

Tok Blong SPPF

A Quarterly of News and Views on the Pacific Islands

NOVEMBER 1992, #41

VICTORIA, B.C., CANADA



Photo by Giff Johnson

Youth to Youth in Health: Ambassadors for health in the Marshall Islands

Inside

A l'intérieur

YOUTH TALK / LA PAROLE AUX JEUNES

Featuring...Interviews with youth from Fiji, Kanaky,
and Aotearoa
...Youth promoting health in the Marshalls
...Youth survey in the Cook Islands
...Thoughts from a young West Papuan
woman in exile

En vedette...Des entrevues auprès des jeunes de Fidji,
de Kanaky et d'Aotearoa
...Les jeunes impliqués dans la promotion de la
santé aux Iles Marshall
...Un sondage jeunesse aux Iles Cook
...Des réflexions d'une jeune femme exilée
de la Papouasie occidentale

About this journal...

TOK BLONG SPPF is pidgin, a language used in many parts of the Pacific. An equivalent expression in English might be "news from SPPF".

TOK BLONG SPPF is published four times per year in English by the South Pacific Peoples Foundation of Canada. SPPF gratefully acknowledges financial support for the publication from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA).

SPPF's major aim is to promote awareness of development, social justice, environment, health and other issues of importance to the peoples of the South Pacific. Through this journal, SPPF hopes to provide Canadians and others 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 journal, 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 or of CIDA.

TOK BLONG SPPF (ISSN: 0828-9670) is available through a minimum donation to SPPF of \$15/yr for students, \$25/yr for individuals, and \$40/yr for organizations. **Recipients having non-Canadian addresses should remit \$US15, 25, or 40 as appropriate.** For further information about Tok Blong SPPF, membership in SPPF or other SPPF activities, contact: SPPF, 415-620 View St, Victoria, B.C. V8W 1J6, CANADA. Tel: 604-381-4131 Fax 604-721-0409 or 604-388-5258. sppf@inet sppf@web.apc.org
Ed: S. Wulff, Asst Ed: M. Argue

SPPF Update

Becoming a membership organisation...

For years SPPF has had a strong but informal base of supporters and volunteers made up of people who actively work on Pacific issues, who work, study and travel in the Pacific, or who want to keep abreast of events in the region. Together they form the base that we at SPPF value very much.

In a legal sense though, the membership that is accountable for the registered society that SPPF is, has been a very small one, one that consists of past and present Board members and former staff. Over the past year the present SPPF Board of Directors has been looking at the question of membership and has now made the decision to move to a broadly based membership organisation. That means an organisation where the members commit to supporting the aims and objectives of SPPF, make an commitment to financially support the work of SPPF, have the right to receive annual reports of the activities and financial workings of the organisation, and have the opportunity to elect the Board of Directors. Because SPPF is a Canadian incorporated society, membership at this point will be limited to Canadian citizens no matter where they reside and to residents of Canada. At the same time, organizations within Canada and individuals and organisations outside its borders are most certainly welcome to be SPPF supporters and to subscribe to *Tok Blong SPPF*. The restriction on membership may change in the future. We would be pleased to hear from you regarding this move to formal membership and as always, we welcome input from all our readers.

This mailing of *Tok Blong SPPF* contains a membership application. We would strongly like to encourage people to become members. A solid membership would strengthen our voice as we strive to bring Pacific issues to the forefront where they will receive the attention they merit, attention which usually eludes them. Rather than stating a strict membership fee the Board of Directors decided to request a minimum donation, the schedule for which is on the membership application. If you have donated within the last six months, we encourage you to become members by sending a completed application form and whatever remaining donation, if any, is required to be eligible for membership. For people in this group we have enclosed a letter with their copy of Tok Blong.

