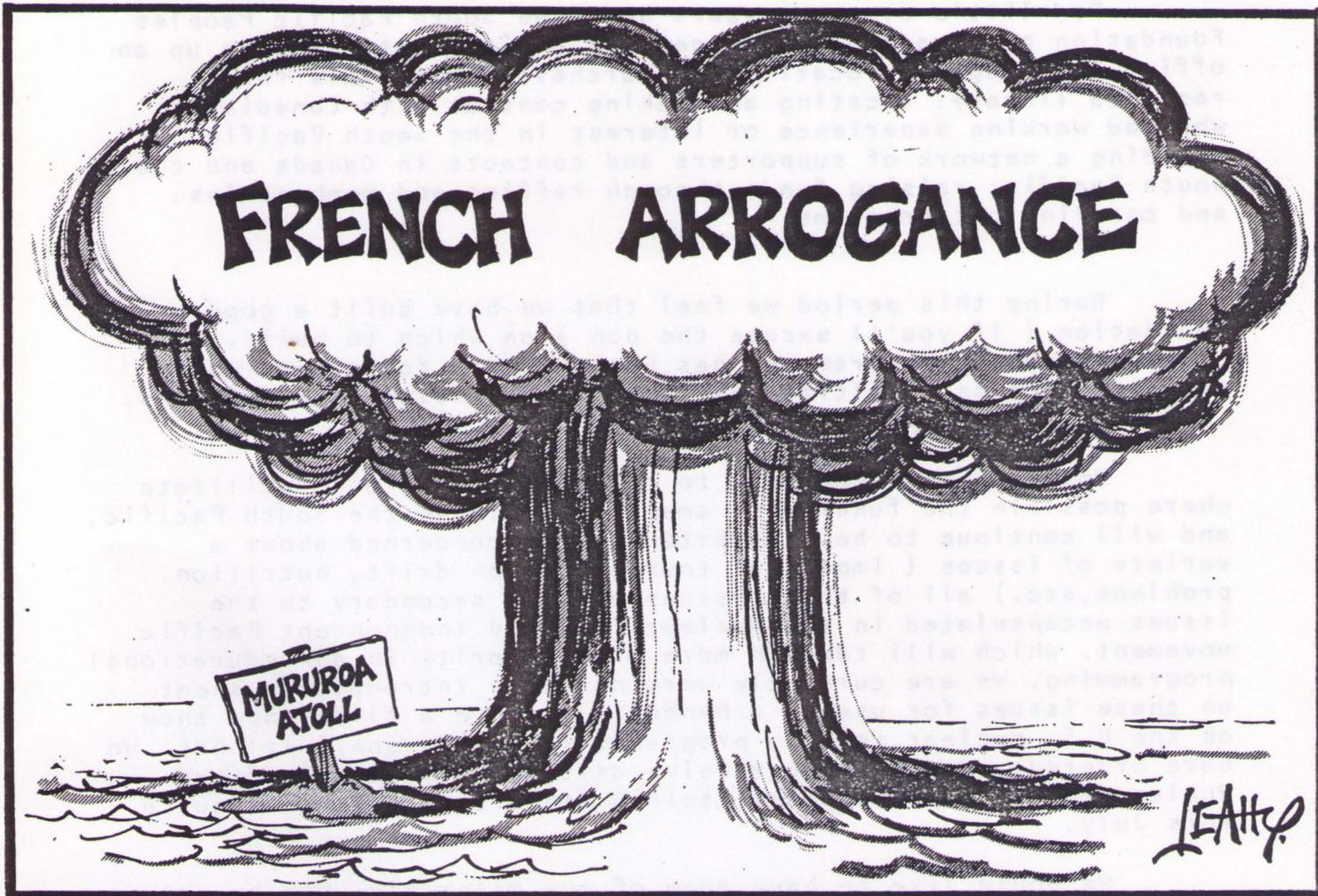


Tok Blong SPPF

#6 FALL 1983



FROM: THE AUSTRALIAN - MAY 30/83

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SPPF FOCUSES

For little over two years now, the South Pacific Peoples Foundation of Canada has been getting on its feet: setting up an office and program; locating and purchasing materials for a resource library; locating and making contact with Canadians who had working experience or interest in the South Pacific; building a network of supporters and contacts in Canada and the South Pacific; raising funds through raffles and memberships; and carrying out programs.

During this period we feel that we have built a good foundation (if you'll excuse the pun) on which to build. Of necessity our programming has been broadly focused as we tried to address a multitude of development issues and concerns.

While we will continue to raise money for and facilitate where possible the funding of small projects in the South Pacific, and will continue to be interested in and concerned about a variety of issues (impact of tourism, urban drift, nutrition problems, etc.) all of these issues will be secondary to the issues encapsulated in the Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific movement, which will take on more of a priority in our educational programming. We are currently working on an introductory sheet on these issues for use as a handout. We have a slide/tape show on the U.S. nuclear testing programme in the Marshall Islands. We have ordered and expect to receive anytime a videotape of the Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific Conference held in Vanuatu this July.

We would like to have more of our materials used by groups and individuals willing to set up a showing, and would be happy to make a resource listing available upon request. We are also interested to know of individuals and groups in Canada willing to act as active disseminators of nuclear free Pacific information, and to respond to urgent appeals as and when necessary.

If you are not yourself interested, please let us know of others who you think might be. Our address: SPPF, 303-620 View St, Victoria, B.C. V8W 1J6.

The South Pacific Peoples Foundation of Canada is a not-for-profit registered Canadian charitable organization undertaking educational work in Canada and project support work in the South Pacific islands. We welcome donations to assist our work and can provide donors official receipts for income tax purposes (#0452177-09-28).

SPPF, 303-620 View Street, Victoria, B.C., Canada
V8W 1J6 (604) 381-4131

New Caledonia: Independence Front Seeks U.N. Committee Hearing

The 1983 Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific Conference took the strongest possible position of support for the Kanak Independence Front and their plans for independence by September 1984. Together with East Timor, support for New Caledonia is an immediate priority for the conference delegates.

The Kanak Independence Front is made up of five political parties: Union Caledonienne, Liberation Kanak Socialiste, Parti Socialiste Caledonien, Front Uni De Liberation Kanake, Union Progressiste Mellanesienne. Their present plan for independence focuses on getting placed on the agenda of the UN Committee on Decolonization. The immediate goal toward that end is to join the next South Pacific Forum meeting this August 29-30 when it meets in Canberra, Australia and gains its support toward UN recognition.

The Vanuatu government will sponsor this request. In 1982 the Front succeeded in gaining the recognition of the Non-Aligned countries in their New Delhi summit. They also gained the support of the International Socialist Conference at Albufeira, Portugal.

While pursuing this strategy for international support, the Front is also working within established French institutions. Round table discussions with the French government to discuss New Caledonia's status concluded recently. In his speech to the 1983 NFIP conference, Yann Uregei, spokesperson for the Front, explained their approach to these discussions. "The purpose of the Independence Front delegation is to discuss a status of full autonomy, set up a schedule for the independence and fix the date, aiming for September 1984," he said. "If this is not seen through, the Independence Front will have to leave the round table." At the July roundtable talks in Paris, a document was drafted at the conclusion of the talks which, while recognizing the Kanak people's legitimate right to independence, did not spell out a timetable for its attainment. The Independence Front subsequently drew up the adjoining position paper, outlining the unacceptability of a statute of internal autonomy without specific provisions for independence.

At the Vanuatu NFIP Conference, Uregei underscored New Caledonia's central role in French Pacific policy: "From a moral point of view, the churches, the political groups and the governments of this region cannot profess to ignore such risks caused by the fact that French imperialism puts the interests of France first, giving priority to its strategic objectives, all of which were reinforced by the recent visit of Regis Debray to the Pacific.

"A base is required to maintain the Center d'Experimentation du Pacifique (CEP) in Polynesia. New Caledonia constitutes the pillar of French strategy throughout the Pacific and for the CEP.

"The independence of the Kanak people in New Caledonia would cancel this pillar which supports French strategy, thereby leading to its revision and possibly to a nuclear free Pacific which is the wish of all the countries in the area.

"The independence claimed by the Kanak people through the registration of its case at the next Pacific Forum to be held in Canberra in August 1983 appears to be the primary goal to lead to the second goal: that of cancelling all nuclear tests carried out in our region."

FROM: PACIFIC BULLETIN / SEPT. 1983



*By: Nga Teviki
FEM: HANA VOLS. No. 1*

NFIPC/83 Vanuatu

We, the 160 delegates representing organizations from 33 countries convened at the Fourth Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific Conference in the nuclear free zone of Port Vila in Vanuatu from July 10-20, DECLARE OUR COMMITMENT TO WORK FOR AN OPPRESSION FREE PACIFIC. As the Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific Movement, we see the Pacific peoples' struggle for self-determination and independence as inseparable from the struggle to attain a nuclear free Pacific. In the conference deliberations we reaffirmed the goals and aims of "The People's Charter for a Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific."

We commend the newly independent government of Vanuatu, a member of the non-aligned nations, for its leadership in supporting the rights of the indigenous people of the Pacific in their struggle to end all forms of oppression.

We pledge our solidarity with the courageous peoples of East Timor, and West Papua in their struggle for self-determination and independence from Indonesian colonization. We uphold and support the demands of the Kanak Independence Front of New Caledonia and their efforts towards Kanak Socialist Independence in September 1984. We set as an immediate priority, the placement of East Timor and New Caledonia on the United Nations agenda for decolonization and commit ourselves to pressure our governments to vote in favor of East Timor and New Caledonia at the United Nations.

We recognize the sovereignty of the people of 'French' Polynesia and their inalienable right to determine their future. We demand that the French Government immediately cease and unconditionally abandon its nuclear testing in 'French' Polynesia.

This conference also recognizes the right to self-determination of the Aboriginal, Maori, native Hawaiian, North American Indian and Chamorro people and condemns the racist policies of the Australian New Zealand, U.S. and Canadian governments toward the native people of those countries.

We firmly oppose the haste in which the plebiscites on the Compact of Free Association have been held in Micronesia and object to the longterm military agreements in the Compact as well as attempts by the U.S. to undermine the Palau Constitution's nuclear ban.

We reaffirm our opposition to uranium mining and support the indigenous North Americans and Australian aborigines in opposing the exploitation of their traditional lands. We call for a global



The Deputy Prime Minister, Sethy Reganvanu, gave the opening address to NFIPC/83.

moratorium on uranium mining and the whole nuclear cycle so that an investigation can be conducted by the UN on the devastating effect on the lands and lives of indigenous people throughout the world and support the blockade of the Roxby Downs uranium mine site in South Australia.

