

# Tok Blong SPPF

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# Focus on New Caledonia

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**TOK BLONG SPPF** is pidgin english as used in many parts of the Pacific. It might literally be translated as "this talk belongs to SPPF" or, SPPF Newsletter. **TOK BLONG SPPF** is published four times per year by the South Pacific Peoples Foundation of Canada, 407-620 View St., Victoria, B.C., Canada V8W 1J6, and is available to donors of SPPF (minimum \$10 yr.). SPPF exists to raise critical issues in the South Pacific to a Canadian audience through a variety of public education methods, and to assist in getting relevant Canadian financial, technical and other assistance into the South Pacific to assist islanders in their self-development. **TOK BLONG SPPF** is edited by Phil Esmonde.

# Why a New Caledonia issue?

It would be nice to be able to report that New Caledonia is peaceful and quiet, and that a clear and supportive process towards independence is in place. Unfortunately, such reporting is impossible.

If anything, beneath a seemingly peaceful veneer, tensions are mounting. The extremist elements in the settler population are bringing more and more guns out of their closets and at the same time feeding fears of the less extremist settler and immigrant population.

In this issue of TOK BLONG SPPF we are publishing some first-hand accounts of the situation in New Caledonia. These come from Susanna Ounei and Ingrid Kircher. Susanna has been involved in the independence movement since 1969 - the time of its re-emergence - and has spent the last 15 months in New Zealand learning English as a guest of CORSO, a national development agency in N.Z.. Susanna passed through Victoria and Vancouver on her way to an international conference on Women's Alternatives to Negotiating Peace held in Halifax, Nova Scotia. From Halifax she is travelling to Nairobi to represent the FLNKS ( the Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front : the umbrella organization for the independence movement ) at the Women's End of Decade Conference. We have reprinted copies of Susanna's speech in Halifax , and her report of events in Noumea around May 10, when a nuclear submarine was stationed in New Caledonia.

We are also printing excerpts from a trip report by Ingrid Kircher who visited New Caledonia from April 12-May 1, 1985, as well as a recent article by her in the Guardian. Ingrid is the official translator in New York for the FLNKS, and is thus very knowledgeable of the current situation.

The French government has come up with a new formula for New Caledonia called the Fabius Plan ( after the French Prime Minister). The FLNKS has accepted part of the plan which calls for elections for regional representatives in August of this year , with these representatives forming a new territorial congress which would work towards a referendum of independence for 1987. However, the extreme right-wing has rejected the Plan and feel sold-out. The potential for massive violence in New Caledonia remains very strong.

The Plan itself also leaves many questions unanswered: voter eligibility; responsibilities of a continuing French administration and those of a new territorial congress; what would happen if there is a governmental change in France ( that is, what security does the Plan have ? ).

We hope this issue helps you to understand more fully the current reality of New Caledonia and the history of this reality.

# And now . . .

## THE FABIUS PLAN

The latest French plan to deal with the situation in New Caledonia was announced in Paris by Prime Minister Laurant Fabius on April 25.

The so-called Fabius plan calls for the abolition of the territorial assembly formed after elections last November (which were boycotted by the Kanaks), and the forming of a new territorial congress which will decide on independence by the end of 1987.

The Fabius plan calls for New Caledonia to be divided into four regions, each of which will elect by universal suffrage its own councils in August of this year. The council members will in turn combine to form the territorial congress.

The new regions drastically alter the existing electoral balance. The Noumea region taking in 60 % of the New Caledonia population will contribute only 18 members to the 43-seat territorial congress. The three other regions - one covering the Loyalty Islands, one on the north of the main island, and the other on the southern half apart from the Noumea enclave - will supply the other 25 congress members. The Kanak vote is expected to take at least 2 of the regions, and likely a third, giving them a strong possibility of forming the congress majority.

At the same time, the country would remain under overall French Administration until 1987, and France would undertake a new development program through the regional councils to redress economic inequalities, as well as bolster its military presence.

The FLNKS decided at its May 25/26 Congress to participate in August elections.

There is still concern on their part, however, that an electoral change in France prior to 1987 could annul changes in New Caledonia. There is concern about the growing military presence of France and its implications.

Meanwhile, the extremist anti-independence elements (who are extremely well-armed) are threatening all out civil war and seem to be gearing up for the "last struggle".

Traditionally in New Caledonia, French troops and policy have been used to protect the interest of the settler population and to repress Kanaks.

The time is again upon the French to decide whether to clamp down on extremists or to back down from pressures at home and from the settler population.

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The colonisers treated the women like they would treat a dog. They used the women just to clean up after them. Sometimes they were raped by the army.

Before the French arrived in our country we had our own customs and we had our dignity. A lot of respect existed between the men and the women. When religion arrived in our country it said that the women must stay at home and never go anywhere. They must stay with their husband, and if they don't, then the husband has the right to beat them. The colonisers said that if the women left their husbands, God would be unhappy. And so our grandmothers, our mothers, stayed.

Lots of young Kanak women who were only 14 or 15 years old got pregnant. The church said that we must not talk about contraception, because God would be unhappy. In 1982, we created a group for Kanak women and other women exploited in the struggle, the GFKEL. We said, "Contraception is not a crime, but it is a crime for society to make a 14 or 15 year old have a baby and care for it for the rest of her life." She has no job, and for us it is a crime to leave these women.

Before colonization, our grandmothers had contraception - Kanak contraception. Since the arrival of colonization and the bible, we have not had the right to use Kanak contraception, because it is a 'crime'. So, when the 14 and 15 year old Kanak women had their babies, they sometimes left them in the bush. We did not protest against the young women, but against society - the hypocritical society - because it left these young women to get pregnant by withholding contraception.

Our women's group analysed the problem of colonialism and of our future. We told our people that they could not get true independence from capitalism or imperialism if they couldn't see the problem of the grassroots. And for us the grassroots are the women, because in New Caledonia the women do every job. They work as servants, and then they go home and do everything there as well.

So we talked with our people and explained that it was really dangerous if the men continued to oppress the women, because they could not talk about the true revolutionary movement for the future if they didn't see what was happening in their own house. And they must see the problem in their own house, and the situation of their exploited sisters, our Kanak sisters.

In our women's group we felt that we must not only talk, but also move to help our brothers. We did not want to stay; we wanted to go together with them. And we think that we can change our Kanak brothers, because both Kanak women and men are exploited. So we must fight side by side with them; occupy the land together; fight on the barricades with them. Our group is represented in the FLNKS. After each action, we pose before them the problem of the future and the problem of imperialism.

Today in New Caledonia there is the Kanaks and a few white allies on one side and the whites and the other immigrants on the other. For me, the women who are on the other side and who oppose the liberation struggle of my people are not my sisters. If they have some problems with their men they can sort that out themselves. I do not want to work with them on issues like contraception and abortion or domestic violence. I will do that work with Kanak women and with the few white women who support our struggle.

# The Kanak people's struggle for independence in New Caledonia

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**Text of a speech by Susanna Ounei to Women's Alternatives for Negotiating Peace Conference, June 5-9, 1985, Halifax, Canada.**

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The struggle in New Caledonia has not just begun now. The struggle began in 1853 when the French arrived and colonized our people. When they arrived they came with the bible. The bible was the beginning of our colonization. In their bible it said, never steal and never kill because God will be unhappy. While we believed in God, they massacred our people and stole our land. Now we end up with nothing but the bible, and they have our land. That is the story of colonization in our country.

While they were saying never kill and never steal because God will be unhappy, we were reduced from 200,000 to only 26,000 Kanak people by the massacres.

