

Tok Blong SPPF

A Quarterly of News and Views on the Pacific Islands

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Making topa, Torga

Elaine Briere

photo by Elaine Briere

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SPPF UPDATE

Regular readers will notice changes in the appearance of **TOK BLONG SPPF**. This issue is our first produced as a desktop project. We hope you will find the new format more attractive and easier to read. We welcome feedback on our new look as we are still very much in transition. Credit for these improvements goes to SPPF staffer Margaret Argue, with generous assistance from the Greater Victoria Disarmament Group's Al Rycroft.

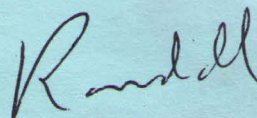
Special thanks go to those of you who have already donated to our special computer fund raising drive. Your generous donations (now over \$1000) will be combined with the proceeds of other fund raising activities and, hopefully, matched by government and private foundations. We are still operating on borrowed computer time and equipment, but hope to have our own equipment in place by April 1st. We can then begin the task of cataloguing our resource centre to make it more accessible to members and the public.

A more important change for the New Year is SPPF's new relationship with *Project Canada Pacifique* in Montreal. This will result in the production of separate editions of **TOK BLONG SPPF** in French for the first time. SPPF will be helping to distribute materials produced by PCP, the most important being *Pacific Islands-Canada Bulletin*. It will mean joint cooperation on a number of projects, hopefully leading to a permanent partnership between SPPF and PCP.

And in the great news category I'm happy to report that SPPF's Islands Fact Sheet project has received new funding, this time a generous donation from the Primate's World Relief and Development Fund of the Anglican Church of Canada. By August we hope to have updated and reprinted our four existing fact sheets and self-study reading packets on Health, Fishing, Tourism, and Population. And we will be producing new materials, including materials on Women in the Pacific and the Pacific Environment.

Finally in the not so great news category, I am sorry to draw your attention to the increase in the minimum donation necessary to receive **TOK BLONG SPPF**.

The new rates listed below will just cover the direct costs of production and mailing. To soften the blow for our long time supporters we will continue to renew existing memberships at the old rates of \$10 and \$25 per year until April 1st. Stay with us. There is much more to come!



Randall Garrison

About this newsletter...

TOK BLONG SPPF is pidgin, a language 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 in English by the South Pacific Peoples Foundation of Canada. Partial financial support for this newsletter from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) is gratefully acknowledged.

SPPF's major aim is to promote awareness of development, social justice, and other issues of importance to the peoples of the South Pacific. Through this newsletter we hope to provide Canadians with a window on the Pacific that will foster understanding and promote action in support of Islanders in their struggles for development.

We welcome readers' comments on the newsletter, as well as suggestions for articles, selections of clippings, or notices of development education materials of interest. We reserve the right to edit material. Views expressed do not necessarily reflect those of SPPF.

TOK BLONG SPPF is available to donors to SPPF with a minimum donation of \$15/yr for individuals and \$30/yr for groups, US\$15/yr and US\$30/yr for non-Canadian mailing addresses. Our address is 409-620 View Street, Victoria, B.C., Canada V8W 1J6. Telephone is 604/381-4131.

BELAU : WHAT'S WRONG WITH THE COMPACT

*Belau to her people, Palau to the United States, a trust territory to be helped toward independence for the United Nations, an area critical to its strategic interest for the US. In February the people of Belau will vote on a proposed Compact of Free Association with the US for the seventh time. In an article excerpted from their book to be published by Times Change Press this year, **BERNIE KELDERMANS** and **LYNN WILSON** explain what's wrong with the Compact.*

Throughout the process of framing their Constitution the people of Belau persisted in defining their present and future rights according to their own visions of freedom-- despite calculated pressures from the US to define them differently. The proposed Compact of Free Association between Belau and the United States clashes with the provisions in Belau's democratically created and approved Constitution. Now, people in Belau must once more vote on whether they will change their Constitution to accommodate the Compact.

The longer negotiations have continued between the US and Belau, the more the US has asked Belau to give up. US State Department officials have been candid in admitting that the US has succeeded in gaining its shopping list in the current Compact. If the Compact is approved Belau will face almost certain bankruptcy. The US would be able to take any land in Belau and would be able to do with this land whatever it wants. The US could have rights forever, even if the people of Belau object.

Many Palauans have not really had the chance to understand the provisions of the proposed Compact because of the way the Compact and related agreements were written. These documents employ a "legalese" that is vague, ambiguous, and sometimes contradictory. The Compact is very difficult to follow for someone who speaks English as a first language, yet

most Palauans speak English as a second or third language.

Although the Compact of Free Association has taken a number of different forms in the close to 20 years of negotiations, the current Compact document was only signed in early 1986 by then Republic of Palau (ROP) President Lazarus Salii and US Ambassador Fred Zeder. On the same day, Salii and Zeder also signed 10 subsidiary agreements concerning property, military use and operating rights, legal status of US armed forces, jurisdiction and sovereignty over territory and sea resources, telecommunication services, economic assistance, law enforcement, construction projects, and federal programs and services.

In 1989 ROP and US State Department officials signed an additional agreement in Guam. This agreement resulted from pressure from US Congressional leaders to satisfy perceived opposition to the Compact within Belau in the hope of getting the necessary 75% approval. Like the previous ten subsidiary agreements, the Guam agreement will go into effect upon approval of the Compact. Many Palauans believe that the passage of the Compact would have a negative impact upon the quality of their lives. The following major points of opposition to the Compact are expressed by people in



STORY BOARD FROM BELAU

PHOTO BY LYNN WILSON

Belau. One, the US government desires permanent access to the lands and waters of Belau. Two, the Compact of Free Association would create an economic situation that would obstruct the potential for self-determination for people in Belau. And three, people in Belau deserve the chance to make an informed and educated choice as to what their future will be.

Land Rights

Where in the US can the government come in and demand land from a landowner within 60 days? Nowhere--not in the fifty states and not in any other US territory in the Pacific. But that is what the US may do in Belau if the Compact is approved.

Since before WWII the US government has recognized the strategic importance of Belau. Denying the use of Palauan lands and waters to potential enemies of the US is only part of the plan. The US has made clear throughout the Compact negotiations its desire to maintain options for establishing military facilities in Belau. The Compact and related agreements state that the US may demand specific lands from the ROP and take them within 60 days.

One of the subsidiary agreements to the 1986 Compact provides the US with the option of joint use of the national airport at Airai and the airfield at Anguar. It gives the US an option for exclusive use of 65 acres adjoining the airport at Airai and an unspecified amount of land at Anguar. The same agreement also gives the US an option on exclusive use of 40 acres of land on Malakai harbour, an extremely deep harbour that could be used as a port for Trident submarines. In the Compact the US also claims the right to non-exclusive land use in Belau for jungle warfare training. In the 1983 version of the Compact the US identified one-third of Babeldaob Island for jungle warfare training-- and area of over 30,000 acres.

When the people of Belau saw the map outlining this large area, many started to oppose the Compact. The map made clear the specific land and villages that the military wanted to use for manoeuvres. Negotiators for the current version of the Compact eliminated the map and the specific demands for land in Babeldaob because these had tended to increase opposition to the Compact. The subsidiary agreement now states US rights to claim property in a much more vague way, but the amount of land the US could claim is not limited to 30,000 acres. This gives the US the right to claim any land in Belau, all the land if it wanted to and Palauans essentially would not be able to say no.

Belau's Constitution prohibits the appropriation of land in this way. It specifically states that the government cannot take land from the citizens for the benefit of a foreign entity. Palauan courts reinforced this prohibition in 1986 by ruling in *Gibbons v. Sali* that the taking of land as provided for in the Compact is unconstitutional.

The Constitution does claim the power of eminent domain for ROP. The government does have the right to take privately owned property under certain conditions, but the landowner has the right to go to court to challenge the government's decision to take that particular land. It also allows for an independent assessment of the value of the land so the landowner can be guaranteed "just compensation". Under the provisions of the Compact, landowners in Belau would not have the right to use the courts or to obtain an independent assessment.

For the privilege of permanent access to Palauan lands and waters the US is offering to pay Belau \$5.5 million. ROP would have to compensate landowners affected out of this one-time payment. Many Palauans believe this compensation is too small in exchange for access to so much of Belau for so long.

Negotiators of the 1989 Guam agreement attempted to appease these critics. The agreement states that the \$5.5 million specified in the Compact would guarantee US options for Malakai harbour and the Airai airport only. If the US demands additional privately-owned land, ROP "may request" further financial assistance. The Guam agreement remains vague about the amount of land the US may demand and reinforces the provision that the US may claim whatever land it claims to need for its security interests.

Ocean Rights

People in island nations tend to understand the sea in ways that differ from people in continental nations. The surrounding ocean provides crucial resources for the needs of island communities and becomes an integral part of life. It represents a means of tying people together rather than separating them. For these reasons the Constitution of Belau defines Belau as an archipelago.

In Belau's case this means drawing a baseline around the islands and their surrounding reefs as a single unit. The Constitution then measures 200 miles from this baseline and claims that all lands and waters within this zone belong to ROP. It claims the right to all

resources within this area for the people of Belau. It also grants "innocent passage and the internationally recognized freedom of the high seas" to all others.

The Compact of Free Association reinforces the US position which draws the boundaries of Belau in a much more limited way. The Compact maintains that each island in Belau is separate and measures Palauan territory by using a 12-mile limit instead of 200 miles. This would cut the territory of Belau drastically and there would be international waters between some Palauan islands.

Why should the US care about how Palau draws its boundaries? The US would enjoy greater freedom to operate its military vessels without having "interference" from ROP with the 12-mile limit. If there were naval accidents such as oil spills or releases of radioactive materials, US liability would be much more limited if the accidents were in international waters.

The Nuclear Question

US military officials want to be able to bring nuclear powered vessels and nuclear weapons into Belau. Earlier versions of the Compact clearly provided for this. Later negotiators rewrote the Compact in a way that obscures US rights to do so. The Compact now states that the US "shall not use, test, store, or dispose of nuclear, toxic chemical, gas, or biological weapons" in Belau. The US may still "operate nuclear capable or nuclear propelled vessels or aircraft within the jurisdiction of Palau" without disclosing whether these substances are present or not.

Why is this so much of a problem? In 1979 Belau's Constitutional Convention wrote a nuclear free clause into the Constitution. Concern for maintaining a healthy, clean environment was high. The accident at Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania had just occurred and the realities of radiation poisoning closer to home were well understood.

Perhaps the most convincing example that leads to deep concern and caution about US military policy in Belau has been the experience of the Marshall Islanders. The US tested 66 nuclear weapons in the Marshall islands. Some islands were completely obliterated, others so contaminated that they remain uninhabitable. Many Marshallese have died or suffered great illnesses from radiation poisoning because the US government made a decision that the rights of people were insignificant in the face of US strategic interests.

The Compact contains no binding standards for en-

vironmental protection. In fact, "the US President may exempt any of the activities of the government of the US under the Compact or its related agreements from any environmental standard or procedure...if the President determines it to be in the paramount interest of the Government of the United States to do so". If the military leaves at some point, the Compact requires the US to remove "hazards to human life" only "insofar as they may be practicable." The US could avoid the expense and the trouble of removing the environmental hazards simply by claiming that cleaning up these hazards would be impractical.

Social Impact of the Military

US claims on Belau's territory and possible contamination by harmful substances present strong reasons for Palauans to oppose a US military presence. Many people in Belau are keenly aware that there are other aspects related to the military that would make Palauans vulnerable in their own land.

Older Palauans remember the brutality of international warfare during WWII. Belau was the centre of Japanese administration in Micronesia. Japanese soldiers and installations became targets for the US offensive. By the time the war in Belau ended virtually all buildings and roads had been destroyed. Many people in Belau do not want to become a military target ever again.

Palauans could once again become a minority in their own land. Extensive military construction projects would mean the importation of many foreign workers. The Compact does not limit the number of US military personnel and their families that could come to Belau. The US would also be able to invite other foreign military personnel to Belau for training exercises.

US military bases all over the world have created serious problems that affect the quality of life for people living near the bases. US bases in the Philippines offer perfect examples. The presence of Clark Air Force Base and Subic Bay Naval Base in the Philippines has meant the growth of extensive drug trafficking, organised crime, prostitution, and the sexual abuse of children. Entire cities of prostitutes surround these bases as part of the "hospitality industry" created almost exclusively for military personnel. Sexually transmitted diseases run rampant and the situation has become even more life-threatening with the introduction of AIDS. In Belau's case, US bases could mean the death of an entire culture.

Financial Compensation

Many Palauans believe the Compact will bring huge sums of money to the islands--fantasies of envelopes stuffed with US dollars passing to villages, clans, and individuals abound. Yet the Compact actually creates a plan for almost certain bankruptcy and continued dependence on the US.

The major reason Palauan leaders have supported the Compact is because it promises large payments by the US to Belau in the first 15 years after the implementation of the Compact. Many leaders have not really studied the Compact, but they look at the millions involved and try to convince people in Belau that these funds are more than enough to make Belau economically stable.