We demand that the Japanese government abandon its waste dumping plan and we will expand our opposition to plans by the U.S. and Japan to dump nuclear waste in the Pacific by adopting and circulating an international protest petition to the Japanese Prime Minister protesting nuclear waste dumping in the Pacific Ocean.

We pledge to monitor activities on deployment of weapons and weapons systems in the Pacific. We strongly condemn the deployment of nuclear weapons systems into

Declaration

the Pacific, especially the Tomahawk Cruise missile. We support the efforts of the Kwajalein landowners of the Marshall Islands to stop the MX and other missile testing on their lands and the restoration of the land to the rightful owners. We also support the indigenous peoples of Canada in their opposition to the testing of the cruise missile on their alienated lands. We not only fear the potential hazards of such weapons systems and the potential for nuclear attack, we also oppose the displacement of Pacific peoples for the establishment of such systems.

We are firmly opposed to the increased conventional war preparations by the U.S., Australia, Japan, New Zealand and Canada. To this end we will co-ordinate international protests against the RIMPAC 1984 military exercises scheduled for March in Hawaii. In particular, we oppose the bombing of the sacred and culturally significant island of Kaho'olawe during those exercises, and will pressure the participating governments to decline U.S. invitations to these exercises.

We will work to develop opposition to the military alliances in the Pacific region which reinforce the neocolonial domination of our people, such as ANZUS and the U.S.-Japan Security Pact.

We uphold the Filipino people's demand for the immediate and unconditional dismantling of all U.S. military



Demonstrators demanded an end to French colonialism and nuclear testing in the Pacific.

installations in the Philippines which could serve as springboards for U.S. intervention in the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf. We oppose U.S. economic, political and military domination of the Philippines.

We also recognize the liberation struggles of our Pacific neighbors in Central America and call for an end to all U.S. economic and military aid to the military juntas of El Salvador, Guatemala and Honduras. We condemn U.S. efforts to destabilize Nicaragua.

We have come together in this conference to share our experiences, exchange our views and learn from one another. We have forged strong bonds for a united front against the nuclear fuel cycle and nuclear and conventional weapons systems in the Pacific. We thank the people and government of Vanuatu for the warm hospitality, generous support and inspiration that they have given us. They have inspired us with a vision of what can be accomplished through united efforts.

We stand in solidarity with each other in our common struggle for self-determination. We will work to gain the support of the Pacific regional organizations such as the Melanesian Council of Churches, the Pacific Conference of Churches, the Pacific Trade Union Forum, the U.S.P.S.A. and the Y.W.C.A. for our action campaigns through the Pacific Concerns Resource Center and the Vanuatu Pacific Community Center. We will also seek the support of international organizations and conferences such as the World Conference of Churches, the World Conference Against A & H Bombs and the European and North American peace movement. We go forward from this conference firmly united in our commitment to make our Pacific nuclear free and independent -- for ours and future generations.



More than 3,000 people demonstrated for a Nuclear Free & Independent Pacific in Vanuatu.

In the Shadow of the Pentagon

7.

The tiny Republic of Palau, in the far western Pacific, has taken a dramatic step to confront United States attempts to militarize the islands. Their unique Constitution, approved over U.S. objections, bans nuclear weapons and nuclear waste without the approval of 75% of the votes cast in a referendum. The Palauans have effectively created a nuclear free zone around their islands.

But the Constitution is just the latest in a long history of Palauan actions to prevent outside control of their islands. When U.S. military plans for use of 30% of their islands were first announced in 1972, traditional and elected leaders immediately went on record opposing the plans. During the mid-1970's, the 14,000 Palauans were successfully organizing local and international support to turn back a massive oil superport/industrial center planned for Palau, with the support of the U.S. military. And today, after four years of struggle, the people of Palau are still defending the integrity of their Constitution in the face of strong pressures from the U.S. government.

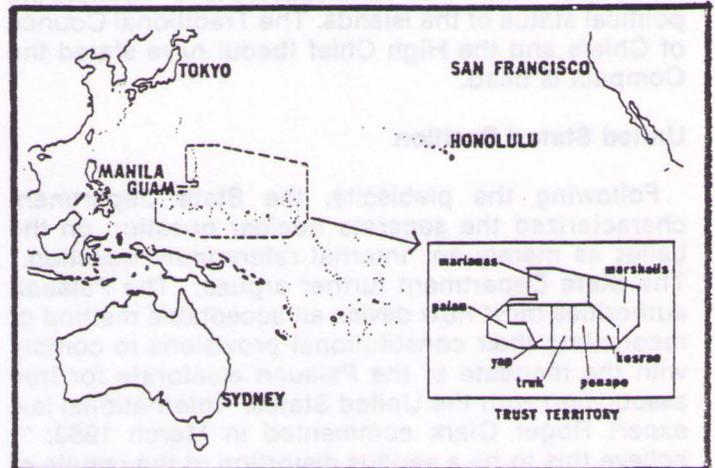
Just 500 miles east of the Philippines and in close proximity to the Asian mainland, Palau is a strategically important island group to the Pentagon. To quell Palauan fears, the U.S. says it has no current military plans for Palau, it only wants "options" to use the land for jungle warfare training, weapons storage and transit and overflight of nuclear vessels and aircraft.

Many Palauans, however, believe the U.S. military will bring another war to Palau. Remembering their experience in World War II, when thousands died and the islands were devastated, older Palauans remark: "When soldiers come, war comes."

Palau's Constitution is a logical step for a people whose life is tied to the ocean and land—and who are confronted with the U.S. military bent on gaining "options" to use a major portion of their limited land. In the shadow of the Pentagon and long isolated from the international media and support networks, the Palauans have consistently struggled to self-determine their future and regain the right to govern their islands. It is now imperative that people and organizations internationally—and especially in the U.S.—support Palau's attempt to maintain its unique, democratically approved, Constitution.

Background

In 1979, the Republic of Palau was the first nation in the world to adopt a Constitution that banned the storage, testing and disposal of nuclear materials within its territory without the approval of 75% of the votes cast in a referendum. The United States State Department has repeatedly stated that the Palau Constitution is "incompatible" with the Compact of Free Association, a treaty that has been developed during 14 years of negotiations. In response, the Palauans initially approved their Constitution by a 92% margin in July 1979. In two separate referenda—



necessitated by U.S. objections to the nuclear ban and other provisions—the Palauans reaffirmed the provisions of their nuclear-free Constitution by 70% and 78% majorities.

The Compact of Free Association, signed by Palau and U.S. government representatives in August 1982, grants Palau more than \$1 billion in aid and a form of self-government in exchange for absolute U.S. military authority over the islands. The Compact also provides the U.S. with an option to use approximately 30% of the island area for military bases, weapons storage facilities, jungle warfare training operations, and transit of nuclear vessels and aircraft.

The U.S., which won Palau and the other Micronesian islands from Japan at the end of World War II, has administered the islands as a United Nations "Strategic" Trust Territory since 1947. The U.S. is seeking to end its role as administrator of Palau under the Trusteeship while retaining strategic military control over this emerging western Pacific nation.

February 1983 Plebiscite in Palau

On February 10, 1983 voters in Palau were the first of the Micronesian districts to vote on the Compact. In a split proposition voters were asked whether they approved of Section 314 of the Compact. Section 314 would allow the U.S. to store nuclear weapons in Palau and the presence of nuclear powered ships or materials. The vote on this proposition (53%) fell far short of the 75% approval required by the Palauan Constitution. The other part of the split proposition asked voters to review the Compact as a whole. 62% of the voters voted for the Compact. However, the ballot itself stated, "Before, the Compact can take effect Section 314 . . . must also be approved by at least 75% of the votes cast." Since Section 314 lost by a substantial margin—the Compact cannot take effect. After 14 years of negotiations the political status of Palau remains unsettled.

On February 25, the Senate of the Palau National Congress (OEK) passed Resolution #87. The

resolution stated that the **citizens** of Palau had disapproved the Compact. The same resolution stated that the Senate had also disapproved the Compact. The resolution went on to call upon the President of Palau and Palau's traditional leaders to renegotiate the political status of the islands. The Traditional Council of Chiefs and the High Chief Ibedul have stated the Compact is dead.

United States' Position

Following the plebiscite, the State Department characterized the separate nuclear question on the ballot as merely an "internal referendum question." The State Department further argues: "The Palauan authorities must now devise an acceptable method of reconciling their constitutional provisions to comply with the mandate of the Palauan electorate for free association with the United States." International law expert Roger Clark commented in March 1983: "I believe this to be a serious distortion of the results of the vote," adding that "the United States, having acquiesced in, or perhaps even insisted upon, the way in which the issue was presented to the voters, is surely bound by the results." (See "Legal Implications of Palau Vote") Nevertheless, the State Department has set up transition offices in Palau (and other parts of Micronesia) to begin implementation of the Compact, in spite of its rejection by voters and prior to review and approval by the U.S. Congress.

"The United States is so concerned about its military options, it has steadfastly refused to accept the people's wishes. We have said no four times to the United States' nuclear intentions in four referenda in four years. When will we be heard? We have voted democratically and the United States must accept our vote. Does democracy apply only in the United States and not in Palau?"

"The Palauan people need time to decide on their own kind of government and economy without interference. We call upon the Trusteeship Council of the United Nations to support our right to choose the future of Palau, rather than support the attempts of the United States to determine our future for us."

—Bernie Keldermans, Educator and Koror Councilwoman, United Nations Trusteeship Council, May, 1983.

U.S. Involvement in the Palau Plebiscite Process

U.S. officials stated on numerous occasions that they had no part in the plebiscite process, when in fact the U.S. was involved in all phases of the plebiscite:

- According to a Palau Supreme Court ruling, ballot wording for the plebiscite drafted by the Palau National Congress "was rejected outright by the U.S." and U.S. State Department Ambassador Fred Zeder, in a November 11, 1982 cable, instructed the Palau Government to change the wording. This U.S. directed wording was later declared misleading and illegal by the Palau Supreme Court just 10 days before the plebiscite.

Photo by Angela Gennino



Palauans rally February 3 to demand the plebiscite on the Compact of Free Association be postponed.

