable drop in revenue on key routes.

"The end result of Polynesian's problems has been serious disruption and a loss of public confidence in the services offered by Royal Tongan," general manager Geoff Bowmaker said in a statement. He said he had made clear his concerns to Polynesian. Tonga had had to suspend services to the US, although a review by Polynesian had satisfied him that Royal Tongan could still count on reliable services to Sydney and Auckland. — AAP

★ ★ ★

Man wins appeal against deportation

A FORMER Tongan policeman has won an appeal against deportation from New Zealand, despite having been convicted of indecently assaulting a child last year. Talifolau Maka, 31, of Auckland, was going to be deported by the ministry of immigration as they said by being in New Zealand, Maka was a threat to the public, including his children.

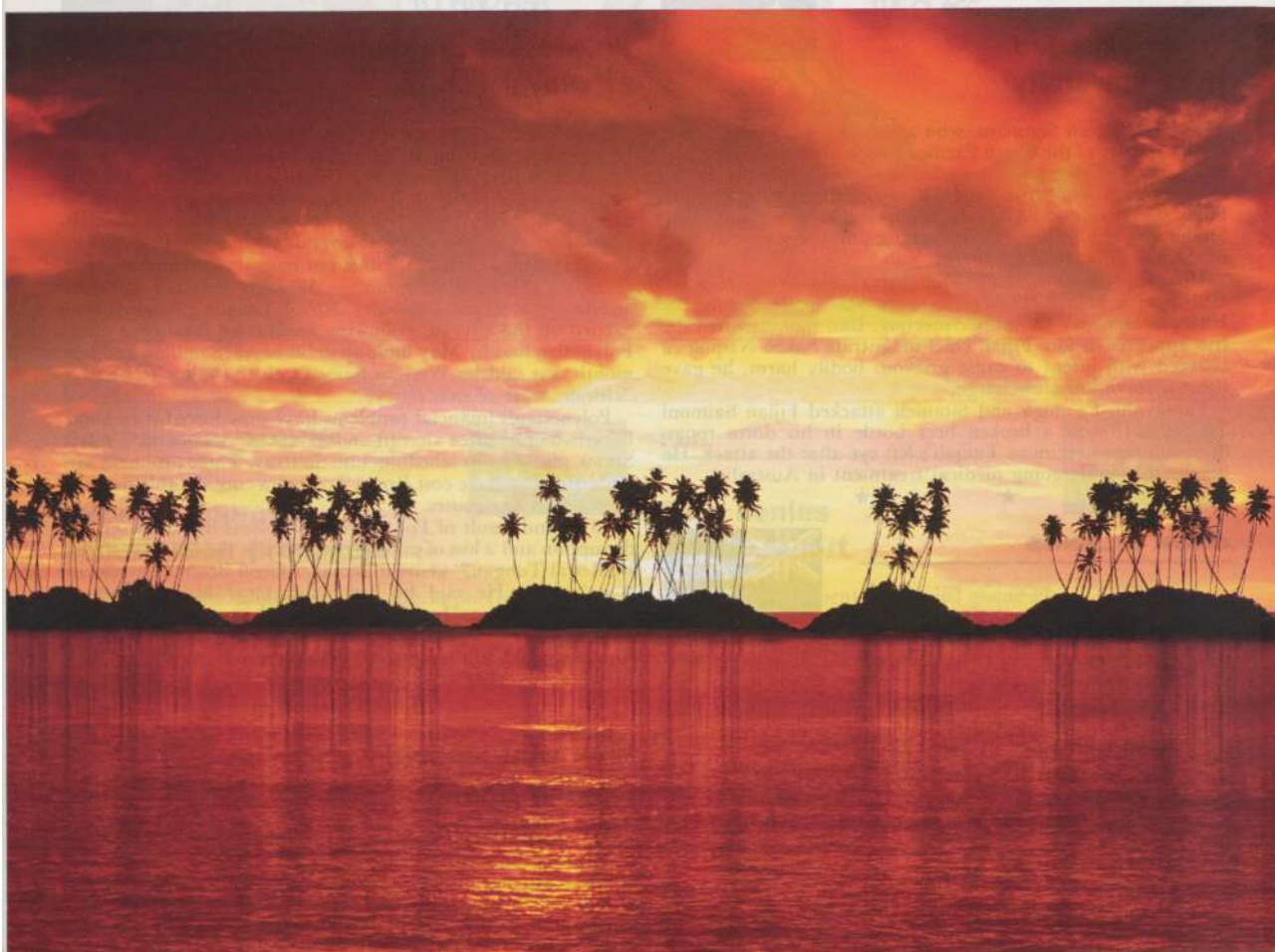
On July 20, 1993 Maka was sentenced to 18 months in jail for indecently assaulting a girl. He served six months and is currently on parole. Maka went to New Zealand in 1986 on a visitor's permit but remained illegally in the country when the visa expired. He was granted permanent residency in 1989. In a report made public on August 3, the deportation review tribunal said Maka's wife was a diabetic and needed regular care. Also the couple's three children all under five needed their father's help and parental influence.

★ ★ ★

Squash pumpkin price worry

SQUASH pumpkin exporters in Tonga are worried that this year's prices may be lower than expected. Radio Australia reported last month that harvesting was two months away, but Tongan government trade officials say prices would be affected by competition from Vanuatu and New Caledonia. They say the Japanese market, which takes all of Tonga's exports, will not pay the record prices of last year. Squash pumpkin is Tonga's top export crop.

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COVER STORIES

The Forum

Managing resources, SPARTECA changes; Tabai stays in post

By Akanisi Motufaga

THIS year's South Pacific Forum was certainly one with a difference. Apart from having a specific theme, Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating said it was also an attempt to revert to the original aim which the founders had in mind.

However, there were indications that some countries left the Forum disappointed and Fiji was no exception. As an official put it, Fiji lost in its bid for the post of secretary-general for the Forum Secretariat, it did not get much out of the SPARTECA changes and the agreement to work towards a common code of conduct for the logging industry.

"The code of conduct does not really apply to Fiji because its logging problems

are not as severe as other countries like Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea or the Solomons," the official pointed out.

Although Fiji Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka said the Forum in Brisbane was more effective compared to the previous two, he could not confirm whether the changes to SPARTECA would be in favour of Fiji.

Fiji was also disappointed and angry with the way former Kiribati president Ieremia Tabai was re-appointed as secretary-general to the Suva-based Forum Secretariat.

Fiji may have been the only country that left disappointed as the Solomon Islands delegation left with an offer of \$2 million from the Australian Government to help conserve its forests.

This year's 25th Forum focussed on the theme of Managing Our Resources with great emphasis on environment issues such as fishing, nuclear dumping and logging as well as regional airline services.

According to a United Nations report,

environment issues are the regional governments' main challenge. It said 70 per cent of Pacific Islanders living in rural areas and outer islands depend on the environment and ecosystem for their livelihood.

"Any destruction to the environment will, therefore, have a wide and significant impact on the welfare and survival of the large minority of Pacific people," it said.

The report said deforestation in the Solomon Islands was a fine example of failure to carefully consider environmental costs.

Australian Minister Gordon Bilney said part of the logging problem was related regional governments being ripped off by logging companies and the lack of careful monitoring.

Some of these countries, he said, were Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and, to some extent, Fiji.

"In some of these countries, you are looking at a situation where the rate of exploitation is six to eight times higher



ALFRED SASAKO

Delegates: at the Forum proper, in Brisbane, last month

COVER STORIES

'Part of the logging problem was related to regional governments being ripped off by logging companies and the lack of careful monitoring'

than what is sustainable in forestry," said Bilney, Australia's Minister for Pacific Island Affairs.

"The countries are simply not getting the prices for the exports that they ought to. I was reading some figures recently that showed in the case of one country's logs that were being sold for around \$3.50 per cubic metre were returning only \$2.70 to that country," the minister said.

Bilney stressed that Australia would not adopt a 'big brother' attitude; rather it would help regional countries through advice and technical assistance to use their resources in a sustainable way to last for the next generations.

As a result of these discussions, an agreement was drawn up between Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea where:

(a) these governments will work towards

having a common code of conduct for indigenous forests which logging companies will have to comply with;
(b) the urgent need to monitor logging and timber exports was stressed, and
(c) senior officials will have to meet soon to implement these decisions.

The Forum also agreed to strengthen its promotion of sustainable exploitation of fish stocks within the region and welcomed the United Nations Convention of the Law of the Sea which would build and strengthen the current regional ties.

In its communique, the Forum said global warming and the rise in sea level were the most serious threats to the region. It welcomed the negotiations for a convention to ban the imports to hazardous and radioactive wastes into Forum Island countries and to control the transboundary movement and management of such waste within the South Pacific region.

The communique said Forum leaders agreed to look into rationalising air services to operate on a likely sub-regional basis in a move to arrest airline losses.

Bilney said at a Press conference that losses for regional airlines ran into millions. The communique said issues such as frequency, operation costs, airfares and safety regulations would be considered before any changes are made to the current airline structure.

It said the Forum leaders also noted:
(a) that finance and trade ministers in the region should meet to discuss and devise proper policies, broaden the Forum island countries economic base, improve the balance of payments and look into fiscal public sector mismanagement;

(b) that the usage of land, in terms of the indigenous peoples' relation to their land, varied from country to country, and

(c) that officials would meet later this year at Hawaii to form an agenda and proposal aimed at promoting trade and investment between the United States and Pacific Island states. □

Mamaloni hits out at comments

AUSTRALIAN aided Solomon Islands Forests Project has been a failure and is losing investor confidence, the island's Opposition leader Solomon Mamaloni claimed in a statement. Mamaloni said 14 years after the project started with Australian International Development Agency Bureau assistance, it has yet to yield any fruitful data as was initially intended.

He said the Australian consultants hired to complete the project have exceeded their job descriptions and indulged in the island's internal affairs. Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating also came under fire from Mamaloni who said Keating was preaching to the SIG project personnel and Solomon Islanders about the proper management of their resources when the first Australian Consultants inventory report on the island's forests contained many errors and had to be withdrawn from circulation. Mamaloni said the view held by Australia was that the Solomons was still an Australian colony hence their "imperialist and paternalistic attitude".

"Instead of listening to lies about over exploitation of our natural resources I, on behalf of the government and people of Solomon Islands, cordially invite all Forum leaders to come and see for themselves, or send their government officials to Solomon Islands to observe the legal instruments and procedures which the Solomon Islands government apply to the control and use of this country's natural resources.

"There is no other better way to disprove what Mr Keating and Mr Billy Hilili have been saying about Solomon Islands natural resources than for the Forum leaders, including Mr Keating or their officials, to come to the Solomons to see for themselves." □

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Fiji vs The Forum

By Akanisi Motufaga

FIJI'S relationship with the Forum Secretariat's Jeremiah Tabai may take some time to heal following the controversy over the appointment of a secretary general for the Secretariat.

The controversy led to a lot of anger and disappointment in the Fiji delegation, which believed that its own candidate, Senator Filipe Bole, would get the job.

However, Tabai's reappointment has led to the Forum laying down clear and firm guidelines on future appointments. Tabai was appointed three years ago and his job vacancy resulted in four applications — one each from Fiji, Tonga, Papua New Guinea and Australia.

The candidate from Papua New Guinea withdrew his application after being offered a United Nations post. Senator Bole, in his application, had asked that his letter be set aside if Tabai reapplied for the post. Seeing that Tabai did not reapply, Fiji endorsed Senator Bole's application and began lobbying. During the Forum in Brisbane last month, Kiribati nominated Tabai for the post minus his application.

In explaining the controversy, Fiji Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka said his delegation had to review its stand when it arrived for the meeting. He said Fiji went to the Forum knowing that Tabai did not re-apply.



Bole: Fiji nominee



Tabai: returned

He said he was disappointed when Cook Islands Prime Minister Sir Geoffrey Henry stated that there was an unwritten agreement that there would not be a Fijian holder of the post because of the location of the Forum Secretariat's headquarters in Suva.

"I did not know that ... and if that is the case, then I don't think that it's very fair. Perhaps we can do what one of delegates suggested — that we put the Forum Secretariat on a platform so that everyone can apply," he said.

Throughout the controversy, Tabai refused to comment or to confirm whether he did apply or not. A senior Fiji official to the Forum described Rabuka as very angry and disappointed. He said Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Tonga, Western Samoa and the

Federated States of Micronesia all supported Fiji and its candidate.

"Mr Bole was the best candidate but the problems were the procedures and the Pacific way of conducting meeting through a consensus. The Prime Minister (Rabuka) spoke very strongly against the fact that Fiji could not support a candidate because it was the host country.

"But they agreed that Tabai should be reappointed and that when his term expires in three years time anyone, including a Fijian, can

apply," the official said. He said the leaders also agreed at the Forum that future appointees should inform the Forum after the second year of service of whether they wish to re-apply for a second term.

He said if future appointee decide to re-apply then he will get to serve a second term. According to Forum officials, Australia supported Tabai's reappointment backed by Kiribati. A member of the Fiji delegation, businessman Jim Ah Koy, said it was disappointing to see the Forum endorse and accept Tabai's "arrogance" in not applying.

The senior official said that if Tabai had indicated his wish to be reappointed, then Fiji would not have had to go through the lobbying period, the disappointment and anger during the meeting. □

Aust agrees to SPARTECA changes

AUSTRALIA has agreed to changes to the SPARTECA (South Pacific Regional Trade and Economic Co-operation Agreement) but Fiji Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka is not sure whether these changes will favour Fiji.

At a Press conference during the Forum meeting, Rabuka said Australia had agreed to accept items under the agreement as part of the 50 per cent local content rule provided that half of the contents used to make these items are derived from Australia alone.

Explaining this, a senior official said this new change was similar to the derogation extended to Fiji by the European Union. This means that if

local manufacturers comply with the new changes, they will have to make cheap and low quality goods and compete with the Asian products exported to the Australian market.

However, local manufacturers have argued that they cannot compete with products from Asia because of cheap labour costs there. Manufacturers have said that they can compete in Australia and New Zealand, but this will mean direct competition with Australian and New Zealand manufacturers — something that the trans-Tasman neighbours do not want.

Rabuka also said at the Forum that the Australian government had agreed

to negotiate with Fiji to include more items which can be classified under the 50 per cent local content rule. The South Pacific Regional Trade and Economic Co-operation Agreement (SPARTECA) has been a bone of contention between Fiji and Australia and New Zealand in recent years.

However, Rabuka told journalists that he was not sure whether the changes were in favour of Fiji manufacturers. "I don't know whether it has really changed in favour of Fiji manufacturers. I think it's a mutually beneficial development rather than change," he said. □

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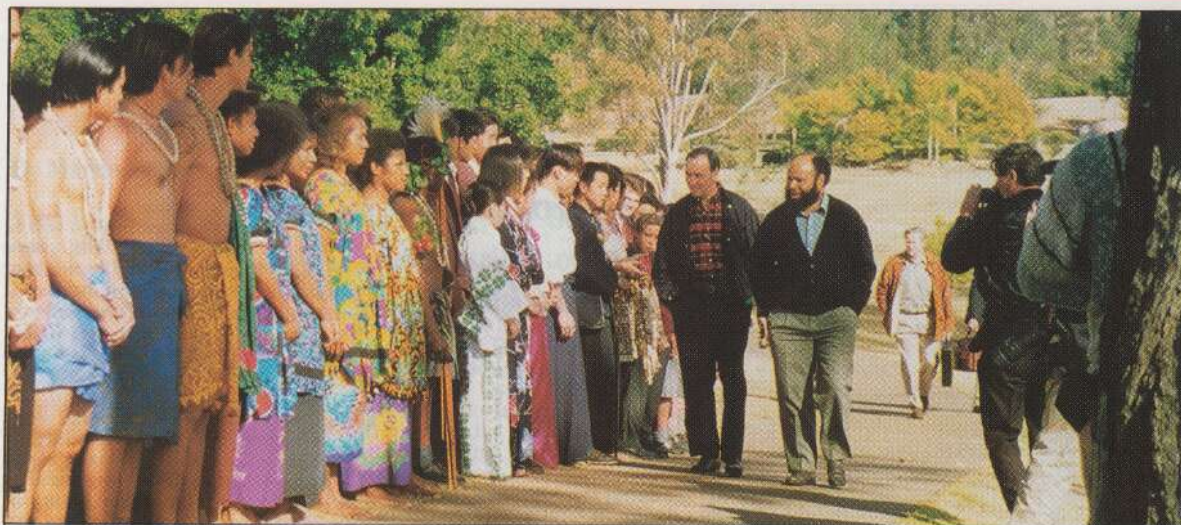


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COVER STORIES



Forum: Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating and Papua New Guinea counterpart Palas Waingti with Pacific students at Kooralbyn Resort during the Leaders Retreat

Unwanted export

By Akanisi Motufaga

THE Marshall Islands government has hinted that it will accept revenue from setting up an international nuclear waste storage tional facility in order to restore economic productivity.

Prime Minister Amata Kabua said such revenue would be adequate to support modest development projects.

"Let me further state that if a safe international facility can be established in my country, its revenue would permit my government to clean-up and dispose of radioactive contaminants in our abandoned islands in a proper manner to restore these islands to economic productivity and to provide essential care for our people afflicted with radiation-induced illness," he said.

"It would indeed be encouraging if such revenue would be adequate to not only support modest development objectives in the Marshall Islands, but also those of our neighbouring countries.

"Let us together regard this prospect as a glimmer of hope for mankind's salvation from nuclear dangers," Kabua said at the 25th South Pacific Forum in Brisbane last month.

He said his government lacked the technology and financial resources to undo the damage done to the people and the land. Kabua said it was well known

Marshalls studying nuclear storage plan, says president Kabua

that the clean-up efforts undertaken in the past few years had failed to restore land conditions for people to live safely and that existing storage facilities were well below the standards to protect the environment.

"Many islands remain abandoned. We know, too, that the incidence of cancer that may be traced to the prevalence of nuclear contamination on a number of our islands is on the increase," he said. "Many of my people are suffering from radiation-induced illness. This is a health crisis that my government must seek to resolve.

"Surely, the Marshall Islands may hope for the understanding and support of the Pacific region and the international community as my government strives to examine the possible means by

which our people may be permitted to return to the homes from which they have for so long been in exile.

"At the same time, the Marshallese people and their government may hope that if a solution can be found for their grave problem, the nuclear menace to the world may by that same means be relieved," he said.

Kabua said the world was at risk in the absence of effective and permanent measure to contain nuclear material. He said there was not a single facility considered suitable for permanent storage and that the safety of large facilities was open to question.

He said security breaches had led to nuclear thefts and that such materials could be used to make weapons. He said his government had set up a National Commission comprising representatives from all sectors to make recommendations to government on nuclear-related issues.

"My government is pledged to broaden consultations regarding the outcome of a study on nuclear waste.

"We must all be committed to arriving at the most responsible solution so that our generation and generations to follow will be spared the plight that has befallen my people and others who have suffered the ravages of the nuclear menace," Kabua said. □

COVER STORIES

Let's not panic, leaders say

By Akanisi Motufaga

PACIFIC Island leaders say their countries are not on the brink of disaster, as Australia put it when describing the region's environment.

Prime ministers Sitiveni Rabuka and Paiax Wingti said there were serious environment problems, but not too serious to warrant panic. They both said that working together to resolve these problems was the way forward.

Solomon Islands Prime Minister Francis Billy Hilly has the same belief although he has a different strategy. Hilly said at the Forum that his country would stop exporting round logs in a move to contain the exploitation of forests and to conserve the remaining trees.

Round logs exports make up more than 50 per cent of the country's revenue. Although no dates have been set on the total ban, the Solomon Islands will have to rely more on foreign aid and diversify its products to survive.

Hilly said at the Forum in Brisbane last month that Australia had offered \$2 million to help in the country's structural adjustment programme.

"All we need is more assistance and less criticism," he said. He added that exploitation of natural resources was a serious problem and that regional governments would be able to look after their own environmental problems if they were given assistance.

Hilly said his government intended to introduce processing of timber products once the total ban is in place. According to a United Nations report, logging in the Solomon Islands for export began in 1961. At the moment, half of the country's viable forest resources have been logged with extraction rates doubled between 1991 to 1992.

The report said logging would not be sustained for more than eight years if the current extraction rate remains. It said the annual sustainable yield was about 270,000 cubic metres, but that the logging licences granted catered for more than 1.4 million cubic metres annually.

"Reforestation will take 30-40 years in those areas that have been carefully logged," the report said. "However, it is reported that there has been widespread disregard of environmental protection controls with the result that reforestation may take anything from 45 to 200 years. Significant under-reporting of volumes and values has eroded the returns to Solomon Islands in the form of royalties and export taxes."

Hilly said his government's aim was to divert foreign exchange income from forest-related products to other areas. "It is a cause of grave concern to the government that because of our limited and narrow economic base, heavy emphasis is being placed on a very few resources to sustain the national economy," Hilly said.

"The government is anxious to implement sensible and practical policies that will enable sustainable management of this resource and the whole environment in general so that future generations of our people too can enjoy the benefits from that sector. The government is also serious in its efforts to diversify the productive sector and therefore divert the pressure away from the reliance on forestry for foreign exchange earnings," Hilly said. □

Korman's challenge to loggers

By Patrick DeCloyre

DURING the recent South Pacific Forum summit in Brisbane, Vanuatu Prime Minister Maxime Carlot Korman was asked to elaborate on his recent stand on logging in the island state. In a ground-breaking decision, last June, he had first banned all exports of whole logs, then invalidated all business licences to logging companies on the tiny island of Erromango. The address he gave in Brisbane is highly critical of some members of his cabinet.

It was a good opportunity for Vanuatu's Prime Minister to make use of the French-English interpretation system that had been installed at the Forum at his request. Talking to Forum delegates, Korman referred to the logging problems as "important" to him.

In actual fact, if they are for him, they did not seem to bear the importance to others. As Korman hinted, "at first, I have left it to my cabinet to negotiate with foreign companies. The result is that contracts have been signed with those companies without taking into account the country's real potential, or the sustainable development, not even local regulations and Customs (...) I considered that a head of government must see his ministers as responsible men".

In earlier interviews in the Vanuatu capital Port Vila, Korman had shown growing concern about the potentially disastrous impact of intensive logging in his country.

"We had reached an absurd situation whereby the country's forest resources would have been destroyed in as less as five years. I have therefore decided to act, and to act abruptly, by declaring without notice a review of all granted licences and a ban on the export of whole logs.

"Foreign companies have no scruple in dragging a government or a nation into anarchy (...) I know certain private foreign interests will seek — and, in fact, already do — to put their weight into the local political life. As their financial power is much more than our national budget, there will be some sport!", he said, adding the island state's general elections were

scheduled next year.

"The electoral campaign will be tough," he said. So the prime minister has had to be tougher than his more docile ministers — "I wanted to show our flawless determination, even if this means that we had to breach existing contracts and therefore be exposed to pay penalties".

Korman explained he had made a simple offer to foreign logging companies operating in the island state — "either this is war, and they sue my government for breach of contract. We would have to pay compensation, but then they would have to leave the country. Or a new balance is found, and existing contracts are renegotiated".

Not only did the government have to resist the foreign loggers' offers, but it also had to explain local landowners that there were other ways to develop a land than just sign contracts, sometimes with two or three different loggers for the same block of land.

"Some landowners think it is their exclusive right to decide what to do with the trees on their customary land. (They) think the government has no right to interfere, even for the sake of the whole community. Some will even find it all right to leave bare ground to their children," he said.

Hence the need, Korman thinks, to introduce legislation that would enhance such values as the duty for traditional owners to be 'guardians' of their land for future generations.

"Numerous traditions here show the traditional landowner and the one cultivating the land are often two different persons. There was a relation between the guardian and the cultivator (...) We should be able to make landowners accept that they don't have the right to destroy what they have not created".

But, as Carlot told the Forum participants, there are reasons for hope.

In this battle, Vanuatu can rely on the full support of major aid donors like Australia, New Zealand, United Kingdom and France. They were the ones who initiated the U-turn last May, when they were jointly received by Korman and expressed their concern to him. □

WESTERN SAMOA

Under pressure

By Martin Tiffany

THE Western Samoan government is again under severe pressure. This time it could lead to the resignation of the prime minister and the collapse of his government. Prime Minister Tofilau Eti Alesana said he would have "no other alternative" but to resign if the findings of a commission of inquiry into his government went against him.

Many Western Samoans, especially the opposition, feel the inquiry will confirm criticism of Alesana and his cabinet by that country's chief auditor, Su'a Rimoni Ah Chong. In a report tabled in parliament in July, Ah Chong accused cabinet of unreasonable and unsound decisions in committing public funds to Western Samoa's debt-laden airline Polynesian Airlines. In May, Western Samoa's financial secretary, Sala Epa Tuioti, said the airline's debt situation was so bad it could threaten the country's economic stability. In a report, he said airline debts amounted to over WS\$45 million, of which government is liable for \$US20 million.

Tuioti said the debt was a result of "poor decisions" and it was "beyond the ability of Polynesian to reply and seriously impact the country's foreign currency reserves". Tuioti was asked to write the report by Polynesian to help secure additional guarantees of WS\$16.5 million for a debt to Air Canada and to lease a Kuwait Air Boeing 767.

However, Tuioti's report said if these guarantees were given the total of the debt and the guarantees would equal "nearly half of the present total foreign exchange reserves".

Until 1992, Australian Airline Ansett managed Polynesian Airlines — things looked better than with a profit, albeit a small one, being shown. In his report, Tuioti says the airline is losing around WS\$300,000 to WS\$350,000 a week. He questioned the ability of the

Western Samoan govt attacked over handling of Polynesian Airline's debt situation

airline to service the WS\$37.3 million non-operating debt that exists.

Basically, Tuioti said, to get the airline back on track its management and board needed to be changed and "not treat it (the airline) as a public service provided

for the common good". In his July report to parliament, Chief Auditor Ah Chong also accused a number of cabinet ministers of irregularities and possible corruption. In response to this the Prime Minister has appointed the Ombudsman, Maiava Tulai Toma, to lead an inquiry into Ah Chong's findings. He stressed that no one could be proved guilty until this inquiry was completed. But said he would accept the Ombudsman's findings.

"If they point out that the PM was not doing his job, then OK, this is my resignation as head of state — I move out," said Alesana. Alesana's government is still reeling from a three-week protest in Apia in March against the Value-Added Goods and Services tax, which was basically a protest against the government.

The estimated 10,000 protestors did not achieve the removal of the tax or the government, but many saw this as a victory for the protestors and a backing down by the government. With anti-government feeling still strong, the last thing Alesana and his government needs is the inquiry.

The opposition is making the most of the situation — as expected. They are criticising government, saying this is what they have been saying all along. The opposition leader appeared on New Zealand television criticising the doings of government. Talking to TV3, he claimed ministers — he did not name any — had used government money for their own gain mainly by helping their business interests — building infrastructure to help their business interests and using their privileged position.

The opposition and the people of Western Samoa are waiting for the outcome of the Ombudsman's inquiry. This could spell the end for Alesana and his government. As they say, watch this space. □



PM Tofilau Eti Alesana: resignation coming up?



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POLITICS — Tonga

Political party for kingdom

By Martin Tiffany

TONGA'S pro-democracy movement have made their most assertive step so far against the country's noble-dominated government — they have launched the kingdom's first political party. The Tonga Democratic Party is expected to become reality in a few weeks with an official launching.

What the pro-democracy campaigners hope for is the party to find seriousness in their fight to change the monarch-led government system.

MP Viliami Fukofuka, a leading pro-democracy campaigner and one of the party's founders, believes the party's time has come as has time for democratic change in the island kingdom. At last year's general election, pro-democracy campaigners grabbed six of the nine "people's representative" seats.

An election in Tonga happens every three years. This means the people choose the nine people's representatives and nine nobles to parliament. The other 12 members of parliament are cabinet ministers appointed for life by the country's near-absolute monarch, King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV.

What this really means is the people's representatives are chosen by 95 per cent of the population (around 94,000) while nobles elect, among themselves, their nine representatives from 33 noble titles.

The new party expects to finalise their



Pohiva: pro-democracy force

constitution soon. The push towards full democracy began in Tonga on November 24-27 when the pro-democracy movement — formed in August that year — held a public pro-democracy conference. Its aim was to show the Tongan public what real democracy was and why power should be taken away from the king.

The battle between the pro-democracy people and the nobles has not been easy. It was also hindered by the fact that many commoners see them as revolutionary. The noble MPs have the pro-democracy movement at every opportunity and cost them — especially MP 'Akilisi' Pohiva — a packet in liable costs.

Pohiva, one of the main men behind the pro-democracy force, has not been totally happy with the forming of the political party before constitutional change, but has agreed to be part of the party.

The pro-democracy movement has proved it has staying power, much to the annoyance of the nobles, and will not go away. Their latest move could prove a turning point in the history of Tonga. □

Nauru's Detudamo dies

By David North

NAURU'S de facto leader of the opposition died on a plane trip to Melbourne on June 5. He was Buraro Robidok Bagewa Detudamo, son of Nauru's late Head Chief (Timothy Detudamo), a long-time member of Nauru's parliament, and one-time cabinet minister. He was 62.

Detudamo was last in the news when he and several colleagues in the Nauru legislature voted down the government's budget 8 to 7.

Kennan Adeang, a former Finance Minister, will presumably become the de facto leader of the Opposition. Adeang, brother-in-law to Detudamo, holds one of the multi-member seats in the legislature for the Constituency of Ubenide, as had Detudamo.

Adeang has been a vocal critic of the spending and investment policies of the Dowiyogo administration; the island is running out of its phosphate riches, and

despite extensive overseas investments regularly runs on deficit financing. (See "Nauru's Missing Millions" PIM August, 1993, pp. 25-31). Nauru traditionally has no political parties, and no formal leader of the opposition.

Nauru also traditionally forgets past political rivalries at such times, and President Bernard Dowiyogo ordered that the body be brought back to the island on a special Air Nauru flight despite the costs of such a trip to the hard-pressed carrier.

Detudamo, though said to be in good health at the time, was headed to Melbourne for unspecified "periodic medical treatment". Melbourne is the site of the offices of the Nauru Phosphate Commission, which handles the sale of that commodity for the island government, and is also the locus of the island's skyscraper investment, Nauru House, and of a colony of Nauru's expatriates.

As the only son of the head chief, Detudamo started life with many ad-

vantages and a set of 40 names. None of this was helpful, however, when the Japanese conquered the island in 1942 and shipped young Detudamo and his family off to Truk in what is now FSM.

Two years after the Nauruans returned, in 1946, Detudamo was sent overseas again, this time to study in Australia at the Knox Grammar School and later at the Australian School of Pacific Administration. Upon his return to the island in 1955 he began his career as a civil servant, and later a politician.

He was first elected to the Nauru Local Government Council in 1959, and served there until 1968 when he won a seat in the island's new parliament, serving 11 consecutive terms in that body. As a member of the legislature he was also at various times a cabinet member and Acting President.

He was buried next to wife Eliza's grave on Nauru. He was survived by sister Maisy (wife of Adeang), nine children, 31 grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren. □

SOVEREIGNTY

A matter of style

By David North

FRANCE has a policy towards its island territories — the US does not. American judges play a much larger role in Mainland-Island relations than do French judges. Both metropolitan powers spend relatively large sums of money on their islands.

These were among the conclusions suggested during a recent Washington conference which, perhaps for the first time, analysed the comparative island-governing styles of France, the US and New Zealand. (Holland's relations with its Caribbean islands were also discussed).

The conference, sponsored by US flag island universities and the US Department of Interior, drew delegations from Guam, Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands and American Samoa, as well as the two Caribbean territories, Puerto Rico and the US Virgin Islands. Managed by Lisboa Associates, a Washington firm, it gave island politicians and academics a chance to rub elbows, swap gossip, blow off steam, and say goodbye to Ron de Lugo, the retiring delegate from the US Virgin Islands, and chair of the islands' sub-committee of the US House of Representatives.

The most interesting of the substantive sessions covered the always difficult question of how metropolitan powers deal with distant island territories — short of giving them full independence, the British model.

The most heartfelt of the session's presentations came from a Puerto Rican academic who has studied New Zealand's relations with Niue and the Cook Islands. Juan R Fernandez, one-time chancellor of the University of Puerto Rico (Rio Pedras), came to the subject after a lifetime of watching his island's relations with the US mainland, and it showed. He found Wellington's approach much more acceptable than that of Washington.

New Zealand did not sit back and simply respond to the islanders on the relationship question — the Kiwis took the initiative and carefully negotiated associated state arrangements with the islands, Dr Fernandez reported.

There were four potential alternative approaches, according to the speaker — independence, federation with other Pacific Islands, associated state status or integration with New Zealand (on the French model); the last choice, Dr Fernandez said, had been ruled out by the New Zealand government.



Guam: central Pacific still holds strategic importance for US

The comparison between the French and the US approaches was outlined by Stephen Henningham, a senior research fellow at the Australian National University. France not only has a coherent policy towards its islands; that policy is readily subject to analysis.

For example, all of Gaul's island territories are divided into three categories. First there are four overseas departments, which are fully assimilated into European France — Guadeloupe and Martinique (in the Caribbean), Reunion (in the Indian Ocean), and French Guiana (a non-island territory in South America). All have been part of the French Empire since the 18th Century or before, and all are considered part of the European Union. Their populations range from 90,000 to 600,000.

Second, there are the smaller territorial collectives, potential overseas departments, also with long ties to Paris. These are St Pierre and Miquelon, near Newfoundland, and Mayotte, near Madagascar.

Thirdly, there are the French overseas territories. These are New Caledonia, French Polynesia, Walli and Futuna, all in the Pacific, and uninhabited islands in the Southern Indian Ocean and the French slice of Antarctica.

The overseas territories are — unlike the US flag islands — covered by the

metropolitan constitution. Henningham told the conference that the constitution "recognises that their administration should take account of their particular characteristics, and allows for a greater degree of internal autonomy than in the departments and territorial collectivities. Metropolitan legislation does not apply automatically in these territories unless the territory concerned is mentioned specifically in ... legislation".

Further, the constitution makes it possible for overseas territories to proceed to independence if this is supported by the majority of the territory's population. This is a viable alternative, he said, only in New Caledonia and French Polynesia, with Wallis and Futuna being too small, and too dependent on metropolitan subsidies, to consider such a step.

Henningham noted five characteristics of French island policy;

1. Authority continues to be centralised in Paris, but each of the islands has voting members in the French Parliament. (Most US islands get along with non-voting representation; the Marianas do not have a non-voting delegate while Hawaii is a full fledged state);
2. People from the French mainland occupy most of the major positions in government and business in the French islands;
3. People of mixed descent, such as the

demis of French Polynesia, play major political, cultural, and intellectual roles in the French islands although they are less prominent in business. (This generalisation does not hold for New Caledonia);

4. French culture and the French language have tended to challenge local identities in the islands;

5. Successive French governments and local elite have "choked off or contained nationalist pressures ... where they have arisen".

In contrast to the neat categories of French policy, the speaker dealing with America's relations with its islands spoke of "a continuum of mutuality" and of a series of ad hoc relationships between the islands and the Mainland.

Making these points was Washington (and international lawyer) Howard Hills, who worked on associated states issues for several federal agencies over the last two decades before going into private practice.

Hills opened by saying that choosing him to discuss the subject of Free Association reflected that absence of the Republic of the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia from the meeting. These states have effectively secured the end of the once colonial relationship with the U.S., and thus felt no need to attend the session.

Hills characterised Micronesia and the Marshalls at one extreme in the "continuum of mutuality", and, in response

The difference between the US and French governing systems is in voting for the presidency

to PIM's question placed American Samoa and the US Virgin Islands at the other end of the spectrum, on the grounds that the leaders of both of these entities have shown no strong interest in re-defining the basic relationships with Washington.

In the middle of Hill's spectrum are Palau, which is about to secure associated state status, and Guam, the Marianas and Puerto Rico, all three of whom are seeking to redefine their relationship with the Mainland. (The Puerto Rican situation was subject to much discussion; and with Washington part-way between New York, where most Mainland Puerto Ricans live, and the island, there were many Puerto Ricans at the session. That many Puerto Ricans want to retain US citizenship, and move toward more independence, was cited as a problem

that had been eliminated in the US negotiations with FSM and the Marshalls — the Pacific Islanders did not seek US citizenship, which eased the process).

Hill said that the relationship of FSM and the Marshalls had evolved, within the framework of Associated State status, close to that of political independence. He recounted the steps along the way: the upgrading of diplomatic status among the two states and Washington from the consular to the ambassadorial level; the admission of the two states to the United Nations and other international organisations; and the recognition of the two island states by other nations.

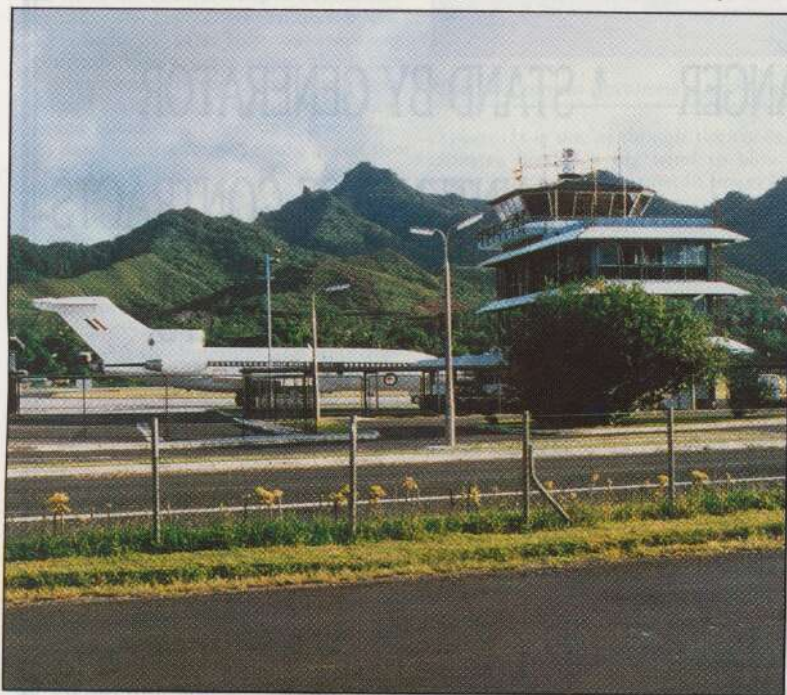
The major question about the future relationship between the US and the associated states is economic. What will happen when the regular flow of funds under the Compact of Free Association comes to an end, he asked. "Will the US just say 'adios'?"

He pointed out that the Cold War was ended, and with it much of the strategic value of the islands in the Central Pacific. He suggested, however, that the US will remain interested in these islands, pointing out the continuing utility of Kwajalein as a missile test site, and a continuing "moral obligation" of the US to the island nations.

Throughout the conference one other comparison between the US and the French governing systems was mentioned repeatedly and vigorously; that was the fact that while residents of the US flag islands are US citizens (or nationals), none of them can vote for the President of the United States.

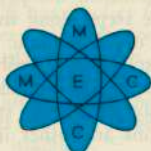
This is not the case for residents of French island territories, all of whom are French citizens, and they can and do vote for the President of France. (In fact, Dr. Henningham pointed out later, candidates for the French Presidency have a tradition of making at least one campaign visit to a French island early in their campaigns).

The US constitution, however, has made island voting for the President difficult, because rather than voting directly for President, as the French do, Americans choose their President through the filter of the archaic, state-based Electoral College. Were Puerto Ricans to opt for statehood (which they voted against in a recent referendum) and Puerto Rico admitted as a state, that would take care of that problem for that island. But the other territories are too small to be considered as potential states, and some other mechanism (as well as a constitutional amendment) would be needed to give residents votes for President. □



Cook Islands airport: NZ's style has been praised by some delegates

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PACIFIC BUSINESS



Western Samoa: could the economy get worse?

By Roman Grynberg

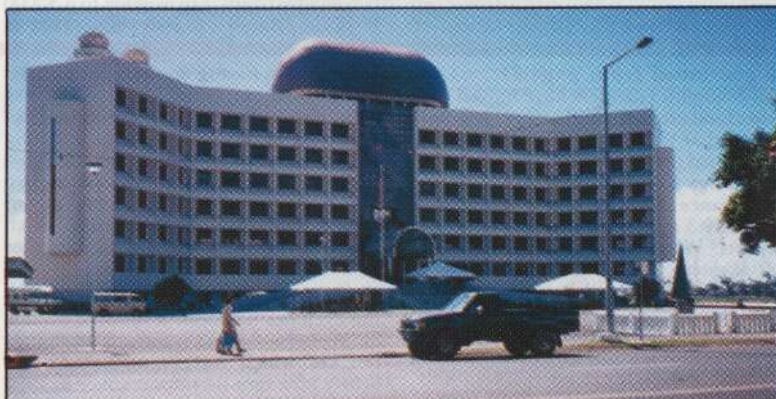
IF you had not been in Western Samoa for the past year or two and went straight into Apia and stood in front of the Clock Tower on Beach Road you would think that the economy had gone through a major transformation. The shabby run-down beach front that had long been a source of unfortunate comparison for many American Samoans has been changed almost irrevocably.

Now there are two shining new buildings standing on the water's edge — one them the Central Bank of Samoa and the other the central government building which by late July was not yet occupied. While some argue about the appropriateness of the architectural style of the Chinese built eight-storey, onion domed government building, few Western Samoans few know or care about the price. The ultimate cost of the building is WS\$35 million which is owed, interest free to the government of China.

As you walk along the sea wall, newly constructed by the Japanese, you feel almost instinctively that this is Western Samoa saying to its richer cousins in American Samoa that they too have arrived. All the buildings and improvements look good but if you walk one or two streets behind Beach Street or Main Street and you see that life has not changed much and for many it has gotten a deal worse.

The feeling that something is unreal is brought into stark relief when you look at the figures published by the Central Bank. Then it becomes clear that what is happening in down town Apia is a grand act of self delusion.

Exports—An Endangered Species
God has not dealt Western Samoa a fair hand lately. Three years ago it was struck by cyclone Ofa and then the following year by Val which absolutely devastated the country's copra and coconut oil



Apia: the central government building in the capital

ARVIND KUMAR

exports. It is not as though the coconut industry needed a big wind to blow it over — the long downturn in prices had virtually killed the industry in almost every country in the region but two cyclones absolutely sent it reeling. Exports from Western Samoa of coconut products which includes copra, coconut oil coconut cream copra meal fell from \$19 million tala (about 60 per cent of total exports) in 1988 to \$3.4 million tala in 1993 (or approximately 18 per cent of exports. Total exports in 1993 were \$16.5 million tala, almost a half their total value in 1989.

At present there are no exports of copra coconut oil and copra meal and coconuts are being imported from neighbouring Niue and Tonga in order to maintain the country's coconut cream industry.

As a sign of how bad the problem is the government is looking for a buyer for its coconut oil plant. What is evident is that Western Samoa has effectively given up the copra and coconut oil export industry forever. The government is, however,

attempting to encourage people to re-plant coconuts given that many of the most senile trees were totally destroyed during the cyclones. The government is paying growers \$2 tala per coconut tree planted for three years and is paying \$1.5/tree planted for cocoa bush for three years. However, it is very likely that the government will suspend the subsidy programme because of abuses by farmers. Few farmers are optimistic that Western Samoa will ever again be a major copra or coconut oil exporter.

What the government is hoping is that it will have enough coconut production to satisfy domestic consumption as well as the coconut cream export needs.

Taro Blight

If the problems that the coconut industry faced were not enough nature has brought another visitation upon the Western Samoans. On top of the cyclones Western Samoa has been struck by taro blight which has effectively devastated the country's staple food crop.

When the same taro blight hit the Solomon Islands after World War II it brought taro production to a virtual end

BUSINESS

By Asha Lakhan

Sorry saga of

SEVEN years ago Fiji made an ambitious bid to carve a name for itself in the region as a reputable shipbuilder but the sorry saga of the *Reef Endeavour* is bound to have done more to tarnish its image than enhance it.

The vessel is a 73-metre luxury cruise ship commissioned by Australian companies for operation in the Great Barrier Reef, Queensland.

Negotiations on the construction of the vessel began as early as 1988, a contract was signed in December, 1989 but five years later the vessel is still at the Government slipway in Walu Bay, still under construction and the delivery date keeps getting extended.

Today the *Reef Endeavour* has become a shipyard scandal that has already cost the Fiji taxpayer \$5 million, written off

in losses last year. An official government report estimates that by the time the vessel is constructed, Fiji would have lost close to \$10 million on it. That was two years ago. It is likely to be at least a couple of millions more if delivery does take place April, 1995 as now scheduled.

Under a new contract signed at the end of 1992, Fiji was to have made delivery of the vessel a month ago in August. Earlier this year the delivery time was revised to December. It is now given as April/May next year.

Under the 1992 contract, after a grace period of 90 days, Fiji is liable to a \$5000 penalty a day for late delivery. It faces

an additional fine of \$300,000 if delivery is not made within five months of the delivery date.

The \$5000 a day penalty becomes effective from November. After January, Fiji would be liable to the additional \$300,000 penalty... a total of \$1 million in penalties alone if the vessel keeps to the revised delivery date.

In April this year, the financial position on the ship was again reported critical with the shipyard estimating another \$1.5 million in losses. It is hardly surprising that The *Reef Endeavour* has become synonymous in Fiji with official bungling on a mammoth scale. It is an

● continued from page 21

and Solomon Islanders have moved onto other food crops since. The problem with taro is that it was not only has it been a staple food product it was in 1993 the last remaining agricultural export of any significance. In 1993 taro exports were worth \$9.5 million tala or 58 per cent of exports. While a few containers of taro left Western Samoa in 1994 exports of taro to New Zealand are now virtually zero. Fiji has been attempting to fill this marked void but market sources point to strong resistance to Fiji in the Samoan dominated New Zealand market.

The problem of course with the taro blight has been that not only has it resulted in a decrease in exports it has also caused an increase in the demand for rice. The department of agriculture is trying to stop what it knows could well be a disastrous shift in food consumption habits in Western Samoa away from vegetables to grains. The health as well as foreign exchange implications of such a shift are very subject and the government has been attempting to encourage, with only limited success, the consumption of alternative vegetables crops.

In the market in Apia some of the ugliest looking taro in the South Pacific is selling for prices that require a bank loan. Prices are, according to agriculture officials 10-15 times higher in the market than they were one year ago. The response to these prices as well as the effect of the blight has been a shift over to banana consumption. As expected banana prices have also risen in the market. However, rice prices have not risen and there has been an increase in imports. The government has attempted to encourage importation of Irish potatoes from New Zealand rather than have a change in eating habits to rice.

In order to combat the blight government has offered subsidies to farmers for

the cost of spraying and has encouraged the growing of Giant Taro and Taro Niue — which, for taste reasons, are not preferred in Western Samoa. Treating blight means removing the affected leaves which impairs the taste of the taro and perhaps more importantly means there are no leaves to make greens which are a very important source of vitamins in the traditional diet.

The total effect of the taro blight and the cyclones has been a massive decline in Western Samoa's foreign exchange reserves which have plummeted from nearly nine months import cover in 1990 to 4.6 months at the beginning of 1994. Economists generally feel that three months import cover is adequate for developing countries. The full effects of the taro blight on the foreign exchange reserves will not be felt until late 1994.

Western Samoa's growth sector-public debt

Western Samoa has always had a balance of trade deficit but its recent losing fight with nature has effectively put exports on the endangered species list. By the middle of 1994 exports only paid for 4 per cent of imports. In 1988 exports were 20 per cent of imports. To say the least things are bad but they could be worse. If the natural disasters that have afflicted Western Samoa were not bad enough the decisions of politicians are probably as bad.

The balance of trade deficit in Western Samoa has always been a problem but the massive remittances that are received every year from Western Samoa residents abroad has been the one thing that has shored up the balance of payments. Western Samoa survives on the easy assumption that remittances will continue at rates that are high enough to sustain living standards for a while to come.

The real problem is not so much the

absence of trade because ultimately the private individual in Western Samoa has little access to credit — he cannot spend more than he earns. This cannot be said politicians. In the past five years the government of Western Samoa has increased its deficit spending massively. The total public debt has grown from WS\$161 million in 1989 to WS\$346 million in 1993. Interestingly enough most of the public debt is held by multilateral agencies. The Asian Development Bank and the World Bank are together responsible for almost two thirds of public sector debt. The debt is almost invariably for large infrastructural projects or for agriculture.

While in some part of government's debt is understandable as some involves cyclone reconstruction but much is related to loan guarantees large infrastructural projects such as the Afuliho hydro dam and the new government offices in the centre of Apia. These three sources of debt combined account for close to 30 per cent of total 1993 public debt of Western Samoa. In the 1994/5 budget the Western Samoan Minister of Finance Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi indicated that government expenditure would increase by 10 per cent from WS\$250 million to WS\$274m. Between 1990 and 1994 government expenditure has increased by 50 per cent. Government revenue has increased by only 30 per cent in the same period.

While the Western Samoan economy has had its fair share of bad lack of late its problems have been compounded by government which is unwilling to see the economic reality of its current situation and spend accordingly. In a few years when the situation requires structural adjustment, the ADB and the World Bank, who have provided the public debt to fuel the appetite of big spending politicians, will almost certainly be the first to condemn government profligacy. □

the Reef Endeavour

incredible tale of massive under-tendering. As the present Shipyard manager, Ratu Mosese Duilomaloma, puts it in an official document on the issue, the entire episode "boggles reasoning".

There are lots of questions that need answering regarding the *Reef Endeavour* contract. For example, why did the marine department accept a \$F9.2 million contract for the ship when its own estimates were almost double?

Unofficial reports from the department are that a management estimate had put initial costs at \$F18 million and that a second estimate from Marine staff had placed it at \$15.2 million. Yet on 22 December 1989, Director of Marine Captain Sekove Cama signed a sub-contract for \$9,231,190 with Ship Design and Management (Australia) Pty Ltd of Melbourne (SDMA) to build the ship.

The purchasers of the ship were QH Tours Ltd (a subsidiary of Qantas) and Sazalo Pty Ltd of Australia, and on the same day that Fiji signed the contract with SDMA, an "almost identical contract" was executed between the Australian purchasers and SDMA.

In addition to the separate contracts, a supplementary legal agreement was entered into among the three parties prompting Ratu Mosese to comment in his report that the Shipyard had "landed itself into a weird contractual situation". The Auditor-General's 1990/91 report is also critical of the contract, pointing out that the Shipyard's own estimate of costs were approximately \$F15 million "but the purchaser was able to negotiate it down to just over \$9 million".

In his report Ratu Mosese claims normal precautionary measures were not taken by the Shipyard at the time to establish SDMA's integrity and capability before committing itself to serious business. "I am most amazed that the Shipyard... had deemed it proper and feasible to boldly take it on its own bet, with or without expert advice, to take on this mammoth task, the largest and most challenging ever taken on in Fiji, knowing full well of its limited resources and its capacity."

"What spurred management on in its pursuit of and eventual embarkation on this project boggles reasoning," he said. His own assessment was that the acceptance of the contract was not based on any "valid and sound principles", but on "sheer whim with a view to taking on something grandiose and glamorous".

The project began to face snags and delays almost from the start. In September 1991 work on the project stopped because of a dispute between the Shipyard and the purchaser over construction



Reef Endeavour: the ship at the centre of the controversy

delays.

At the time, the vessel was only 45 per cent to completion. The Marine Department put the blame on SDMA. In an interview with *The Fiji Times* in October, 1991, Captain Cama said circumstances beyond the Shipyard's control had made it impossible to deliver the vessel on time.

"We have been victims of a sophisticated attempt to exploit the weaker partner in the contract", he charged, claiming that delays were caused by SDMA's failure to provide drawings on time.

When the contract was terminated, Fiji sued SDMA claiming \$A10.5 million in damages only to find that the company had a paid up share capital of \$2 and that their liabilities were more than their assets. The case had to be dropped since Fiji had no hope of recovering anything.

By July 1990, the government decided that the only possible solution was to complete the job and minimise the loss. In March 1992, therefore, an agreement was reached between the Fiji government and the owners of the ship for completion of the vessel. A new contract was signed in November 1992 for the ship to be completed within 18 months after receiving the first instalment payment of \$1,069,176 in December.

In December 1992, the government wrote off the \$5.5 million loss on the Revolving Fund Account. An assessment by the Ministry of Finance shows that by the time construction on the vessel is completed, the government would have suffered a loss of \$9.5 million on it.

The second contract was signed for the old price of \$F10.5 million even though the total cost of construction of the vessel was then estimated at \$A16 million or \$F17.6 million. This left a balance of \$7.1 million of which \$5.5 million had been

written off leaving \$1.6 million still being absorbed.

The Shipyard has since undergone a shakeup to ensure financial control and a new management team is in place to complete construction on the vessel without any further mishap.

But a shipyard report in April claimed that the project's financial position was again critical with an additional \$1.5 million loss anticipated. The current management of the Shipyard wants an inquiry into the saga of the *Reef Endeavour* with a view to determining liability.

In 1989 when the contract was signed Apisai Tora was the Minister responsible, his Permanent Secretary was Anasa Vocea, Director of Marine Captain Sekove Cama, Shipyard Manager Apenisa Naigulevu. Captain Cama denies any responsibility claiming he merely acted on the advice of the Shipyard manager. He also denied any knowledge of the \$18 million estimate put on construction of the vessel by Shipyard management in 1989.

"Who can prove that I was led astray? Where is this document?" he asked adding that he himself had heard rumours of the \$18 million internal estimate on the project.

Captain Cama said the department's legal advisers had looked into the credentials of SDMA at the time. "There was a trip down to Melbourne and the company office was visited. Our legal people did their ABC and looked into it."

"I had every faith in our people but we could not be expected to perform miracles. We did not have the high technological expertise other shipyards have," he said.

The shipyard is confident it now has the expertise and the capability to finish construction of the 73-metre vessel by April/May next year. □

PEACEKEEPING

Fiji troops in Lebanon face

By ASHA LAKHAN

UNITED Nations Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has given notice of a cutback in peacekeeping operations in Lebanon. The mission is costing the UN about \$US138 million a year. Since its inception in March, 1978 the total cost of the peacekeeping force to the organisation has been over \$2 billion.

But can Boutros-Ghali cut back on the strength of the mission in Lebanon? And if it does decide to do so what will be the

impact on Fiji which has 650 men serving under UNIFIL?

According to Fiji Government sources, the country has earned about \$150 million from the UNIFIL since its first contingent took up duties in May, 1978. The United Nations has always lagged behind in its reimbursements to Fiji, which meant that much of the burden of the humanitarian mission has fallen on the shoulders of the Fiji government.

Today the UN is believed to be about \$12-\$14 million in arrears in its payments

to Fiji. The problem is that demand for United Nations peacekeeping operations has blown out of all proportion.

Since peacekeeping operations began in 1948, the UN has been engaged in 34 such operations at a total cost of \$US10.4 billion. Data released by the UN Information Centre in Sydney shows it is today engaged in 17 missions involving 71,543 troops and civilian personnel at an annual cost of \$US3.8 billion.

At June 30, 1994 outstanding contributions from member states to peacekeeping operations stood at \$US2.1 billion. However, much as Boutros-Ghali might be justified in trying to cut back on some of these commitments, on humanitarian grounds alone he may find it very difficult to do so.

At least that's how Fiji sees the situation. Despite the breakthrough in peace efforts in the Middle East, the Fiji Military Forces believes it may be too soon to cut back on UNIFIL operations.

Says Fiji Military Forces chief of staff Brigadier George Konrote — "The situation out there is quite volatile. It remains unpredictable ... likely to flare up without warning."

The peace process has brought some stability to the area and today there some semblance of law and order. At the same time, the warring factions tend to do their own thing. "It's a question of who's controlling whom."

On the UN's plans to cut back on UNIFIL, Fiji is still very much in the dark. "I don't know. It's so unpredictable....", says Brigadier Konrote. But he ventured to add: "I can see the present status quo being maintained."

Lesi Korovavala, a former senior plans officer for UNIFIL who is in Fiji on leave from peacekeeping duties, says if there is a cutback the decision will be sent to his government first.

"If the United Nations has to enforce reductions based on operational or financial considerations, then contributing nations have little say apart from implementing these decisions.

"The government or FMF may attempt to protest that decision; however, the final decision rests with the United Nations." This is not the first time the United Nations has been forced to reconsider or cutback on its peacekeeping operations.

In 1986, as the costs of UNIFIL mounted, it was suggested that the force be withdrawn. A proposal to cutback on UNIFIL as made in 1988, a decade after

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cutback by United Nations

UNIFIL began operations, when the United Nations was on the brink of bankruptcy. In that 10-year period, the mission had cost the United Nations about 1.5 billion.

About that time the United Nations had directed a 10 per cent reduction in all contingents in line with a 10 per cent cutback in the UNIFIL budget. The Fiji contingent, which had risen from the initial 500 troops to 750 in the mid-1980s just after the second Israeli invasion of Lebanon, was reduced to 650.

Major Lesi said the United Nations last year directed a 10 per cent budget cut on UNIFIL. "Naturally it should be expected that a corresponding strength reduction should follow."

"After the budget cut last year, the United Nations had directed all missions to study its own organisations with a view to streamlining itself and its functions and also to be more cost effective."

Supposing a 10 per cent reduction was implemented, it would not affect the basic setup of the contingents.

"I could foresee that any reduction would be in the form of reducing the rifle sub-units and not the administration and logistics support elements at its headquarters as long as Fiji is required to contribute a battalion to UNIFIL," he said.

"Given the worst scenario, the headquarters support elements will carry out its secondary roles of basic infantry duties to support the rifle companies. This will be an internal command responsibility."

The 10 per cent budget cut announced at United Nations headquarters forced UNIFIL to re-assess its operations regarding armed elements and to maximise on its existing resources, Major Lesi said.

Changes in operation brought about as a result have been in force since February. It has changed the focus of UNIFIL operations from a static to a mobile force with a major emphasis on extensive patrolling. Meanwhile, even while demands for UN peacekeeping

duties are on the increase around the world, pressures are mounting on it to contain costs and cutback on operations. One of the UN's most vocal critics in this area is its major donor, the United States. The United States pays 30.1 per cent of the UN peacekeeping budget and by the end of this month will be \$1 billion in arrears.

The United States intends to reduce its peacekeeping commitment to 25 per cent by January 1996 and believes that other newly-rich countries should pay their fair share. A new policy directive from President Bill Clinton governing United States participation in multilateral peacekeeping operations aims to impose more discipline in the area of peacekeeping.

He said internal political turmoil may not be susceptible to the efforts of the international community. "So neither we nor the international community have either the mandate, nor the resources, nor the possibility of resolving every conflict of this kind."

Lake reiterated US commitment to strengthening United Nations peacekeeping capabilities, but said missions must now carry "sunset provisions". "Before we go in or before we sign up for an extension, that we know when it will end or how we will know that it has ended" — that is, the United States is demanding definite limits to the duration and conditions of peacekeeping.

Fiji for its part has a contingency plan for the day when its forces has to pull out of Lebanon and Sinai. At Sinai, Fiji has 300 men serving with the Multinational Observer Force, which has been reduced from 500 men when the operation first began in April 1982.

The Lebanon venture began in May, 1978 soon after the first Israeli invasion with a contingent of 500 men.

At the time, the total strength of the Royal Fiji Military Forces was 770 men. The Lebanon contingent comprised roughly 70 per cent territorials

and 30 per cent career soldiers.

The Fiji force swelled to 750 men after the second invasion in the mid-'80s and then came down to 650 men — a number regarded as insufficient to cope with the demands of the task.

The Fiji Military Force has come a long way from those early days of 1978. From a tiny force of 770 men, it swelled after the coups to 7000 men but has in the past couple of years gone down to 5000 men.

The military budget has gone up to \$30 million from \$16 million in 1986, almost on a par with the national budget for Education and Health. There is no indication from the military as yet whether a cutback in UNIFIL forces will mean a cut in the overall size of the force at home. □



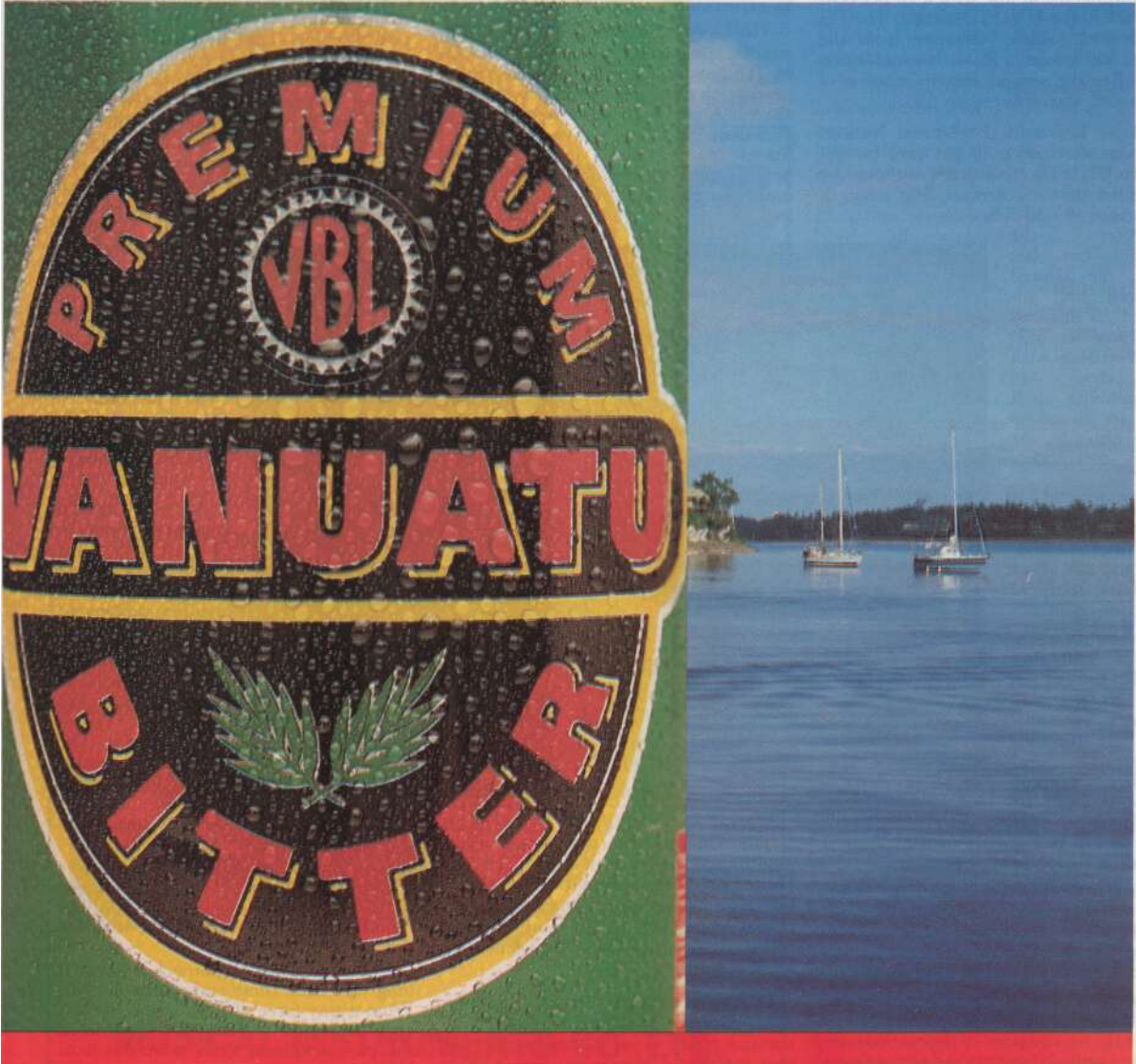
PEACEKEEPERS: *Fiji troops checking vehicles at a checkpoint in Lebanon.*

The Clinton directive issued three months ago spells out new conditions for United States engagement in peacekeeping missions and aimed at ensuring that peacekeeping will be "a more effective collective security tool for American foreign policy".

Clinton's national security adviser, Anthony Lake, speaking to reporters on the new policy in early May pointed out that the post-cold war era was a more dangerous time. "Its defining characteristic is that conflicts in this era take place now more within societies, within nations than among them. And this makes it a particularly difficult time ... for us all in the international community to come to grips with questions of when and how and where we'll use force."

Vanuatu's

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Managing our resources

PAPUA New Guinea will host the South Pacific Forum next year to coincide with the country's 20th independence anniversary along with the Republic of the Marshall Islands hosting the 1996 Forum. It will be the first time for the government on Majuro to host a summit of South Pacific leaders.

In 1997, the Cook Islands will host the 28th South Pacific Forum — it's third since the Forum began over two decades ago. These dates were decided at the 25th Forum in Brisbane last month.

Like the Cook Islands, the Brisbane Forum was Australia's third time to host the meeting. Australia's Prime Minister Paul Keating who took over the rotating chairmanship of the Forum this year from President Bernard Dowiyogo of Nauru, said he was "impressed" with the outcome of the Forum (Nauru was the host of the Forum last year). At the leaders' retreat held at the Japanese-owned Koorabyn resort in the Gold Coast hinterland, Prime Minister Keating was also selected as the Forum spokesman.

"Overall, I think the meeting clearly shows the understanding that South Pacific leaders have, of the urgent challenges we face. And the thing that impressed, I must say, particularly, was the political will that they all showed in seeking to manage those challenges, and their willingness to actually grasp the nettle on big problems," Keating told a news conference afterwards.

"I think the Forum has again proven its value as an institution." Indeed, Keating said that Pacific leaders felt quite proud of the achievements of their meeting this year.

Perhaps what set this year's Forum quite apart from past meetings was the selection of a theme which ensured that leaders' discussions and deliberations were focused. The focus this year's was on the theme *Managing Our Resources* — a timely theme which has undoubtedly sent an alert signal that Pacific island countries may not be getting what they should be receiving for their limited, but invaluable resources countries were receiving a combined revenue of only A \$74 million in revenue each year. This amount represents between two to four per cent of landed catch which, according to one estimate, is valued at A\$2 billion a year worth of fish hauled from Forum Island countries' waters.

In the forestry sector, the picture is almost the same. According to a recent study commissioned by the Australian government in preparation for the Brisbane Forum, some countries in the region were losing the equivalent of half their current national income through ineffective monitoring of logging exports.

The Forum also endorsed the undertaking by the Leaders of the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) — Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu — to examine uniform legislation, procedures and practices in forest resources.

In fisheries, there's overwhelming support to develop a multilateral approach to negotiating access to fisheries resources in the Forum Countries' combined Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) which covers an estimated 29.1 million square kilometres across the Pacific Ocean. Talks are expected to be held in December with Deep Water Fishing Nations (DWFNS) which do not have such an arrangement with Forum countries. At present only the United States of America has a multilateral fishing arrangement with Forum nations under which Pacific Island Countries receive about

THE FORUM



**ALFRED
SASAKO**

US\$10 million annually in fishing rights fees.

The Forum leaders have also agreed to tackle the problem bedevilling some of the region's airlines which now have annual combined losses of around A\$108 million which is equivalent to the level of aid provided to the region by Australia and New Zealand annually.

Options for rationalisation of air services, perhaps on a sub-regional basis would be examined. Operators and civil aviation authorities of Forum countries will soon meet to prepare a proposal on the matter for Forum heads of governments.

Common problems of public sector and fiscal management would also be addressed. It is expected that Finance Ministers of the 15 member nations of the South Pacific Forum will meet before next

year's Forum to look at ways of accommodating fiscal adjustments in national budgets. To be funded by Australia, the meeting will consider a number of policy initiatives including devising appropriate policy responses which maximise opportunities, but at the same time lessen threats resulting from changes to the global economic environment.

Among other things, the Ministers are expected to look at ways of broadening the economic base of Forum countries with a view to increasing international competitiveness and productivity and improving the balance of payments through imports reduction and adoption of procurement, conservation and efficient policies.

A range of other issues was also discussed by Forum leaders. On human resources, for instance, Forum leaders agreed that sustainable development is critical with education being the key to the effective management of the region's natural resources. Hence, the one-day meeting endorsed the Suva Declaration on Sustainable Development in the Pacific, underlining the importance of the quality of life in the context of Pacific Islands cultures.

For the first time, recognition was given to the centrality of indigenous rights and customs and the special relationship indigenous people have with their land. Australia announced it will provide A\$6 million to help island athletes from the Forum Island countries prepare for the Sydney 2000 Olympic.

The other is that it will contribute A\$900,000 towards a Foreign Investment Advisory Service office to be established in Sydney. This office is expected to support further quality investment in the region as well as to improve product development, market research and to overcome non-tariff barriers to trade. New Zealand's decision to reduce by five per cent the Rule of Origin requirements to 45 per cent for garment imports under the South Pacific Regional Trade and Regional Economic Co-operation Agreement (SPARTECA) was also welcomed.

New Zealand has also spearheaded contributions towards the establishment of a South Pacific Representative Office in Tokyo by announcing it will provide NZ\$200,000. To realise their seriousness about such an office, Forum Island Countries have agreed to allocate 10 per cent of their annual assessed contributions to the Forum Secretariat's regular budget for this cause. With the assistance of the government of Japan, the proposed office is expected to promote trade, investment and tourism between Japan and the FICs. □

CULTURE

Rasigatale's US adventure

FIJI cultural expert and entertainer Manoa Rasigatale can claim some credit for luring tourists into Fiji with his special brand of entertainment.

And after 21 years in the business, Manoa has struck his first big break with a shot at cracking the United States market. Manoa's story began in the 1970s, when after a career in journalism and a dab in the music industry, he decided to give it a go with cultural entertainment. Thus, the Dance Theatre of Fiji was born.

With a troupe of Fijian dancers, and more recently firewalkers from the island of Beqa, Manoa has performed for both tourists and locals at his Pacific Harbour location, a 30-minute drive from Fiji's capital, Suva. Manoa then moved into the big time with a cultural exchange scheme with the Polynesian Cultural Centre in November last year.

Under the scheme, Manoa and his 15-member team were invited to stage a two-week show at the end of last November at the centre at La'e, in Hawaii. He said because the first show was an overwhelming success, they were invited to perform there again for three weeks in July this year.

"We returned to Hawaii for a three-week show in July because of public demand and they want us back in February next year."

He said the Polynesian Cultural Centre was expecting a bigger audience with the Fiji shows. "Hawaii is the gateway to the United States and several organisations on the US mainland have made approaches for shows in the US," Manoa said.

Not bad for someone with such humble beginnings in 1972. During the first week of July next year, Manoa and his team are expected to give shows at a festival in Las Vegas which is expected to draw some 168,000 people. He has also been asked to give shows at Sea World in California. It is estimated that 40 million people pass through Seas World every year. Norway next July and Spain are also on the agenda for next year.

Manoa is the first to admit that one of his main attractions are his firewalkers. "The Dance Theatre has been touring for 21 years. To add ingredients to the show, I brought in firewalkers.

"The Americans understand technology but cannot figure out how the firewalkers are walking across white hot

stones." Manoa has no doubt he has made a substantial contribution to Fiji's economy via tourism. "We have made a great impact for Fiji's economy and the Fiji Visitor's Bureau and Air Pacific should capitalise on our presence on the US mainland.

"There would be no cost to the Fiji government and we would too glad to talk to the government and to Air Pacific."

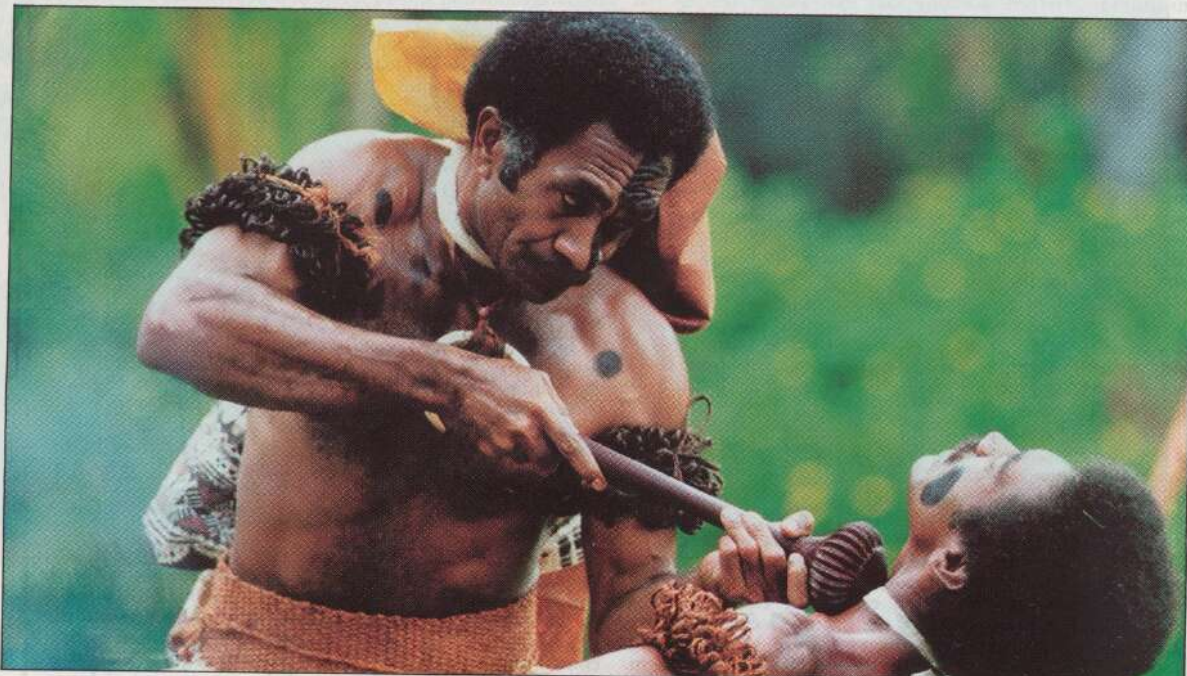
Manoa however warned that Fiji had to be prepared to meet the expectations of the Americans as they were "so advanced".

"Service has to be spot-on and personnel in the tourism industry have to be trained for a higher level of presentation.

"Tourism is a fragile industry. Like a ceramic pot, it should be held with both hands because if you drop it, it breaks and is very hard to put back together."

Manoa also believes that culture should be handled carefully. "We should not copy others because this can lead to cultural suicide. People will see a show and say, 'When you've seen one, you've seen them all'." But he has a lot of confidence in Fiji's tourism industry.

"We certainly have the talent and the people to make the industry even more successful here in Fiji."



IOSEFO KALIOVA: administers traditional Fijian justice to 'victim' Atonio Radrodru

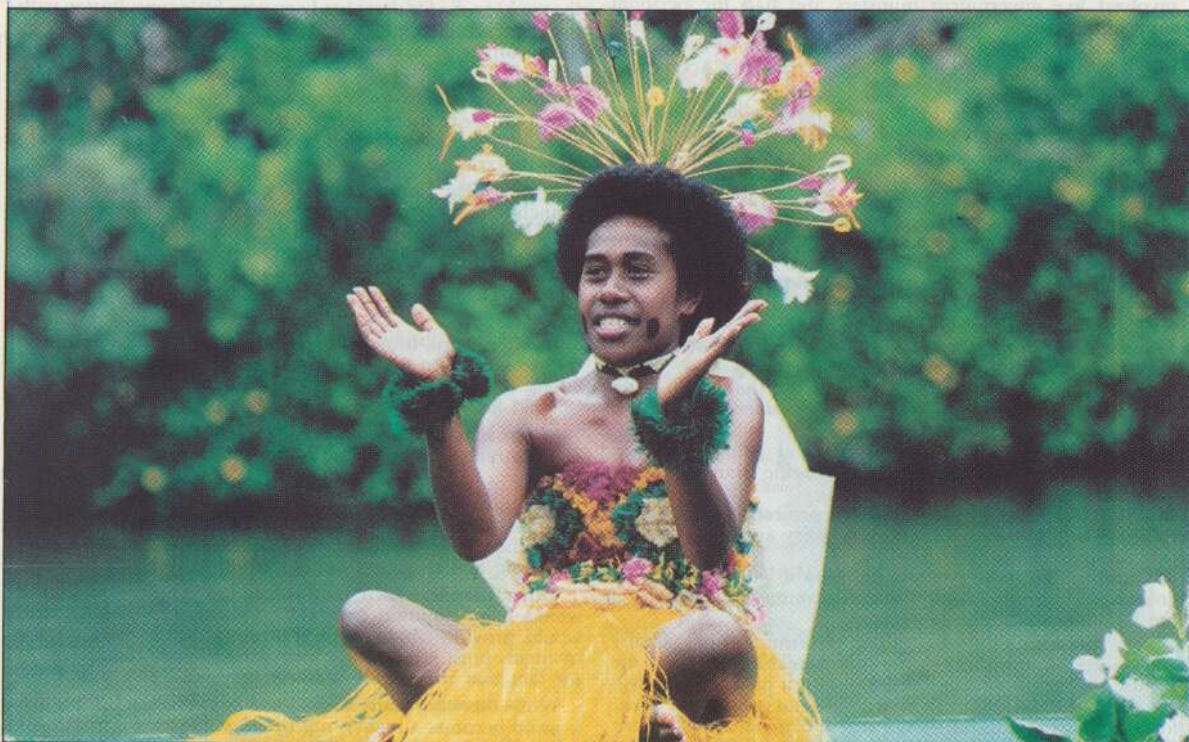
Pictures BARRY MARKOWITZ



War dance: Iosefo Kaliova's performance stirred an eager crowd with the audience in Hawaii



Call to arms: Neori Burua calls his fellow performers during a war sketch at the centre



Fijian charm: Vitalina Vuki delights crowds with her smile and grace

Pictures: BARRY MARKOWITZ

Victory for islanders

A CENTURY after their relatives were kidnapped, coerced or enticed from their home islands to work on Australian sugar plantations the descendants of the first Pacific islanders to live in Australia have won formal recognition of their plight from the Australian government.

A Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) report published last year showed South Sea islanders (as the descendants of indentured labourers are called to distinguish them from more recent Pacific island migrants) were among the poorest groups in the country.

The HREOC report showed they had suffered racial discrimination from governments and the private sector. It found the unemployment rate among South Sea islanders to be 28.5 per cent — two-and-a-half times the national average.

Home ownership rates, a good measure of overall wealth, were lower even than newly arrived migrant groups such as Vietnamese or other Pacific islanders. The official recognition and the announcement of a programme to redress past injustices is part of the government's official response to the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission report. It has involved five government ministers and had the personal support of Prime Minister Paul Keating. The cornerstone of the government's programme is the inclusion of South Sea islanders as a target group in the government's Access and Equity strategy.

The strategy is designed to ensure all Australians, who may suffer discrimination because of their language, culture, race or religion, get a fair share of government resources and an opportunity to be a part of the decision making process.

It does this by monitoring all federal government departments and programmes on behalf of its target groups and negotiating changes where programmes fail to live up to the strategies aims. It gained extra muscle recently when the prime minister appointed a minister of state especially to look after the strategy. Other initiatives in the government's response to the HREOC report include

- a \$300,000 project to write the South Sea islander's story into the school history curriculum;
- a photographic exhibition which will tour the eastern states and, it is hoped, will also be seen in Solomon Islands and Vanuatu;
- a cultural award scheme which will help South Sea Islanders to re-establish links with the Pacific Island countries from which their relatives came;
- a \$50,000 cross-portfolio research project to gather data that will help government service delivery agencies meet the community's needs;
- funding for two community liaison officers to assist government agencies tailor their programmes to the needs of the South Sea islander community.

The fact that the Australian government has finally acknowledged the sorry history of blackbirding from the Pacific and in the process come up with a package that will genuinely start to redress those wrongs is an enormous victory for women like Faith Bandler, Patricia Corowa and Nasuyen Enares who have been leading the islanders' fight for justice. It is just four years since they renewed their demands for recognition.

To have won these gains in such a short time must have

AUSTRALIA



JEMIMA
GARRETT

set a new record for government action. While the government's package has deservedly won applause from the islander community it has not met all their demands, or even all the recommendations of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission.

In particular, it has not given South Sea islanders access to the more generous benefits available under programmes for Aborigines and Torres Strait islanders. Much of the new move for recognition of South Sea islanders is a result of the fact that islanders have been pushed off Aboriginal benefits. The gap created by the loss of those benefits can be seen in statistics on education.

The HREOC report found two thirds of today's 19-year-olds received money from the Aboriginal Education scheme Abstudy during

their school years. Since Abstudy was introduced in the mid-Seventies the number of South Sea islanders dropping out of school for economic reasons has dropped from a massive 80 per cent to a still far too high 55 per cent.

Islanders still see some difficulties in the implementation of the package. So far there has been very little consultation with the community itself and, at this stage, there is no money specifically earmarked to for supporting islander organisations.

With islanders so poor and living in very geographically dispersed areas, money is essential if they are to maintain the sort of national organisation necessary to have a credible voice in Canberra.

For Patricia Corowa, secretary of the New South Wales branch of the Australian South Sea Islanders United Council (ASSIUC), consultation and responsiveness to islander perspectives is the key to success of government programmes. And she has a vision which could make islander programmes a model for other cultures where extended family living is still strong.

In Bilyindgil, in northern New South Wales for instance, she would like to see the NSW housing department build a village designed to islander specifications rather than provide isolated houses as they become available.

Where islanders have succeeded it has often been as a result of the strength of their family network.

Ms Corowa believes a village would not only strengthen those family ties but provide a basis for enterprise and small business initiatives which would start to put islanders on a par with other Australians. Some of those business initiatives, such as fishing and tropical farming, are already being pursued.

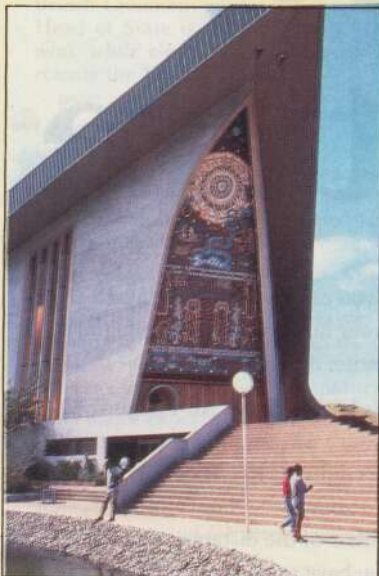
Other islanders own land which government assistance would help maintain or make productive. That, in turn, would provide employment for young people who, at the moment, must either move away or reconcile themselves to the fact that it is highly unlikely they will get a job.

While there are many obstacles to be overcome before such a vision becomes a reality, not the least Housing department rules which frown on ethnic specific developments, it is within the realm of the possible. All it needs is continuing enthusiasm and flexibility from Canberra and a bit more effort from the state government. □

VISIT PAPUA NEW GUINEA YEAR '95

advertising feature

The Pacific giant



Parliament: democratic institutions are well-entrenched, combining with tradition.

By Wally Hiambohn

PAPUA New Guinea, the largest of the Pacific island countries, is a rapidly developing vibrant country. It is where Asia meets the Pacific, and is full of promises of prosperity.

This prosperity can be guaranteed for several reasons. It is politically stable with well-entrenched democratic institutions. Government recognition of the private sector in development, and guaranteed safety of foreign investment with a range of concessions and generous assistance to attract investors.

It has an abundance of natural resources in mining and petroleum, fishing, forestry, agriculture and tourism. The country and its lands are relatively young. The geography is characterised by high mountain ranges, deep valleys and swift rivers.

Its four million people are mainly Melanesians, 80 per cent of whom live in the rural areas. Port Moresby, the capital and major city, has a population of 200,000 with other important towns being Lae (80,000), Madang (27,000), Wewak (23,000), Goroka (18,000), Mount Hagen (18,000) and Rabaul

(17,000). PNG is, in fact, the most heterogenous country in the world. Because of the isolation of most communities in the past, over 700 different languages were developed and are still spoken, about one-third of the languages known to man.

Because of the cultural diversity of the country, English is the language of government, commerce and law. English is a compulsory subject in school and, apart from isolated communities, is widely understood throughout PNG.

PNG was granted independence from Australia in 1975. The democratic heritage of Melanesian society and the parliamentary traditions of Great Britain have combined to produce a stable democracy in PNG. There have been a number of democratic elections since independence and universal suffrage is enjoyed by the population. There is freedom of the press.

The national government comprises three independent branches — the executive, the legislature, and the judiciary. Executive power is vested in the national executive council which comprises of the prime minister and a number of ministers whom he chooses

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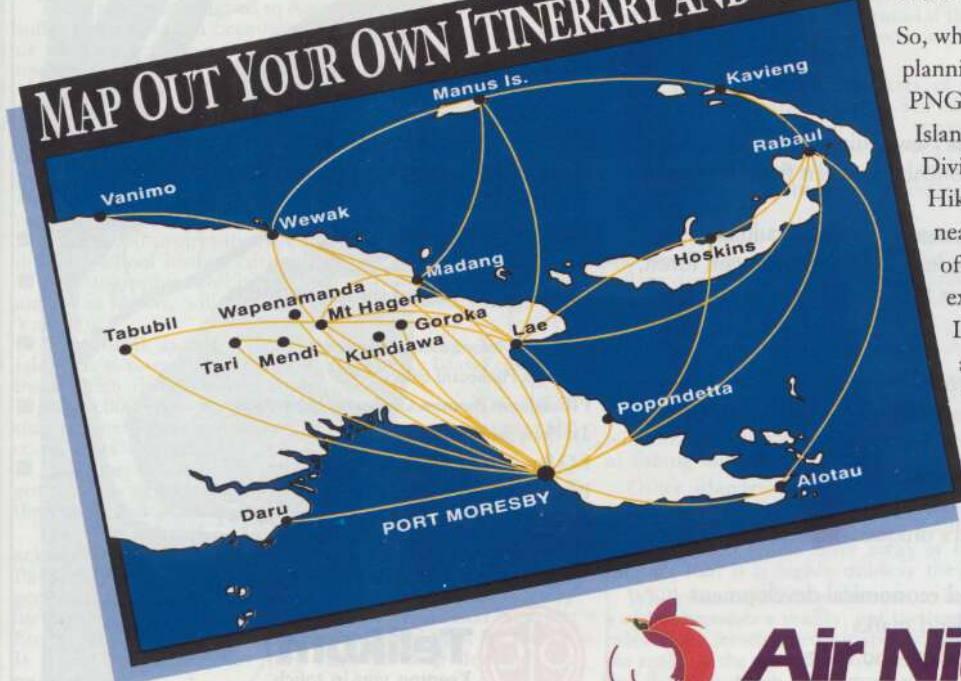
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VISIT PAPUA NEW GUINEA YEAR '95

advertising feature

from among members of parliament.

A decentralised system of provincial government also exists in PNG, though the sheer size and cost of this has led to a serious review currently being undertaken. PNG is an active member of the British Commonwealth. The ceremonial Head of State is the Governor-General who, while elected by Parliament, represents the British Monarch.

PNG has been described as "a mountain of gold floating in a sea of oil". While this may somewhat be overstating the situation, it does reflect the importance that PNG's extensive natural resources have played and will continue to play in the country's development.

At present there are two distinct economies — traditional, mainly subsistence, farming which supports the majority in the rural areas; and the cash economy which is very much an open economy geared for international trade.

Its major exports are gold, oil, copper, coffee, timber, cocoa and oil palm, with major imports being machinery and equipment, manufactured goods, food and chemicals. Australia, Japan, the United States and Germany ranks as the biggest trading partners.

The development of several new important mineral and oil projects have laid the foundation for strong growth for



Mining: mineral resources have led the way for strong economic growth

the remainder of the 1990s.

In 1991 the country's GDP grew by 9.5 per cent, 11.8 per cent in 1992 and by a sizzling 14.4 per cent in 1993. There are extensive reserves of natural gas and oil. The first oil production began at the Kutubu oil field in mid-1992. A conser-

vative estimate of recoverable reserves at the field has been put at 248 million barrels. Other known fields have yet to be developed. The main mineral deposits are copper and gold, but there are also recoverable deposits of other minerals.

THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

RESEARCH SCHOOL OF PACIFIC AND ASIAN STUDIES

Davidson - Te Rangi Hiroa Fund Awards

The Research School of Pacific and Asian History, The Australian National University, Canberra, Australia is inviting applications from students for support under the Davidson-Te Rangi Hiroa Fund. The Awards are made chiefly for students who have recently completed or are completing their higher education and are made chiefly to those seeking assistance towards the costs of travel and living expenses for short visits for research, study and consultation at universities, institutions or places other than that in which they are currently studying.

No limitation is placed on the field of study but there is some preference for assistance for visits to universities, institutions or other places in the Pacific region. The intention of the Awards is to support persons in the earlier stages of their career, rather than those well established in their employment. Awards do not normally exceed \$A1,500.

The John Knight Awards

The Research School of Pacific and Asian History University is also inviting applications from students for support under the John Knight Pacific Fellowship Scheme. The Awards are for young people who have completed or are completing their higher education. Awards will be made chiefly to those seeking assistance towards the cost of travel and living expenses for relatively short visits for study and experience in Australia, including short courses, conferences, visits for industrial, agricultural or social enterprises, or similar.

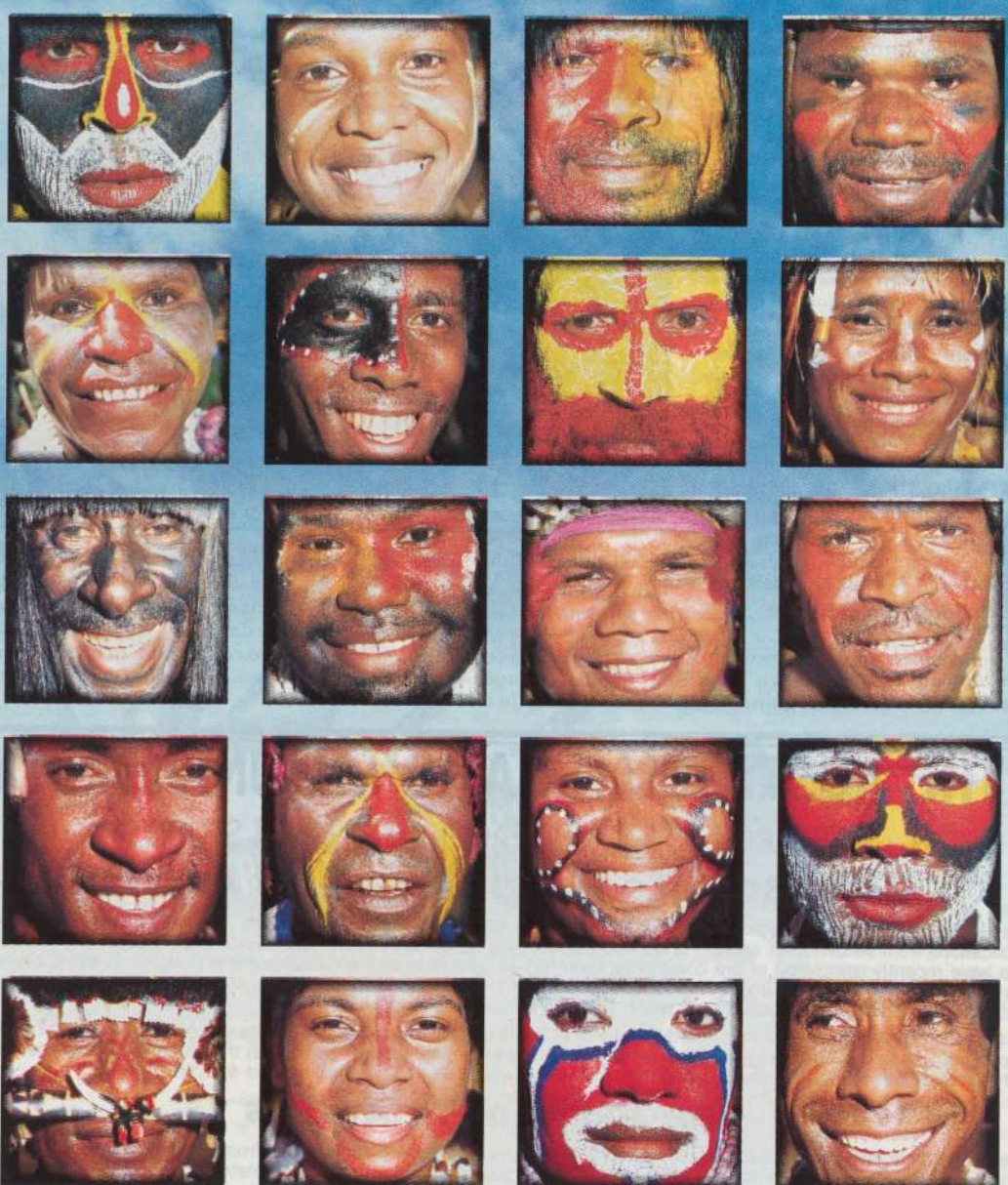
Awards will normally not exceed \$A2,000. There is no limitation on the field of study, but the selection committee may take into account Senator Knight's special interest in providing help for the disabled.

Application forms and further information for both the Davidson-Te Rangi Hiroa Fund Awards and the John Knight Fellowships should be obtained from:

The School Secretary
The Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies
The Australian National University
Canberra ACT 0200
AUSTRALIA

Applications for the Awards and Fellowships in 1994 have a closing date of 1 October.

OUR CUSTOMERS



The grid displays 20 individual portraits of Pacific islanders, arranged in five rows and four columns. Each person has unique traditional face paint or body paint designs. The designs include red and yellow patterns around the eyes and nose, black and white patterns, and intricate red and white designs. The individuals are smiling and looking directly at the camera against a blue sky background.



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VISIT PAPUA NEW GUINEA YEAR '95

advertising feature

THE Ok Tedi mine is now producing more copper than that produced by the Bougainville mine before its forced closure due to an armed rebellion. The Porgera gold mine is one of the world's largest and is expected to produce 11.3 million ounces of gold over its 20-year life. A medium size gold mine is also based on Misima Island, and soon to come on stream is the Lihir gold mine, said to be the biggest undeveloped gold mine outside South Africa.

The waters around PNG are also rich in marine resources and are almost untapped. Within the 200 mile economic zone are large varieties of fish, including migrating schools of tuna.

Forest products are one of PNG's major exports but the timber resource of the country remains largely intact. There are 36 million hectares of enclosed forest of which 15 million hectares of high quality tropical hardwood are estimated as suitable for immediate development. Timber operators are currently harvesting only around 1.5 million cubic metres of available timber.

The government of PNG is, however, mindful of the important obligations to its environmental heritage. Each major investment project is carefully evaluated in terms of the environmental impact. Every effort is made to devise appropriate solutions to meet the needs of both the local people and the investors.

The PNG banking system is made up of the Central Bank (Bank of Papua New Guinea), a number of commercial banks, a small number of finance companies and a development bank, namely the Agricultural Bank of PNG.

One of the commercial banks, the Papua New Guinea Banking Corporation, is wholly owned by the government. The others are subsidiaries of international and Australian banks.

The Agricultural Bank of Papua New Guinea has as its main objective the provision of finance to PNG enterprises for agricultural, industrial and commercial projects. Another recently established government body, the Small Business Development Corporation, assists small and medium size local businesses to secure finance and operate efficiently.

Other financial institutions include finance companies, saving and loans societies, and credit unions.

Some companies operating in PNG are listed on Australian Stock Exchanges. The government also intends to establish a stock exchange in PNG in the near future. While some finance is available from the banking system in PNG, overseas investors are unlikely to secure substantial local borrowing from the relatively scarce local resources. A new operation would normally need to bring in funds from overseas to establish a project in which case the Central Bank requires a



Highlanders: 80 per cent of the population live in rural areas



Copra: a major revenue earner



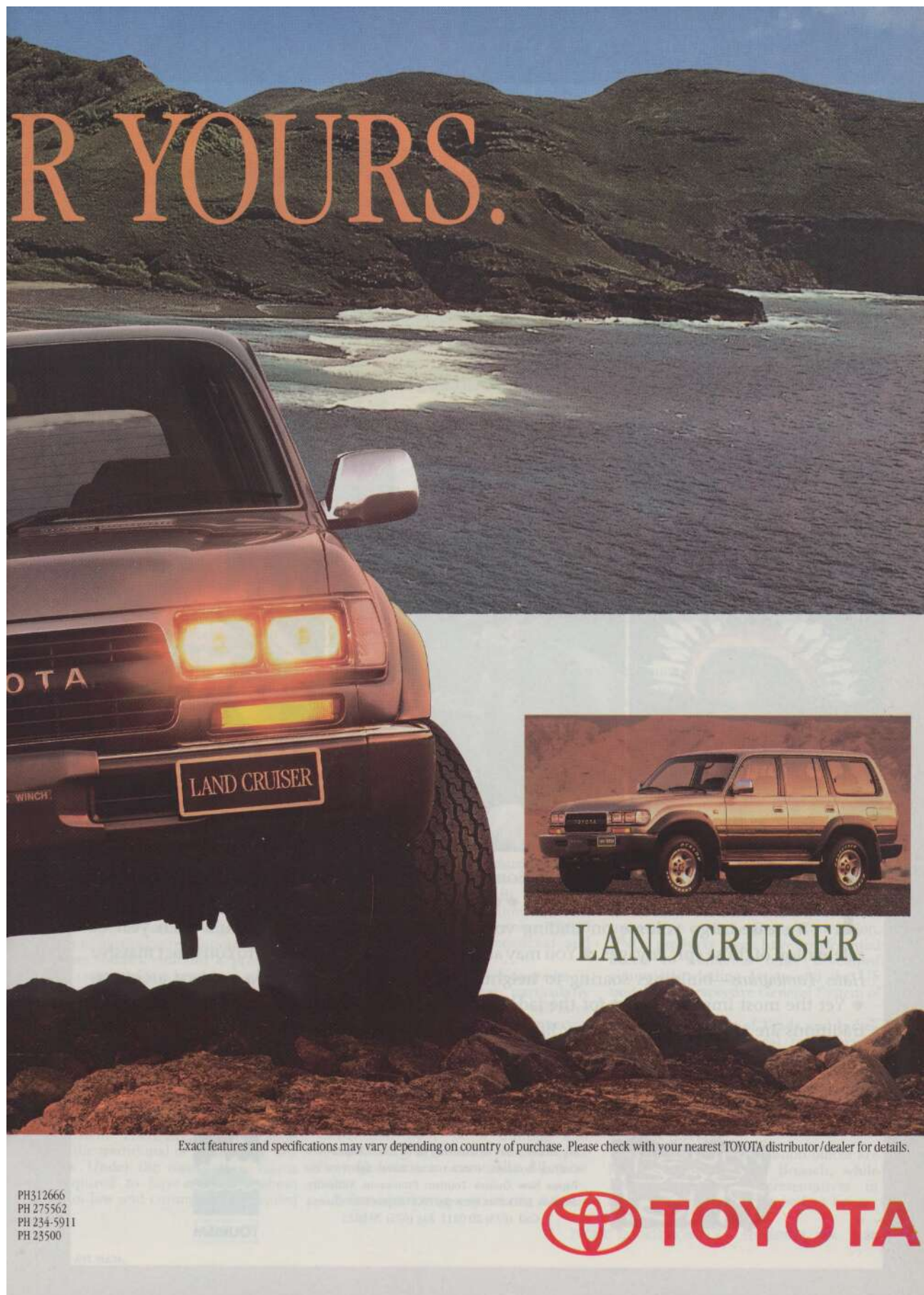
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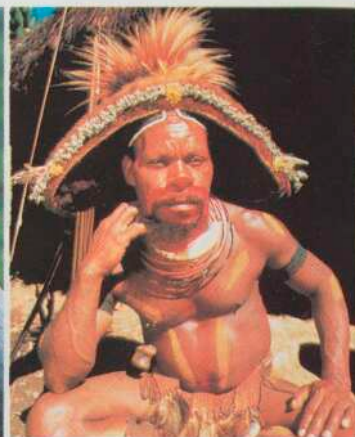
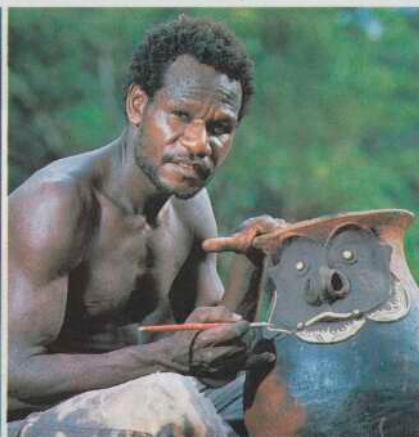
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The advertisement features a large, close-up image of the front of a dark-colored Toyota Land Cruiser on the left, with its headlights on. The car is positioned on a rocky, uneven terrain. In the background, a rugged coastline with steep cliffs and a body of water is visible under a clear sky. The text 'R YOURS.' is overlaid in large, orange, serif capital letters across the top. A smaller inset image on the right shows a gold-colored Land Cruiser from a side profile. The word 'LAND CRUISER' appears twice in a serif font. At the bottom left, a list of phone numbers is provided. The Toyota logo and brand name are prominently displayed at the bottom right.

This is Papua New Guinea.



If you think our scenery is impressive
wait until you meet our people.



P RIMITIVE cultures? Think again. Some of our ancestors were tending irrigated market gardens thirty thousand years ago. ♦ Others devised giant multi-hulled sailing vessels to increase cargo volume on trading voyages. These *Lakatois* are still built each year in celebration of those epic voyages. ♦ You may also marvel at the skills needed to construct massive *Haus Tambarans*—buildings soaring to heights that would shame many a modern architect. ♦ Yet the most impressive fact for the jaded traveller is that so many fascinating cultures and traditions are still a part of everyday life; not something turned on for the benefit of tourists. ♦ And with over 800 languages in PNG, we probably have more ways of saying “welcome” than any other people on earth. ♦ So come to PNG for the natural, breathtaking scenery and you will quickly discover that it’s our people that make PNG a truly unique destination.

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ACME TPA



Papuans: training of locals is a necessity with foreign investment

debt to equity ratio of 3:1 or less.

Exchange controls are applied in PNG and are administered by the Central Bank. These controls are applied to protect the country's reserves and have been liberalised recently. Approval is readily given for the repatriation of after-tax profits of foreign-owned enterprises, and other current account payments for legitimate business reasons generally present no problems.

Business may be carried out in PNG in a number of forms. These include a sole trader, partnership, private company, public company, branch of a foreign company, business group and trust.

Each type of business organisation is subject to particular regulations. Foreign investors usually establish a private or public company or a branch of a foreign company. Before commencing business in PNG, it is necessary to incorporate a company or register as a branch of a foreign company under the Companies Act. This is a simple formality if a shelf company is purchased.

The legal system in PNG is based largely on the Australian legal system which, in turn, has its roots in the English legal system. There are, however, areas where the traditional or 'customary' law applies. Under the constitution, courts are required to have regard to both common law and customary law (called

the underlying law). This underlying law is determined by the courts and can be particularly important when dealing with cases involving land tenure and the use of natural resources.

Court hearings are held in English and the law is applied equally and fairly. The final court of appeal is the Supreme Court of PNG.

LABOUR

There is an available pool of labour in PNG; but while the wage rates are low by developed country standards, productivity is not high. The Government has taken steps to improve its education standards and qualifications of the people. In 1991, there were over 13,000 enrolled in university, vocational and technical institutions.

Until the local workforce upgrades its skills many new ventures, particularly those requiring technical skills, will have to rely on some managerial and supervisory staff from overseas on short term assignments.

EXPATRIATE EMPLOYMENT

While recognising the legitimate need for overseas personnel for some new ventures, the Government of PNG also insists that there be a training and localisation programme to allow Papua New Guineans to eventually fill these roles.

Before employing expatriates, a busi-

ness must submit a plan to the Department of Labour and Department of Labour and Employment which outlines the training to be given to local PNG staff to enable them to take on the positions filled by the expatriates.

Once the requirements are satisfied a new business should have no problem in obtaining work permits for expatriates.

TRADE AGREEMENTS/EXPORT PROMOTION

PNG has preferential access to a number of overseas markets. Products of PNG origin are allowed duty free access to Australia, New Zealand and the EC under the PATCRA and SPARTECA agreements and the Lome Convention. PNG products also have preferential access to numerous other developed countries including Japan and the US under their respective General System of Preferences.

The Department of Trade and Industry actively assists local producers to export. Activities are targeted at areas where supply capabilities are available or have good potential for development. The Department sponsors selling missions and attendance at trade fairs in overseas markets.

Commercial representation offices are located in Sydney and Brussels, while PNG's diplomatic representatives in other countries are organised to bring

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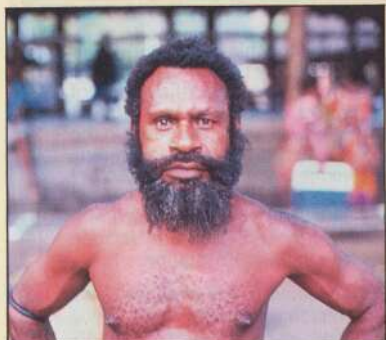
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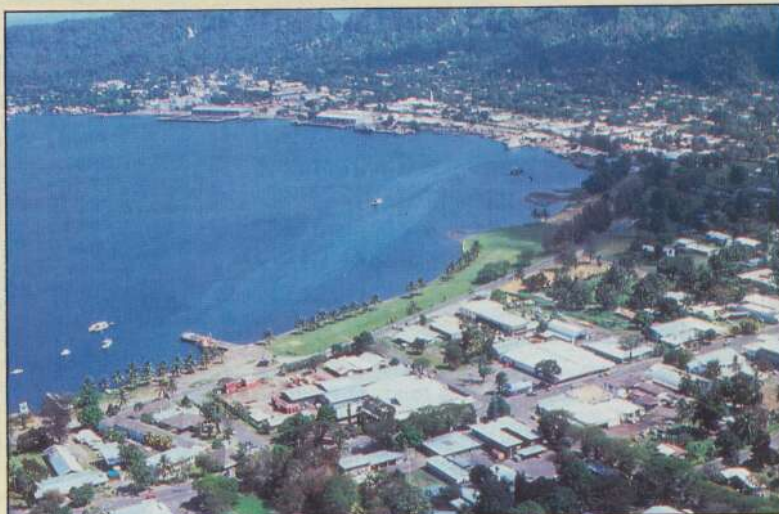
Landowners: government committed to protecting traditional rights

about greater foreign market awareness and demand for PNG products.

LAND TENURE

As already mentioned, the ownership and the right to use most land and natural resources is governed by the traditional law of the PNG people.

Only three per cent of land is outside of this ancient system and this is almost entirely owned by the national government. Foreign investors can lease land from the government for particular projects. The recently-established Industrial Centres Development Corporation is developing industrial sites, which could also be made available to investors, in or



Port Moresby: industrial projects won't have land difficulties

near the major urban areas.

Investors involved in manufacturing operations will usually face no difficulties with land availability. Those involved in resource or agricultural projects should appreciate, however, that access to land resource may be difficult.

The government will assist investors in large projects that are vital to the

economic growth of the country — it has the right to do so under the Land Act.

Nonetheless, the government is generally restricted to protecting traditional property rights and investors will not be allowed to negotiate directly with the local owners. If handled properly, the government's investors has shown that a mutually satisfactory agreement can be readily developed. □



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IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

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- IPA will assist foreign investors in their search for JV partners.
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- Businesses freely choose to enter JVs in PNG.
- All Businesses must be registered with the Office of the Registrar of Companies.



The Managing Director

For further information please contact:

Investment Promotion Authority 5th floor Investment Haus Douglas St Port Moresby

P.O. Box 5053 BOROKO NCD Papua New Guinea Tel: (675) 217311 Fax: (675) 212819



South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)

Vacancy Population and Development Officer

Applications are invited for the position of Population and Development Officer with the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) in Apia, Western Samoa.

SPREP is a regional organisation established by 26 governments and administrations to assist Pacific Island countries and territories to protect and improve their shared environment and to manage their resources so as to enhance the quality of life for present and future generations. The need to integrate population and environment concerns is a priority for sustainable development in the Pacific and an integral part of SPREP's Action Plan.

The Population and Development Officer is responsible for the implementation and supervision of a UNFPA funded Population Integration Project that focuses on macro level linkages between population characteristics, sustainable development and the environment which can be addressed through sectoral and national planning.

Candidates must have appropriate tertiary qualifications from a recognised institution and at least five years' work

experience in a field related to this position. Other essential requirements are the ability to work as part of a small inter-disciplinary team, to manage the work of consultants and to meet project deadlines. Appointment will be at Project Officer level and will be for two years in the first instance, renewable for a further term by mutual agreement. An attractive remuneration package and other employment benefits will be offered, with commencing salary dependent on qualifications, experience and current salary in country of recruitment. For non-Western Samoan citizens, salary will be tax-free in Western Samoa.

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

Applications should be addressed to:

The Director
South Pacific Regional Environment Programme
PO Box 240
APIA
Western Samoa

Telephone: (685) 21 929 Fax: (685) 20 231

Further information, including a full duty statement and schedule of terms and conditions of appointment, can be obtained by contacting SPREP's Administration Officer, Mrs Amy Grace Tielu, at these numbers.

Applications close on 15th October, 1994.

10467147

An event of coincidence not to be missed...

On the 8th May, 1994 these 5 beautifully designed phonecards were released. Four commemorating the International Year of the Family, which world Red Cross and Red Cross Society mark it as a special year dedicated to children all over the world featuring the theme "Dignity For All".

Also on the 5-8 May, 1994 another special event occurred. Yes, the 1st International Phonecard Exhibition which was held in Essen, Germany.

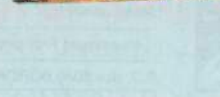
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"Traditional Bowls" will be released in September, 1994



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Sept 84	1	Red Cross PNG Map	2,000	3.40	4.00	4.00	2.20	4.00	1.40	
Sept 84	1	Red Cross PNG Children	5,000	7.80	9.80	9.80	5.30	10.00	3.60	
Sept 84	1	Red Cross PNG Flag	5,000	7.80	9.80	9.80	5.30	10.00	3.60	
Sept 84	1	Exhibition	5,000	7.80	9.80	9.80	5.30	10.00	3.60	
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City Studio Form 043



Sea: PNG can take advantage of its routes to export LNG to the Far East.

Liquid gas next on the list

By WALLY HIAMBOHN

PAPUA New Guinea is on the brink of becoming the next LNG (Liquified Natural Gas) exporting nation in the Asia-Pacific region.

They point to the country's reputation as being gas prone and its proximity to sea routes linking the country with the leading LNG importers of Asia as major reasons why PNG will have at least two LNG trains in operation within the next 10 years.

At a recent statement to parliament, Masket Iangalio as Mining and Petroleum Minister (he is now finance and planning minister) was very optimistic about the future of LNG development.

Here is an edited version of Iangalio's statement —

"During the last few months, significant and very positive steps have taken place in our gas resources sector.

"These events leave little doubt that we are moving rapidly towards the establishment of a massive natural gas exports industry.

"At the outset, I must inform parliament that the development of our natural resources will overshadow all

previous resource developments. This will be in the sheer size of the project, the impact on the economy and benefits to our people.

"If we are successful in the next few years in matching markets with our huge natural gas developments, we will embark on a decade-long programme of huge natural gas developments.

"They will require a bipartisan approach. An investment of between K6 billion (about \$US6.3 billion) and K10 billion (\$US10.5 billion) will not be made if international investors are attacked.

"A LNG export project would be of a scale four or five times the size of Kutubu or Porgera projects.

"While petroleum exploration has been declining internationally, we are seeing a major upsurge.

"Clearly, we not only have attractive resources but our government policies are also being judged as right by international petroleum developers.

"The outcome of several of these wells will be most important in setting some future trends, notably in speeding up gas development commitments.

"By far the most important will be another well on the Hides structure, now

proved to have a gas column 1000 metres deep.

"The other wells to watch will include that at South East Mandana, where it is possible that a resource approaching that of the size of Kutubu exists.

"Just as important will be the wells in the foreland of the Papuan Fold belt, which may open up new prospects.

"Also to be watched will be the development of the offshore programme headed by Mobil at Pandora. This is already a significant gas discovery, and with the hopes for adjacent discoveries, could provide a second feed for LNG.

"In all of this we should never forget that PNG is primarily a gas province, although much of the exploration activity is directed at finding oil.

"Before I turn to some details of the Hides project, and to the immediate prospects of starting an LNG project, a short overview is necessary.

"A major study of the known 15 oil and gas fields was completed by the Department of Mining and Petroleum. The study assessed our recoverable oil and gas reserves to internationally accepted standards.

"OIL — A possible 400 million barrels of oil, of which 215 barrels is considered proved, and is in production in the



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Highlands: foreign investment will be needed to develop the lucrative gasfields

Kutubu project; and

"GAS — A possible 20 trillion cubic feet of gas, of which at least three trillion is proved in the Hides gasfield.

"On an energy equivalent basis, the possible gas reserves of PNG now amount to a resource 10 times larger than our oil reserves.

"When we therefore consider the potential development of gas field such as Hides with proven reserves of the order of three trillion cubic feet, gross revenue streams of billions of kina are achievable.

"After the deduction of the billions of Kina in development costs, the supply of the LNG can therefore produce attractive revenue streams to the resource owner, the State, whilst the developer can achieve a reasonable rate of return on his investment.

"However, there is international competition. Total world-proven gas reserves are estimated as being in excess of 4300 trillion cubic feet. This may make our reserves seem insignificant, but we have some special advantages that have aroused the interest of not only developers but also purchasers.

"Almost half of the LNG in the Far East is sourced from Indonesia, and more that 80 per cent comes from Islamic nations.

"Far East purchasers are acutely aware of the troubles which oil suppliers encounter due to the oil crisis of the



Shipping: PNG is geographically suited to supply Asian LNG importers

1970s, borne out of the Middle East conflict.

"Consequently, LNG purchasers are seeking diversification of supply so that in the event of future conflicts, LNG supplies would in no way be hindered or stopped

"PNG is geographically well placed to supply the Far East LNG markets of Japan, Korea and Taiwan, particularly

via a north coast port such as Madang.

"It is close to purchasers, and supply lines do not pass through any strategic sea passages.

"With the growth in demand for LNG, some existing projects in other countries can be expanded by enlarging or streamlining facilities to take up a proportion of the new demands.

"Existing LNG contracts will have

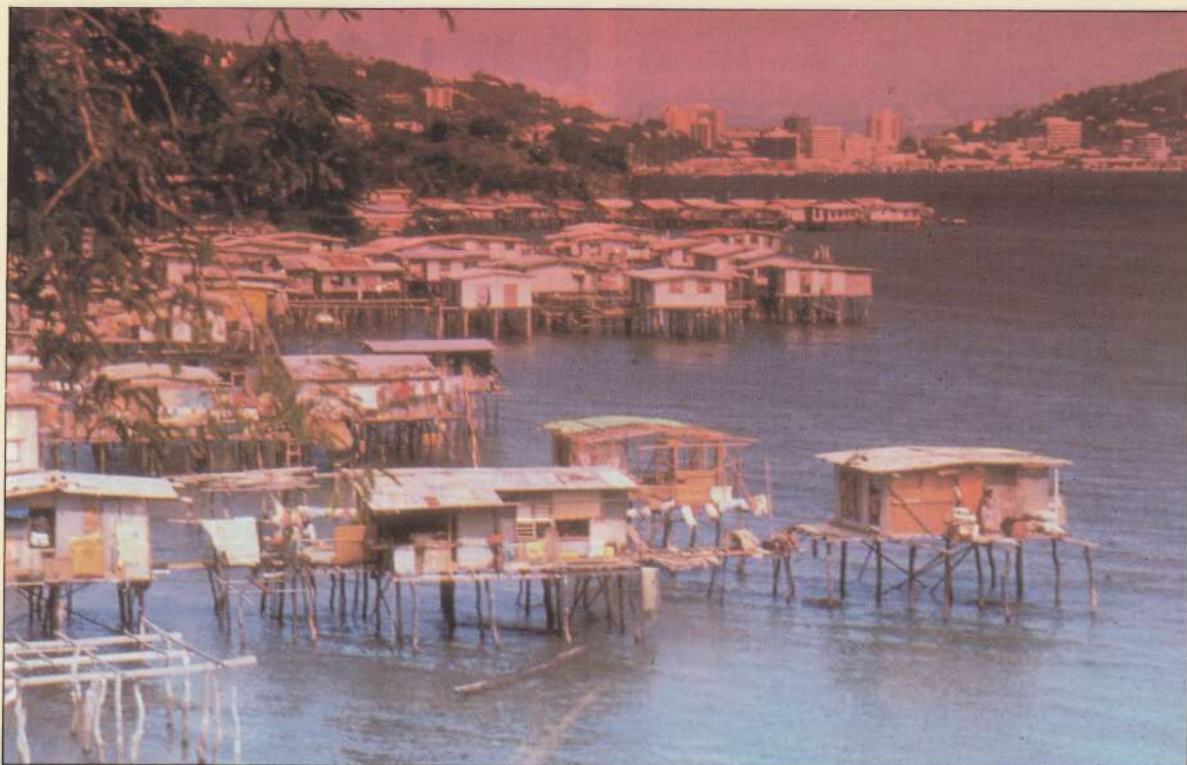
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Port Moresby: government will be conducting a White Paper on gas exploration

exhausted various fields, and new production projects supported by newly-discovered gas fields will be required. There are a variety of projects vying for shares of the project increase in demand ranging from Qatar and Oman in the Middle East, to our immediate neighbours, Indonesia and Australia.

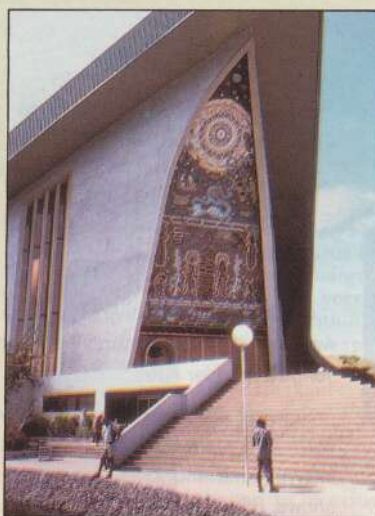
"The confirmation of our large gas reserves, the success of our first oil project, and the advantages that I have talked of, have all placed PNG at the head of the LNG supply list for the next decade.

"If we wish to realise the wealth of our gas resources we need to confirm our interest as a nation.

"LNG projects are hugely capital-intensive, with construction periods of between six to eight years. The mere construction of the facilities and plants represent a major activity which can provide a boost to our economy.

"Once gas production and processing commences, apart from providing excellent and stable revenue streams, the LNG infrastructure allows for the easier addition of other activities such as power generation, petrochemical industries and manufacturing industries which are dependent on such.

"In order for us to realise a gas-driven economy, we need to understand that we will have to exploit both the investment



Government: commitment must last

capital, as well as the technical and commercial skills of the developers.

"But, at the same time, we need to be the catalyst of development, partner of developers, and the regulation of gas production, processing and marketing activities. "The very long lead time during the construction, before production leads to revenue, requires solid

commitment from the buyers, developers, sellers, and the governments of both the producing and consuming countries — right from the project's inception.

"The progress towards commercialisation requires the active and willing participation of all parties. These commitments must endure and rise above changes in politics, policy or governments.

"Whilst companies that have discovered gas in PNG are keen to reap a return on their sunken exploration expenditure, an LNG development of gas reserves is so significant a venture that it requires firm endorsement from the government and the people of PNG prior to any steps towards LNG project development.

"Prior to that endorsement being provided, the policy framework for gas development has to be reviewed and put in place. To this end an inter-departmental task force has been established to review the present provisions for gas exploration, development, production, processing and sale.

"A White Paper will result from this which will encapsulate this review and analysis, and place proposals before us."

□

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CELEBRATION

TONGA TREAT

Nuku'alofa comes alive to celebrate Heilala Festival

By Christine Hatcher

IN contrast to the rest of the year, in the last week of June and the first of July, Nuku'alofa the capital of Tonga positively vibrates with activity and excitement. The Kingdom knows it's "Heilala" Festival time, and welcomes the injection of colour the celebrations bring to dull winter days. While it's fun time for most, for others it means just plain hard work, headaches and frustrations.

Named after the national flower by King Taufa'ahau Tupou IV, the idea for this Festival was conceived in '79. First organised by the Tongan Visitors Bureau (TVB) and the Tonga Tourist Association (TTA) under the patronage of Crown Prince Tupouto'a, the aim was to celebrate His Majesty's birthday, promote tourism, preserve culture and tradition. This was the altruistic beginning and fifteen years



Sharlene: the Samoan touch at the fest



Pictures: CHRISTINE HATCHER

Miss Heilala 1994: Miss San Francisco Tonga, Tokilupe Lavulo

later, some things may still need improving.

During Festival time the capital's population doubles. Foreign exchange earnings increase by a million (1993 figures). Youngsters are given license for graffiti and aluminium fences become works of art. Huge arched structures span the main roads at intervals of 200 metres. In honour of the King's 4th of July birthday, some are decorated with greenery while others colourfully illuminate the nights. "May You Live Forever", "Happy 76th Birthday!", they say this year. Underneath, stalls selling peanuts and mandarins suddenly appear from no-where. Children queue in ever swelling clumps to ride the ferris wheel and other fairground delights brought in especially for the occasion. A year's worth of entertainment creates a feast from famine situation for amusement addicts.

"I'm very happy with the planning and organising this year compared to last year," says police commander Sinilau Kolokihakaufisi after his inaugural term as chairperson of the Heilala organising committee. "This is the first year we have had professional performers and light and sound at 'Atele Stadium. I'm happy with what "Heilala" was — hard work, all hands on deck but a real, loyal community effort. There is bound to be criticism, but we have done our utmost."

Christopher Cocker, tourism marketing officer for TVB agrees to a point. "Our main problem is that we need to start working on our next years programme 12 months ahead. But we never get organised until February, so the printed programme only comes out a couple of weeks before the Festival." Accurate information, he says, is essential so that travel wholesalers can be pre-sell Tonga during "Heilala".

He and Kolokihakaufisi are divided on the question of attracting tourism — Sinilau prefers that Tongans living overseas attend. Cocker, however, was disappointed at the low number of tourists attracted this year and therefore pleased the health department was closed lipped about escalating typhoid

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CELEBRATION



CHRISTINE HATCHER

Traditional show: Tongan dancers performing at the festival



Royal salute: preparing to mark the King's birthday

rumours locally. He says — "The health department did a good job trying to stop the disease. I think they did the right thing by not publicising it. We didn't want to scare the tourists. If a tourist got infected it would be terrible."

Cocker says his department was notified three weeks before the festival. Tourist resort staff were checked by health inspectors and none were found to be infected, he said. Reports after the festival confirmed 10 cases, all cured, but no fatalities.

Sinilau said the enormous commitment by individuals (many working for government) giving time and muscle freely made the festival possible. Local sponsorship provides money for prizes and floats for the parade. Free labour and more time makes possible the sporting events, flower arranging competition, art and craft displays, fishing competitions and the international variety night performances.

Who needs fireworks when a torch procession around the edges of the island with a view to the neighbouring island of Fa'fa looking just like a birthday cake for His Majesty, creates an air of wonder and magic for the children who carry the flames? A Fakaleiti Galaxy evening when men put on a show dressed as women was hilarious, played to a full house. Top that with enough brass band music to make your heart soar, and the highlight, the Miss Heilala beauty pageant and you have a programme that, despite not always being 100 per cent accurate, is a remarkable achievement for amateurs.

Sinilau laughs — "My management training came in handy," but agrees with Christopher that the organisation still

left a lot to be desired.

Christopher says — "Tourists don't want to come to see a beauty parade, so we're trying to move away from the Miss Heilala emphasis next year — have more of a cultural range of activities."

However, Simote Pouliwaati, general manager of The Dateline, Tonga's largest hotel and secretary of the TTA says this is only an idea at this stage. It's unlikely that there will be any drastic changes to the programme, he says. One who would like to see changes is the outgoing and disillusioned Heilala Queen, Michelle Niu.

Before handing over the crown to this year's winner, Miss San Francisco Tonga, Tokilupe Lavulo, she said "The Heilala committee have done their best but they should realise once and for all that it is Tonga as a whole that they are working for and get their act together. I have found promoting Tonga, being an ambassador, a challenge. I have done everything they have asked me to do. All I wanted was a thank you. Not for me but for my family." She said her father had to support her from his own pocket when performing some Heilala queen's duties overseas.

A note of dissatisfaction seems to be filtering between the layers of gaiety. I personally was manhandled roughly at the palace gates as I walked over to ask permission to take a photograph of a dance performance for the King. A colleague, officially recording the event for TVB and wearing media ID was deliberately pushed by a woman official as he tried to take a photograph.

But Simote Pouliwaati, remains philosophical. As one of the main co-organisers since 1986, he has seen many a high, many a low and overall "Heilala" is Tonga's most successful festival, he says. "I ask myself every time why I do it, but it's all in a good cause. It's such a joy seeing the festival improve from year to year!" Being a good natured glutton for punishment he is busy putting together people of influence and man-power to establish a secretariat. Guidelines to strengthen the committee and improve the national festival are being worked on, but are not complete, as yet, he says. He grumbles about lack of government support. "We were short of a few thousand last year after spending about US\$35,000," he says. Nevertheless, undaunted, he is busy planning the next one. Layering on the success of this year's Easter religious festival, a repeat is anticipated with another still between October and December. "Tonga could well become a nation of festivals," he concludes. □

THEATRE

Tackling social, economic problems

TACKLING social, economic, and health problems is not new to Wan Smol Bag — it is in fact the very reason why they were created in the first place. It all started back in 1989, when company Director, Vanuatu resident Englishman Peter Walker, obtained funding from the Australian Community Aid Abroad (CAA), which enabled the group to employ five people full-time.

Their first assignments were on small-scale projects for the Vanuatu ministry of Health — the whole concept was to be able to educate the population both in the Vanuatu capital Port-Vila and in the outer islands by showing short plays. There was family planning, AIDS, diarrhea, where every time a message had to be got across ... and it did because Wan Smol Bag put it in simple terms and always related to traditional island-style situations that people even in the most remote islands could relate to.

The CAA funding went on for two years. It was replaced in 1990 by an Australian South Pacific Culture Fund (SPCF) grant for another project — a longer, more permanent play, called the Vanuatu Show. The purpose was then to collect traditional custom tales, to include dances, all this wrapped up in a plot telling the story of Vanuatu, including the first contacts with the Europeans last century.

The show, which was first performed in front of rural audiences in the outer islands, then settled on a permanent basis in the capital Port Vila to be viewed and acclaimed by locals and visitors alike. Performed in the country's chiefs Nakamal, it became a permanent feature and an attraction for overseas tourists.

In the meantime, the British Regional Aid Programme provided salaries for the group, which had by then extended to ten members.

While performances went on in Port Vila, Wan Smol Bag gained regional exposure and recognition: non-governmental organisations from Fiji and the Solomon islands came last year to Vanuatu to take part in workshops designed to learn how to get their messages across. They were run by Wan Smol Bag.



Vanuatu play; Wan Smol Bag performers in action

Wan Smol Bag—a success story

By Patrick Decloitre

VANUATU'S only professional theatre company, Wan Smol Bag Theater, is putting the final touch to its new play — *Down Paradise Street*. Designed both for local and overseas viewers, it touches a wide variety of the social and economic problems Pacific islanders face in a society where money values tend to replace traditional ones.

This time, with this new play, the South Pacific Culture Fund had provided a second grant of around US\$6700 to support what was initially planned to be a second part to Wan Smol Bag's previous play, the *Vanuatu Show*. As it turned out to be, it was something totally different from part one. "The group wanted to talk about something different, like the problems of an extended family, whether the culture and custom had any place today, where the money is driving out all the old values", says director Peter Walker. "A lot of the play comes from the small acts we did before for education purposes, where all these subjects had already been touched separately," he adds.

The only difference is that, this time, Wan Smol Bag and their writer Jo Dorras have come up with a two-hour musical, the first of its kind in the island state's theatrical history — *Down Paradise Street*.

There are indeed a lot of songs in this new production, but it is only to enhance situations where the young generation is

faced to a new set of Western-style values, as opposed to the roots of their culture and tradition. This includes references to rising urban drift, unemployment in towns and related social plagues such as alcohol, poor working conditions and the women's changing role in an urban environment.

"It's boring in the islands. I want to see different things," says a character who's just moved to town, a promised land in his eyes. But the much-craved town often turns to have a bitter taste — often there are no jobs, and even when there are, hard-earned money sets the rule. And money is going fast — men spend it on alcohol or *kava*, their wives don't like it a bit, they get beaten up. "Now it's money, money, money," says an old man in the play.

The premier of *Down Paradise Street* was to take place on 26 July in Port Vila, in a brand new permanent building in the outskirts of the Vanuatu capital. It will be the first time they actually perform on their own stage, thanks to British and Canadian aid, among others.

As in its previous productions, Wan Smol Bag not only aims at the local audience, but also at the regional viewers. "We hope this will have an impact on tourists. Also, once people from countries of the region will have seen it, I'm sure a big festival will want it, because it deals with problems which are prevalent throughout the Pacific. In fact, the scene takes place in Vanuatu, but it could be anywhere else in the region," says Walker. □

GUAM

Heroes honoured

War veterans get warm welcome in Guam celebrations

By Barbara Ray

ON July 21, Guam welcomed 1500 US Veterans and their families once again to its shores. The people of Guam saluted the veterans during the golden anniversary celebration just as they had fifty years ago when these same men stormed ashore, ending the three-year occupation by the Japanese during World War II.

From the moment they stepped off the plane, the veterans were treated like royalty. Five days of festivities, including many dedications, memorials, and reunions greeted the men. Even the Chamoru nation, an activist group which had vowed to protest the military land takings, quietly backed away at the urging of government officials and public sentiment.

The group agreed to a compromise. In exchange for calling off the protest, they would be allowed to plead their case to a small group of veterans, who, it was hoped, would take the message back to Washington. The group explained to the veterans that self-determination was still elusive fifty years after these same men liberated the island in the name of democracy.

Many veterans expressed surprise at the news, while others saw the situation as bleak, acknowledging that a previous letter-writing campaign had produced little.

However, recent news from Washington garners guarded optimism from those involved in Commonwealth talks. The Clinton Administration has signalled a willingness to discuss the "mutual consent" clause, which for years has been a stumbling lock in negotiations. The clause gives Guam a mutual voice in the approval of any laws that effect it. Past administrations had determined this clause unconstitutional.

But events in Washington were put on the back burner for a few days as Guam concentrated on what it loves to do best, celebrate. Even torrential rains could not dampen spirits at the marathon parade on the



Veteran commander: General Loius Wilson (left)

21st. Five hours of floats, military bands, Boy Scouts, and past Liberation Day Queens greeted cheering crowds numbering in the thousands lining Marine Drive.

By the sunset, the grandstands housing island dignitaries and veterans had emptied, but the crowds on the street held firm. The trucks pulling the floats simply turned on their lights. Darkness just made for a smooth transition to a grand finale of fireworks.

The July 21 festivities had begun on a more somber note, however. Shortly after sunrise, a Navy ceremony at sea was held with a 21-gun salute followed by the missing man formation flying aloft. On land, a ceremony dedicating a memorial to the Third Marine Division at Asan beach held sway. It was on this beach that the Marines had landed in the dawn hours of July 21, 1994. Further south, at Agat beach, Marines of the 9th division along with the 77th Army division landed amid heavy resistance.

The recapture of Guam would take its toll, with nearly 7,000 American men killed or wounded and roughly 17,000



Micronesian contingent: in celebration parade



War Dog Cemetery: Naval Station, Guam

Japanese falling victim.

Not all the victims were human. War dogs, mostly Doberman Pinschers, were used on Guam to sniff out Japanese stragglers hiding in the jungle. The dogs, 350 strong, patrolled with their handlers, who trained exclusively with the dog for six weeks prior to battle.

In remembrance, William Putney, war dog platoon commander and veterinarian to the dogs, dedicated a cemetery graced with 25 headstones engraved with the names of the dogs killed on Guam. A bronze statue of an altered Doberman by artist Susan Bahary Wilner guards the dogs' eternal rest.

One of the handlers, PFC Marvin Corff, 3d Marines, earned a silver star in battle. He and his dog Rocky were on patrol in the island's northern jungles and had stopped for a break. Suddenly, Rocky became alert and anxious. Corff went to investigate and saw a pair of spectacles hanging from the tree. Before he knew it, he was in a fire fight.

"It got around pretty close to where we were face to face," he remembers. He killed four Japanese, then his rifle jammed. "The enemy was whacking at me with his sword as we went around and around the tree." He was defending himself only with his rifle butt. "We went around a few times before I got my rifle un-jammed." Corff received a silver star for that courage in hand-to-hand fighting.

There were many stories to recount during their week on Guam. There were also reunions. Many veterans returned with the hopes of finding those Chamorus who had befriended them so far from home, and the local press and grapevine did its best to comply. But for most, it was a sense of closure they sought. Some lives it haunted, some it defined. For all, the war was a turning point in their young lives. They had arrived as boys and left as men. □

No longer a regional outcast

ONE of the most pleasing developments in the Pacific over the past few years has been the way the French territories have opened up politically and economically to their neighbours. For years, the bitter issues of independence for New Caledonia and nuclear testing in French Polynesia kept both territories in a state akin to that of regional outcasts. Everyone agrees that the long period of isolation they suffered was in nobody's interest.

It did not help New Caledonia, where internal differences which spilled over into bloodshed were bad enough. Estranged from its neighbours, the territory became introverted — a piece of France thousands of miles away from home wrestling with an identity crisis that had no predictable outcome.

It did not help French Polynesia, its own latent independence issues subjugated to the role of host to a nuclear testing programme few local people liked but depended upon for their economic well-being.

France found itself pilloried on the international stage, including in the United Nations, on both counts. It was seen to be an intransigent colonial power at a time the rest of the world was granting independence to its territories and deaf to growing international environmental concerns.

France had to defend itself at the United Nations as the South Pacific Forum countries moved in 1986 to have New Caledonia inscribed on the list of non-self governing territories. And it came under increasing international fire as the New Zealand Labour government's anti-nuclear policy focused worldwide attention on nuclear issues.

New Zealand and Australia found themselves at loggerheads with one of the world's major powers, one with huge influence in Europe, where important economic interests offered a disturbing potential for instability in the Pacific — an added worry, especially for New Zealand, whose nearest neighbour is New Caledonia.

It's good news all round then that such harmony exists today, with France's continuing moratorium on testing at Mururoa and New Caledonia peaceful under the Matignon Accords.

From New Zealand's point of view, relations are good and growing, as will be shown when Trade Negotiations Minister Philip Burdon leads a trade and investment mission of business leaders to both territories this month.

It is significant that it was not just a political decision to focus New Zealand's continuing trade drive on the French possessions at this time. The business leaders themselves nominated them as their choice for particular attention following a successful mission to their biggest Pacific markets, Fiji and Papua New Guinea, last year.

WELLINGTON



DAVID
BARBER

The attraction is obvious. Both territories are wealthy by Pacific island standards, with per capita incomes of about NZ\$25,000 each, and both are heading into a period of economic development that promises increased prosperity and a higher level of imports.

France is ploughing billions of dollars into each territory over the next five years to build up their infrastructures and develop the tourism, fishing and agricultural industries.

Most significantly, the Paris government — after keeping both very much tied to France's apron strings for years — has taken a policy decision to open up their markets to South Pacific neighbours and to encourage closer economic ties with New Zealand and Australia.

France has effectively ended the monopoly control it exercised over both colonial economies which are now seeking integration with the rest of the region and looking to New Zealand and Australia as long-term partners, says Bruno Fremy, TradeNZ trade development manager in Noumea, who has responsibility for both territories.

There are already encouraging signs. New Zealand's sales to French Polynesia rose a dramatic 41 per cent last year to top \$104 million, making it the third biggest Pacific market after Fiji (\$187 million) and Papua New Guinea (\$110 million).

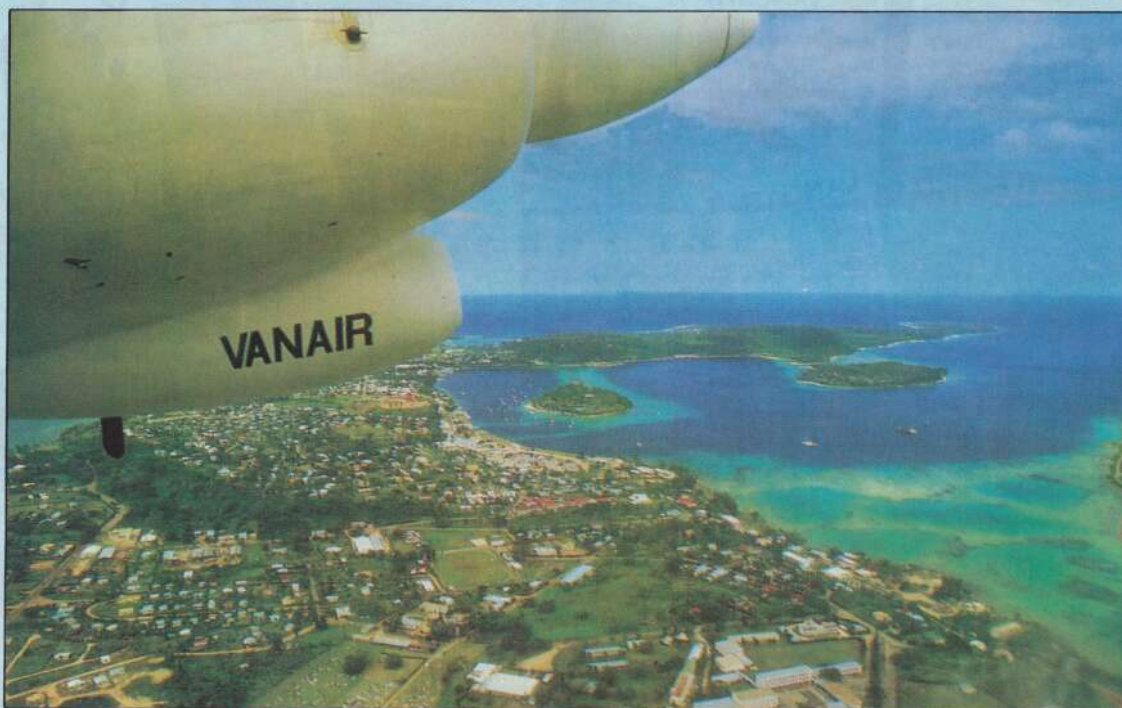
Exports to New Caledonia jumped 14 per cent to \$67 million, putting it in fifth place after Western Samoa, whose purchases declined seven per cent to \$84 million in 1993.

Burdon has identified building and construction, furniture and furnishings, marine products, clothing, educational services and agri-tech as industry sectors with particular potential for New Zealand exporters.

This underlines the fact that in New Caledonia, contrary to the pattern of most of New Zealand's markets, the trade is not dominated by food and beverages, manufactured products holding an equal share of about one-third.

This is mainly because New Caledonia — unlike French Polynesia, for instance — is self-sufficient in fruit and vegetables in some months of the year. Additionally, manufactured exports grew rapidly after New Caledonia began liberalising imports in early 1992.

Fremy sees big opportunity in tourism expansion, with new hotels and resorts planned to cater for charter flights from Europe which are expected to bring in an extra 10,000 visitors a year. □



Emerald reception: flying into Port Vila Bay gives a bird's-eye view of its outstanding natural beauty

A natural welcome

EVERY visitor on a descending jet arriving at Vanuatu's Port Vila airport is greeted with emerald green forests, rocky mountains, golden beaches and thousands of coconut trees.

Immediately after disembarking, the visitor is about to be challenged to explore an almost virgin culture, learn about mystifying traditions, and meet friendly partly-clad painted people still living in thatched homes.

To a certain degree, and depending on the enthusiasm of the visitor, Vanuatu can become a time machine through which people can travel into the past, away from the hustle and bustle of daily life in their own countries.

There are no sky-scrapers jutting out of the lush green forests and freshness continues to linger in the air despite the humidity.

The country is rich in culture and lucky visitors may even be allowed a glimpse of the modern craze, bungee jumping, in its original form.

Until recently, the death-defying jump was a spectacle exclusively for the ni-Vanuatu. But now a small number of tourists are allowed to watch the feat of ni-Vanuatu men jumping off 35-metre towers, being supported only by vines tied to their ankles.

The main islands have unique characters of their own, including their own chiefly systems, language and culture. Jealous guardianship of culture ensures visitors first hand experience of a lifestyle centuries old yet in its originality.

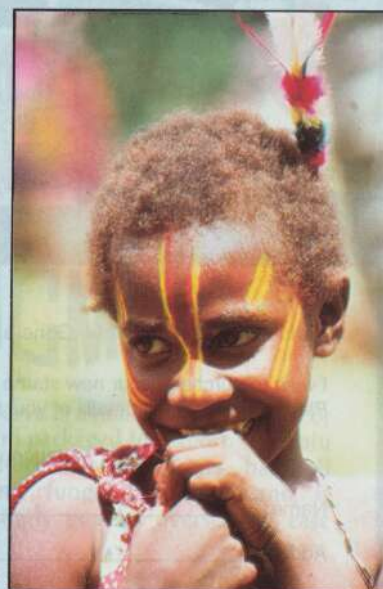
Guests to the republican country can enjoy a land which comprises a 'Y'-shaped archipelago of some 80 islands, stretching out over 850 kilometres.

The population of Vanuatu is estimated to be 160,000. The population is largely rural with only 18 per cent living in urban areas.

For a small number of people, they speak over 100 indigenous languages, but the national language is Bislama, while the official languages are Bislama, English and French. The principal languages of education are English and French.

One of the greatest attractions of Vanuatu lies in its mostly unspoilt forests and thousands of miles of reef inhabited sea.

Vanuatu is an experience for every visitor, to see and perhaps learn how people can co-exist with nature harmoniously.



Lifestyle: Vanuatu's culture has remained largely intact

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VISIT VANUATU YEAR '95

advertising feature

Calendar of events

JANUARY — Parade/launching of Visit South Pacific Year '95.

FEBRUARY

John Frum Day

MARCH

Custom Chiefs Day
Vila/Noumea Golf Challenge

APRIL

Vila/Honiara Golf Challenge
Pentecost Land Diving (every Saturday)

MAY

Pentecost Land Diving (Every Saturday)
Efate Round the Island Relay;
National Day for Women;
Triathlon

JUNE

Environment Week
New Zealand to Port Vila Yacht Race
Len Ceremony (grade taking ceremony)
South Pentecost
Rom Darce (Initiation ceremony) Graig Cove, West Ambrym.
Music Festival
Miss Vanuatu Quest

JULY

Kiwanis Horse Race
Independence Day Celebrations
Independence Cup Tournament;
Independence Fun Race (yacht)
Opening of Nakamal (meeting house)
North Pentecost



Opening of Cultural Centre

AUGUST

Vanuatu Golf Open International tournament
Arts Festival (Santo)
Art '95
Naluan Ceremony (Grade Taking Ceremony) South West Bay, Malakula

SEPTEMBER

Musket Cove to Vila Yacht Race
Mother's Union Day — Pentecost

Port Vila Fun Day

OCTOBER

Constitution Day
Agricultural Show
Pig Killing Ceremony (Avatoa, East Ambae)

NOVEMBER

International Petanque Tournament
Game Fishing Tournament

DECEMBER

Christian Christmas festival



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VISIT VANUATU YEAR '95

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Vanuatu's riches

THE archipelago has much to offer the international tourism market — first and foremost, the sheer sense of space and the large number of islands, a totally unspoilt natural environment with few man-made modifications, and scenery that makes it a paradise on Earth.

The beaches are brilliant white, the sand in places such as Champagne Beach in Santo is unusually fine, and the coral reefs and seabed are a delight to the eye.

Until now, Vanuatu has made very little use of its fabulous potential and tourism did not begin to develop, and then only very slowly, until the 1970s. Over the past few years, though, the archipelago has been turned upside down. Direct air links with Sydney, Brisbane, Noumea and Suva have increased in number and frequency and there has been increased interest on the Japanese market.

Large new hotels have been built to international standards, providing accommodation for all tastes and pockets.

The duty-free policy which has led to the introduction of products from Japan and Hong Kong onto the local market, and their sale at particularly low prices, is another attractive feature.

Shopping, however, is not limited to the latest optical or electronic gadgets. A wide range of local craft products are on sale in the curio shops or unscheduled markets held in Port Vila, Santo and the

Islands. Tourists can buy pareos, souvenirs and a whole miscellany of traditional objects made of wood or basketry including ritual masks, ceremonial chieftain sticks, puzzles, baskets, bed mats, and necklaces of Pacific shells.

Sometimes, but more rarely, tourists are lucky enough to find the strange spiral pigs teeth which take many years of careful farming to produce and which have an astronomical value in ceremonial terms on the Northern Islands. The spiral teeth are much sought-after and very expensive, but they make very attractive bracelets.

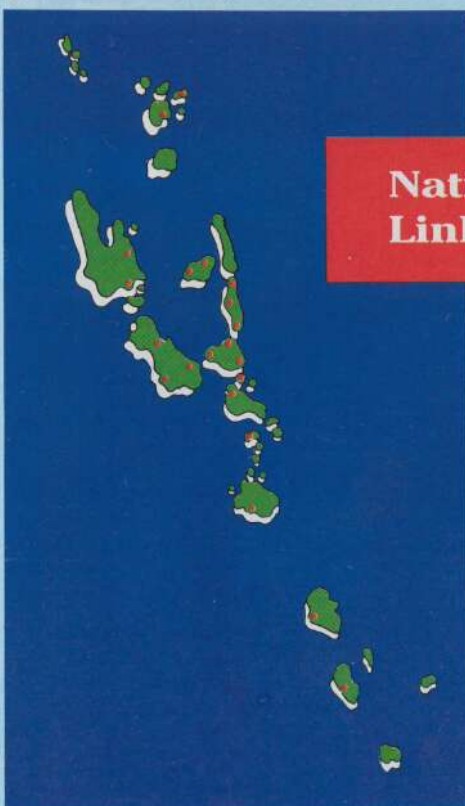
Vanuatu is also a land of ritual and custom. The inhabitants of these Melanesian islands have succeeded in maintaining their traditional culture and it is infinitely rich, despite a history that includes many a difficult period.

Foreign tourists are not only faced with a totally different natural world; they are also confronted with strange customs dating back many generations. The people of Vanuatu are proud of their land and their customs, and they are naturally hospitable.

The ritual and custom is very much their own but they will share it with tourists ready to respect it and show genuine interest. In pagan and Christian villages alike, visitors are generously welcomed; hospitality is never a mere facade. □



Customs: the people of Vanuatu are naturally hospitable



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Living off the fertile resource of land

THE Vanuatu Archipelago consists of very fertile land. The population lives in small villages and meets most of its own needs as regards food and domestic necessities.

Traditional family "agriculture" is based on root crops, planted in small, carefully-tended gardens. The crops consist mainly of yams, taros, cassava and sweet potatoes but there are also bananas, sugar canes and kavas.

There is nothing more varied than a Melanesian garden and the impression of abundance comes from the prodigious fertility of the black soil that is constantly enriched by the emission of volcanic ash and from the gentleness of the oceanic climate, which is warm and humid but not excessively so.

Although the archipelago's inhabitants are poor in terms of hard cash, they live far above subsistence level since their traditional gardens will grow.



Fertility: volcanic soil enriches the soil and creates an abundance of crops

During the colonial years, a plantation economy was gradually established, with the predominant plants being coconuts and cocoa. The dried kernel of the coconut supplies copra, the oil-bearing raw material required for the manufacture of fats.

This product formed the basis of the archipelago's economy for almost a century, providing the plantation owners with a measure of prosperity and giving the Melanesian villagers a certain degree of wealth as they began to imitate the planters on their own land.

Thanks to copra, the villages began to think in terms of a monetary-based economy thanks to a crop that was readily exported. However, the crisis which gradually led to a decrease in the prices paid for raw materials marked the downfall of what had become a single crop form of agriculture.

Plantation owners and Melanesian peasant farmers were forced to look elsewhere for income. Cattle were introduced onto European-owned plantations

to graze and keep down the grass while providing a supply of fresh meat for the work force and, after the war, livestock became a form of speculation in its own right.

New breeds such as Charolais, Limousins, and Brahmas were introduced, improving the quality of Vanuatu's cattle. New markets opened up, in particular in New Caledonia and Japan with salesmen emphasising the high quality of meat from the islands.

At the present time, the national

economy is still based partly on copra although its relative value is continuing to slide. Income provided by fishing is another, far from negligible, source of income, thanks to the re-exporting of tunny fished offshore by foreign companies. The export of precious timber such as Kaori is also beginning to develop.

However, over the past few years, it is international tourism that has become the main source of income and foreign currency.

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**CALENDAR OF
EVENTS 1994 — 1995**

July 1994 August September	Saturday 16th 16th & 16th Saturday 30th Wednesday 10th Sunday 30th Saturday 17th and Sunday 18th	Horse Race (Port Vila) Toka Festival (Tanna) Independence Day (all over the country) Europe 94 Yacht Race Depart for Cairns (Australia) Annual Market Cove Yacht Race to Port Vila
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February 1995 March April May June July August September October November December	— John Punt See — Custom Circuit Day — Vila/Neumea Golf Challenge — Vila/Neumea Golf Challenge — Port/Neumea Golf Challenge — Port/Neumea Land Diving (All Month) — Port/Neumea Land Diving (All Month) — Plate Round the Island Relay — National Day for Women — Tradition — Environment Week — Niwanis Horse Race — Independence Day Celebrations — Independence Cup Tournament — Vanuatu Golf Open International — Tournament — Market Cove to Vila Yacht Race — Constitution Day — Agriculture Show — International Petanque Tournament — Game Fishing Tournament — Opening of Cultural Centre??
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VISIT VANUATU YEAR '95

advertising feature

The land divers of Pentecost Island



Pentecost: a small number of tourists are being allowed to witness this age-old tradition of land diving

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Preparing for 1995

A NATIONAL Visit South Pacific Year '95 working committee was formed in early April with its first meeting held on the April 18th. To date there has been nine meetings.

In these meetings a number of activities have been carried out.

The committee has now finalised a calendar of events and is now working on producing a good calendar for these event. These should be on the market by September. In regards to the committee's internal awareness programmes for the VSPY '95, the committee is working on a number of activities.

The committee is now getting quotation for VPSY '95 Logo stickers. Current plans call for 20,000 small stickers to sell to business houses for them to use in their correspondences. There will also be 1000 stickers of 15 centimetres in size and 30 large stickers.

These will be distributed to all public vehicles and placed on the sides of Air Vanuatu and VanAir aircraft.

There will be pin badges with the VSPY '95 logo. The committee will have placed orders for the badges and stickers.

The committee has spoken to the National Breweries Limited and Vanuatu Beverages, who have both agreed to expose the VSPY '95 logo on their cans.

The Vanuatu Philatic Bureau has publicised a special issue of stamps for the



VSPY '95. The committee plans to host a scheme similar to the New Zealand Kiwi Host Scheme.

The committee has made enquires about the scheme. someone who has expressed interest in training, which will begin with those who come in contact with visitors.

The committee informs the public about its activities through the use of one of the local newspapers, the *Trading Post*. The editor, who is also one of the committee members, publishes our activities every fortnight.

The committee has also written to Vanuatu Television and ask if they can use the VSPY '95 logo as a filler or part of their test programme.

The committee is now working on a Tourism Open Forum which is planned to be held on September 14. It is hoped that this forum will further exposed the awareness of VSPY '95.

The committee is also working on printing of T-shirts and sweatshirts. These will be on sale soon. □



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SPORT

Manu Samoa slaughtered

By Atama Raganivatu

A HORRENDOUS 73-3 loss to the Wallabies under floodlights at the Sydney Football Stadium badly marred an otherwise successful tour of Australia by Manu Samoa. Western Samoa was totally outgunned by the rampant world champions, for who Viliame Ofahengaue — the Tongan Torpedo — made an impressive return to the international arena, after missing the whole of last season through a knee injury. Ofahengaue provided the inspiration for a dominant home pack and their rampant backs went on a points scoring spree. The result was an Australian record, beating the 67-9 annihilation of U.S.A. in 1990.

And yet, the Samoans went into the game with seemingly justifiable hopes of victory. They had improved considerably since holding an Australian team on the way to World Cup triumph 9-3 in Wales three years ago and impressed everybody while winning all their four previous tour games.

But, Western Samoa never got into the game in Sydney at all and perhaps had been drained by what was greeted as a milestone conquest of Queensland six days earlier.

As well as the 24-22 win over the Super Ten champions, Western Samoa recorded successes against Victoria (60-26), Australian Capital Territory (39-13) and President's XV (21-18). A good team does not become a bad team overnight and, hopefully, the Samoans

will focus upon their excellent performances when coming from behind to beat Queensland, despite being reduced to 14 men, and the eclipse of what is widely regarded as the best A.C.T. combination to ever be fielded, rather than the nightmare experienced under the stars at Sydney (although this is rather like asking Mrs. Lincoln to remember the play's plot!).

Nearly every major national rugby side has experienced a defeat of similar magnitude at some stage in their history and bounced back. The character of Manu Samoa will now be severely tested, but such is the quality of the young talent now coming up through the ranks that the S F S failure is likely to be soon dismissed as a mere aberration rather than a major setback. □

Nauru joins Olympic team

By David North

NAURU has been accepted into the next round of Olympic Games. The Switzerland-based International Olympic Committee (IOC) decided that Nauru could join a list of 192 nations and near-nations in the next Summer Olympics, in Atlanta, USA, in 1996. Nauru President Bernard Dowiyogo had flown to Western Samoa earlier this year to press his island's case when IOC President Juan Samaranch was touring the South Pacific.

The other Pacific island jurisdictions already on the list include: American Samoa, the Cooks, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, the Solomons, Tonga, Vanuatu, and Western Samoa. Not participating, at least so far, are the nations of Kiribati and Tuvalu, the French islands in the Pacific and the various US and ex-US territories in Micronesia.

Nauru's hope is that it can do what no other Pacific island has done — win a medal in a Summer Olympic competition. Those hopes are pinned on the sturdy physique of Marcus Stephen, who has already won weight-lifting gold medals in a series of non-Olympic competitions, such as the 1990 Commonwealth Games, the 1991 South Pacific Games, and more recently the 1994 Micronesian Games.

Stephen, incidentally, is the only Nauruan with Olympic experience, having joined the 1992 Games as a member of the Western Samoa team. In the year 2000 the Games will come a little closer to the islands, being played that year in Sydney. □

Maori bid continues despite some criticism

By Martin Tiffany

DENNIS Hansen, a former New Zealand Maori rugby league representative, says he believes the Aotearoa Sports Federation is backing a lost cause. He said they should instead concentrate on nurturing promising Maori sporting talent.

Hansen's comments follow signs a Maori contingent will compete at the 1999 SPG. A sports delegation from Aotearoa Sports was recently in Tahiti pushing the case for Maori inclusion. The Maori delegation has been granted observer status at the 1995 games in Tahiti.

Hansen, however, does not believe the Maori will ever compete at the SPG because of what he describes as its "closed door policy on large nations". Hansen was a member of the original Aotearoa Sports Committee (as it was known) from 1980 to 1985. It was around this time the Maori began the push for the right to compete in the Games. At the time there was a lot of resistance from small Pacific states.

Aboriginal and native Hawaiian participation at the SPG has also met with resistance.

Hansen said it was understandable that there was resistance as Maori were already exposed to top competition while the smaller Pacific nations used the SPG for the development of sport. Some countries have said it would be unfair for their athletes to compete against Maori, Aboriginals and native Hawaiians as those nations have big advantage because of the sports development and facilities.

Some of the island nations with American links receive funding from the United States to help with their participation at the SPG. Many of these nations are worried that funding would not be forthcoming if these bigger nations are allowed to compete, says Hansen.

However, Bill Tangariki, a member of the Aotearoa Sports delegation to Tahiti, has said he was not aware of this financial assistance being a factor in the Maori exclusion.

He said they were much closer than they were 14 years ago.

A decision on Maori participation is likely to come after the 1995 SPG, where further discussions will take place. □

SPORT

By Atama Raganivatu

THE Pacific islands have a meritorious boxing tradition. The region can claim Commonwealth Games gold medalists, Commonwealth professional champions, Olympic Games medalists, world title contenders and even a former holder of one of the sport's less plausible versions of a world title.

However, a significant professional world championship has proved elusive and, for many, it still seems too good to be true that a 21 year old Samoan is being acclaimed as a likely future contender for the sporting world's greatest prize — the World Heavyweight Championship.

David Tua's professional record to date is 14 wins (including thirteen knock-outs) and no losses, he is already ranked the 24th best heavyweight by the illustrious *Boxing Illustrated* magazine and his Olympic bronze medal, gained while still a teenager, marks him as something special. But what gives Tua real credibility is the involvement in his career of manager Lou Duva.

Duva is one of the most successful and respected figures in professional boxing history. He has had no fewer than 18 world champions under his wing, including recent heavyweight king Evander Holyfield. When Duva takes interest in a boxer that boxer must be good.

The 71-year-old American legend persuaded Tua to turn professional immediately after the 1992 Olympics in Barcelona. Duva then enthused — "David has all the qualities I look for, he has all the moves, direction and ability. I recognise a talent which will come out more and more as he matures to be heavyweight champion of the world."

Tua's detractors were sceptical then and most of them remain unconvinced. Their claim is that he is far too short in physique to compete successfully against the man mountains who inhabit the heavyweight division's upper spheres and that his win-loss statistic has been bolstered by a succession of bouts with talentless journeymen.

Duva, ever the sage, responds to this criticism with alacrity — "I'm taking the kid to school and David's got to learn to fight. His progress is carefully planned



David Tua: time's on his side

and when he's ready to face better fighters, he'll fight them and as for his size-well, he has similar dimensions to Rocky Marciano, Mike Tyson and Joe Frazier."

It is not only Tua's boxing ability which appeals to Duva. He also admires the Samoan's commitment and hunger for success, both of which are derived from his background. David's parents, Tuavale and Moela, come from Western Samoa's smallest inhabited island, Faleatiu, but Tuavale moved to Apia to pursue a professional boxing career. A middleweight, he is still remembered in Samoa for an epic encounter with Battling La'avasa in the late 1960s.

La'avasa won and moved to Auckland, where he became the toast of that city's boxing fraternity, but his beaten opponent retired soon afterwards. Without access to adequate training facilities and responsible coaching, Tuavale failed to fulfil his potential — a common occurrence amongst Pacific islands based

boxers, particularly in those days.

Tuavale moved to Auckland with Moela shortly after hanging up his gloves. They settled in the southern suburb of Mangere and raised a close knit family that eventually grew to include eight children. David commenced boxing when eleven and overcame several early losses and a multitude of handicaps to become one of New Zealand's most successful ever amateurs.

Financial restrictions at home made it necessary for Moela to make his singlet and shorts from material bought at a nearby shop, training shoes invariably had holes in them and the family's income seldom ran to a diet suitable for budding athletes. Tua always felt himself an outsider in the cliquish world of Kiwi amateur boxing and never more so than in 1989 when expelled from a national squad training camp after arriving late.

He had warned officials earlier that a delay was probable due to him having to sit a school examination and, despite being hurriedly driven the 600 miles between Auckland and Wellington by his father, Tua failed to arrive by the deadline. That deprived him of a chance to compete at the following year's Commonwealth Games in Auckland.

When reflecting upon the incident now, Tua says — "I only became angry when I learned that two other boxers, Nigel Anderson and Johnny Wallace, arrived even later than we but they were admitted into the camp. I never doubted that there were different rules for different guys. I wish now that I stood up for my rights or accepted an offer to represent Western Samoa at the Games. I said nothing, but promised myself I would have the last laugh."

This was but a temporary setback for Tua. His earliest New Zealand national crown had come in 1986 in the junior lightweight division; followed by the intermediate heavyweight title in 1988 and the first senior heavyweight championship one year later. An initial taste of international competition came at

easy

the 1991 World Junior Championships in Peru. He suffered a controversial loss to a Cuban there but soon afterwards beat the gold medal winner, Russia's Anzor Undrevv, in a challenge match at Palmerston North.

Olympic champion Felix Savon of Cuba knocked him out during the first round of their World Championships semi final clash in Australia, just before the Barcelona Games. Still, Tua was gaining knowledge with every fight and he went to Spain confident of bringing home a gold medal. After conclusive wins over Spanish and Czech opponents, only Nigeria's David Oizonritei stood between him and a rematch with Savon in the final. Unfortunately, the tall, willy Oizonritei outpointed a strangely listless Tua — despite having his nose broken.

Tua had done sufficient in the two earlier bouts to impress Duva as an uncut diamond with immense promise. The teenager needed little persuasion to turn professional. Compatriot Jimmy Peau (now better known as Jimmy Thunder) stagnated far too long in the backwater of New Zealand amateur boxing and allowed his career to lose all momentum before, belatedly, joining the paid ranks. Two or three more years as a carefully groomed amateur would probably have benefitted Tua but New Zealand was unlikely to provide this and, moreover, he was eager to secure the financial future of his family. "We are poor," he said at the time. "I admit it and I'm not ashamed of it. But, hopefully, I can change that."

One of Duva's priorities was to change Tua's eating habits. His penchant for fresh bread and hamburgers (even when offered a variety of healthy food in Barcelona, he preferred to frequent the local McDonalds) may have been permissible in New Zealand's haphazard amateur boxing circles but Duva insists his food intake now befits a top athlete. Billed in the United States as "The Terminator", Tua's physique, as well as ringcraft, have developed to an incredible degree under the elderly guru.

In New Zealand and Western Samoa for a holiday during May and June, Tua also impressed interviews with his level headedness. "People have their own expectations of me. They want me to be the world heavyweight champion," he contemplated. "I think I will be, but right now I just have to be patient. My time will come and I will be ready. I am always learning. I know where I'm going and how I'm going to get there. No one will stop me, because I believe in myself. That's the key." □

Samoans tipped as giantkillers

By Atama Raganivatu

MAURICE Lindsay, British rugby league's leading administrator and director of his sport's 1995 World Cup, has tipped Western Samoa as the team to watch next year after officiating at the tournament draw in Brisbane.

"The rugby league world will be staggered by the quality of Western Samoa," Lindsay enthused. He could be right — but only if Samoa is given the opportunity to field all the top quality players eligible to represent them, including John Schuster (Halifax); Sam Panapa (Salford); Va'aiga Tuigamala (Wigan); Apollo Perelini (St Helens) and Esene Faimalo (Widnes) in England, the Australia-based Ruben Wiki (Canberra Raiders) and many high profile performers in New Zealand's major domestic competition.

However, the Kiwis believe they have first call upon several members of this talented bunch. An unsavoury and embarrassing tug-of-war may eventuate. Western Samoa has been included in the same group as France and Wales — teams they would be confident of beating, if at full strength. The draw has been less kind to the Pacific's other representatives.

Fiji will face the top two seeds — England and Australia — in group one. Even with players honed by experienced in the world's toughest domestic competition, Australia's Winfield Cup (Noa Nadruku and Manoa Thompson are the best known of an ever-increasing band), the Fijians cannot be expected to

match the game's two traditional giants at this stage of their development, even if the recent 40-8 defeat of Britain's national amateur selection suggests them to be progressing well. South Africa is the fourth team in the pool.

Enigmatic Papua New Guinea will be heartened by the 29-22 win over France in Port Moresby that effectively raised them to number five in world rankings. The Kumuls are certainly a team of great potential and, in halfback Adrian Lam (now playing for Eastern Suburbs), they have a player of exceptional skills. But PNG usually struggles in the cold of England and will probably find New Zealand too tough for them in group two which also features Tonga.

During their brief international rugby league history, Tongan teams have already won many friends with an inextinguishable fighting spirit. Hopefully, they will also have the services of Winfield Cup stars Martin Masella (Balmain) and Jim Dymock (Canterbury — Bankstown) and St Helens' George Mann. But even then, a lack of real depth will probably prove crucial. Group one's top two teams, plus the winners of the other two groups, will advance to the semi-finals.

Sadly, the Cook Islands were regarded as too weak to be involved. However, Lindsay made a point while in Brisbane to express his delight at the way rugby league was booming in Rarotonga. He has also hinted a secondary competition may be organised, should available funds permit, which would include Russia, Moldova, USA and Canada and the Cooks. □

Island weightlifters surprise Aussies

AUSTRALIA'S anticipated dominance of the Oceania Weightlifting Championships in Guam did not quite eventuate, with several lifters from the smaller Pacific nations stealing the thunder of the higher ranked Australians.

The performance of Ashfaq Dean (Fiji); Peter Kolapa (PNG); Marcus Stephens (Nauru); Manalatu Boli (Guam); and Eric Brown (American

Samoa) all gained deserved acclaim, but the enduring impression will be the tremendous depth of talent in the region.

Australia did take the team event but only five points ahead of Guam. The South Pacific Championships, for which Australians were not eligible, saw American Samoa top the points table, with New Caledonia second and Guam third. □

YACHTING

By Sally Andrew

AFTER completing a journey through the islands of New Caledonia, Vanuatu, New Zealand, Tonga and Fiji, the yacht *Meridian* has returned to her home port of Hobart, Tasmania, in the far South Pacific.

Meridian, a 41-foot steel cutter designed by Sparkman and Stevens and built in Tasmania, has been home to Richard, Brenda and Madeleine (Maddie) McCure for the past four years. Maddie is a bright and cheery five-year-old with a toothless smile who says what she likes most about sailing is "the enormous waves".

Originally designed as a ketch, *Meridian* has been modified to a cutter rig with roller furling on both headsails. Auxiliary power is provided by a four cylinder, 80 horsepower Ford engine. Rainwater is collected on deck and drains directly into two 100-gallon tanks.

A prop-shaft generator used in conjunction with two solar panels makes enough power to run navigation lights, an SSB radio, and a VCR. According to Brenda, the VCR has been a real "sanity saver" at sea. It keeps her daughter Maddie entertained during long passages when she and her husband are busy 24 hours a day with navigation, standing watch, and trying to catch up on sleep.

Meridian has had very few "dramas" over the years, sailing slowly up the east coast of Australia to Brisbane on a shake-down cruise before heading offshore to New Caledonia. Richard completed *Meridian's* fit-out along the way, using exotic Tasmanian timbers like king billy, celery and huon pine.

In New Caledonia, the picture book beauty of the Isle of Pines and its interesting history make it a popular cruising ground. Located south of Noumea, the Isle of Pines is an enormous outcrop of coral with many small islets scattered around a coast that is dotted with limestone grottos filled with crystal clear water, underwater caves and spectacular stalactites. Like the McCures home state of Tasmania, the Isle of Pines was a convict settlement.

In New Caledonia's Loyalty Group of Islands the McCures visited Ouvea, one of the most beautiful atolls in the Pacific and well-known for its immense beach and large lagoon, and Ile Beautemps-Beaupre. This is polaroid sunglass country. Navigation is tricky in these reef strewn waters, but with Richard up the mast as lookout, Brenda was able to negotiate the boat safely between the ubiquitous coral heads.

After spending their first cyclone season in New Zealand, *Meridian* entered and won line honours in the 1992 Island Cruising Regatta to Vava'u. Richard and Brenda enjoyed being part of the entourage of boats that left New Zealand that June and through the radio they made friends with other regatta participants.

That year, many of the regatta boats

Journey's end



Pictures SALLY ANDREW

Schoolgirls: on Rabi Island, near Taveuni, Fiji



sailed en masse from Tonga to Savusavu where special arrangements had been made with Fijian Customs to clear into the north-eastern district of Fiji. Normally a sleepy little town, Savusavu leapt to life. All the local businesses — the Copra Shed Yacht Club, the Planters Club, the Hot Bread Shop, the Pizza Barn, the Travel Shop, etc. — welcomed the arrival of so many visitors. It was a week busy with parties, races, feasts, dances and entertainment.

Savusavu is a great jumping-off spot to the islands of north-eastern Fiji. The north-east boasts some of the best diving in the world and superb sailing. Viani Bay and Rainbow Reef lie nearby off the south-east side of Vanua Levu. Qamea and Matangi Islands are around the corner, north-east of Taveuni.

At remote Budd Reef, north of Taveuni, Richard performed *sevusevu* with a 96-year-old chief. According to custom, the chief offered Richard and his boat the protection and blessings of the village and welcomed the McCure family to their island. Richard and Brenda passed their days snorkelling and exploring these seldom-visited islets of Budd Reef.

At nearby Rabi Island, *Meridian* joined two other yachts — *Pacific High* with Americans Tim and Arlene aboard, and the German-registered yacht *Equinox* with Joric and Yvonne. Together, the three boats spent time on shore as guests of local families. During the week Maddie went to kindergarten with two young Rabi girls, Monkey and Belle, who live in a village on the shore of Elizabeth Bay on the north-western coast of Rabi.

Richard and Brenda imagined the cruising lifestyle would be lonely, that it would consist of endless isolated anchorages in exotic locales. Instead, cruising was a intensely social experience. They made many close and fast friendships with other people sharing the same not-so-secluded anchorages and Richard found that "the friendships we formed along the way were much like the friendships of childhood — with everyone doing the same thing, sharing the same experiences".

Meridian and her crew are now back home where the journey started, weathering a Tasmanian winter and dreaming of their next cruise through the South Pacific. □

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Shipping schedules

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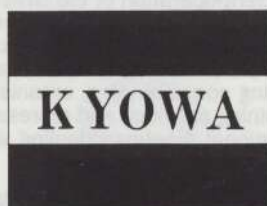
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FORUM SECRETARIAT VACANCY

DIRECTOR, ENERGY DIVISION

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 Director, Energy Division, with the Forum Secretariat.

The Forum Secretariat was established in 1972 by the South Pacific Forum to encourage economic and political cooperation between its member states and between those states and the more industrialised countries. Under the control of a Secretary General, the Secretariat undertakes activities in a number of areas: economic development, legal and political, civil aviation, energy, maritime, telecommunications and trade. In pursuing these work programmes, the Secretariat works with a range of aid donor countries and organisations including Australia, New Zealand, Japan, France, EC, Canada and the UNDP.

The Energy Division aims to assist Forum Island Countries improve their capabilities to plan and manage their energy sectors. The Division implements a comprehensive energy sector development programme that covers all key energy subsections and activities including general energy policy and planning, petroleum, electric power, renewable energy, and energy conservation and efficiency. The Division also assists in coordinating the activities of other organisations active in regional energy programmes, convenes Regional Energy Committee Meetings, provides technical advice and training services, and gathers and disseminates energy information and statistics to member countries.

The Director will be responsible for the efficient operation of the Division and the effective implementation of its projects. The Director will assist with formulating regional policy initiatives, identifying regional projects, drafting funding proposals, liaising with officials of member countries and with other energy-related agencies, arranging consultancies, organising regional seminars, workshops and other training activities and representing the Secretariat at regional and international meetings dealing with energy matters.

Applicants should have proven programme management and administrative abilities, and be capable of directing the work of a multi-disciplinary team of energy sector specialists. Experience in administering energy-related, or similar, technical programmes in developing countries would be highly regarded as would relevant tertiary qualifications, preferably in economics or engineering. The applicant should also have proven energy policy development experience. Preference will be given to applicants with a demonstrated appreciation of the economic, social and political aspirations of the Forum's region.

Applications close on 07 October 1994. They should contain full information on education and career backgrounds and should give names, addresses and telephone numbers of at least 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: 302-204**

Further information is available on request from the 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.

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