

Tok Blong SPPF

A Quarterly of News and Views on the Pacific Islands

April 1989 #27



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SPPF Update

As this newsletter nears completion, we have just finished organizing and facilitating the 6th annual NFIP (Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific) Canadian support network meeting. Representatives of 26 organizations from as far east as Ottawa and as far south as San Francisco spent 2½ days at a camp on the west coast just north of the Canada-U.S. border. The meeting provided people with issue updates, gave them a chance to view new audio-visual material, challenged them to make links in their analysis of issues, and encouraged strategizing on actions in support of Pacific issues. A treat was having 68 year old Levina White of the Haida Nation join us for a day. She discussed indigenous issues in B.C., challenging people to see the injustices in their own backyard and the similarities with issues in the Pacific.

While the year still remains young, we have been busy. I was a

guest speaker at Edmonton's Third World Film Festival, speaking between two of the several films the Edmonton Festival rented from us. The organizers wanted to provide a Pacific islands theme to this highly successful and well-attended gathering. I also made a journey to Toronto and Ottawa, giving a public talk in Ottawa. SPPF continues to get important financial assistance from CUSO and the United Church of Canada, for which we are most grateful. We continue to get some financial support from CIDA as well, and this is received with thanks. Of more importance, in many ways, than the large donations are the 240 of you who contribute with small and meaningful donations. If you are due for renewal (a note will be attached with this issue if you are), Margaret Argue and I hope you will find our work worthy of your continued support.

Phil Esmonde

About this newsletter. . .

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, 409-620 View St., Victoria, B.C., Canada V8W 1J6, and is available to donors of SPPF (minimum \$10/yr. individuals; \$25/yr. groups). 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. Partial financial support for this newsletter from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) is gratefully acknowledged. We welcome readers' comments on items carried in this newsletter, as well as suggestions for articles and copies of Pacific news clippings, etc., which would be of use to our work. TOK BLONG SPPF reserves the right to edit material. Views expressed do not necessarily represent the South Pacific Peoples Foundation.

Ebeye Remembered

SPPF recently received the following letter from Dr. Peter Walford of Hornby Island, B.C. Dr. Walford spent a week doing dental work on Ebeye several years ago.

Dear SPPF,

I was so pleased to receive Tok Blong SPPF last month with the article on Ebeye by Kim Echlin. I found the article added depth to my perceptions gained from a week of dentistry performed at the dental clinic on Ebeye several years ago. The experience has haunted me ever since, for two reasons. One is that the magnitude of the dental health problem seems completely overwhelming. The other is that a solution, either in the preventive or treatment spheres, seems almost hopeless. Perhaps the greatest reason for this conclusion, is that Ebeyans need to be self-governing in order to step out of the passive abyss that colonial Americanism has left them. The diet of American junk food without any of the technical fixes in dental health that usually accompany that diet - i.e. flourides, oral hygiene, and lots of treatment manpower - leave them wide open for rampant decay. I left knowing deeply that they would have been much better left to their ancestral ways, catching dinner off the reef and living in low density in scattered settlements.

I often think of the beautiful people I met there, and the clinic staff who are carrying on with limited resources. One curse they don't share with this North-American bred dentist, is the ambition to create dental health - a possibility we are taking a century to create. Nonetheless, their frustrations are many and their hope was that a Philippino dentist would be permanently stationed there. I thought that was a good idea - the character is Asian, not North American, and the program that brought me there - a parachute design to bring dentists from North America down for a week's unpaid 'vacation', doing volunteer dentistry - was a colossal waste of Ebeyan money. Particularly since the

reward was a further week of South Pacific expense-paid travel, in my case, to Truk. A Philippino dentist would have worked 3 months for that amount of money.

I don't know what has gone on since, and I've been wrestling with the problem of Ebeye's dental health ever since. I have never felt so inadequate to a challenge in my life. It feels like the work of generations, and, when my fundamental conviction was that these people would be best-off not trying to acculturate and modernize, I felt my skills as a clinician were more of a contribution to their problems, than a solution. Well, you can't turn back the clock, I suppose, as the shadow of the huge radar dome casts its long shadow over Kwajalein and onto Ebeye, and two of the three staff at the clinic had had thyroid surgery, either themselves or in their immediate family....from the nuclear tests.

So, thank you for remembering my contact with Ebeye and sending the issue. I've talked the story over with my wife and she's willing to go down and do dentistry again for some needy South Pacific peoples if the travel could be covered. If you know of some agency that might need me, please feel free to send my name along. I enclose \$20 for a membership to SPPF. I look forward to future issues.

Peter Walford.

Islands Business Responds

The following letter from Islands Business - a monthly newsmagazine in the Pacific Islands - was received in response to the October 1988 interview Tok Blong SPPF conducted with freelance journalist David Robie.

The letter has been edited to focus on responses central to the substance of Robie's comments.

* You interviewed New Zealander David Robie in your October 1988 issue, which has been brought to our attention.

To set the record straight on comments by yourself and Robie about Islands Business:

Robert Keith-Reid, a Fiji citizen and respected journalist, has controlled Islands Business since he acquired the major shareholding from a local business conglomerate in 1983. He is the publisher and managing director.

Islands Business has dramatically improved its financial results. More than two-thirds of the advertising is from outside Fiji. The owners of Islands Business believe this new financial strength enables the magazine to maintain its independence and develop its quality. This is already reflected in the increase in paid circulation.

The current editor of Islands Business has written sport. He has also been a news journalist on The Dominion (Wellington), Sunday News (Auckland), Fiji Times (Suva), and The Herald (Melbourne). He resigned to become editor of Islands Business after becoming the longest-serving editor of the Fiji Sun. He is Fiji's executive member of the Pacific Islands News Association.

The entire fulltime staff of Islands Business is seven people - a financial director, advertising and marketing manager, production worker, and a circulation controller, plus three journalists. All our journalists are Pacific Island citizens who have a background of experience unmatched on any other regional publication. We have a network of 22 correspondents, of whom David Los of Noumea, is the only one who is not a fulltime journalist.

Islands Business rarely reprints from other publications. It has never reprinted its cover story from the Sydney Morning Herald - nor any other paper. However, because of its new financial strength it has been able to commission relevant articles from authoritative sources who are travelling extensively in the region. The article Robie claims was reprinted from an Auckland paper was, for example, commissioned from such a writer."

Peter Lomas
EDITOR
Islands Business

LE VAOMATUA

Le Vaomatua (Samoan for the tropical rain forest) is an environmental organization incorporated in 1986 by a group of local residents who had a common interest in the protection of the native forests, reef and marshes, as well as preservation of Samoan cultural historical sites. In Samoa, increasing population pressures and expanding commercial and industrial developments are beginning to present a danger to the flora and fauna of the islands. **Le Vaomatua** members believe that it is the duty of informed citizens to recognize dangers, to educate the general public to potential problems and to influence legislation that will protect the endangered areas.

Since its inception, **Le Vaomatua** has been an active organization. Some of [its] activities include:

- * Frequent public lectures by experts working in fields broadly related to environmental and archeological protection.
- * Presenting informed testimony in public hearings involving issues of environmental concern. For example, **Le Vaomatua** members have testified in favor of a Samoan national park and against the Leone Harbour project.
- * Giving educational presentations about topics such as the local endangered Samoan flying fox, Pteropus samoensis to local schools.
- * Publication of a quarterly newsletter, **Rainforest Echoes**, to keep our membership informed on current activities, upcoming events and ongoing projects.
- * Adoption of the Samoan flying fox, Pteropus samoensis, as the club symbol to dramatize its precarious status. It has been suggested for listing as an endangered species.

Membership for families or individuals is \$US 10 per year. Write to: **Le Vaomatua**, P.O. Box B, Pago Pago, American Samoa, 69799 (U.S. zip code)

Scott's Investment: To Benefit Or Destroy?

By George J. Aditjondro

Introduction

SCOTT PAPER COMPANY, one of the largest American producers of paper products plans to invest in another potentially large environmentally disastrous enterprise in Irian Jaya. According to the Malaysian Business Times, May 12, 1987, this company, which has its main office in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, wants to invest US\$600 million to open a 500,000 acre Eucalyptus plantation and build a pulp factory in Irian Jaya. Their Indonesian partner is Astra, one of the biggest conglomerates in Indonesia which has subsidiaries in practically every line of business, from cars and motorbikes, to agribusiness and timber concessions.

According to that news story, Scott wants to open their tree-plantation in the northern coastal land of Irian Jaya. But it could just be an editorial error, and the area where they really want to invest is the southern lowlands of Irian Jaya, with its savannahs and naturally growing eucalyptus forests.

The Times of Papua New Guinea of February 4-10, 1988 however, said that Scott officials had also paid a visit to that country late last year, to investigate investment opportunities in PNG. As in the case of Irian Jaya, the company would like to ask the PNG government to provide 200,000 hectares of land to plant a fast-growing species of eucalyptus. The tree, as stated in the news article, thrives only in tropical climates, and would be used to make pulp for tissue paper. Hence our first question is: where has Scott Paper Company finally decided to locate its eucalyptus plantation and pulp factory in this region? In Irian Jaya, or Papua New Guinea? Or is the company still trying to play-off Indonesian and Papua New Guinea government officials, to see who will give

exemptions, land availability, and the lowest wage rate? The project is claimed to provide 3,000 permanent jobs, apart from service and spin off industries which would provide even more employment for either Irian Jaya or Papua New Guinea residents. And not to forget, which country would give the company the least environmental headaches - Indonesia, or Papua New Guinea?

Social & Environmental Impact

However, regardless of which country will eventually host Scott Paper Company's latest overseas operation, it is still debatable whether the social and environmental costs of that (ad)venture would be able to offset its stated (economic) benefits. For analysis, let us say that Irian Jaya will offer Scott the best bid, and will put PNG out of the picture. Then the first problem would be to obtain 200,000 hectares or nearly 500,000 acres of land to grow those gum trees. One would have to infringe upon the customarily owned land of the Marind, Yei and Kanum peoples, or to disrupt their usufruct rights of those God-given natural resources. A company which would need such a vast tract of land would either have to alienate it through the government, causing animosity with those local tribes, or deal in a laborious series of negotiations with the clan elders of those three tribes. Here, the second question arises: how would the Scott subsidiary be able to obtain that land, simply land in the spatial sense?

The third question is: how would Scott obtain their raw material to sustain their pulp production for a long enough period to return their investment - with interest, of course? Would Scott really grow their own gum trees? And prior to that, would they simply harvest the existing Eucalyptus forest, which are

communally owned and controlled by the indigenous peoples, but which in most cases are not legally substantiated with land titles or certificates? Would they try to strike a deal with the local tribes to buy their gum trees on a long term basis, providing them with technical assistance to grow better or higher yielding gum trees?

At the very moment that I am writing this article, destruction of the lowland savannah forests of the Merauke region in Southern Irian Jaya is already taking place. An Indonesian company, PT Sylvana Lestari Agung, has received the licence to cut 20,000 cubic metres of eucalyptus, acacia and mangrove lumber per month. Their concession covers the catchment areas of the Maro, Kumbe and Bian rivers. Their lumberjacks consists of indigenous Irianese men and migrants from Sulawesi and Java, who are paid the equivalent of US\$1.25 per cubic metre of wood, excluding gasoline and lubricating oil for the chainsaws, as well as food, cigarettes and medicines. A team of six lumberjacks can only cut two cubic metres of wood per day, so it is a very meagre income indeed. The customary owner or custodian of the forests receive around US\$0.25 for every cubic metre lumber cut. Rivershed protection is totally ignored by the lumberjacks (or should we say, by the concession holder?), although there is a regulation that vegetation up to 50-100 metres from the riverside be kept intact. It is still unclear what the working relations are between this Indonesian concession holder and Scott Paper Company, and whether this licence to PT Sylvana Lestari Agung is not just a force majeure by the provincial Forestry Service to the central government to comply with Scott's requests, and to pave the way for Scott to start planting a brand-new pulpwood plantation of high yielding Eucalyptus species. This is still being figured out by Indonesian environmental groups in Irian Jaya and Jakarta.