- Over \$439,000 dollars was appropriated for a "voter education" program which degenerated into a pro-Compact campaign. Of that sum \$315,000 was directly allocated by Interior Assistant Secretary Pedro Sanjuan via the High Commissioner, Janet McCoy. **This compares with the \$400,000 recently spent by the electoral commission in El Salvador of which \$240,000 was a direct allocation from the U.S.** The people of El Salvador number 5 million, the people of Palau number 15,000. Palauan law 1-43 limited all spending on the plebiscite to \$250,000.
- The so-called political "education" became a one-sided promotion of the Compact, as demonstrated by a "People's Fact Sheet" in Palauan and English published by the Palau Government in January, 1983. This document stated all the benefits of the Compact but none of the drawbacks. For example, it pointed out the many immigration rights Palauans would have for travel and employment in the U.S., without mentioning that Americans would have the same rights in Palau.
- The Dept. of Interior and the United States Information Agency (USIA) hired a four member "plebiscite expert team" to monitor the plebiscite.

Plebiscite Irregularities

In the haste and under U.S. pressure to proceed quickly to conclude the plebiscite numerous irregularities concerning voting procedures and ballot collection occurred. Confusion marred the plebiscite process:

- The date of the plebiscite was changed four times.
- The official Rules and Regulations for the plebiscite were changed four times, once three hours **after** the polls were open.
- Five Palauan Senators have filed a civil complaint seeking the return of over \$200,000 in mis-allocated or unauthorized expenditures of the public "voter education campaign."
- There were numerous irregularities in the conduct of the absentee vote which amounted to nearly a fifth (1,300) of the total 7,200 votes cast.

Self-Determination, U.S. Style

When the Palau National Congress on November 9, 1982 approved the wording for the ballot (according to Public Law 1-43 governing the plebiscite), the U.S. Ambassador Fred Zeder cabled the Palau Government on November 11 instructing it to change the wording used. According to the January 31 Palau Supreme Court decision, Palau "Ambassador Salii has testified that the wording in Republic of Palau Law No. 1-43 was **rejected outright by the United States and it was insisted that the wording incorporated in the cable of November 11, 1982 be placed on the ballot.**" (Emphasis added.)

More than six weeks later on December 20, in a successful effort to counter requests for a postponement and insure U.N. observation thus legitimizing the controversial plebiscite, the United States' representative to the U.N. Trusteeship Council told that body:

The United States is not conducting the plebiscite; the Government of Palau is

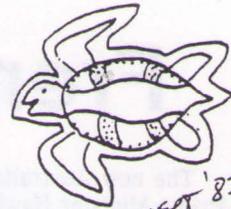
conducting it. Naturally, we had discussions with the Palauans about the language of the ballot, **but that language, in the last analysis is theirs; they are the ones who are deciding how to put the matter to their people...The second question on that ballot was phrased according to their wishes, and since they are the constitutionally elected Government we shall have to accept it as is.** (Emphasis added.)

The ballot wording was **not** Palauan, it was dictated by the U.S. State Department. Had two Palauan elected leaders not successfully taken the issue to the Palau Supreme Court, the Palauan people would have been faced with a "completely misleading statement" on the ballot, said international law expert Roger Clark. That the United States should deceive the U.N. to get its approval for the plebiscite shows a strong contempt for democratic processes.

ABOVE FROM: PALAU: SELF DETERMINATION VS U.S. MILITARY PLANS BY MICANESIA SUPPORT COMMITTEE

POLITICAL EDUCATION

Contrary to State Department assertions that the people of Palau, after 14 years of negotiations, are "fully familiar" with the Compact, numerous Palauans charge that there was inadequate time to understand the implications of this lengthy document. In January, the Palau Senate passed a bill to delay the vote in part because "the political education process has been slow, inadequate and misleading."



SEPT '83
PACIFIC BULLETIN
↓

Belau Court: The Compact is 'Dead'

Opponents of the proposed Compact of Free Association have won a major victory in Belau. In early August, the Belau Supreme Court "declared that the Compact of Free Association and its integral and subsidiary parts that include the Harmful Substances Agreement, were disapproved by the people of the Republic of Palau in the February 10, 1983 referendum and plebiscite."

Since the February vote, Belau High Chief Ibedul, many elected leaders and others in Palau, supported by outside legal assistance, have claimed that the Compact was rejected because the controversial nuclear agreement did not receive the 75% approval it needed according to the Constitution. The US State Department and the executive branch of the Belau government have worked hard to implement the Compact, despite the rejection of the nuclear provisions.

On July 1, US Ambassador Fred Zeder and Belau Ambassador Lazarus Salii signed an agreement which acknowledged the defeat of the nuclear agreement but specifically omitted any reference to the transit of nuclear vessels and the storage of nuclear weapons while in "transit." Despite contradicting the Belau Constitution's nuclear ban, the State Department asserted that this agreement merely needed the approval of the Belau National Congress for implementation. But after a month of deliberation, the Senate rejected the new agreement. And a week later, the Supreme Court, with its precedent setting judgement, rejected the Palau Government's and the US State Department's contention that the Compact had been approved in the February plebiscite, handing the US government a major defeat in its plans to secure military and nuclear "options" in Belau.

Half-truths, glaring omissions, downright lies, critics claim

Arch-conservative French presidents of the past — de Gaulle, Pompidou and Giscard — reacted to criticism of the Moruroa nuclear tests by wrapping themselves in a cloak of haughty official silence. The present pseudo-socialist government of President Mitterrand, which took over the reins of power in May 1981, seemed keen from the start to break with this offensive "no-comment" policy.

The first to preach the doctrine of a "Pacific dialogue" was the new Defence Minister, Charles Hernu, who, during a visit to French Polynesia in August 81 (PIM Oct '81 p22), made the following eminently sensible statement: "The press must be informed about security problems. If there is an accident (at Moruroa) it is better to let the truth be known than to let all sorts of rumors spread. Nothing must be hidden that affects the health of the population. When New Zealand and Australia ask for information, we shall supply it."

For one reason or another, it has taken the French Government 18 months to come good on this promise. But, finally, all French embassies in the Pacific region have begun distributing lengthy statements to the press on the Moruroa tests. The one released by the French embassy in Canberra (PIM Jun p31) deals in impressive detail with various aspects of the testing program, and the possible health hazards arising from it. The happy conclusion reached by the authors at the close of almost every paragraph is that, unlike the American, British, Russian and Chinese tests, the explosion of 96 atomic bombs at Moruroa and Fangataufa has not given rise to the slightest harmful radioactive fall-out. This highly self-congratulatory document merits a close, point-by-point analysis.

1. What France does in French Polynesia is nobody

MARIE-THÉRÈSE and BENGT DANIELSSON subject a recent statement released by the French embassy in Canberra (PIM Jun p31) on nuclear testing at Moruroa Atoll, French Polynesia, to rigorous analysis — and are notably unimpressed with what they find in it.

else's business, because France owns these islands. To start off with an arrogant statement of this sort is certainly not suggestive of a high degree of diplomatic finesse, to say the least of it, especially in view of the fact that all Pacific leaders most definitely believe that they have a right and a duty to protest against any nuclear pollution of their territories. As many readers will recall, it was this form of environmental aggression which was the basis of the complaint lodged with the International Court of Justice at the Hague by the Australian and New Zealand Governments in 1973. It was also the basis of the attitude adopted by all West African governments in the early 1960s, when their territories were exposed to radio-active clouds from the French nuclear tests in the Sahara desert, which France "owned" until Algeria won its independence.

This general disapproval led to the transfer of the tests to Moruroa and Fangataufa — and a long series of protests from all Polynesian leaders, accompanied by appeals to France to stop testing atomic weapons in *their* islands.

2. **The nuclear tests are an essential part of France's defence policy.** Perhaps. But this is beside the point, since the elected representatives of the Polynesian people, sitting in the Territorial Assembly, have never sought to interfere with French defence policy. All they ask of the French Government is that they conduct their tests — guaranteed as perfectly harmless by all their own experts — in France.

3. **Radio-activity is carefully monitored by the French army and Atomic Energy Commission.** As in Australia and New Zealand, there exists in France a National Radiation Laboratory. But, strangely enough, this government agency has never been permitted to undertake any radiation studies whatever in French Polynesia. Instead, the two bodies responsible for the nuclear testing program — the army and the AEC — evaluate the health hazards resulting from them. In other words, the accused sits in judgement on his own case. Similar, the territory's health department is headed by an army doctor with the rank of general, and the so-called public hospital at Mamao, Papeete, is likewise run by army doctors.

4. **For the whole of 1982, all personnel on Moruroa Atoll collectively received a radiation dose of only 4800 mrems.** Sweeping statements of this kind are meaningless, especially as no information is supplied about seasonal variations, and the particularly hot spots.

The only way to get a fairly accurate picture of the extent of nuclear pollution at Moruroa is to study the well-documented report prepared by the people most directly involved — the French technicians connected with the socialist trade union federation CFDT, who live and work on the atoll.

This frightening report dated October 19, 1981, reveals among other things that the north coast of the atoll is impregnated with lethal plutonium whose half-life is 24,000 years; that the pile of nuclear waste which has been

allowed to accumulate on the reef covers an area of 30,000 square metres; and that there are numerous faults in the atoll, showing that much underground seepage and leakage must have taken place. Further details were furnished at the time by the leading Australian newspapers. Our own summary of the CFDT report appeared in PIM, January, 1982.

5. **The air pollution at Moruroa is practically nil, as anyone can find out for themselves.** With blinding scientific precision, the French embassy in Canberra records that in 1981, "alpha element radio-activity as expressed in femto-curies per cubic metre of air" was only three in Moruroa, three in Tahiti, but 25 at Montlhery near Paris, and a scary 106 in Senegal. This may well explain why so many Frenchman and Africans have migrated to French Polynesia in recent years. But as an indication of the level of air pollution it is worthless since it leaves unanswered such basic questions as: How many samples were taken, and where, on the atoll? If this is the annual average, what were the maximum and minimum figures? And so on . . .

Particularly puzzling is the accompanying assertion that air pollution "can easily be checked by anybody with basic equipment taking samples outside territorial waters downwind from Moruroa".

Even if a private citizen managed to sneak into the restricted zones around Moruroa and Fangataufa the proposed observations would be of very little interest today, considering that atmospheric testing was abandoned eight years ago!

Any meaningful observations would have to be made by medical doctors systematically examining representative samples of the whole population of French Polynesia. If French army doctors have ever made any

FRENCH NUCLEAR TESTS

such thorough health survey, the results have never been published.

6. No sea pollution has occurred, as proved by the fact that military and civilian personnel at Moruroa are allowed to go swimming in the lagoon. Swimming has not always been permitted, and what is more the French technicians who wrote the CFDT report believe that the ban should never have been lifted. There is also the tragic case of former Governor Jean Sicurani. He often went swimming in the lagoon in a period when megatonne H-bombs were being exploded — and eventually died of leukemia. He could also, of course, have been contaminated at many other places in the test area which are above water . . .