Some leaders have equated support for the Compact with personal gain. The General Accounting Office of the US Congress reported in 1989 that corruption concerning public funds and contracts runs high in Belau. In each Compact referendum the US has appropriated hundreds of thousands of dollars meant for political education. These payments have contributed to bolstering many political careers within Belau in the process.

Construction projects have offered another avenue for financial gain among ROP leaders. A new electrical generating facility was constructed in Belau as a result of pressure from the US military who announced in 1982 that the US would be withdrawing the surplus military generators that had been supplying electricity to the capital of Belau. A plant was built that was much larger than Belau actually needed for its own use and its price tag was much larger than Belau could afford. Funds from the Compact will now have to go to repay the more than \$44 million debt for the IPSECO plant, though there is now a plant in place that could supply the needs of both Belau and a major US military base.

US officials have repeatedly reported that infrastructure is essential for economic development in Micronesia. Critics of US policy have stated the same thing and noted that infrastructure development in Belau has been insufficient. The US estimates themselves affirm that the level of funding provided in the Compact for infrastructure development is far below what is actually needed.

Perhaps the single most important issue of Compact finances concerns the relationship between the Trust Fund and annual ROP expenditures. The initial concept of the current Compact was that the US would

provide a majority of ROP's annual operating expenses in years 1 through 15. During this time a \$70 million Trust Fund would be established--ROP would not be able to withdraw any money from the fund in the first five years and only small amounts could be taken out in years 6 through 15.

In this way, the fund could accumulate interest and grow. By year 16 when all payments from the US cease, there would be enough money in the fund to provide for ROP operating expenses between years 16 and 50. Negotiators anticipated that ROP could develop other sources of revenue to support government expenditures by year 50.

Today the financial picture has changed drastically. Critics realize that the negotiators failed to draw an accurate picture of Trust Fund finances. Interest rates have dropped. Negotiators underestimated or misrepresented the extent to which the Trust Fund money would be needed for the ROP annual budget. ROP expenditures have more than doubled in less than a decade. If the compact is implemented it means almost certain bankruptcy for Belau.

A Permanent US Presence

Understanding the process of ending or changing the Compact may be more important than any other provision. In the initial negotiations on the Compact Micronesians were adamant in demanding "unilateral consent" for terminating the agreement. The US pushed for and got a provision for "mutual consent" on matters related to land or money. The current Compact requires that both the US and ROP must agree for the Compact to be changed or terminated. If the people of Belau approve the Compact the US military could be in Belau forever if the US wants it that way.

What happens if disagreements erupt between the US and ROP concerning the Compact? The current version of the Compact creates two means for settling disagreements. One process provides dispute settlement for non-military related clauses. Disputes unresolved after 90 days would go to an arbitration board with one representative appointed by each nation and a neutral chair chosen by the two appointees.

Another structure is created to handle disputes related to military matters or land use. If these disputes cannot be resolved by a joint committee of Palauans officials and the US military commander in the Pacific, then Belau has the "right" to take its case to the US Secretary of Defense who will have the final word on all disputes involving US military activities in Belau.

Pressure to Approve the Compact

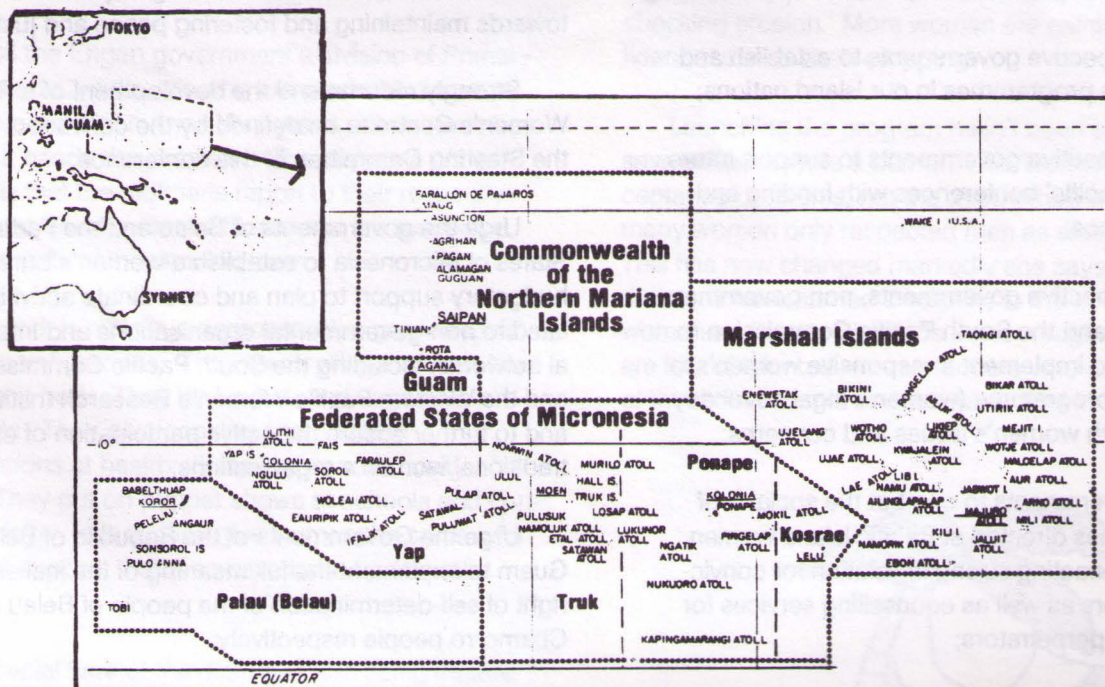
US officials have actively placed pressure upon the people of Belau to pass the Compact. The US attempted to set up a totally new political system led by young men without real authority. It was hoped the result would be quick agreement to a permanent US presence in Micronesia. US officials tried to prevent the current ROP Constitution from being approved and have compelled people in Belau to vote repeatedly on the Compact.

Within Belau pressure to approve the Compact has come from government officials and groups of individuals working closely with them. Government employees such as teachers and nurses were ordered to campaign for the Compact. Money has been paid to people to garner their votes. Government sponsored education about the Compact suppressed its actual contents. Money for Compact education remains unaccounted for and not enough copies of the documents with translations have ever been available.

Many Compact opponents who worked for the government lost their jobs or were demoted. Telephone and electric service were cut to homes of critics of the Compact. Some Compact opponents were denied access to government sponsored medical help. In 1987 government officials encouraged threats of violence directed against those who opposed the Compact. One man was murdered, homes were shot at, bombed, and burned. Justice officials denied requests for the protection of these individuals.

The latest agreement signed in Guam adds new financial pressure for people in Belau to approve the Compact. The additional funds promised in the Guam agreement will be withdrawn if the Compact is not approved and the funds not contracted for by the end of the fiscal year 1991. Many have asked, "If the Compact is such a good deal for Belau, why have so many individuals and agencies felt it was necessary to apply such intense pressure to gain its approval?"

MICRONESIA



1989 WOMEN OF THE PACIFIC CONFERENCE

At the 1989 Women of the Pacific Conference held in Guam last May, the following plan of action was adopted. It is reprinted from "Women's News," the quarterly newsletter of the Pacific Women's Resource Bureau in Noumea.

We, Pacific Island women,

Urge that governments, international and regional organisations and women's organisations make concerted efforts to strengthen communication links among themselves to seek and/or provide funding and technical support for women's activities;

Urge our respective governments and women's organisations to initiate awareness programmes at all levels to inform the public of the possible damage and loss caused by rapid economic development, especially in regard to sale of lands and real estate;

Urge our respective governments and women's organisations to support and initiate research projects focusing on the negative impacts of rapid economic development in our region, particularly its consequences in the social and cultural areas, and to define possible solutions for implementation;

Urge our respective governments to establish and finance child care programmes in our island nations;

Urge our respective governments to support future 'Women of the Pacific' conferences with funding and technical assistance;

Urge our respective governments, non-governmental organisations and the South Pacific Commission to support, fund, and implement a responsive women's legal awareness programme (women's legal advocacy office) dealing with women's issues and concerns;

Urge our governments to combat the social ill of rising violent crimes directed at Pacific Island women and children by enacting strong legislation for conviction of perpetrators as well as counselling services for both victims and perpetrators;

Urge our respective governments and private agencies within our islands to encourage and provide incentives to our overseas students to return upon

completion of their education abroad to mitigate the 'brain drain' problem;

Urge our respective governments and women's organisations to initiate public awareness programmes about the negative impact of tourism on our lands, our people and our island environments through public education in conjunction with the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme;

Urge the South Pacific Commission and post-secondary institutions in the Pacific to establish or support women's institutes and promote the concept of a 'university without walls' utilising satellite technology;

Urge our respective governments to include a provision for 20-50% female participation on all government Boards and Commissions;

Fully endorse and support Mrs. Gabriella Ngirmang's encouragement of all Pacific peoples to maintain a nuclear free environment and further endorse and support her efforts to achieve a Nuclear-Free and Independent Belau;

Commend our various church groups in their efforts towards maintaining and fostering peace and justice;

Strongly recommend the development of a Regional Women's Centre to be defined by the convenors and the Steering Committee of this conference;

Urge the governments of Belau and the Federated States of Micronesia to establish a women's bureau with budgetary support to plan and coordinate activities related to non-governmental organisations and international networks, including the South Pacific Commission and the Western Pacific Women's Research Institute; and to further ensure the active participation of existing traditional women's organisations;

Urge the Governments of the Republic of Belau and Guam to implement the full meaning of the inalienable right of self-determination of the people of Belau and the Chamorro people respectively;

Endorse the efforts of the Government of Guam to reclaim Guam's water resources such as Fena Lake and all ground water wells held by the US military;

Urge the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia to recognise the effort of the FSM women towards unity and to provide support and financial assistance for a bi-annual 'National Women's Conference' to be held respectively in each state of the FSM;

Urge the University of Guam to ensure indigenous Pacific women's participation at the professional and managerial levels of this institution of higher education and further to provide for a collegial exchange centre for the region;

Endorse the efforts of the Women's Affairs Office of the Governor, CNMI, for the anticipated establishment of a National Council of Women which will provide women of CNMI a forum to present their issues or concerns and

to foster a spirit of unity and cooperation among women; and highly encourage the neighbouring island sisters to attend the upcoming convention to ratify the charter;

Finally, we express our appreciation to Dr. Laura Torres Souder and all women organisers and supporters of this 1989 Women of the Pacific Conference.

A video (PAL/VHS format) record of the 1988 conference is available from the Pacific Women's Resource Bureau, South Pacific Commission, B.P. D5, Noumea, New Caledonia. Cost is US\$10. SPPF has an NTSC/VHS copy available to members of SPPF for a rental fee of \$15.

ENGA DIDIMERIS

This article by Linda Lomax is reprinted in an edited version from the Times of Papua New Guinea, July 12, 1989.

In Papua New Guinea, the province of Enga's energetic didimeris are a sharp contrast to the token extension programs most other provinces have for farm women. Some provinces have one or two, but many provinces have no didimeris. Often they are denied transport so they can't do village patrols. Resources and training are scant.

In 1986 the Engan government's division of Primary Industry hired 12 didimeris who are grade 10 dropouts. That's two per district. Anna Yamena, a subsistence horticulturalist, heads the program. She says one of the strengths is that the didimeris report to their respective District Rural Development Officers and are respected as part of the district extension team.

Their work is mainly in demonstration garden plots and in farmers' gardens. They teach village women how to plant seed beds. They do kaukau and vegetable variety trails. They give cooking and nutrition demonstrations at health clinics and in community schools. They put on puppet shows at schools and conduct field days. In fact, they give women the same information and support that men have been traditionally given.

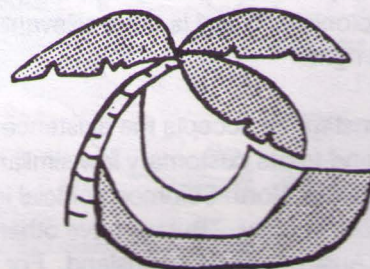
The special flare of the didimeris is in using theatre and the creative arts to get their message across. Puppet shows promoting crop rotation or how to control

bacterial wilt on potatoes can be both fun and effective.

All the puppet shows are in Engan and there's such high demand from schools it is sometimes hard to keep up.

Anna says didimeri efforts are getting results. Their crop emphasis is on potatoes, vegetables and pyrethrum. Many women are getting better yields of higher quality produce. In some areas terracing is checking erosion. More women are gaining the confidence to start cash cropping.

Launching the program hasn't been easy. Anna says attitudes were a barrier. "But women had the acceptance problems, not the men. When we first started, many women only respected men as extension officers. This has now changed markedly she says. The didimeris have earned credibility in the eyes of both women and men. She finds it encouraging that there are lots of talented women farmers who are now aware of the didimeris role and are interested in the job.



Bougainville: PNG in Crisis

For a year, former surveyor Francis Ona and the tiny Bougainville Revolutionary Army have been holding an Australian mining company and the Papua New Guinea government to ransom. Port Moresby faces radical land and mineral policy reforms or risks disintegration.

BY DAVID ROBIE

Papua New Guinea has entered its 15th year of independence facing its most critical crossroads. The Bougainville crisis, which is now over one year old, cast a pall over the independence celebrations in September and if it remains unresolved then national unity could slide into economic and political collapse.