This leads us then to the fourth question: what would be the social and ecological impact of the denuding of the savannahs around Merauke of their existing Eucalyptus stands, as well as the genetic deprivation of the land from all the other vegetation, which is also native to the region, such as the people's sago palm, coconuts, bamboo stands, and Pandanus

groves? All these native plants fulfill several functions for those indigenous peoples, who have already faced several adverse impacts due to the influx of outsiders, starting with Dutch who wanted to reap benefits from the lucrative pre-World War II bird-of-paradise trade, to the present day sponsored and spontaneous migration from Malukuk, Sulawesi, Jaya, and the Timor-Flores islands.

The experience from other tree plantations has shown that the conversion of native, heterogeneous vegetation into monoculture plantations could create adverse impacts which must not be overlooked. One of the most important adverse environmental impacts of eucalyptus reforestation schemes is that it lowers the local water table. This was suspected by Egyptian Public Works officials way back in the 1920s, by Brazilian farmers, by Portuguese farmers, by Australian researchers, and by the well-known Indian ecologists Vandana Shiva and Jayanta Bandyopadhyay as well as strong promoters of forest farming such as J Sholto Douglas and Robert A de J Hart, who stated that "A single eucalyptus tree forty feet high transpires 80 gallons of water a day." And while underlining the fact that the malarial marshes in Israel were drained at the turn of the century with the aid of eucalyptus trees imported from Australia, Sholto Douglas and Hart suggested that "It is important to avoid using eucalyptus in areas where groundwater supplies are known to be limited, otherwise the risk exists that they will cause wells and springs to dry up." So what will happen if in the arid savannahs of Southern Irian Jaya - or Papua New Guinea, if that is where Scott Paper Company will be allowed to operate - the existing heterogeneous vegetation is converted into a monoculture of these fast-growing and high-yielding eucalypti?

Besides that, we also have to consider Scott Paper Company's practice of using dioxin, a 'sister compound' of the infamous Agent Orange, to get rid of unwanted tree species in their tree plantations in the US, which stirred protests from Scott's shareholders 'back home'. And, as shown by the experience of pulp and paper company workers in Canada, where Scott has large pulpwood plantations and pulp mills, those workers have the greatest accumulation of PCB, used to

impregnate the lumber to make it termite-proof. So our fifth question should be: what guarantee do the Indonesian and Papua New Guinea government have, that those treacherous pesticides would not be used in their own country?

The sixth question is: where would they obtain the labour force to run the plantation (if Scott prefers to grow their own gum trees, instead of purchasing their raw material from the local people) as well as the pulp factory? Would they bring in their own labour force from the most populated island of Indonesia, Jaya, or would they hire local people? Local people, however, could still be divided between government-sponsored settlers who have been flown into Merauke during the last decade, and the earlier mentioned indigenous tribes. so which group will be preferred by Scott to be employed in their 'paper plantation' and pulp project? The settlers and other newly brought-in laborers, or the indigenous peoples, whose livelihood sources - the savannah forests - would be effected by Scott's paper plantation?

A seventh question would be: after the gum trees have been harvested, and the logs de-barked (releasing all its organic chemicals into the log-pond), chipped and fed into the pulping process, what would happen to all the upstream and downstream wastes? Would they be dumped into the river or the sea, or treated properly (according to whose standards?) before being discharged? One could easily imagine what would happen if the effluent is discharged into the sea, and washed back 50 kms inland through the main rivers and tributaries by the tide! And we mostly know that pulp and paper factories are not one of the cleanest industries in the world, as shown for instance, by the experience of the Ojibwa people who have been suffering from the pollution of the Reed Paper Company in Grassy Narrows, Ontario, Canada [mercury poisoning - Ed.].

As far as Scott itself is concerned, the company's pollution control record is generally unimpressive, according to a study by the Council on Economic Priorities (CEP) in 1972. Eight of Scott's mills have adequate primary water treatment. Only the largest, the draft mill at Mobile, Alabama, [USA] has adequate secondary treatment, even though

all but one small ground-wood mill produce bleached pulp, and thus discharge considerable amounts of dissolved chemical and organic matter. Making matters worse, five of the mills produce pulp by the sulfite process, the effluent of which has a very high BOD (biological oxygen demand). The Winslow (Maine, USA), Anacortes (Washington, USA), and Marinette (Wisconsin, USA) mills provide only primary treatment, and Oconto Falls (Wisconsin, USA) evaporates 50 percent of the liquor and discharges the rest after primary and partial secondary treatment. All four of the company's kraft mills have adequate primary treatment.

Scott's air pollution control is somewhat better. Three of the mills have adequate gas and odor control, and six have adequate particulate control. Only the Muskegon (Michigan, USA) and Anacortes (Washington, USA) have both. Although the lack of pollution control at the company's two very small mills in Menominee (Michigan) and Marinette (Wisconsin) should not be balanced as heavily as similar inadequacies at the larger mills, this overall pollution control record is far from satisfactory. It is also difficult to understand in light of the fact that Scott is definitely aware of pollution control, and in a 1970 brochure published the kind of specific information on pollution control equipment that the CEP (Council on Economic Priorities) spent months trying to extract from other companies. Another contradiction is that Scott works with Crown Zellerbach to develop the ammonia-base sulfite pulping process and long ago began converting its calcium-base sulfite mills. Yet only Oconto Falls has even partial recovery of its spent liquor.

However, in 1978 they had to close down this mill, after paying \$1 million in fines and penalties to the state of Wisconsin and the federal government for water pollution violations at Oconto Falls. Meanwhile, Scott Paper Company's mill in Everett (Washington) now has one of the most effective pollution control systems in the paper industry, thanks to an investment of \$55 million during the 1970s, so that stockholders were told in 1979 that the Everett plants emits only "an occasional puff of steam". This record seems to improve constantly, because in 1982 the Natural Resources

Council of Maine gave one of its five conservation awards to Scott for their "outstanding environmental design and operation" of their Somerset Mill in Hinckley. Currently, Scott is planning to sell one of its pulp mills in Brunswick, Georgia (USA) to Georgia-Pacific, another US paper giant. A smart step to take, which would help the company to gain some extra millions of dollars instead of having to spend it on pollution control equipment, since the Brunswick mill, jointly owned with the Mead Corporation, is one of Scott's most polluting mills, according to the 1972 CEP study. Besides, it is still questionable whether Scott's domestic pollution control record is congruent with their environment record overseas, such as in Canada, Mexico, or anywhere else where Scott has its production units. What is clear from reading their annual reports is that the company has spent less funds for overseas pollution control, than for curbing pollution at their domestic pulp and paper mills.

The eighth question is: what is really the driving force behind Scott's intention to invest in the New Guinean natural eucalyptus forests? Is it mainly to obtain this hardwood resource to produce pulp for their paper products, or is it because of the abundant cheap labour available, which in the case of Irian Jaya, mainly consists of Javanese and Flores-Timorese settlers, who are not allowed to strike and have to join government controlled labour unions? Would that explain why Scott Paper Company is not interested in setting up their 'paper plantation' and pulp factory in Australia, which has more abundant eucalyptus resources but with a much higher wage rate and much stricter environmental laws and regulations than its northern neighbours?

As a way of summing it up, if the odds are against the interests of the indigenous people of Irian jaya, then we should question ourselves: is it fair to force the Marind and other indigenous peoples to give up their Eucalyptus forests, the basis of their livelihood as hunter-gatherers, in order that city people in America and elsewhere can have an ample supply of xeroxing paper or other Scott products? And quite ironically, every customer of Scott products is

automatically made to support Scott's fundraising campaigns to help unfortunate families in the so-called Ronald McDonald Houses and to provide "free learning tools for schools" in the United States; an ingenious way to obtain tremendous tax exemptions. According to Scott's 1987 annual report, this Helping Hand program has earned them a Presidential Award for Private Sector Initiatives, presented to Scott by President Ronald Reagan himself. Would the same social benefits also be provided by Scott for the tens of thousands of indigenous peoples in Irian Jaya or Papua New Guinea, who would be displaced or adversely affected by their tree-plantation?

Therefore, express your opinion on these matters directly to Scott's CEO (chief executive officer), Mr. Philip E Lippincott, or his deputy, Mr J R Leaman Jr at 1 Scott Plaza, Philadelphia, PA 19113, USA. Their phone number is (215) 522-5000.

[Reprinted from The Times of Papua New Guinea, Week of 10-16 Nov, 1988].

UPDATE

Scott Paper is planning to go ahead with this project. Your help is needed. Please see the "action alert" on page 15.

Ciguatera In The Pacific: A Link With Military Activities

by Tilman A. Ruff

[This article first appeared in The Lancet, January 28, 1989, and is reprinted with permission of the author. The original article, including all references, is available on request. Readers should be aware that there are also non-military causes of ciguatera. We are publishing this article however because while the non-military causes are often highlighted, little attention is paid to the possible military causes. Editor]

SUMMARY Ciguatera fish poisoning is widespread in the Pacific. Outbreaks and the rise in incidence of the disease are related largely to military activities that disturb coral reef ecology. Nuclear test explosions and the setting up of the infrastructure for these tests are major components of such military activity.

INTRODUCTION

CIGUATERA, the commonest type of marine food poisoning world wide, is caused by the ingestion of tropical fish containing toxins produced by coral reef dinoflagellate plankton species. The toxins have no observable effect on fish, and the highest concentrations are found in large predatory fish that feed on herbivorous fish, favoured by man for food. Ciguatera is especially common in the Caribbean and in the Pacific.

Ciguatera most commonly presents as an acute self-limited syndrome of vomiting, diarrhoea, and abdominal pain, accompanied by sensory and/or motor disturbances. Ciguatera during pregnancy may result in abortion, premature labour, and neurological disease in the newborn, and the disease may be transmitted by breast-feeding. Ciguatera is occasionally fatal, but more commonly it runs for weeks, months, or years, with

constitutional symptoms, diffuse tingling pain, and temperature reversal dysaesthesia, often being the most persistent symptoms. Subsequent attacks tend to be more severe than first attacks, and symptoms may recur with ingestion of non-toxic fish, alcohol, and other foods. Such "sensitisation" may persist for years after an attack of ciguatera.

The most striking factors precipitating ciguatera outbreaks are disturbances in the ecology of coral reefs, by natural events such as storms, earthquakes, tidal waves, and heavy rains, or by human activities such as construction works, explosions, and dredging. In this article the relation with military activity is examined.

MILITARY-RELATED OUTBREAKS

The Pacific Islands are divided ethnogeographically into three broad areas: Micronesia, Melanesia, and Polynesia.

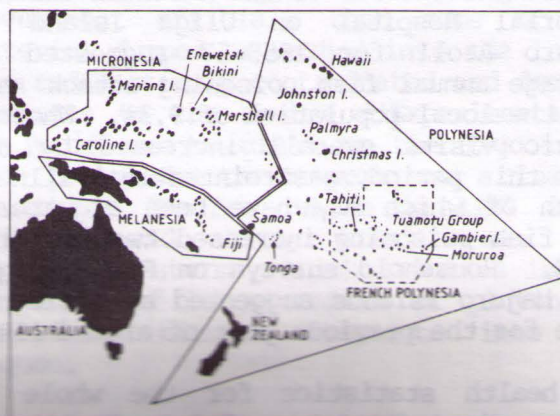


Fig 1—The Pacific Islands.