Since the last issue of the journal, we have hosted 7 visitors from the South Pacific. From Papua New Guinea came Peti Lafanama of MELSOL and Chris Kia Aina from the Melanesian Environment Foundation; from Vanuatu, Jacob Sam; from the Solomon Islands, Patrick Kekea; and from Fiji, film makers, Dr. Shaista Shameem and Peter Prasad. The first 5 travelled to Canada under the sponsorship of CUSO, the Canadian international development organisation, and SPPF arranged further in-country workshops and networking opportunities for them. Chris Kia attended the Indigenous Youth Conference in Saskatchewan as a guest of CUSO and in B.C. networked with several environmental groups, one of whom took him on a hike into the Walbran, a valley of old growth forest on Vancouver Island which is a point of conflict in the forestry debate in British Columbia. Shameem and Prasad collaborated with Sam and Kekea to do several public presentations on the topic of popular theatre as a tool for change on Vancouver Island, and Kekea and Sam had the good fortune to meet up with the Puppets Against AIDS popular theatre group from South Africa at the Victoria Fringe Festival. Through many meetings, media work and presentations, both them and the Canadians whom they met went away full of ideas, experiences and a better understanding of each other's place.

Margaret Argue at SPPF



In this issue

Given the rapidity of change in the Pacific in the decades of the 60s through the 90s, we thought that we would give the youth of the Pacific Islands a voice in this issue of ***Tok Blong SPPF***. The many changes brought about by urbanization, by movement away from subsistence to market economies, by rapidly increasing populations and changing lifestyles and so on are having a powerful impact on this generation. In the early years after the islands gained their independence, positive aspirations abounded. Now things are less positive. On the cover of Issue #36/37 of ***Youth Link***, a regional newsletter published at the South Pacific Commission, we read "Mirror, mirror on the wall, is there a future for me at all?" The youth speaking in this issue of ***Tok Blong*** are more positive but they are addressing the same issues - unemployment, violence and abuse, peer pressure, political change, a clean environment - as well as their hopes for the future and their perspective on the Pacific and their own lives.



Mirror, mirror on the wall,
is there a future for me at all?

C'est avec un grand plaisir que le projet Canada-Pacifique a accepté de produire ce numéro bilingue de Tok Blong SPPF sur la jeunesse, et nous vous présentons dans ce numéro quelques extraits de ces entretiens entrepris par un équipe d'étudiant-e-s du département d'anthropologie de l'Université de Montréal. L'équipe s'est donné le nom de PUHI-HAU qui signifie 'Souffle de paix' en polynésien. Nous vous souhaitons autant de plaisir à les lire que nous avons eu à y participer.

Our readers will no doubt have noticed that this is a bilingual French English issue of ***Tok Blong***. We have worked together before with the ***PUHI-HAU*** team of the University of Montreal but this is our first bilingual issue, and we welcome the opportunity. The seed for this issue began to germinate when Dr. Donna Winslow, ***PUHI-HAU*** team leader and coordinator of Projet Canada-Pacifique, told us about the May 1992 Jeanne Sauvé Youth Foundation First International Conference. It was the ***PUHI-HAU*** team that interviewed delegates from Kanaky, Fiji and New Zealand at the conference, and then spent hours transcribing and translating those interviews for ***Tok Blong***. Thank you ***PUHI-HAU!***

Du 23 au 30 mai 1992, l'Université de Montréal accueillait 250 jeunes venus de 83 pays afin de participer à la Première Conférence Internationale des Jeunes Leaders organisée par la Fondation Jeanne Sauvé. Sous le thème "nationalisme et mondialisation", ces jeunes se sont retrouvés afin d'explorer et de discuter certains grands sujets de l'heure. Afin de créer un contexte stimulant à la discussion le projet Canada-Pacifique a organisé une exposition dont le titre était "La jeunesse: vers une culture mondiale?". Cette mise en situation représentait une ville internationale fictive où défilaient quelques-unes des problématiques touchant les jeunes à travers le monde. C'est dans ce contexte que nous avons interrogé, sur des sujets leur tenant à coeur, éducation, emploi, urbanisation, environnement, santé, et autres, des délégués de pays du Pacifique Sud: Fidji, Nouvelle-Zélande et Nouvelle-Calédonie.

We hope you enjoy reading this bilingual issue. For us at SPPF and ***PUHI-HAU***, it has been a pleasure to put it together.