The problems of Bougainville cannot be divorced from the rest of the country, or even from the rest of the Pacific. At stake are the crucial issues of a conflict between western concepts of land ownership and indigenous land values, the equity between the national government, provincial administration and the traditional landowners, and a choice between genuine sovereignty over resource development projects or dependence on foreign control.

Militants of the self-styled Bougainville Revolutionary Army are holding one of the world's biggest open-cut copper mines, a major Australian mining company, 2000 security forces and the national government to ransom. Rebel landowner leader Francis Ona and seven of his key lieutenants now have a 200,000 kina (US\$200,000) "dead or alive" price tag on their heads.

But while the national government and foreign mining interests portray Ona as an insurgent, many Bougainvilleans regard him as a sort of Robin Hood who is defending their rights.

The crisis is unlikely to be resolved militarily or quickly. Many Papua New Guineans believe it is also necessary to rewrite the Land Act so that it is based less on western concepts of land ownership, a legacy from Australian colonialism, and is more relevant to customary land rights.

"Our constitution accepts the existence of customary law and treats customary law similar to common law," an influential North Solomons official in Arawa told Pacific Islands Monthly. "But we have other laws based on codes in Australia and Queensland. For example,

the Land Act which is contrary to traditional land rights.

Under customary law you own land, under the land, and even above the land."

"Even if Papua New Guinea accepts western law that the Crown owns mineral rights then there is the problem of access. If the landowners control the surface then they're not going to let you under the surface. We have the same problem as the Aborigines. The biggest difficulty which has to be addressed in Papua New Guinea is that 95 per cent of the land is customary owned. The Land Act is unworkable when it applies to only five per cent of the country."

The crisis has hamstrung the government of Prime Minister Rabbie Namaliu which has tried to reach a negotiated solution but was forced to put its controversial peace package on hold after the assassination of a provincial cabinet minister in September. Provisions among the 23 clauses of the offer include attempts by the national government to try to renegotiate the Bougainville Copper Ltd agreement to ensure a better deal for the landowners; preference for local companies over foreign companies in the allocation of contracts; restriction of BCL's operations to extraction, milling and marketing of mineral ores; transfer of five per cent equity in the company to the landowners and a similar stake to the provincial government from the current 19.1 per cent shareholding of the national government; and a 43 million kina package over the next seven years which would mean building an office complex in Panguna for the landowners' association, and the upgrading of health and community schools.

Although this was part of the new mining policy initiatives announced by Minerals and Energy Minister Patterson Lowa in the last session of Parliament, the Opposition was unimpressed. Opposition Leader Paias Wingti has condemned the failure of the government to reach a solution, but at the same time has been reluctant to force a censure motion. Wingti doesn't want to inherit the crisis.

"For the first time since independence, Papua New Guineans are systematically murdering each other," says economist Roman Grynberg, a former advisor to the national government. "While tribal warfare has gone on from time immemorial, what is new about this conflict is that it is about gold and copper - something quite foreign to traditional Papua New Guinea society. For the

first time, Papua New Guinea is writing its history in blood."

In spite of the revolt - which has left more than 40 people dead and triggered a minor New Zealand exodus in October - big foreign investors such as Conzinc Riotinto Australia Ltd (CRA) and the American oil corporation, Chevron, are persevering with other projects. But will this confidence continue if CRA's Bougainville Copper Ltd, the mainstay of the national economy, is put into "mothballs" for a year, as company executives threaten, or is shut down. Since May 15 the mine has opened only once - and then closed down eight hours later when militants ambushed a bus carrying workers.

Already belt-tightening is under way in Papua New Guinea. The first target is to restructure the huge, cumbersome and expensive bureaucracy bequeathed to the country by the Australian colonial administrators.

Namaliu may be also forced to drop some ministers and absorb their duties into other ministries as a cost-cutting device. An official announcement about the abolition of departments is expected to be made before the start of this month's parliamentary session.

Drastic cuts will be suggested by a "hatchet committee": chaired by Minister of State Ted Diro. His colleagues are Trade and Industry Minister John Giheno, Police Minister Mathias Ijape, Justice Minister Bernard Narokobi and Administrative Services Minister Theodore Tuya.

Apart from the environmental devastation caused by Panguna mine and the disappearance of the ancestral land belonging to tribes like the Nasioi, a crucial factor in the upheaval is the disparity between the 58 per cent of profit going to the national government - which owns 19 per cent of BCL - through dividends and taxation, compared with 5 per cent for the provincial government and a mere 1 per cent in royalties and compensation for the landowners.

Under the agreement worked out before independence in 1975, the other shareholders - mainly foreign with the biggest being Conzinc Riotinto Australia Ltd (CRA) with 53.6 per cent - share the remaining 36 per cent of total earnings.

Since 1972, Panguna mine has provided 17 per cent of the national government's revenues and 45 per cent of its exports. Before it closed, the mine was pumping 1 million kina a day into the national government's coffers and profits of 1.5 million kina a week to BCL.

When the crisis began, 3550 workers were employed at the mine - including 610 expatriates, mostly Australian but also many New Zealanders. Of the 2950 Papua New Guinea citizens, two-thirds of them were from the rest of the country.

Now, following retrenchments, suspensions and resignations, there are 2350 on the payroll with more retrenchments said to be imminent. In the last full year of operations the mine produced revenue of 480 million kina and after tax profits of 108.6 million kina.

The outside labour creates another problem. The jet-black Bougainvilleans consider themselves apart from the rest of the country's ethnic groups whom they refer to disdainfully as "redskins". They resent the jobs that have gone to mainlanders and they resent the high salaries paid to expatriates along with the distortion of the local economy caused by the high proportion of foreigners living on the island.

The colonial experience on Bougainville is rather different from on the mainland. Colonial powers arrived late, encountering an island which is mountainous, covered in dense jungle, and crisscrossed by rivers and ravines. During the 1880s, German traders and missionaries came to Bougainville and the north-east coast of the mainland.

Bougainville is geographically and culturally part of the Solomon Islands. The island, swapped by Britain last century for German Samoa, was absorbed into Papua New Guinea during the First World War when Australia captured the German-ruled territories.



These factors help explain why the idea of secession has found fertile ground on the island.

According to British author Richard West in his 1972 book, *River of Tears; The Rise of the Rio Tinto-Zinc Mining Corporation*, initial contact between the company and the Nasioi villages in the area which is now the mine site was confused by company and administration reliance on a single outspoken Nasioi who "had no right to commit the community to cooperation with CRA". In fact, the women who were the traditional landowners under the matrilineal system were not negotiated with at all.

Opposition to the mine was overruled, quite legally by the colonial administration under Australian law, but it has led to growing feelings of intimidation and betrayal among the landowners since their original opposition in 1962. The arrival of the company fuelled secessionist sentiments in 1969 with the founding of Napidakoe Navitu which had its sights on Bougainville independence.

Responding to an appeal by Prime Minister Namaliu for the establishment of dialogue to end the crisis, Ona's right-hand man, army deserter Lieutenant Sam Kaona, told Arawa Bulletin reporter Moresi Tua in an exclusive interview that any committee or individual seeking negotiation must:

- * view the Bougainville crisis from the point of view of Francis Ona and his supporters

- * truly represent the wishes of the 140,000 people of Bougainville to the Prime Minister and cabinet and other countries

- * have no interest in protecting any foreign company or business

- * be prepared to fight on behalf of Ona "and the Bougainvilleans" for a referendum and independence, or to canvas views on secession for Bougainville

- * be ready to suffer even if it means death and many years of struggle.

When the smouldering resentment among customary landowners - which stretches back to the 1960s - burst into open revolt last November with a raid on the Panguna mine's explosives magazine, the militants had very clear demands. They wanted a massive 10 billion kina compensation for use of the land and the environmental devastation, closure of the mine and secession

from Papua New Guinea. The latter demand was a revival of a desire at independence which has continued to enjoy popular support among many Bougainvilleans.

Ironically, a catalyst in the struggle was an environmental and social impact report prepared by a PNG government-appointed New Zealand company, Auckland-based Applied Geology Associates Ltd (AGA), which was regarded as anything but independent by many of the landowners. Describing the report as being perceived as a "whitewash" by landowners, North Solomons Premier Joseph Kubui told Pacific Islands Monthly it was a trigger for militant action. "It wasn't the right sort of report," he says. "It was okay as far as the legal framework was concerned. But the general feeling was that it didn't adequately address environmental pollution.

Actually the report, completed earlier this year, does describe extensive environmental damage, and provincial government officials who have closely studied it regard it as far more critical of BCL and the national government than the landowners realize.

The report's chief author, environmental consultant Martin Ward, says Panguna Landowners Association secretary Francis Ona tried to intimidate him at a meeting in the Panguna chapel in September 1989. Ona was so wound up that he walked up to Ward, thrust his face menacingly in front of the consultant and pointed to the altar crucifix.

"Em 'big fella' kilim i dai, Mipela nogat likem report bilong yu, you kilim," hissed Ona in Pidgin, and he drew his finger across his throat.

Two months later, discussing the preliminary findings of the report in a meeting at the provincial government offices, the landowners became angry when they realised it wouldn't be as damning as they wanted. When one consultant said it couldn't be proven scientifically that fish were dying from the pollution of the Jaba River, a landowner sneered: "Have you drunk from it?"

Eventually Ona angrily stormed out declaring, "the only way is for us to shut the mine". A former surveyor and truck driver at the mine, Ona and his supporters took to the jungle and launched a long war of attrition and sabotage against the mine.

The mine company, whose 1988 annual report has a misleading "environmentally sound" cover depicting lush rainforest, was satisfied with the AGA report. "It showed there was no blame on us," says commercial

general manager Ken Perry. "The problem is that double the size of the population is now competing for the same resources. What I said to the landowners was, 'You have asked the wrong questions, you asked them (AGA consultants) to prove BCL did it. You should have asked why is it happening - that's why you're unhappy'."

The report describes:

- * a mine pit occupying 400 hectares and proposed pit extensions totalling 1210 hectares; 300 hectares of waste rock dumps, which could extend to 550 hectares if the mine is extended 15 years; 3000 hectares of mine tailings devastating the Kawerong and Jaba River valleys and a 900 hectare delta of discharged tailings in Princess Augusta Bay.

According to economist Grynberg, 90 per cent of the land loss at Panguna is a result of the manner in which BCL has disposed of its tailings. "BCL has opted for the environmentally sound method only when it is the least expensive solution", he says. In its initial proposal, the company had argued that dumping the tailings into the river would cause broad-scale land loss. But later, because it was cheaper, it decided to dump the tailings in the Kawerong and Japa Rivers after all.

Among the AGA report's recommendations were that:

- * the company and national government urgently needed to establish a quick and clear communications link with the landowners and the provincial government

- * lease documents, land ownership records and other information needed to be brought up to date and made freely available

- * information about the mine should be provided in the Pidgin language; senior mine management should learn Pidgin

- * the present system of compensation payments needed urgent overhauling

- * improved housing needed to be provided for mine workers

- * a comprehensive health programme was needed, including the control of malaria; and

- * the company needs to undertake serious planning for mine closure covering rehabilitation of all mine-ravaged areas and revegetation.

Landowner spokesman Lawrence Daveona, secretary of the Panguna Road Mining Tailings Leases Trust Ltd., claims 39 Bougainvilleans have been killed so far in the struggle. Although provincial government officials say this figure is too high, it is widely reported that at least 40 people overall have died.

Also, human rights observers are troubled by persistent but unconfirmed rumours that many Bougainvillean villagers have been killed and their bodies left in free fire zones that are closed to journalists. More than 3000 villagers have been evacuated, or "relocated" under the official euphemism, to makeshift camps around Arawa. Anybody left behind is regarded as a rebel.

The crisis has deteriorated sharply, beginning with the murder of 39 year old North Solomons Commerce Minister John Bika in front of his family on September 11. Seven masked militants went to his home soon after midnight and shot him twice in the stomach and head as his wife clung to his leg pleading for his life. In his briefcase was the Bika Report, an enlightened document advocating statehood or more autonomy for the North Solomons province - still far short of the secession the militants demand.

Namaliu said the "senseless killing" would cause revulsion in the community. "Such savagery has no place in our nation," he added, "and I appeal to the people of the North Solomons to put aside their differences and unite to find a peaceful and lasting solution to their problems".

Minister of State Ted Diro responded to the murder with a reward offer for the capture or killing of Francis Ona and seven named deputies, including Kaona, cargo cultist Damien Damen and another renegade soldier, Sergeant Andrew Piamo. Diro, the former Defence Force commander, also empowered the security forces commander on Bougainville, Colonel Lima Dotaona, to use tougher military measures - including electrification of the vital electricity grid pylons to the mine, booby traps and landmines.

Within four days, a soldier blew himself up while planting a booby trap at the foot of one of the 67 pylons. An 18 year-old Bougainvillean youth was severely wounded when he accidentally set off another landmine. Since then the troops have been putting up barbed wire barriers to cordon off the booby trap areas. However, another soldier was killed early last month while setting a booby trap in the Kongara, a rugged limestone area south of Panguna. Late in September a soldier was

wounded in an ambush near Panguna mine and militants shot and knifed to death two security guards who were suspected of being informers for the military at Kerei village, near Arawa.