The Pacific has been used extensively for military activities. Naval, air, and communication facilities are maintained in the region and three countries fire missiles to a number of

splashdown points. Nuclear test explosions have been conducted by the British in Australia (12 in 1952-57) and at Christmas and Malden Islands (9 in 1957-58). US Pacific tests have been carried out at Enewetak and Bikini in the Marshall Islands (66 in 1946-58), in the Johnston and Christmas Island areas (36 in 1958-62), underwater in the Pacific (4 in 1952-62), and at Amchitka, Alaska (3 in 1965-71). The French exploded 41 nuclear bombs in the atmosphere between 1966 and 1974, and continue underground tests - 101 as of November 1988. French nuclear tests in the Pacific take place at Moruroa and Fangataufa, two neighbouring coral atolls located in the Tuamotu archipelago in eastern French Polynesia.

Marshall Islands, Micronesia

These islands were the site of several battles during the 1939-45 war. As a result of military activity then, Kwajalein and Majuro replaced Jaluit as the administrative and commercial centre of the Marshalls. As the populations here increased there were reports of ciguatera in these two areas, especially at Majuro, the rise in the 1950s being attributed by the Marshallese to the nuclear test programmes carried out there between 1946 and 1958.

Despite the reported absence of ciguatoxic fish from Enewetak in the years following nuclear test explosions there, severe outbreaks of ciguatera occurred in other atolls in the Marshalls. Outpatient department records of the Marshall Islands Memorial Hospital on Uliga Island of Majuro Atoll for 1955-57 suggested an average annual fish poisoning attack rate for the local population of 9.3%. Whereas clinic visits overall increased by 60% over this period, gastrointestinal illness (much of which may have been ciguatera) and fish poisoning increased two to three fold. Household surveys on Rita, Uliga, and Majuro islands suggested an incidence rate for the previous year of around 15%.

In health statistics for the whole US Micronesian Strategic Trust Territory, fish poisoning used to be included under "accidents" - and in the late 196-50s the accident rate in the Marshalls was at least 50% higher than that for the whole Territory.

In a 1982 survey requested by the WHO Regional Office, 56% of families in the Marshalls reported that at least one member had been poisoned within the last year.

Only since 1982 have health statistics for the former US Strategic Trust Territory of the Pacific islands (TTPI) been recorded separately for its components - the Northern Mariana Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, and Belau. Between 1982 and 1987, the reported annual ciguatera incidence rate for the Marshall Islands averaged over 300 per 100,000 per year, more than three times the rate of any other Micronesian territory (table I).

TABLE I—CIGUATERA CASES FOR MICRONESIAN COUNTRIES
CONSTITUTING THE FORMER TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC
ISLANDS, 1982-87

Country	Number of cases by year						Total cases	Population (1987)	Ratio of cases (1982-87) to 1987 population $\times 10^4$
	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987			
Federated States of Micronesia	0	4	15	8	6	12	45	94 400	4.8
Marshall Islands	100	85	142	116	155	264	862	36 700	234.9
Northern Mariana Islands	17	31	15	22	53	13	151	20 200	74.8
Belau (Palau)	0	0	0	3	0	0	3	12 400	2.4

Source: South Pacific Epidemiological and Health Information Service Annual Reports, 1982-87.¹⁵

There is little doubt that ciguatera continues to be a greater problem in the Marshalls than elsewhere in Micronesia. The most plausible explanation is the extensive military infrastructure and activities related to the 66 nuclear test explosions at Enewetak and Bikini between 1946 and 1958, and to the Kwajalein Missile Range. Alternative explanations have not been offered.

Gilbert Islands, Kiribati

On several of the Gilbert Islands, outbreaks of ciguatera were closely related temporally to naval shipping activities and battles in the 1939-45 war, the link being clearest for those at Butaritari and Tarawa (site of the 1943 Battle of Tarawa).

Line Islands, Kiribati

The first recorded outbreak at Fanning Island, previously free of ciguatera, followed the dumping of war material (tank mines, ammunition, batteries, and so on) by the US Army in July 1945, before evacuation of the island. 95 cases of ciguatera were recorded in a population of 224 between February 1946 and April 1947. Except for 1 case, illness followed the eating of fish caught in areas where war material had been dumped. Toxicity decreased during the 1950s.

This outbreak at Fanning was part of the more widespread appearance of ciguatera through the northern Line Islands in the 1940s that started during the 1939-45 war. Local residents reported that there had been no ciguatoxicity before then. The only island unaffected was Washington Island - the sole island in the group where military forces were not stationed and which no military vessels visited. Palmyra Island, Kingman Reef, and Christmas and Fanning Islands, along with Johnston and Midway Islands further to the north, were affected.

Hao Atoll, Tuamotu Archipelago, French Polynesia

The outbreak at Hao is the best known example of a military-related outbreak of ciguatera. Ciguatera had not occurred in Hao before January 1965, when it is generally said that the French Commissariat à l'Energie Atomique (CEA) began to convert the atoll for use as a staging base for nuclear testing at Moruroa and Fangataufa Atolls, several hundred kilometres to the south. Newspaper and Territorial Assembly records in fact show that members of the French Foreign Legion were illegally despatched to both Moruroa and Hao, to begin construction work in July 1963. The building of an army camp for 2000 soldiers, a permanent base for nuclear bomb assembly, and a large military airfield with a 3500 m runway required the construction of piers and dredging of large quantities of coral.

The first case of ciguatera reported from Hao involved fish caught at the original French landing site in August 1966. The disease then spread

contiguously to other areas of the atoll over the next 2 years. The first fish to become toxic were herbivores; by April, 1968, carnivores were causing poisoning. By mid-1968, 43% of the population of 650 had been affected by ciguatera. Not till 1975 did toxicity in herbivorous fish begin to fall.

Gambier Islands, French Polynesia

A dinoflagellate organism was first clearly implicated as a cause of ciguatera during the 1968 outbreak in the Gambier Islands, after which it was named. Construction of the military base at the Gambiers began in 1967. Before the detonation of the first hydrogen bomb on August 24, 1968, a fallout shelter was built for the local population on Mangareva. It was not only construction materials that were dumped in Mangareva lagoon. Warships often visited mangareva, the main island. Before each of the 41 atmospheric tests conducted between 1966 and 1974, the 3000 personnel on Moruroa, Tuamotu Archipelago, were evacuated in a dozen or so warships, from which they watched the explosion. The ships, radioactively contaminated to varying degrees, would then disperse to atolls with large lagoons and wide passes - Mangareva, Hao, or Fakarava. Within 24-48 hours of arrival in these waters, the ships were washed down with seawater. When radioactivity at Moruroa was considered to have fallen sufficiently, usually 1-2 weeks after the explosion, the ships would return the evacuated personnel to Moruroa. Despite concern by local government officials that some of the material dumped or washed into the lagoon was radioactively contaminated and despite requests to the Centre d'Experimentation du Pacifique to clean up the lagoons it had polluted, these were not cleaned, except at Moruroa, where in 1981 waste disposal and safety trial areas were damaged by storms, which resulted in the dispersal of large numbers of plutonium-containing bitumen fragments into the lagoon.

Between 1971 and 1980 the incidence of ciguatera in the Gambiers remained at above 30%, with a peak at 56% in 1975. Between 1960 and 1984, the average number of attacks of ciguatera for each of the 500-600 inhabitants was 5-7. Fishing had previously been the major source of

livelihood, and the high risk of poisoning from eating local fish has had a considerable social and nutritional impact.

Moruroa, Tuamotu Archipelago, French Polynesia

Ever since the nuclear test explosions began, fishing in the Moruroa lagoon has officially been banned, although this ban has not always been respected, particularly by Polynesians. Moruroa has had a high incidence of ciguatera over the past two decades, during which there has been extensive coral damage caused by the building of the military infrastructure and by the explosions themselves. The most striking example of direct damage was a 100-400 kilotonne explosion beneath the reef at Moruroa on July 25, 1979, which caused a submarine slide that dislocated 1 million cubic metres of coral and rock from the side of the atoll and produced a tidal wave that swept over the southern part of the atoll and through the Tuamotus. Several such submarine slides have accompanied nuclear tests, and extensive cracks and fissures have appeared on Moruroa, and large areas of the atoll continue to subside.

Other Islands of Tuamotu Archipelago, French Polynesia

Military activity may also be implicated in the following outbreaks of ciguatera that have occurred since the 1960s in several atolls of the Tuamotus, especially since no other explanation has been offered: (1) at Fakarava (western Tuamotus), which, like Mangareva, was visited by contaminated warships; and (2) at Pukarua and Reao (eastern Tuamotus), which lay within the "danger zone" for aircraft that applied during atmospheric tests.

No data on ciguatera are available for Fangataufa, site of a military base, and reported to have been heavily contaminated by the first French thermonuclear explosion (1968).

RELATION BETWEEN RADIOACTIVITY AND CIGUATERA

The outbreaks cited above raise the question of whether radioactivity is

related to ciguatera. The only reported study addressing this issue was conducted in the Central Pacific 30 years ago and was supported by the US atomic Energy Commission. No correlation between radioactivity and ciguatoxicity was found in fish from a variety of locations, including Enewetak and Majuro; the possibility that nuclear explosions may have caused ciguatera by other means was not considered. Whether radioactive fallout is related to ciguatera deserves further study, especially in view of the likelihood of sizeable leakage of radionuclides from Moruroa within 10-100 years.

INCIDENCE

Ciguatera is substantially under-reported - the South Pacific Commission estimates that official statistics reflect only 10-20% of actual cases. The South Pacific Epidemiological and Health Information Service has collected ciguatera morbidity and mortality data since 1973. Although incomplete, their records form the best available database on overall ciguatera epidemiology in the South Pacific. For the region as a whole (excluding Papua New Guinea), the reported annual incidence for 1987 was 219 cases per 100,000 population per year.

For the period 1973-87 rates more than three times the regional average were recorded in French (eastern) Polynesia, some of the isolated island groups in the north central Pacific (Kiribati, Tokelau, and Tuvalu), the Marshall Islands in north-east Micronesia (data for 1982-87 only), and Vanuatu (1985-87). Compared with the experience in French Polynesia, ciguatera occurs less commonly in the Melanesian nations to the west (Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands), where the population is less dependent on marine resources, and where morbidity reporting is less complete.

Between 1960 and 1984 there was clearly a general flare-up of ciguatera in French Polynesia, with more than 24,000 cases being recorded among a population that grew from 84,500 in 1962 to 174,000 by mid-1985. The incidence rose sharply through the 1960s, peaking in 1972-75 at 1200 per 100,000, a ten-fold increase over the 1960 figure. Improved case reporting

has never been presented as a major reason for the increase.

In the areas most affected - the eastern Tuamotu, Gambier, and Marquesas Archipelagos - the decline in incidence which began in the mid 1970s has not been sustained and the incidence in the 1980s remains high. The annual regional incidence varies widely (table II), with extremes ranging from 56% in the Gambiers in 1975, to zero in several years in the Australs. Regional figures may mask the impact of ciguatera in areas with high levels of toxicity as may transport of fish. For example, in 1976 at least 38% of poisonings recorded in Tahiti (Society Islands) were from fish caught in the Tuamotus. Pooling of data by archipelago tends to dilute high incidence figures from particular islands.