It is in any case quite ridiculous to pretend that personnel swimming in the lagoon during their leisure hours could know anything about the amount of damage and pollution that have occurred in the base of the atoll — at a depth of 600-1000 metres, where the bombs are

exploded. We may ask: who measures the plutonium and carbon-14 which slowly sink to the bottom of the ocean only to re-emerge years later through the food chain at the surface? It is high time for Captain Cousteau and his bathyscape to be stationed permanently at Moruroa to carry out regular "in-depth" studies.

7. Data regularly sent to the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR), plus those collected by a "UN Antenna" in French Polynesia, prove conclusively that the tests are harmless. The truth is quite different. If we examine not only the French reports, but also the minutes of the UNSCEAR meetings, we shall immediately find that committee members are constantly complaining about "the paucity of the data" supplied, which makes it impossible for them to reach "any valid conclusions". Readers interested in the subject will find a more searching analysis of the annual reports sent by France

to UNSCEAR in our book *Moruroa, mon amour* (Penguin 1977).

As for the so-called "UN Antenna", it is simply the same old army laboratory in Tahiti, renamed *Laboratoire d'étude et de surveillance de l'environnement*, and its only connection with the UN is that it gathers the highly unsatisfactory data from which the above-mentioned inadequate reports are put together.

But, talking of UN reports, there is also one marked A/35/392, dated September 12, 1980. It was especially prepared for the UN by the prestigious International Commission on Radiological Protection, and predicts that no fewer than 15,000 people in the southern hemisphere will eventually die as a result of radiation doses received from all American, British, and French nuclear tests. The fact that the number of victims will be 10 times higher in the more densely populated northern hemisphere is no consolation. Not a word is said in the French Moruroa report about this important UN document.

8. The number of cancer cases in French Polynesia is in no way higher than in other parts of the world. In support of this bold statement, France's Canberra embassy presents a table of statistics headed "Cases of Cancer in French Polynesia". The figures given are: 62 in 1977, 65 in 1978, 85 in 1979, 58 in 1980, and 71 in 1981, which represents an incidence of about 50 cases per 100,000 population. This compares very favorably indeed with the averages for Australia (106), France (175), and New Zealand (264). Wonderful, if it were true.

Actually, the statistics published by the French embassy do not show the total number of cancer cases in French Polynesia (as the heading would have us believe). They show only the number of cases treated in the Namao government hospital, and one small private hospital in Papeete.

Conspicuously lacking are data concerning cancer patients treated by: The 80 doctors in private practice who, until a few months ago, had no obligation to provide information on such mat-

ters; the Polynesian healers and various quacks; the special hospital for military and civilian personnel on Moruroa, where all data are top secret; the doctors in France who are consulted by former servicemen discharged after serving in French Polynesia for shorter or longer periods. (A parallel with this last category is provided by the belated discovery in the U.S. and Australia that servicemen present during nuclear testing in Nevada and at Maralinga were contaminated to such an extent that they got cancer.)

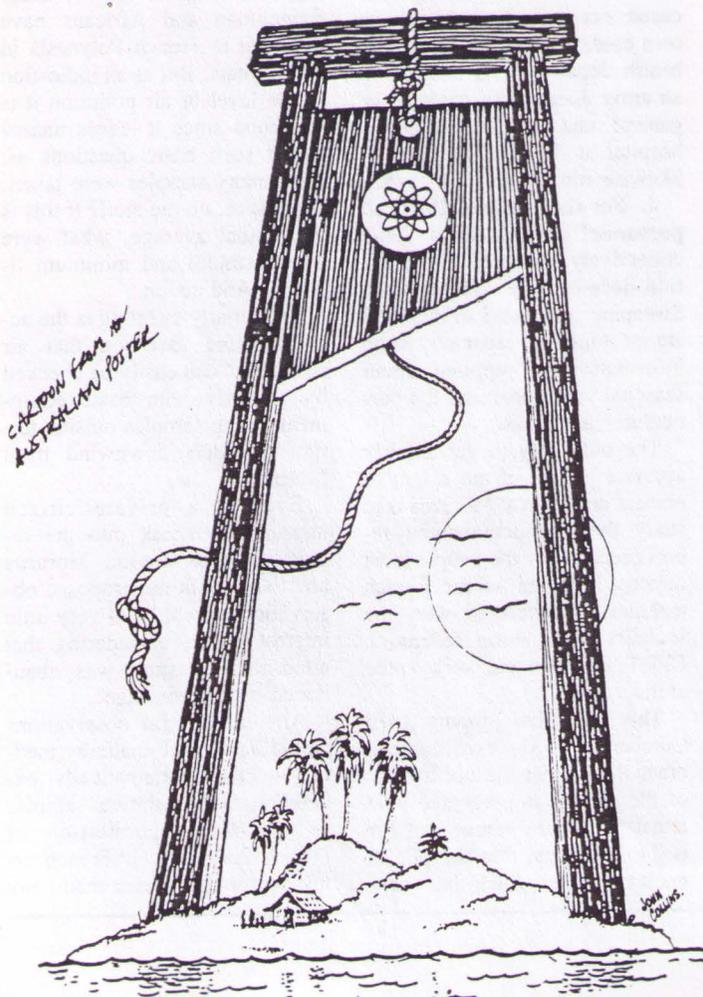
Finally, there are large numbers of people living in remote islands of French Polynesia where there are no doctors at all, and who consequently die from all sorts of diseases, including cancer, without receiving any medical treatment at all.

Yet, in the French embassy statement, a glaringly incomplete collection of figures is compared with the overwhelmingly more comprehensive and reliable cancer statistics kept by countries like Australia, France and New Zealand, and the totally unwarranted conclusion is drawn that the rate in French Polynesia is much lower.

This is an unabashed attempt to deceive the governments and peoples of the South Pacific, no more and no less.

It should also be noted that it was precisely because of the absence of reliable health statistics in French Polynesia that the World Health Organisation in 1981 pressed the local health authorities to start a cancer register on the internationally approved model. Sad to say, it is still in its development stages.

9. The most common form of cancer is lung cancer, and the cause is heavy smoking. Once again, the statistics are reassuring only because they are so outrageously incomplete. The only good thing about this part of the statement is that the embassy has refrained from repeating the preposterous claim of the local health department in French Polynesia that heavy smoking is the sole cause of all cancer cases. Is it really necessary to point out that all medical research points to the fact that the worst thing about exposure to radiation is that it



The M.V. Henry, a French Frigate based in Tahiti visited Victoria recently, and ----

Leaflet handers escorted out

Two men distributing anti-nuclear weapons testing leaflets Thursday near the French frigate E. V. Henry were escorted out of CFB Esquimalt by military police.

Victoria Disarmament Committee chairman David Jackman and South Pacific Peoples' Foundation head Phil Esmonde were handing leaflets to people visiting the ship about 3:30 p.m.

The flyers outlined what claimed to be French government policy of test-

ing nuclear arms in the South Pacific.

Jackman said someone on board the ship asked Canadian Forces military police to stop them handing out the information; MPs suggested "it would be better if we left," and gave them a ride to their car.

In an unrelated incident, Victoria police said a sailor from the French frigate was robbed at knife-point on his way back to the ship early Thursday.

Eric Nespoux, 22, was at the intersection of Bay Street and Tyee Road about 3:45 a.m. when two men stopped in a car and offered him a lift.

They drove Nespoux around Victoria West then pulled a knife, took his wallet, shoes, belt and jacket and dumped him at Bay Street and Esquimalt Road.

Nespoux was not in uniform at the time.

SEP 23/83
VICTORIA TIMES-COLONIST

BELOW IS THE INFORMATION WHICH UPSET THE FRENCH

French poison in the Pacific

The new Australian government of Prime Minister Hawke should be commended for suspending shipments of uranium to France to protest against French nuclear tests in the south Pacific (*Times-Colonist*, June 10).

French testing in the region has been strongly condemned by all independent governments of the south Pacific, as well as the Pacific Conference of Churches, the Pacific trade union movement and numerous activist groups within the islands.

France began testing nuclear bombs in the south Pacific in 1966, with 41 of these tests taking place in the atmosphere. It was only after strong protest and after radiation from an explosion travelled over Fiji and the Cook Islands that France, in 1975, began tests underground.

Nuclear tests now number 101. The test site at Mururoa Atoll in French Polynesia is heavily guarded by the French military and France has allowed no independent scientists in to test radiation levels or contamination. Information has been difficult to gather concerning the tests because of the

Phil Esmonde

security. As well, statistics on disease and mortality in Polynesia were no longer published after the testing began.

However, after a severe storm in 1981, it was atomic workers at the test site who broke silence and revealed some of the problems at the site. According to the workers' report, the substance of which has been confirmed by French President Mitterrand, this severe storm sent waves over a huge mound of radioactive debris covering the western end of Mururoa Atoll, scattering most of the contents into the sea and lagoon. According to the atomic workers, this same storm also ripped up a protective layer of asphalt that had been laid over plutonium wastes and some of the debris washed up near the workers' homes.

The latest French test was in April, only a few weeks after the worst set of hurricanes to hit Polynesia in 80 years had concluded. Many Pacific islanders and others are concerned about dam-

age and contamination at the test site after the storms. In early March this year, a test was delayed because of "technical and meteorological reasons." This delay was announced shortly after the major hurricane hit.

France continues to test nuclear bombs in its south Pacific colony. It also continues to prosecute Polynesian dissenters and jail them in France. Recently, France refused to co-operate with a World Health Organization study of cancer in the south Pacific.

As the foreign minister of Australia demanded in April, "If the tests are so harmless, as the French government claims, why aren't they conducted in France?"

Readers wishing a direct answer to this question should write to Francois Mitterrand, president of France, Paris, France. They should also ask Mr. Mitterrand about his stated policy to test a minimum of 10 atomic bombs annually as well as plans to test neutron bombs later this year. Copies should be sent to Prime Minister Trudeau.

The writer is executive director, South Pacific Peoples Foundation of Canada, in Victoria.

JUNE 21/83
VICTORIA TIMES-COLONIST

lowers the general level of resistance of its victims, who thus are rendered more liable to contract all manner of diseases, and to die younger?

10. Reliable statistics on the number of cancer patients evacuated to hospitals overseas are readily available. This is simply not true. For example, if we take the New Zealand figure of 13 in 1982, it represents only the cancer patients sent there by the territorial health department, and thus excludes the much greater number who paid out of their own pockets for the trip and treatment in New Zealand. Although this country is the destination of most Polynesian cancer victims who can afford a trip abroad, others, also go to Hawaii, the U.S. mainland, and France.