In 1878, a big chief called Atai, who did not want to follow what the French said, organized the people and we had the first insurrection in New Caledonia. For that, the people were again massacred. Our people were killed. Others were sent to Australia, some to Vanuatu, and we don't know where the rest went.

In 1917, when they fought the Germans in the first world war, the French wanted to bring our people to France to protect their land against the Germans. Our chief Noel said, "Why are we going to France to defend the land of the French against the Germans, when they are stealing our land and killing our people?" And so he organized the people to refuse to go to France.

And what happened to him? They cut his head off and sent it to the museum in Paris. To the present day, the head of our chief is in Paris. The head of our chief is kept by the same people who conquered us and who said at that time that we were savages!

After that, right up until 1953, our people - our grandfathers and our grandmothers - were too scared. The repression was really strong. Up until 1946, the Kanak people did not even have the right to go into the towns - they first had to get permission from the gendarmes (police). If they went into the town after 9 o'clock in the evening, the white French had the right to kill our people.

Our people - our mothers, our parents, and our grandparents - were humiliated every day. Every day you would hear the whites calling us "dirty Kanaks" - and "Kanak", for them, was a really pejorative word. Of course, when they were overseas at that time, they said we were "Melanesians", because they wanted to put on a good image overseas. But in New Caledonia they said "dirty Kanaks".

The Kanak dress (a frock introduced by the missionaries throughout the Pacific), for example, is a symbol of our colonization. The Kanak dress was designed to distinguish the Kanak women from the white women. The Kanak women did not have the right to wear jeans or white women's clothes. They had to wear a Kanak dress, so that when the tourists came they could see these dresses and admire the beautiful folklore of our country.

### The beginning of Kanak opposition

In 1953 our parents formed the first Kanak political party, the Union Caledonienne (UC) and they began to ask for an improvement in our living conditions. They never said anything about independence because they didn't want to upset the whites too much, but they achieved a few reforms and made life a little easier for us in the tribes.

In 1969 a Kanak chief called Nidoish Naisseline came back from France, where he had been studying. Nidoish Naisseline had been involved in the 1968 workers' and students' upsurge in France. When he arrived back in New Caledonia the word "Kanak" was really pejorative, but he fought to make it valuable again.

Then we created the Red Scarves. The Red Scarves was the beginning of our movement of today. At that time lots of Kanaks were arrested, including Naisseline. They sent Naisseline to France, but in 1972 we called him back again because the struggle began to get strong. He came, and we organized our struggle against colonization around him.

We wrote the word "Kanak" on our scarves. It was our slogan. When the French saw we were really proud to say "Kanak", they began to call us "Melanesians". We began explaining to our people why we wanted to make the term "Kanak" valuable. And we talked about the land; the need to demand the return of our land without conditions.

Then the right wing began to organize. They said that if New Caledonia became independent, we would not be able to get rice and sugar. They said we would be like people in Africa, who die because they are hungry. And why are they hungry? they asked. Because they are independent! So we went around the countryside and explained to the people that our imports did not all come from France but from other countries, and we explained the importance of independence.

New Caledonia has a rich economy. We are the second-largest producers of nickel in the world. As well, we produce manganese, chrome, gold, iron, cobalt, zinc and coffee. And of course, we have tourists; in Club Med. We said to our people that we must have our freedom, because the French use our land and say they are staying in New Caledonia to protect us and stop us from being hungry. Our reply was that as long as they stay in our country and we don't get our independence, we will always be hungry. So the French must give us back our country.

### Kanaks murdered as protests grow

We have had a lot of problems with the French government since then. In 1975 they killed Richard Kamouda, a young Kanak.

In 1979 Theodore Daye was shot by a racist French police inspector. The inspector was never tried, but was simply sent back to France. In 1980 they killed Emile Kutu. He was shot when he and some friends visited an employer to pick up some wages that were owing. The employer refused to pay and instead open-fired. He was given only a light jail sentence and has since been freed.

In 1981 they killed Jean-Pierre Declercq, who was a white from France. He was general secretary of the Union Calédonienne. After each killing more and more people demonstrated.

### Kanaks a minority

The total population of New Caledonia is 140,000. But the Kanak people are only 60,000 in our own country. The white French, who are descended from those who came in 1853 (the Caldoches) are 30,500. The other 49,500 are Chinese, Wallis Islanders, Tahitians and other immigrants. This figure also includes an estimated 20,000 French civil servants and their families, who are temporarily resident in New Caledonia.

Noumea is the capital, and a white town. Kanaks cannot live there because they have no work. Out of 60,000 Kanaks only 7000 work, so the Kanak people live in their tribes.

The new immigrants we got were all the traitors, the supporters of French imperialism from Algeria, all the traitors from Vanuatu, all the traitors from Vietnam. We get that sort of refugee! We haven't any refugees from oppression in South America or South Africa, for example - the true refugees. No, we get the traitors of the world - the rubbish of the world. They are all in our country!

### Negotiations for Independence

The Mitterand government has said that we will get independence through a referendum, and that all the people living in New Caledonia will be able to vote. We refuse that. We say that only people who have one parent born in New Caledonia should be able to vote. We made this concession because we recognise that the people who have been in our country for generations, the Caldoches, did not choose to come there. We recognise them as "victims of history". But they refuse to recognise our rights as the indigenous people of the land.

The French "Socialist" Government of Mitterand has sent a special envoy to negotiate for them. Edgard Pisani said he came to bring all sides together, to meet all the communities. Communities? They can call other people ethnic communities because they are from overseas, but not us. We are not a community, we Kanaks are the true people of the land.

On the question of negotiations, we say we do not want to be given a plan for independence drawn up in France for us to just sign. We do not want neo-colonial independence where France can keep its military bases and keep control of our economy. We want true economic, political and cultural independence and then we can negotiate our own agreements as a sovereign nation with other sovereign nations.

**KANAK SOVEREIGNTY IS OUR BASIC RIGHT IN NEW CALEDONIA. IT IS NOT NEGOTIABLE.**

### The life of Kanak women

In 1853 our grandmothers fought against the bloody colonization. They hid their children in the bush to prevent the army from killing them. If there are 60,000 Kanak people today it is because of the great courage of our grandmothers. During the period of colonization, in the coffee plantations they worked hard even when

they were pregnant and after they had given birth. Since then, the life of our women hasn't changed. Out of 60,000 Kanak people only one Kanak woman has a degree in French.

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In 1983 they came to see me because they said they were feminists and they wanted to talk about the problems we faced as women. They wanted me to denounce the Kanak men. But Kanak men are not my enemy, they are my brothers. If we sometimes have a problem with them, we will deal with that problem on the ground in the struggle. My enemy is the racist colonial system which exploits my people, and anyone who supports that system - women as well as men.

In the struggle today, none of us is secure. We never know who will be the next to be killed by the French Government or by the fascist settlers. But the only way we can hope to become secure is to get our freedom. And we will get our freedom. If they wanted to stop us they should have killed all of us. Now it is too late for them because all of us are determined to go to the end. And nothing is stronger than the power of a people's movement.



# MILITARY BUILDUP IN NEW CALEDONIA

Immediately following his visit to New Caledonia this January, President Mitterrand indicated that France would build a major naval base in Noumea to strengthen its military presence in New Caledonia and maintain its strategic presence in the region.

"France intends to maintain her role and her strategic presence in this part of the world. I have asked the Prime Minister [Mr. Fabius] to take all necessary measures to this effect, notably those which concern the installation necessary to reinforce the military base at Noumea."