TABLE II—CIGUATERA INCIDENCE BY ARCHIPELAGO, FRENCH POLYNESIA, 1960-84

Archipelago	Average annual incidence per 100 000 population, 1960-84
Gambier	22 700
Marquesas	4300
Tuamotu	1700
Society	500
Austral	100

Based on: Danielsson and Danielsson³⁵

The basic biogeographical phenomenon of decreasing diversity of marine and terrestrial fauna from west to east in the Pacific may help explain the susceptibility of eastern Polynesia and some small island chains further north to ciguatera. Reduced biological diversity and interspecies competition may be advantageous for opportunistic organisms such as ciguatera plankton. Simple ecosystems may be less resilient to a variety of insults than their more diverse counterparts.

CIGUATERA AND NUCLEAR TEST EXPLOSIONS

The examples of ciguatera outbreaks and the changes in incidence of ciguatera cited above indicate that in the Pacific nuclear test explosions may be related to ciguatera both directly and indirectly. Directly, nuclear explosions damage atolls and coral reefs and, if underground, may trigger earthquakes. The indirect effects are probably larger and related to the ecologically disruptive impact of human activities on fragile island and coral reef ecosystems. These activities include

a substantial military component - those associated with military bases, missile impacts, test monitoring, port facilities, airfields, ship and submarine movement, dredging and channel blasting, seabed drilling, dumping of refuse, and the presence of thousands of military personnel.

Although Bagnis (Medical Oceanography Unit, Louis Malarde Medical Research Institute, Tahiti) agrees that ciguatera outbreaks in French Polynesia are predominantly related to human rather than natural or mixed disturbances, he has not documented the precise nature of these disturbances except for the Hao outbreak. The impact of ciguatera would be reduced by a greater understanding of the precise factors controlling production and accumulation of ciguatera toxins in marine food chains, by a simple, reliable, cheap field test for toxic fish, by improved environmental, and epidemiological monitoring, and by effective therapy. In practical terms, however, it will be essential to minimise a wide range of ecologically disruptive human activities on and near coral reefs. Military activity in the Pacific, largely related to the testing of nuclear warheads and their delivery systems, conducted by nations distant from the affected regions, is a good example of such an assault on a delicate ecosystem and the human population it supports.

Tilman Ruff is a member of the Department of Social and Preventative Medicine, Monash Medical School, Alfred Hospital, Prahran, Victoria 3181, Australia.

Crop Protection In The Pacific

Serious pest and disease outbreaks are increasing in the region: taro beetles are now in Fiji, a leucaena pest and white flies are in most countries of the Pacific, and virus-like pathogens threaten oil-palms and coconuts in the Solomon Islands. The UN Development Programme has approved US\$ 660,000 for Pacific crop protection.

Environmental Concerns of Hazardous Waste Incineration

While immediate pressure is off most Pacific island governments to have their homes used as locations for hazardous waste incinerators, SPPF has no doubts that such pressure will be renewed as waste disposal regulations in the U.S. become more stringent, and as new consumer societies look to be rid of their wastes. In this regard, it is instructive to read parts of the findings of an American Samoan fact finding mission looking into a 1987 proposal to use American Samoa as one such incinerator site (since turned down by the government of American Samoa).

A wide range of environmental concerns were raised, both by the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and by the mission:

- * Because of the remoteness of American Samoa it would take time to airlift specialized hazardous waste technicians and medical personnel to cope with emergencies...In the time it would take to mobilize a state-side emergency team, the damage from a spill would already have occurred.

- * The chances of contaminating the limited ground water resources exist whenever a spill occurs on land. If one of (Tutuila's) major aquifers was ever contaminated, the volume of fresh water resources could be drastically reduced.

- * The construction of a new port facility and the resulting shipping traffic will degrade the overall water quality in the locaion of the operation.

- * The American Samoa EPA does not have the ability to exert the necessary regulatory authority over the proposed facility. USEPA's ability to provide regulatory oversight is extremely limited due to the distance from American Samoa to San Francisco.

- * The proposed operation in American Samoa will be exposed to the high winds and tropical storms of the area. All structures would have to be built to withstand severe conditions.

- * The climate of American Samoa is corrosive. Vigilant maintenance would be necessary to prevent the deterioration of piping or electrical equipment which could

result in spills.

- *Transport vessels with hazardous waste cargo would face the normal dangers of the sea, but the consequences of any serious incident involving loss or spill of cargo would be catastrophic.

- * As almost all of the wastes to be incinerated would be imported from elsewhere, the chances of an accidental spill during transporting, loading, and off-loading is magnified.

- * A spill could cause irreparable damage to the fragile nature of American Samoa's environment.

- * Evacuating and resettling inhabitants following a spill would be extremely difficult considering the limited land area of American Samoa.

- * For an operation of this nature to be economically viable, a vast amount of wastes must be destroyed. The greater the amount of waste involved, the greater the public health risks.

- * Even if 99.9999% of the toxicity of the hazardous waste was removed, the project will produce 2500 pounds of toxic waste in its residue each month.

On hazardous waste incinerator-cogenerator, the Mission had this to say:

This idea has been kicking around all over the Pacific. First here, then Western Samoa (or vice-versa), then we hear in Tonga, then Tuvalu. The tactics these poeple are using to persuade the host country are questionable - promises of huge profits, no mention of potential hazards. The Pacific Council of Churches which met recently in New Caledonia, has issued a statement against the proposal and warns its member countries to refuse any such plan. The messafge is clear; we don't want our land poisoned by the toxic wastes that other countries are prohibited from disposing of on their own lands!

[Reprinted from "Rainforest Echoes" News from Le Vaomatua, American Samoa, Vol 1, Number 4.]

ACTION ALERT: WEST PAPUA

Scott Paper has decided to locate in Irian Jaya/West Papua. They will convert 500,000 hectares of natural forest and savannah in the ecologically fragile lowlands into fast growing eucalyptus trees. They also plan to build a pulp and paper mill. In the process they will displace three tribal groups from their traditional lands. That is *if* the project goes ahead.

Your *help is needed* to stop this damaging project. When a journalist asked a Scott representative if the project would be stopped if it were shown to have serious negative social and ecological effects, the reply was, "it depended on advice from the Indonesian partner and the level of profit." This callous approach by Scott is totally unacceptable. Do *you* agree with it?

Scott will try to shirk its responsibility by referring to its "Indonesian partner". While the Indonesian company also is responsible and needs to be held to account, it is clear that the driving force for this project is Scott Paper.

That we in North America will have nice, white (dioxin filled) toilet paper, etc., while an environment is destroyed and tribal peoples displaced is unacceptable to thinking North Americans. Please re-read the article on page 5 and **write to Scott today** (see address at end of that article). **Please also write to:**

Mr. William Soeryawiljaya
PT Astra International
Jalan Ir. H Juanda no 22
Jakarta Pusat
Indonesia

and to the Indonesian Embassy in your country. Thank you.

Resources

Peace Security and the Nuclear Issue is a new book containing a compendium of scholarly papers addressing these issues as they pertain to the Pacific region. It is edited by Ranganui Walker and William Sutherland, and is available from Zed Books, 57 Caledonian Road, London N1 9BU, England. Cost is £8.95.

Davui is a newsletter published by the Movement For Democracy in Fiji, P.O. Box R500, Royal Exchange NSW 2000, Australia.

Fiji Voice is a monthly newsletter published by FINS (Fiji Independent News Service). It is up-to-date and very informative. Write FINS at P.O. Box 106, Roseville NSW 2069, Australia.

Power and Prejudice - The Making of the Fiji Crisis is a new book on Fiji written by Brij V. Lal, and is available from the New Zealand Institute for International Affairs, Victoria University, P.O. Box 600, Wellington, N.Z.



Small caption: The cartilaginous membrane between the two passages of the nose. The Australian aborigines, tribes of New Guinea and others throughout the Pacific region, often bored through this septum so that they could insert wood, bone or boar's tusks. These served as decoration and also for ritual purposes, when the various decorations meant various things: e.g., when the boar's tusks are pointing downward, they are going to war. Pictured is a New Guinea warrior with boar's tusks through the septum.



The SPPF "French Postcard"

Stop
**FRENCH
NUCLEAR
TESTS**
IN THE PACIFIC

**ARRETEZ
LES ESSAIS
NUCLEAIRES
FRANCAIS
DANS LE
PACIFIQUE**



Since 1966, France has exploded over 145 nuclear devices in "French" Polynesia at Moruroa and Fangataufa atolls (41 in the atmosphere and over 104 underground). Moruroa atoll is known to be sinking. Strong evidence links an increase in fish poisoning to the French testing program, and cancer statistics are withheld by France. Every Pacific island government, the Pacific Conference of Churches, and Pacific people have asked France to stop the tests. They ask "If it is safe, why not test in France?" Your help is needed. Write to the French Embassy in Canada: 42 Sussex Drive, Ottawa, Ontario K1M 2C9.

This year France celebrates the bi-centennial of its independence. Why not order some of our two-colour postcards to send France a message of congratulations, and ask when the country will honour others' call for independence? Cards are 50 for \$7.50 from SPPF. Order now for your group.

The French Government Responds

AMBASSADE DE FRANCE
AU CANADA

Ottawa, le 14 décembre 1988.

[TRANSLATION]

Sirs:

For several weeks now, this Embassy has been receiving postcards that you have produced to inform the Canadian public about the French nuclear experiments. My country, having been invaded three times in one century, believes, perhaps more than any others, in the necessity of having in place the means to fully assure her defence. I would also make two brief comments about the text on these postcards.

In the first place, you cannot ignore that several international scientific commissions made up of eminent scientists have recognized the harmlessness of these experiments for the small populations neighbouring the testing sites. The conclusions of these experts have been made public and, if you wish, I will have them sent to you.

In the second place, I would like to remind you that these tests take place very far away from areas where population density is significant. In the case of other countries where there is some doubt

that similar precautions are taken, I do not know if you would criticize them in the same way.

Finally, I would like to point out that France is, within her means, working towards the realisation of an eventual nuclear disarmament. In 1983, the President of the Republic, before the United Nations General Assembly, presented conditions that would have to be fulfilled in order for France to join in such an initiative. If you wish, I can send you a copy of that speech.

Unfortunately, I am not sure that these arguments are themselves enough to modify the course of the campaign that you have chosen to undertake. Nevertheless, I wanted to bring these points to your attention.

Guy AZAIS
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.



And We Respond

January 25, 1989

Mr. Guy Azais
Chargé d'Affaires a.i.
Embassy of France
42 Sussex Drive
Ottawa, Ontario
K1M 2C9

Dear Mr. Azais,

Your letter of 14 December 1988 has been received and translated.

We are aware of the international missions which have gone to Moruroa Atoll. We are also very aware of their shortcomings, and their limited access to data. The Territorial Assembly of French Polynesia has asked for a full and independent inquiry and examination of the effects of French nuclear testing. To date, no investigation has given full assurance that French nuclear tests are harmless. Even Cousteau's report, which is only a partial investigation, suggests

Moruroa is cracking. Is this why the sudden move to Fangataufa? According to New Zealand Minister of Disarmament and Arms Control, Mr. Marshall, Cousteau was not given all the information and data he needed from the French Atomic Energy Commission. I include a copy of an overview article on Cousteau's report with this letter, as well as a report on a conference held last August in Tahiti.