The most interesting conclusion to be drawn from the official figures concerns the gradual reduction of cancer patients despatched by the territorial health department to New Zealand (39 in 1979 as against 13 in 1982), and the simultaneous increase in the number sent for treatment at military hospitals in France (18 in 1979 as against 49 in 1982). The explanation for all this is undoubtedly the inquisitive nature of the New Zealand press, which has no counterpart in metropolitan France.

Fully aware of the worthlessness of all these official "health certificates" and bland assurances, the 30 elected members of French Polynesia's Territorial Assembly have repeatedly asked for an independent investigation

of the health situation in the territory. The last time they made such a formal request was in December 1981, when they unanimously adopted a resolution setting up a scientific committee of inquiry composed of impartial, civilian French and foreign radio-biologists and doctors, and establishing a territorial radiation laboratory.

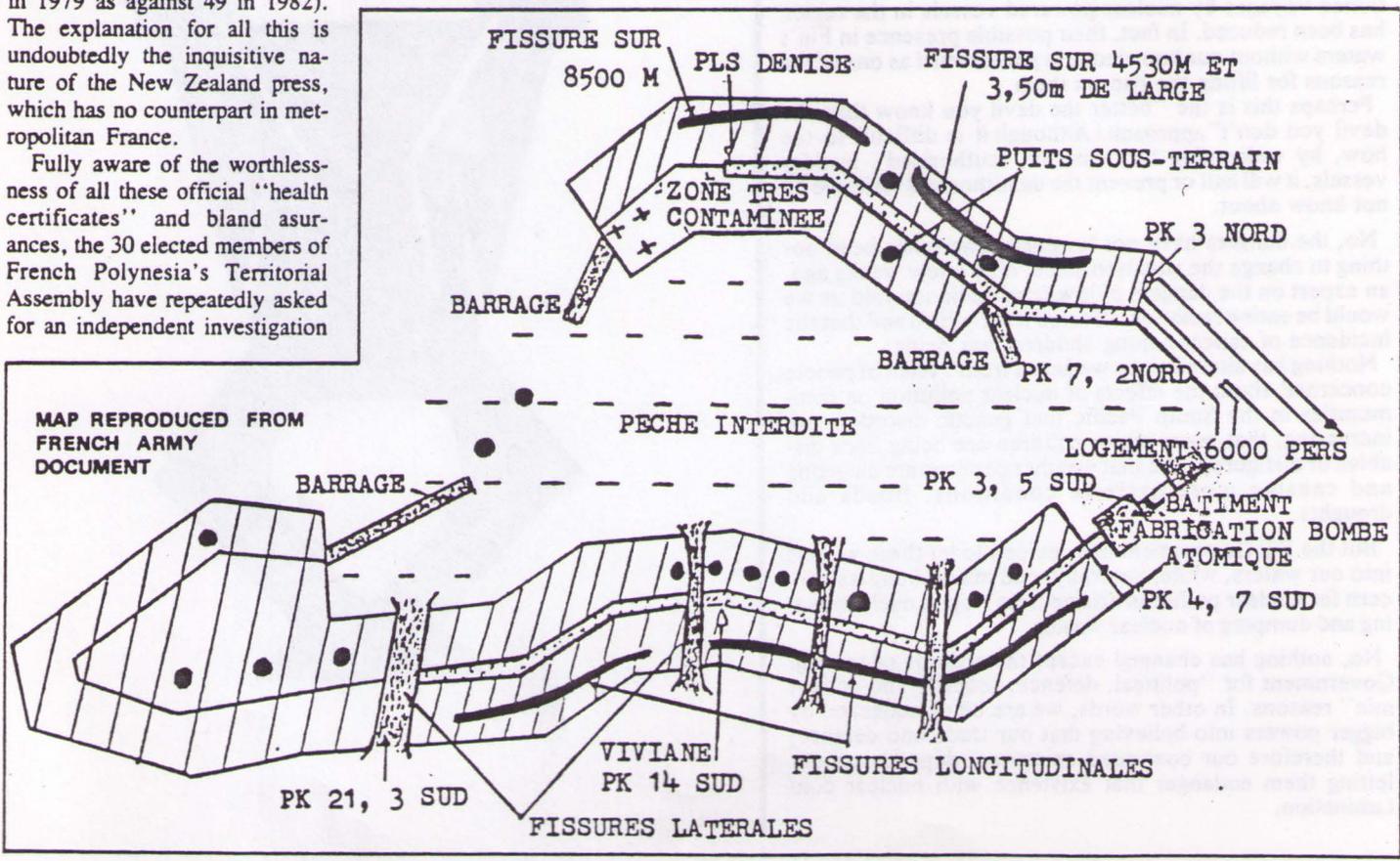
Up to now, the French Government has done all in its power to prevent implementation of this decision.

Its latest trick has been to send presidential adviser Régis Debry to invite — on its own terms — "special observers" from a number of Pacific countries to make a quick conducted tour of the nuclear testing site. Fortunately, the new majority leader in French Polynesia, Gaston Flosse, refuses to be sidetracked in this manner. He is inviting a dozen or so heavily qualified and independent-minded radio-biologists and doctors to sign up for the thorough-going health survey which alone and at long last can establish the whole truth. — Marie-Thérèse and Bengt Danielsson.

FRENCH ARMY MAP

A hitherto unpublished official French army map of Moruroa in June 1980 (this page) shows the extensive pollution and damage done to the 30-x-10-kilometre atoll until that time — and the situation could hardly have improved since then. The black blobs mark the spots where 53 underground tests had been carried out since 1975. The spaces between the test pits are rarely more than 500 metres. The words *zone très contaminée* on the north coast refer to the portion of the reef impregnated with lethal plutonium with a half-life of 24,400 years. In 1980 there was also an enormous pile of nuclear garbage — timber, iron, tools, clothing, and so on — on the northeast coast. According to the report prepared by French technicians associated with the French trade union federation CFDT, who had been employed on Moruroa, the pile covered 30,000 square metres. The accuracy of this report was confirmed by Defence Minister Charles Hernu in a speech in the National

Assembly on December 9, 1981. However, no information has been supplied by French authorities as to what happened to this pyramid of nuclear waste during the first four months of 1983 when five cyclones swept over or passed near Moruroa. The thick black lines show the longitudinal faults (*fissures*) caused by the 53 underground explosions, and the lightly shaded ones lateral faults. The hatched areas are off-limits to the 3000 men and 12 women employed on the atoll whose living quarters at the extreme eastern end of the atoll represent only a tenth of the total area. Near this village is the building where the bombs are put together (*bâtiment fabrication bombe atomique*). The words *pêche interdite* mean that all fishing in the lagoon is prohibited. It is in the eastern portion of the lagoon, about 30 metres deep, that a drilling platform was erected in 1980, and all tests are now being made there, still a depth varying between 600 and 1000 metres.



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EDITORIAL COMMENT

Policy on nuclear warships

WHILE New Zealand protesters are risking life and limb to express their opposition to the visit of a nuclear-powered ship to one of their harbours, the Fiji Government has firmly made a major policy change to permit nuclear-powered warships to visit our ports.

From February 1980 until now, the policy was that nuclear-powered vessels or those carrying nuclear weapons were not allowed in Fiji waters, as part of Fiji's concern to prevent nuclear pollution in the Pacific.

What has changed in mid-1983 to cause the reversal of this policy? Not, surely, a lessening of the dangers of nuclear pollution. Certainly not a halt to nuclear weapons testing. Nor any change in the attitudes of people who want to dump nuclear waste in the Pacific Ocean.

Nor is it likely that the number of unknown and unsanctioned voyages by nuclear-powered vessels in the region has been reduced. In fact, their possible presence in Fiji's waters without our knowledge is put forward as one of the reasons for lifting the ban on them.

Perhaps this is the "better the devil you know than the devil you don't" approach. Although it is difficult to see how, by welcoming the visits of "authorised" nuclear vessels, it will halt or prevent the unauthorised visits we do not know about.

No, the dangers have not lessened. There has been nothing to change the situation since, only a few weeks ago, an expert on the dangers of low-level radiation told us we would be eating radiation-affected fish by 2000 and that the incidence of cancer among children was rising.

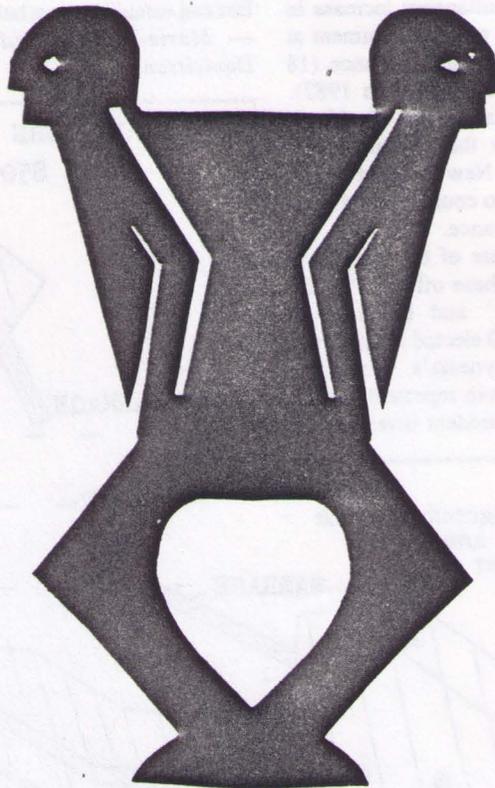
Nothing has altered since we heard from a team of people concerned about the effects of nuclear pollution on communities in the South Pacific that genetic disorders are increasing, that more of our children are being born disabled or disfigured, and that weather patterns are changing and causing more extreme conditions, floods and droughts.

But the Fiji Government has decided to let these vessels into our waters, while, naturally, still maintaining its concern for nuclear pollution arising from "open nuclear testing and dumping of nuclear wastes."

No, nothing has changed except the attitude of the Fiji Government for "political, defence, security and economic" reasons. In other words, we are being squeezed by bigger powers into believing that our trade and defence, and therefore our continued existence, depends on our letting them endanger that existence with nuclear contamination.

NEW NFIP GROUP FORMED IN FIJI

The Fiji Government recently announced it will lift its ban on nuclear warships entering its harbours. In response, a Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific Committee was formed by NFIP/83 delegates and supporters. The chairperson of the committee is Suliana Siwatibau.