On April 17 French media announced that a nuclear attack submarine of the 'Rubis' class was on its way to Noumea, with the submarine scheduled to arrive at the same time as Defence Minister Charles Hernu. Hernu, who likes to point out that his great grandfather settled in New Caledonia as a political prisoner, states, "The retreat of the French soldiers from New Caledonia is non-negotiable. France is there for another twenty, thirty, or one hundred years."

A Defence Department study commissioned by the French government envisions the construction of a naval base large enough to accomodate nuclear submarines and aircraft carriers, the enlargement of existing airfields to host several Jaguar attack planes, and the stationing of several thousand military personnel.

On May 7, Defence Minsiter Hernu participated in welcoming ceremonies in Noumea for the nuclear submarine. Hernu stated that more submarines would be sent to New Caledonia: "it is not your last".

# NEW CALEDONIA: MAY, 1985

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The following is a report of several events in New Caledonia during the first weeks of May, 1985. It is written by Susanna Ounei. Susanna has spent the last 14 months in New Zealand learning English, and is one of the few Kanak English-speakers. While the English in this report reflects Susanna's newness to the language, we felt it best to leave it as is, for it captures the emotions of her and the Kanaks' struggle for equality.

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The 8th of May, the FLNKS decided to have a rally in the town of Noumea to denounce the nuclear submarine which arrived recently in New Caledonia. Nothing happened during the rally. After the rally when the Kanak people began to disperse, the nostalgic from Algeria called Henri Morini arrived with a group of Wallis Islanders and white fascists and started throwing stones at the Kanaks. There was a big fight between the Kanaks and the others. The army, hypocrits like their government, pretended to separate the two groups but the fascist whites broke through the army line and continued their fight against the Kanaks. When the Kanaks from Mont Ravel and Pierre Lenquette (Kanak areas) knew about what had happened in the town, they decided to make a barricade on the road in their area to defend themselves from the white settlers. The Kanaks in the tribes near Noumea from Paita and St. Louis came to help the Kanaks from Noumea but they were stopped by the army. The settlers attacked but they held their ground. The 8th of May was a day of fighting between Kanaks on one side and the right-wing settlers, both white and Wallisian, on the other.

The white leader, Lafleur, called over the radio for all whites to take up arms against the Kanaks. The last Congress of the RPCR resolved to use violence against the Kanaks if the Kanaks organized any demonstration to call for the decolonization or the demilitarization of New Caledonia and the Pacific. To follow the call of the fascist Lafleur at 10:00 AM, 200 white settlers gathered in front of the FLNKS office. By 2:00 PM they numbered 5000, many armed with guns. A lot of our Kanak people were seriously injured.

During the day of 8th of May, the results of violence was awful. We had a lot of casualties. Sixty-nine Kanak people were badly injured and one Kanak youth was killed, his name was Celestin Zongo and he was from Lifou. He was planning to go to France in June to study at University. Zongo gave the most beautiful years of his youth to our struggle against the white racists who live in our country.

It's deplorable to see how the army and the white settlers shot the Kanaks. One child was shot by them and one youth was run over by a car.

The same day the CRS (army) went to Coula in the tribe of Houailou and threw grenades and shot at the Kanaks.

## The Explosion at School of Do-Kamo

To satisfy their need to kill the Kanaks, the whites decided to attack our youth at the school of Do Kamo. On the 13th of May 1985 at 7:30 PM a bomb was placed at the entrance of the school and 7 of our young students were injured. The director of the establishment said that it could have been worse because 4 of our youth were just near the explosion and could have been killed. Do Kamo has become a target because it's the only school in the white-dominated town of Noumea to accept our Kanak youth. The lives of our young people at Do Kamo are threatened by the fascists because the majority of Kanaks who get their baccalaureat and go

11

after to study in France come from Do Kamo. For the fascists, the bomb at Do Kamo was only the beginning. Now, every night they go to the school to insult our youth: "Dirty Kanaks, you escaped this time but the next time we will not miss you".

### Events in Houailou (East Coast) "Operation Coup de Pouce"

On the 9th of May the people from Houailou decided to occupy the Town Hall of Houailou to protest against the violence of the CRS (army) in their tribes and the violence of the white settlers against the Kanaks in Noumea and to demand the closing of the nickel mine of Poro (Houailou). The tribes of Houailou have often been the victim of "Operation Coup de Pouce" (operation coup of thumb). Operation coup de pouce was given its name by Pisani when he sent his CRS or mercenaries to the tribes to attack the Kanaks with rifles, grenades and tear gas. Since the boycott of the November elections, these kinds of operations have been common in our tribes - the torture and killing of our people. Example: the 12th of January, 2 of the Kanak leaders were killed - Eloi Machoro and Marcel Nonaro, in the forest of Kohny in the area of Koinde Oui Point (La Foa). It was in this way that a strong young Kanak, Aldo Tonhoueri, was killed in February in Thio. When the Kanaks discovered the body of Tonhoueri, it was so badly beaten that they couldn't identify his face. The result of the autopsy by the French government: "Tonhoueri died a natural death".

### The Nuclear Submarine

During the boycott of the November 1984 elections, we heard that the French government was planning to send a Nuclear Submarine to New Caledonia. On May 7th this became a reality. At the official welcoming ceremony, the racist mayor of Noumea, Laroques, said "it's our first submarine". Hernu, the French Minister of Defence, answered, "Yes, and it's not your last". Hernu's reply is significant for us Kanak people because the struggle for our freedom will be hard and bloody. But the French Government must know that the march of the Kanak people towards its independence is irreversible. In our Kanak hearts, each of us is aware that true independence involves the control of all the resources of land and our sea. The whites fight because they hate the Kanaks, but us Kanak people, we fight by love to defend our Kanak identity and our country, Kanaky. Like all our brothers who have already died we all know that one day we too may fall. But we accept that risk.

### How the fascists use other ethnic groups

This is the picture of the apartheid in New Caledonia in the Pacific. On one side there are the whites with other ethnics like Wallis, Tahitian, etc. and on the other the Kanaks. These immigrants have a clearer skin than ours, so the white bosses tell them that they are more intelligent than the Kanaks. The tragedy of it all is that they believe what the whites tell them and fight with them against the Kanaks.

On the 18th of May the white settlers armed a group of Wallis Islanders who are against our struggle and sent them to Ponerihouen to kill Kanaks. The Kanaks disarmed them and broke their guns in front of the army. After that the Kanaks explained to them that our enemy is the French Government and not the Wallisian people. The Wallisian hypocrites pretended to believe what the Kanaks said but when they went back to Noumea, the same Wallisians went to

12

the Media and denounced the Kanaks. They said that they were obliged to say what the Kanaks wanted them to because they were afraid and they reaffirmed their support of the white settlers. It's not the first time the Wallis people have done that to us. Last year when they needed our Kanak Trade Union to defend their interests they came to ask for our support. The Kanak Trade Union helped them and they got their jobs back. But later as part of a right wing riot in Noumea, the same people went to burn our Kanak Trade Union office and demonstrated with the white settlers. When Machoro was killed, they drank champagne with the whites and cheered "we won".

We Kanak people are aware of the fact that the Wallis Islanders, the Tahitians, the Javanese and others are used by the French Government to oppose us. We have tried to involve them in our struggle and not let the white colonial system divide us. But it is impossible to continue to give our hand to the people who are deaf to us and who help the army and the white settlers to carry out their attacks against the Kanak people.