Coinciding with the increase in violence, several incidents have upset many of the estimated 200 New Zealanders living on Bougainville. More than a dozen New Zealanders fled the strife late in September and early last month. Forenco Ltd, a Rotorua-based forestry company, evacuated its New Zealand workers from the south of the island after one had a brush with death near the Laluai River.

Brendan Ward was ambushed while driving a pick-up truck and his windscreen was shattered by a shot which narrowly missed him. The shooting, the day after Minister Bika was murdered, left him unhurt but badly shaken. He never saw who fired the shot but the attacker was believed to be a militant: "If I had been going just a little faster, the shot would have come straight through the driver's window and I wouldn't have had a hope.

A protest was filed with Colonel Dotaona over a separate incident during weekend celebrations marking the 14th anniversary of independence. A group of off-duty soldiers harassed and threatened another forestry worker, Paul Howers, in the remote Cape Mabiri area. The soldiers, who had been drinking, accused him of helping the militants. They thrust M16s at him and one threatened to "blow his head off".

Many Bougainvilleans are convinced that Australia, if not New Zealand, is supporting the PNG Defence Force soldiers whom they regard as killing their people to defend a foreign mining company which has ruined the environment and deprived them of their land. When Australia handed over four Iroquois helicopters to Papua New Guinea in July, Canberra pledged they would not be used as gunships. And, strictly speaking, they are not.

However, the choppers - being flown by contract Australian and New Zealand pilots regarded by the locals as "mercenaries" - are frequently fired from while in the air. It is said that machine guns mounted with ropes inside the choppers are used to strafe villages.

The difference between a gunship with mounted armaments and free firing from a helicopter is meaningless to villagers. As far as they are concerned, Australia has broken its promise.

Rumours persist that if a political solution to the

crisis isn't reached soon, senior military officers would be keen to seize power in a coup. But the seven colonels are reportedly fighting among themselves, and although a third of the military are on Bougainville, they are having so many problems that it is unlikely they could control the whole country under martial law. Panguna's huge size, its mountainous position in the middle of dense jungle and the isolation of the 35 km powerline running from Loloho on the coast makes the mine virtually indefensible from saboteurs with explosives knowledge.

Diro accused some of the military of leaking his undated letter offering the "wanted" reward for Ona.

According to the diocesan priests of Bougainville, the crisis must be blamed on the imposition of Western concepts of land ownership, values and compensation on a Melanesian social structure. They believe that laws must be enacted to recognise the Melanesian concepts of ownership, value and compensation for land:

- * The Melanesian concept of land ownership includes the ownership of all resources both on and beneath the land. Note that Melanesian ownership also includes ownership of fishing rights.

- * In Melanesian society, outsiders are not allowed to enter the clan territory without permission from the clan leaders. Prospecting authorities must be changed to recognise the sovereignty of Melanesian society.

- * Land is the livelihood and "social security" of the Melanesian clan. Future generations of Melanesians will depend on each hectare of land for their livelihoods as their population increases.

"The people of Bougainville morally support Francis Ona - he has fought for the land rights of the whole province," said a Nasioi chief, Naona Yaniung. "We believe he has challenged the government to make a real mining policy that is closer to our ancestral rights." Yaniung, a member of the Ovotung (chiefs) for Peace Committee which tried to initiate dialogue with the militants, played a tape recording said to be the voice of Francis Ona: "I don't like to see this happening in our province. The national government should consult our people. They are treating us today as the administration did before BCL came in 1964. They are doing the same things as they did in the colonial days - they are sending in the security forces. But they cannot stop us because we are fighting for our land. We're fighting for future generations of our children. I am fighting for the whole province."

[Adapted from **PACIFIC ISLANDS MONTHLY**, November 1989.]

ADI KUINI BAVADRA HEADS FIJI COALITION

Adi Kuini Bavadra has accepted the offer to lead the National Federation Party/ Labour Party Coalition in Fiji after the untimely death of her husband, Dr. Timoci Bavadra last November. Pacific Islands Monthly (December 1989) reported that Mrs. Bavadra was expected to be selected as leader of the Labour Party at its next executive meeting and subsequently formally installed as leader of the Coalition.

Kuini Bavadra holds a degree in Politics and Public Administration from the University of the South Pacific and has had a distinguished career as a public servant, most recently serving as Principal Administrative Officer of the Fiji Public Service Commission.

Mrs Bavadra assumes leadership of the Coalition at a difficult time. The "interim" government of Ratu Mara is beginning its third year in office in the shadow of General Rabuka and the stalemate over a new constitution continues. There is hope that Mrs. Bavadra may be able to use her chiefly status to help re-open the dialogue necessary to restore constitutional and democratic government to Fiji.

COMMONERS BOYCOTT TONGAN PARLIAMENT

The nine People's Representatives in the Tongan Legislative Assembly walked out on September 12th, 1989 as a peaceful protest against what they described as the Government's turning the House into a rubber stamp. The People's Representatives objected to the increasing tendency to use the Government's majority of appointed and noble members to stifle debate and undermine the powers of Parliament. The issue that sparked the protest was a decision by the Government to defer a wage increase for public servants that had already been approved by Parliament.

Six People's Representatives remained outside the House for two weeks, returning only at the last hour of the 14th day when the Speaker would have had the power to declare their seats vacant and call by-elections to replace them. The People's Representatives then presented a motion calling for constitutional change. The motion called for increasing the number of People's Representatives to 15 and decreasing the number of noble and appointed members to the same number. (Currently Ministers and Governors appointed by the King hold 12 seats, Nobles 9, and People's Representatives 9.)

The motion was withdrawn after a week's debate as it had no chance of passage. Some observers feel the King may act to increase the number of People's Representatives in order to head off more radical demands. Tongatapu People's Representatives No 3, Akilisi Pohiva, described the situation to Matangi Tonga as the time when "the eye of the cyclone is passing over us."

400 JAILED IN WEST PAPUA

Up to 400 pro-independence protestors were detained by Indonesian authorities on December 14th in Jayapura, the capital of West Papua/Irian Jaya. According to a report published in the Sydney Morning Herald, December 19, 1989, the arrests were made at a protest held to mark the first anniversary of the jailing of Dr. Tom Wainggai and 36 other West Papuans after a flag-raising incident in Jayapura in December of 1988.

Raising the West Papuan Morning Star flag has become a frequent form of protest against Indonesian occupation of West Papua, despite the fact that previous flag raising incidents have led to imprisonment, torture, and sometimes death. Dr. Wainggai has been sentenced to 20 years imprisonment for subversion for his part in the flag raising. The 36 other detainees, including Dr. Wainggai's wife and seven Protestant ministers still face subversion charges as a result of last December's incident.

Information on the new demonstration is difficult to obtain. Security is reportedly very heavy in Jayapura and no mention of the new protest has appeared in the Indonesian press. Diplomatic sources expressed the same concern over the fate of the new detainees as the original group. In the case of Dr. Wainggai and the original 36 detainees international protests were lodged over the conditions of detention, allegations of torture and abuse of the prisoners, and over the fairness of the legal processes.

An Emergency Call To Action For The Forests and Their Peoples

[The following *Call to Action* is reprinted from **THE ECOLOGIST**, Vol 19 No 5 Sept/Oct 1989.]

1. Forests, both temperate and tropical, are an integral part of the life-support systems of the planet, performing numerous ecological and social functions that are essential for the continuation of life as we know it on earth.

Those functions include:

- Regulating climate at both the regional and global level;
- Providing a habitat for the majority of species on earth;
- Providing a homeland and spiritual basis for millions of forest peoples;
- Maintaining and conserving soils;
- Regulating hydrological cycles and ensuring water supplies.

2. The continuing loss of the world's forests now constitutes a global emergency.

In temperate areas, the bulk of primary forests has been destroyed. What remains is being lost to logging and acid rain and other pollutants.

In tropical areas, forests are disappearing at the rate of 100 acres a minute or more. Moreover, the rates of destruction are increasing, and, on current trends, little will be left by the year 2040.

3. The immediate and long-term consequences of global deforestation threaten the very survival of life as we know it on earth. Indeed, the scale of deforestation and its impact now represent one of the gravest emergencies ever to face the human race.

Such consequences include:

- A loss of biological diversity on an unprecedented scale;
- The destruction of forest-based societies;
- Increasing droughts, floods, soil erosion and desertification;
- The disruption of climatic equilibrium and the acceleration of global warming;
- An increase in impoverishment and famine among rural populations.

4. Deforestation is the inevitable result of the current social and economic policies being carried out in the name of development.

Such policies and practices include:

- Plantations, both for industrial forestry and for export crops;
- Ranching schemes;
- Dam projects;
- Commercial logging;
- Mining and industry;
- The dispossession of peasants and indigenous peoples;
- Colonization schemes;
- Roads;
- Pollution;
- Tourism.

5. Official solutions to the problem of deforestation have ignored or played down the fundamental causes of deforestation, and have instead adopted policies that blame the victims of deforestation for their plight, while simultaneously pursuing "solutions" that can only result in the further degradation of forests and croplands through the promotion of industrialized forestry.

Specifically such policies include:

The Tropical Forest Action Plan, as promoted by the World Bank, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization, the UN Development Programme and others;

Sustained yield commercial logging, as promoted by the International Timber Trade Agreement;

Policies to zone the forests;

The commercialization and privatization of biological diversity, as promoted through the International Biodiversity Programme;

Pollution control programmes that are directed towards managing specific pollutants rather than reducing the source of pollution.

6. Throughout the world, the victims of these policies are taking action to arrest deforestation and reverse the process of destruction. In Sarawak, Amazonia, the Himalayas, Thailand, the Philippines and elsewhere, people are standing up to protect the forests and their societies. Such peoples have proved that they are able to use the forests in the only way that is compatible with their preservation. It is they, not corporations, aid agencies or banks, who should be entrusted with designing and implementing the protection and regeneration of the forest wealth of the planet.

7. The victims of the development process, along with those concerned with their fate and the fate of the earth, therefore call upon the United Nations and national governments:

To declare the preservation of the remaining tropical and temperate forests of the earth to be a global imperative and to subordinate political and economic considerations to achieving the overriding goal of their preservation;

To restore ecological justice and integrity to humanity by returning to the millions of people both who live in the forest and who depend upon it, their right to a sustainable livelihood;

To restore ecological justice and integrity to life on earth through ceasing further forest destruction and regenerating damaged forest lands through the guidance of indigenous peoples, peasants and local communities, planting only their choice of trees and plants, with the aim of restoring ecological diversity and the survival of indigenous societies;

To restrain the overconsumption and wastage of resources by the world's privileged groups through making the necessary changes in lifestyle and consumption patterns consistent with the development of sustainable livelihoods throughout the globe, in order to satisfy the ecological, spiritual, social and aesthetic needs of people everywhere.

8. Specifically, we call upon the United Nations and national governments:

1. To empower forest peoples and those who depend upon the forests for their livelihood with the responsibility for safeguarding the forests and ensuring their regeneration by:

a) achieving land security both through revising land tenure legislation and through land reform, as recommended in the Brundtland Report;

b) ensuring forest people the right to a decisive voice in formulating policies for their areas;

c) correcting social and economic policies based on the assumed cultural superiority of non-forest peoples;

2. To halt all those practices and projects which would contribute either directly or indirectly to further forest loss.

Such projects would include: plantation schemes, dams, ranching schemes, mining and industrial projects, commercial logging, the Tropical Forest Action Plan, the UN Biodiversity Programme, etc.;

3. To revise radically the policies of those agencies that currently finance the projects and practices causing defores-

tation. Funding for such projects should be ceased and instead directed towards projects that promote the protection and regeneration of forests. The agencies involved include: the multilateral aid agencies and banks, such as the World Bank, the Inter-America Development Bank and the Asian Development Bank, the UN Food and Agriculture Organization and the United Nations Development Programme; the overseas aid agencies of the developed countries, and major international corporations;

4. To implement, through the agency of forest peoples and under their direction, a programme for regenerating degraded forest lands and reinvigorating local cultures;
5. To take immediate steps to curb the wastage, misuse and overconsumption of timber products;
6. To ban all imports of tropical timber and tropical wood products from natural forests;
7. To take immediate steps to cut down the consumption of imported beef from tropical forest areas;
8. To take immediate steps to reduce atmospheric air pollution and to eliminate those pollutants responsible for forest die back at the source, both through improved technologies and through changes in current patterns of consumption and production;
9. To restructure the present unequal world economic system which is dominated by institutions and policies that favour the developed countries at the expense of the poor of the Third World. This global system at present enables the developed countries to control and use an overwhelming and disproportionately high share of the world's natural resources. A fairer and more equitable economic system is therefore fundamental to any strategy for saving and regenerating the world's forests;
10. To initiate a global shift towards developing sustainable livelihoods, The basic goals of such a shift would be developing systems of production that are ecologically and socially sustainable. This will require:

Reducing the scale at which production is carried out and adopting practices which minimize the impact of production on the environment;

Maximizing local self-sufficiency;

Assuring that economic activities are subordinated to social and ecological ends.