COLONIALISM AND INDEPENDENCE

15.

This is the second part of a report by Richard Swift and Dinah Forbes of the Development Education Centre. Here they discuss colonialism and independence in the South Pacific.

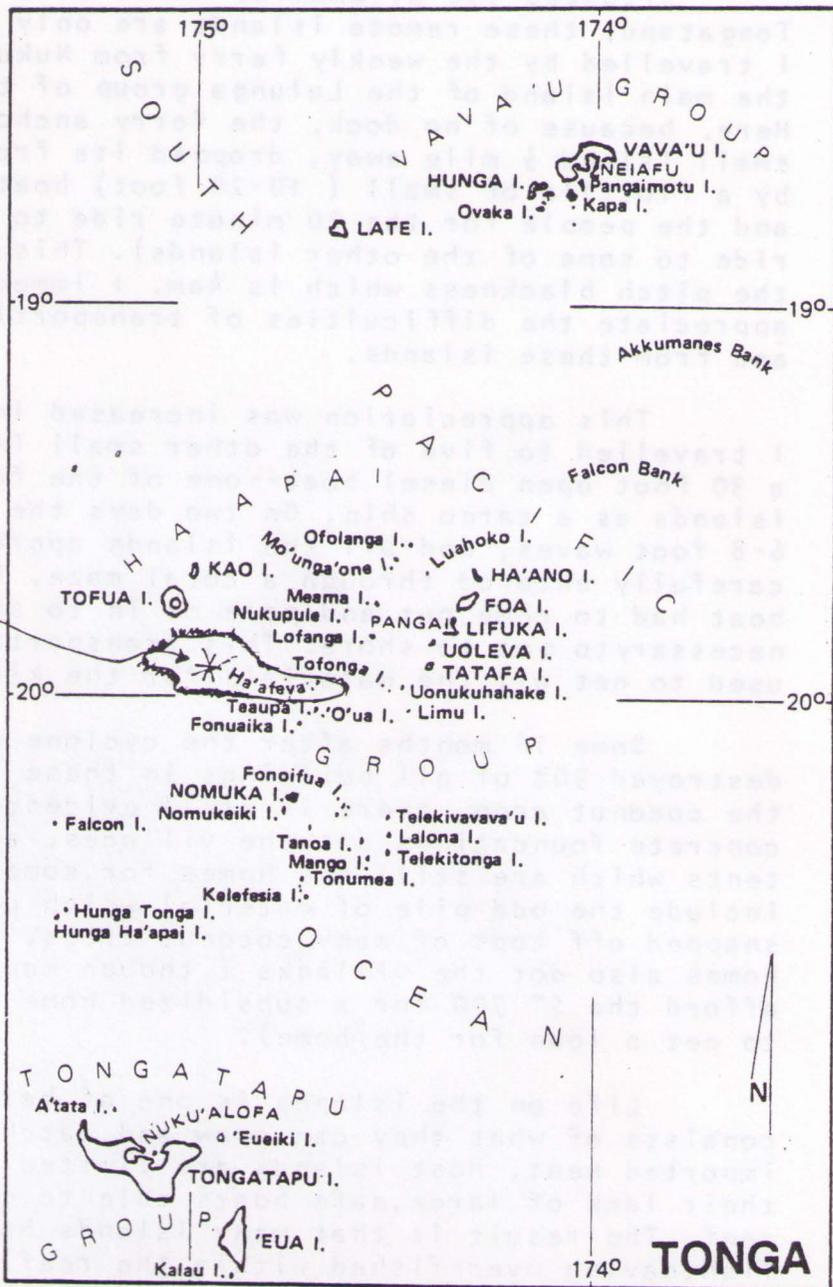
The issue of colonialism and independence continues to be a major preoccupation through the region. Many countries such as Papua New Guinea, Fiji, the Solomons and Vanuatu are now independent in terms of administrative and political control, but their economies function in part because of the massive amounts of foreign aid pumped into the region, especially by Australia (\$300 million a year from Australia to Papua New Guinea alone). The economic development strategies of many of the independent nations, rhetoric notwithstanding, has tended toward the continuation of an export-oriented resource production economy, either of agricultural products (coffee, copra, beef, sugar) or of minerals (copper, gold and nickel). Import substitution is not actively pursued as an economic strategy and very little production of goods or processing of raw material takes place anywhere in the region. The countries that once played a colonial role in the area continue to play a critical economic role through aid, trade and investment. The one factor that has ameliorated (some would say frustrated) the penetration of western-style economies based on production and growth has been, especially in Melanesia, the strength of opposition to any government, corporate or expatriate control of land. Land ownership is as it always has been and attempts during the colonial era to "alienate" land for plantations was nowhere on a sufficiently large scale, except for the sugar plantation areas of Fiji, that the traditional subsistence economy and way of life was destroyed.

Customary land control remains a critical issue to the independence movements, especially in the French colonies. It is an issue that has led to sometimes violent confrontations in Vanuatu and in New Caledonia between the Melanesians and French settlers. Yet the control of land, and even the economic resources of the region, are not the compelling reason for continued colonization. What is perhaps more easily seen as the reason behind continued U.S.A. and French control, and less easily behind Australia's interests, are the military and strategic interests of the West. Quite clearly the independence movements of the region have to address these military and strategic interests both as the motive behind colonialism and as the reason for the relative prosperity of the colonies.

"The disarmament process must start somewhere - it probably has a better chance of early success in the Pacific than in Europe or in America. A nuclear free zone would stand as living proof that there are ways of solving national security problems other than by military alliances and treaties."

Ken Enderby in Disarmament Campaigns
(July/August 1983)

PACIFIC ISLANDS YEARBOOK



Location in Tonga
of the SPPE
PROJECT.
SEE NEXT PAGE
FOR A BRIEF
REPORT.

TONGA

Following are some observations by Phil Esmonde on his trip to Tonga to visit the SPPF-assisted kitchen project and to investigate other areas for project support.

The area of Tonga where the Womens Development Groups are building the kitchens is at first notable for its isolation (in the Pacific Islands Yearbook -- the reference book on the Pacific-- the islands do not even appear on its map of Tonga).

Situated 150 kilometres north of the main island of Tongatapu, these remote islands are only reachable by boat. I travelled by the weekly ferry from Nuku'alofa to Ha'afeva, the main island of the Lulunga group of the Ha'apai islands. Here, because of no dock, the ferry anchored in the lee of a small island $\frac{1}{2}$ mile away, dropped its front grate, and was met by a flotilla of small (10-20 foot) boats which took the cargo and the people for the 20 minute ride to Ha'afeva (or the longer ride to some of the other islands). This activity took place in the pitch blackness which is 4am. I immediately began to appreciate the difficulties of transporting goods and cargo to and from these islands.

This appreciation was increased in the next few days as I travelled to five of the other small islands in the area by a 30 foot open diesel boat--one of the few available to these islands as a cargo ship. On two days the boat was bounced by 6-8 foot waves, and all the islands approached had to be carefully entered through a coral maze. Even then, a smaller boat had to come out and pole me in to shore, with a wade still necessary to get to shore. This transportation process is the one used to get all the materials for the kitchens to the islands.

Some 16 months after the cyclone which damaged or destroyed 90% of all buildings in these islands, as well as the coconut crop, there is still evidence to be seen. Rare concrete foundations dot the villages, as well as relief tents which are still the homes for some. Other indications include the odd pile of material which used to be a home, and the snapped off tops of many coconut trees. Some hurricane relief homes also dot the villages (though many people here cannot afford the \$T 700 for a subsidized home , and have no collateral to get a loan for the home).

Life on the islands is one of hard subsistence. Food consists of what they can grow and catch, plus the odd can of imported meat. Most islands are limited in fishing because of their lack of large, safe boats able to go outside the coral reef. The result is that many islands have little in the way of fish, having over-fished within the reef.

Problems in 'Paradise' — Appropriate Technology in the South Pacific

Tony Marjoram joined the University of the South Pacific Rural Development Centre as Technology Specialist in 1982. Here he describes the technology programme that he helped to establish and is now responsible for.*

Despite popular Western misconceptions, the independent small island nations of the South Pacific experience a whole range of development problems. The myths continue partly because of the remoteness of the region and the tiny sizes of the countries. These two factors also combine to present the major contemporary problems: the islands include some of the world's smallest nations, sea-locked in its largest ocean. All the usual problems of size are therefore compounded by physical isolation. Most of the countries are also archipelagoes spread over vast areas of sea.

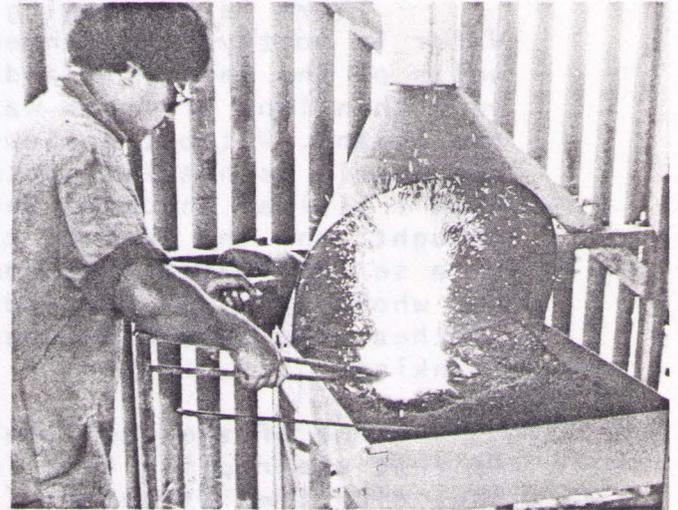
Problems

The problems the islands face inevitably include transportation and communication; the populations are small and far flung and there are numerous local languages. The relatively larger islands have few natural resources, and on the smaller islands and atolls these can be limited almost to coconuts and fish. The modest amounts of copra produced have been subject both to the general depression in world commodity prices, a drop in demand and increases in transport costs, causing until recently decreased production and a serious reduction in the income of the villages. Artisanal fishing is also declining, being replaced by local commercial operations, transnational joint ventures or simply the licencing out of fishing rights in the 200-mile Exclusive Economic Zones. Increased government revenue has been counterbalanced by increased consumption of lower grade and imported tinned fish and similar products. There is also a shift away from traditional staple root crops such as yam, cassava, taro and sweet potatoes, to imported rice and flour. Reported cases of malnutrition are on the increase in the islands.

Whilst rural economic activities tend to decline, governments generally continue to support larger scale modern sector ventures. Commercial fishing is one example, others include export logging, coconut plantations and other agricultural projects producing cocoa, coffee, rice and oil palm, with varying degrees of viability. Tourism, 'duty-free' shopping and tax-havens or 'finance centres' are also supported by the governments. The emphasis on relatively large projects has often been to the detriment of smaller scale subsistence-based activities. It has also tended to benefit urban and peri-urban areas rather than the rural people, who constitute around eighty per cent of the populations, frequently living in villages of less than 200 people. An inevitable effect has been migration to urban areas and, where possible, overseas, to Australia, New Zealand and the United States.

Although the larger countries of the region have the potential for overall economic self-sufficiency, the general and foreseeable trend at present is one of continued and increasing balance of payments problems. Typically, countries meet only their recurrent budgets, with finance and other assistance for development projects coming from

overseas aid, (bilateral, multilateral and non-governmental). While the countries of the region rightly pride themselves on their generally recent political independence, it appears that economic dependence on the Pacific rim nations, especially Australia, New Zealand, the United States and now Japan, together with Britain and France, will increase. A recent series of hurricanes and droughts have underlined the fragility of the economic and ecological systems in the region.



Using coconut shell charcoal as a forge fuel.

Similarities and differences

A further and important factor to consider with respect to developmental activities in the South Pacific is that although the countries have the general similarities noted above, they arguably have an even greater number of differences. The real diversities become apparent when it is realized that the countries encompass significant geographical and climatic variations spanning an EEZ area over twice that of continental Europe, variations matched only by the cultural diversity of the region. For example, the role and activities of women differ considerably across the region, including a major agricultural responsibility in some countries which is absent in others.

Rural development

With the exception of the one or two capitals with populations of over 25,000, few locations in the region fit an overseas conception of 'urban'. Even with scaled-down definitions to fit the local picture it is still surprising that relatively modest attention and support is devoted to rural development. Rural areas have not, in the past, however, been given a high priority in Governmental plans. Whilst Development Banks have been active, most of their finance has tended to go to relatively larger rather than smaller projects. This is due to the greater loan security for the bank and a knowledge of application procedures and better contacts among those running larger projects.

**The address for correspondence is: USP Rural Development Centre, P.O. Private Bag, Nuku'alofa, Tonga.*

Crops consist of taro and sweet potatoe. When meat is eaten it is canned corned meat or pig, with the latter usually saved for major ceremonies or functions. All of the islands are aflood with pigs on the loose, and this creates a sometimes serious and dirty problem. The families who are members of the Village Womens Development Group (about 75% of families) have been addressing this by sweeping their yards and building small fences to keep foraging pigs out of their gardens and yards, and away from their kitchens.

There is no running water or electricity on the islands. Water is mostly by catchment tanks. While there are some small wells on the larger islands, these wells are drawing from a very thin lens of fresh water sitting on the salt water below the island. Without a slow-drawing pump and a wide-based well, the result is brackish water (the situation on these islands). When I visited in July, these islands had been in a five month drought, and the lack of catchment tanks had put most islands in a serious water shortage. Crops were parched and small and the whole area was dry and dusty. On one island people and clothes were washed in the ocean as there was only water for drinking.

One of the positive sidelights of the kitchen project is that the roofing iron is now providing catchment areas where they didn't exist before (traditional roofs of coconut thatch are not very good for water catchment).

Canadian funding for the kitchens has provided the lion's share of transportation, cement, roofing iron, ridgecaps, nails, and some sideboard. All labour is a local donation , with the villagers cutting coconut lumber and planing it into 2x4's. They lay the foundation and floor for the 10x12 foot kitchen, put up the framing and roof and sides. The total cost of the labour and wood locally supplied is over half the cost of the kitchen. It was excellent to see that the people themselves were building the kitchens and taking great pride in their efforts.

This is the first "outside" project through the womens groups in this remote area of Tonga, and it is obvious that it has strengthened and solidified the womens previous efforts, and also provided positive reinforcement for efforts they have made to help themselves. Other families joined the development groups after seeing that they were getting kitchens. These new members were told to show that they were serious about bettering themselves, and they too might get a kitchen at some point.

The kitchens themselves are important multi-purpose buildings. Here the extended family not only eats, but cooks and prepares the food. It also serves as a food and dish storage area, a place to do sewing and weaving, and a socializing place.

Most of the kitchens are completed. Thanks to Canadian funding these remote islands have 216 kitchens and a strengthened womens development group, as well as a strengthened sense of their own accomplishment.

Useful contributions can be made to rural development at the regional level and that is where the University of the South Pacific (USP) is active. Based in Suva, Fiji, the University was established in 1967 with a broad developmental orientation. A specific commitment to rural development was signalled in 1981 with the foundation of a Rural Development Centre (RDC), located in Tonga, but serving the whole University region. Funded by the EEC, the activities of the RDC include rural technology, small businesses, food and nutrition, small animals' husbandry and close liaison with a regional women's programme. The RDC is an interdisciplinary venture, recognizing both the realities of rural development and the regional context in which it operates.

Appropriate technology at the RDC

The technology programme of the RDC is concerned principally with small-scale appropriate technology at the village level. Areas of involvement include:

- Water supply and sanitation.
- Energy and fuel use.
- Village tools.
- Housing.
- Transportation.
- Agricultural technology.

There is considerable integration between the various areas, for example village tools and agricultural technology, and with other RDC programmes in the fields of food production and small businesses. The 'appropriateness' of a technology of course depends on the context in which it is to be used. Intermediate technologies developed in other countries, climates and regions have sometimes been found not to be particularly applicable or to require modification before introduction in the South Pacific. This is largely because of the small size of the villages, communities and countries in the region, their isolation and problems of transportation or communication. It is also due to limitations in the supply of raw, processed and scrap materials. This is in turn part of the vicious circle of problems facing small isolated communities. At the regional level wide differences between the islands in natural resource availability further narrow the scope of broadly relevant projects and technologies.

Apart from the modicum of official interest in appropriate technology across the region, there are only a handful of projects at national levels, and limited regional activity. It is fortunate therefore, that such activities as there are, are of quality and keenly received, indeed often demanded, in the villages. The disparity between the lack of official interest in the field and the needs and desires of the villagers is largely explicable in terms of rural isolation and a frequent lack of awareness at the centres and of funds.

Bearing this situation in mind, the technology programme of the RDC was organized with the following three emphases:

- Applied research into village technologies in the region and potentially suitable ideas from overseas.
- The practical evaluation, testing and necessary adaptation of such products and processes.
- The propagation of technologies that were considered needed, suitable, durable and useful.

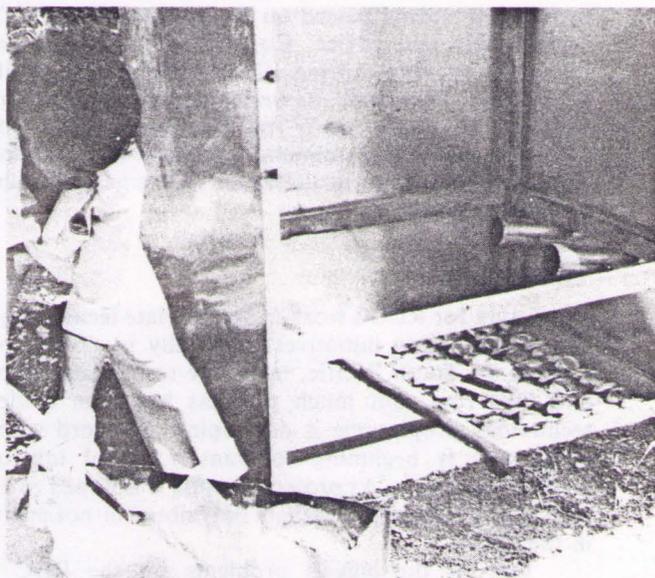
The three areas of interest are necessarily continuous, although needs-assessment and potential project identification have now largely given way to evaluation, selection and implementation.

Project work

Selected project areas include the following:

- Ventilated pit and pour-flush latrines and the local construction of domestic water tanks, assessing the suitability of coir-reinforced cement.
- Charcoal production and the manufacture of charcoal and wood-burning stoves, solar and solar-assisted driers.
- The production of village tools, their maintenance and craftwork. Charcoal produced from coconut shells has been found to be a valuable fuel for village forges.
- Improved low-cost house construction designs, techniques and materials, such as woven panels made from pandanus leaves, fibre- or sacking-reinforced roof and wall cladding and natural cement, produced from coral, as a substitute for imported cement.
- The use of small hand-carts and barrows and the potential for small draught animals, especially as they could reduce the work-load of women.
- Improved low-cost designs, materials and construction techniques for small marine craft for fishing and short-haul transportation.

Lesser areas of interest also include the production and use of ceramics in the village for utensils and house construction, the technical improvement of traditional crafts and the establishment of small businesses based on the above-mentioned technologies.



Building a smoking and drying cabinet using crushed beer cans for floor insulation and to economize on the use of cement. One of the many projects that the RDC is involved in.

Information dissemination

Problems of distance and isolation arise again in the propagation and dissemination of appropriate technological products and processes. Alternatives available to the RDC include in-house workshops, external national and sub-regional workshops and distance education methods. The high cost of travel (flying) in the region is an economic disincentive for anything but intensive courses lasting at least several weeks. External courses are more cost-effective and enable more people to be reached, especially those closer to grass-roots development initiatives.

Distance information dissemination has begun with leaflet production and distribution on various topics including long-handled brooms (where they are traditionally absent), charcoal production and making charcoal stoves. It

is felt that the distribution of specific leaflets can be of more use than larger booklets or books dealing with a wide range of subjects. The leaflets maximize graphics and minimize prose (in English) to ease understanding and implementation across the region. Such a format also simplifies translation if it is desired.

The University also houses satellite radio terminals in Extension Centres across the region. The RDC has yet to make full use of this service because satellite communication requires the existence of an established national network on the ground to be effective, an infrastructure within which information exchange can take place. Such liaison at the national level also helps project identification, transfer and implementation, and supports feed-back within the region. Regional exchanges frequently suffer from a lack of preparation, commitment and national involvement.

Creation of an A.T. network

Thus, a major aim of the RDC is to establish such a network in the region for the transfer and introduction of appropriate technological principles and practice — a network which could also act as a consultative body to whom questions and problems could be directed. Enquiries could be dealt with in the region by its technical advisory capacity or indeed passed on to groups such as ITDG for further help and advice. Co-ordination, contact and co-operation between existing efforts in the region would also be mutually beneficial. Re-invention of the wheel could be avoided, as could many pitfalls. Preliminary contacts confirm positive and unanimous support in the region, but the methodology and structure of such a network have still to be worked out.