### Tourism

Everywhere in the world, when the French introduce the picture of New Caledonia, they will show beautiful white sand with some wahine (the name of the Tahitian women) with their Tahitian Tamure music. Of course the world will believe that in our country we have no problems and nobody ever knows what we, the Kanak people, look like.

We are Melanesian and since 1853 we have been fighting for our freedom and the return of our land without conditions. Nobody knows about our life conditions. Up until November, 1984, out of 60,000 Kanak people, only 7000 had jobs. The rest of the Kanak people just stay in the tribes and feed themselves with our own food like yam, taro, kumara, banana, manioc and go fishing and hunting if it is a nice day.

The tribes are reservations created by the French government when they colonized our people so that when tourists go to New Caledonia they can come to admire some native animals in the reservations and these native animals are us, the Kanaks.

They exploit the beauty of our sea, our beaches, our rivers and our white sand.

In 1982 there were 125,000 tourists and they expected 184,000 for 1985. But because of the troubles in New Caledonia, not many tourists want to come to our home. We do not mind because the Kanak people have nothing to lose if the tourist industry is blocked. We get none of the profits from the tourism anyway.

### Slaves in our own country

When the French said that they built our country, we Kanak people say it is not true. For 75 years our people worked without wages to build the roads, to work in the coffee plantations, the copra and to work with the sandal wood. The Kanak women were used as maids without wages and they called them "popinee" or "ponoche". Today they still call us "popinee" or "ponoche" when they are angry with us.

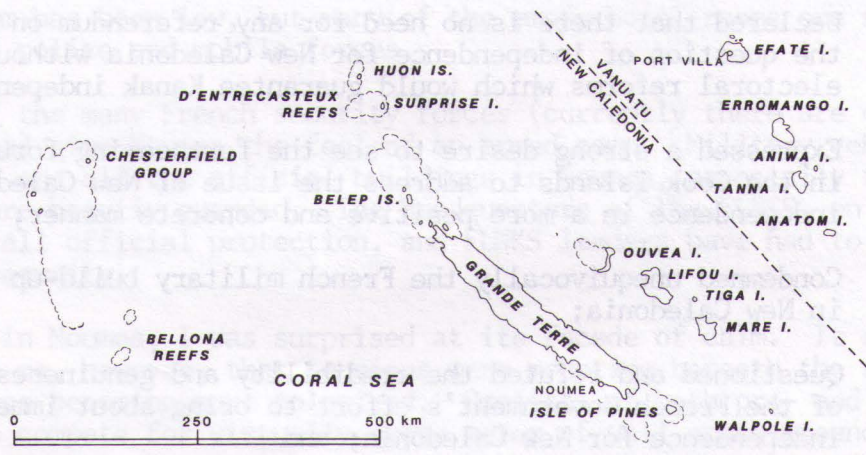
In the coffee plantations if the women give birth, the very next day they have to stand up to work without having any time to rest. The white boss was always

ready to give her a whipping if she wanted to stay at home with her baby. This information was given to me by an old woman from Ouaoué, the wife of the chief of Ouaoué.

Old men have told me with tears in their eyes how the whites treated our grandfathers. One old chief from Ouaoué Bourail (West Coast) said: "When the white bosses needed the Kanaks to work for them they would go to see the gendarme. The gendarme would come and order the chief to send some Kanaks to unload the boats. Even when they came at 12 o'clock at night or 2:00 in the morning we had to obey the orders we were given by the whites and go out to the boats anchored off the reefs. If not, we were just sent by the gendarmes to jail. When I see today how the young people are strong and fighting against them (the whites), I'm really pleased because our life was really hard."

The life of Kanak women

In 1853 our grandmothers fought against the bloody colonization. They hid their children in the bush to prevent the army from killing them. If there are 60,000 Kanak people today it is because of the great courage of our grandmothers. During the period of colonization, in the coffee plantations they worked hard even when they were pregnant and after they had given birth. Since then, the life of our women hasn't changed. Out of 60,000 Kanak people only one Kanak woman has a degree in French.



MAP 15 CANX/1987 1995 SOUTH PACIFIC HANDBOOK, BOX 1078, CHICO, CALIF., USA 95727

**NEW CALEDONIA**



# MELANESIAN GOVERNMENTS SUPPORT KANAKS

The Foreign Ministers of Melanesian countries, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu and the FLNKS Minister of External Relations, in the spirit of Melanesian solidarity, had an unprecedented and historic meeting in Port Vila, Vanuatu on 3 June 1985.

The meeting was convened to obtain first hand information from the FLNKS leaders and to exchange views on the situation in New Caledonia. Their discussions centred on developments in New Caledonia since the 18 November Territorial Assembly elections and the recently announced Fabius Plan on the future of New Caledonia.

During the course of the meeting the Foreign Ministers:

- (A) Re-affirmed the legitimate right of the Kanak people to independence;
- (B) Declared that there is no need for any referendum on the question of independence for New Caledonia without electoral reforms which would guarantee Kanak independence;
- (C) Expressed a strong desire to see the forthcoming forum in the Cook Islands to address the issue of New Caledonia's independence in a more positive and concrete manner;
- (D) Condemned unequivocally the French military build-up in New Caledonia;
- (E) Questioned and refuted the credibility and genuineness of the French Government's effort to bring about immediate independence for New Caledonia; and
- (F) Agreed that it is timely to re-inscribe New Caledonia on the U.N. list of non-self-governing territories.

The meeting ended with the understanding that there may be further meetings before the 16th South Pacific Forum meeting in Rarotonga, Cook Islands.

# INTERVIEWS WITH KANAK LEADERS

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Ingrid Kircher of the U.S. Pacific Issues Network spent three weeks in New Caledonia from April 12 - May 1, 1985. What follows are excerpts from her trip report, including interviews with several leaders of the FLNKS (Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front).

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NOUMEA: Noumea, the capital city, resembles a Cote d'Azur town transplanted 20,000 kilometres into the Pacific. The most visible sign of the reign of French colonialism, Noumea is tightly controlled by the caldoches. Its mayor, Roger Larocque, a wealthy businessman and one of the RPCR leaders, has held his post for the past 26 years. Of Noumea's population of 50,000, only 15,000 are Kanak. Noumea has all the amenities of a well-to-do European city and is one of the main tourist centers in the South Pacific. Since the November election boycott, tourism has been low, but many of the empty hotel rooms are filled with French CRS police and mobile forces.

The presence of the many French security forces (currently there are over 6,000 in New Caledonia) give Noumea the feel of an armed camp. Military vehicles are a common sight, and all the official buildings in Noumea, especially the High Commissariat, are heavily guarded. The headquarters of the FLNKS, on the contrary, lack all official protection, and FLNKS leaders have had to provide for their own security.

During my stay in Noumea, I was surprised at its facade of calm. It soon became clear to me, however, that tensions were mounting beneath the surface and the situation was becoming more polarized. Grafitti of both pro- and anti-independentists compete for virtually every meter of wall space around town.

The media, which are totally controlled by the rightists and extremely biased, are one of the key instruments in perpetrating French colonialism. For example, a report on security in the bush following the French teacher's death featured interviews with five whites but no Kanaks; the local TV station featured the RPCR Congress in a lengthy report, while it made only a brief mention of the April 20 Kanak demonstration and did not report on any of the international support demonstrations.