Margaret Argue for SPPF et Donna Winslow, coordonnatrice, projet Canada-Pacifique, Département de Sociologie, Université d'Ottawa, 550 Cumberland, Ottawa, ON, K1N 6N5

Inside....	Page
Youth talk from Fiji - Marie Chan (bilingual interview)	...4
Youth promoting health in the Marshalls	...7
La Parole aux Jeunes - Géro Atchee et Iréné Poulawa	...10
Struggling for Independence for a Country I've Never Seen	...14
The Future Through Today's Eyes: Youth in the Cook Islands	...16
PNG Environmentalist Visits Canada	...18
Youth talk from Aotearoa - Tod Michael Muller (bilingual interview)	...19
Youth and Music: Can Music Rock Body and Soul?	...22
A Visit to PNG's East Sepik	...23
Women of the Pacific: Confronting the Challenge	...25
News from Pitcairn	...26
News Updates: Belau Election and Constitutional Amendment Proposal; East Timor Resistance Leader Captured; Toxic Soil to the Marshalls; New Caledonia: Kanak Training Scheme and Investment; Bougainville Update	...27
Book Review: France in the Pacific	...29
Resources	...30

YOUTH TALK from Fiji

Marie Chan is a 24 year old Fijian of Chinese descent. She has many interests, one of which is journalism. Since graduating from the University of the South Pacific, she has taught History and Languages at a high school in Suva. She was interviewed while attending the Young Leaders Conference in Montreal.

Puhi-hau: As a high school teacher you must be aware of some of the problems that young people face today.

Marie Chan: Yes, I see a lot of influences creeping in - Westernization for example. A lot of people try to be 'trendy'. Another thing is the drug situation. The greatest drug problem is alcoholism followed secondly by the use of marijuana. Some people grow it in their backyards and there are people who smoke drugs openly. In the schools, the problem is probably alcoholism and it means that a lot of people become delinquents. The alcohol problem is really bad because it leads to other serious drug problems, it leads to crime. Rape is getting to be a big issue too. There's some thefts, there's some car break-ins, - we're becoming very westernized now, we know how to use guns, we know how to break into shops and how to kill people because we've seen it in films and videos and that's the influence of western culture. But there's a serious awareness and anti-drug campaign going on in schools and communities. The major problem might be an adult racist kind of view point. Basically, the youth don't much care for racial distinctions. But when people reach the age of 30-35, they begin to be conscious of what this racism is all about and it's really fragmenting our country. I think racism was underlying the old British colonial system and it just continued. Everyone took it as a fact of life, took it for granted. I wouldn't say racism is overt, like the Rodney



Photo: Bendit Tailleur

Marie Chan from Fiji

LA PAROLE AUX JEUNES de Fidji

Marie Chan, fidjienne d'origine chinoise âgée de 24 ans, a participé à la Première Conférence Internationale des Jeunes Leaders à titre indépendant. Parmi ses nombreux intérêts on compte le journalisme, ainsi que l'histoire et les langues. Elle enseigne ces deux dernières dans une école secondaire de la ville de Suva, où elle a terminé ses études à l'Université du Pacifique Sud.

Puhi-hau: En tant qu'enseignante vous devez être au courant des problèmes auxquels les jeunes font face aujourd'hui.

Marie Chan: Oui, je vois beaucoup d'influences qui s'infiltrent, l'occidentalisation par exemple. Bien des gens essaient d'être à la mode, d'être "in". La situation avec la drogue c'est autre chose. Le plus grand problème de drogue est l'alcoolisme, suivi par la consommation de marijuana. A l'école le gros problème est probablement l'alcoolisme et ça veut dire que bien des gens deviennent délinquants. Le problème d'alcool est vraiment grave parce qu'il mène à d'autres sérieux problèmes de drogue, il mène au crime. Le viol devient un gros sujet aussi. Il y a des vols, des voitures forcées - on est en train de devenir très occidentalisés maintenant, on sait se servir de fusils, on sait comment entrer par effraction dans des magasins et comment tuer des gens parce qu'on l'a vu dans des films et des vidéos, et c'est ça l'influence de la culture occidentale. