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JUNE 1991

PACIFIC ISLANDS

M O N T H L Y

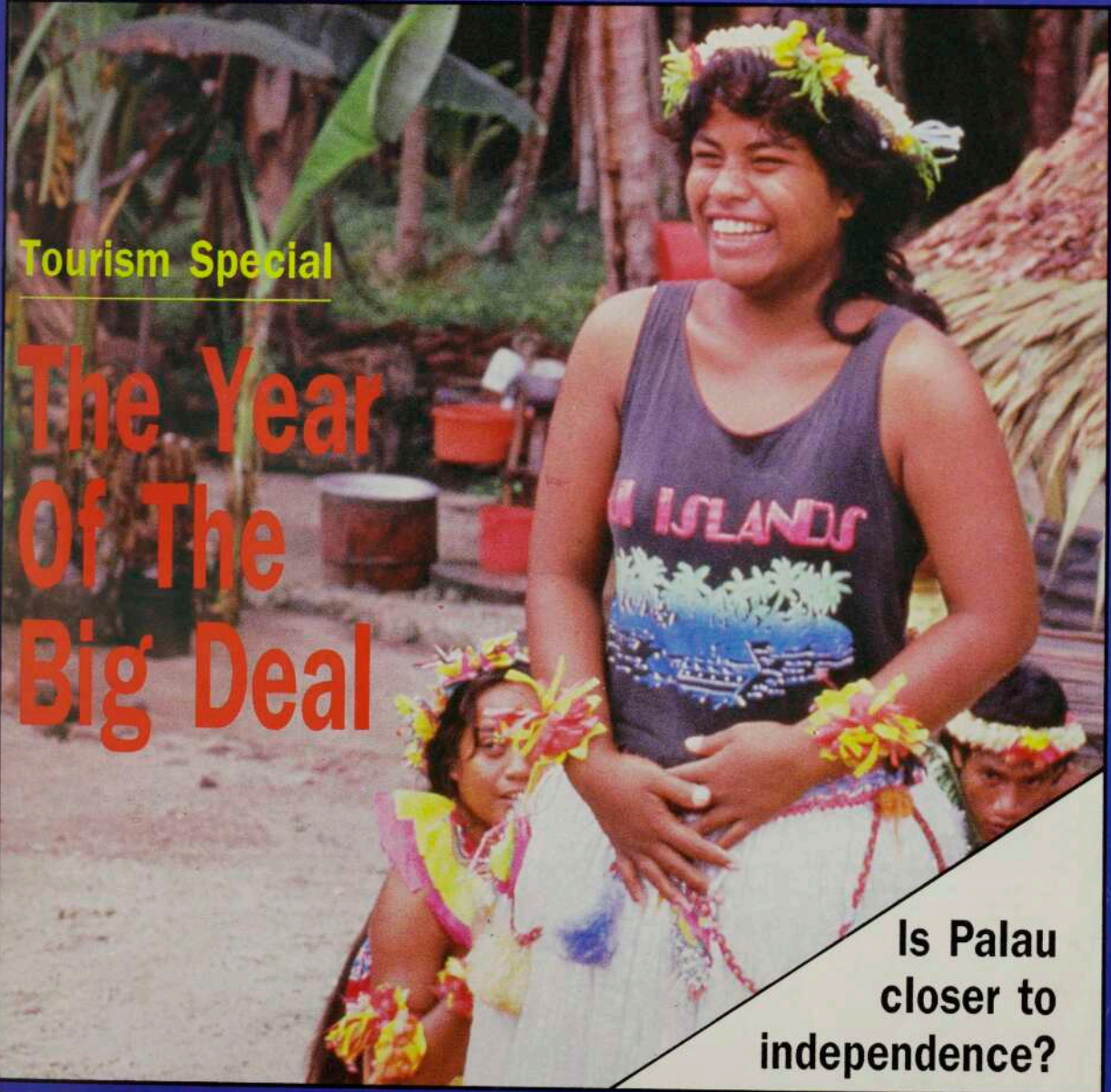
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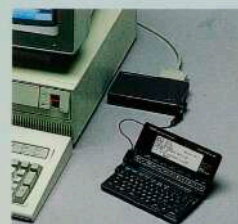
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PACIFIC ISLANDS

M O N T H L Y

Vol. 61 No. 5

THE NEWS MAGAZINE

JUNE 1991

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MAILBOX

Flosse return 'deflating'

THE very sad news of the comeback of Gaston Flosse has left me very deflated. If the Maohi people of French-occupied Polynesia have allowed this man back into office, they will have only themselves to blame.

Flosse is a foremost member of that depressing cacotocracy (government by the worst people) of elitist "demis" who lord over Tahitian politics like spoiled royalty. In my opinion, both their vision and prime agenda is strongly questionable. The outer extents of their vision seems to be simply to beg France for more money, and their prime agenda seems to be the maintenance of their ridiculously out of place European lifestyles in what is essentially a third world Tahiti.

These "pseudo-Tahitian" elites consistently betray the trust of the vast majority, the "Kaina", by keeping them in the dark. They insist that the only key to prosperity is to cling to France for eternity, with all the radiation induced cancer and growing AIDS cases (the highest in the Pacific Basin) that such a policy entails. Their battle cry is "Autonomy", while the sad fact is, as long as France pulls the purse strings, autonomy, in any form, is a cruel joke. It is so sad. These "demis", which are supposed to be Tahiti's best educated, and potentially best equipped to find a successful path to a prosperous

independence, are the very one's that preach Maohi defeatism — that only Europeans can succeed, and Maohi's can't make it on their own.

There must be a new day in Tahiti. A day when "sincere" Tahitians like Oscar Temaru step forward and lead "Eastern" Polynesia into an era of native-born prosperity. Then we can tell the spoiled elites like Gaston Flosse to shut-up and sup their Croissants and sip their Moet.

IVAN VERNON McKINNEY Jnr,
Friends of Polynesia/Pacific

PS. The word "cacotocracy" is a new and still obscure terms on the English language scene. It will take some time before it becomes common in all dictionaries.

Central pivot is money

YOUR December 1990 issue (Vol. 60 No. 12) indicated that there has been some earlier correspondence relative to Western values being imposed upon Pacific Island States.

In very simplistic terms I believe that the main difference between a "European" outlook and that of a Pacific Island State is that the former has money as the principal objective, whereas the latter has the extended family as the central pivot.

Until such time as recognition is achieved throughout the world that money should be used as a commodity to assist the well-being of the family (and not the other way around) there will continue to be problems.

Unfortunately, isolated, small and independent Island States will never be able to truly influence the much larger

"European" type outlook/systems.

Unity of the Pacific Island States could, on the other hand, be a significant step towards forcing the "European" outlook to re-think its objectives ... particularly when relating to any aspect relative to the Pacific Ocean. And if this unity could be further extended ...?

ALAN HORNSBY

Wellington, NZ

Still 'paranoid', still late

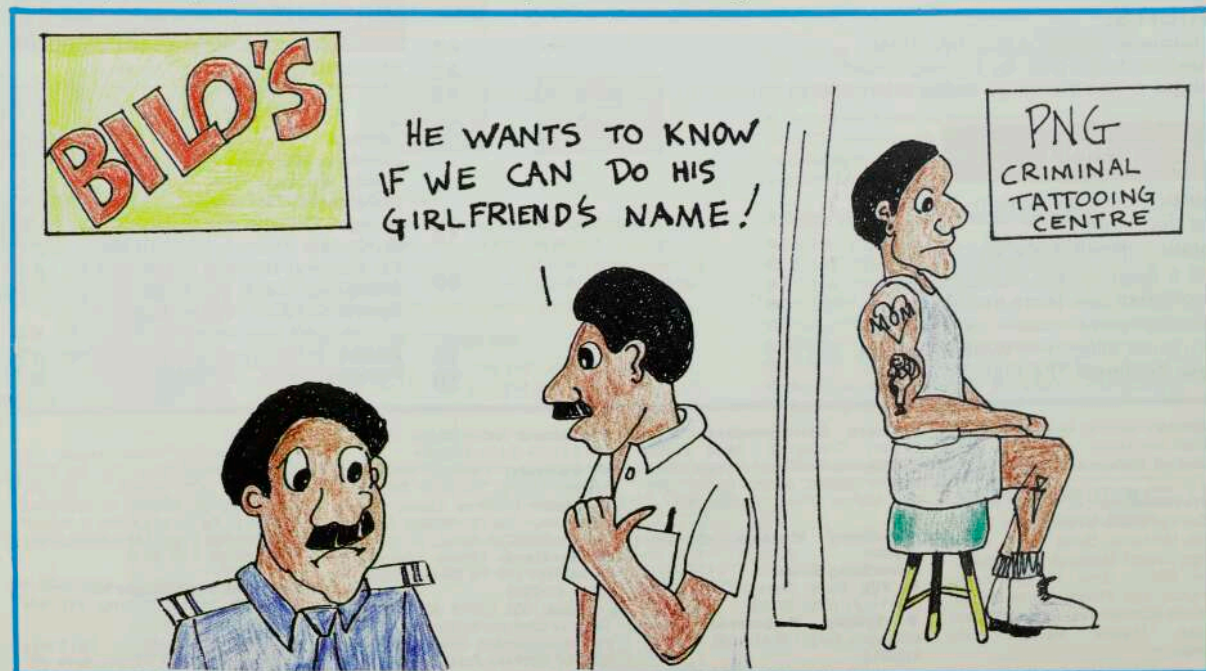
HOW curious that Mike Forster, trade spokesman of the interim government off Bougainville, should be so concerned (*PIM* April 1991) about my report of the NFIP conference which he was not even at. And almost six months after the event!

He mentions my "failing to report" a Bougainville resolution. This was just one of 46 resolutions passed at that conference. In any case my article was actually about Palau, the Fiji issue and divisions within the movement not about Bougainville.

It might have been more productive, Mr Forster, to question why some of the paranoid local conference organisers were so determined to effectively gag journalists. (And why there was no representative for republican Bougainville there.) I was one of only three journalists at Pawarenga for the conference and we were all excluded from the plenary session when the resolutions were passed. Organisers sending out an "official" list of resolutions almost one month after the conference is of little use to new media. I stand by my comment about the failure of the movement.

DAVID ROBIE

Auckland





JEMIMA GARRETT *the australian*

Robber barrons of the logging world

PAPUA New Guinea's Barnett Inquiry into corruption in the logging industry produced a world-class report.

It is also the one and only detailed account of the often secretive operations of the large logging companies which operate throughout Asia and which, increasingly, are moving into the Pacific Islands.

On corporate operations in PNG's New Ireland province Justice Barnett said:

"It would be fair to say, of some of the companies, that they are now roaming the countryside with the self-assurance of robber barons; bribing politicians and leaders, creating social disharmony and ignoring laws in order to gain access to, and rip out, and export the last remnants of the province's valuable timber.

"These companies are fooling the landowners and making use of corrupt, gullible, and unthinking politicians. It downgrades Papua New Guinea's sovereign status that such rapacious foreign exploitation has been allowed to continue with such devastating effects to the social and physical environment, and with so few positive benefits."

By the end of the Inquiry companies from Japan, Malaysia, Taiwan, Australia and elsewhere stood accused of corrupting politicians and officials, circumventing Papua New Guinea tax laws, undervaluing and misdeclaring the species of logs they were taking and failing to live up to their commitments to landowners. Barnett found not one company investigated had a satisfactory record of performing the conditions of its operation.

At the same time landowners became increasingly angry about environmental destruction. Big companies were clear-felling forests and leaving water supplies silted up and undrinkable. In some cases villages and food gardens were bulldozed while promised amenities such as new houses, churches and schools failed to materialise.

It's a familiar story in many areas which have suffered the predations of large industrial logging companies. And one which needs to be tackled now if the forests, with their valuable and unique species, are to survive into the future.

Papua New Guinea provides an object lesson in just how difficult it can be to bring these companies to heel.

Despite a two-year moratorium on logging intended to give the government time to take stock of the country's remaining forest resources and the 67 million Kina donated to the World Bank's PNG Tropical Forests Action Plan (which was designed to protect the forests), logging continues apace.

Vast tracts of forest have been exempted from the

moratorium. In many cases companies criticised by Barnett are returning continuing their operations unchanged.

It is now becoming clear these giant corporations are simply too big and too powerful for small national governments.

The continuing abuses by logging companies have prompted landowner protests and blockades. PNG's National Alliance of Non-Government Organisations, a body which includes all major national environment and development groups and the Melanesian Council of Churches has re-iterated its call for a ban on all export logging.

In many quarters there is a now growing feeling that only alternative forms of timber cutting and alternative uses of the forest are likely to save the resource and ensure its future economic benefits accrue to landowners and national governments.

One very promising alternative is the Walkabout sawmill, a small mill which can be carried into the forest by four men. Its success lies in the fact that it can be owned and controlled by landowners themselves and, because it requires no roads or heavy machinery, it avoids what is usually the most damaging part of tropical forestry.

Other commercial alternatives to large scale industrial logging include farming of rattan palms followed by production and export of rattan furniture, fruit and nut farming or tourism — all activities which can go hand in hand with the highly selective Walkabout-style timber cutting.

Although alternative uses of the forest have been shown to be cost effective, enormous political clout will be needed to control the logging companies.

Most are part of huge Asian conglomerates with profits and power far in excess of individual small island nations. As was the case with the Asian driftnet fishing fleet, the job of bringing them to book may be best handled by a regional institution which has the backing of the 15 Nation South Pacific Forum.

Just as the Forum Fisheries Agency under Philipp Muller's able leadership was able to save the albacore tuna from extinction so a regional body like the Noumea-based SPREP (the South Pacific Regional Environment Program) may be able to halt the destruction by industrial logging companies.

Regional institutions of this sort have the advantage of being less vulnerable to corruption and more able to exert a level of diplomatic pressure which cannot be ignored.

Any moves by island nations are likely to find support within the wealthy timber importing countries.

Western governments are facing increasing domestic pressure to take action to stop the devastation of tropical forests.

This month, for instance, Australia will consider a ban on the import of tropical timber which has not been sustainably produced.

If adopted this may require significant changes in Fiji and Solomon Islands. It would also open up lucrative new markets for the more than 300 Walkabout producers cutting their own logs in PNG. □



DAVID BARBER

wellington

Nuclear tests strike a psychological blow

PEOPLE in New Zealand and the Pacific have been asking the question for years: If the French nuclear tests are as safe as they say, why not conduct them in France?

The answer has always been pretty obvious — the reason is political — but no French leader until Prime Minister Michel Rocard has been prepared to admit it. The tests were safe, he repeated during his historic visit to New Zealand at the end of April — “there is not the slightest danger”.

But the problem was people *perceived* that they were not. There was especially a psychological problem for people who lived in the vicinity of nuclear tests, he said.

There were virtually no people living for 500 miles around Moruroa Atoll, so testing in the Pacific didn't matter. The implication was that millions lived around the Massif Central, so testing in France would matter, even if a majority of the French favour an independent *force de frappe*.

For “psychological” read “political”. Rocard was saying while the majority of French voters were content to have their nuclear weapons tested far away in Pacific waters, it would be politically unacceptable to test them at home.

Safety, or harmlessness, it seems, is measured electorally in terms of the number of miles between the majority of your voters and a nuclear testing site. A fair enough argument, I guess, if you're a politician, and just bad luck if you were born in, or choose to live in, an unpopulated area like the Pacific.

Unpopulated? Undeveloped? A South Seas paradise even? What an ideal place to test weapons of mass destruction! You can test to your heart's content and not run the risk of being thrown out of office, a risk you would run if you tried to test the cursed things — things Rocard said were so awful that even heads of state and their generals were scared to use them — in your own constituency.

One had to admire the Prime Minister's honesty, and one could even follow his argument in favour of nuclear weapons as a means of keeping the peace. Previous wars had been started because people were not afraid of the weapons used to wage war, he said.

But Rocard moved onto trickier ground at a press conference when he began to question New Zealand's anti-nuclear stance.

“Now the fact that from such a friendly warm country like New Zealand ... a moral country ... should emerge the idea that we should get rid of the one weapon which we're so scared of that we don't use it, in order to fall back on the weapons that we're used to, and therefore we use, is quite honestly such a weird idea that I have difficulty in understanding it.”

(To be fair to the Prime Minister, “weird”, with its impolite hint of craziness, was his interpreter's word. The milder “strange”, or “curious”, would have been a more accurate translation.)

Now he was entitled to justify his country's adherence to the principle of nuclear deterrence, and had, in fact, been invited to do so.

But I for one doubt the propriety of his questioning New Zealand's anti-nuclear policy — a policy adopted by one party in government, endorsed by the people and reaffirmed by another party in government.

It is a policy that may seem strange or curious to others with a vested interest in the question, but one that is not at all strange or curious to those who believe in it, and that happens to be most New Zealanders.

As New Zealand's Prime Minister Jim Bolger responded: “If France wishes to maintain an independent nuclear deterrent, we can't prevent that.”

But, he went on, reverting to where we began: “We would much prefer that the tests were carried out on mainland France rather than in Pacific territories of France.”

The two Prime Minister inevitably had to agree to disagree on the issue, and the visit, the first by a French Prime Minister to New Zealand, was conducted in a spirit of remarkable bonhomie.

It was essentially a pilgrimage of atonement, allowing the French leader to formally apologise for the *Rainbow Warrior* bombing at the scene of the crime and to sign a friendship agreement, turning the page on a sad chapter in history.

But Rocard and the French in general left behind a sense that they are puzzled why New Zealanders continually refer to the *Rainbow Warrior* and nuclear testing. Rocard asked more than once why questioners could not talk about other issues on which the two nations agreed.

It seems that the French cannot understand the depth of feeling in New Zealand and the Pacific.

They do not appear to appreciate that it will take a long time for memories of the *Rainbow Warrior* to die in New Zealand, and a long time for Pacific people to forget the testing, when and if it stops, because they simply do not believe that they are safe.

As New Zealand's Labour Party leader Mike Moore said: “The relationship will never be absolutely normal while France continues nuclear testing in the South Pacific.”

One of Rocard's main reasons for coming here was to declare France's continuing interest in the Pacific, to lay claim to a regional role for the Republic and its territories in the 21st century when the Asia-Pacific Rim will come into its own, and to assure the peoples of the region of French goodwill.

There would be no better way of improving relations with the region and removing suspicion of French intentions than by stopping the tests or moving them to France.

One could even say that, from a Pacific perspective, there even exist some good psychological and political reasons for doing so. □



FUTA HELU

the islands

Diaspora of Pacific Islanders

THE most recent large-scale movement of people in the Pacific has been a diaspora of islanders. The causes have been connected with the search for greener fields, economically speaking, but not through conquests or being led away to captivity. However, it is not as simple as it sounds. The phenomenon is the culmination of a long process initially set in motion by missionaries. Since that early period the islanders have been undergoing a transformation — slow at first but lately becoming a terrifying rush — from communalist-minded people to more individualistic persons.

The lure of high consumption and physicality in developed, industrial societies like Australia, New Zealand and the United States has been a sucking force on island populations. But we must not be blind to economic and cultural conditions in the islands that are unconsciously felt and which drive people to migrate. So there is a push-pull effect holding between island countries and industrialised countries. On top of this there are the immigration policies of the same countries that are designed to skim off the better educated and trained islanders — despite their hypocritical message to the islands that they must do everything to stem the brain drain!

One of the earliest mass transport of people from the islands onto the bigger, affluent neighbours was the result of blackbirding in Papua New Guinea, Solomons, Vanuatu and New Caledonia for slaves to work in the canefields of Queensland. Their descendants now live in communities dispersed throughout Queensland and northeast New South Wales.



In search of greener fields: Pacific Islanders buying dalo in New Zealand

One of them, from the Fatnowna family (of Solomon Islands origin), has published a history of how his ancestors and other members down to his own generation, fared in their adopted country. Jemima Garrett, in her May comment, says Canberra recently set up ATSIC giving Aborigines and Torres Straits wide powers in terms of land and other citizenship rights. The policy, says Garrett, leaves out South Pacific islanders — by which she means, I suspect, the Papua New Guineans, Solomon Islanders, but excluding other South Sea islanders like Fijians and Polynesians — who now are banded together to form ASSIUC. Even if this first group of 'South Pacific' islanders are rehabilitated in the manner required, the other segment of Pacific peoples in Australia — Fijians, Tongans, Samoans, Maoris, Cook Islanders, etc — would still be unaccounted for.

Apart from the forced removal of people from their island homelands, the recent exodus to metropolitan centres has causes unrelated to any military invasions like those behind the Jewish case — whether through being led away by invaders or following in their wake. According to the migrants themselves they go in search of a better economic station or educational opportunities for their children. But it is also a fact that sociocultural contexts in the islands are not entirely serene, that they prod people along to leave for overseas.

The 'global economy' did not exist for the islands until well after the Second World War. Before that island economies were solely dependant on export earnings from cash crops like copra and banana.

These resources were, and are, extremely unreliable and created no economic momentum on which any kind of progress can be founded. Next thing, the islanders believed they discovered a "river of money" flowing between North America and Australia and New Zealand but missing the islands or worming through them on its way to its destination.

Therefore, they reasoned, migrating to these countries would enable them to tap part of the river for resources. Then the mass movement in those countries started, small at first and travelling light, but increasing consistently to its peak in the late 60s and early 70s. The situation now is that there are islander communities — some sizable, some mere pockets — all over New Zealand and Australia, in California, Texas; in and around Salt Lake City, New York and Philadelphia, in Miami, and British Columbia, Canada and many other places.

There the islanders live as third or fourth class citizens, employed in the most menial of jobs — those that the people of those countries would not take — and very largely ignored by the governments of their adopted countries. They are looked down upon, quietly discriminated against, exploited in national celebrations as exhibitionist, cultural freaks, and referred

to as 'coconuts'. Yet the islanders, especially the Polynesians, are oblivious to this treatment.

However, the full fury of the animus usually levelled against Jews is avoided in the case of islanders mainly because they are believed to possess very low IQs and do not represent a commercial or economic threat to the people of those countries. But at the same time their cultures are being dramatically changed or simply eroded by mere contact with stronger cultures abroad. Island cultures are weak because they are based on the morality of cooperation and friendliness that is so out of place in a dog eat dog environment. The church is the only institution that provides a context for the propagation and preservation of island culture.

And yet the churches batten on the meagre economic means of the islanders. Through annual donations, church appeals, cathedral development projects, and whatnot, they do not permit the poor migrants to become economically independent.

The island migrants are a persecuted lot. In the social field they are encircled by hostile cultures. In the economic domain they are exploited by the churches. So far as I can see the only way for them to function with some measure of dignity is to give up their own cultures and adopt those of their new homes — cultures that are based on individualism, thrift, acquisitiveness and independence. But they don't have options, really. Environment and experience shall see that they embrace just those values.

The Pacific diaspora is quite extensive and its effect on island economies very significant. Though agricultural export could have been much higher, some island states are only able to stay economically afloat because of remittances from islanders who live abroad. Resources generated economically are miserable compared to foreign aid and remittances. All major development projects in the islands are aid-funded and at least 60 per cent of domestic

consumption expenditure in some countries is paid for by remittances.

There are more Niueans in New Zealand than Niue. The position in the Cooks is similar. Same for Samoans though their distribution is wider, with American Samoans concentrating in the United States (there are Samoans in Congress) and Western Samoans massing in New Zealand (it is predicted that a Samoan will be Prime Minister of that country within the next 20 years or so). The number of Tongans who live outside Tonga is close to that of Tongans who are still at home.

The Fijians were somewhat slow to join the exodus but since the coups more people have left Fiji for overseas. One can imagine the size of the capital transfers that such numbers can effect via different means. It is a source for lucrative business and 'secondary' (we must not say 'parasitic') commercial institutions like banks have already moved into place.

The phase of the Return is already making an uncertain start. Many islanders go back home every year but only temporarily. They attend national celebrations, festivals and church conferences. They are regaled in feasts paid for by money they remitted to their feast-making relatives — a case of earnings made in another country and consumed in another. But a few return for longer or for good.

These 'Sephardic' islanders set up businesses (most fail for lack of experience since they worked overseas only as factory hands) and some stand for parliament (here their failure is more pronounced because they are mostly with the wrong educational background and the electorate does not regard former factory hands as ideal material for parliamentary work).

I believe, however, these shortcomings will soon be corrected and a real confrontation between them and the 'Askenatzen' who never left the home reefs will become normal fare. □

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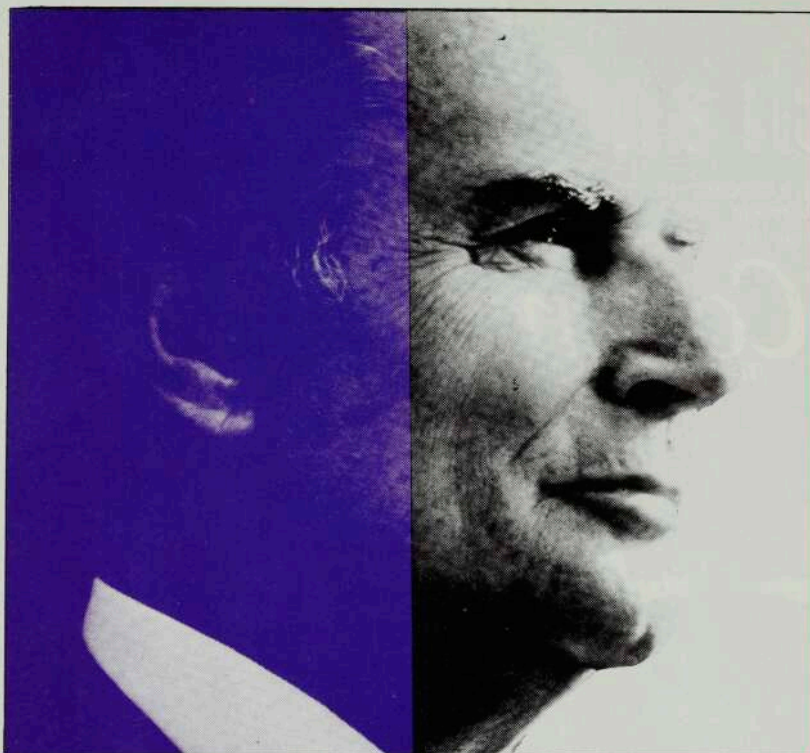
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THE REGION



Francois Mitterrand: his decade in power saw tumultuous change in Pacific policy

Return of the French

Ten years of Mitterrand highlighted by Rocard's reconciliation tour. **Nicolas Rothwell** reports from Paris.

AS President Francois Mitterrand celebrates a decade in power this month, politicians and diplomats in Paris reviewed the tumultuous changes in France's Pacific policies during his first 10 years in power — a period that included the Rainbow Warrior bombing, the killing on Ouvéa in New Caledonia, and repeated political struggles in French Polynesia.

Mitterrand's Prime Minister, Michael Rocard, resigned on May 15 and was replaced by Edith Cresson, but not before making a path-breaking "visit of reconciliation" to New Zealand at the end of April. The visit was a neat piece of symbolic timing, designed to repair relations between Paris and the government in Wellington. Rocard's journey was welcomed by New Zealand officials, who invited the then French Prime Minister to pay a visit to Akaroa, the village where French pioneers first disembarked on New Zealand soil in 1840. For Rocard, who had been trying to build up a power base as a potential

successor to Mitterrand, the Pacific is a special area of concern — the scene of his first great triumph in office, the Matignon Accords that paved the way



Rocard: Pacific reconciliation tour

for peace in New Caledonia.

French commentators regard relations between Paris and Wellington as definitively restored, after the virtual break-down caused by the Rainbow warrior bombing by French agents in July 1985. Rocard went as far as any French minister could conceivably go in making a veiled public apology during his visit, when he declared that "errors were made in the past".

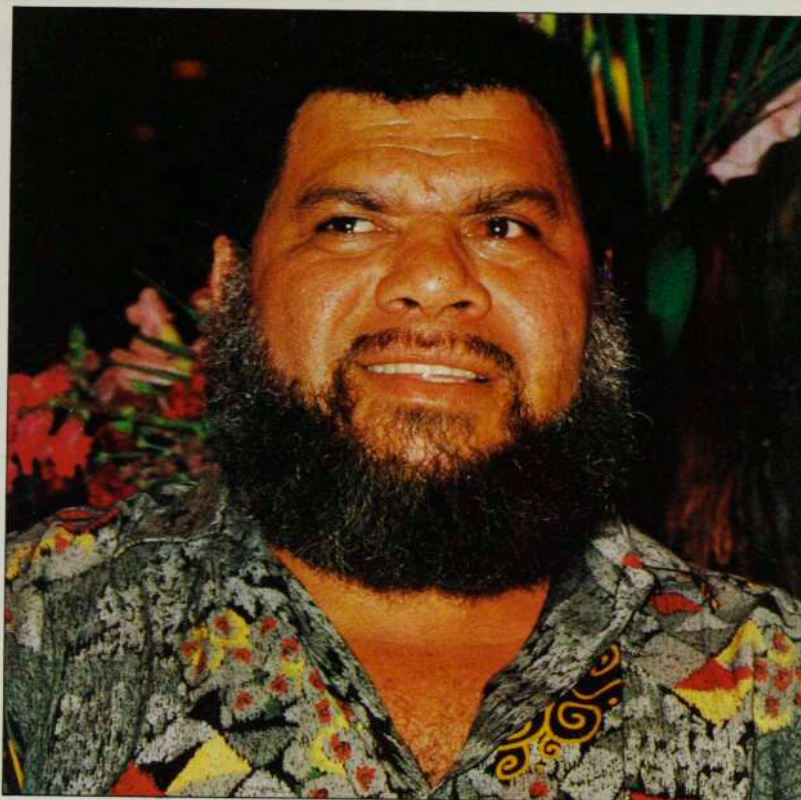
For the Prime Minister, who was not in office at the time of the affair, this was a simple concession to make. A certain doubt still surrounds Mitterrand's connection with the affair; at the time, and ever since, he has denied any knowledge of the bombing, while responsibility was shouldered by the Minister of Defence of the day, Mr Charles Hernu. Rocard found his New Zealand hosts eager to accept his amends, and put relations between the two countries back on a smooth footing; but in France, there has been rather less rejoicing. Ordinary public opinion has never shown much remorse over the Rainbow Warrior affair, which was widely viewed as an operation mounted to protect France's national security interests by warding Greenpeace's protest vessel away from

THE REGION

the nuclear test site at Moruroa. Conservative critics of the Government were less than impressed by Rocard's attempt to improve relations with Wellington: an editorial in the establishment newspaper, *Le Figaro*, caustically described Rocard as a "well-known masochist" and ventured that if he was going to conduct himself in such an embarrassing manner while representing France overseas, he should resign. Rocard's New Zealand hosts may be glad to have heard words of contrition, however measured, from a Paris official, but they remain less than happy with France's continued nuclear testing in the Pacific. New Zealand's Prime Minister, Jim Bolger, may have said that the two countries had agreed to disagree, and that "France and New Zealand must work more together to promote regional stability and development" — but when France detonated its first warhead of the testing season under Moruroa barely a week after Rocard left Wellington, the reaction was one of predictable anger.

Rocard had made no attempt to hide the fact that France would continue its nuclear test programme which he stressed "posed no special danger either for New Zealand or for nearer islands". But the French decision to go ahead with testing gave a sharp indication that Paris still places its military program ahead of the sensitivities of its Pacific neighbours.

France's Pacific policies also are undergoing an intriguing evolution in its colonies. When President Mitterrand contested the 1988 elections against the conservative candidate Jacques Chirac, who was then Prime Minister, the status of New Caledonia was one of the key issues. On the eve of voting, Chirac ordered the storming of the Kanak militants on Ouvea in the Loyalty Islands — an operation that failed to win him sufficient votes to dethrone his rival. Since then, the prospects for the territory have oscillated, with the killing of Kanak leader Jean-Marie Tjibaou marking the low point on the journey towards greater autonomy and eventual independence. Now mainland commentators are hopeful that a significant agreement between the two main communities can be reached, in the wake of the recent congresses of the two chief political parties — the Rassemblement pour la Calédonie dans la République (RPCR) and the Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front (FLNKS). RPCR President Jacques Lafleur called for the acceptance of a consensual solution with the Kanaks before the referendum that will decide the ultimate disposition of the territory, in 1998. FLNKS President Paul Neaoutyine said the pro-independence forces were "open to any discussion on the basis of our clearly stated positions — to prepare for the coming of sovereignty and independence".



FLNKS president Paul Neaoutyine: open to any discussion

Picture: David Robe

New Caledonia may have escaped the headlines, but its future remains a topic of vital interest for the ruling Socialist Party in Paris. Rocard, in particular, has bound his name closely to the Matignon process. But his conservative rivals remain suspicious of the pro-independence movement and supportive of the European community in Noumea; many are coming to accept that some form of independence is inevitable, but the Gaullist leader Chirac is still convinced that France's national interest, and New Caledonia's development, would best be served if it stayed French.

Flosse and the French profile

In Papeete, the most politically turbulent of all France's overseas possessions, the latest internal power struggle has culminated with the return of the conservative Gaston Flosse to power. Flosse's ascendancy marks the eclipse of his protégé-turned-rival, Alexandre Leontieff. Since Flosse was a determined activist in his role under the Chirac conservative Government as a roving Pacific minister, there is now a possibility that the French profile in the Pacific island states will be raised once more. Flosse, head of the Tahoeera Huiraatira (Popular Assembly), fell from power in December 1987, but had always re-

mained a force in French Polynesian political affairs.

The return of this energetic conservative will not be welcomed by the mandarins of French Pacific policy in the Matignon and the Elysee palaces. Mitterrand, who made a high-profile visit to Papeete a year ago, has become increasingly involved in charting Pacific policy as the years of his Presidency have gone by. In the closing period of his reign, his prestige unprecedented, he may well feel inclined to play a more direct role in the ocean that caused his regime so much trouble during his first term. □

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THE REGION

Superministry, super plans

By Al Prince

HOW to tackle Tahiti's struggling and complex tourism industry has been a major preoccupation of Gaston Flosse since he returned to power on April 4 as Territorial Government President, following the March 17 general election.

As evidence of that concern, Flosse is the first president not to appoint government cabinet ministers in charge of tourism and airline transportation.

Instead, he has created a sort of "superministry" at the presidency, which includes a few expert advisers like Alec Ata, who headed up Tahiti's first tourist board for many years then served as tourism minister in the late 1970s.

Ironically, the optimistic goals of doubling Tahiti's 1982 hotel capacity and yearly tourist volume began with the first of two Flosse governments, when Alexandre Leontieff was his tourism minister. The goals remained the same during Flosse governments from 1982-1987 and continued after Flosse resigned as president in February 1987. Those goals continued after Leontieff bolted from Flosse's party in November 1987, forced Flosse's successor and loyal supporter Jacques Teuira to resign, and formed his own government, which lasted three years and four months before being defeated at the polls on March 17. Thus, all that has changed over the past nine years has been the deadline for achieving 4000 hotel rooms and 200,000 tourists yearly in four to five years.

When reminded of that history, Flosse smiled and nodded his head affirmatively during an interview on May 16 with *Pacific Islands Monthly*. "We've come up with so many figures," he said. "I don't have any figures to give you." He later agreed that 1500 quality rooms are

needed, although he did not fix a deadline.

He said the Government had been meeting with investors who had been told that, regardless of previous delays in government authorisations or any lack of push by the Leontieff government to realise tourism development projects, the Flosse government is ready to move quickly. One of the first things that will be done, he said, will be to improve Tahiti's Investment Code — without increased government financial aid but still assuring investors exactly how much government aid they will get.

Flosse claimed that under the Leontieff government investors were promised aid of up to 30 per cent of their investment,

owner, Japanese investor Harunori Takahashi, the head of EIE International and the biggest Japanese hotel owner in the Territory.

Next on Flosse's list was the \$6-million renovation of the 200-room Hyatt Regency Tahiti. The new Hyatt, also a Takahashi property, is destined to be Tahiti's most deluxe hotel.

Massimo Ianni, Hyatt's general manager, later confirmed that 75 renovated rooms, including the chain's Regency Club, will be inaugurated on July 1. Another 25 renovated rooms will be ready by September 1, with the final 100 ready by the end of this year, Ianni said. Work also will begin in mid-June, one to two months behind schedule, on the Territory's first theme park recreation area opposite the hotel entrance. Spread over 43,057 square feet of land, it will be a sort of Fantasy Island on land overlooking the ocean. Completion date is by next January 1.

A third Takahashi-owned hotel, the 150-room Moorea Beachcomber Parkroyal, will finish most of a \$11-million renovation and upgrade by mid-July.

The most controversial project on Flosse's list is a \$100-million, 250-room Sheraton Hotel and 18-hole golf course next to Oponohu Bay on Tahiti's sister island of Moorea. This project was first proposed in December 1988 by Mitsuhiro Nishikawa, president of JIN Architectural Planners, Inc., of Tokyo, and president and board chairman of DOH Company, Ltd., of Tokyo. Nishikawa apparently received the necessary authorisations from the Leontieff government last year, but work has been delayed by citizens groups on Moorea opposing the golf course planned for agricultural land leased from the Territorial Government.

Flosse said he had already met separ-

The optimistic goals of doubling hotel capacity are the same as 1982

only to discover after final decisions that the amount was 12-15 per cent. "I don't think things should be promised that aren't kept," Flosse said. He said Investment Code improvements would be presented to the Territorial Assembly for approval by the end of May or early June.

Listing his priorities for hotel development, Flosse first mentioned a two-phase, \$30-million expansion project to convert the 202-room Tahiti Beachcomber Parkroyal into a 322-room hotel in 18 months, making it the second largest hotel in the Territory after the 350-room Club Mediterranee village on Moorea. Tahiti Beachcomber General Manager Philippe Brovelli later confirmed that this 120-room expansion project would start when the green light came from the

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Gaston Flosse: taking on tourism and airline transport himself

ately with Nishikawa and some of the opposition groups at his presidential offices, and he and government members planned to go to Moorea on May 30 to "regulate this problem" so work could start.

Flosse's verbal list did not include an even more controversial Japanese project — Advance Pacific Developments' proposal for a \$1-billion tourist resort community with about 2000 rentable hotel, condominium and villa rooms, and a shopping centre on the privately-owned atoll of Tupai, eight miles north-northwest of Bora Bora. It would be the Territory's first self-contained public tourist resort community attracting a potential 160,000 tourists yearly with only a 75 per cent room occupancy rate.

This has been indefinitely delayed due to opposition from citizens groups on Bora Bora. A court order was needed last year to evict squatters protesting the project on the atoll, nearly all of which is reportedly owned by Marcel Lejeune, one of Tahiti's first "notaires", or solicitors.

Another delayed project is a \$10-million championship golf course next to the airport on Moorea, planned by California-based Bali Hai Corp., which owns three hotels and operates a fourth in French Polynesia. The Corp. announced last August plans to build the golf course, renovate the 63-room Moorea Bali Hai and reopen the 44-room Hotel Bali Hai on Huahine, which closed in November 1988 due to a labor dispute. Those plans were to be financed by new capital raised through American investors in the Bali Hai Corp.

But additional negotiations with potential Japanese investors since 1989 have yet to produce an agreement.

Flosse's verbal list of projects also included an \$80-million, 440-room Hotel Meridien for what is known as the Rivnac property in Tahiti's west coast Commune of Punaauia and a 2-300 room hotel by a Japanese group for the Tahiti Village property next to the Meridien site. Meridien is also reportedly looking for investment to finance the construction of individual hotels on the islands of Moorea and Bora Bora.

Several hotel renovation and other expansion projects also are under way. The biggest is a \$35-million, 150-room new Club Mediterranee village on Bora Bora.

Although Tahiti may end up with Sheraton and Meridien, it also needs more chains, such as Hilton and Marriot, so that competition will increase promotion, Flosse said. He also agreed that Tahiti would need to train more of its own people for hotel jobs. He said his Council of Ministers voted on May 15 to transfer an existing hotel training school to a new and bigger site with a capacity for 500 local students and 100 students from the South Pacific, but he also would look at training people overseas.

Besides hotel development, Flosse has been looking at increasing international airline service. He agrees that more hotels have to be built to attract more airlines, but he is attacking both problems simultaneously. He indicated a high priority was a US carrier serving Tahiti from the US mainland. Tahiti has not had such a carrier since Continental Airlines pulled out in October 1989 after

Looking for the right Mr Tourism

THE Tahiti Tourist Promotion Board, known locally by the French acronym of OPATTI, will be restructured to become more of a private than public structure, with control by the Territory because it will be using the Territory's money, according to Tahiti's president, Gaston Flosse.

He said the key to this restructuring was finding a Mr Tourism to be a general manager worthy of his title. "I'm looking for a real tourism professional who is going to think about the restructuring of OPATTI," Flosse said.

He said he thought he had found the right candidate in Tahiti, but was waiting for a response from the person's employer. If this does not work out, "we will look elsewhere," he said, adding that he would be prepared to hire a foreigner.

The first job of the Mr Tourism would be to reduce political involvement at the Tourist Board's Papeete headquarters. The restructured OPATTI would handle overseas promotion and representation, and no longer be concerned with having hostesses to deal with the public and handling maintenance of tourist sites. "A visitor's bureau can take care of that," Flosse said. □

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15. Prepare annual financial statements for audit and subsequent submission to the annual Intergovernmental Meeting.
16. Represent the Director of SPREP as required, on sub-committees of the annual meeting, and prepare any papers on financial matters dealt with by the Intergovernmental Meeting.
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THE REGION

Still trouble with tourism

TAHITI'S 30-year-old tourism development history has been highlighted by almost never enough hotel rooms, international airline seats, tourists and money for overseas promotion. And the Tahiti Tourist Board has been increasingly criticised by industry officials for being too politically oriented and not up to overseeing or guiding French Polynesia's biggest single private industry.

But a new problem has emerged in the past year — an "anti-progress" revolt among Tahitians, particularly in the outer islands, wanting to preserve the land for their children. They have organised several demonstrations against the building of big, new hotels and golf courses by foreign, particularly Japanese, investors. The revolt has left potential investors and hotel developers wondering how serious Tahiti is about building up its industry, to help the French Overseas Territory improve its balance of payments.

But several tourist industry officials feel bigger hindrances are the economic impact

of France's 25-year-old nuclear testing program and French Government subsidies for Tahiti, and a job market dominated by the public sector, which pays higher wages than private sectors like the tourist industry.

Such officials argue that as long as this Territory of 200,000 people has a high gross national product of US\$7,830 per inhabitant, thanks mainly to Tahiti's economic dependence on France, there is less incentive to develop tourism.



Anti-tourism revolt: culture and land for tourists or the next generation?

Despite its struggling performances, Tahiti's tourism development history, which really began with the opening of its international airport in March 1961, has never lacked optimistic, even dream-like predictions for the future ranging from an underwater lagoon hotel, a gambling casino and 4-500 super deluxe hotels to an overall capacity of 4,000 hotel rooms and 200,000 tourists yearly.

Last year Tahiti had a volume of 132,361 tourists, its lowest since 1985 (122,086 tourists) and far behind its best year of 1986 (161,238 tourists). But 1991 is not expected to produce many more tourists than last year, mainly due to the Gulf war, the US recession, and financial hardships of international airlines.

Although Tahiti's previous four Territorial Governments since 1982 have each had a goal of ending up with 4000 hotel rooms and 200,000 tourists yearly within four to five years, Tahiti began 1991 with a hotel capacity of 2824 rooms, which is unlikely to increase much this year. One tourist industry official said only 1000 of those hotel rooms are good enough to be commercialised. Tahiti needs 1500 new, good rooms, particularly overwater bungalows on Bora Bora, to meet the demands of today's tourists, he said. □

operating two weekly flights from Los Angeles and Auckland for three years.

During the first four months of this year, Tahiti's international airline situation has been encouraging. On April 1 Qantas Airways restored the third weekly flight from Los Angeles and Sydney that it had cancelled in October 1989. Since last October, both Qantas and Air New Zealand (two weekly flights from LA and Auckland) have drastically reduced their number of transit passengers and increased their passenger loads of Tahiti-destination and stopover tourists.

Last year, Air New Zealand carried 21 per cent of all Tahiti's tourists, second only to UTA French Airline's 25 per cent share. With UTA having cancelled one of its three weekly flights from Paris and the US west coast on May 1 and with UTA and Air France (one weekly Paris LA-Tahiti flight) carrying more Europeans and fewer Americans, both Air New Zealand and Qantas should increase their overall shares of Tahiti's

tourists and particularly their American shares. Last year, UTA carried 30 per cent of the US tourists, Qantas carried 25 per cent, Air New Zealand carried 19 per cent and Air France carried 5 per cent, according to the Territorial Civil Aviation Department.

More good news for Tahiti was recently announced by Minerve. Starting July 1 it will operate a weekly regularly scheduled flight from Paris via Los Angeles and hopes to add a second in 1992. With Club Med now a major stockholder in Minerve, tourist industry officials expect to see Minerve take most of the Tahiti Club Med business away from UTA.

On the negative side, Flosse's attempt to get French approval for the French carrier Air Outre Mer to fly to Tahiti was recently vetoed in Paris — the French Government has the final say, illustrating one of the biggest obstacles in increasing Tahiti's international airline services.

Christian Vernaudeau, president and board chairman of Air Tahiti, the

Territory's inter-island carrier, and Tahiti Vacations, a Los Angeles-based tour operator, welcomed the Minerve developments because Club Med meant more stability for Tahiti's industry than an airline like Continental. Minerve's July 1 switch from San Francisco to Los Angeles would attract American tour operators, who found 80 per cent of Tahiti's American clients saw LA as the gateway to Tahiti.

Vernaudeau said if Tahiti stopover business develops as expected, the hotels would have much better occupancy rates for the fourth quarter of this year, leading to a potentially good tourist volume year in 1992.

Vernaudeau said there was no need for a second Tokyo-Tahiti flight because there were no more overwater bungalows on Bora Bora to fill. What is missing, he said, are another 1500 "good" hotel rooms — built in a relaxing, distinctly Polynesian style next to a nice lagoon, to top up the 1000 existing ones which could be commercialised. □

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ELECTIONS

Corruption claims in Western Samoa

By Ulafala Aiavao

ELECTION petitions have been filed against 11 Western Samoan members of Parliament who were elected in the country's general elections on April 5.

They allege that corrupt or illegal practices on behalf of the 11 MP's materially affected the result to the extent that the petitioners should have won instead.

Many of the allegations concern illegal distribution of food, drinks or money during a pre-election ban on such activity. Other claims are that some voters who cast ballots were not qualified to do so.

In one case, it is alleged that several hundred voter identity cards were collected and kept as an act of bribery, which interfered with the independence of voters. (All voters had to present an official identity card before they were issued with a ballot paper.)

More unusual allegations included claims that a small number of people cast votes in the names of other voters, who, on election day, were either dead or overseas. Hearings in the Supreme Court begin in mid-May, and take priority over other court business. □

New faces for FSM

ON May 11 Bailey Olter of Pohnpei was elected to be the third FSM President and Jacob Nena of Kosrae the fourth Vice President by the National Congress from among its four at-large members. Olter, 59, replaces John R. Haglegam of Yap who served one term beginning in 1987, after Olter, now FSM President. The 7th FSM Congress, meeting on the first day of its First Regular Session, also elected Jack Fritz of Chuuk to serve as its Speaker. □

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WORLDWIDE EXPRESS

Tabai top of the polls again

IEREMIA Tabai kept the pundits guessing last month when popular support returned him to parliament for the fourth time in a row. His re-election on May 8 most likely meant that he, as Kiribati's founding President, had chosen to remain in his resource-poor republic for the next four years at least. That may have dashed speculation he was seeking well-paid jobs in regional organisations available outside Kiribati. One popular belief was that Tabai was seeking to be the next secretary general of the Forum Secretariat, currently held by former Tuvalu Deputy Prime Minister Henry Naisali. Naisali's term expires at the end of the year and the job has been advertised. A candidate will be named at the Forum meeting in Ponape next month. In another interesting turn of events, the University of the South Pacific Council in Suva last month elected Tabai pro-chancellor and chairman, effective from the first of this month. He replaces Naisali who held the positions for two terms from 1985.

Tabai is also coming to the end of his reign as President, a position he has held since independence on July 12, 1979. Having served the maximum three terms allowed under the constitution, Tabai is expected to use his influence to push his friend Teatao Teannaki into the presidency when the presidential national election is held on July 3. Both were re-elected with ease and Tabai continues to

command majority support in parliament after last month's two rounds of general elections.

The number of registered voters increased by six per cent, indicating increased awareness of the importance of voting. The previous general elections in 1982 and 1987 recorded 70.3 per cent and 70 per cent respectively, total voters registered.

The election week (first round May 8) was highlighted by articles and an editorial in the Catholic monthly magazine *Te Itoi ni Kiribati*. The lead editorial suggested members of the Catholic church vote for a person of Catholic religion. The editor, Father Raymon Durrheimer, said this would be appropriate and right since there are more Catholic members than Protestants, in Kiribati. He bluntly criticised Tabai's government for not accepting funding application by one of the Catholic's institutes, calling for more shares for the Catholic mission.

The Secretary for Home Affairs and Decentralisation (who looks after religion), replied to the editorial over Radio Kiribati, expressing government feeling that it didn't want the Catholic magazine carrying misleading reports.

The former Minister for Education, Ataraoti Bwebwenibure and Tekinaiti Kaiteie, the former Minister for the Line and Phoenix groups, were both defeated, and 13 former MPs lost their seats. □



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Special
TOURISM REPORT

The year of the Big Deal

FIJI
TOURISM
CONVENTION



By Beryl Cook

THE South Pacific must start wheeling and dealing hard in the high-flying world of tourism, to keep hold of the wings of tourism. The economic downturn in major source countries for Pacific tourism and aggressive price-cutting overseas has forced us to accept that this year will be, without question, The Year of the Big Deal.

Fiji hotels (widely accepted as tourism leaders for the South Pacific) are already feeling the pinch, with occupancy rates as low as 18 per cent in recent months. Fiji Hotels Association (FHA) chief executive Kevin Mutton made it clear the worst is yet to come, when he advised the Government at the May Economic Summit that the association had revised its earlier 5 per cent estimate for the 1991 downturn, to 30 per cent.

"The message is quite clear: 'We have to get off our bums and do something urgently or we will really be in trouble'," Mutton told *Pacific Islands Monthly*.

Individual hotels started dabbling in deals such as "Pay six nights and stay seven" months ago, and Air Pacific launched special fares such as \$10 per year of age for accompanying children flying from Australia. The special airfares brought hotel occupancy rates up during March, but they plunged once the fares stopped. The hotels have been keen to blame airfares, while Air Pacific has diplomatically declined from pointing out that our range of accommodation and meal prices are higher than competitors in Asia, Bali and Hawaii. Help from airlines throughout the region may be



Picture: TCSP

Cost-cutting competition: tourists want more than pretty smiles and swaying palms

limited — they have all been hard hit (see article on page 23) and Air Pacific has been granted fare rises of up to 15 per cent from May 15 on most international destinations to cover expected rising costs. (Australian and New Zealand fares were not expected to be affected.)

For now, a joint strategy has been adopted following an emergency meeting of Fiji's hoteliers, airline officials, the Society of Fiji Travel Agents and the Tourism Council of the South Pacific (TCSP) in Suva on May 15. Air Pacific has introduced a return airfare of \$499 from Australia (undercutting standard low-season economy fares by up to \$343), which is effective from June 7 until December (excluding school holidays ex-Sydney and Melbourne but not Brisbane) and available only with accommodation packages. Hotels have added "Pay five days stay seven" and "Pay 10 days, stay 14" to make up packages they say could save an Australian couple about 44 per cent. Whether this will be enough remains to be seen.

The region has the natural attractions and reputation, and key players such as the TCSP will be marketing this aggressively. According to TCSP director and chairman of the Fiji Tourism Convention Planning Committee, Malakai Gucake: "Emphasis will be on increasing the South Pacific's awareness of new markets, and adding emphasis to traditional markets."

Trade shows in the United States, Australia and London will be targeted.

Organisers of the Tourism Convention at the Sheraton from June 13-15 also have added marketing heavies to the list of speakers, including European tourism industry economist and marketing consultant Esmond Devas, and Wilf Barker — Australian Marketing Man of the Year 1985, former marketing director for Australia's Nine and TEN networks, and former chairman of the Federation of Australian Television Stations, the Australian Media Council, and the Advertising Industry Association.

Sales and Marketing Director for The Fiji Visitors Bureau, Bill Whiting, also

Special TOURISM REPORT

believes it is time to face the harsh realities of the challenges ahead.

No-one was likely to be lulled by the record results for 1990, he said. (The number of visitors reached a record 278,996 — an 11 per cent increase from 1989 to 1990; and gross earnings from tourism had been estimated provisionally at a record \$335.9 million — compared with \$295.5 million in 1989).

Whiting said the biggest challenge for Fiji (and therefore the region) would be the Australian market.

"The situation there right now is the most competitive, the most difficult that we've faced for many many years. The recession is tough, the competition is tough," Whiting said. "We've got a good product and they're still interested in it. But everybody there is asking 'What's the deal to Fiji? What's the fare?', because the whole market is being motivated by deals. Whether you want to go to Melbourne or London and return, it's all got a special deal attached to it. The whole market is deal-orientated and we have to be conscious of that."

Whiting said overall performance for the next 12 months would be affected by the Australian crisis, and "how long we see this crazy pricing going on"

Airline deals could be crucial.

"Some of those airlines must be really hurting, having to live with higher fuel prices, but they are offering incredible deals. I think we can compete with what is being offered in Australia, but a lot depends on how the airlines handle their fare structures," Whiting said.

The South Pacific is facing the recession in Australia, increased domestic competition in Australia through deregulation of internal airlines, and competitive pricing by Australian resorts.

"On top of that, in terms of (Australian) outbound tourists, we have an excess of capacity on the Australia/United States route," Whiting said. "You have the northwest coming on soon with another four to five flights a week, so there is stiff competition."

"Similarly, Bali in the last year or 18 months have added about 8000 hotel rooms and you have competitive price marketing there."

Hawaii, Bali and Thailand are cost-cutting e.g. Hawaii offered return fare and five nights accommodation for \$799.

Whiting said Fiji depended on Australia for about 36 per cent of its visitors, but Australians stay longer so they represent about 47 per cent of Fiji's tourism income.

"If we have a problem in Australia, Fiji tourism has a problem," he said. "We have to be competitive, we have to be able to hang in there, we have to accept that for some months we may have to live with lower yields from that market until it recovers, and until we decrease our dependence on that market. What deals we can offer will directly affect how well we do."

Other markets

Whiting said the Bureau would look at new markets and expanding existing ones, while ensuring not too much ground was lost with Australia.

The US market held up better last year than the Bureau expected, and enormous potential had been identified in the United Kingdom and Europe.

"Our UK/Europe arrivals last year were in excess of 40,000. We have to work on developing those markets. We haven't done much on them in the past and one of our targets from the Bureau's point of view is to put more effort into increasing the business there, and decreasing our dependence on the short haul market from Australia."

New Zealand: The Bureau is expecting about the same from New Zealand as 1990, despite a tough economic climate.

Canada: Despite the fact Canadian Airlines is no longer servicing the route, the Bureau views the airline's seat share arrangement with Qantas as evidence of

its commitment to Fiji. The Bureau also is finalising a 12 month-marketing program with them, and has just opened an office there. Despite economic problems, (Canada was introducing a General Sales Tax on January 1), Canada should perform reasonably well in the next 12 months.

United States: Americans have slowly started travelling again after the Gulf crisis, but the impact is hard to read.

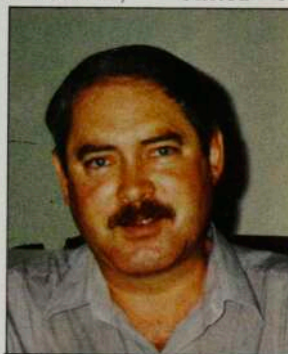
Australia in particular is pitching hard in North America, so the Bureau is maximising marketing there by linking Fiji to Australia and New Zealand with a campaign theme: 'On his way to Australia, God created Fiji.'

"If we can market Fiji as an essential part of a visit to the South Pacific we stand to grow," Whiting said.

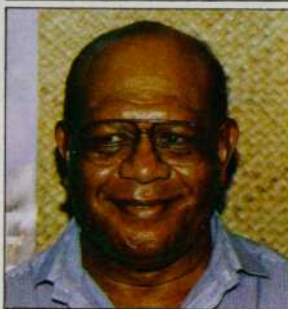
Europe: Considered extremely promising. The unification of Germany increased the potential market for three or four years time. Scandinavia and the United Kingdom are sources, and Switzerland and Italy are growing. The Bureau

would like air links improved, but the potential is promising. Joint marketing with Australia and New Zealand is being used, and the Bureau is also using Tourism Council of the South Pacific representatives in London and Munich for Europe and the United Kingdom. Between them they cover all of Europe.

Japan: Air Pacific started its second service on April 25, and the Bureau is expecting significant growth despite a slow start. Whiting said possible air links with Taiwan and South Korea represented medium-term potential. □



Mutton: worse to come



Gucake: push for marketing

Ecotourism on the horizon

THE introduction of an environmental aspect to the 1991 Fiji Tourism Convention reflects this year's theme, The New Horizon.

Tourism bodies are being asked to adjust the extent of their vision; to look beyond short-term considerations and

plan ahead to protect natural resources for the future.

The director of the Tourism Council of the South Pacific, Malakai Gucake, said one of the key speakers at this year's convention would be vice-president of Science and Education for The Cousteau Society, Dr Richard C. Murphy.

The invitation to Dr Murphy was a move by the convention committee to lift the profile of environmental considerations in tourism.

Gucake said the industry had to develop an understanding of how protec-

tion of the environment now was protection of a long-term tourism industry.

Fiji was renowned for its natural attractions, and the demand for these was increasing, he said. But many locals still did not seem to be aware of the need to protect the environment, and many investors did not seem to understand the importance of it.

"It is crucial to a long-term industry. If we do not take care of our environment, our natural attractions, then we simply will not have an industry. If we want a future in tourism it is the respon-

Special TOURISM REPORT



Picture: Blue Lagoon Cruises

Fragile environment: the rise of "ecotourism" is part of a push to protect natural resources such as the reef. Their protection will shape the future of the tourism industry.

sibility of each and every one of us to protect the environment," Gucake said.

The tourism industry needed to consider the impact of developments and activities such as diving, but locals also needed to change their thinking.

"We live in these islands, we are brought up in these islands, and we ought to know how to look after them. Yet we may well be the biggest offenders at the moment when it comes to pollution on land and sea."

Gucake said tourism development eventually would become environmentally sensitive.

"The Lands Department is starting to move that way already. But that is not enough, we need to make everyone aware of the importance of the environment so they can plan ahead," he said.

Some of Fiji's geographic characteristics and the country's attitude to development could help avoid problems faced by some other countries.

"We do not have too much industrial development, and having no urgent need for immediate development is certainly an advantage," Gucake said.

"It is also an advantage that, although we do not have regulations regarding the height of buildings, there has been an unwritten law that no (tourism) structure will be higher than the tallest coconut tree. Investors are brought to understand through the Native Land Trust Board that nothing else will be accepted."

The size of Fiji is also an advantage.

"As small as we are (compared to

larger countries), we should be able to look after our fragile environment and ensure it survives," Gucake said.

The marketing director for The Fiji Visitors Bureau, Bill Whiting, said the industry was catching on to the notion of "ecotourism" which is popular overseas.

"Fiji has a heritage to protect here which is a valuable tourism asset. This is important particularly when people come from areas that have been very badly polluted and they're expecting an

unspoiled place," he said.

"People here are becoming very conscious of that, but we need to develop a wide perspective on the issue. It goes beyond being aware of the sea, land and air to introducing practices such as protection of rainforest.

"We also need to make sure our streets are clean and tidy. We need to make sure that buses, for example, aren't belching black fumes on the street — little things can really count as well." □

Opportunity for SP cruising

ADVENTURE cruise operators and smaller luxury class ships offered the best prospects for cruising in the South Pacific, according to a report into the potential of the cruise industry.

The report has just been released by former president and chief executive officer of Sitmar International and previously managing director of Sitmar Cruises Australasia Ted Blamey, in conjunction with Kyle and Associates of Los Angeles on commission from the Pacific Asia Travel Association.

Blamey said the cruise industry was a fast-growing sector of the leisure travel market, and the South Pacific had an important opportunity.

"But, given the long distances and high airfare costs involved in bringing passengers to the region, the greatest

prospects will be the adventure cruise operators and the smaller luxury class ships," he said. "Both appeal to a market that is affluent, destination-driven and prepared to take vacations longer than the norm."

Blamey said the available infrastructure, tourist plant and airlines were more suited to their smaller passenger loads.

The report includes a detailed review of the world industry (past present and future); specific markets of interest to the SP (Japan, Europe and Australasia); potential market developments; adventure cruising; and discussion of requirements to support cruise operations in the South Pacific. It is available from PATA's Pacific Division in Sydney, phone 05612 3323599, fax 05612 3316592. □

Special TOURISM REPORT

Cultural cure for high-cost holidays

SMALL businesses have failed to cash in on the demand for cultural experiences — depriving themselves of profits, and hindering the industry's ability to offer attractive deals, according to a tourism leader.

A group of New Zealand tourism operators who visited Fiji recently told *Pacific Islands Monthly* that accommodation and meal costs were a turn-off for tourists.

"A lot of our clients would be happy to come back again because they love the people and the natural attractions of the area, but quite a few are more experienced travellers now and they're not so scared to travel a bit further from home — particularly when they see the packages offered by places like Bali and Hawaii," one of the agents said.

She said tourists seemed more unhappy about land content prices, than airfares.

"The price of accommodation is much higher than other places and some of our clients are amazed to see the effect the price of meals can have when they're added on to the bill. Some of them get a shock because they expect it to be a lush tropical land of plenty; then they're

amazed at things like the cost of a plate of fruit at the resorts," she said.

"The economic recession has put price high on their list of priorities, so when we explain the alternatives many of them decide to try somewhere a bit different that's a bit further from home, but costs the same or less."

Fiji Hotels Association chief executive, Kevin Mutton, said the high cost of some meals in resorts/hotels was linked to importing certain goods.

He said tourists could keep holiday costs down by ordering local food or, if they are staying close to a town, by catching a taxi to some of the local eating places. This also would be a cultural experience.

Mutton believes the local community has failed to cash in on this.

"We have recognised for quite some time that we need additional secondary tourism — local restaurants and activities outside the major hotels which cater

to people going out for the day," he said.

Only a few local entrepreneurs had attracted this kind of business, by developing the product and using expertise to promote it, Mutton said.

He said the Fiji Government could help local people gain direction, as they had when residents of Taveuni Island began their Tavoro Falls amenities project. (The \$60,000 New Zealand government-funded project is a seven kilometre track covering 2000 hectares of Bauma Forest Park with its waterfalls and pools.)

"There is a definite need for more cultural experiences, eating experiences and sale of quality souvenir items — handicrafts, jewellery and clothes. There are almost 300,000 tourists coming in and I suspect a lot are leaving with money in their pockets," he said.

Growing markets such as Japan, North America and Europe also expect activities away from the beach.

"These people come a long way and they want to see and do as much as they can. A lot of them don't just want to lie on the beach. The average Japanese after a few days looks for something else, unless



Picture: The Regent

Culture: Tourists expect more than an expensive room at a resort where the only activity is lying on the beach. The Regent, right, makes use of Fiji's rich local culture by incorporating traditional story-telling into its entertainment line-up.



PACIFIC ISLANDS MONTHLY JUNE 1991 51



Pacifically Speaking

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Special TOURISM REPORT

he or she has a special interest like diving," Mutton said.

He stressed the development of centres such as the Pacific Harbour Cultural Centre, for both tourists and locals.

"If you think of eliminating local people from what happens in tourism, you develop an anti-tourism backlash. But if you do things the right way everyone can benefit. Thailand and Hong Kong are good examples — some of the best facilities which Hong Kong has are used by locals and visitors, for example the funicular (pulley) railway, harbour ferries, food and beverage facilities in hotels," he said.

"The first two are examples of infrastructure built for local people that is being exploited by tourists who want a bit of local character. The second is an example of how, as the industry has developed, it has generated more sophisticated facilities."

Mutton said the industry needed to recognise that the community is part of the industry.

"We need to involve ourselves to a larger extent. Some of the best tourism facilities start out as part of the service industry around towns needing facilities for locals. There's a small amount of that happening but, if Fiji is going to develop its industry to its full potential, we need to see a lot more of that local involvement." □

Niue looking for Fiji link

NIUE has negotiated landing rights in Fiji although no date has been set for start of services. It will be a freight run as much as a passenger run, to allow Niue to sell to and buy goods from a market other than New Zealand.

Regular flights out of Fiji also would allow tourists to include a few days on the island in their itineraries. Niue Airlines (NA) is promoting a tourism package marketing the island as a place where visitors can fish for game species from the cliff-tops.

The Auckland-based airline began flying to Niue last year with a Solomons Airlines Boeing 737 during the aircraft's weekly layover in Auckland. Now it has switched to leasing with Air Nauru, which has three 737-200 jets and is planning an upgrade to Boeing 737-400s.

The government's Hotel Niue was due to reopen on June 1 after post-cyclone repairs. NA heads a consortium which has just received permission to build a 34-double unit hotel with a kitchen for preparing in-flight meals. The airline hopes the hotel will open by Christmas, but March is a more likely date. □



Air Vanuatu: island carriers need to tap the Asian market

Island airlines' new task

By Robin Bromby

THE tourism goals set by island nations for the next decade have given regional airlines a whole new challenge. If the 1980s was the decade in which viable and locally owned carriers emerged, then the 1990s will require them to look beyond offering basic services to home airports.

Tourism will only grow with an airline network which allows holidaymakers to fly from Taipei, Singapore or Bangkok direct to an island, then move around the region relatively easily. Australia and New Zealand, the main foreign destinations for carriers such as Polynesian, Niue Airlines, Air Vanuatu, Solomon Airlines and Air Niugini, will not provide the sheer numbers of tourists especially given the economic recessions there. Asia and North America are the keys.

The Solomon Islands wants to treble its visitor numbers by the year 2000 (see page 45). Western Samoa is preparing a new tourism industry plan. By mid-next year even Niue will have two hotels and need to lure the visitors. Papua New Guinea desperately wants to get a visitor industry going. And Fiji, dependent on the industry, needs new sources of tourists to maintain economic growth.

The competition is hot. For long-haul travellers from North America and Asia, there is Honolulu, Australia, New Zealand and Micronesia. And those destinations all have one key ingredient: well-developed airline links with cities around the Pacific rim.

Honolulu is the hub of the North Pacific with enormous seat capacity from

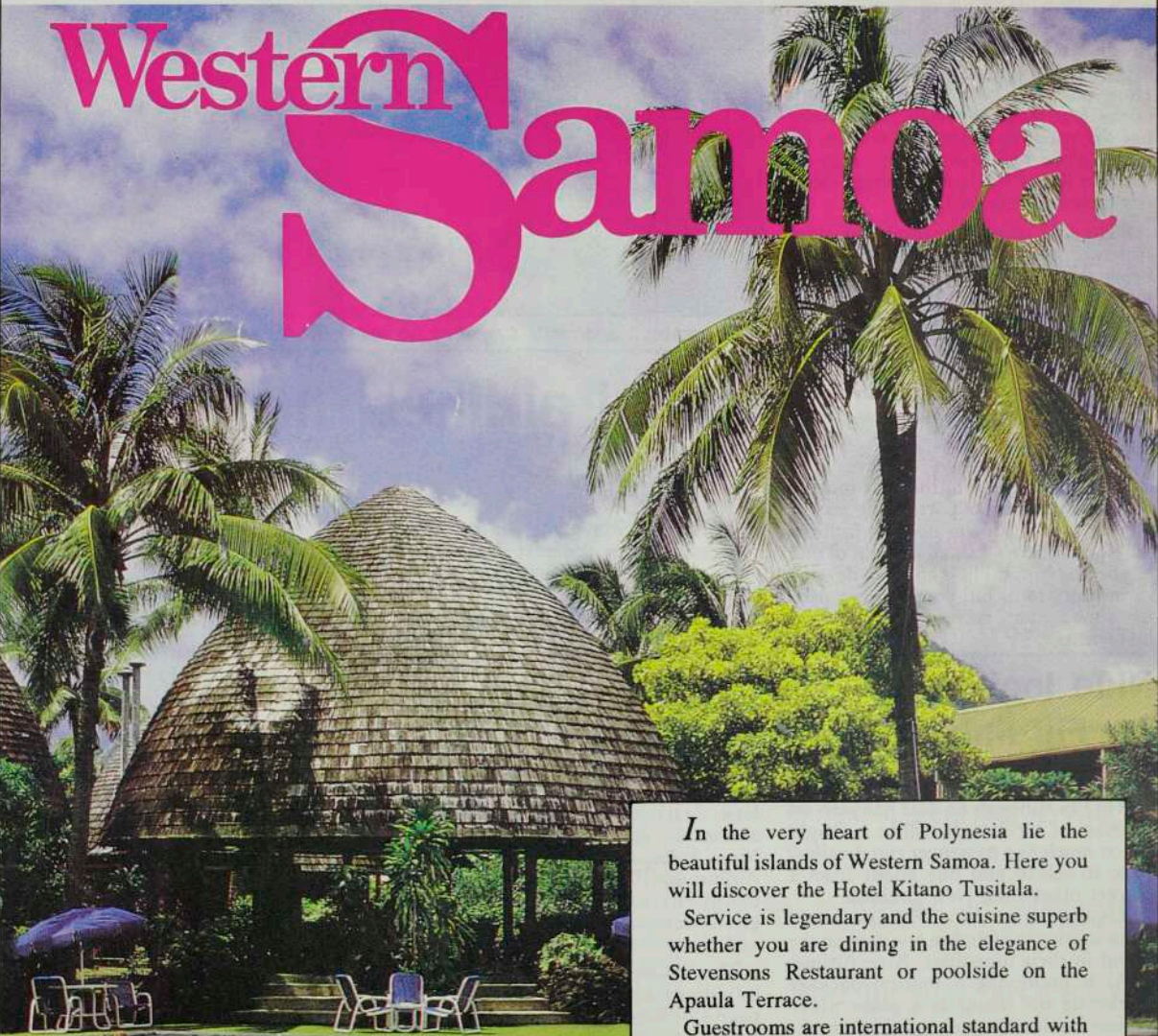
Japan and the United States. Even Micronesia now has services out of Japanese and South Korean cities (with links to Taipei growing). Australia and New Zealand have national carriers which can promote them internationally.

The great progress in the South Pacific during the 1980s was the lessening of dependence on outsiders, as evidenced when Canadian Airlines withdrew its South Pacific services. It maintained that routes to Auckland and Sydney via Nadi could be served by Qantas and Air New Zealand linking with its attenuated network at Honolulu. But some points are worth making.

First, Canadian Airlines was one of a handful of air services providing Fiji with a direct link with North America, and Fiji's tourism interests were presumably not a major factor when the airline considered the future of its South Pacific services. Second, Canadian no longer has a vested interest in promoting Fiji as a destination. Air New Zealand and Qantas, while providing services through Fiji from various North American cities, will advertise their home countries with more diligence.

It is not easy for the smaller airlines to provide substitute long-haul services. Fiji's Air Pacific badly burned its fingers with its service to Hawaii, Kiribati's Air Tungara has generated its own long-running saga seeking a service to Hawaii with a leased Boeing 727, while Air Nauru ate up huge sums of phosphate revenue before opting out of several routes, including that to Hong Kong.

The director of the Tourism Council of the South Pacific (TCSP), Malakai Gucake, said it was not the same when





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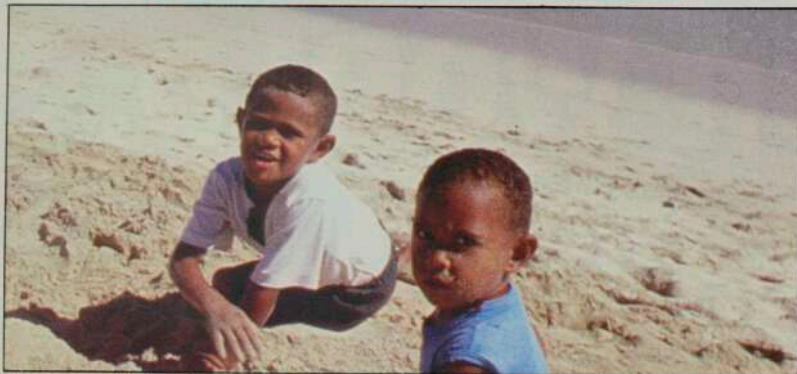
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Special TOURISM REPORT



Children at Natadola: a coastal park is likely to precede development

'Biggies' on the backburner

MOST of Fiji's multi-million dollar developments are simmering on the backburner, waiting for finance which is scarce in the current international recession.

Government approval has been received for the \$400 million development for Vulani Island, north of Nadi, but developers Cobwebb and Company of Australia still are organising finance. They plan four hotels, two marinas, a 27-hole golf course, a commercial centre and condominiums built over nine years. Stage one would take four years and cover infrastructure, two hotels, the golf course and commercial centre.

The developers of Nasoso Island, next to Vulani, are still organising finance for the six hotels, two golf courses and commercial centre. Investors include several locals and a United States partner, with finance being sought offshore. Preliminary feasibility work has

been positive but no other progress has been made. There is talk of linking Vulani and Nasoso, and a monorail joining the islands to the airport.

The Saweni Resort development outside Lautoka has been just a half a fence since 1987 — even the signboard has fallen down — but an announcement is expected soon about the start of the three luxury hotels of 1030 rooms, 376 villas and townhouses, marina, oceanarium, golf course and commercial complex.

Fiji Resorts plans to start building a 300-room international class Shangri-La hotel and golf course at Natadola, on the south-west coast, as soon as negotiations with the Government are completed. The project requires extensive public infrastructure, and release of the Department of Town and Country Planning's development plan for the Natadola area, which is likely to recommend a coastal park with environmentally-sensitive facilities. □

a country relied on foreign airlines. Much of the traffic which Canadian was generating from Europe and Canada will not be replaced, although the TCSP realised that airlines now had to make tough commercial decisions.

Fiji has tried unsuccessfully to interest one of the US carriers (Continental, American and United) flying to Australia in calling at Nadi, and the absence of a US carrier from Nadi remains a major gap. The Fiji Government is being asked to exert influence, but the US carriers are all up against the financial wall and will offer no favours. Long-haul fares are the key to international operations and the new generation of aircraft make it possible to fly across the Pacific without intermediate refuelling points — a role which once favoured Pago Pago, Papeete, Nadi and even places such as Canton Island.

South Pacific transport links run by

outsiders have almost always been tailored to operators rather than Pacific clients. Route networks connect various islands with the major Pacific rim destinations, but rarely with each other (Hawaiian Airline's services are one exception although its use of DC-8s on some island routes means limited seat capacity).

It has been a struggle for the region's own carriers but the TCSP's Gucake is pleased at the progress. Air Niugini has its own wide-bodied aircraft and has expanded its network out to Auckland at one end, Singapore at the other. Polynesian (Western Samoa), Air Vanuatu, Solomon Airlines, Niue Airlines, Air Marshall Islands all survived the intensity of birth pangs. While there is still much to be done, these carriers have improved services around the South Pacific beyond what anyone hoped for back in the 1970s.

Stronger links with Japan

THE Fiji Hotels Association (FHA) has introduced weekly language lessons to the industry in Nadi, through a Japan Overseas Cooperation Volunteer, Keiko Mizuno. Mizuno, from Gifu in Japan, teaches Japanese at the School of Hotel and Catering in Suva and through the University of the South Pacific. She translated editorial for the Fiji Focus lift-out in 2000 special copies of *Pacific Islands Monthly* which are being transported to Japan by Air Pacific and distributed by the Fiji Visitors Bureau.

Air Pacific launched a television campaign in Japan to back up its second weekly Tokyo/Nadi flight which started on April 25. The biggest sponsor so far has been Air Terminal Services with \$150,000. The Fiji Visitors Bureau contributed \$100,000 to the campaign, and brought 100 Japanese travel agents to Fiji for five days last month. □



Mizuno: breaking the language barrier

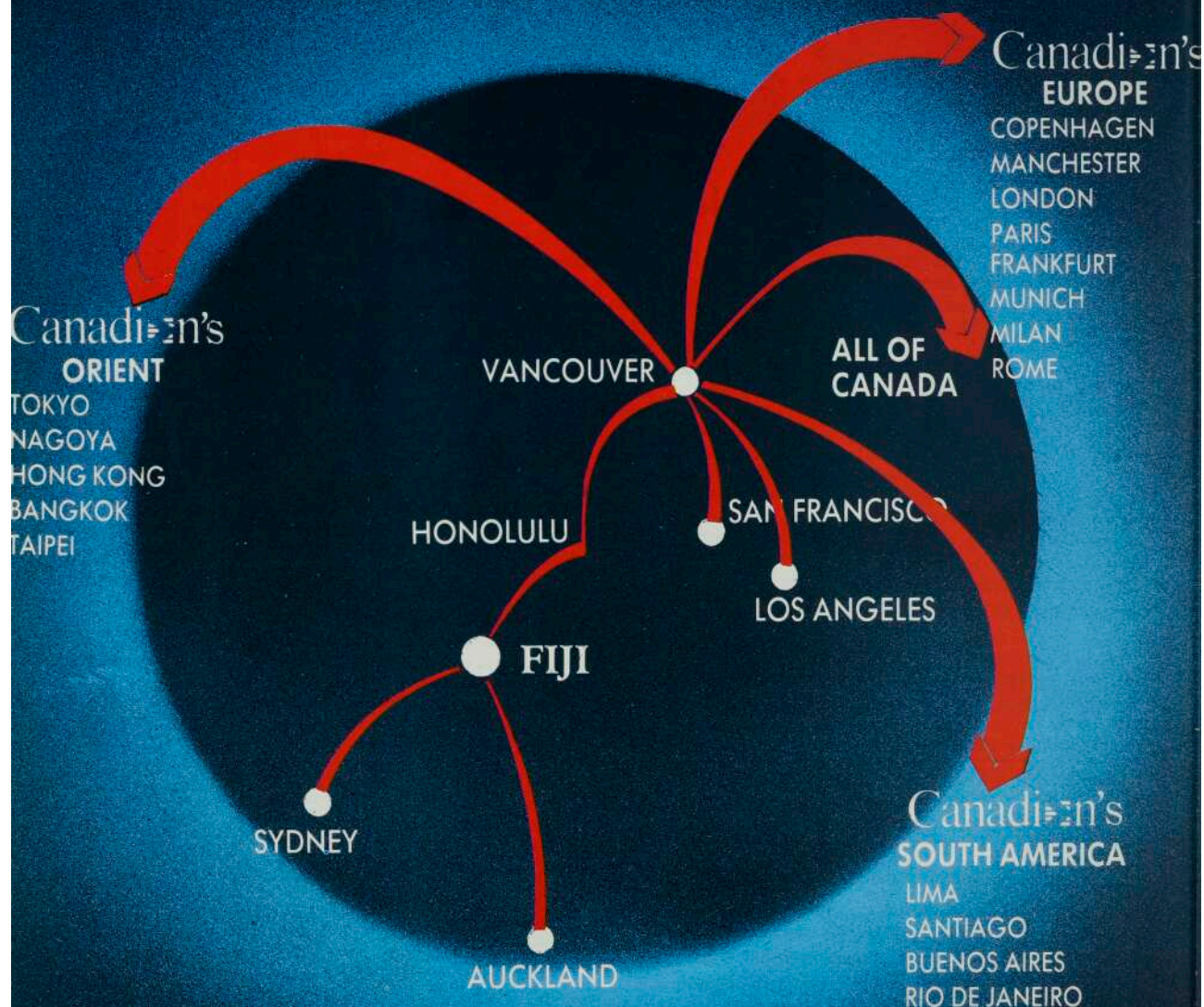
Now they need to turn to Asia.

Air Pacific has just launched its second weekly service to Tokyo, and Micronesia is well served from northern Asia. Rumours still are emanating from within Air New Zealand that it is on the verge of signing an agreement with China Airlines, Eva Airlines, and both governments for Auckland New Zealand/Nadi Fiji flights. And the Fiji Cabinet agreed on May 14 to seek a bilateral air service agreement with Hong Kong before 1997.

It is unlikely, though, that carriers such as Korean, Singapore, Garuda and Thai International will be interested in any significant expansion through the South Pacific. They have more important fish to fry.

It will remain the island carriers' task to find a way to tap these Asian markets for the sheer numbers of tourists needed to give the South Pacific a jolt. It will not be easy, but they have demonstrated they can take on a huge challenge. □

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Hawaiian Airlines: a stormy 11-minutes on US television's *Sixty Minutes* dealt the Pacific a sock in the jaw

Settling our fate from afar

By David North

ON Sunday morning, April 28, Pacific Island tourism got a healthy boost — the cover story and page after page of glowing accounts of Fiji in the *New York Times* travel section; on Sundays the prestigious *Times* has more than 1.7 million readers, many affluent enough to come to the Pacific.

On Sunday evening, April 28, Pacific Island tourism got a sock in the jaw — an 11-minute attack on the safety standards of Hawaiian Airlines on *Sixty Minutes*, one of America's most-watched television programs (with no mention of Hawaiian Airlines' remarkable, 61-year-long record of avoiding serious accidents.)

Months earlier, a series of decisions made in Baghdad, Washington, and Tokyo substantially reduced the flow of Japanese tourists, particularly into Saipan, Guam, and Hawaii. First Saddam Hussein decided to invade Kuwait (sending aviation fuel prices soaring), then George Bush decided to strike back (creating a fear of aviation terrorism in many potential tourists), and finally a number of faceless Japanese executives decided it would not be politic for their companies to fund vacations for their employees in American Flag resorts — it would not look right for Japanese to be partying while the US fought the Gulf war.

What pulls these seemingly unrelated matters together is that in each case a distant decision — by a nation's leader, an editor, or a TV producer — a decision

totally beyond the control of the Pacific islands tourist industry, had a major impact on island tourism. It is a grim reminder of the limited ability of the islands to manage the flow of tourists.

There are four major flows of tourists to the Pacific Islands — Australians and New Zealanders, Japanese, North Americans and Europeans. With the exception of the minority who come on cruise ships they are all air-borne, and the relative ease, the relative cost, and the perceived safety of air travel play big roles in determining how many will visit.

At times distant decision-makers have moved, usually quite indirectly and often not deliberately, to affect air travel to the islands from two major potential markets, North America and Japan.

A fundamental (but hidden) set of decisions relates not to tourism directly, but to how nations handle their airlines. In most of the world airlines operate something like cartels, with little internal competition and sturdy finances. This is certainly the case in Asia, and is only a little less true in Australia and New Zealand. In the US and Canada, however, there are many airlines, and all have been operating for the last dozen years or so under "deregulation", a sort of near pure, dog-eat-dog form of capitalism in which weaker airlines are

pushed into serious financial troubles, and weakest (like America's once mighty Eastern Airlines) simply die.

So there is an anomaly, one of the largest group of potential tourists to the South Pacific (the North Americans) must arrive on the weaker or "deregulated" airlines, while the smaller populations of potential tourists from Japan, Australia, and New Zealand can travel on the financially sturdier, cartelised carriers. (The individual tourists may pay higher fares on these airlines than they do on the North American lines, but that is another consideration.)

The Pacific islands, to make matters worse, have attracted the very weakest of American carriers (financially speaking). Pan American, now in bankruptcy, sold its lines in the Pacific to United several years ago — and United has opted to fly over the islands on its way to what it regards as better markets in Australia and New Zealand. Pan American once served both Fiji and Guam, for example, but United chose not to follow suit.

Similarly Continental, sister line to the late Eastern, and now in dire financial trouble itself, expanded into the Pacific several years ago. It continues to serve Hawaii and Guam, and through its subsidiary Air Micronesia, most of what had been the Trust Territories, but it ended its service to Fiji several years ago.

Hawaiian Airlines, too, is a deregulated carrier in financial trouble, and the *Sixty Minutes* attack threatened its ability to continue to serve the islands, and certainly any potential expansion. Hawaiian's hub, or principal terminus, is Honolulu. Its major role in life is to move passengers among the Hawaiian chain, but it also brings tourists to Hawaii from Los Angeles, Seattle and Las Vegas. Further, it has a monopoly on the Honolulu Pagopago run, and from the



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latter base it also serves Western Samoa and Tonga. Another route is Honolulu-Papeete-Rarotonga.

Until about a year ago, Hawaii Airlines was thinking of moving into the Honolulu-Nadi run; had it done so, it would have filled a gap — that of a North America-based airline flying that run. Pan-Am had served that route, Continental dropped out about three years ago, and, in April, Canadian Pacific did the same. Qantas and Air New Zealand fly from the US (via Honolulu) to Fiji. (Air Tungara has confirmed plans to inaugurate a route linking Honolulu, Christmas Island and Tarawa in Kiribati, and Nadi Fiji from May 23.)

If any one or two of the four since departed airlines were still active on the Honolulu-Nadi route it would not only bring more tourists to Fiji, it would help other nations as well. As Donald Panza, regional manager for Fiji's Pacific Air in Los Angeles put it, "the typical South Pacific tourist is multidestinational — he wants to see more than one country."

Further, all four of these lines have or had active networks of local agents, terminals, and advertising programs in North America — much more so than Qantas and Air New Zealand — all capable of helping promote Pacific islands tourism.

But the *Sixty Minutes* producers were not thinking of the interests of Pacific Island tourism when they decided to rip into the Hawaiian Airlines' safety record. They had what they thought was a good expose, and they aired it.

Ed Bradley, a familiar television face and voice, and wheelhorse for this program, opened by speaking of the various promotions, such as frequent flyer programs, now being offered by US airlines, and then got to his point.

"...the question persists, if they're giving away all this free service are they cutting back on maintenance to pay for it? The airlines say no. They brag about how well they maintain their planes."

"Hawaiian Airlines, however, would have a tough time bragging about how it maintained its planes."

Bradley then said that two American government agencies had "blackballed" Hawaiian Airlines last year — the Defence Department, regarding flying troops, and the General Service Administration, regarding flights by civil servants.

He then did on-camera interviews with a retired Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) supervising inspector, and a former Hawaiian Airlines mechanic. The mechanic (now an employee of Hawaiian's arch-rival, Aloha Airways, a factor not mentioned on the air) said that he had found a defective part of a landing gear, and his supervisor had told him to

Harder to get there than before

IT'S hard to get people to the islands. "And it is harder now than it used to be," according to Mary Peters, an experienced American travel agent.

Ms Peters, whose Washington-area firm, Friendly Travel, concentrates on overseas bookings, ticked off a number of highly specific problems when I raised the question of air travel from the East Coast of the US to the Pacific Islands.

"First, there is the question of frequency of flights; if something goes wrong out there, your client probably has to wait a whole day, or maybe two days, before continuing his travel."

"Then there is the question of time zones and schedule changes, something you find out half-way through the client's trip, that there has been a change that will screw up all the rest of the legs of the trip. And, the way the schedules are set, you usually have to spend the night in a (Honolulu) hotel halfway there."

"Finally, we do not have direct access to many of the island airlines' reservation data, and we can not be sure whether we really have a seat or not."

The last reference is to the computer system which is the heart of every travel agent's life. Ms Peters uses the United Airlines system, to which most American airlines are connected.

As we talked over the phone she worked on an itinerary I had taken a couple of years ago, flying Canadian Pacific from Washington to overnight in Toronto, then to Honolulu and Fiji. My question was, could this still be done, since Canadian Pacific had left Nadi?

The basic computer system, to which the airlines concerned were not connected, seemed to indicate that I could fly Toronto-Vancouver-Honolulu-Nadi. But it did not indicate that I would have to get off the Canadian airline in Honolulu and transfer to either Qantas or Air New Zealand. It showed there was one stop between Vancouver and Nadi, but it would not tell us where that stop was, or when it landed and took off.

ignore it, just change the tyre. The incident was reported to FAA which took its time to check on it and the aircraft, according to Bradley, flew for several months with the questionable part.

Bradley also noted that both the airline and the Department of Defence, which had barred the use of the airline for troop movements, had refused to be interviewed on camera by *Sixty Minutes*, knowing, I suspect, that this is usually a pretty brutal process.

According to Hawaiian Airlines, what

She said that the difficulty in booking space sometimes suggested that more flights might be in order. She used the computer to check out availability of Qantas and Air New Zealand flights to Fiji on several days in mid-June — not routinely a high traffic season — and found on several flights that no economy seats were available, and on others the lowest fares were all gone. (These flights might have been heavily booked because of the International Lions Convention in Brisbane about then.) The Fiji Embassy in Washington told me earlier that one often had to book a month in advance, during the northern winter, to get an economy seat.

Ms Peters and I talked about Guam, which for decades was served by Pan-Am and was used as a hub to send people off to other islands. "But now it is hard to get there directly," she said.

She returned to her computer and showed me that its immediate reaction to a client wanting to go to Guam was to suggest a flight via Norita (in Japan). This is out of the way geographically and involves a five-hour layover there. Upon closer examination the computer reluctantly admitted that there is a Continental flight to Guam out of Honolulu at 1 pm every day, but no flight from the East Coast of the US arrives early enough in Hawaii to connect.

We did not get into the greater difficulties of arranging flights to Kiribati, Tonga and the Cooks from the East Coast, but she did mention that three airlines (Qantas, Air New Zealand, and Air France) offer several non-stop, eight-hour flights from Los Angeles or San Francisco to Papeete.

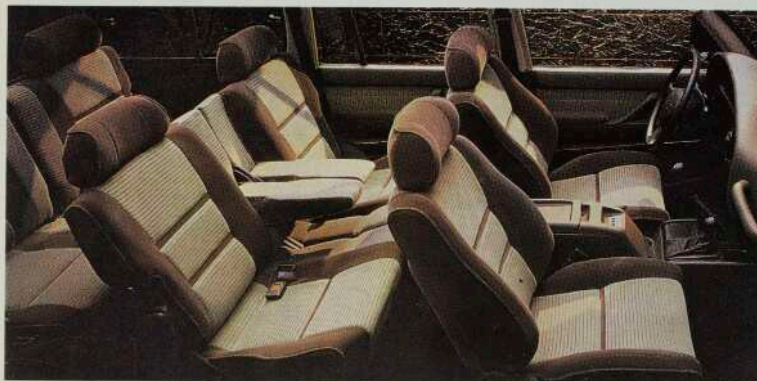
The other opportunity was a surprise — on Sundays and Fridays a Lanchile 707 takes off from Santiago and flies to Easter Island, refuels, goes on the Papeete, then returns to Chile. From Papeete, the traveller can use Air France connections which serve Boro Boro, and Noumea in New Caledonia. □

Sixty Minutes did not mention were the following:

- The mechanic, Tom Sealy was with HA only briefly and was talking about an event more than three years ago;
- Since then the airline has come under new management (John Ueberroth is the CEO), and new policies;
- That it spends close to \$100 million a year on maintenance;
- That the Defence Department has long since reversed its position on the safety of the airline, and has awarded the



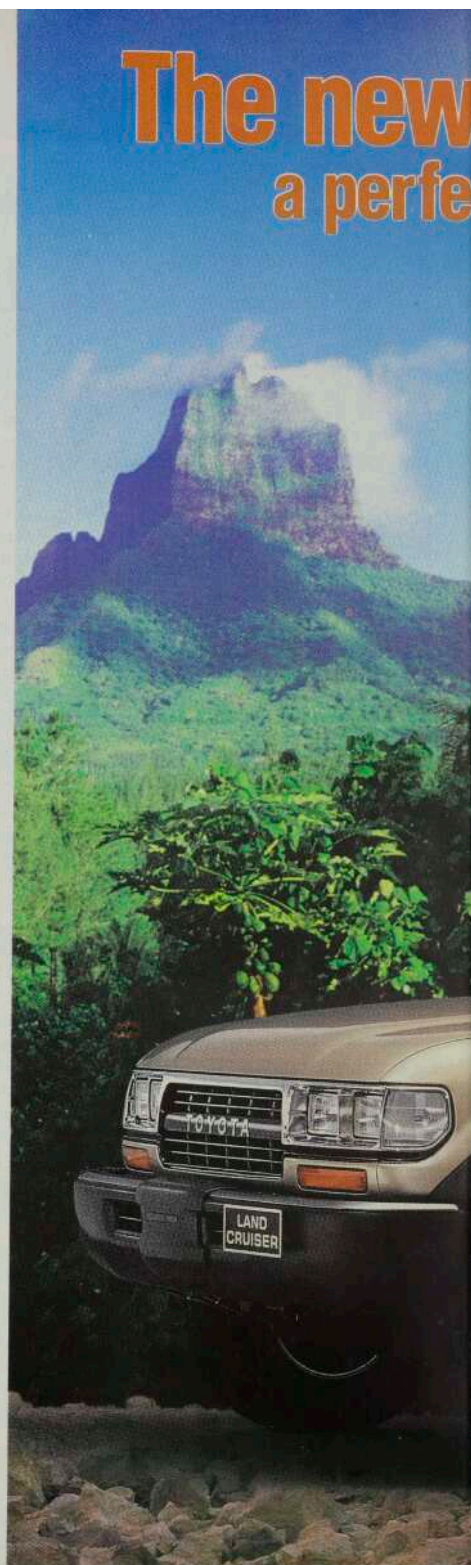
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line a \$57 million contract to fly troops to and from the Persian Gulf;

● and that no other American airline, perhaps none in the world, has flown 61 years without a fatality or accident.

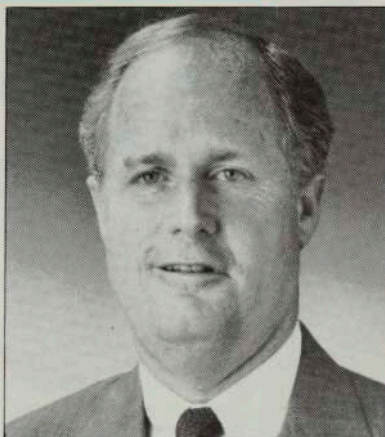
Some people who know the airline well defended it, including Don Brugman, Manager of Air Marshall Islands (AMI) in Majuro, who saw it as a media ratings ploy. But not everyone who knows Hawaiian Airlines loves it — some of those who use it in the monopoly situation, the Honolulu-Pagopago route, are highly critical of line's treatment of passengers. There is a series of complaints about delays, lack of communication, and similar matters — not safety.

Hawaiian Air has been having severe financial problems. Its last annual financial report showed a \$121 million loss on sales of \$341 million — reportedly the greatest annual financial loss of any Hawaii-based corporation in the history of the state. If it follows South Pacific International Airlines to the great hanger in the sky it will be due to heavy losses, not *Sixty Minutes*.

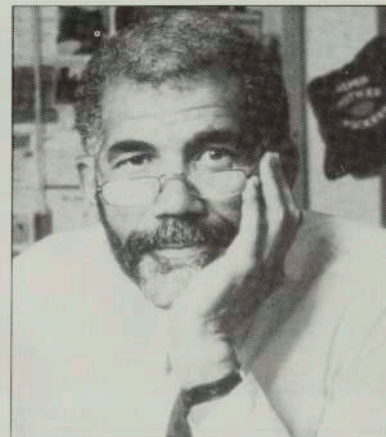
Under its new leadership, Hawaiian Airlines has renegotiated much of its debt and its plane-leasing arrangements. It dropped its Honolulu-Guam route, where it was head to head with Continental, and it got out of the Alaska-Hawaii route which it had pioneered, but which did not prove profitable. It also picked up the \$57 million charter deal to fly American troops to and from the Persian Gulf. Its first quarter earnings this calendar year will not show a profit, but they will show a remarkable improvement over the \$26 million loss in the first quarter of 1990.

The open system of deregulation of US airlines has led to weaker airlines serving fewer islands. Meanwhile a quite different economic and political environment, Japan's closed system, also led to fewer tourists for the islands. In both cases distant decisionmakers, largely unwittingly, undermined island tourism.

The tourist industries in Guam, Sai-



John Ueberroth: airline president



Ed Bradley: *Sixty Minutes* presenter

pan, and Hawaii hope the reduced flow of Japanese tourists during the Gulf War was short-term. It was, however, severe. The Guam Visitors Bureau reported 32,000 cancellations in April and worried the figure would reach 42,000 in May. Some major islands do not see that many arrivals in a year. Fiji's best month in the last two years was August, 1990, when 27,823 tourists arrived.

The Government of Guam announced that the April decline in arrivals meant that the Territorial Treasury lost \$2.2 million in gross receipts taxes, while the tourist industry itself lost untold more.

Meanwhile, Hawaii suffered as well (though it has a much more significant flow of tourists from the US mainland). In February its flow of tourists was down 20 per cent from the previous year, mostly due to Japanese defections.

Hawaii's Governor, John D. Waihee III (D), went to see the Japanese ambassador in Washington while the other governors conferred with Bush Administration officials during the annual Governor's meeting in Washington. Waihee's message to Ambassador Ryohei Murata was the sharp decline in Japanese tourists was, unwittingly, meshed with Saddam Hussein's efforts to undermine the US economy. Guam's Governor, Joseph Ada (R), flew to Japan in March to make the same point.

In addition to discovering some walking room on Waikiki Beach, observers noted two interesting aspects of Japanese tourism in this connection:

First, Japanese tourists are much more valuable financially. Hawaii's State Economist,

Gregory Pai, calculated that the average Japanese tourist spends (US) \$580 per day in Hawaii, about four-and-a-half times as much as a Mainland American.

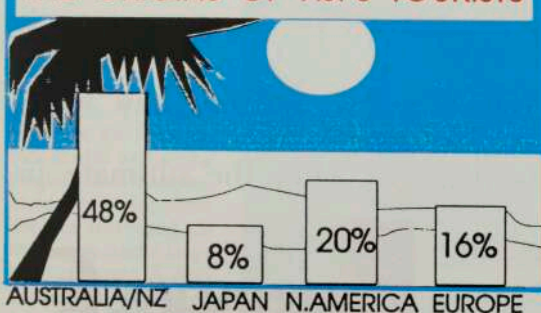
Secondly, Japanese tourists often arrive in bunches because their employer is footing the bill. Several years ago routinely pro-business Japanese tax policy was adjusted to give Japanese corporations tax-breaks when they financed employees' vacations. This concentrated decisionmaking power with a small group of corporate executives. The reduction in the flow of Japanese tourists to the US resorts was thus caused both by individual fears of Iraqi-caused terrorism and corporate decisions that it was not good form to send one's firm's employees off to vacation while Americans fought a war.

On a more positive note, the big *New York Times* spread lavished affection on Fiji, particularly its outer islands. Headlines, photos and text carried the same tone, as three American women wrote four long stories about "Fiji's Easygoing Ways," "Wakaya: A Retreat Far Away From It All," "Taking a Cruise in the Lazy Land of Blue Lagoon," and "At Home on a Remote Island," an account of a visit to Ono Island, just off the tip of Kadavu Island. (These were news stories by freelance journalists, not puff pieces by tourism publicists.)

The coverage included some criticisms such as tiny roaches, musty towels, and coffee that "was barely more than hot brown water" on a Blue Lagoon Cruise — but the writer still enjoyed herself.

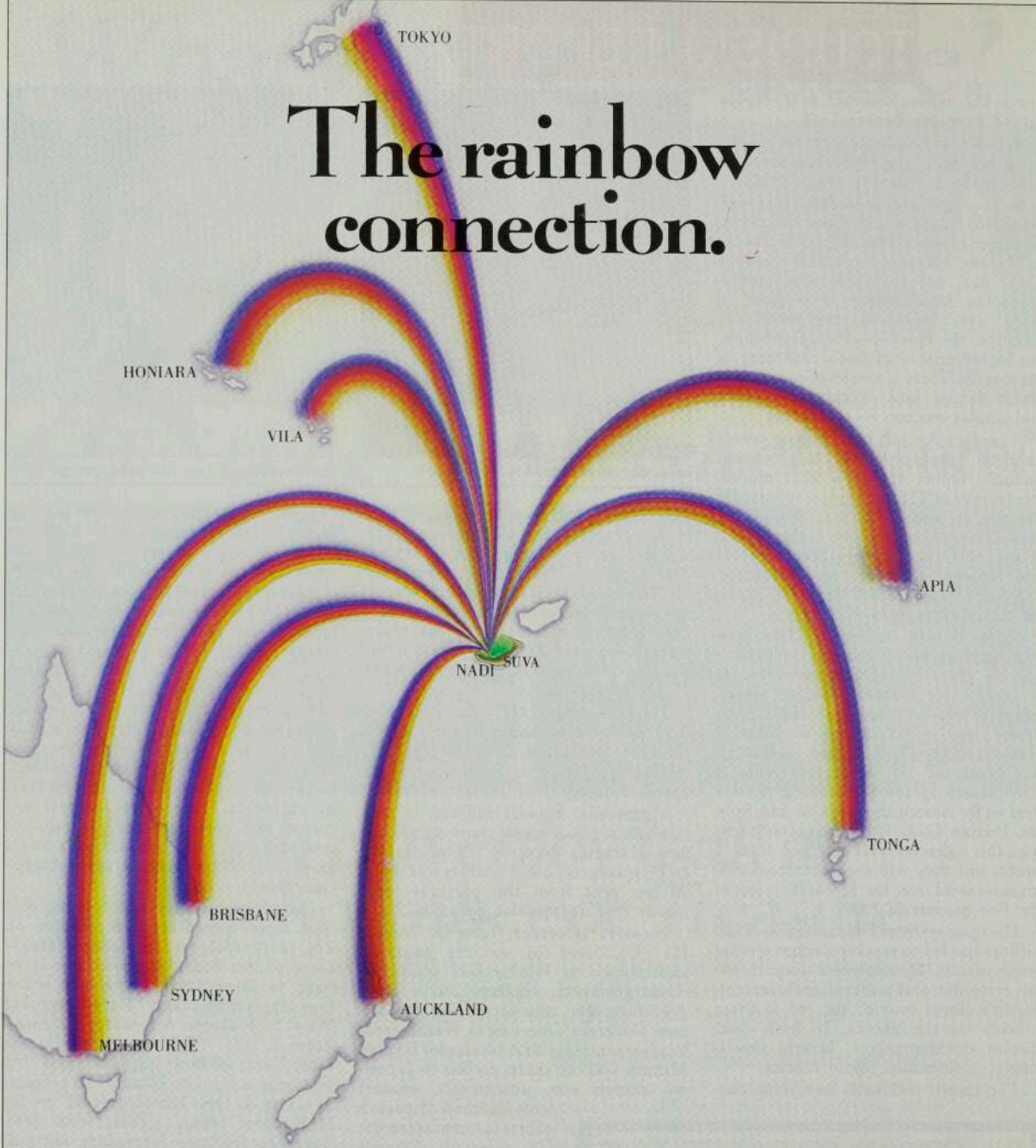
Lots of writers want to tell of their travels, particularly in *The Times*, so there is no lack of copy; but somebody in charge, on New York's West 43rd Street, allocate the space to Fiji on April 28. It was only the wildest of coincidences that some other media executive in the CBS headquarters a mile or so away, decided that Sunday, April 28, was the day to attack Hawaiian Airlines. □

THE ORIGINS OF FIJI'S TOURISTS

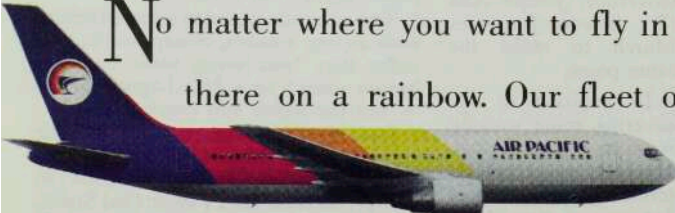


Based on statistics from the Fiji Visitors Bureau for calendar 1990. "Other places", mostly the islands, constitute the other 8 per cent.

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Special TOURISM REPORT

Growth in Nadi and the islands

By Penny Gibson

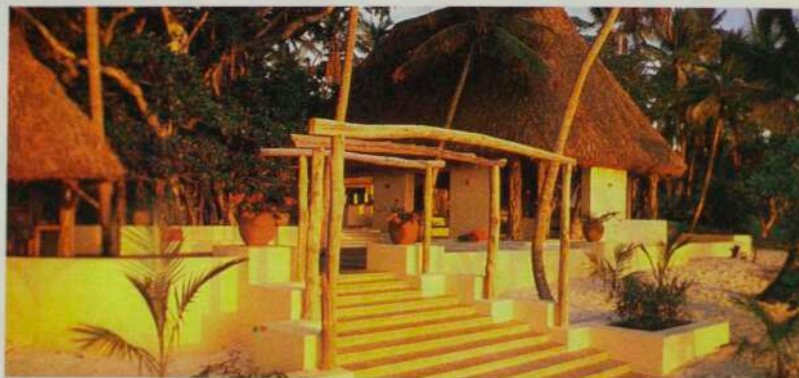
DESPITE the downturn in hotel occupancy and international competition, Fiji's hotel and resort business grew rapidly around Nadi and the islands in the past 12 months.

All echelons, from the exclusive and expensive to the budget hotels, experienced growth with seven new hotels opening or about to open, two reopening, seven being built and others planned. Each aims to make its own niche in the market, with special attractions aimed at a specific target tourist.

The newest hotel was the upmarket Sonaisali Island Resort, south of Nadi on an island with 24-hour access and all-weather beaches. The small resort — 32 large rooms and six large timber bures — has luxury resort amenities and 24-hour service, but maintains individuality and privacy. It caters for families, couples, groups and singles, and has the only operational fully-serviced marina in Fiji.

In Nadi, the old Westgate recently reopened as the New Westgate Hotel, a bright, airy hotel with local timber and light ceramic tiles and informal, personalised service. It has 35 deluxe rooms, a pool, bar restaurant, disco/convention room and, by July 27, standard rooms. It is a reasonably-priced, mid-range hotel for transit and destination tourists.

The \$7 million Tokatoka Resort Hotel opposite the airport is the first to have a majority shareholding by Fijians, the Sovau family of Saunaka. Opened officially in October 1990, it features 70 units (villas and apartments) with kitchens, four-channel videos and a supermarket. Its large pool with Fiji's only waterslide is a major attraction. The hotel is geared for families, but is also attracting singles and couples, including Japanese couples travelling on their own, and a large local clientele. A convention room should be completed by September.



Vatulele Island Resort: expensive, exclusive and thriving

One of the few Nadi hotels offering beach frontage to budget-conscious tourists is the Club Fiji Wailoaloa Beach Resort, due to open in July. It will have modern amenities, watersports, a restaurant, bar and day trips. The 12 traditional-style bures, each with two units, are built on pine poles with island views from the verandahs.

Paradise Island Resort, five minutes by launch, fills the need for a beach resort close to Lautoka. It caters largely for daytrippers, cruise passengers and visitors to Lautoka with watersports, a nature walk and beach barbecue, but also for locals and businesses with dinner dances and business lunches. The resort recently opened 12 duplex bures and an "upper echelon" dormitory.

Offshore, the reknowned club Naitasi reopened in May after 17 month's closure, and plans to regain its former share of the small group, family and couples market. Its nine villas have been renovated and facilities, pool area and waterfront upgraded.

Up-market Tokoriki Resort, with 19 bures, opened in May with a billing as "two for the price of one". It offers guests accommodation and activities with its sister, Matamanoa, and its own tropical island attractions, a semi-submersible coral viewer and sports fishing.

The exclusive \$7 million Vatulele Island Resort has established itself as a world-class luxury resort in its first 12 months. The architectural blend of the 12 bures is New Mexican pueblo and Fijian bure. Guests pay for solitude, peace, excellent cuisine and no children.

Yasawa Island opened in March on remote Yasawa Island. Initially eight very large single and double bures with Fijian trimmings were built, but another 10 are under construction. The \$8.5 million luxury hideaway aims to provide all visitor needs, on the island and in the water. Children are only allowed during Australian school holidays.

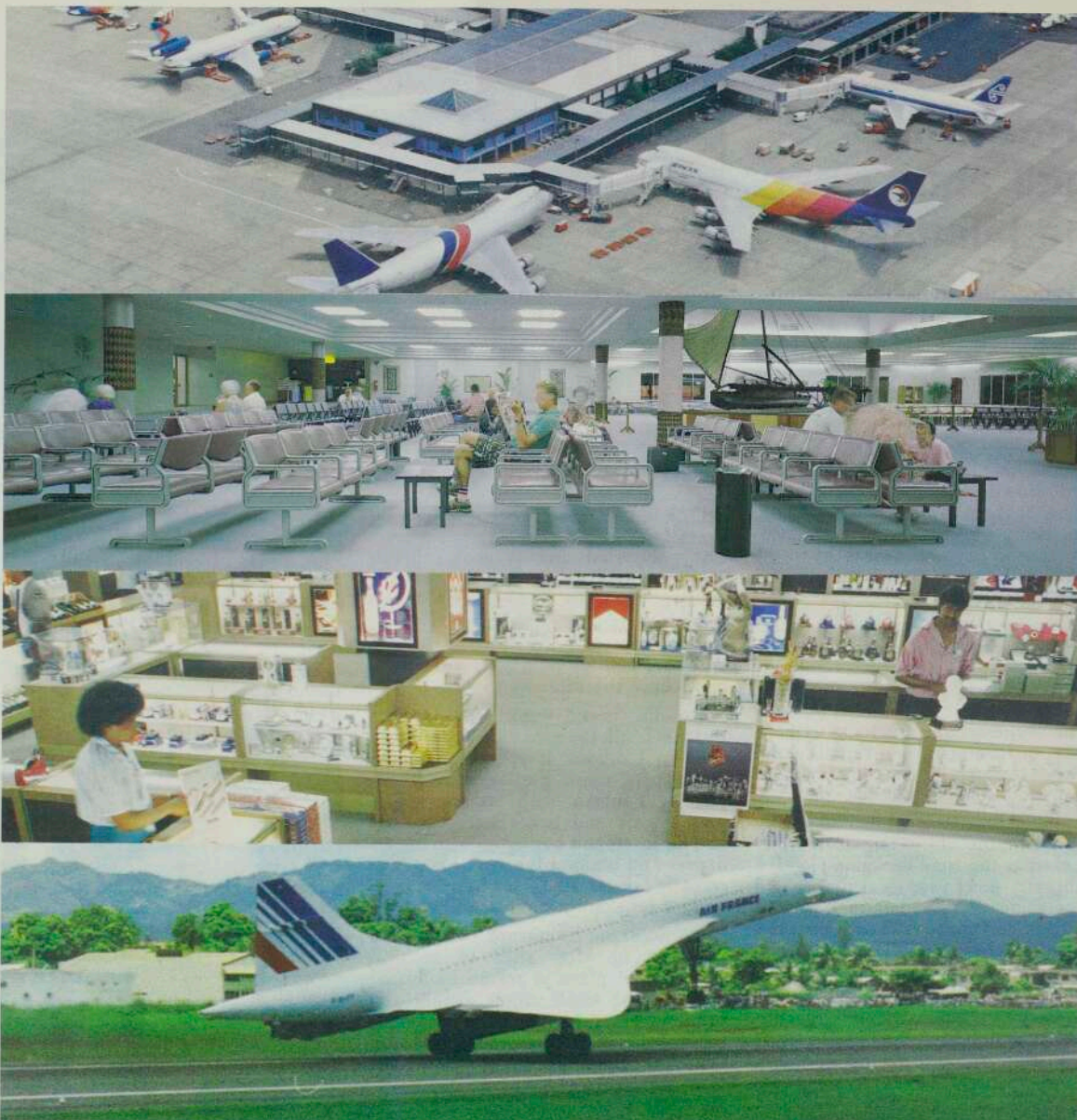
Some hotels and resorts now under construction are almost complete, while others are still on the drawing board.

The \$1.5 million Lako Mai resort is due to open around Christmas, with 12 Fijian bures nestling in the rainforest of Malolo Island, with patios and lounges overlooking the sea. A mid-range resort, activities will include tennis, watersports and paraffying. It will have a Fijian style restaurant, bar and lounge.

Construction of Yasawa Paradise has just begun on Naukacuvu Island in the Yasawas. The upmarket re-



New Hotel Westgate: bright and airy revamp



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Special TOURISM REPORT

Friendly, unique but filthy

By Ulafala Aiavao

WHEN tourists enjoy their stay in Western Samoa they praise the friendly people and unique culture. When they discuss shortcomings, says hotelier Alan Grey of the premier 156-room Aggie Grey's Hotel, the guests point out that "Apia is the filthiest place they've been to".

Groups such as the Western Samoa Visitor's Bureau have tried to sponsor cleanup schemes, but with little public support. Donations of rubbish bins by the private sector have had little success because the bins are among the most popular takeaway items in town. The standard bin — 44 gallon drums cut in half — makes a good base for barbecues. The handles on the bins mean that they are also valued as mobile storage.

Potholes on the roads also compete with cracked sidewalks and manholes lacking covers. Locals usually avoid the hazards, but several tourists have fallen into open manholes, or twisted their ankles on uneven pavements.

On the political front, Apia suffers from the fact that it is in a no-man's land. The two electorates closest to the capital overlap the outskirts of Apia, not the central business district. Therefore, no politician is directly accountable for the state of the capital. Nor is any department directly responsible for its upkeep on a large scale.

In late August the government announced it would set up an Apia Municipal Authority to oversee basic services. The proposed AMA is welcomed but it is seen by some groups and businesses as just another bureaucratic arm — and bureaucracy has not managed to do the job in the past.

The ideal, and cheapest solution, lies in national pride. This means people picking up rubbish (not the bins), and washing or painting public buildings.

On the tourism front itself, the industry is slowly recovering from downturn that cut hotel occupancy to as low as 30 percent. Occupancy is now up, and promoters are trying to build up interest in the small resorts nearing completion in some of the outer villages.

At a recent International Travel Industry Expo in Las Vegas, United States Samoan representatives found that the overseas tourist promoters knew more about Aggie Grey's Hotel than Western Samoa. Their first task now is to build up the visibility of the country.

Some, like Soose Annandale, a marketing and sales manager, do not see Western Samoa as a sole destination, but part of a regional network of destinations. Island-hoppers could take advantage of a Polypass ticket available from the national carrier Polynesian Airlines, which allows unlimited travel on a Polynesian Airlines service for 30 days.

After spending 5.5 million Tala to buy the 96-room Tusitala Hotel, Western

Samoa's second biggest, the Japanese firm Kitano Construction is investing another T3 million renovating what is now called Kitano Tusitala. The hotel is seen as a base for travellers to go on day tours or overnight stays in a Samoan village to experience the culture, said Company secretary Yoshitada Mikami.

There are no plans yet to tap the Japanese market due to the absence of direct flights between Apia and Tokyo. The Japanese are a tiny percentage of Western Samoa tourist traffic. Getting them to Apia would rely on picking them off from groups heading to Fiji, on the direct Nadi-Tokyo flight.

Mikami discounts the view that just because Japanese spend up big in Europe and the United States, they will do so in small island states.

"Many Japanese spend money on imported consumer goods (often Japanese made) which are more expensive in Japan," he said. Such goods are not normally available in Apia.

Local handicrafts tend to be small in range and often inferior in quality.

Mikami, now into his third month in Western Samoa, says that one of the country's strong points is that it feels "safe, very safe." Local tourist agents want the same view to rub off on security-conscious travellers in places such as the US and Europe.

Tourism remains one of the promising sources of future revenue for Western Samoa. Earnings from tourism in 1989 of WST42 million compares to just WST30 million in merchandise exports for the same year. □

sort will have an Italian flavour. Fifty to 60 Fiji bures and a restaurant or three should be completed within two years.

The developer of the Sheraton, Dennis McElrath, expects construction on Vomo Island to start by year's end.

Back on Viti Levu, a mid-range hotel with 50 units and bures will open this year at Nadiri Bay, just north of the Fijian. On the Coral Coast, which the Department of Town and Country Planning has identified as needing more hotel beds, the popular "3.5 star" Reef Hotel is planning a 190-room addition.

On Wailoaloa beach, plans are evolving for a 200-bed Holiday Inn while on the highway a 60-room hotel, the budget family Rain Tree hotel, will open by late August. It will offer free accommodation for children under 16 and cooking facilities. Visitors will have access to Nadi sports and social clubs.

In Lautoka, the Waterfront has doubled the number of rooms and added bar, lounge and function facilities. The Tanoa Hotel is rebuilding as 23 fully self-contained apartments. □

Transformation ahead of schedule

THE \$300 million transformation of Denarau Island from mangrove swamp to tourist haven with golf course, hotels, marina, waterways and condominiums is ahead of schedule, despite financial difficulties of the owners.

The EIE International Corporation's financial position and the tourism slump postponed development of the third hotel for Denarau, the 300-room Regent International, but site preparations will continue and building of some of the 750 condominiums may be brought forward.

The landfill project is five months ahead of schedule and tenders are being called for dredging the marina and landfilling residential areas.

The championship golf course should be completed by October 1992. EIE's chief executive in Fiji, Andrew Thomson, said it would be a major selling feature particularly for Japanese tourists, although the project's success would rely on Australians and New Zealanders who

are expected to buy most condominiums, villas and town houses. The economic situation in Australia and New Zealand is bad now, but condominium construction is scheduled from 1993 onwards.

EIE's internal financial problems recently led to refinancing with Japanese banks and world-wide sale of properties and companies not in line with the corporation's core criteria: golf courses, ownership and development of Regent International, and fully integrated resorts. Thomson said Denarau was an EIE priority because it fulfilled all three criteria. When the financial and tourist situations improve, construction of the Regent International will start. It will feature a salt and freshwater 'lagoon' swimming pools. The second stage of development — two more hotels, the condominiums, villas and townhouses, a shopping village, cultural centre, convention centre and the marina — will be built from 1993 to 1995. □

Special TOURISM REPORT

The State of tourism

By Angela McCarthy

WITH New Zealand cutting its annual aid to the islands, the Cook Islands will have to increase income from other sources just to maintain the present standard of living. The pressure is likely to be on tourism which, along with financial services, is the biggest source of national income.

The Tourist Authority's first quarterly tourist arrival figures for 1991 has shown a phenomenal increase of 22.5 per cent over 1990's first quarterly but the industry is unsure whether this will continue.

According to the Cook Island Tourist Authority figures, tourism provides more than 30 per cent of the workforce with jobs. In the last 10 years the number of restaurants, motels and transport services have doubled. But further development is likely to be needed.

Any changes probably will be done sensitively, given the Tourism Master Plan Project funded by the Asian Development Bank, which is under way in Rarotonga. Its brief is to prepare a

20-year perspective for the Cook Island tourist industry, with a detailed plan for the next five years. The five-man team is led by Robert Cleverdon — a tourism development planner for the RPT Economic Studies Group in London, with four years experience as UNDP tourism regional advisor for Fiji.

A draft report by his team will be tabled at a Cook Island tourism forum in July where the findings will be discussed before the report is finalised. Cleverdon says the Prime Minister, who is Minister of Tourism, has insisted on two guiding principles — optimise, not maximise, and focus on local opportunity to make the industry something for Cook Islanders and not for foreigners.

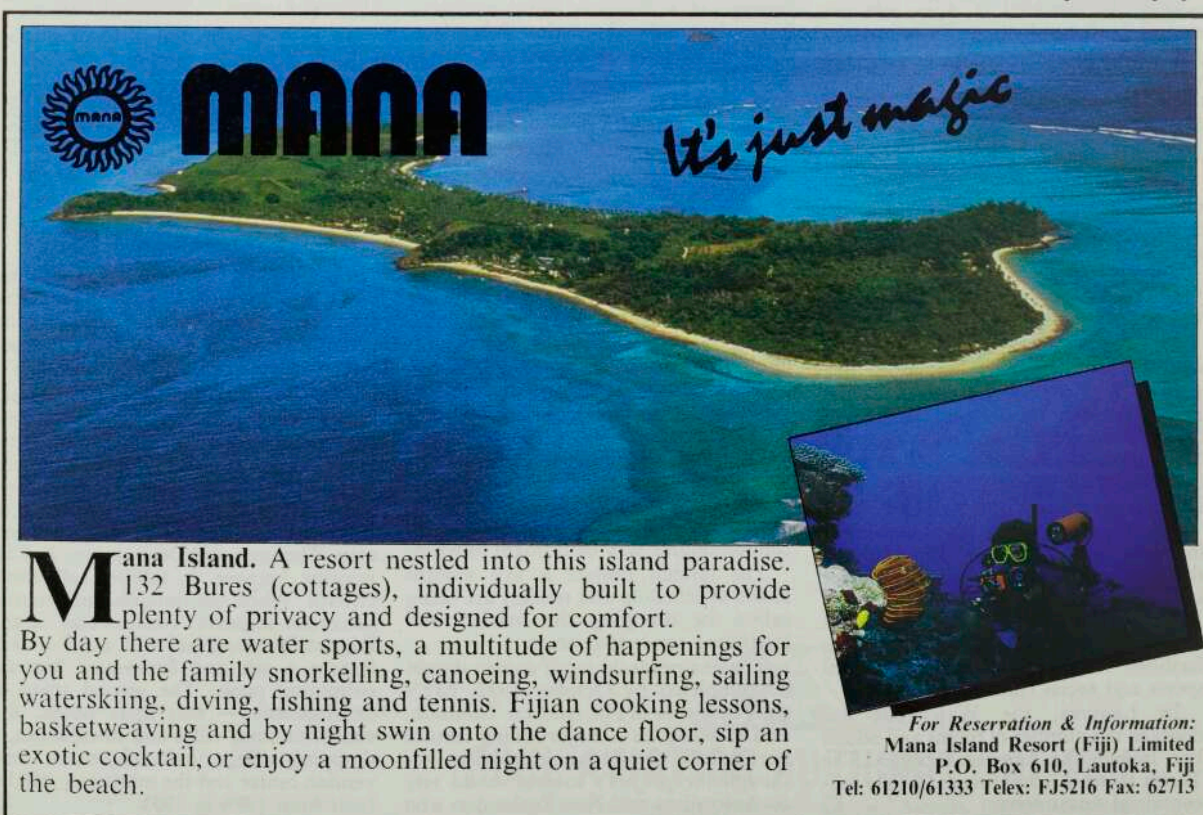
"We don't want to leave the legacy of a homogenised tourist destination, so we look to identifying and building on resources that are different, and one of the main differences is obviously the people. If you have to import personnel then there is a blurring of identity," Cleverdon said.

Most of the accommodation on the island is self-contained and owner-

operated with over a third owned and run by Cook Islanders. There are 691 rooms at present. According to government statistics the occupancy rate for 1990 was 60 per cent which was up 5 per cent on 1989, so the accommodation available at present is not stretched and the 22.5 per cent jump has been catered for.

Cook Islanders are dominant in tour operations and bars and most of the service industries such as retailing, although restaurant management is mostly by foreign residents. The industry has safeguards against being taken over by foreign interests through two laws — one states local majority shareholding is needed in any business venture, and the other disallows the sale of land, so land can only be leased from the traditional family owners. So far multi-national foreign involvement has been kept.

But in 1988 the Cook Island tourist industry moved into a new phase. Then the Cook Islands government signed a contract with Italian bank, Icle Bank of Rome, and Italian contractor, SICEL, to build a 200 room, four-star hotel on a turn-key basis in Rarotonga for a 100 per cent borrowed sum of NZ\$51 million (in Deutschmark currency). Unfortunately it has become a developmental nightmare. From its inception the project



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Special TOURISM REPORT

has been plagued with problems and criticism over the amount of money borrowed and the validity for such accommodation on Rarotonga. With a change of government in January 1989, a Commission of Inquiry was set up to look into the hotel deal.

It found the project riddled with inconsistencies and criticised the fact no private tendering was done; that the hotel site was still undecided; that there was no design or management; that the SICEL feasibility study expected 75 per cent occupancy in the first year; that there had been no provision for turnover tax or royalties to landowners; and that "the risks of continuing to hold the obligations in foreign currency have been likened to playing Russian roulette with the country's economy, with three bullets in the chamber of the gun."

It also found it odd that government hadn't pursued private sector groups who had indicated an interest. The Commission's feasibility study showed the hotel would impose a substantial obligation on Government to meet annual shortfalls. It concluded that it would be possible although difficult to get out of the project through default or a private sector takeover, but that if it continued then contract terms had to be renegotiated, including changing the loan currency. The Henry Government chose to go ahead and develop architectural plans, and secure the services of the Sheraton group to manage it once opened. The new agreement included paying full turnover tax with exemptions on duties and levies for plant and equipment. An eighteen-hole golfcourse was also added. It appears that the loan is still in Deutschmarks.

But problems continued, culminating in November 1990 with the Cook Island government hotel owning company Ecil serving a 14 day notice of default to the construction company SICEL for lack of progress. It was then announced that SECIL, who had gone under "controlled administration" in Italy and had all credit frozen, could not account for all of



Cook Islanders: difference is a resource

NZ\$30 million it had drawn down. The project stopped for five months with the Cook Islands owing interest on money that has achieved little for the country.

Earlier this year the Cook Islands government secured a further NZ\$20 million loan through the bank Icle. New plans meant a reduction in room numbers and in the artificial lagoon size. The construction contract, with a new Italian contractor Stephany SPA, now includes granting of 15 per cent of total work to local contractors.

The Prime Minister is confident the balance of the NZ\$31 million will eventually be returned by SICEL, but the Cook Islands are now NZ\$71 million in debt for a hotel project that is still, as the Rarotongans say, "a hole in the ground". The hotel that was once to be opened November 1991, then June 1992, is now due to open mid 1993. The government is servicing that loan right now, and there is still no sign of movement on the site.

The government also has 63 per cent ownership on the Rarotonga Hotel. When it opened in 1976 as a joint venture with THC, Air New Zealand and the Cook Island Government it was intended to be the flagship hotel for Rarotonga. It never has been — in fact some people see it as a liability for the tourism industry because of its bad service reputation and inability to pay its bills. In the early eighties two tourism primary wholesalers, United Travel Services Ltd, South Pacific Travel Ltd and Scholes Oakley Travel Ltd, took over from THC and Air New Zealand with the Cook Island Government Property Corporation holding majority shares.

At one stage an Australian company, Randall Pacific, were negotiating with government over a proposal to refurbish and upgrade the Rarotongan and another Government-owned property in Aitutaki, and build a country club and golfcourse next to the Sheraton, but the deal fell through.

The Sheraton management are now consultants for the Rarotongan, running it day to day. John Eaton, preopening manager for Sheraton, says they are doing this as a favour to government. He feels the lack of a strategic plan with the Rarotongan has been a major problem.

None of the directors had hotel experience and it needed a capital injection which the government and bank are working on, he said. "For the government as major shareholder it was an embarrassment that the place was losing money. Now we are making money to the Gross Profit line — in 12-24 months it should be able to pay other expenses," he said.

The industry is all about making money from tourist investments. The private accommodation sector and tour operators are doing well, retail is surviving, Air Rarotonga is expanding. The government ventures, however, are showing negative return. The Cook Islands are hoping that will change — with NZ\$71 million on the line it needs to. □

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Special TOURISM REPORT

Good news for watersports wallflowers

By Malcolm Weatherup

A **PRODUCT** designed for "watersports wallflowers" is catching on fast in the Pacific.

The 'Australian Snorkeler Afloat' is a inflatable PVC apparatus, ergonomically designed to support the body at the correct angling for surface snorkeling. It is made with two separate air chambers — if one is punctured, the swimmer still has some support in the water.

The product is good news for a surprisingly large number of people who miss out on the grandeur of underwater seascapes because they cannot swim, or feel insecure when snorkeling.

According to the company, proof that the problem is widespread is seen by the runaway success of the new product during the early tourist season in northern Australia. It also is catching on fast in the Seychelles Islands and the Maldives, and Tradelinks Pty Ltd of Suva has just been appointed its Fiji agent.

One of Australia's most experienced underwater photographers and explorers, Ben Cropp, has done extensive

testing of the Float on the Great Barrier Reef, and he believes the product will be a boon to those wanting to get the best view of the Reef.

The product will provide a new experience for non-swimmers who would otherwise miss out, but it also is ideal for experienced swimmers. It will allow the confident snorkeler to float for much longer periods on the surface without tiring.

Also included is a long retaining cord with a wrist strap, to allow experienced swimmers to dive to the seabed without the float drifting away.

The Float was designed by Townsville tour boat operator Doug Tarca, who noticed that many tourists he took out to the reef, particularly Japanese visitors, watched glumly from the boat while their companions saw the beauty of the coral gardens firsthand.

It took Tarca four prototypes before he came up with the perfect design, which is made in three sizes.

"It will provide a missing link for people who've been missing out for so long," he told *Pacific Islands Monthly*. □



New depths of fun: a snorkeling aid

Tonga terminal complex open

TONGA'S new terminal complex for Nuku'alofa's Fua'amotu International Airport was opened on the island of Tongatapu in Tonga last month.

The project was funded by the Grant Aid Programme of the Government of Japan with the Japan International Cooperation Agency. A grant of 1.393 million yen (about US\$10 million) was provided to Tonga for the new terminal, apron, taxiway, road, carpark, and ground service equipment. □

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PACIFIC ISLANDS

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BUSINESS

Promising signs from PNG mines

Three big players in the mining game are optimistic about the future

PAPUA New Guinea's giant Porgera Gold Mine is on schedule despite an extra K6 million (US\$6.32 million) in electricity costs after a landowner dispute delayed power supplies.

The Porgera joint venture partners had been counting on power supplies from the Hides gas field, 70 km away, to be flowing by September when stage 2 of the mine will be commissioned.

But — while the power station's first stage and cross-country transmission lines will be finished in July — the land dispute has delayed completion of the nearby gas field and the 8km pipeline to the power station. The dispute, in which various clans are claiming the right to revenues from the gas field, is now subject to a Papua New Guinea government enquiry.

Two dual fuel generators originally destined for Hides will be taken to Porgera and run on diesel to allow stage two to stay on schedule. The cost of transporting the equipment and the margin between gas and diesel costs will run to K6 million by next January.

This cost is likely to run beyond that as the new schedule for connection of gas to the Hides power station is no more certain than some time in the first half of 1992.

Otherwise Porgera (Placer Pacific Ltd, Highlands Gold Ltd and Renison Goldfields Consolidated Ltd each have 30 per cent, with the PNG government holding 10 per cent) is running to plan. The project's general manager, Vic Botts, said that all parts of the mine were either on or ahead of schedule.

"That's an achievement in Papua New Guinea," he said.

The mill is exceeding design capacity by almost 20 per cent. The project's March quarterly report said 162,369 tonnes of ore was milled in the three months to produce 224,804 ounces of gold. Average head grade was 65.6 grams per tonne.

Porgera now has 15 megawatts of diesel-generated power, but more will be needed in September to supply the new pressure oxidation plant which will take gold recoveries from the present 70 per cent to more than 90 per cent. The two additional generators being installed will deliver another 13.4 megawatts.

When completed Hides (BP Development Operating Co Pty Ltd 95 per cent, Oil Search Ltd 5 per cent) will produce

64 megawatts — enough power to meet Porgera's needs when the mine reaches its full production capacity. Half of the 8km gas pipeline between the field and power station has now been completed. Work at Hides has also been delayed by particularly bad weather.

Revenues due to the local landowners are being held in trust until the Land Titles Commission decides which are the rightful claimants.

The problem began several months ago when two rival clan groups claimed the Hides joint venture had not settled compensation issues and each claimed they were the sole and rightful recipients. There were charges against BP of divide-and-rule tactics and that some local people had made marks on agreements without knowing what they were signing.

The Porgera mine will meet its aim of producing 900,000 ounces a year even with the power problems. The oxidation plant will, apart from lifting recovery from new ore, also be used on rock already milled and stockpiled and which still contains some gold. Average grade figures for the March quarter were lower than planned because the mill processed almost 1800 tonnes of ore per day instead of its 1500-tonne design maximum. This meant that lower grade ore had to be processed earlier than expected.

The new concentrator capacity will

CRA excited over Wafi copper find

AUSTRALIAN mining giant CRA Ltd appears to have found another significant copper deposit in Papua New Guinea.

CRA, whose subsidiary Bougainville Copper Ltd lost control of the vast Panguna copper mine, has announced an exciting discovery on its Wafi prospect, about 65km from Lae.

Three drill holes have intersected unusually large widths and high grades of porphyry copper. In the next few months surface work will try to delineate the extent of the deposit, and preliminary metallurgy testing on the ore has begun.

The announcement came just a month after CRA bought back the 45 per cent interest in Wafi it had previously sold to Elders Resources Ltd.

Mineralisation has been found in huge columns in the three drill holes with assays still to come in from a fourth — this latter one is suspected to be separated by a fault from the others and lie outside the main ore zone. The assays from the first three holes included impressive grades: one was 76 metres averaging 2.28 per cent copper. The indications so far suggest an ore body 400 metres by 500 metres going to a depth of 400 metres. □

BUSINESS

Oil Search reaffirms belief in PNG

ONE of the largest resources investors in Papua New Guinea has reaffirmed its belief in the future of the country, despite the gloomy political outlook in view of the protracted Bougainville situation.

The recently issued annual report of Oil Search Ltd, which has spent several decades exploring Papua New Guinea for oil, said the Kutubu oil project has proven reserves currently assessed at around 200 million barrels. This represents an approximate 50 per cent increase over the figure quoted in last year's report, and is up 20 million barrels on the figure of just two months earlier.

Oil Search said the company saw it as increasingly desirable to cement the bonds between itself and Papua New Guinea. This was helped by the share issue to local investors in late 1990.

The report said ongoing feasibility studies at Kutubu continued to fine-tune development plans so that the initial production rate will be raised from an estimated less than 100,000 barrels a day to about 130,000 barrels a day.

The project will cost about US\$750 million to develop. Planned production now dwarfs any of the Australian discoveries of recent years.

By the end of January the joint ventures had committed about \$US300 million to the project with some 600 workers, of which about 60 per cent are Southern Highlands employees. The crude will be piped 265 kilometres to a

marine terminal in the Gulf of Papua with international sales expected to start in the second half of next year.

Oil Search also reported some good news, and problems, with its Hides gas project which is expected to provide 10 million cubic feet of gas a day for a power station to provide electricity for the Porgera gold mine. Recent drill tests indicated the Hides field would produce about 300 barrels a day of condensate as against earlier expectations of 20 barrels a day. Some surface facilities have had to be redesigned to cope with storage of the condensate. Construction of the Hides project should be completed by the end of the year. By then the Porgera joint venture should have built its power station and associated transmission lines.

During 1990 Oil Search was a partner in 15 well drillings in its Highlands acreage. With the confirmation of reserves in the Kutubu project, the company's attention is now swinging back to PPL 101, a neighbouring permit area which contains the Juha gas condensate discovery and several untested prospects. One of these untested areas, P'nyang, was chosen for drilling in 1990.

The annual report said the well was encouraging: gas and condensate were discovered, and were similar in composition to the gas caps of the Kutubu oil fields. The report said the quality of Toro and other reservoirs in P'nyang was as good as Kutubu. A follow up well was due to be drilled toward mid-1991. □

maintain total gold production after September even as lower grade ore is produced from the underground mine. Porgera's open pit operations are due to begin in early 1993.

Increasing production from the Porgera mine gave PNG Explorer Highlands Gold Ltd a heady start to the year. Unaudited net profit for the 16 weeks to April 7 was K8.25 million, bringing net profit for the first 40 weeks of the financial year to K18.77 million based on total sales of 140,900 ounces of gold and 105,000 ounces of silver.

Mine production income was supplemented by interest on money left over from the share float in late 1989 when parent MIM Holdings Ltd sold 35 per cent of the company to the public. Highlands' report said the company received an average price of \$US396 per ounce of gold and \$US4.04 per ounce of silver over the 40-week period.

The company has a 30 per cent interest in the huge Porgera mine in PNG's Enga province. Porgera's contribution to Highlands' earnings for the 40 weeks was K27.3 million before tax. Highlands paid K54.1 million in Porgera calls for the 40 weeks and debt at April 7 totalled K89.6 million.

But despite impressive assay results in some drill intercepts for the Uramit prospect (known as Wild Dog) on East New Britain, little continuity was obtained. Exploration is continuing on Mali after outcrops revealed assays of gold, copper, silver and barium. Signs on Manus island in New Ireland province also have been encouraging, where gold was visible after panning. □

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Healthy surplus through Trust Fund

TUVALU'S Trust Fund is forecast to stand at A\$37.4 million (US\$29.3 million) by the end of the country's fiscal year on September 30. The fund was established by donations from Britain, New Zealand and Australia to underwrite Tuvalu's recurring budget deficit. The investments made from it are managed by Westpac Bank.

The Trust Fund Advisory Committee's spokesman, New Zealand representative Brian Bell, said the Fund will provide a healthy surplus for distribution this year to the Tuvalu Government. Under the existing formula A\$1.5 million will be released. The advisory committee said it had recommended that the government fund the balance of the budget shortfall this year by overdraft from the National Bank of Tuvalu, and try to reduce this overdraft to A\$500,000. It said the government should be aiming at a budget surplus by 1995 by increasing spending only in line with inflation. □

BUSINESS

Stepping-stone to a tax haven

FIJI is to become a intermediary for nationals of other countries who wish to indirectly use the Vanuatu tax haven. A new trust company, the Trustee Corporation of Fiji Ltd, is now being set up to acquire the Fiji business of the Burns Philp Trustee Company, the Australian parent of which is being liquidated.

The owners of the new company are two Port Vila-based trust companies, Pacific International Trust Co Ltd (PITCO) and the Melanesian International Trust Co Ltd (MELITCO). The latter partner was originally established as a joint venture by three banks operating in Vanuatu — Barclays, Hong Kong Shanghai and the ANZ — but is now controlled by PITCO.

The main task of the new Fijian company is to service customers of the Burns Philp operation, which was the oldest private sector trustee operation in that country and the largest trustee company after the government trustee. It will provide customers with drawing up and administration of wills. The new

owners plan to introduce other financial services through the Fiji company.

But the Vanuatu owners say that Fiji will prove to be a very useful stepping stone for international company and trust structures when these are linked to financial arrangements in non-tax or low-tax jurisdictions. What this means is that companies and individuals will be able to use the Vanuatu tax haven indirectly. They will be able to open an account in Fiji, which is considered to be on the "white" list with tax authorities in places such as Australia and New Zealand, and have that business re-directed to Vanuatu which is on the so-called "black" list.

It was reliably reported in late 1988 that the interim government in Suva was investigating setting up its own offshore legislation, but financial observers said at the time that potential investors would be unwilling to entrust their funds to a country which had undergone military coups. □

Opposition to VAT proposal

FIJI Government plans to introduce the value-added tax (VAT) and change labour laws came under attack at the National Economic Summit in Suva last month.

Opposition centres around claims that the new tax would hit the poor, particularly in the outer islands, and that abolition of the Wages Council was likely to lead to worker exploitation.

Finance Minister Josevata Kamikamica announced exemptions to the VAT, including all farming income, all unprocessed foods, housing rents, financial services, businesses which turnover less than F\$10,000 (US\$6710), public transport by bus, all agricultural land and exports. The tax will apply to sales to tourists, all imports, municipal rates, purchases by government departments, management and advisory services and barter arrangements.

But there was considerable pressure from those attending the Summit that the Government should not go ahead with the tax. One speaker complained that the people in rural areas would suffer most from a 10 per cent increase in the price of consumer goods, and that those in outer islands already were paying extra to receive goods shipped from Suva.

Church social worker and author of a report on poverty, Fr Kevin Barr, said after the summit that low income earners

down to those who receive welfare assistance would be most adversely affected by VAT and would "continue their gradual decline into deeper poverty". But the Government's proposal to raise the tax threshold should be of some benefit to low-income earners, he said.

Opponents of the proposed tax have complained that the Government has not specified the amount by which income tax would be lowered to compensate for the shift to more indirect taxation. Taxation Commissioner Tui Mailekai told the conference that the public had until July 31 to make submissions on the VAT plan — the tax comes into effect in mid-1992.

A communique issued after the summit said it was recognised that the VAT had significant long-term economic and social advantages. It added that the Government would take measures to protect disadvantaged people.

Both welfare and business speakers argued for the retention of the Wages Council. Businessman Robert Lee said the present wages system allowed for negotiations and the free movement of labour. Meanwhile, the Fiji Trades Union Congress said it would fight any government attempts to strip the union movement of its rights. The FTUC was reacting to Government proposals to change labour laws. □

Drop in albacore hits small economies

NUMBERS of adult albacore available in South Pacific waters are falling and the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) is blaming the depredations of Asian driftnet operations.

The director of the Solomon Islands-based FFA, Philip Muller, said the economies of the small states in Oceania were suffering, particularly that of American Samoa which has two large tuna canneries. His remarks followed news of poor catches.

Muller said the South Pacific was now beginning to witness the repercussions of the massive driftnet fishing effort which had started with the rapid expansion of Japanese and Taiwanese driftnet fleets in 1987. The removal of large quantities of young albacore from surface waters by driftnets was now being felt through a reduction in numbers of adult albacore available to deepwater longline fishery.

He criticised the distant water fishing nations involved in driftnetting for their reluctance to provide accurate information to South Pacific officials on the sizes of their catches by this method — which the FFA estimates to have been worth 25,000 tonnes in 1989.

The agency believed its estimates to be conservative because the figures did not include those albacore which escaped the nets but died as a result of being temporarily trapped.

Muller said the South Pacific countries remained committed to a total ban on driftnet fishing despite experiments undertaken by some Asian boats to reduce the by-catch of other fish species, marine mammals, turtles and sea birds. These methods had not been proven to be effective. □

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BUSINESS

Vanuatu push for local input

VANUATU will be encouraging more short-term, cash producing projects in the future.

The country's Finance Minister, Sethy Regenvanu, said too many past development projects had not lived up to their expectations. The government was concerned about the level of loan charges, which had more than doubled since 1988 to reach Vt427 million (US\$3.81 million). That figure does not include loans for education projects, Parliament, Telecom, the Development Bank, agricultural extensions and the Santo port projects on which repayments were not yet due.

Regenvanu said the country had to encourage more local participation in the economy. The opening of the new Commercial Bank of Vanuatu this year would be a step in that direction. By bringing more into the cash economy, the Government could increase customs revenue without raising tariffs and also provide more social benefits. Revenue from customs duties and business licences totalled Vt420 million in 1990.

The minister said in Parliament he would be concentrating economic policy in foreign earnings within Vanuatu (especially from tourism), foreign earnings from exports, and creation of jobs.

Government reserves stood at about Vt600 million between 1980 and 1985, but the collapse of tourism in 1986 and

three cyclones almost eliminated these. Regenvanu said a balanced budget would continue to be a high priority. The Government would be seeking new income sources, improving existing revenue collections, spending only when revenue was available, enforcing strong financial control and limiting new loans.

The country still faced the problems of an inadequate infrastructure, a very small industrial base, over-dependence on copra for rural cash income and a lack of skilled manpower.

But tourism had recovered and the Finance Centre was making an important economic contribution. Gross domestic product was now growing at about five per cent a year, inflation was down from 16 per cent to about six per cent, commercial banks loans were up 23 per cent last year and domestic savings had grown by 10 per cent in each of the past two years. Regenvanu added that the balance of payments had been in surplus for 1989 and 1990, while the decision to base the vatu on a secret basket of currencies had halted speculation in the currency and made it more stable.

The minister said the subsidies being given to the Vanuatu Commodity Marketing Board — Vt970 million last year — could not be maintained. "Clearly the Government needs to give serious attention to this problem," he said. □

Inflation outlook for Tonga poor

TONGA'S inflation outlook is poor because the full impact of higher petroleum prices caused by the Gulf Crisis have not fully worked their way into the Consumer Price Index (CPI), according to the quarterly survey by the National Reserve Bank of Tonga.

Power charges were increased by 38 per cent at the start of January, and lagged indirect responses to previous price increases are still working their way through. The rise in port and service taxes will further stimulate inflation.

The inflation rate reached 15 per cent by the end of 1990 and the report said this was Tonga's most pressing economic and financial problem — with the imported component of domestic prices playing a major role. The imported component of the CPI totals 55 per cent of all consumer goods and services. This was exacerbated in the December quarter of 1990 by a weaker Pa'anga.

The bank is predicting that landed

costs of petroleum products will remain high in the first months of 1991 despite the slump in global oil prices (the rise in crude prices in August did not reflect in the landed cost of petroleum in Tonga until well into the December quarter). Electricity and transport prices will rise in response to higher oil costs. Most of the landed cost increase from the December quarter had not worked its way through to the CPI in that period.

"This ... means that the rapid growth in the CPI to date has not yet reflected much of the increase in imported oil prices," the bulletin said. "It also means that continued high inflation is in prospect through the first half of 1991."

Increased government duties involve the change from a specific to an ad valorem tax for collecting customs duties on petroleum prices, which has meant taxes will continue to rise with any further increases in the landed cost. The higher port and service charges introduced in the 1990-91 budget will also contribute to the costs of imports.

The bank said the heaviest inflation bursts (in 1987-88 and 1990-91) followed major upward adjustments in civil service pay scales. □

TRADE WINDS

Solomons set tourism target

AVERAGE annual growth of 22 per cent has been outlined in a new Solomon Islands tourism development plan. It targets 24,600 arrivals in 1995 and 72,100 in the year 2000. The plan said this would mean gross foreign earnings from tourism of S\$140 million (US\$53.4 million) in 1995.

Tourism Minister Victor Ngele later said more than 50,000 tourists a year could be expected after the Henderson Airfield upgrading.

TUVALU

Runway survey finished

A SURVEY for the upgrading of Funafuti runway has been completed. McConnell Dowell (Fiji) Ltd reported to the Tuvalu Government that the 1700-metre runway needed the top soil stripped off, and material and a coat of tar seal laid. The company is one of three bidding for the contract. The upgrading is expected to take six months.

TONGA

Set for international flight

TONGA's national airline is to expand its route network with the start of its first regular international service, which will operate between Auckland and Nuku'alofa from July 1. The King of Tonga has approved a name change for the former Friendly Island Airways, which will now be known as Royal Tonga Airlines. It will fly direct every Monday with a Boeing 737-200 leased from Solomon Airlines.

New squash exporter bid

TAI Agency Services is seeking an export licence to become Tonga's fourth squash-exporting company. Tai claims it could sell 5000 tonnes of pumpkin squash to the Japanese company, Marubeni — additional to Tonga's quota in Japan.

NIUE

Aid cut threatens jobs

ABOUT 150 government employees in Niue face the sack following the New Zealand government's decision to reduce its aid to the island. The plan, which follows attempts to get Niue to tackle the bloated size of the public service, will cut NZ\$1 million (US\$595,000) off the annual NZ\$10 million. NZ Premier Sir Robert Rex said his administration was top-heavy (600 out of a population of 2300 are on the government payroll) but that it needed time to resolve the problem so the fragile economy was not damaged. He said New Zealand had not considered Niue's run of bad luck — severe drought, Cyclone Ofa and disrupt-

tions to air links with New Zealand.

MICRONESIA

FSM Bank upgrading

THE Federated States of Micronesia Development Bank will receive a grant of US\$153,000 from the Asian Development Bank to help it upgrade. This will include preparation of a corporate plan and review of the FSM Bank's lending operations, structure and branch network, and staff training. It needs to expand its loan portfolio to match increasing funds from national and state governments.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Landowners in boat venture

LANDOWNERS in West New Britain have set up a company which will operate three log boats. The first vessel, *MV Volka*, is expected to be delivered from Japan in late May. The company, West New Britain Landowners Trust Co Pty Ltd, was established by 12 land-owner groups after they realised they were missing out on benefits from logs being harvested by expatriate companies. An agreement has been signed with a Greek shipping company for operation of the vessels.

Airbus leased to Bulgaria

AIR Niugini has dry-leased its second A310 airbus for two years to a new private Bulgarian carrier, Jes Air, at K530,000 a month (US\$538,600). The aircraft will operate between Sofia and Singapore, New York and Ottawa, after it has been returned to France for a new paint job. Air Niugini leased the aircraft because it has adequate capacity.

Power charges rise

Electricity consumers in Papua New Guinea are paying an additional 6.1 per cent for power. The electricity commission had applied to the price controller for the increase citing inflation, the devaluation of the kina, law and order problems and the Bougainville crisis.

Retail group collapses

UNIVERSAL Trading Group has asked its bankers to appoint receivers, with company chairman Robert Bolling blaming the severe economic downturn in Papua New Guinea, internal accounting problems and weak commodity prices. The group is one of the largest merchandise chains in the country, and includes the well-known Sullivans Pty Ltd and the Prima smallgoods brand. Its activities are spread through the Highlands and Northern provinces.

The company had lost money through its plantation investments on Bougainville, but Bolling said Universal still had positive shareholders' funds. It was planned that the group would continue

trading, with the receivers looking at ways to reconstruct the company and extract it from current financial problems. The receivers were appointed by the Papua New Guinea Banking Corporation.

KIRIBATI

NZ funds seaweed project

NEW Zealand foreign aid is to back a commercial seaweed farming venture in Kiribati. A study by the New Zealand Ministry of External Relations and Trade concluded that seaweed was one of the most appropriate money earners for the region. It uses naturally available resources such as sticks and coconut fibre ropes to suspend the weed. The project is also set up with minimal capital.

A Danish company is reported to have agreed to buy all the seaweed Kiribati can produce. More than 10 islands in the Kiribati group have been designated as suitable for seaweed farming.

FIJI

Malaysian finance company move

MALAYSIA'S largest public-owned finance company, Malaysia Borneo Finance Holdings Berhad, is to open an office in Suva once Reserve Bank of Fiji approval has been gained. The company has entered a joint venture with the National Bank of Fiji to offer merchant bank services in Fiji, but the regional office will operate separately from the joint venture. The company has assets in the South Pacific worth about US\$28 million and is also looking to open an office in Port Vila.

Phone boost for Fiji

FIJI'S telecommunications system is to get a F\$118 million (US\$79.2 million) modernisation injection over the next five years. Automatic exchanges will be converted with digital radio links and fibre optic cable systems. Extensions and upgrading of the underground cable network will link a further 23,000 customers to the telephone system. About F\$2.2 million will also be spent on improving the postal system. □

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The bridge: it proved to be the most comfortable spot

Traps and trappings on the ferries of Tonga

By Douglas M. Thorsen

WHEN the *Fokololo-oe Hau* finally arrived 36 hours late one showery night, I bought a ticket on the wharf for a deck passage to Vava'u for T18 and found that it was the only kind they had!

She was strictly a cargo-vessel but could accommodate 250 passengers in a large saloon fitted with rows of padded benches. Apart from two toilets on the lower deck aft, there were no amenities for the travelling public — no running water or refreshments of any kind!

Like the dozen other passengers stretched out on the benches, I passed an uncomfortable night, livened only by the usual noises of a ship at sea and the sough of the wind as it whistled through the open doors.

Just before dawn, while the ship was lurching about in the open sea, I gave up the idea of sleep and made my way to the bridge. The first thing I noticed was the language on the engine-room remote control panel, on the radar set. The word "Osaka" on the magnetic compass indicated this vessel had been built in Japan. The date was 1971, she had a registered tonnage of 252 and a crew of six.

The Captain kindly shared his morning cup of strong black tea with me, as the sun rose behind the lowering clouds.

In the pearly light of morning we passed the first of the tiny islets in the southern approaches to this group and the peaks of the tall islands ahead had

already appeared above the horizon.

The captain gave our expected time of arrival to the port authorities, the First Mate checked the echo-sounder and the helmsman struggled with the old-fashioned five-foot hand-wheel to keep the ship on the narrow, winding course on the British Admiralty Chart.

A myriad emerald islets rose on either side, clothed to their summits with verdant tropical foliage.

When the bow-door was finally lowered on the ramp near the overseas wharf at the port of Neiafu, we had covered 80 nautical miles in 10.5 hours. Crowds of people thronged the area and the town spread gracefully on the slopes of surrounding hills.

On the recommendations of an advertisement I made straight for the 76-room "Paradise International Hotel", 1.5 km away, and found that its impressive facilities included a bar, swimming pools, handicraft shop, games room, pool tables, nightly videos, a band, laundry service and conference rooms. The service at reception and in the restaurant was impeccable and it had a private wharf with all facilities for yachts.

Above all, it provided a panorama of the splendid harbour unequalled anywhere else in that town of 5000 people.

From the simple comforts of my economy room, at T24 a night with an ensuite bathroom and toilet but no harbour view, I explored the commercial centre of Neiafu, with its many shops, modern offices and massive stone churches. The crushed coral-paved roads

were pitted with potholes and not the best for walking, nevertheless I made it past the European cemetery to the Fangatongo Royal residence.

In Sailoame Market I found a plentitude of fruit and vegetables from local gardens. At the top of a steep path I reached the summit of Mt Talau, with a view of the town, harbour and many of the other 40 islands of this group.

I read on a brass plaque plinthed high on the village green, how "On the 4th March, 1781, there landed here the first European visitor to this group, Francisco Antonio Mourelle, Commander of the Spanish Frigate *La Princesa*, on her way from the Philippines to the Viceroy of Mexico."

In the company of a taxi-driver I visited four of the nearby villages, passing many Mormon and Methodist churches, the Electric Power Station and an ice-cream factory. In the countryside, only tracks connected the villages but the ubiquitous coconut palm grew everywhere.

A bit of class at sea

The ferry booking-office on Halaevalu wharf in the port of Neiafu was an unmarked 20-foot cargo container, open at the ends.

When I finally reached it in the long queue of clamouring Tongans at 11am on Monday, I was most disconcerted to be confronted with a demand for T170 — the cost of the two-berth cabin I had inadvertently booked two days before!

Trucks filled with cargo moved rapidly over the ramp through the bow-door and we passengers were motioned to embark by a steep, narrow gangway in the afterpart of the main deck.

I had to fight my way, carrying luggage, through the milling crowd, past

SHIPPING

people coming down, to find a few square feet of space on deck not already occupied by groups of men, women and children with mats, bundles, bags and boxes of provisions. According to a framed "Schedule of Fares", they had paid T42 per adult, T31 per student, and T21 per child.

The stewards wore no uniform and it was some time before I found one who spoke English. He led me down a companion-way into a central alleyway on the lower deck and indicated the aftermost of four cabins opening off it.

Each cabin measured about 12 by eight feet and was fitted with a fixed metal table, a padded seat, a metal locker and an electric fan. Doors from the corridor led to a canteen, a galley, and two tiled bathroom-toilets.

Forward was a mess-room with tables and benches, leading to a long compartment on both sides filled with small tables, all occupied at T74 each.

While the Stewardess was making up my lower bunk I noticed that the other cabins were occupied by families of seven, eight and 10 people, all with young children. With a good book the afternoon passed peacefully, but when I went up on deck I found about 500 men, women and children camped out on their mats under makeshift awnings between mooring-bollards, engine-room casings and hatch-coamings on the boat-deck, and the upper deck.

The canteen did a brisk trade in Sao

crackers, tea, coffee, milk in packets, beer and softdrinks, and cigarettes.

Between five and seven pm the long, low islands of the Ha'apai group came in sight close by on both sides, and soon afterwards a full Tongan meal was served to the cabin passengers.

Ventilation below deck was adequate, but when a boisterous sea burst into my cabin through the open port-hole I had to close it for an hour or so.

Apart from the customary noises of a ship at sea, there was the sound of music from overhead speakers, the hum of conversation from the mess-room, the continuous shuffle of feet descending the companion-way to use the toilets, and the throbbing of the propeller-shaft six feet under our deck.

By five o'clock next morning we had passed through the encircling reefs north of Tongatapu, and half an hour after berthing at Queen Salote wharf all the other passengers had disembarked.

That ship carried two well-equipped 50-person life-boats, six 20-person life-rafts, and the bridge was fitted with all the latest navigational aids like an autopilot, radar, engine-room controls, short-wave radio and a full set of charts.

Her certificate of registry showed she had been built in Bremen in 1981, had a gross tonnage of 707, a crew of 23 and was certified to carry 350 passengers.

If and when I make another trip to the Kingdom of Tonga I will surely travel in this one. □

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Sofrana Unilines operates a ro/ro container service every three weeks from Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Lautoka and Suva. Contact Sofrana Unilines (Aust) Pty Ltd, PO Box Q136, Queen Victoria Building, Sydney, NSW 2000, Australia. Tel (02) 2648944, Fax (02) 2676547, Tlx (71) A170090, Contact Andrew McLachlin, Sam Attaway.

Carpenters Shipping, Suva, Tel (679) 312244, Fax (679) 301572. Sofrana Unilines Suva, Tel (679) 315 645, Fax (679) 300057. Carpenters Shipping, Lautoka, Tel (679) 63988, Fax (679) 64896. Sofrana Unilines, Lautoka Tel (679) 62921, Fax (679) 64896.

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China Navigations New Guinea Pacific Line operates a regular container and breakbulk — heavy lift service from Hong Kong, Taiwan, Manila, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand to Port Moresby, Lae, Rabaul, Kieta and Honiara. Cargo from the same eastern ports to the South Pacific Ports of Noumea, Santo, Vila, Papeete, Pagopago, Apia, Nukualofa, Rarotonga and Tarawa will be shipped via Japan or Busan on the monthly Bali Hai Service. Contact Steamships Shipping, Port Moresby, PO Box 634, Tel 220283 or 220289.

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NZ - Fiji

Translink Pacific Shipping sail twice a month to Fiji, with Polynesian Link and Coral Links which operate out of Tauranga and Auckland. Fiji Agents are: Campbells Shipping Agency Ltd, Ph 314189 Fax 300144 Suva; Ph 62231 Fax 62251 Lautoka. Auckland Agents: McKay Shipping Ph (9) 390229 Fax (9) 303293. Tauranga Agents, searade agencies Ph (75) 754989 Fax (75) 758380.

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ACT Pace Pacific (ACTA Shipping) operates a fully containerised/break bulk service every 17-20 from Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane to Noumea, Suva and Lautoka. The vessels continue on to the West Coast of North America calling Honolulu at frequent intervals. Ships are ACT and ACT 12. Contacts: ACTA Pty Ltd, Sydney Ph 2869666, Tx 121369, Fx 2869610. ACTA Pty Ltd, Melbourne Ph 6112000, Tx 30949, Fx 6293055. ACTA Pty Ltd, Brisbane Ph 2213116m Tx 40719, Fx 2298143. SATO, Noumea Ph 281122, Tx 3163, Fx 278532. Burns Philp Shipping, Suva Ph 311777, Tx 2168, Fx 301127; Burns Philp Shipping, Lautoka Ph 60777, Tx 5146, Fx 65850.

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Japan - South Pacific Service

Bali Hai Line a joint service of China Navigation, Mitsui OSK Line and NYK Line operates a fully containerised/break bulk service from Korea, Japan to South Pacific ports on a monthly basis serving ports of Pusan, Kobe, Nagoya, Yokogama, Tarawa, Lautoka, Suva, Apia, Pago Pago, Papeete, Nuku'alofa, Noumea, Vila, Santo. The ships are also fully specialised to carry vehicles on Ro/Ro basis. Ships are Coral Islander and Pacific Islander. Contacts: John Swire & Sons, Tokyo Ph 32309220, Tx 22248, Fx 3239288; Nippon Yusen Kaisha, Tokyo Ph 3284516, Tx 22236, Fx 32846332; Mitsui OSK Lines, Tokyo Ph 35877086, Tx 22266, Fx

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Europe - South Pacific Service

Bank Line Limited operates a monthly service from United Kingdom, Europe to South Pacific ports. Vessels are fully equipped to carry containers, break bulk cargo and have deep tank facilities to carry bulk liquid such as oil, etc. The service operates from Hull, Rotterdam, Hamburg, Dunkirk, Le Havre, Papeete, Apia, Suva, Lautoka, Noumea, Vila, Santo, Honiara, Papua New Guinea Group, Singapore and back to Europe/Continent. Ships: Forthbank, Ivybank, Clydebank, Moraybank. Contacts: Bank Line, London Ph 2650808, Tx 887392, Fx 4814784, Bank Line, Lae Ph 421235, Tx 44265, Fx 422925; Bank Line, Sydney, Ph 9063173, Tx 24063, Fx 9061430; Burns Philp Shipping, Suva Ph 311777, Tx 2168, Fx 301127; Burns Philp Shipping, Lautoka Ph 60777, Tx 5146, Fx 65850.

Australia - Vanuatu - Fiji

Sitmar Cruises operates a year round cruise programme for Sydney to Vanuatu, Fiji. The programme also includes a number of calls to a number of islands such as Dravuni, Yasawa-i-Rara, Rotuma, Mystery Island, etc.

Contact: Sitmar Cruises, Sydney Ph 2560111, Tx 20712, Fx 2560101; Burns Philp Shipping, Suva Ph 311777, Tx 2168, Fx 301127; Burns Philp Shipping, Lautoka Ph 60777, Tx 5146, Fx 65850. □

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THE REGION

Palau pushed gently toward change

The long-lasting Micronesian stand-off may be drawing to a close. **Ian Williams** reports.

THE UN Trusteeship Council met in May to consider its last remaining charge — the Republic of Palau. For the first time, the US offered to consider independence, and hinted to Palauans that something must change.

On the Palauan side, President Ngirakel Etpison told the Trusteeship Council of his confidence that the US would agree with a recommendation for a joint working party to identify, discuss and recommend appropriate action.

The deal to terminate the trusteeship in December included a US promise to Soviets in closed-door Security Council sessions that they had no plans to build bases anywhere in the Pacific Trust Territory. Stella Guerra, US Assistant Secretary of State repeated the pledge to the Trusteeship Council saying the US did not intend to exercise its rights to do so under Trusteeship or a Compact.

That *should* open the way for trade-offs between the Compact and the Constitution. It also deprives Palau of leverage in extorting better financial terms from Compact renegotiations. In the post-Cold War era, Palau as a difficult-to-sink aircraft carrier lost its strategic relevance for the US — one reason Guerra and US Ambassador James Wilkinson were happy to offer independence.

Ambassador Wilkinson explained to *PIM* Free Association had defence implications which independence did not. "You can get to almost the same place by independence and a defence treaty, so we are prepared to discuss options."

It is another matter whether the Palauan people would be so happy with independence, which could end up as the Compact without the cash.

Washington Overture

US State Department representative in Koror, Lloyd Moss, sent a cable in April, clearly intended to be leaked, which said rational economic reasons existed for Palau not to ratify the compact of free association. Standards of living in FSM and Marshalls already lower than Palau's may decline further when funds from their respective Compacts of Free Association dry up and why should Palau, which is getting \$16 million a year from the US, follow suit? He points out that the degree of Palauan independence already gives them much of what they would gain despite recent US government attempts to exert more control.

His recommended the US set a date for the end of Trusteeship, to encourage

Palauans to make up their mind. "Indefinite prolongation of the last trusteeship on Earth — with its attendant unpredictable financial burdens, ambivalent political status, and legal problems, appears too high a price for palliation of concerns that a hypothetical independent Palauan government might some day deny the visit/transit of a US ship or aircraft," he concluded.

The Reaction

On April 29 the Ibedul, Yukata Gibbons, and Acting Rekli John Ngiraked, on behalf of the Council of Chiefs and the Council of Governors, moved a class action suit in Washington against the US Interior Department. The complaint in the District Court of Washington DC alleges that Interior Order 3142 took away self-government powers from Palau, going against the intention of the Trusteeship agreement, accepted by Congress in 1947, which bound the US to encourage self-government. Order 3142 gives extensive powers of interference in Palauan affairs. The US says this is response to the General Accounting Office Report on the IPSECO and related affairs which documented corruption and lack of judgment in some of Palau's dealings. Some Palauans, including petitioners to the Trusteeship Council, say it is a move to force Palau to come to terms with the Compact. The real answer is probably a mixture of both.

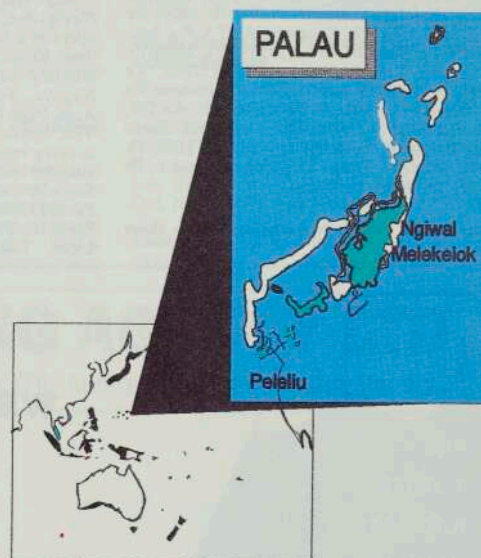
The Ibedul does admit to some self-interest in the claims. The order prohibits developments in the environmentally sensitive Rock Islands, where he owns property, without a public law from the Palau government. Another plaintiff, John Gibbons, Governor of Koror State, mentions an agreement with private investors to fund a Master Plan for his state in return for "certain preferential development rights", which is inhibited by 3142's insistence on a National Master Development Plan. Some opponents questioned whether the motivation for litigation owed more to property development than national development.

New York: The Ibedul and his co-

plaintiffs were also petitioners at the Trusteeship Council, where they made the same points, alleging that the islands had been reduced to a "welfare state" with free enterprise stifled.

They told *PIM* that they had agreed jointly with President Etpison to introduce the law-suit in Washington when the order was introduced, but they had only discovered in April that he was not joining them. "We have the support of the people and of the law — and a lot of support in Congress".

Hoping that the lawsuit will break the logjam, they say that the US should set a date — about five years ahead. Before then it should "inject the capital neces-



ary to build the infrastructure".

Professor Roger Clard of the International League for Human Rights, echoing the call for withdrawal of 3142, asked why it was not felt necessary to enact more control earlier, at the time of the "IPSECO scam" or in 1987, when there were murders over the Compact issue.

Bykow: *PIM* asked Ambassador Dmitry Bykow, the Soviet Representative on the Trusteeship Council, what had led to their agreement to the partial termination last year. "In 1986 we insisted that termination had to go to the Security Council. We never said we would veto the termination there, but the US was scared that we would, so never brought it there. Even a year ago, although there were less harsh words in the Trusteeship Council, but the same substance — confrontational".

He said the breakthrough was due to two factors: the new political thinking

THE REGION

after the Cold War and, in December, US advice that it did not intend to build future bases in the Pacific Territory.

Did they have any preference between Free Association and independence? "The emphasis on free choice has been stressed, even in the Security Council, but it is for them to argue over terms. But the new situation makes it easier to take into account the will of the people... It is also, I think, the first time it has been suggested that independence is an option."

What about the rumours of a unilateral termination of trusteeship? "Termination is of course for the Security Council — that's what the deadlock was between '86 and '90."

Uherbelau: Victor Uherbelau, Foreign Minister of Palau, explained that when Free Association was developed back in 1969 it was modelled on New Zealand's relationship with Cook Islands and Niue, but with the addition of control of foreign relations excluding defence and security.

He cannot understand the logjam over the Nuclear or the land-use provisions. "They have always told us that there is no future intention of using the land, but they want the option. It's so ephemeral."

And he does not necessarily accept Moss's contention that the Compact is a less eligible option than the current status. He suggested that it was better to have 15 years assured funding than the present situation in which, "so far we have to beg Washington every year to lobby for finance, so what Lloyd Moss said was premature, a value judgment."

What did he think of the threats to terminate? "You can't just terminate the trusteeship or you'd create a void, a vacuum... (but) during the talks at the State Department two weeks ago they spoke of five or six years from now. We do have to have a target date on which to work."

As he told the Trusteeship Council, agreement was in reach if the US could agree to take the defence aspects of the Compact into a separate treaty, and ensure that that treaty had no nuclear options. If Free Association failed, the only viable option was independence. "If mutually agreed terms means conditional independence, then that's no different from the Compact of Free Association. Territorial and Commonwealth status are ruled out because of the lack of control over citizenship — and hence land ownership."

What about the IPESCO debt, where the bankers are just waiting for the Compact Funds to pay off their claims?

"We wanted a deal that would make it all self-financing. And we said the Compact funds would not be used as collateral for the loan. If... the project was self-financing like they said, then why did they need collateral?" □

Reshaping the role of women

PALAU'S 15,000 people have a Federation of 16 states, with a bicameral legislature, the OEK (*Olbiil Era Kelulau*). The Council of Chiefs represent traditional government, at least in an advisory capacity. But one very powerful aspect of traditional power is not so well represented — Palauan women.

Traditionally, chiefs were chosen by women on the basis of descent from the female line, and they could be sacked by them. So, has the power of Palauan women been eroded in the Constitution adopted in 1979? *Pacific Islands Monthly* posed the question to two Palauan women in New York for the UN Trusteeship Council.

In February, Sandra Pierantozzi, Palau's Minister for Administration, was the second woman appointed to the cabinet after 10 years as Clerk to the Senate. She explained that women's power was traditionally behind the scenes, with the highest ranking woman deciding who the chief will be.

"On traditional things we still have that power, so I don't see that the constitution takes power from them. In fact it opens the door for women."

The constitution allows women to speak out without subservience to the *Bilung*, or highest ranking woman — "so many educated women welcome the democracy." It also allows women to hold office in their own right, instead of through male nominees, and she would like to see more women take office, as they have in Guam.

She thinks the US directive 3142 taking power back is a means of putting pressure on Palau over the Compact. But it might misfire, like the leaked Cable sent by State Department staffer Lloyd

Moss advocating the US unilaterally set a date to terminate trusteeship. "The cable admits that the Compact is no good, so there is no reason why they should push it down our throats," she explains.

So how does she see the constitutional impasse resolving itself?

"If the nuclear provisions are taken out of the Compact, then there's no need to amend the constitution. On the other hand maybe we should also amend the constitution — but a lot of Palauans are very protective of it."

Meikam Weers, a Palauan who now lives in San Francisco, is a poet not a politician. She writes in English and Palauan, and was addressing the Trusteeship Council on behalf of the Otil A Beluad, (Anchor of Our Land) organisation. She thinks the 1979 constitution, although it united many people on the nuclear issue, divided traditional society based on consensus within the clans and villages, bound together by a web of alliances.

"Instead of clan, family and village, it's now money and votes. The impetus is no longer the accountability of the people, but of the rich". She also believes women should participate more, but in a political as well as traditional way through a Council of Women.

She told *PIM*, Palau could combine the old and new cultures and provide a sophisticated model for the world.

It is a prospect which may not appeal to the United States, where Nancy Reagan's power behind the throne was not seen as a unmitigated blessing. But then, the prospect of more Pacific islands with the obduracy of Palau is not likely to please the White House either. □

— By Ian Williams



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THE REGION

High chiefs take court action

By David North

THERE is a new ingredient in the ongoing relationship struggle between Washington and Palau — a lawsuit filed against the US Government by Palau's traditional paramount chief, Ibedul Yutaka Gibbons.

The Ibedul was joined in the court action by other high chiefs in Palau, and by the Council of State Governors, but not by either the President or the national legislature (see story this page).

The suit was filed against US Secretary of Interior, Manuel Lujan, and Assistant Secretary for Territorial and Island Affairs, Stella Guerra, in the US District Court for the District of Columbia (the location of the Interior offices.)

The suit seeks to undo decades of Mainland policies, and change a variety of island and Mainland governmental practices. Its objectives include:

- termination of United Nations Trusteeship on terms accepted by Palau;
- expenditure of unspecified amounts of Mainland money to restore Palau's infrastructure to the level it was during the height of Japanese activity;
- partial or total repeal of the recent order of the Secretary of Interior, which limited the extent of Palauan self-government.

Co-signing the lawsuit were John Ngriraked, Acting Reklai and vice chairman of the Palau Council of Chiefs, John Gibbons, the Governor of the State of Koror (and chairman of the Palau Governors Conference), Moses Uludong, Governor of the State of Ngchesar (and secretary of the Governors Conference), the Palau Council of Chiefs and the Palau Conference of Governors.

While island-based suits against Washington are usually futile, this one raises two interesting sets of issues — post-war destruction of roads and buildings by the US Army, and imposition by the US Government, or its toleration of, "the welfare state, massive government employment and corruption."

On the first the Ibedul's press kit states: "During the Japanese occupation of Palau there were 95 miles of paved roads in Palau. After World War II these roads were destroyed by US forces. In 1991 there are only nine miles of paved roads in Palau."

Similarly: "prior to 1947 there were more than 950 reinforced concrete buildings in the capital city, Koror. Under the administration of the United States these buildings were dynamited and bulldozed. Today most structures in Koror are constructed of corrugated tin."

The Ibedul's colleagues say the US military wanted to destroy remnants of

Japan, and install good, US-built roads and buildings; but destruction took place and reconstruction did not.

The press kit continues: "Prior to 1947 Palau had a water system capable of meeting the needs of all its people and an electrical generating system capable of providing dependable power to the inhabitants of major villages. Today few villages — including the capital city Koror, have dependable water and electrical services."

The Ibedul's colleagues said that Palau's new, controversial, and not-yet-paid-for electrical generating system serves only about two-thirds of the population (those in and near Koror) and is not totally reliable.

The Ibedul's press statement also recalled that "prior to the Second World War Palau had a diverse economy with a thriving private sector... between 1924 and 1936 Palau was a net exporting country of agricultural and manufactured goods... [but] today the mainstay of the Palauan economy is a bloated, inefficient and unproductive bureaucracy fueled by US tax dollars. It is a false economy based on government employees."

The lawsuit, and accompanying documents and statements, speak sharply of Mainland policies which are not conducive to self-government. Last year's secretarial order, limiting the power of

the Palauan government to pass legislation and spend money, is regarded by the Ibedul as yet another effort "to put pressure on the people of Palau" to accept the Compact (with its controversial provisions about storage of US nuclear weapons on the islands.)

The Ibedul stressed his continuing support of the island state's constitution which apparently would need to be amended were the Compact approved. Without stating his (apparently negative) feelings on the Compact, the Ibedul said he wanted his people to make up their own mind and, later, that he wanted them to have sufficient education to discuss the alternatives.

At no point in the proceedings did anyone raise the issue of the supermajority — three-quarters approval — which has stalled US-Palau relations. There have been seven referenda, and the proposed Compact has always secured a heavy majority, but never three-quarters of the vote. No-one has moved to amend the island constitution to eliminate the need for a three-quarters vote, and the self-imposed stalemate continues.

Oral arguments before the not-yet-chosen US District Court judge will not take place for months. There are the likely appeals, so a final decision may not be reached for years. After conferring with allies and potential allies in the Congress, the Ibedul planned to spend some time in New York, carrying his case to the United Nations Trusteeship Council, before returning to Palau. □

The Ibedul's anomalous role

"FORGIVE my ignorance of the intricacies of your government, but would not your suit be stronger if it were joined by the President of Palau?"

This question, asked by a puzzled Associate Press (AP) reporter at the Ibedul's press conference, underlined some of the handicaps in the lawsuit filed by Palau's traditional chief, Yuytaka Gibbons, and his visit to Washington.

The Ibedul's efforts on behalf of his countrymen were dogged with obstacles, some self-imposed.

The first problem, identified by the AP writer, was the clearly-visible split within the island's Establishment. The traditional chiefs and the governors of the island states (there are 16 of them for a population of 15,000 people) joined the Ibedul, but neither the Federal legislature (the OEK) nor President Ngrirakel Epison were signatories to the suit. (The Ibedul answer to the AP reporter was simply that "the traditional leaders are very powerful in our country".)

A second problem was the afore-

mentioned intricate leadership structure. A traditional leader who is not the elective leader but who does play a role in politics is a difficult proposition for American minds. (The Ibedul was once mayor of Koror, and is important in the politics of the island territory.)

The third problem was a lack of clarity in the suit itself — it seeks a termination of the Trusteeship under terms acceptable to Palau, but sets neither those terms nor a date. Similarly, it seeks funds from Washington but does not specify an amount.

Another problem was a lack of planning. Copies of the all-important court filing were not available at the time of the Ibedul's press conference. And, though the Ibedul's party had been hoping for a member of Congress to join the suit as a plaintiff, none had signed on by the time the suit was filed on April 29.

The final problem was the Ibedul's decision to conduct his contacts with the press through an interpreter, despite having spent six years studying in Guam, and as a soldier in the US army. □

SPORT

Tackling the 'bad boy' tag

By Loveni Enari

WHEN the Western Samoan rugby side lost to Auckland last month at Eden Park in the "test" of their five-match tour, most of the crowd walked away in awe of the mighty Auckland machine that rolled the Islanders 42-3.

The Auks had ruthlessly exposed deficiencies in the Samoans' lineouts, scrums and competition for the loose ball and most post-match discussions were about the merits of the Auckland side at the after-match function. But a hard-core group of tour supporters was mulling over their drinks and discussing, of all things, respect.

Admittedly, the talk went, there was a lot of work needed before the World Cup on the lineouts, the scrums, the loose ball and all the rest of it. But first there was this "respect" question that had to be resolved.

They were referring to the fact Auckland seemed so totally in control of the match from the start. That control seemed to make an Auckland side, typically arrogant, puff their chests even more. They went slightly overboard as they illegally pushed the Samoans around in the lineouts, stomped on wayward bodies in rucks and mauls, and rubbed in the fact the Samoans still have some way to go before they approach the level of the champion Ranfurly Shield side.

A Sunday newspaper went through the match on video the following week and pointed out seven incidents of dirty play caught by the cameras — five from Auckland. The Auckland and All Blacks flanker Alan Whetton was suspended for three weeks for a dangerous piece of tap-dancing on the head of Samoan first five Stephen Bachop.

The Samoan No. 8 complained about Auckland players swearing at him and punching him. And through it all the Samoans simply put their heads down and tried to get on with the game.

Tour manager Tate Simi said after the match the players were wary of doing anything that would damage their reputation as clean players.

"We've been branded as head hunters and we've been trying to live down that reputation for a long time now," Simi said. "Even in the club game back home that pressure is there. So when we go overseas our problem now is that when the silly things happen in a game the boys are not retaliating.

"The boys had a lot of respect for Auckland being the great side that they are, but it was almost too much ... We're not advocating dirty play but there is a time when someone should be whacked, but discreetly."

Basically that was what the supporters were talking about. Their view was that one of the Samoan players should have sorted out the illegalities early in the game and, quite frankly, punched the living daylights out of one of the opposition — if only to say, "Hey, we can do it too, but we prefer to play rugby so let's get on with it."

But nobody did and Auckland con-

tinued to hand out a hiding to the Samoans. In the long run it was probably a good thing — it means there will be no fear of big heads leading up to their assault on the World Cup in October.

They did have reason to fear big heads because overall the tour was a resounding success for the Samoans who finished with three wins and two losses.

Their first win, in the tour opener against Waikato, was the best. Waikato were runners-up in last year's national championship and boasted five All Blacks in their forward pack which couldn't dominate the Samoans.

Former Auckland prop and Samoan captain, Peter Fatialofa, summed up the enormity of the win for the Samoans: "Waikato have beaten Australia, Argentina and Wales.

But have they beaten Western Samoa? No way."

It's no coincidence the three countries Fatialofa used as examples are pooled with Samoa in the World Cup. That was the most pleasing aspect of the tour, said Simi.

"The win helped a lot to set the mood for the rest of the tour. It lifted the spirit of the team making them realise if they play to their full potential they can beat a team like Waikato."

He said the tour had been a great success in its results, and by lifting the profile of their country and its rugby.

"We were given the chance to come here and set the record straight as to where our rugby is right now and we've showed that though we're not up to Auckland's standard, we are definitely getting there," he said.

Since the tour further fixtures between the Samoans and the local unions have become a possibility. There's talk of including Western Samoa in the elite South Pacific competition and maybe even a match against the All Blacks.

But Simi is under no illusions. There's a ton of work to do, including organising a calendar three or four years in advance instead of year by year.

"Basically we have to adopt a more professional approach," he said.

The same could be said for the players. Their discipline throughout the tour was exemplary even under severe provocation. They lived down that bad boy reputation, Western Samoa is growing up in the rugby world and their World Cup quarter-final prospects are looking rosy. If only they can sort out this "respect" problem. □



Dangerous dance: Alan Whetton soars for Auckland watched by Samoa's half back Matthew Vola



South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission Director and Deputy Director Positions

Applications are invited from nationals of SOPAC member countries for the following senior positions in the Technical Secretariat of SOPAC, based in Suva, Fiji:

- (1) Director : for a three year appointment from January, 1992
- (2) Deputy Director for a three year appointment from 1 January, 1992

SOPAC

SOPAC is an inter-governmental organisation comprising fourteen South Pacific countries as members*. Its primary objectives is to assist its member countries in the identification and assessment of the marine mineral and other non-living resource potential of the offshore areas within their Exclusive Economic Zones, in the management of development in their coastal areas, and in the training of their nationals in all relevant areas within the SOPAC Work Programme.

TECHNICAL SECRETARIAT

The Technical Secretariat is the executive arm of SOPAC. The Director is responsible to the Governing Council of SOPAC for the overall management and operation of the Technical Secretariat. The Deputy Director is responsible to the Director for managing the SOPAC Technical Work Programme.

The SOPAC Technical Work Programme is reviewed and formulated by the member countries during their Annual Session each year.

The staff establishment of the Technical Secretariat is currently 50 people of which more than half are professional technical staff recruited internationally.

QUALIFICATIONS

Applicants for both positions should have a sound understanding of the Pacific Islands region and should be capable of developing effective relations with the member countries of SOPAC and with other Governments and organisations providing funding, technical and scientific support to SOPAC.

In addition, the following specific requirements will also apply:

Director: Applicants should have a high degree of ability and extensive experience at a senior level in administration and management; a proven record of successful team leadership; and demonstrable negotiating and communication skills. Extensive experience in dealing with Pacific Island Governments and with donor sources would be a considerable advantage.

Deputy Director: Applicants should have a degree in one of the Earth Sciences with team leadership and management experience in addition to technical experience in their area of expertise. Work experience in the SOPAC region, familiarity with current marine geoscience programmes in the South Pacific, and a proven ability to work with member country nationals would be an advantage.

Remuneration

An attractive salary will be offered, depending on the successful applicant's qualifications and experience.. The overall remuneration and other terms and conditions of employment for professional officers in SOPAC will apply. These are comparable to that of similar senior positions in other South Pacific regional organisations.

An appointee who is not a citizen or permanent resident of Fiji may be granted full diplomatic privileges by the Government of Fiji.

Appointment

The Governing Council of SOPAC will decide appointments to the above positions during its Annual Session in early October 1991.

The appointment for each position will be for a 3-year contract. In the third year of a tenure, the post will be advertised to allow the Governing Council of SOPAC to award a new three-year contract from the end of the current contract. An incumbent will be eligible for a further three year contract.

The current incumbent Director will complete his second three-year contract on 12 January 1992.

The current incumbent Deputy Director will complete his first three-year contract on 31 December 1991.

Documentation

All applications should be fully documented and include details of work experience and qualifications and the names of at least three referees. Applications, to be marked "Director Application" or "Deputy Director Application", as appropriate should be addressed to the Chairman of SOPAC and should reach the following address by 31 July 1991:

**SOPAC Technical Secretariat
Private Mail Bag
Suva, Fiji**

Further information on the above positions may be obtained from Mr Umar Farook, Finance and Administration Controller, Technical Secretariat on Telephone 381-377 or Fax 370-040.

* Member countries of SOPAC are AUSTRALIA, COOK ISLANDS, FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA, FIJI, KIRIBATI, GUAM, MARSHALL ISLANDS, NEW ZEALAND, PAPUA NEW GUINEA, SOLOMON ISLANDS, TONGA, TUVALU, VANUATU, WESTERN SAMOA.

BOOKS

Testimonies of nuclear times

Chronology: The French Presence in the South Pacific (Greenpeace International, Auckland, 1991); **Testimonies: Witnesses of French Nuclear Testing in the South Pacific** (Greenpeace International, Auckland, 1990); **Global Warming: The Greenpeace Report**, editing by Jeremy Leggett (Oxford University Press, London, 1990); **The Greenpeace Book of the Nuclear Age**, by John May (Victor Gollancz, London, 1989).
Reviewed by David Robie.

EVERYONE is doomed, Edwin Haoa was told after a "successful" test in French Polynesia. They, or their children, would all experience health problems in 15 to 20 years' time.

Haoa, a Tahitian leader of a decontamination team on Moruroa and Fangataufa atolls during the atmospheric nuclear tests, is one of two Maohi witnesses who spoke out in the New Zealand-made independent television documentary *Niukila Fri Pasifik* in 1989. He is among 26 people who give hair-raising accounts of the cultural, economic, environmental, health and social devastation of 44 atmospheric and 120 underground nuclear tests in *Testimonies*. This work hardly "proves" a relationship between the nuclear tests and increased rates of cancer, stillbirths or other medical complaints. The editors admit an exhaustive medical survey of the 12,000 people who worked on the

atolls, and analysis of health statistics over the past two decades would be needed to show if there is a health legacy comparable to Micronesia. But France would hardly allow this.

Many of the testimonies were gathered in secret during 1987 by Dr Andy Biederman, a Swiss doctor and crewman on the bombed Greenpeace flagship *Rainbow Warrior*.

The book is a moving account but Greenpeace has been slow in publishing — three years is too long to wait for such important testimonies.

Chronology, the just-published companion volume to *Testimonies*, is packed with useful data on the French presence in Polynesia, but it hardly lives up to its subtitle. In the opening double-page map of the "French presence in the Pacific", for example, there is no indication of Wallis and Futuna.

The entries on New Caledonia are at times inaccurate and the editors appear to have relied heavily on inadequate newspaper reports. The assassinations of Jean-Marie Tjibaou and Yeiwene, and the Ouvea massacre, are brief.

There is not a single bibliography title about New Caledonia. Still the material on Tahiti is a must for any Pacific library.

Documenting "hidden history" on a far grander scale than *Testimonies* are *The Greenpeace Book of the Nuclear Age* and *Global Warming*. The former is a devastating 378-page account of civil and military nuclear accidents until 1989, including a revealing and appalling description of Chernobyl.

The second demonstrates how solutions to the global warming threat are obvious, but they hinge on paradigm shifts in human behaviour.

The nuclear age "began with two promises: a Promise of Plenty and a Promise of Security. After 50 years, our bombs and reactors have failed to deliver either of these". But the end of the Cold War and the advantage of global communications could lead to a new age, based on co-operation and ideas rather than confrontation and suspicion. Nuclear weapons have no place in such an age. ☐



French presence: a soldier in the South Pacific

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Applications are invited for the following positions with the South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA):

1. Computer Services Manager;
2. Finance/Administration Officer;
3. Manager, Multilateral Fisheries Treaty;
4. Senior Analyst Programmer; and
5. Fisheries Development Officer.

(All the positions should become vacant in 1992, the first 3 in January, the fourth in April and the last one in July).

The Agency was established to encourage regional co-operation in fisheries development and management among independent South Pacific States. It is based in Honiara in the Solomon Islands, has a small professional staff with economic, legal, computer and technical fisheries expertise and serves the 16 South Pacific member nations.

1. Computer Services Manager

Applicants should have appropriate academic/technical qualifications and experience in developing and managing statistical data acquisition and processing systems. As tuna constitutes the major marine resources of the region, fisheries (particularly tuna) resources/industry related experience would be an advantage.

The Manager, who is responsible for the effective use of FFA's computer and communication facilities is expected to advise member countries on optimum computer systems to satisfy the needs of their fisheries sectors.

2. Finance Administration Officer

Applicants should have appropriate academic/technical qualifications in business administration or have formal qualifications in accountancy. Several years of experience in government or international agency service is desirable, but relevant private industry experience will qualify.

Duties entail assisting management with administrative work concerned with staff conditions of work and service, supervision of administrative work staff, management of Agency accounts including financial commitments and budgetary organisation, and all other general administrative work involved in the day to day running of the Agency.

Applicants should have sound working knowledge of computers including experience with a computerised accounting package.

3. Manager, Multilateral Fisheries Treaty

The Manager is responsible for the administration of the Multilateral Fisheries Treaty with the United States Government, which provides for the regulation of US tuna fishing vessels in the South Pacific.

The position carries a high degree of responsibility as the Manager will be extensively involved in contact with various agencies in FFA Member Governments (includ-

ing fisheries, legal, surveillance and finance agencies), with US Government and with fishing operators.

The appointee should have a sound administrative experience and an understanding of South Pacific fisheries development. Experience in the regulation of foreign fishing vessels would be an advantage.

4. Senior Analyst Programmer

Applicants should have appropriate academic/technical qualifications and experience in developing and managing statistical data acquisition and processing systems. The SAP assists the Computer Services Manager in the design, development and maintenance of fisheries-oriented ADP systems and equipment. Experience with UNIX and Oracle computer systems would also be an advantage.

5. Fisheries Development Officer

Applicants should have extensive and sound background in fisheries with detailed knowledge of South Pacific tuna fisheries. Post graduate qualifications in a fisheries related discipline is an advantage. Experience in the establishment and development of fisheries in developing countries also is an advantage.

Essential Requirements for all positions

Applicants should have:

- an ability to work as part of a small inter-disciplinary team and to supervise consultants;
- an ability to work without detailed direction, and to meet project deadlines under difficult circumstances;
- willingness to undertake considerable international travel;
- personal qualities of leadership, initiative, resourcesfulness and sensitivity.
- administrative abilities to manage staff and to supervise short term consultancies.
- administrative ability to manage staff and to supervise consultants.

Full details including duty statements, terms and conditions of employment, and qualifications required for each position are available on request.

The appointees will be based in Honiara but may be required to travel widely especially in the South Pacific region. A tax free salary at a regional level applies, with transportation, housing, child and education allowances, recreation leave and superannuation provisions.

Applicants should detail education and employment background with particulars of three referees with whom the applicant has been associated in a professional capacity and should address all applications **which close on Wednesday 31 July 1991** and enquiries to

**The Director, Forum Fisheries Agency
P.O. Box 629, HONIARA, Solomon Islands**

PACIFIC PEOPLE

Keeping a balance in times of turmoil

By Martin Tiffany

PETER Sobby Tsiamalili sat in his Suva office and emphasised that he had to "maintain the balance." He was speaking of his time on Bougainville island in Papua New Guinea during the Bougainville Copper Mine crisis when he had to keep an equilibrium between the national security forces and the Bougainvilleans. But he could easily have been describing his own life.

Maintaining the balance is what Tsiamalili, 39, PNG's new ambassador to Fiji, has done a lot of during his 19 years in government.

Being a Bougainvillean, from the village of Torokina, and working for the national government on Bougainville almost cost him his life because the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) saw him as a traitor. To this day he maintains it is nothing short of a miracle that he is alive.

In January and February last year there was bloody fighting between the security forces and the BRA, resulting in a death toll well past 100 lives. The next month saw a ceasefire, followed by withdrawal of PNG soldiers and police. Somehow, someone forgot to tell Tsiamalili.

He recalls that it was mid-March. "Suddenly everybody was gone — no police, no security forces — I was a sitting duck," said Tsiamalili. The BRA wasted no time and abducted him on Sunday March 11. He was to be shot the following morning at their camp in the hills. When they captured him they also destroyed his home in Kieta, and with it 18 years of his and his family's lives. Fortunately he had sent his family off Bougainville earlier after numerous threats to his and their lives — they left hastily with not much more than their clothes.

On the day he was to be executed he was positioned to be shot and a gun pointed at his head. "I thought that was it, it was just a matter of pulling the trigger. But at the last moment they changed their minds and demanded that I tell them everything I knew," Tsiamalili recalls. "They wanted me to explain about papers and documents



Peter Tsiamalili: survived bloody fighting and abduction on Bougainville

that they had found at my home, and I told them what I could."

He was held for three-and-a-half weeks, wondering if he would live or die.

"During that time one thought kept going through my mind — if there is a will there is a way," he recalled. A will there was as he tried to hold on to his sanity, managing only 15 to 20 minutes of sleep a day. Tsiamalili said at one point he thought he had lost his mind and had to do simple arithmetic to ensure he was still sane. "I did sums like six multiply by three to see how long I would take to answer it."

Most of his days in captivity were spent praying — the result of a strict Catholic upbringing. The full details of his time in captivity cannot be released due to security precautions and to protect people who helped him. However, with the help of a writer, Tsiamalili hopes to publish his autobiography next year.

After almost being shot again by the

BRA and a failed attempt on his life by one of the BRA soldiers, Tsiamalili managed to slip away to Kieta and hide while figuring a way to get off Bougainville. "I knew I only had a slim chance of getting out alive but I knew I had to try or die in the attempt as if I got

DEATH NOTICE

MACKENZIE DONALD MAXWELL (MAX). 12th April, 1991.

At Sydney, NSW, Australia : Lately of Nagasau, Nacaugi, Tuvununu Estates, Taveuni Island.

Dearly loved brother of Alec & William Mackay. Esme, Viti & Sara (Nan) Mackenzie. Brother in law of Fred Beddows, Robert Snodgrass and Claude Pocock (All Dec). The last of the Mackenzies and Mackay's of Taveuni and Suva.

Loved and so special uncle of Talei Irwin and Jan Ranson. Great uncle of Elizabeth, Catherine & Marisa Irwin, Sara, Jane and Kate Ranson.

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captured again I would be killed anyway.

His rations were running out — he had sipped from a bottle of tomato sauce to sustain himself; and he found it difficult to find anyone to help because everyone was scared. He almost gave up hope, before finding someone.

His helper wrapped Tsiamalili in a fishing net and tarpaulin and, under the guise of going fishing, took him to a boat waiting six miles out of the harbour. "I owe my life to two guys - a jungle guy and a boat guy," said Tsiamalili.

He then went to his family at his wife's village of Bakubari in the Northern Province, where he thought his troubles would be over. But again trouble haunted him — the first defence force soldier killed on Bougainville was from the Northern Province, a rumour spread that Tsiamalili was collaborating with the BRA and a gang was hired to assassinate him.

But one of the gang members was a close relative of his wife and he looked upon Tsiamalili as a brother-in-law. Tsiamalili was alerted and managed to talk with the gang and sort things out.

Another incident occurred during the Bougainville crisis when he was beaten and almost killed by the security forces because they thought he was a traitor. He admits he would have liked to stay in his wife's village for the rest of his life and forget about the troubles of the world, but duty called and he went to Port Moresby to join the Prime Minister's Department. With more security problems in Port Moresby he was sent to New York as PNG's United Nations representative to cover the 45th session of the UN.

In December 1990 he was surprised to learn he had been appointed Ambassador to Fiji. Surprised because he didn't expect such an appointment so soon and because he was still physically and mentally winding down. But he took the post with confidence and is looking forward to the challenge. From Fiji he also looks after Nauru, Tuvalu, Kiribati and the Federated States of Micronesia.

Tsiamalili's career in government started as a Cadet Patrol Officer looking after government functions in the district at a station in East New Britain in 1971. He served in other stations and at headquarters as Special Fields Projects Officer and Acting District Officer Lands. From 1973 to 1975 he took a diploma in public administration and graduated with distinctions.

He then went to his birthplace — the Bougainville province of North Solomons, as a government liaison officer to monitor the situation because there was talk of secession from PNG. A Republic of North Solomons was declared on September 1, 1975, 15 days before PNG independence on September 16.

A delegation led by the then Prime Minister, Sir Michael Somare, currently the Foreign Minister, met with Bougainville leaders and reached a compromise which led to the birth of Provincial Government — North Solomons became the first province to get Provincial Government.

At the end of 1976 with the establishment of the Provincial Government of North Solomons there were certain things the leaders of North Solomons demanded. They put out a list of names of people instrumental in carrying out the national Government's responsibilities and they wanted these people off Bougainville — Tsiamalili's name was on that list. He was forced to leave his home but he vowed he would be back.

In 1977 he furthered his studies with a Diploma in Commerce from the University of PNG. After graduating in 1978 he held various positions in the provinces and at headquarters before studying Urban Planning and Development under an AIDAB scholarship in Sydney. He returned to become Principal Government Liaison Officer.

At that time the post of Deputy Provincial Commissioner of North Solomons became vacant and the Administrative Secretary in North Solomons offered Tsiamalili the job.

He turned down a high position with the national Government and was in the North Solomons before they knew he was. His transfer was formalised six months later.

In 1985 he took over as Administrative Secretary of Department of North Solomons and held that position until his narrow escape from Bougainville in 1990. Despite all that has happened he still vows he will return. "It is my home, I will return," he explains simply.

For now, he and his wife Ruth and their four children are settling well into Fiji. Tsiamalili says it is the first place after the New York appointment where they can have peace of mind.

PNG, Tsiamalili feels, can learn a lot from cottage industries in Fiji and Fiji can offer experience, because small scale industries will benefit the large rural community in PNG. Self-help and rural development programmes are one of his pet "after-hours" interests and he talks with enthusiasm about how rural people can help themselves — they just need to be shown how.

On the future, he says that after 19 years in government he would like to retire after this appointment to go home, and be a simple villager helping out in the village. He also has plans to continue his studies and do his Masters in Public Administration. In 1984 he did Post Graduate studies in Manchester University in England, studying Rural Development and Planning. □



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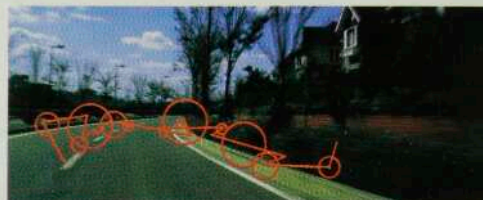
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