FROM A MEETING WITH YEIWENE YEIWENE, MINISTER OF FINANCE AND SOLIDARITY OF THE FLNKS

On the French Military Base: Mr. Yeiwene expressed the FLNKS apprehension over the proposed French military buildup: "We are totally against the presence of a military base by any country. We are in the Pacific, we are a pacifist country, we have no enemies. Any problems of defense could be resolved by a regional defense (defense commune) with Vanuatu and the other Melanesian countries. We cannot accept the presence of a base which also threatens the other countries of the region. We have already protested against the French nuclear tests, but France has never taken into account public opinion of the South Pacific countries."

The FLNKS is calling on the other Pacific countries for support. Mr. Yeiwene noted: "I think the fact that France will establish a nuclear base in New Caledonia will oblige the other countries of the Pacific to understand that the nuclear problem and the question of independence are part of the same struggle."

On the Economy: Referring to Jean-Marie Tjibaou's quote, "il faut construire l'indépendance" ("we have to build independence"), Mr. Yeiwene emphasized the importance of self-sufficiency to break the system of European control of business and commerce, since it is this very system that is used against them. At the recent Congress of the Union Caledonienne the question of the establishment of an alternative means of produce distribution was one of the major points of discussion. The debate was then continued with the other partners within the FLNKS.

Currently assessments are being conducted in all the regions to see what the needs are. Then cooperatives will be established, with possibly a purchasing centre in Noumea to coordinate with the regions. For example, Jean-Marie Tjibaou, the mayor of Hienghene is setting up a number of different enterprises in his district, including sheep, chicken raising, planting of citrus fruits, etc.

FROM A MEETING WITH YANN CELENE UREGEI, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE FLNKS

Mr. Uregei, who had just returned from a trip to Vanuatu, where he spoke at a solidarity rally of some 3,000 people in Vila, emphasized that each point of the plan outlined by French Prime Minister Fabius fell far short of independence. He felt that the delay of the time table to December 1987 was very significant. He recalled that even those South Pacific Forum countries which had been hesitant to give their full support had agreed that independence should come to Kanaky before the legislative elections in France in Spring 1986. These elections will most likely result in a rightwing majority in the French parliament, and despite the much-discussed concept of "cohabitation", President Mitterrand might schedule early presidential elections, which could bring an opposition government to power well before 1988.

Mr. Uregei also stated that the current Fabius plan left the question of the composition of the electorate in an independence referendum unresolved, since Fabius was referring to "universal suffrage". The earlier suggestion of Pisani to have a three-year minimum of residency had been unsatisfactory to the FLNKS.

Mr. Uregei noted: "As for so-called independence/association, the FLNKS is not in agreement with France. What guarantee is association for the Kanaks? Another problem is the militarization, which Fabius made no effort to hide. They plan to establish bases in the South, at the airport, and at the seaport. It seems to me that they want to occupy the country....The Socialists just don't seem to be that serious about independence."



He stated that for the FLNKS, the main questions continue to be the electoral reform, the calendar for independence and French militarization of Kanaky. He expressed his skepticism about the proposed regionalization: "It is like giving someone a piece of meat to eat and leading them into a pit....Even if the FLNKS has the majority, we still don't know what this would mean. With the dissolution of the present Territorial Assembly and direct administration by the French government, what would the role be of a new assembly? And what would direct administration mean once the Right is in power again in France? The plan could be changed completely, for example into something like Ukeiwe's apartheid plan... The Fabius plan is clearly neo-colonial: France wishes to reform, whereas the Kanaks want to change the system fundamentally. To be imprisoned in a French neo-colonial system protected by French military--what kind of independence is that?"

FROM A MEETING WITH EDMOND NEKIRIAI, MEMBER OF THE FLNKS CENTRAL COMMITTEE

"We have always refused any kind of neo-colonialism, and now we will fall into it if we don't pay attention. The first manifestation of this neo-colonialism is the French government's taking charge through direct administration of our country during a period of transition. The second is the problem of the French nuclear base." He expressed with satisfaction that the nuclear/military issue had already encountered opposition from the countries in the region, such as New Zealand, the Cook Islands, etc.

The discussion then turned to the status of the caldoches. Mr. Nekiriai noted: "Mr. Mitterand's independence is independence for everybody, we say Kanak sovereignty first. Give us our independence and we will discuss with the others. We have no intention to tell the others to go. There is enough room for everybody. It is a question of sovereignty which guarantees us our rights as the first occupants, and then gives the right to the others to live with us. That's what the whites here have always refused to do. There can be no peace in a Kanak country without consulting us, without living with us.

FROM A MEETING WITH PASTOR JACQUES AJAPUHNYA, PRESIDENT OF THE EGLISE EVANGELIQUE (The Eglise Evangelique represents 26% of the population in New Caledonia. It is an indigenous church, with all 70 of its ministers Kanak.)

As in some of the other Pacific Island nations (e.g. Vanuatu), the Eglise Evangelique plays an important role in the Kanak struggle for self-determination. As Pastor Ajapuhnya explained, the church went through an extensive process of reflection beginning in 1976 on the questions of liberation, self-determination and the meaning of independence for New Caledonia. The 1979 General Synod (which was preceded by four regional synods) concluded that the church needed to speak clearly on matters of justice and Kanak independence. The 45 delegates present unanimously adopted the declaration in support of Kanak Independence. Ajapuhnya states: "The principle we endorse is that, in order for other ethnic groups to receive their legitimate recognition here in our land, first the Kanak people must be recognized."

Pastor Ajapuhnya explained that at present there is an attempt to build ecumenical relations with the Roman Catholic Church which represents 66% of the population. An ecumenical committee comprising members of the two churches has been formed to facilitate dialogue. The biggest obstacle to cooperation is the question of support for independence, since the Catholic church has not taken a clear position. Its bishop, a large number of its priests, and a large majority of its congregation are French.

Pastor Ajapuhnya stated the Eglise Evangelique's firm commitment to independence: "The church has a role in the independence movement, but it does not replace political efforts. Rather its role is more one of preparing young people for the future, for leadership/" He then explained the church's involvement in the education system through the Alliance Scolaire and the Eglise Evangelique's major role in setting up schools and in facilitating university studies abroad for Kanaks. [The Eglise Evangelique is currently administering 20 primary schools and 5 secondary schools in New Caledonia.]

During our discussion the question of violence/non-violence and the role of the church in articulating and advocating non-violent resistance was raised.

Pastor Ajapuhnya emphasized that violence is not the Melanesian way, where decisions are usually discussed until consensus is reached. Noting that the large majority within the FLNKS is against violence, he said: "We must understand that violence was not planned, but erupted in the course of events. The church knows why violence has erupted: it is rooted in despair, a loss of hope, and ceaseless provocations."

He expressed hope for a swift evolution towards independence; "The logic of the FLNKS calendar is correct, since after the opposition comes to power in France, our chances for a negotiated settlement will diminish. There are many problems we independentists have to face. Still, when I hear that we Kanaks are not ready for independence, I say let us begin with the little we have."

FROM A MEETING WITH PASTOR WELEPANE, DIRECTOR OF THE THEOLOGICAL COLLEGE OF BETHANIE. (Training centre for ministers of the Eglise Evangelique)

When asked about the role of the church in the independence struggle, Pastor Welepane explained the need to instigate and further dialogue, but emphasized: "At the same time the church works for truth and justice;... and Kanak Independence is first a question of justice. The problem with the caldoches is that they wish to hang on to their French identity and what is in their pockets (i.e. their land and economic interests). The Kanaks on the other hand need to establish their identity and this land as Melanesian. The whites do not understand this, such that their ideology of an "integrated society" is really only the perpetuation of racism and the non-acceptance of Kanak identity in this land."