Supporting Organizations

ABEN-REDES (Nicaragua)
 Americans for Indian Opportunity (USA)
 Bank Information Centre (USA)
 Cultural Survival (USA)
 Development GAP (USA)
 Earth Island Institute (USA)
 Ecoropa
 The Ecologist (UK)
 Environmental Defense Fund
 Forest Peoples' Support Groups (UK)
 Friends Committee for National Legislation (USA)
 Friends the Earth (Brazil)
 Haribon Foundation (The Philippines)

The Indonesian NGO's Network for Forest
 Conservation - SKEPHI (Indonesia)
 Japan Tropical Forest Action Network (Japan)
 Monitor Consortium (USA)
 Probe International (Canada)
 Project for Ecological Recovery (Thailand)
 Rainforest Action Network (USA)
 Rainforest Information Centre (Australia)
 Reforest the Earth (UK)
 Research Foundation for Science and Ecology (India)
 Sahabat Alam Malaysia
 Survival International (UK)
 Uniao das Nacoes Indigenas (Brazil)

SCOTT PAPER PROJECT RECYCLED

Excerpted from "Down to Earth", a monitoring service for sustainable development in Indonesia, No. 6, December 1989.

Scott paper's decision to withdraw from the \$654 million eucalyptus plantation/woodchipping and pulp mill project has been cheered by environmental and human rights groups worldwide. It was widely held that the project located in Merauke, Western New Guinea (Irian Jaya), would bring environmental devastation to the area, and wreck the lives of 15,000 tribal people living in the 800,000 ha concession. But Indonesian and international NGO's have realised that the story of Astra-Scott joint venture has not ended yet: the Indonesian government is determined to see this highly publicized project go ahead, with or without a foreign partner.

Scott's decision to withdraw took the Indonesians by complete surprise and was not taken lightly. Indeed the government has been dealt a severe blow. The investment is Indonesia's biggest outside the oil and gas sector to date. Scott's explanation for their decision was taken with a pinch of salt by both the government and human rights NGO's. According to Richard Leaman, President of Scott Worldwide, "extensive studies" indicated that "the Company can meet its needs for pulp from other sources." (Scott press release, 13/10/89). Leaman's line was loyally toed by other Scott spokespeople including the Indonesia-based director of Astra-Scott Cellulosa, Barry Kotek, even though he was quoted in an interview with the weekly Tempo as saying: "NGO pressure was the only reason why we withdrew." (4/11/89).

Government officials agree with this version, Director General of Reforestation and Land Rehabilitation Armana Darsidi attributing the decision to withdraw to the "campaigns... made by environmentalists and non-governmental organisation executives who claimed the huge forestry project would destroy rich plant genetic resources in the area...", and to Scott's fears of a consumer boycott (Jakarta Post, 23/10/89).

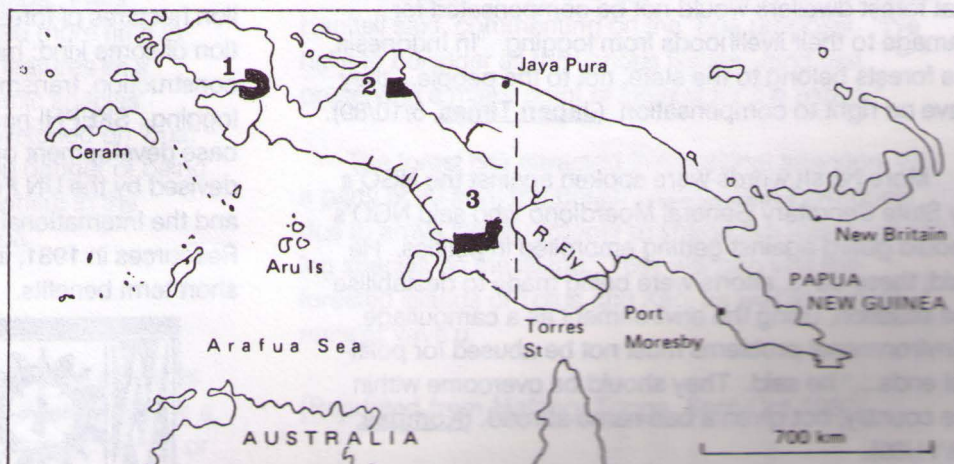
SCOTT'S REPLACEMENT FOUND?

According to Irian Jaya Governor Bas Suebu, Scott's replacement has already been found. He told the Indonesian Antara News Service in early November that "scores of big companies from Japan, Hong Kong, and South Korea" were "falling all over each other" to take Scott's place. PT Astra, Scott's Indonesian partner in the aborted joint-venture had "already decided on the replacement," he said (Jakarta Post, 13/11/89).

Governor Suebu did not reveal the identity of Scott's replacement, but his statement implied the new investor was an Asian company. Immediately after Scott's announcement, Darsidi had said that the project would be offered to five Asian companies interested in investing in pulp projects in Indonesia- two from South Korea, two from Taiwan, and one from Japan. (Jakarta Post, 23/10/89). According to Tempo (4/11/89) there was speculation that the South Korean Firm Samsung, already involved with PT Astra in East Java, will be the new partner. But no foreign venture took the plunge immediately. Tempo pointed out that like Scott, Japan, too could find the NGO's a stumbling block.

WEST PAPUA FOREST PROJECTS

- 1) Bintuni Bay
- 2) Mamberano Forest Products
- 3) Astra-Scott, Merauke



One week later Forestry Minister Hasjru Harahap, clearly thinking along the same lines, announced that the government was encouraging PT Astra to team up with other Indonesian companies instead of foreign firms (**Jakarta Post**, 1/11/89). By November 15, he was saying that PT Astra could continue to develop the project with or without the participation of foreign investors (**Jakarta Post**, 16/11/89).

Backlash against NGO's

There are signs that government fury over Scott's withdrawal is being directed towards the NGO's who campaigned against the project. As international organisations are beyond their reach, the government is turning on the more vulnerable Indonesian groups. Already part of the international NGO network, groups like SKEPHI and WALHI, enjoy considerable international support however, and this may restrain the government. NGO's were already severely censured earlier this year following a letter of protest they wrote to the World Bank about the Bank-funded Kedung Ombo dam project. Chastised then for washing Indonesia's dirty linen in public, they are now being accused of collaborating with international NGO's to effect the withdrawal of Scott.

Forestry Minister Harahap criticised the "vocal attitude" of NGO's who fought for environmental conservation and who, he said, came up with no alternative (**Kompas**, 16/11/89). Complaining that NGO's only stressed the importance of preserving forest resources, he said: "It is the right of NGO's to speak like that but it is also the right of the Forestry Minister to continue utilizing our forest resources for the sake of improving the people's living standards in the country" (**Jakarta Post**, 16/10/89).

Harahap's views on the rights of indigenous forest-dwellers were made known recently in Japan, during a visit to promote Indonesia's forestry policies. He said that forest dwellers would not be compensated for damage to their livelihoods from logging. "In Indonesia, the forests belong to the state, not to the people... they have no right to compensation" (**Japan Times**, 5/10/89).

More harsh words were spoken against the NGO's by State Secretary General Moerdiono who said NGO's should guard against getting embroiled in politics. He said, these days, efforts were being made to destabilise the situation, using the environment as a camouflage. "Environmental problems must not be abused for political ends...", he said. They should be overcome within the country, not given a bad name abroad. (**Kompas**, 18/11/89).

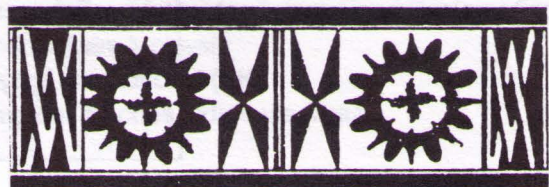
SKEPHI CALLS FOR ALTERNATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Indonesian forestry conservation NGO SKEPHI has been one of the most outspoken critics of development in Indonesia, calling not only for Scott's withdrawal from Merauke, but for the whole of Western New Guinea to be developed on an ecologically sustainable basis. Describing this largely unexploited region as "the last mystery of the world", SKEPHI urged the government to take a different approach to development in Irian Jaya, to prevent it meeting the same fate as Kalimantan and Sulawesi.

Scott's withdrawal, SKEPHI said, does not mean that the problem of conservation in Irian Jaya has been resolved: three other projects have become international issues- Freeport International's mine which lies inside the Lorentz National Park in the Cartenz Mountains; Asmus MacLean's planned joint venture with PT Sansporindo to log the Mamberamo forests; and Marubeni's mangrove logging/chipping plant project in Bintuni Bay.

The weakness in the current approach to forestry development, says SKEPHI, is that the functions of "conservation" and "production" are divided under the Forest Use Agreement (the basic Indonesian forest category system) whereas, conservation should be at the basis of all kinds of development throughout Irian Jaya and its marine surroundings. Dividing forests in such a way creates the potential for overlapping too. This has happened in Irian Jaya where 77 concession holders have been granted 12.9 million hectares of forest, when the total area of the region's production forest is only 8.2 million hectares. The overlap is likely to take in "conversion forests", earmarked for non-forestry development, but also "protected" forests and nature reserves.

In total, says SKEPHI, 70% of Irian Jaya's 41.8 million hectares of forest have been allocated for exploitation of some kind: mining, oil exploration, dam construction, transmigration, and plantations as well as logging. SKEPHI has appealed to the government to base development on the "World Heritage concept", devised by the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation and the International Union for Conservation of Natural Resources in 1981, instead of thinking only in terms of short term benefits.



Last Chance to Preserve Dwindling 'Eua Rainforest in Tonga

Moves are afoot to form a national park to preserve the rapidly-disappearing rainforest on 'Eua.

Ministry of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources staff will make a survey on the island in October to collect data and information which will be presented to Cabinet and Privy Council in support of a national park proposal.

At the same time, a new National Parks Authority is being formed for Tonga. The new body is expected to give impetus to the move for a park covering the 'Eua rainforest.

The idea has already been the subject of detailed reports by a Ministry of Agriculture, Forests and Fisheries officer, Bruce Revington, and by a Tongatapu science teacher/photographer, James Foster. Earlier this year the Foster report was presented to HRH Princess Salote Pilolevu Tuita, who was concerned enough to take it immediately to the King.

The threat to the forest is obvious to any visitor who ventures into the forested areas. Tussock areas show evidence of past interference by man; plantations and garden plots encroach increasingly upon the remaining bush - showing how the four wheel has opened up previously inaccessible areas. According to Bruce Revington, "soon there will be no forest left."

Endangered

In both geological and mythological reckoning, 'Eua is among the oldest of the Tongan islands. Plant species have been there longer and had more time to adapt and develop their own peculiar features as a result of the environment. Many endemic species - species found nowhere else - have developed on 'Eua, and as the forest diminishes they are in danger of being lost. There are also plants found elsewhere in the Pacific that occur in Tonga only on 'Eua.

Tourism value

Those pushing for the formation of a park stress its tourism potential. According to James Foster, "'Eua is a place suitable for bush-walking, birdwatching, caving or

climbing. If advertised and developed as such it has much potential. Otherwise visitors from San Francisco or Auckland or Sydney are unlikely to recommend it to their friends..."

Bruce Revington pointed out in his report that no great initial expense would be needed to establish facilities for visitors to the park.

"Once the Government has shown a serious commitment to forest conservation it should be possible to obtain adequate funds from aid donors for further development," he said. "Costs would depend upon the scale of development required. At first little more than the cutting of safe walking tracks would be needed. A labour force of five men should be sufficient."

The Revington report proposes a park of 525 hectares on the eastern edge of the island including a coastal strip south and east of the Ve'ehala Estate to put the Matalanga'a Maui blow hole within the park boundaries. He said that of this area, about 370 hectares is useless for crop growing "as it is dissected by steep-sided gullies and it has an infertile soil that is easily eroded if disturbed." He also said it is unsuitable for forestry. Revington suggested that other areas be surveyed for possible inclusion.

The new National Parks Authority will be made up of the Minister of Lands, the Secretary of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources Sione Tongilava and Secretary of Agriculture Haniteli Fa'anunu.

"It's a question of land use that has to be assessed," Haniteli said, commenting on the 'Eua proposal. "We have to consider all the various issues...land use, preserving a major point of interest for the nation."

The forest has attracted international attention, with a party of 20 from the British organisation Earthquest due to arrive late in October to spend five weeks recording species on the island. They will also visit the forested islands of Tofua and Kao, as well as survey reefs at Vava'u.

[Reprinted from Matangi Tonga, Sept-Oct 1989]

Vanuatu's Rainforests : Saving the Kauri

By Adrian Barrance
Principal Forestry Officer
Vanuatu Department of Forestry

Kauri (*Agathis macrophylla*) is a species of tropical conifer, indigenous to the islands of the South West Pacific. Its timber is highly prized for many uses, including boat-building and veneer, as it has a very clear grain, lustrous texture, and is easy to work. There are 13 species of the tree, which extend from throughout South-East Asia to Fiji. *A. macrophylla* probably has the greatest plantation potential. Due to its high value, however, the species has been extensively logged throughout its native areas, and there are few populations still untouched. Logging is putting severe pressure on the remaining gene resources of the kauri as the trees disappear.

In addition to occurring on a single island in the Solomon Islands, and having one variety in Fiji, kauri is found on three islands in Vanuatu. In the north, a little-known population exists in the mountains of Espiritu Santo, and in the south of the country, kauri is on Erromango and Aneityum Islands. On both of these islands the trees have been heavily logged over many years.

Vanuatu's Department of Forestry, recognizing the plantation potential of kauri and the threat from logging, is undertaking an active programme aimed at both conserving and using the genetic resources of kauri.

In plantation development, the Department is establishing seed stands on islands such as Efate to overcome the problem of seed shortage. This shortage is due to inaccessible parent trees, low seed viability, and seed destroyed by the rare primitive moth, *Agathiphaga vitiensis*. This moth is known to exist on Erromango and Aneityum, but not on Efate. In addition, research is continuing into vegetative propagation of the species, as (a) cuttings, to reduce seed requirements, and (b) scions, to establish grafted seed orchards. Provenance investigation of the species is planned, and growth trials are being established as fast as seed supplies allow.

There are two aspects of the conservation programme of the species. Research into its regeneration characteristics and ecology has commenced, and will hopefully continue with external assistance. This research may tell if active management of kauri forests for sustained yields is possible. In addition, it is essential to

establish a strict reserve of kauri, containing an untouched and self-sustaining population safe from the outside world. It is also essential that action be taken to conserve and manage viable breeding populations of the species, or opportunities for plantation development and the survival of the species will be threatened.

The history of establishing a reserve on Erromango goes back many years. In 1971, during a Royal Society and Percy Sladen Expedition to Vanuatu, a strict reserve was recognised as necessary. The Senior Principal Research Scientist of the Expedition produced a proposal for establishing such a reserve, describing the area, the catchment of the Lampounari River, as "the only remaining good stand of *Agathis obtusa* (as the Vanuatu *A. macrophylla* was then known) in the world". There is considerable variation in its range throughout the South Pacific. It is therefore still vitally important to conserve the Erromango kauri and to retain the species naturally. The cultural value of the area has also since been recognized: the area is rich in cultural associations and sites of custom significance, remembering that land heritage forms an essential basis for Melanesian culture.

Following this proposal in 1971, progress in establishing the reserve lapsed until 1985, when it was resuscitated by the Forest Research Officer. In the meantime, logging companies had concentrated fortunately on the dwindling resources of more accessible kauri stands elsewhere on the island.

In 1985, a revised proposal for the Kauri Reserve was approved by the Vanuatu Council of Ministers. Since then, assistance in establishing the reserve has been sought from international agencies. In 1986, AIDAB (the Australian International Development Aid Bank) funded a visit by the Principal Research Scientist from Australia's CSIRO Division of Forest Research to Vanuatu, to produce a feasibility study for the reserve. In a follow-up visit in 1988, funded by the United Nations Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), it was recommended by the Director of the South Australian National Parks Service that environmental legislation be drafted as a priority to provide for protection and management of this and other reserves in Vanuatu, and that work to get funding and to secure land tenure on the reserve area be carried out without delay.

The Environment Unit of the Ministry of Lands, and the Department of Forestry, have received approval, in principle, from the introductory legislation to establish

and manage National Parks. It is proposed that this legislation will cover, in addition to the management and protection of reserves funding, administration and a framework allowing all parties with interests in reserves to participate in decision making.

The Department of Forestry is currently drafting a management plan which will set out management policies for the Erromango Reserve, accounting for its ecological and environmental value, and the culture and aspiration of the surrounding inhabitants.

The area of the Erromango Reserve is around 282 hectares. Its boundaries were chosen to follow a distinct watershed: this should minimize the risk of influence from any activities which are carried out on adjacent land. These boundaries are also geographically obvious (ridges and a major river); this will assist in controlling "encroachment" into the reserve area.

The area includes what is considered a complete range of several stages of kauri forest development, from the fully developed two-storied kauri/tamanu (*Calophyllum neo-ebudicum*) forest, through low *Acacia*

spirorbis/sandalwood forest to open grassland. This will be very useful for understanding the ecological balance of the forest, and the importance of these species for the mature forest.

Local people living in the vicinity of the reserve, including the traditional custom landowners, support the idea of a reserve, recognizing the loss of cultural heritage suffered elsewhere due to land degradation by logging. The Department of Forestry has negotiated a lease with the landowners, who will receive annual rental payments.

Thanks to the interest of the landowners in establishing the Reserve, logging companies due to be starting operations on Erromango soon have been confined to other areas. To ensure the security of the area in the long term in the face of possible renewed pressure from logging companies, it is essential that the lease is secured as soon as possible. Funding to initiate the reserve has been informally identified; however, additional funding is needed to provide for long-term tenure.

[Reprinted from IRETA's South Pacific Agricultural News, March 1989]

FIJIAN FOREST RESERVE LOGGED

Illegal logging of a recently established rainforest reserve in Fiji shows that preservation is as dependent as much on policing and government will as it is on public ownership. This statement was issued by SPACHEE, the Suva-based environmental group.

The J.H. Garrick Memorial Reserve in southern Viti Levu, behind Navua, was given to Fiji by the Garrick family and declared a reserve in 1986. It is Fiji's most important reserve for the conservation of tropical rainforest. The reserve, on freehold land, is managed by the National Trust of Fiji, which is responsible for the permanent preservation of examples of each of the natural ecosystems of Fiji. The logging of the Garrick reserve in 1988 is indicative of the present status of conservation in Fiji.

The Garrick is Fiji's only reserve protecting tropical rainforest which meets the requirements set by international conservation bodies. The logging was not a simple, recent incursion from the neighbouring concession; it was completed at least six months ago and the major logging road through the reserve has been used daily since. The area logged (about one quarter of the reserve) was the only pristine, primary rainforest in the reserve. The magnificent philanthropic gesture by the Garrick family of donating this reserve to the nation has been squandered.

The incident illustrates the inadequate control exercised by the three governmental bodies involved: the Ministry of Forest, the Native Land Trust Board, and the National Trust for Fiji. The Ministry of Forests, as legally required, is presumed to have measured and marked each of the stolen logs before its removal. The NLTB is required to mark the boundary on behalf of the native landowners who hold the adjacent forest concessions license and who employed Southern Forests Ltd to undertake the logging. No trace of this boundary was found.

Why the National Trust has not responded to the incursion is uncertain. One cause must be the lack of budgetary support from the Government. The Trust's budget in 1989 was F\$31,000, equivalent to less than one third it received in 1980. We have recommended: 1) prosecution of the logging contractor and adjacent concession license holders; 2) an investigation of the inability of the Government and the statutory bodies involved to protect the reserve; 3) complete rehabilitation of the site, and 4) creation of a Ministry of Environment to be responsible for pressing environmental concerns such as pollution, watershed management, soil erosion, environmental concerns such as impact assessment and others currently being ignored.

[Reprinted from PACIFIC WORLD, Wellington, N.Z.]

LOGGING IN THE SOLOMONS

The following editorial and news brief on logging in the Solomons are reprinted from the August/September issue of the Solomon Islands Development Trust publication LINK.

EDITORIAL

Some tribal landowners easily invite a foreign company to operate in their area without the consent of other indigenous landowners of that particular area. The destruction created by major foreign owned- companies has been experienced in many parts of Solomon Islands.

The country's current traditional customary land-ownership does not give absolute rights to single members of the tribal landowning groups to do what ever he/she wants with their land. Traditionally all must take part in decision-making before agreeing on any developments to be carried out. If this is not done, the result will be land disputes.

Since most Solomon Islands lands are owned customarily, leaders must take into account the human need of the environment and the usefulness of natural resources. If landowners fail to consider these facts, the speed of destruction will increase and if that continues, only fragments of our natural resources will remain for our future generations. People must realize that if they lose the whole forest system of their natural resources, the country will lose its greatest treasure forever. Our primary rainforest grows on poor soil and is nourished and replenished in a perpetual cycle between plants, soil, rain and animals, each needing the other. Remove the trees and the cycle is broken. When the forests go, plants and animals go with it and of course, soil erosion begins and the whole area becomes a wasteland.

Some people have no choice but to clear forest for their own ends. But the real cause is the combination of ignorance and the short-sightedness of those who are prepared to allow themselves to be robbed of their heritage. People of this country should by now understand if they remain blind to the present rate of destruction, shrug their shoulders and do nothing, elect Area and provincial leaders who give in easily to exploitation of our natural resources then there is little hope.

GOVERNMENT'S STAND ON LOGGING

Changes in the logging law to increase the number of logs processed (milled) in Solomon Islands to 50% have been enacted in this session of Parliament.

Before this could actually happen, though, loggers would have to be given time to increase their sawmill capacity, Prime Minister Solomon Mamaloni said in answer to a question by LINK recently. At present, 20% of all trees cut must be milled in Solomon Islands. Mr. Mamaloni added that the ultimate aim of his government was to ban all exports of unprocessed logs, although he could not say when this would be achieved.

In addition, said the Prime Minister, a thorough survey of Solomon Island forest resources and a system of replanting should be undertaken as a first step towards conservation, "otherwise our country could become a desert," he said.

He stated that, in future agreements with logging companies, he would eventually like to see landowners being partners in business, not just receiving royalty payments. In addition, he said one way of limiting logging generally would be to allow only one company to operate on each major island rather than the two or three currently permitted.

Mr. Mamaloni explained that one of the government's aims was to reduce Solomon Island's dependence on logging as a major source of revenue. He said he would be encouraging other forms of development in the commercial sector, like agriculture, fishing and local manufacturing, in order to compensate.

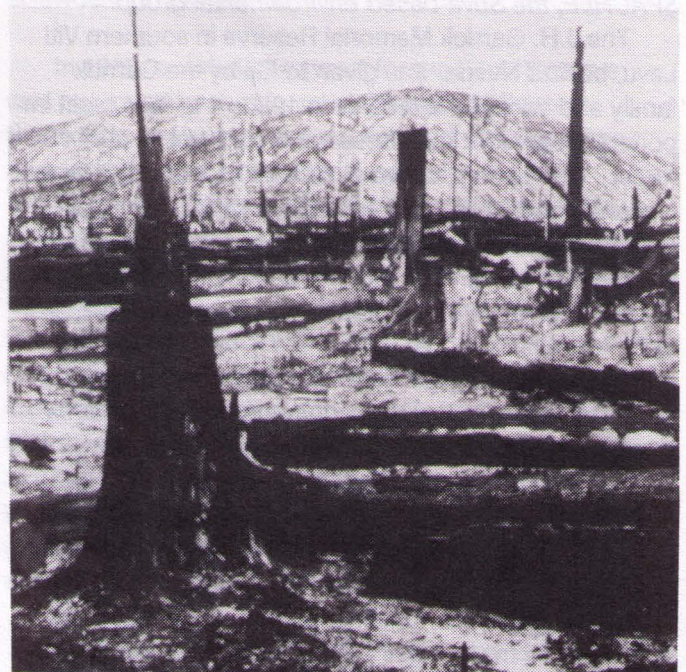


PHOTO: SPREP

FRANCE TESTS #111

France exploded its 111th nuclear device in the South Pacific on November 28th, 1989, at Fangataufa atoll. The yield of this test, probably on the 100 kiloton range, was to have been the largest of the series of eight underground tests carried out in 1989. Monitoring of the French testing is carried out by the New Zealand Department of Scientific and Industrial Research at an observation post in Rarotonga.

France plans to continue testing in Polynesia with a series of six tests in 1990 despite local protests and a UN General Assembly Resolution passed in November calling for an end to nuclear tests in the Pacific. The New Zealand Herald (October 30, 1989) quoted French Defence Minister Chevenement speaking in Tahiti as describing nuclear weapons as "an essential pillar" of French national defence.

France continues to ignore the protests of the elected territorial government of "French" Polynesia. Jacqui Drollet, Tahitian Minister of Health, Environment, and Scientific Research has called for an end to the tests and challenged Paris to release health statistics on the effects of testing in Polynesia. Drollet told Greenpeace November 1, 1989, "The time has come for us to speak our minds and not keep quiet for the money of those who send the bombs.. to bring our voice to the world that there are people in French Polynesia who don't accept the tests."

AMNESTY FOR KANAKY

The Monitoring Committee set up by the French Government to assess the progress of the Matignon Peace Accords in New Caledonia met for the first time in Paris in October. The major question at the talks was an extension of the amnesty for crimes related to New Caledonia's political traumas of recent years. It was agreed that the amnesty granted under last November's referendum on the Matignon Accords be extended to cover crimes involving loss of life.

Covered by this general amnesty are those involved in the killings of four gendarmes at Ouvea Island in April 1988, of two gendarmes killed in 1987 in the Kone region, of a European youth killed at Thio in 1987, of Kanak leaders Eloi Machoro and Marcel Nonnaro killed in 1985, of Yves Tual, a European youth killed in 1985 and independence leader Pierre Declercq, killed in 1981.