The future

The future for RDC's work in appropriate technology looks very bright. New initiatives, especially in diverse regions such as the South Pacific, take time to become established and take root, but much progress has been made. The technology programme is developing in accord with local needs and is beginning to transfer useful information around the region. As projects mature it is hoped to expand the range of interests to others only noted or not mentioned in the above.

One of the biggest problems for the RDC is the identification of village technologies and the collection of relevant information, both in the South Pacific but more particularly overseas. Contacts with agencies and organizations in countries faced with similar issues are even more problematic than with the far-away West. Although the RDC has established several very useful overseas contacts, further contacts are always welcome. The RDC would be pleased to hear from others around the world who could share information relevant to the issues discussed and noted in this article. ●

Further reading

Also refer to the Development Plans of the South Pacific countries where published and available.
South Pacific Rural Technology Workshop, Commonwealth Secretariat and Ministry of Agriculture, Suva, Fiji, July 1981.
Tony Marjoram, 'Needs-Assessment Survey for the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Kiribati', unpublished survey, Centre for Applied Studies in Development, University of the South Pacific, 1981.
D. Medford and H. Rothman, *South Pacific Sub-Regional UNCSTD Paper*, United Nations Conference on Science and Technology for Development, University of the South Pacific, 1978.



Fear and Loathing in Samoa

By Paul Shankman

Since the publication of *Coming of Age in Samoa* in 1928, Samoa has been synonymous with Margaret Mead and casual sex under the palms. Now Derek Freeman's scathing critique of Mead's work, *Margaret Mead and Samoa: The Making and Unmaking of an Anthropological Myth*, offers a dark portrait of a Samoa riddled with aggression, conflict, and rape. The controversy generated by these diametrically opposed depictions of Samoa has received more public attention than any other controversy in the history of anthropology. The subject matter alone is enough to intrigue the curious reader, but for anthropologists the controversy goes beyond popular images of sex and aggression in the South Seas. Reputations are at stake. And there are overtones of an almost primal conflict between the Nurturant Mother (Mead) and the Aggressive Father (Freeman) vying for the attentions of a young, impressionable discipline of anthropology.

When the dust settles, observers will probably conclude that Mead's depiction of Samoa was too rosy while Freeman's was too harsh. One misleading popular stereotype of the islanders may now be replaced by another. For 50 years, Samoans have tolerated male tourists anticipating the favors of nubile Samoan women. Will they now endure decades of fear and loathing based on Freeman's description of aggressive Samoan men?

Regardless of the outcome of the controversy, there is more to Samoa than sex and aggression. Both Samoas—the U.S. Trust Territory of American Samoa (population 32,000) and the independent country of Western Samoa (population 157,000)—have been dramatically altered by their relationships with the modern world. The majority of American Samoans no longer even live in the islands; they have migrated to Hawaii and to the west coast of the U.S. mainland. Western Samoa also has a large migrant population, most of whom are in New Zealand where the issue of illegal Samoan migration has been a pressing political problem for the past several years.

These migrant populations over-

seas are vital to the economic well-being of their relatives back home, for they send millions of dollars in remittances. This money has allowed a higher standard of living than would



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otherwise have been possible, but it has also contributed to the demise of the traditional Samoan subsistence base. In American Samoa, interest in cultivating basic crops has declined to the point where a federally funded CETA program was implemented to train Samoans in traditional planting techniques. However, migration, government employment, and free food programs have rendered subsistence agriculture so unnecessary that few Samoans responded. With its many U.S. subsidized programs, American Samoa has become known as the "Land of the Free Lunch."

The independent Western Samoa has had to face its economic problems more directly. Although Western Samoa retains more of its traditional subsistence base, it too imports large quantities of canned fish, tinned beef, rice, and butter. Between 1976 and 1981, total imports rose from \$23 million to \$70 million, while total exports rose to only \$11 million. Inflation, which has increased by almost 400 percent over the past decade, has contributed to the large trade deficit.

Even with large sums of remittances and foreign aid, Western Samoa has a foreign exchange shortage. By 1982, the country was so close to bankruptcy that it could not service the debt on a loan used to purchase a

Boeing 737. Austerity measures and increased taxes have now been imposed as the basis for negotiating a loan from the International Monetary Fund to salvage the ailing economy.

As if economic troubles were not enough, Western Samoa has also had political difficulties. Under the quasi-traditional, quasi-parliamentary government of the islands, only chiefs (all of whom are older males) can vote. The issue of broader representation is less important than the continuing revelations of bribery and corruption on the part of some chiefs. In the 1981 elections, the new Prime Minister was removed from office on the grounds of electoral malpractice. He was later acquitted, but only after a major political crisis and further accusations of malfeasance.

The current political and economic troubles of Western Samoa weigh heavily on younger Samoans, who are excluded from the political system and are on the margins of an economy that cannot fulfill their rising expectations. Many of the islands' young, well-educated Samoans do not wish to return to village agriculture although jobs in town are scarce. They often view migration as their only option, but international migration is tightly restricted. These pressures and many others may have contributed to an increase in juvenile delinquency and alcohol abuse. Youth suicide has also risen dramatically in the last decade. Western Samoa now has the highest rate of suicide among young people in the world.

These contemporary dilemmas post serious problems for Samoans. Yet readers interested in such problems will find much more data in articles from *The Wall Street Journal* (April 14, 1983) and the *New York Times Magazine* (April 24, 1983) than in the entirety of Freeman's book. In this context, the controversy over sex and aggression in Samoa is a limited one. Regardless of whether the islands were ever the sexual paradise of Mead or the sexual purgatory of Freeman, they are now part of the Third World.

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VANUATU

The Republic of Vanuatu, formerly called New Hebrides, is a chain of some 80 islands with a total area of 12,189 square kilometres spread over a distance of about 850 kilometres in the southwest Pacific Ocean, between the Solomon Islands and Fiji. The annual per capita income of the estimated 123,000 inhabitants in 1982 was about \$650. About 80 % of the population lives in rural areas, earning a per capita income which is much lower than for the country as a whole.

Before becoming independent in 1980, Vanuatu was jointly administered by the United Kingdom and France. The government's current budgetary operations still depend heavily on foreign assistance. Moreover, one half of the total capital expenditures called for under the First National Development Plan (1982-86) is being sought as grant aid. Foreign loans and direct private investments are expected to provide the balance, with relatively negligible amounts expected from local savings. The major bilateral donors have traditionally been the United Kingdom and France, with assistance from Australia and Japan increasing in recent years.

The objectives of Vanuatu's First National Development Plan are: balanced growth; increased utilization of natural resources; realization of the nation's human resource potential; increased promotion of the role of the private sector; and preservation of the cultural and environmental heritage.

Agricultural exports account for the bulk of the country's total commodity exports. Copra (dried coconut meat which yields coconut oil), cocoa, beef, and timber are the major exports. Efforts are being made further to promote tourism which now accounts for as much net foreign exchange earnings as commodity exports. Fishing and small-scale manufacturing industries are also being developed. The principal imports are foodstuffs, fuel oil, vehicles, transport equipment, consumer goods, and building materials.

As in other South Pacific island countries, Vanuatu's development prospects will be challenged by its remoteness from centers of world trade and industry, its dispersed small island composition, scattered population, the small domestic market, and limited availability of skilled manpower.



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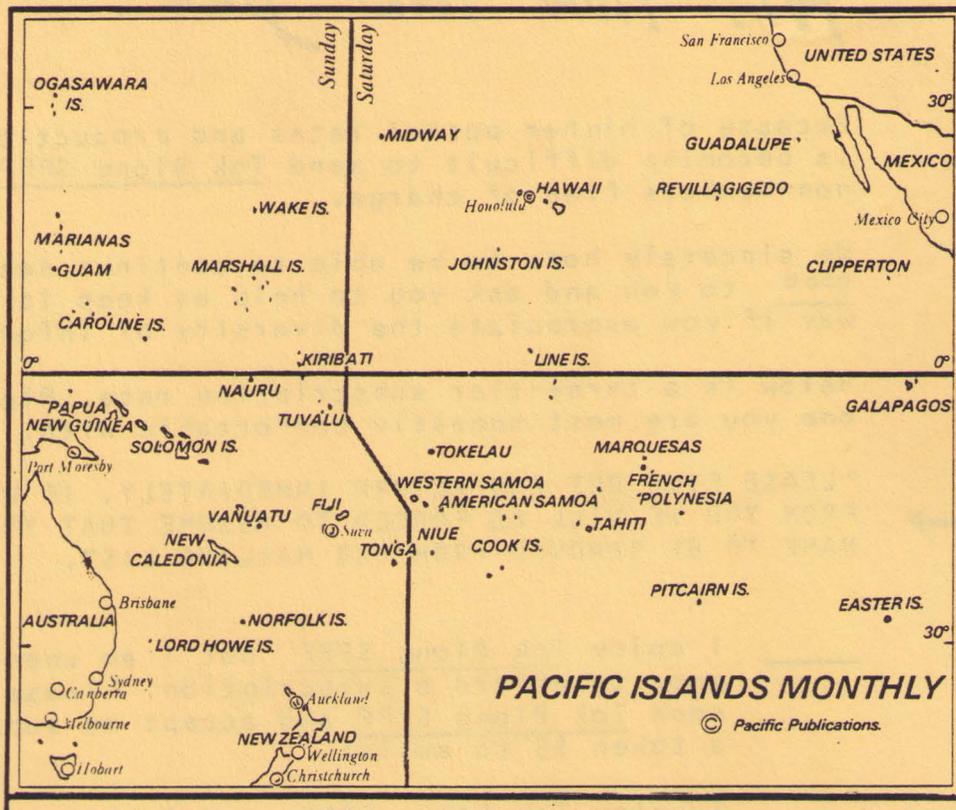
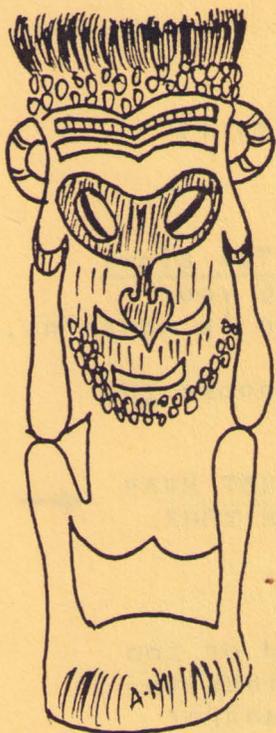
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