The discussion then turned to the question of violence and non-violent tactics. "Remember that the vast majority of violence comes not from FLNKS activists but from the system," stated the Pastor. "This is more evident on the Grande Terre because it has been colonized for so long. There the activists have negotiated weapons... I think it is a tribute to the FLNKS leadership that in fact there has been so little violence. Of course, when a French gendarme dies, it is international press; not so when a Melanesian is killed."

Pastor Welepane felt that these incidents were few "compared to the constant provocations of Kanaks by the gardes mobiles, who attack not with rocks but with tear gas and batons and guns... We Melanesians have no real material means to do battle: the French have the guns and the radio and the press and the helicopters. We have only our heart and our will."

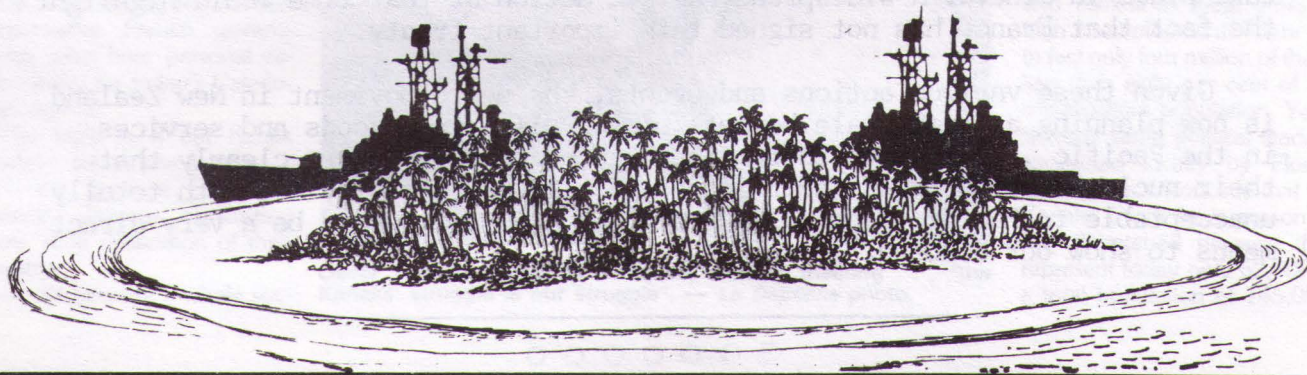
THE "POPULAR SCHOOL" OF HUNETE. (Popular schools are a recent establishment stemming from an FLNKS boycott of the French school system. Hunete is on Lifou, one of the Loyalty Islands.)

The teachers provided me with a history of the popular school. Teaching had only begun the previous week with the study of the language of Lifou and mathematics. There are 10 students. At the end of the week, an evaluation with the parents is planned. It had been determined that the priority of decolonizing education would be the young children, to create a new generation for Kanak independence. Before setting up the school, questionnaires were distributed and a meeting was held with the parents to determine the most urgent needs of the children: to read and write in Lifou, to acquire practical skills relating to agriculture, the forest and the ocean and to study customs, religion, local arts and crafts. The committee then recruited local people with particular skills and asked them to teach. For example, one is in charge of reading, another one of math, etc.

The teachers showed me a draft curriculum, outlining the subjects to be taught, the nature and organization of the teaching. Besides the subjects outlined above, the proposed curriculum includes technical training, such as fishing, repairing nets, building canoes, going into forests and identifying plants, etc. Some of it would be done in the context of the family and the tribe, other subjects would be taught by members of the tribe knowledgeable in those areas. Funds for the school had been raised through cooperative efforts, such as making papaya jam and selling it on the market.

The popular school movement is an attempt to counter one important factor of colonization, both in terms of the socializing influence of the French education system and its double standards for Europeans and Kanaks. Until 1953, Kanaks were barred from public schools and the only education available to Kanaks was from mission schools, which were often minimal due to lack of funds. But the church has consistently been in the forefront of obtaining better education opportunities for the Kanaks.

As several people related, the French system historically only responded with reforms when alternatives were practiced, such as the establishment of church schools. However, FLNKS members were quick to point out that the French schools only change form, not structure. For example, the French administration recently announced the teaching of local language for three hours per week. Attempts by teachers in the French schools to interact with the popular schools are strongly discouraged by the French administration. When in Ouvea some teachers tried to meet to suggest reforms, a decree was issued by the French authorities that any teacher participating in popular schools would be dismissed.





Peace, trade union and development groups in New Zealand are proposing a boycott/ban on all French goods and services for the month of September.....

-The French have tested their nuclear weapons at Moruroa/Fangataufa since 1966, both atmospheric, and today ( since 1975), under the fragile atoll of Moruroa. Their largest test ever exploded underground took place on May 8th this year.

-In Kanaky ( New Caledonia ) the French are planning a radical increase in their military facilities, and have already sent a nuclear powered submarine to Noumea.

-In September this year a peace fleet will be stationed off Moruroa to protest in a very direct way against the French tests. This flotilla will consist of the Greenpeace flag ship, Rainbow Warrior,( which has just completed a successful campaign in the Marshall Islands, transferring the people of Rongelap Atoll from their irradiated homeland to another island, called Majeito) and the veteran protest yacht, Greenpeace III, plus a local peace flotilla of about four boats from New Zealand.

-Also in September the Third Review of the Non-Proliferation Treaty will take place in Geneva. A widespread Pacific action at that time would highlight the fact that France has not signed this important treaty.

Given these various actions and events, the peace movement in New Zealand is now planning a large-scale boycott/ban on all French goods and services in the Pacific . We want to inform the French government very clearly that their nuclear weapons, and their increased military activity are both totally unacceptable to Pacific people. We feel that a boycott would be a very direct means to show our concern.

For more information, write LE GROUPE, P.O.Box 5510,Auckland,New Zealand.

# Tahitians stir to plight of New Caledonia's Kanaks

Why are the Kanaks in revolt?

In attempting to answer this question, Gaston Flosse can only repeat what his Paris political mentor Jacques Chirac has to say about it. In one of his recent speeches to the Territorial Assembly, Flosse explained that the whole business was due to the activities of "a handful of agitators spurred on by personal ambition, and manipulated by Colonel Gaddafi and the Russians, who are out to destabilise the region and grab hold of New Caledonia".

One must ask why it is that it is taking 6600 gendarmes, soldiers, and CRS riot police, armed with the most murderous weapons, with armored vehicles and Puma helicopters, to get on top of this small band of "desperates" with their grass knives and hunting rifles . . . But let's leave all that aside for a moment and simply note that if there's one man who's trying to make use of New Caledonia to serve his political ambitions, it's definitely our very own Gaston.

It's also primarily for party-political reasons — because New Caledonia has blown up into a big issue between the parties in metropolitan France — that Chirac and the other Grand Panjandrums of the opposition, Barre, Giscard, and Le Pen, are regaling us with this humbug. True, there's an element of bad conscience to their hypocrisy: for it is precisely these men from the former conservative French governments who bear personal responsibility for today's Caledonian drama.