A bill to amend the amnesty article of the law put to referendum last year was expected to be passed by the end of the 1989 session of the National Assembly. The acceptance of the general amnesty is seen as a major concession by RPCR leader Jacques Lafleur [From Pacific Report, October 1989].

SOLOMON ISLANDS ELECTS FIRST WOMAN MP

In the by-election held last May 24th to fill the vacancy in the Northeast Guadalcanal constituency Solomon Island voters elected Hilda Kari as the first woman to sit in the national parliament. Kari was President of the Solomon Islands National Council of Women and a senior administrative officer in the Ministry of Health. Her election gave the governing Peoples Alliance Party 22 of the 38 seats in Parliament.

In an interview with the Solomon Star Kari emphasized the importance of electing more women MP's saying, "Men cannot see the problems women encounter everyday." Kari stressed the need for improved water supplies to reduce the burden on village women who often must carry water great distances, as well as the need for improved accommodation for women who take produce to market in Honiara. Kari also called for a halt to large scale logging in her constituency. In an interview with Solomon Islands Development Trust's LINK Kari criticised Hyundai's logging operations on Guadalcanal and called for replacing big operations with small scale forestry projects.

WESTERN SAMOA CELEBRATES 50 YEARS OF MALIETOA REIGN

A national celebration was held on January 4, 1990 to mark 50 years of service by the Head of State, Malietoa Tanumafili II and coincided with his 77th birthday. In 1940, the Head of State succeeded to the Paramount Title of Malietoa, one of the four highest in Samoa. In the same year, he was appointed a "Fautua" or advisor during the New Zealand Administration. Malietoa became Joint Head of State with Tupua Tamasese Mea'ole when Samoa gained independence in 1962. When Tupua Tamasese Mea'ole died in April 1963, Malietoa Tanumafili II continued as the sole Head of State for life [From 'Pacific News Briefs', Samoa News, October 31, 1989.]



PHOTO: PACIFIC ISLANDS MONTHLY

Booming industry: a Fiji garment industry operating in a tax-free zone.

THE GARMENT INDUSTRY IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC

BY RANDALL GARRISON

At the end of the day outside Nadi one can see crowds of women waiting at bus stops returning home from work in the garment factories of Fiji. On Yap there are now more than 400 young Sri Lankan women living in dormitories while working in garment factories. In both cases one has to stop and wonder why? Why has the garment industry been the new growth industry of the Pacific?

Certainly the domestic markets of individual islands or, for that matter all the Pacific Islands together, are too small to support a large-scale, indigenous garment industry. The islands are located far from potential markets. All the necessary raw materials must be imported, and even most of the work force in the case of Micronesia. Yet, the Pacific garment industry has grown very rapidly from a slow start in the early 1980's.

Now Fiji, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI), the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Tonga, Western Samoa, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and Tuvalu all export garments. Most of the production takes place in Fiji and Micronesia where more than ten thousand workers are employed in garment factories which often employ 200 to 700 workers each. In the rest of the Pacific the industry is still primarily small scale, locally-owned and employs a local work force.

The Fijian garment industry now generates over F\$12 million in exports annually. Over the next ten years Fiji's garment industry expects to ship exports worth more than F\$300 million and to employ as many as 25,000 employees, almost all local women. While much of the garment industry in Fiji is locally-owned, there have been some large foreign investments. These in-

clude Farah Manufacturing of Australia which relocated its entire cut make and trim operation from Hong Kong to Fiji in 1986.

Other garment manufacturers from Hong Kong, Taiwan and Korea began to relocate a portion of their production to Micronesia in the early 1980's. In the CNMI more than a dozen factories are now operating with a work force primarily recruited from the Philippines and Thailand. Immigrant workers outnumber local garment workers by five to one. Brand names like Christian Dior, Pringle of Scotland, and Outlander are now being produced on Saipan.

Yap surely must seem among the least likely places in the world to find a garment industry. Yet in July of 1989 250 Sri Lankan women arrived in Yap to work in the Federated States of Micronesia's first garment factory. By the end of July more than 400 Sri Lankan and 100 Yapese women were to be employed at the Kingtex factory producing turtlenecks for export to the US under the "Daniel Caron" label.

The same investors who financed Kingtex have another Sri Lanka-Taiwan joint venture on line for Pohnpei, this time to produce knit garments for export to US. The proposed Tri-Star factory received approval from the Pohnpei State Foreign Investment Board on December 14th. Not only will the raw materials and most of the workers be imported, but even the \$2 million plant will be pre-fabricated and shipped in. It will employ 200 to 250 local workers and as many as 800 Sri Lankan women. The women will live in dormitories near the site as they do on Yap.

Of all the reasons for the garment industry boom in Pacific, access to markets in the US and Australia and New Zealand has probably been a critical factor. So have the low wages and the virtual non-existence of labour standards legislation. Added to these are the incentives Pacific island governments have offered in the attempt to attract investment that will create wage employment.

In Micronesia it is the signing of Compacts of Free Association with the former Trust Territories that has provided special access to US markets. Once the Compacts were approved CNMI, FSM and the Marshall Islands all came under the provisions for "insular possessions of the US". This makes garment imports exempt from US quotas, though not duties.

Duty-free access to New Zealand and Australia is available to garment makers in the Pacific islands under the South Pacific Regional Trade and Economic Cooperation Agreement (SPARTECA). Forum countries may export garments to NZ or Australia so long as they have 50% local content. Farah moved its cut make and trim activity to Fiji from Hong Kong specifically to take advantage of access to the Australian market under SPARTECA. Australia has imposed quotas to provide some protection to its domestic garment industry, but NZ has announced that all import licensing for clothing will end by 1992.

The garment industry is labour intensive and therefore very sensitive to labour costs. The low wages and lax labour standards legislation make the Pacific islands look attractive. Usually there is no minimum wage legislation and until recently there were no unions to represent workers. Workers often work long hours with no overtime pay, no holiday pay, and no sick leave. And women, always the vast majority of the workers in the garment industry, have very few alternative sources of wage employment in the Pacific islands.

Wages in the Fiji garment industry run from F\$20 to F\$60 a week, with most in \$25-\$30 per week range, less than \$0.65 per hour in Canadian dollars. In NZ or Australia wages and benefit packages for garment workers would cost employers the equivalent of over F\$10 per hour.

In order to attract foreign investors governments have offered subsidies ranging from reduced taxes and provision of infrastructure to training of workers. In 1987 Fiji established Tax Free Zones offering a 13-year tax holiday, no withholding tax on interest and dividends paid abroad, complete freedom to repatriate capital and

profits, and duty free imports of equipment and raw materials. As well, Fiji is setting up a garment and textile training school in anticipation of the workforce doubling and the University of the South Pacific is proposing to offer a certificate in clothing design.

In Micronesia minimal taxes are collected, but the necessary infrastructure and social services have been heavily subsidized. On Yap Kingtex pays a 1% excise tax on imported raw materials and a 3% tax on gross receipts. Workers pay 6% income tax on incomes that average only US\$3,000 per year. Yet Yap Public Works cleared the land, levelled the site, built the access road and connected sewage and water lines, all at no cost to Kingtex. The new industrial park near Palikir on Pohnpei, where Tri-Star will be the first occupant, received subsidies of US\$500,000 each from the US Department of Commerce and the Pohnpei legislature.

The garment industry has grown rapidly but there are serious concerns about its impact on the host nations. In Fiji there has been a great deal of concern about working conditions in the industry. On July 24, 1989, The Australian reported that an inquiry into working conditions in the garment industry had been established after traces of drugs were found in breast milk of workers. It was alleged that workers were plied with amphetamines to make them work long hours. The inquiry also looked at complaints of workers being locked in factories for extended hours and prevented from taking breaks even to use the lavatory. There have been numerous complaints of workers being forced to work in overcrowded, poorly lighted, and poorly ventilated conditions.

In Micronesia there is the additional concern about the large scale importation of foreign workers, especially when there was no consultation with traditional leaders or the community before projects began. The concern is particularly high on Yap as the Island has only 45 sq miles and 7,000 residents. Now there will be 700 Sri Lankan young, single women living on what is still the most traditional of four FSM states in lifestyle and dress. There is concern about the net benefit of the project, especially in view of the tensions resulting from cultural differences and the resentments resulting from situations like the hiring of only 100 of the 273 Yapese who applied for jobs at Kingtex.

The government of CNMI imposed a freeze on construction of new garment factories in 1987. By that time the census showed that the 16,000 immigrants made up more than 40% of the total population of only 37,000. More than 2,800 of the immigrants were employed in the

garment industry. CNMI revenues for the garment industry now amount to over US\$8 million per year, the second largest source of income for the government after tourism. Yet the sudden expansion of the garment industry in 1987 still forced the government to impose an emergency freeze, as the strain on everything from water and sewers to health services and schools became apparent.

In the Epilogue to Micronesian Politics published in 1988 Sam McPhetres noted that "The main benefit to the CNMI is the jobs created in the various service industries such as transport, consumer goods, taxes, and licensing fees. The salaries earned by the workers, do not find much entry into the local economy since most of this is either deducted by the employer for room and board or repatriated to the family in the homeland."

Despite the poor working conditions and the questionable net benefit to island economies, the garment industry continues to grow. In FSM, Chuuk state has begun talks with the China International Trade and Investment Corporation. The proposed joint venture would see a \$2 million garment factory on Moen.

The garment industry has been defined as women's work and women's work nearly always remains the lowest paid. Women forced to live in dormitories while working in a foreign country far from home are particularly vulnerable to exploitation. There have been some efforts both by governments and workers to improve working conditions in the garment industry. It was only through the pressure created by the newly registered Fiji Association of Garment Workers, the first trade union in the industry, that the 1989 Fijian government inquiry into working conditions was undertaken.

Improving conditions will be a difficult task for island governments, even if they have the will to do so. Foreign-owned industries, artificially supported can disappear as fast as they appear. In 1986 the Fiji government suspended an attempt to impose a minimum wage order of \$0.90 an hour in the garment industry after manufacturers laid off more than 1500 workers and threatened plant closures. Perhaps influenced by this earlier experience, in May of 1989 the Government of Fiji decided not to prosecute 57 manufacturers found to be contravening the Factory Act. Instead they were given a grace period of up to 12 months to improve conditions.

There is increasing concern in both Australia and New Zealand about unfair competition. At the Sydney Apparel Expo on July 23rd the Fiji exhibit of tax free garments was picketed by trade unionists. Anna Booth,

Australian Clothing Trades Union Federal Secretary, said the Australian government should consider insertion of a social clause in the SPARTECA agreement to make payment of decent wages and provision of safe working conditions a condition for all duty free imports to Australia.

The NZ Textile and Garment Manufacturers Association has asked NZ government to take action against a wave of garment imports from Fiji, while some individual manufacturers have begun to move to Fiji because of the lower production costs and government assistance offered to new industries. In May of 1989 NZ textile workers demonstrated for restrictions on Fijian imports, expressing anger at the numerous plant closures resulting from the unfair competition from goods produced by lower paid island workers.

In Micronesia governments have begun to take action to slow the growth in the numbers of foreign workers. In the FSM Senate a bill has been proposed which would establish a fee of \$1,000 for each non-resident worker, \$1,000 for each dependent and a quota of no more than 50% of non-residents from any one country. In 1987 the CNMI passed a bill banning use of non-resident workers in a variety of clerical and retail positions. It set a limit of four years on foreign workers remaining in the Commonwealth and banned transfer of aliens from one job to another. It also established a US\$75 per worker fee, with the revenue to be used to train locals to replace them. Later in 1987 a 10% minimum local hire was imposed on the garment industry.

Pacific islanders need to give serious consideration to the impact of the garment industry on their economies and the social fabric of their nations. Lower costs in the islands combined with the special access to overseas markets should still make the industry viable. But governments must ask themselves if the tax revenues cover the costs, not only of the direct subsidies, but also of the provision of the necessary infrastructure and social services. They must ask whether the benefits derived from these subsidies and the special access shouldn't result first in a decent standard of living for the garment workers, rather than inflated profits for the investors.

More consideration needs to be given to alternatives like cooperatives, public ownership, or direct government investment in the garment industry. Perhaps operations run under alternative ownership arrangements would operate in a manner more in concert with local needs and would pursue priorities that would guarantee that more of the benefits derived from the industry would remain in the islands.

In the short run there is a need for action to ensure fair wages and safe and humane working conditions for garment workers. Both trade union action in the Pacific and action by consumers and trade unionists in other nations can help. Development should mean more than integrating women workers in the Pacific into the world economic system on the lowest rung of the economic ladder.

NOTE ON SOURCES: Thanks to JK Report on Micronesia, DAVUI and Fiji Voice from Australia, and business sections of Pacific Islands Monthly, Pacific Magazine, and Islands Business whose coverage of garment industry provided the material on which this article is based.

PACIFIC NETWORKING CONFERENCE

APRIL 6,7 and 8, 1990

PLACE: Crescent Beach, B.C. (near Vancouver)

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SEI!

POPULAR THEATRE IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS

The Solomon Islands Development Trust (SIDT) is a local NGO which has adopted innovative development outreach programs. Techniques include use of comics in Pidjin English and use of popular theatre as part of development workshops. The following is an edited version of an article from the 1989 mid-year report of SIDT.

By 1988 it became clear that village-level development workshops required a fresh approach. A theatre group, SEI! was created. Young people touring with SIDT mobile teams acted out in dynamic form the more serious environmental, social, and cultural problems village people were suffering. In a few months time the SEI! theatre group visited dozens of villages on Guadalcanal and Temotu province.

More than 8,000 villagers were entertained, informed, and moved by performances of SEI! The Canadian High Commission's **Canada Fund** as well as the Canadian volunteer group **CUSO** have been the major contributors to the SEI! outreach program.

SEI!'s work centred on nutrition, logging, land use and other stories villagers were concerned with. SEI! members have been told over and over again that while development workshops are good, people understand better when theatre is used at the same time. Villagers grasp quickly and correctly the basic drama message.

Many times villagers are asked to make long term decisions concerning their garden land, reefs, and natural resources. Without adequate and timely information their decisions are oftenshort termed and hurtful to future generations. Once they have both sides of a story, understand both the negatives and the positives, their decisions are in line with the long term benefits for the majority of their clan. Reef Islanders for instance hotly debated whether to have an airstrip or not. SEI!'s performance tipped the scale towards land preservation.

SPEAKING OF GARMENTS

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□ BOOK REVIEW

Poisoned Arrows **An Investigative Journey through Indonesia**

George Monbiot

Michael Joseph, publisher

Cost - about \$30, hardback, 16pp b&w photos

Reviewed by Jeremy Smithers and reprinted from
TAPOL Bulletin No. 93, June 1989.

[Penguin Canada is due to release *Poisoned Arrows*
in paperback in April 1990 - editor].

The sub-title of this book, "An Investigative Journey Through Indonesia", is misleading. It is not Indonesia George Monbiot and photographer Adrian Arbib went to investigate, but West Papua. And West Papua is not Indonesia. If you have any doubts about that, this book will dispel them. There are already several good books which show how Indonesia, with the tacit approval of western governments, is destroying West Papua and its people. But these are based largely on the erratic flow of information coming out of the country under very difficult circumstances. No one else has been there with the specific aim of bringing back first-hand accounts of how transmigration, logging, military occupation and general 'Indonesianization' are affecting West Papua. George Monbiot has done us a valuable service by making the effort, and what he reports is at least as alarming as anything I have heard so far.

And it certainly was a tremendous effort. Indonesia has a lot to hide in West Papua, and the authorities allow visitors to see only a handful of places there. George and Adrian had to impersonate development consultants to reach transmigration sites in West Papua; they had to bluff their way past local policemen demanding to see their non-existent travel passes; and they even stole a sheet of headed notepaper from a top official in Jakarta and faked their own general travel pass. They took a considerable risk in doing this. In some of the more remote areas with trigger-happy army garrisons, they might have been killed had they been found out. No one undertaking such a journey in Indonesia should forget that six journalists were deliberately killed by Indonesian troops in East Timor in 1975.

The terrain proved almost as big an obstacle to their investigation. Covered in tropical rainforest, and divided by a huge mountain range gouged out by impossible fast rivers, West Papua is one of the most inhospitable places on earth. The West Papuans have adapted themselves well to this environment, but for George and Adrian, an epic journey from the mountains of the Baliem Valley to the swamps of the Asmat, starved of nutritious food and plagued by tropical sores, was al-

most unendurable. Anyone who has been to West Papua will understand that they were not exaggerating.

But the discomfort of their travels didn't stop them trying to answer every question about conditions in West Papua that occurred to them. They managed to reach Mindiptanah, and confirmed that the threat of army operations and incoming transmigrants has indeed driven thousands of refugees over the border into Papua New Guinea, though there was a lot of fear stoked up by OPM guerillas as well.

Not content with what they discovered in Mindiptanah, George and Adrian took the risk of trying to contact the OPM in Jayapura, always watched by military officials. They paint a depressing picture of the independence movement which, from their discussions with dozens of people, is evidently still looked to by most West Papuans as their main hope for independence from Indonesian rule. Indeed, in this book everything West Papuan the Indonesians touch seems to be destroyed, as is so often the case when outsiders occupy a country they have little respect for and wish merely to exploit for whatever riches it will produce.

And yet the riches are illusory, as George and Adrian discover when they see the transmigration sites near Merauke. Several days away from the nearest town, the transmigrants are starving, their crops washed away, dried out or consumed by a climate they don't understand. For, as George notes in the book, just about the only thing that will grow in rainforest soils is rainforest, something the West Papuans probably discovered several thousand years ago. But this isn't stopping Indonesia from plundering the timber of the Asmat forest, callously wiping out a fragile society as they go. George Monbiot writes that he set out doubting the terrible reports from human rights groups of what's happening in West Papua, only to discover that it is worse than he'd heard.

This is a readable book, combining the necessarily grim subject matter with a light-hearted account of the journey itself. On one memorable occasion, George is convinced he has been fatally stung by native wasps, and runs panicking into the nearest village babbling - only mixing up his Indonesian nouns that he's been attacked by a swarm of watermelons. This is by no means a comprehensive account of the situation in West Papua. It is as much a travel book as an expose of human rights violations. As such though, it will entertain you, it will sadden you, but most of all, it will make you feel very angry.

RESOURCES

BOOKS

Tahiti-Polynesia Handbook

Author: David Stanley, 275 pp, US\$9.95 (US\$12 postpaid)

Hawaii Handbook

Author: J.D. Bisignani, 788 pp, US\$15.95 (US\$18.95 postpaid)

Both from MOON PUBLICATIONS, INC, 722 Wall St., Chico, CA 95928, USA

MOON PUBLICATIONS does it again with these two travel guides, all chock full of good, current and sensitive information for travellers. Background information on history, culture and customs as well as tips on how to get there, where to stay and what to see and eat.

The South Pacific

Author: Ron Crocombe, 277 pp, (5th edition), 1989, Institute of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific, Box 1168, Suva, Fiji.

Extensively revised and updated, this title is a good basic introduction to the Pacific. Available from: Institute of Pacific Studies, USP for F\$10 per copy in the islands, US\$12 elsewhere, \$3 postage and handling or The Polynesian Bookshop, 283 Karangahape Rd, Auckland, NZ or The Book Bin, 2305 NW Munroe, Corvallis, OR 97330, USA.

Economic Development in Seven Pacific Island Countries

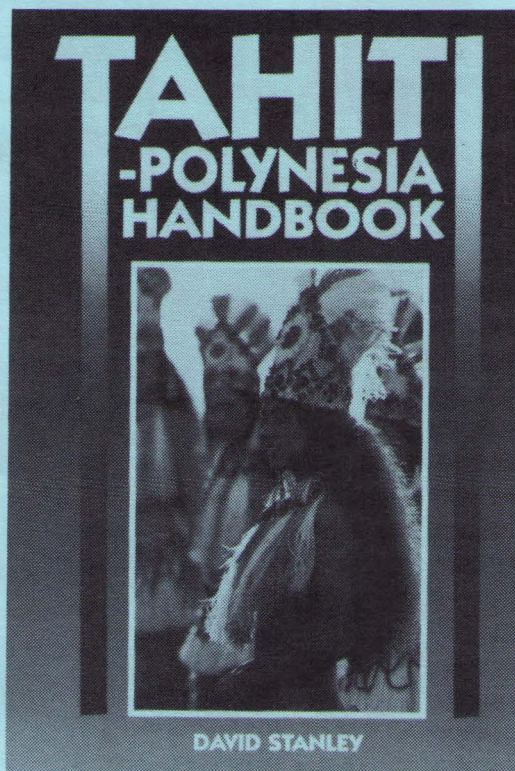
Author: Christopher Browne, 218 pp, 1989, IMF Publications, 700 19th St NW, Washington, DC 20431, USA. US\$18.00 ISBN: 1-55775-035-1.

A factual, comprehensive overview of economic development in Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Kiribati, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Western Samoa and Tonga.

NEWSLETTERS

The Paper Crane

A newsletter set up for networking among youth peace groups across Canada. For more information write: National Youth Peace Network, 555 Bloor St. W., Suite 5, Toronto, ON M5S 1Y6, CANADA.



AUDIO VISUALS

Niuklia Fri Pasifik (A Nuclear Free Pacific)

55 min, available in both PAL and NTSC from the New Zealand Film commission. Produced by Pacific Stories Partnership in association with Channel 4, the Short Film Fund of the NZ Film Commission and Television NZ Independent Production.

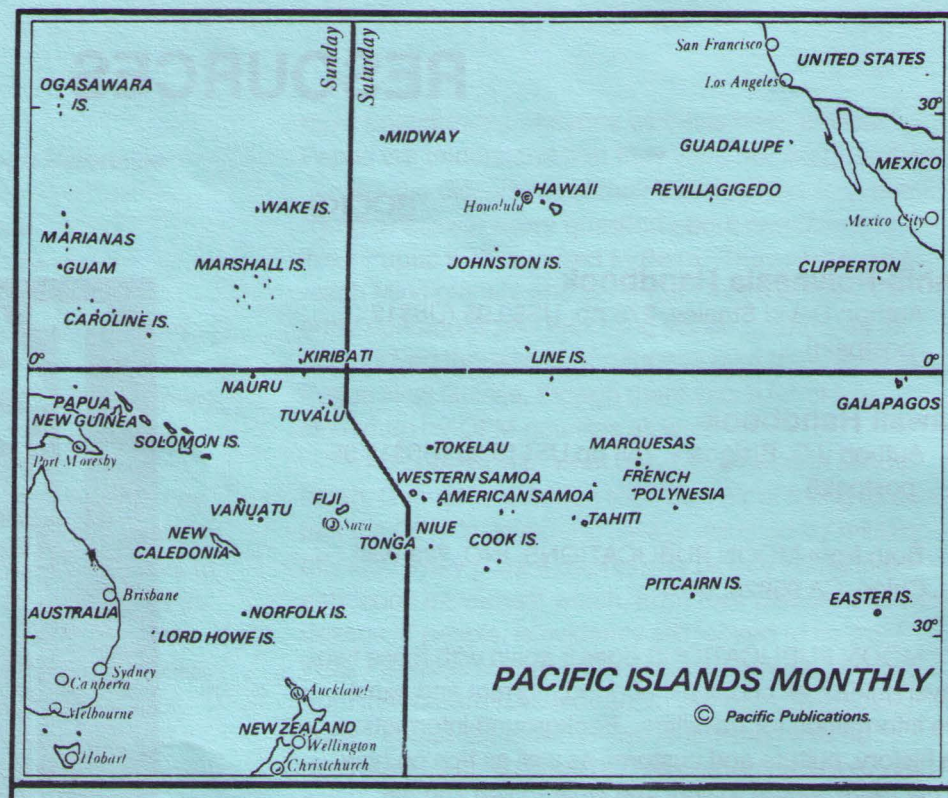
An excellent documentation of the "growth of the anti-nuclear sentiment in the South Pacific region leading to the 1985 Rarotonga Treaty which created a nuclear free zone in the Pacific".

CATALOGUES

Moving Images of the Pacific

The Center for Pacific Island Studies, University of Hawaii at Manoa, 1890 East-West Rd., Moore Hall 215, Honolulu, HI 96822, USA.

An excellent up-to-date and highly accessible catalogue of audio-visuals about the Pacific islands. Gives formats, sources and prices as well as a brief description of each listing.



CEREMONIAL CANOE LAUNCHING

Press release from Alele Museum, Majuro, Republic of the Marshall Islands.

On Saturday September 2, 1989 the first traditional ceremonial canoe-launching took place here since, most say, WWII. The ceremony was first blessed by Father Tom Marciniak, S.J., after which the two Lerooj or High Chieftess's of Majuro Atoll blessed the canoe by explaining canoe traditions and the importance of the canoe as a symbol of the Marshallese people.

They explained that the canoe binds the people with the sea surrounding them. They also wished good fishing and always safe voyages for the canoe and all it carries. There were more than fifteen women's groups who assisted the launching with songs and dances. Finally, all women while singing and chanting laid palm fronds in a row from the canoe to the water and while carrying the canoe to its new home, chanted "bwil im nur, oliojet tutu" ("let's launch our canoe with all our energy to as-

sure it safely reaches the water").

Once the canoe hit the water the women threw one of the builders into the water, assuring both canoe and builder will always be one. The project, called Waan Aelon Kein (Canoes of the Islands), was sponsored by the Alele Museum. Dennis Alessio, a boatbuilder who specializes in traditional wooden boatbuilding, was project manager. Jinadde Leon, the master canoe-builder from Jalwoj (Jaluit) Atoll came to Majuro and helped Dennis throughout the construction of the tipnol (sailing outrigger).

After the canoe was launched, Reverend Kanki Amlej blessed the feast served by the women's groups. After which the sailing outrigger was sailed for the first time. She sailed with the speed and smoothness derived from more than 2500 years of fine-tuning sailing canoes.

Know someone who would be interested in TOK BLONG SPPF? Send us his/her name, address and interest in the Pacific Islands 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 Street, Victoria, B.C., CANADA V8W 1J6.