In noting that all Pacific governments ask France to stop testing in the Pacific, and in noting that your government continually states there are no health or environmental effects from the nuclear testing, this organization would be satisfied if your government would explicitly state that it would welcome an independent and complete investigation of the effects of nuclear testing on the health and environment of French Polynesia. Is your government prepared to do this?

Such an investigation could be carried out by a team representing such organizations as the World Health Organization, South Pacific Forum, Pacific Conference of Churches, etc.

I would be pleased to receive such assurances from your government.

Finally, I would like to comment on your disturbing statement that the French tests take place very far away from zones where population density is significant. Who defines what is significant? France? To the people living in French Polynesia, their population density is very significant. And so is their environment. People and governments in this "insignificant" area of the world have asked your government to stop testing. Does this not carry any "significance" for you?

I sincerely hope that the concerns of people in the Pacific will be listened to and addressed by your government.

Yours sincerely,

Phil Esmond
Executive Director

cc/President and Members of the
Territorial Assembly, French Polynesia

European Community Rejects Plan to Probe French Tests

The European Parliament yesterday rejected plans to set up a panel of independent scientists to probe the effects of French nuclear tests in the South Pacific on the environment and the human body.

The project, submitted by British MEP, Mr Stephen Hughes (Labour), was rejected by 136 MEPs, 106 voted favourably, and 14 abstained.

It questioned earlier scientific finding and reflected misgivings in South Pacific countries over the French tests.

But several French MEPs said there was no legal basis for the European

Community to investigate military nuclear issues concerning any of the 12 member states, and that governments remained sovereign.

Mr Hughes said the resolution was not anti-French, but the truth about the work of French nuclear scientists in the South Pacific could not be hidden forever.

French diplomatic sources said the project showed the hand of the ecological group Greenpeace which has openly opposed nuclear tests in French Polynesia.

[Reprinted from the New Zealand Herald, February 15, 1989]

New NRDC Study Reveals Nuclear Weapons Tests Number of French explosions now over 170

The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) recently released a working paper entitled *French Nuclear Testing, 1960-1988*, which reveals five previously undisclosed French nuclear tests in the South Pacific. These secret tests were conducted between 1975 and 1981. With a few exceptions, France has not announced any of its tests since 1975.

The report, the most thorough account thus far, reviews the origins, purpose, location, and status of French nuclear weapons testing. Among the findings are:

- France has conducted 172 nuclear tests since 1960, which account for almost 10 percent of the nearly 1800 nuclear tests conducted worldwide by the U.S., Soviet Union, China, United Kingdom, and France, since 1945. Yet France has produced less than 1 percent of the some 100,000 warheads produced worldwide since 1945;
- For each warhead type, France has conducted three times as many tests as the U.S. Around 20 nuclear tests have been conducted for each French warhead type, compared with 6-8 tests for each modern U.S. warhead type;
- Recent French tests number eight per year, compared with U.S. and Soviet rates of 15 and 20 respectively. France is currently testing warheads for use on: the Hades missile, including a neutron warhead; the M45 Submarine-Launched Ballistic Missile; and for the S4 Intermediate-Range Ballistic Missile;
- Since 1963 the French have produced approximately 800 nuclear warheads, of eight major types, of which almost 500 are currently deployed;
- Almost 110 underground tests have been conducted at the Mururoa atoll in the Pacific, with an estimated cumulative yield of over 2 Mt. Continual testing has fractured the coral atoll and contaminated the site and the surrounding waters. To prevent further serious damage to Mururoa, France has been forced to search for another test site. The bigger tests are now being conducted at Fangataufa.

According to Andrew Burrows, NRDC Research Associate and principal author of this new study, "with the French carrying out almost 20 percent of all nuclear tests conducted over the last ten years, it is clear that efforts to halt all nuclear testing must take account of France's role."

The working paper is available from NRDC at 1350 New York Ave., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20005, USA.

Belau Leaders: Constitutional Changes Unacceptable

It appears that there will be no further legal challenge to the results of the November presidential election. Although there was a strong case for election irregularities, the Belau Supreme Court and the Appellate Court have both ruled against the petition for a vote recount and no further initiatives have been taken by the opposition party. Mgiratkel Etpison has been inaugurated as President.

Belau's unresolved political status looms as the major issue facing the new administration. On January 16, 1989, a "working group" of Belauan leaders issued a position paper on the proposed Compact of Free Association with the U.S. The document has been signed by members of the new administration including Etpison and Vice President Kuniwo Nakamura as well as ten senators and representatives. The full **"Position Statement on the Future Political Status of Palau"** is as follows:

"The leaders of Palau are unified and have agreed to place a high priority on the ultimate resolution of the future political status for Palau. The Palau leaders find that the six unsuccessful attempts by the Palau electorate to ratify the Compact of Free Association in the past demonstrated clearly the need to address and resolve the political status issues which impacts on the sovereignty and lives of the Palauan people.

"Despite repeated failures by the Palau electorate to muster the 75% mandated majority approval of the Compact of Free Association, Palau leaders continue to believe that an overwhelming majority of the Palau electorate still favors and supports the concept of a fully constituted and self-governing Palau freely associated with the United States. This concept is based on the recognition of two inescapable realities. On the one

hand, there is the expressed desire of Palau to control its land and other resources and on the other, the obvious need for outside technical and financial assistance. The longstanding American interest in this area for defence and for the promotion of international peace and security in this part of the world is recognized.

"What is more, the international trusteeship obligations of the U.S. towards Palau to prepare Palau to achieve self-government or independence as may be appropriate to circumstances of the people of Palau fell far short of expectations and will now have to be accommodated under the terms of reference of the Compact of Free Association. In that regard, it is the Palau consensus that any reconciliation of any possible conflict of inconsistency between the Palau Constitution and the Compact with the U.S. will ultimately result in the changes to be sought within the four corners of the Compact with the U.S. and any proposal to accommodate changes by effecting amendments to the Palau Constitution will not be considered. [our emphasis]

"On another plane, Palau wants to establish a political status of free association with the United States because its present status as the last Trust Territory smacks of a quasi-colonial status which is degrading to Palauan people and unworthy of America. A Compact of Free Association with all of its subsidiary agreements, if it properly addresses needs in and without the Compact, could forge a unique partnership between Palau and the United States, not as between guardian and ward, but more as between equal partners.

"A Compact of Free Association, in order to obtain the unqualified approval of the overwhelming majority of the Palau

electorate must take into account minimum political, economic and social requirements for the Palauan people to enable them to make a smooth transition from their present status to a new one. To this end, a political status entity will be organized at the earliest possible time representing all segments of Palau leadership and reflecting varying points of view on the future political status issues for Palau. This entity should be given mandates to address Palau's basic concerns with the United States toward resolving the future political status of Palau and to seek broad agreements on a Compact of Free Association which in its opinion will be best suited to the needs, interests and aspirations of the Palauan people."

The Position Statement brings several questions to mind: Will the new political status "entity" truly include all segments of Palau leadership including grassroots' and women leaders and will U.S. leaders hear - and heed - the important messages of unity and support for the Constitution in this document?

[From ASIA-PACIFIC ISSUES NEWS, February 1989]

'The Sugar Coated Pill'

The U.S. continues to attempt to win Micronesian "hearts and minds" as evidenced by its Christmas activities. The following is taken from a church newsletter in Guam:

The U.S. Air Force's annual Christmas drop delivered clothing, toys, recreational supplies, machetes and fishing gear to residents of 35 islands in the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas, the Republic of Palau and the Federated States of Micronesia.

Santa's recent visit to Palau was sponsored by the Seabees of Civic Action Team 0328 and Palau's Council for the Aging. As his boat reached the pier at the first village of Ngarechelong, singing school children greeted him at the waterfront. For many of the youngsters, their Christmas carols were the only English they had learned and most had never seen a Santa Claus before. Santa's attention, however, was not confined to the children; he also visited elders of the village.

Belau: 'We Need Breathing Space'

An unidentified Palauan Congressman, speaking in January 1989, has called for U.S. pressure on Belau - in the form of U.S. legislation - to be withdrawn:

"Legislation has been introduced to the US Congress by Congressman Ron de Lugo, Chairman of the Subcommittee on Insular Affairs, in an attempt to make Palau approve the Compact. The proposed legislation is made quite attractive because it offers more money. But at the same time it attempts to maintain certain power over Palau's internal affairs by providing an auditor to ensure that Palau uses its money according to US fiscal practice, and by providing a special prosecutor to enforce US drug laws and watch over corruption among our leaders.

In other words, the legislation seems to increase US involvement in the running of our government. What we need right now is not to try to speed the implementation of the Compact with added financial benefits but with continued US involvement in our internal affairs. Rather, we need a moratorium on the continued attempts to implement the Compact, so that we can have the chance to work to unite people and restore internal peace which has been destroyed because of the issue of Compact implementation. Palau should be given a chance to reconcile and think of its future destiny without being influenced by outside actions or the promise of more money, a chance to decide our future status with dignity and preserve our cultural integrity as a truly free people."

BELAU ALERT – PLEASE ACT

This information came to us just as we were preparing Tok Blong. We hope that our readers will take some action, especially in light of the call for breathing space for Belau (see previous page). When writing, be sure to use the 'official' Palau rather than Belau.

This information was supplied by **OPTIONS 2000** in Bolinas, California.

THE SITUATION The Bush Administration appears to be mounting yet another push to force Palau into passage of the Compact. The strategy seems to be to attempt termination of the Trusteeship, isolate Palau from UN protection and create the impression that approval of the Compact is the only option.

According to international legal authorities, the Trusteeship remains in effect, not only for Palau, but for all of Micronesia and can only be terminated by a vote of the UN Security Council.

Here's how things now stand...

IN PALAU President Eptison still remains without a cabinet after 3 months in office. All his ministerial nominations have been rejected by the O.E.K. [the Congress]. The Political Status Commission is reportedly split on its purpose and goals. Some members favor Compact approval, while others are seriously studying the Compact's provisions for the first time and still others favor exploring other options.

IN THE U.S. CONGRESS While Palauan leaders' attention has been focused on their Status Commission deliberations, a version of the "de Lugo bill" Compact enactment legislation, was introduced in the U.S. Congress early in March. It represents a compromise with the Senate and leaves some key areas of concern including military land use to be worked out.

IN THE UNITED NATIONS As a result of U.S. pressure, a hastily-called special session of the Trusteeship Council in March mandated a visiting mission to Palau to "observe the steps being taken toward implementation of the Compact of Free Association". The Mission, which is now in Palau, will present a report to the Trusteeship Council Session scheduled for

May 8. Sources at the UN expect the U.S. to push for termination of the Trusteeship at the May session, citing the existence of Palau's Political Status commission as evidence that Palauans have already chosedn the Compact and are now taking steps to implement it.

SUGGESTED ACTIONS For organizations and individuals in the U.S. and elsewhere, send immediate messages of concern to Congress and the UN. **POINTS TO EMPHASIZE:** a) oppose Trusteeship termination at this time, since U.S. obligations under the Charter remain unfulfilled; b) demand that the decolonization Sub-committee of the General Assembly exercise its authority in Palau's behalf; c) demand that the Security Council exercise its authority over the Trusteeship termination issue. Cite the 1986 report by David Gore-Booth, then President of the Trusteeship Council and Chairman of the Visiting Mission to Palau, in which he reiterated the UN Charter's requirement that Trusteeship termination can ONLY occur AFTER a vote of the Security Council on the question. **[NOTE: CANADA is currently a member of the Security Council.]**

U.S. CONGRESS Send telegrams or letters to Ron de Lugo, Chairman of the House Sub-committee on Insular and International Affairs, 223B Rayburn Bldg. Washington DC 20515. Phone 202/225-1790.

THE UNITED NATIONS Address petitions and letters to: 1) The President, UN Trusteeship Council; 2) The President, Decolonization Sub-committee, The General Assembly; 3) The President, Security Council. Address: The United Nations, New York, NY, USA 10017

TO PALAU Messages of support should be sent to activist organizations KITAL RENG, PO Box 1405; and OTIL A BELAUD, PO Box 273. Also to: Vice Pres K. Nakamura; Pres of the Senate, J. Koshiha, O.E.K.; and Speaker of the House, S. Kyota, O.E.K. All (including KITAL RENG etc.) to: Ekor, PALAU 96940. Express your strong support for Palauans' rights to 1) a strong economic future with no strings attached; 2) their lands and waters; 3) have their constitution honoured; and 4) have the US meet in full its Trusteeship Charter obligations.

Setting The Scene For a Pacific War?

...Lt. Col. Jim Sandy discusses the scenario

The following article recently ran in the Financial Review of Sydney, Australia and was reprinted in the Fiji Post on February 7, 1989. Given the author's background and the article's overview of some current Pacific issues, plus its fascinating military scenario, we feel our readers will find it interesting.

Canberra-based regional defence analyst Lt. Col. Jim Sanday was the Fiji Military Forces chief of staff when Major General Sitiveni Rabuka executed the May 14, 1987 military coup.

AT a recent conference at the Australian National University in Canberra, the federal Minister for Defence, Mr. Beazley, emphasised the vulnerabilities of South Pacific island States.

He told his audience that Australia needs "...to be able to...reinforce the ability of our neighbours to manage their own affairs and to prevent foreign adventurism."

But who are the foreign adventurists to whom Mr. Beazley is referring? Is Libyan intervention in the region still on the cards? Are the Russians coming, and if so, why?

Although some may have considered Mr. Beazley's concerns rather far-fetched, a more careful analysis of the facts reveals the substance of those fears.

The political complexion of the South Pacific is changing fast. The heart of the region's problems is its political insecurity, which stems from its lack of internal cohesion. In the larger islands, politics tends to be split along ethnic, tribal and class lines.

These schisms are compounded by the attitudes of the new generation of leaders emerging; leaders who are more nationalistic and who do not necessarily

share the values of the post-independence ruling elites they seek to displace.

All of these considerations give rise to political factionalisation, which constantly sets the ruling regime against internal rivals. The political pie is small and the post-colonial style of politics that has emerged does not contribute to stability.

In New Caledonia, violence in 1984-1985 left at least 30 dead; 19 Kanak Independence fighters and French gendarmes died in the hostage drama on Ouvea island in May 1988. The independence issue that; has been the bane of recent French governments is far from settled, though the Matignon Agreement provides a framework for political stability.

The agreement was negotiated in May 1988 by the Rocard Government in Paris and promises greater administrative control to local provincial assemblies as well as a referendum on independence within 10 years.

In French Polynesia, the October 1987 dockworkers' strike and the rioting that ensued in the capital, Papeete, left at least 30 people injured and damage estimated at \$US12 million. French troops were flown in to restore order.

The riot underscored serious inequalities between rich and poor in French Polynesia and the underlying tension between locals and their French colonial administrators.

In Fiji, two military coups in 1987 left the people demoralised and racially divided and the economy in tatters. The May 1988 discovery by Sydney Customs agents of 16 tonnes of arms in a Fiji-bound container exacerbated tensions and compelled Fiji's quasi-civilian regime to impose a Singapore-style Internal Security Decree which Fiji's Chief Justice was later to describe as "Draconian" and an abuse of human rights.

The recently issued draft republican constitution does not provide enough guarantee for Fiji's future stability.

Meanwhile, Papua New Guinea is plagued by shifting coalitions. The loophole by which governments can be brought down through the use of "no-confidence" motions in Parliament has been all too often used for short-term political gain.

Regional loyalties have given rise to secessionist tendencies in the past. These tendencies could find new expression with access to greater wealth resulting from the exploitation of the country's considerable natural resources.

The scramble to gain political control of the economy and the distribution of wealth once these riches come on line is a potential source for instability.

The Papua New Guinean/Indonesian border remains volatile. The Free Papua Movement (Organisasi Papua Merdeka) has used PNG territory as an active sanctuary in its operations against the Indonesian regime in Irian Jaya. The policing of the border and containment of the OPM is the most obvious military problem besetting Papua New Guinea.

In recent weeks, Vanuatu has been the focus of regional attention since the abortive attempt by President Sokomanu to dissolve the Government of Father Lini and install an "interim government" under Barak Sope.

Sokomanu, Sope and five other members of Mr. Sokomanu's proposed interim administration now languish in the jail in the capital, Port Vila, although it is too early to write them off. [ED. NOTE: In March Mr. Sokomanu was given a 6 year jail sentence; Mr. Sope got 5 years.]

In May 1988, rioting in Port Vila left one dead and 10 injured, and Australia responded with an airlift of riot-control equipment.

In the past, Vanuatu's flirtations with Libya's Colonel Gaddafi - diplomatic relations were established on May 30, 1986 - generated fears of Libyan penetration of the region. These fears were confirmed by

the visit of a Libyan trade delegation to Vanuatu in early 1987 and Libyan requests - rejected - to establish diplomatic relations with Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Tonga.

Colonel Gaddafi may continue to woo South Pacific island nations to antagonize French interests in the region in retaliation for the defeat of Libyan interests in Chad. He may also feel inclined to counter Israeli diplomatic advances in the region. With Fiji's political problem now assuming religious dimensions, there may be scope for Libyan support to Fiji's 60,000 Muslim population.

ANOTHER underlying reason for the South Pacific's instability is its economic vulnerability. Many of the countries in the region are at the mercy of more powerful nations and organisations because of their small size, physical isolation and vulnerability to natural disasters. In addition, most have limited resources, are dependent on a very narrow range of tropical products for export income, experience serious balance of payments problems, and have a heavy dependence on aid, foreign expertise and skill.

All South Pacific nations suffer from the "phenomenon of rising expectations" where provision levels are lower than expectation, and population pressures place heavy demand on scarce resources.

Land is particularly scarce resource in Tonga and in most of the micro-states in Micronesia. The demand for access to land in Fiji has always been a highly emotional and contentious issue.

The population of the Marshall Islands is expected to double in the next 20 years, where the current population of 35,000 is already overcrowded and experiencing the range of problems related to population explosion - youth delinquency, teenage pregnancies, malnutrition and youth unemployment.

All these factors place intense pressures on ruling regimes to search for new partners and new solutions to satisfy rising expectation levels. Economic vulnerability has, therefore, given rise

to political vulnerability - of exploitation by new external partners identifying an opportunity to hard-sell their ideologies.

In sum, the current turmoil within the region can be attributed to the attitude of remaining colonial powers to decolonisation pressures, differences on nuclear issues, internal instability inherent in the larger states, and economic vulnerability of the micro-states, in particular.

All of these issues give meaning to Mr. Beazley's warning of foreign adventurism. But could foreign adventurism in the region include acts of military adventurism?

If this means the deployment of military units of one country into another to achieve some political objective, then the answer must be affirmative.

It occurred in 1980 with the despatch of Papua New Guinea troops to quell Jimmy Stevens' secession attempt on the island of Espiritu Santo in newly independent Vanuatu: Australia provided the logistical support.

Could a similar scenario develop in the future? Consider the use of Fijian troops to support a Pacific island regime, with logistic support provided by an outside power. Far-fetched?

Only three Pacific island states possess indigenous military forces that have been engaged in combat operations: Papua New Guinea, Fiji and Tonga (Tongan soldiers served in Fijian units fighting the Japanese in the Solomon Islands campaign during World War II).

With their involvement in both world wars, the Malaysian emergency in the 1950s, and its recent peace-keeping experience in Lebanon, Zimbabwe, the Sinai and Afghanistan, Fijian soldiers have by far the most extensive and most recent operational experience. The Fiji military has developed an "internationalist" outlook that, combined with the confidence it has developed in its own operational capabilities as well as its recently acquired political role, make it a suitable agent for politically inspired adventurism within the region.

Consider also the fact that real power in Fiji lies with one man - the coup leader and Minister for Home Affairs, Major-General Sitiveni Rabuka. His political ambitions will dictate that he remains the power-broker, influencing the jostle for power that will ensue from the departure of the President (Ratu Sir Penaia Ganilau) and the Prime Minister (Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara), both approaching their 70s, from the local political scene.

But General Rabuka's popularity among sections of the indigenous Fijian community that supported him in the first place is waning.

There is high unemployment; a 12 per cent annual inflation rate (pre-coup, 2 per cent); a breakdown in interpersonal relationships; a flight of local capital and skilled labour; and a soaring crime rate. The politics of race being used by the current administration to shape Fiji's constitutional future is a matter of concern to many individual citizens as well as the Fiji Council of Churches and the Fiji Trade Union Congress, who see in the proposed republican constitution, the creation of an oligarchy that will effectively put Fiji under the control of just three chiefly families.

SUCH factors have tended to undermine General Rabuka's credibility, and he might feel compelled to divert public attention away from the country's ills by some form of military adventurism.

This would give him the opportunity to cast himself as the undisputed leader of a wider "nativistic" movement within the South Pacific - including in Australia and New Zealand where he is likely to receive support from elements within the indigenous societies of these two countries.

He possesses the necessary motivations. He also controls the military resources of the most militarised nation in the Pacific islands. He might look for:

- * A Melanesian country where Fiji's racial affinities could be used to justify intervention.
- * A target nation as near as possible, to shorten the lines of communications.

And the military geography should facilitate a quick pre-emptive action aimed at securing objectives in a capital city in support of a plan by dissident locals to seize power.

- * The opportunity to neutralise the security forces of the target nation very early.

Assuming that he was able to pull off such an intervention, the Fiji-installed regime would immediately announce foreign policy changes supportive of Western interests, encouraging early international recognition from those powers with a strategic regional stake.

If, for example, the incoming regime were to renounce support for the FLNKS in New Caledonia, the OPM rebels, as well as renouncing Libyan links in the region, would this not facilitate recognition by such countries as the United States, France, Israel, Indonesia, and even Australia and New Zealand?

It could be that these countries would view the Rabuka-assisted change in regime as being of some politico-strategic advantage - using the argument that the bottom line is long-term regional stability and not necessarily regime legitimacy.

Might not one of these outside powers consider the provision of military

logistical support to General Rabuka but a small premium to pay?

Is not the groundwork for such logistical support already being laid in Fiji with the provision by France of a helicopter (one so far) and military vehicles as well as military training including naval exercises between French navy frigates and ships of Fiji's navy?

And what about the increasing presence of Israel - the master of pre-emptive military strikes and expert in the use of proxy forces to promote its interests?

Perhaps there was more substance to Mr. Beazley's concern about foreign adventurism than he was prepared to admit publicly.

Australia alone cannot dictate the regional political agenda. There are other players, and Australia must apply influence where it can to ensure outcomes favourable to its own interests.

Fijian Jim Sanday was a lieutenant-colonel and chief-of-staff of the Royal Fiji Military Forces. His military service was severed after the first coup. He is currently a visiting Fellow at the Strategic and Defence Studies Centre at the Australian National University, Canberra.

West Papua: Obliteration of a People is available for Canadian readers only from Foghorn Books, Box 354, Ladysmith, B.C. V0R 2E0. Price is \$9.45, which includes air mail shipping. Non-Canadian readers should order their book from Tapol (see New Resources section elsewhere in this newsletter).

"A few people doing a lot will make the news—a lot of people doing a little will make history."

Pacific Islands Books

Get American Distributor

The Institute of Pacific Studies in Fiji, publishers of a unique variety of books about the Pacific Islands, often written by islanders themselves, now has a North American distributor. It is: The Book Bin, 351 N.W. Jackson, Corvallis, Oregon, U.S.A. 97330. Tel: (503) 752-0040. Our North American readers should feel free to write for a catalogue of books available.

Militarising The Kids

The Marketing of "Rambos" Snacks

The militarisation of Fiji has extended into a new area, the marketing of a "Rambos" snack food for children. The Tucker Group (Fiji) Limited is marketing its latest "cheese and onion snacks" by literally cashing in on the military's new role in Fiji. In August, 1988, a full page ad in The Fiji Times invited children in Suva, the capital, to meet "Rambos, Fiji's newest snack food hero". The ad carried a photo of the snack food package which shows three stocky figures, two black and one white, all with menacing eyes and brandishing various weapons (a bow and arrow, a sword and a rifle).

The figure in the forefront, the most prominent, carries a rifle. Guns became a familiar sight for children in Fiji, especially in Suva, after the two military coups in 1987.

For the launching of the snack food, children were invited to visit Suva's Cruickshank Park, to meet "Rambos" in person - he would arrive in a jeep, "with his team". The children were also invited to participate in a "Rambos Assault Course" specially designed to test those "tough enough" to complete it. All children taking part were offered free "Rambos" snacks and a free "Rambos" T-shirt.

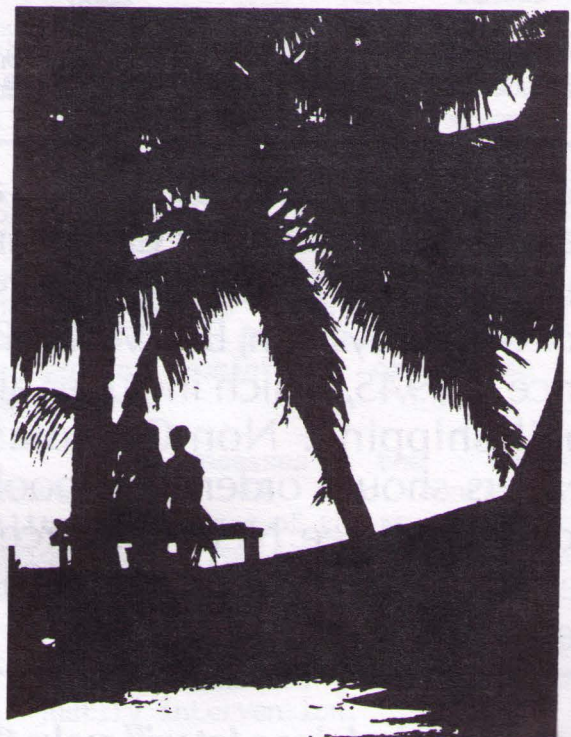
Fiji has gone through a very painful period in its recent history, and it is particularly unpleasant to see a business enterprise exploiting the postcoups situation, to sell cheap "non-foods" of poor nutritional value to children, using images of the gun, violence and assault.

The two coups, in 1987, introduced guns into Fiji politics, led to an economic collapse, a heightened unemployment level and further institutionalised a racial divisiveness and distrust - an unfortunate legacy that Fiji's children are going to have to live with. Now, a canny business operator is selling "Rambos" snack food to these children, positively playing on the image of the coup leader, Rabuka, who in some quarters, is seen as a "Rambo" type of hero.

It's not surprising to note that the Tucker Group (Fiji) Limited had the full support and co-operation of the Fiji Military Forces. In the advertisement it thanks the FMF for its "enormous help and support" (The Fiji Times of 11.8.88, page 23). Humes Industries also gets thanked for supplying the concrete pipes for the "assault course"! Perhaps this product and its marketing, is a symbol of Fiji's current state: business as usual, and the military doing quite well, thank you!

POSTSCRIPT: The October 26, 1988 Fiji Times reported an 8 year old girl accidentally shot dead by her 13 year old brother. While the children were playing soldiers the boy found his father's revolver lying on a speaker. His father, a 2nd lieutenant in the territorial forces had been "demobilised" a year earlier.

[Reprinted from DAVUI, March 1989]



Controversy Rages Over Beer Ads

The proliferation of South Pacific Brewery Ltd promotion is sparking debate over whether the brewery is flaunting the law.

Under Section Five of the Liquor Miscellaneous Provisions Act, the national government stipulates the only alcohol advertising allowed is on the premises of licenced retailers. A brewery or distillery is also allowed to do "corporate" advertising, which permits the company's name to appear as a sports sponsor etc. However, no brand names of beer or liquor are allowed. Neither are photos of beer or liquor.

However, since the recent transfer of liquor licencing rights to the provinces, there has been an explosion of promotion. SP Brewery field operations manager Gerry Faramus says many provinces "have overlooked adopting the advertising provisions". Many provinces have their own acts but no advertising restrictions. The brewery's lawyers advise that under organic law, this type of provincial law over-rules national law. So, they say there now are no advertising restrictions.

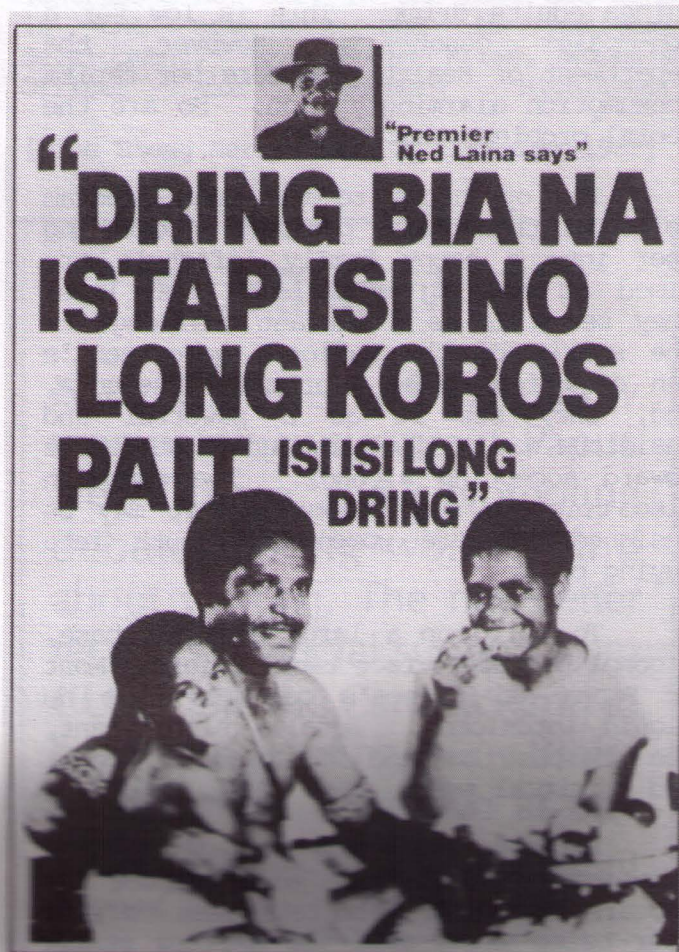
Daniel Logi, acting liquor licensing commissioner, Department of Home Affairs and Youth, says the national government wanted the restrictions to remain in force after decentralization. He offers to help provinces develop the needed provisions.

Although SP contends there is no advertising ban, Faramus insists SP promotion is not violating the provisions. "We continue to act as though those provisions were still in place. We are not advertising beer. We are advertising responsible drinking". This SP interpretation clashes with that of the Alcohol-Tobacco Working Group. The working group's stand is that promoting a beer-drinking lifestyle is promoting beer.

The Working Group is chaired by Dr. Bias Gwale who heads the health

department's non-communicable disease control program. Gwale's group is composed of representatives of churches, community groups and several national government departments. The working group is concerned when it sees SP t-shirts in remote villages. These are t-shirts Faramus says were given to tavern staff to be worn on-site as uniforms, although a number have since been given away in lotteries.

Gwale's team is concerned to see more and more newspaper advertisements featuring SP Brewery. When the company name is the same as its beer label, who can deny this won't double as beer advertising. And, of greatest concern is Operation Moderation.



Operation Moderation was launched in mid-October in Enga. The campaign is sanctioned by Premier Ned Laina. It is paid for jointly by Fairdeal Liquor and SP Brewery. Its focus in the first months is a series of posters urging people to drink moderately. One has two men shaking hands in friendship over a beer. Another features a father, beer in hand, helping his son do homework while his wife looks over his shoulder approvingly. A third shows the father sipping beer with his smiling family as they dig into a heaping platter of food. Five 60-second video commercials are now being produced by SP. Although they are being developed for Enga, Faramus says they can be used nation-wide.

The brewery contends the posters and videos which show moderate drinking will reduce excessive drinking. Faramus calls it "an alternate style of drinking". He says Operation Moderation is an outgrowth of SP's concern about the malnourished children, beaten wives and highway injuries that are alcohol related. Consumption figures show 15% of Papua New Guinea adults drink. This is low for a non-Moslem country. However, the Department of Health considers per capita consumption alarmingly high. So are the social problems that result.

The opponents to the Enga program point out that poster pictures integrating beer into a happy family lifestyle are aimed at selling more beer, not less. They see this as a blatant challenge to the spirit of the national government's ban on off-premises beer advertisements. And, they see it as a powerful and insidious way of changing public attitudes toward accepting alcohol. The campaign also triggers suspicions that it may be designed to lure women and youth into buying beer.

To build up a large consumer base, alcohol producers face two barriers. Most of Papua New Guinea's cultures have no liquid intoxicant. Equally significant, the churches contend liquor is a social and spiritual evil.

Faramus says 80% of Papua New Guineans are illiterate so therefore the posters and print materials need to show beer being drunk amid the smiling family setting to get the message of moderation

across. Others question the impact. For those who can't read, what is the real message? A random street survey by **Nuis Blong Meri** showed the number one message was - beer makes a happy father.

"This may be a critical time," according to Dr. Isaac Ake, chairman of the National Health Education Advisory Committee, "for the leaders of PNG to decide whether they really want alcohol to be widely promoted as a basic, natural and readily acceptable way of life. If so, responsibility has to be taken for the enormous loss of health, life and property which accompanies widespread use of alcohol."

[Nuis Blong Meri, Issue 4, December 1988]

NEW RESOURCES

West Papua: Obliteration of a People, a well-researched and documented analysis of Indonesia's colonization of the western part of New Guinea island, has been updated and republished. This is a timely update (it was last published in 1984) given the increasing incursions by Indonesia into Papua New Guinea in pursuit of West Papuans fighting their colonization. Cost is £4.25 including surface mail from Tapol, 111 Northwood Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey CR4 8HW, England.

Doing It Right: Democracy In The Pacific is a new one hour video from the makers of **Strategic Trust**. The documentary covers recent events in Palau and the U.S. Congress and United Nations concerning Palau/Belau. Included are the death of President Salii and testimony before Congress by Palauan leaders and constitutional defenders. Cost is \$US 48 including postage and handling (VHS NTSC or PAL) from Options 2000, P.O. Box 1047, Bolinas, Calif. USA 94924.

Pacific Island Education. Robert Sperry has written overviews of education in many of the Pacific islands. Computer printouts are available in exchange for locally produced Pacific materials, such as newsletters. Contact Mr. Sperry at Cameron University Library, 2800 West Gore Drive, Lawton, Oklahoma, USA 73505.

Papua New Guinea's Women Speak Out

Women in Papua New Guinea will benefit greatly if recommendations improving the national Women's Development Program are implemented.

The women officers of the 20 provinces and the Women's Division of the National Government developed the recommendations at a national workshop in Kundiawa, October 16-21. [The workshop was funded by the Canada Fund.]

The women recommended six major changes:-

- * more funding of women's programs by the national government as well as increased commitment and funding by provincial governments.
- * more funding and training for village women in economic development.
- * an increase in the number of community women's organizers. These are women's leaders who help village women with development projects.
- * more training of village, provincial and national women's leaders.
- * more commitment by other government offices, at both provincial and national levels, to support government-sponsored women's programs.
- * the Women's Division of the National Government to launch a service to help provincial governments develop their own women's policies.

The government officers called for improvements to the National Women's Development Program for several reasons. Assistant Secretary for the Women's Division, Jane Kesno said, "We want better services for women and stronger, autonomous councils and associations of women. The provincial officers are saying. It's time for increased

government priority for women's programs."

"The recommendations recognize the significant contribution of women to economic and social development in Papua New Guinea," said Hona Lewen, Women's Officer in New Ireland.

"A further motivation for the changes was the realization that times had changed. For the first four years of the National Women's Development Program, the focus was mobilization of women into teams and groups. The training and skills emphasized were often home skills. These recommendations have a new emphasis - enhancing women's skills so they can contribute not only in the home but also in the community and in national development," says Susan Elias, Women's Officer for Southern Highlands.

[Nius Blong Meri, Issue 4, December 1988]

Nius Blong Meri

Nius Blong Meri is a new women's newsletter in Papua New Guinea, and is promoting debate among women and about women. The newsletter receives financial support from CUSO and the Canada Fund to help with printing. Nius Blong Meri can be contacted at Box 7354, Boroko, N.C.D., Papua New Guinea.

Fighting Deep Sea Robbery

By Pesi Fonua

Tonga, with its 50,000 sq kms of ocean territory is waging a war on intruders who are fishing illegally and removing natural treasures from its waters. By one conservative estimate foreign boats are stripping Tongan waters of up to 1,000 tonnes of fish each year worth up to \$2 million or perhaps even more on foreign markets.

The move by Tonga has received overwhelming support from the Australian Government which has recently agreed to give the Kingdom three patrol boats, and to establish a \$700,000 communication network, as well as providing logistic support for the Tonga Defence Service.

In announcing the establishment of the communication network on October 13, the Australian Minister for Defence, Mr Kim Beazley, said that the network will link Tonga's land bases and vessels enhancing operational co-ordination and maritime surveillance in the region. This aid package will help consolidate Australian defence links with Tonga in support of Australia's Defence Co-operation Programme with South Pacific countries as outlined in an Australian Defence White Paper tabled with the Australian Parliament in early 1987.

The Australian Pacific Patrol Boats [PPB] programme was first proposed by the Prime Minister Mr Bob Hawke at the 1983 South Pacific Forum, in response to concern expressed by Pacific leaders about the security of their Exclusive Economic Zones. The PPB materialized and became Australia's biggest defence co-operation programme which includes vessels, associated spares support, training and advisory assistance. Phase one of the project is estimated to cost AUD\$68.76 million for the building of 12 boats by the Australian Shipbuilding Industries (WA) Pty Ltd (ASI) of Western Australia - with four boats each for PNG and Fiji and one each for Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Cook Islands and Western Samoa.

Tonga is a new entrant to the Pacific Patrol Boats programme after exploring other possibilities of setting up its own surveillance network. At one stage Tonga moved to have its own surveillance aircraft. However, Tonga's final acceptance of the patrol boats programme was confirmed when Minister of Defence, Crown Prince Tupouto'a, met Mr Beazley in Perth on 24 October this year [1988].

ILLEGAL FISHING

Illegal fishing in Tongan waters is not a new phenomenon. During the 1950s and the 1960s it was the Japanese who were doing most of the illegal fishing, and even though their fishing boats were all visible from ashore at night it did not arouse much local concern. As the Japanese left they were replaced by the Koreans and the Taiwanese. To date three foreign fishing boats have been captured and fined for fishing illegally, one Korean and two Taiwanese. Tonga succeeded in capturing these boats with the barest of surveillance facilities and with the under-developed surveillance structure that still exists today. Most of the sightings of illegal fishing are reported by Tonga fishermen and then both the Tonga Defence Services and the police are set into operation.

Chief Superintendent of Police, Sinilau Kolokihakau Fisi, said that the three components of the Tongan surveillance network, the police, the Tonga Defence Services and the Fisheries Department have the authority to arrest boats which are fishing illegally in Tongan waters.

However, there has not been a good enough reason to warrant a major investment by Government in surveillance, simply because Tonga does not have a fully fledged fishing industry. In the past fisheries was a minor component of the Ministry of Agriculture. The prominent move to form a base for a fishing industry

took place in 1982 when a fisheries division of the Ministry of Agriculture was established. Then in 1987 Tongan fishermen throughout the country formed associations. The main objective of these organizations, as listed in their Constitution is to become the 'voice' of Tongan fishermen and to protect their rights to national fishing grounds.

GROWING ALARM

With the growth of the industry there is a growing alarm over the number of foreign fishing boats still fishing illegally in Tonga's waters.

Semisi Fakahau, the Government principal fisheries officer, estimates there are 20 illegal foreign fishing boats in Tongan waters year-round, taking away three times more than the annual 300 tonnes catch of the Government fishing boat, the Lofa. Semisi, who is excited with the rate at which the local fishing industry has been developing, predicts that before the turn of the century Tonga will be a deep sea fishing nation of the Pacific. He is also pleased with the interest the police and the Defence Service have paid to surveillance. He feels that in the past even though they co-operated it was not a major concern for them as it is for the fishermen.

FISHERMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS

"The development in the fishing industry is elementary and we are still trying to lay down a good foundation, primarily for the fishermen to become involved. After all, our development is for the people and not for the fish. The fishermen's organizations in Ha'apai and Vava'u are taking great strides. The Vava'u Branch now has a marketing section dealing directly with outlets in Tongatapu, and Ha'apai will do the same in the near future."

"The Tonga Fishermen's Association headquarters will be established soon in Nuku'alofa, with an office for the president and its executive. I am looking forward to this move, when there will be less Government involvement in the industry. Instead of having us dictate to the fishermen, they now have a strong body which can tell us what to do."

Semisi, besides being optimistic with the development of Tonga's fisheries, stressed that in the long run Pacific countries must work together in protecting its migratory tuna resources, their most valuable commodity. The formation of the Forum Fisheries Agency in 1979, Semisi said was a further step ahead in the realization by Pacific countries of a closer co-operation in defending their fishing grounds.

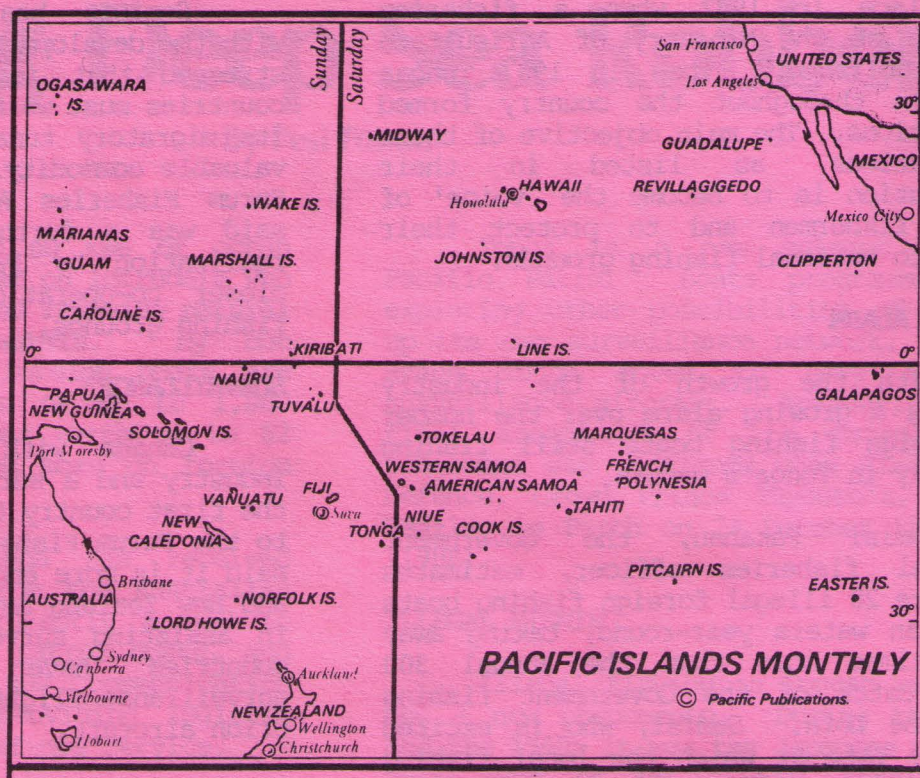
SURVEILLANCE

Canada with a developed fishing industry and a surveillance operation was the first country to offer some assistance to the Forum Fisheries Agency, but now he said it is more encouraging that Australia and New Zealand have shown great interest in assisting surveillance work and both countries have stepped up their surveillance flights to the Pacific using Orion aircraft.

AUSTRALIA'S STRATEGIC PROBLEM

The beefing up of Australian involvement in the security of the region is well defined in its White Paper, which warns that a number of recent developments in the region have posed strategic problems for Australia. It describes as unwelcome, any further access to the region by the Soviet Union following USSR fisheries agreements with Kiribati and Vanuatu. The paper says that the Soviet's involvement in the region poses an obligation on Australia and its allies to properly develop and co-ordinate their security policies.

The paper outlines four fundamental objectives of the new Australian defence policy which are: an ability to defend Australia and its interests; the ability to contribute to the security of the South-West Pacific and the South-East Asian region; the strengthening of alliances with the US and New Zealand, and the enhancement of Australia's ability to participate in the Western alliance. Its strategy has three layers - intelligence gathering and surveillance using new satellite communications, over-the-horizon Jindalee radars and airborne early warning aircraft; a naval and air capability able to destroy enemy forces; and a flexible ground force with air and naval support



able to react to any enemy incursion across Australian territory.

The broad aim of the new defence policy is to produce an Australian defence force capable of dealing with any credible threat in an area stretching over 7000 km from the Cocos Islands to New Zealand and the South-West Pacific, and from the Indonesian archipelago to the Southern Ocean.

The first of the three patrol boats for Tonga is expected to arrive in Tonga next October and the third is expected to arrive by mid 1991. A spokesperson from the Defence Service hails the Australian patrol boats as a major boost. The Defence Service is ready to confront the deep sea robbers on no uncertain terms. "It means that we can go out at any time - day or night, and we can stay out for a few days. The boats will be armed."

(Reprinted from **MATANGI TONGA**, Sepitema-Tisana [September-December] 1988)

About Matangi Tonga

Matangi Tonga is a national news magazine. Articles are in both English and Tongan. For information on subscriptions write them at Vava'u Press Ltd., P.O. Box 427, Nuku'alofa, Tonga.



Know someone who would be interested in *Tok Blong SPPF*? Send us his/her name, address and interest in the Pacific Islands (if known) and we will send a complimentary copy. Let us know if we can use your name as a reference. Send to SPPF, 409-620 View St., Victoria, B.C., CANADA V8W 1J6.