The truth is, if our Kanak brothers are in revolt today:

— it's because colonialist France, without consulting them, took possession of their country;

— it's because a whole suc-

To the delight of some, and the chagrin of others, the traditional "chorus of support" from the inhabitants of French Polynesia for the battles of New Caledonia's Kanaks has mostly consisted of a long and deafening silence. Despite the many parallels in their respective fates, the lines of development of the two French territories have for the most part been just that — parallel, and never meeting.  
But not any more.  
Recent events in New Caledonia, the anti-independence "alliance" signed by French Polynesia's Gaston Flosse and Caledonia's Dick Ukewie (PIM Apr p28), and the prominence assumed by the Caledonian issue in metropolitan French politics, have combined to place it for the first time high on the political agenda in Tahiti.  
A striking illustration of this new development is the document reproduced here. It is a statement issued by OSCAR TEMARU, mayor of the important Tahitian municipality of Faaa, and leader of the pro-independence Polynesian Liberation Front party.  
Mr Temaru, one of the more colorful of Tahitian political figures, is an orator in the true Polynesian tradition. But he is more than that: the document also shows him to be a political analyst of very high quality.  
The document has been transmitted by PIM from the March 1, 1985, issue of the Papeete daily, *La Dépêche de Tahiti*. To its credit — Mr Temaru's views are hardly those of the paper's editors — *La Dépêche* printed the statement in full.



Oscar Temaru speaks at a Papeete political meeting . . . "the Kanaks' struggle is our struggle". — *La Dépêche* photo.

cession of French governments used the country as a human cesspit for 20,000 convicts;

— it's because the French administration has driven them from their lands to make way for white settlers, who more often than not were freed convicts, or their even more deprived and brutal former jailers;

— it's because French and multi-national companies have seized their main natural resource, the nickel deposits of New Caledonia;

— it's because in order to exploit this stolen treasure these companies imported thousands upon thousands of workers from Vietnam, Indonesia, France, Wallis Island, and Tahiti;

— it's because one after another the governments of General de Gaulle, Pompidou, and Giscard, at a time when almost all other Third World countries had become independent, went on running New Caledonia like a 19th-century colony.

The gravest injustice of all, and the one against which our Kanak brothers are protesting with the greatest vigor, is this uncontrolled, unlimited, immigration which has ended up making them a minority in their own country.

In France, Chirac, Giscard, Barre and Le Pen want to get rid of colored immigrants, judging them to be unassimilable and useless in these times of high unemployment. There are in fact only four million of them, less than eight per cent of the metropolitan population. Yet it is these same political leaders, supported locally by Flosse, who refuse to concede that the Kanaks might have reason to feel threatened because they represent today only 62,800 in a total population of 145,000.



To top everything, all these upholders of lost colonial causes go on repeating that the situation of inferiority imposed upon the Kanaks by virtue of a "democratic" vote under the French Constitution must be perpetuated. Just think for a moment. Suppose your house was invaded by a crowd of strangers, more of them than there were members in your own family, who settle in without so much as a by-your-leave. Would you put it to such intruders that a "democratic" vote should be held on whether they can stay? Or would you try to get rid of them as quickly as possible? That is the crux of the Caledonian problem. That is why our Kanak brothers deserve our sympathy and our support.

We too, we Maohi people (Maohi is the Tahitians' name for themselves — Ed.), have been exposed to the same kind of domination and exploitation as the Kanak people. To start with, France imposed its protectorate upon us by military force. Then a smart French official conned poor King Pomare V into turning the protectorate into a colony. Europeans monopolised great stretches of land. The settlers imported foreign workers. A multi-national mining company took out the phosphate on Makatea, pocketing all the profits. Since the nuclear-testing agency CEP arrived, the country has been flooded with metropolitan French, and various runaways from other French departments and territories. With the same stubbornness as in New Caledonia, all governments of the Fifth Republic have refused to undertake serious decolonisation. Big hotel chains have exploited, and continue to exploit, our natural resources for their own advantage.

The only small difference is one of numbers: we are not yet quite as dominated and submerged as our Kanak brothers in New Caledonia. But if we don't soon manage to put a stop to this new colonisation, we'll be sunk in a few years. It'll be all perfectly democratic and constitutional, but we'll be sunk just the same. The same colonial system creates the same injustices in the two territories. For this reason the Kanaks'



**President Charles de Gaulle meets former Free French personnel in Noumea in 1966 . . . with his successors Pompidou and Giscard, he ran New Caledonia "like a 19th-century colony".—Fred Dunn photo.**

struggle is our struggle, and we side with them and not with Lafleur, Laroque, and their sidekick Ukeiwe, as Flosse would like.

How are all these injustices perpetrated upon the Kanak people to be redressed?

The only solution envisaged by the leaders of the metropolitan opposition is to send out still more troops, to "neutralise" the alleged Kanak terrorists, along the lines of the deeds of the sharpshooters who struck down Eloi Machoro. This solution has in fact been tried before in New Caledonia — and tried with great brutality — in 1878 and 1917. But the Kanaks are still there. It was also the method used in Algeria between 1956 and 1962, with still more horrendous results. A million Algerians were killed because they wanted their country to be independent, and 80,000 wretched French conscripts were killed for nothing. Short of wiping out the Kanaks altogether, as a lot of former supporters of "French Algeria" now living in New Caledonia would like, the solution is not going to work this time either. Because contrary to what Flosse would have us believe, the Kanaks in revolt against the present system are not a handful. There are 62,000 of them. After asking for the return of their country patiently and fruitlessly over the years, the Kanaks have at last begun to use somewhat more energetic measures. And there are still people so benighted as to reject this demand, just and natural as it is in these days of 1985, when

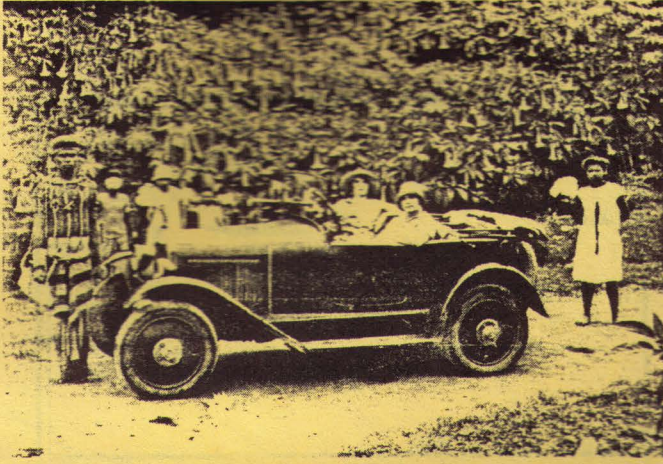
practically every former French, British, Dutch, Spanish and Portuguese colony in the world has attained independence! Incidentally, it's worth noting in passing that relations between France and its former colonies are not only very cordial, but also very profitable, especially for the former mother-country.

The parties of the Right in France have so far done everything in their power to prevent the socialist government from putting this just and equitable solution into effect, the same solution as guided General de Gaulle in his great work for peaceful decolonisation, which nobody any longer contests. The most shameful aspect of the whole affair is that this obstruction of the belated independence of New Caledonia by men who pride themselves on being great Gaullists, the likes of Debre and Chirac, is dictated purely and simply by tactical considerations, by the desire to gain the maximum possible number of votes at the forthcoming parliamentary elections in metropolitan France. Which proves once again how abominable the situation is from the Kanak point of view.

Watching the metropolitan parties and their leaders cynically exploiting the Caledonian drama for party-political gain, one feels something amounting almost to affection for those French generals who, due to certain mental defects arising from their trade, and also no doubt to a quite genuine naivety, can see in New Caledonia and all its human

suffering absolutely nothing but a giant aircraft carrier, anchored securely in a zone of strategic importance. As they see things, the number one priority is to defend this French bastion against the communist menace, come what may. It really is quite staggering to see such arguments advanced by generals who, with their training, might be expected to have a more realistic view of the military role France can hope to play in this far-off part of the world. The truth, of which they are apparently blissfully unaware, is that nothing has changed since World War II, when New Caledonia, like French Polynesia, was saved from Japanese invasion not by France, but by America. In the same way, in any future conflict in the Pacific, the only power strong enough to oppose any expansionist communist designs, be they Russian or Chinese, would be America again. Why not apply to the future state of Kanaky the excellent principle of self-termination, so dear to the hearts of politicians of Left and Right alike? In this way the Kanaks will be able to decide for themselves by whom they feel threatened, and to whom they turn for help. If, as is most likely, they turned to France, it's a very safe bet that the French chiefs of staff would be mightily embarrassed, and very far from forthcoming, at the prospect of having to station on the other side of the world warships, aircraft and troops which were sorely needed in Europe to defend their national territory.

Finally, there is also the problem arising from the undeniable fact that the other races established in New Caledonia do not want to lose the gross privileges they now enjoy at the expense of the Kanaks. Those yelling loudest are the Caldoches, the descendants of the former convicts and jailers, who consider that they enjoy practically the same birthright in New Caledonia as the Kanaks, and who are shouting from the rooftops that they want to remain French. The solution in their case is simple: they need only shut up, because everyone, the FLNKS in the first place, agrees that they have a right to stay in the country, and to keep their French nationality after inde-



A blast from a past that will not return . . . French colonial ladies look down their noses at the world in this 1930s scene on a New Caledonian country road.

pendence if that is what they still want to do.

It would also be helpful here to expose a lie which is being repeated day in and day out by the mass media: the idea that there is only one category of Europeans in New Caledonia. In truth there are not only the long-established Caldoches, but also metropolitan immig-

rants, the so-called "Zoreilles", 20,000 to 25,000 of them, who have gone there over the last 20 years or so in search of work and fortune, and who have families and bank accounts in France. Let them go home (without stopping in Tahiti). If there's any injustice involved, it would be the same as befell the former French colonists in In-

dochina and Africa, who did very nicely thank you, being generously rewarded both with previously acquired profits, and post-repatriation indemnity payments.

But workers of other nationalities are quite significant in the scheme of things, and some say it would be quite unjust to push them out. Now this isn't true either, because they have practically always sided with their bosses, and have routinely taken the place of Kanaks in the workplace. What would you think, dear compatriots, if tomorrow 5000 Kanaks, 12,000 Wallisians, 5000 Vietnamese and 5000 Javanese suddenly landed in Tahiti to live and work? Wouldn't you think it the height of absurdity if these newcomers were able to take part in Polynesia's elections, so that you would be in a minority in your own municipalities, as well as in the Territorial Assembly? Well, this is exactly the situation which has been imposed upon our Kanak brothers, and it is therefore little

wonder that their attitude to the Tahitians and the other immigrant groups is no longer all that warm. . .

It is possible, even probable, that in the new Republic of Kanaky all these immigrant workers will no longer have the same privileged status they've enjoyed in the past. But won't it be sufficient for them to have the same rights as Kanaks?

It occurs to me that since national solidarity came so strongly into play at the time of another disaster — the long series of cyclones in Polynesia early in 1983 — why shouldn't it do so again? Especially as responsibility for the misfortunes now besetting New Caledonia belongs essentially to the metropolitan governments headed by de Gaulle, Pompidou and Giscard, it would seem perfectly justified for a public levy to be struck in France, as it was at the time of the cyclones, for the benefit of people of various races forced out of New Caledonia by the present political storms.

## Show distribution continues

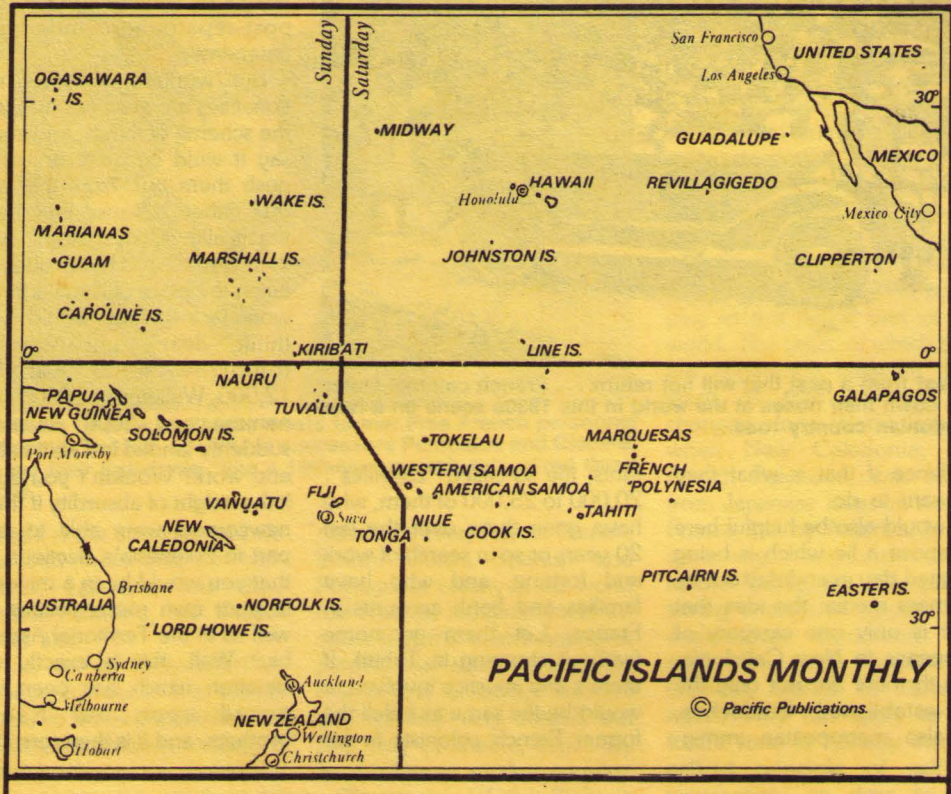
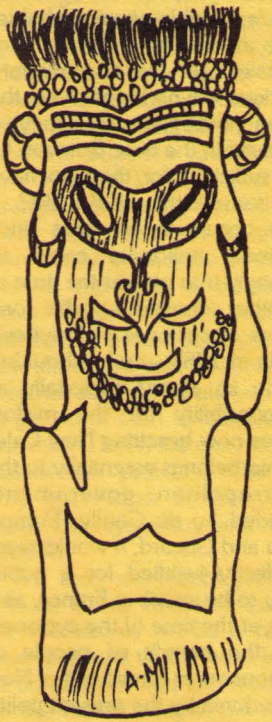
The SPPF-produced slide show on New Caledonia is becoming truly international. Copies are now being used in Australia, New Zealand, West Germany, the Cook Islands, Fiji, and the United States (Hawaii, Washington DC, and New York City).

The Ambassador for Papua New Guinea in New York, Renagi Lohia, is planning to use the slides for a United Nations showing to help inform the international community on the background to the New Caledonia situation. The set sent to the Cook Islands was requested so that educational work could be undertaken prior to the South Pacific Forum meeting scheduled for this August, at which time it is hoped that support will be forthcoming for the Kanak people.

The set in Hawaii was purchased by the Hawaii Geographic Society and was shown at their annual meeting in May. They hope to be able to get it used in the Hawaii school system.

A further order for a copy of the show has also been received from Japan.

Canadian readers wishing to rent the show from SPPF for showing to a church, community or development group should write us. Address is on the cover.



USED WITH PERMISSION

FROM:

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PACIFIC  
PEOPLES  
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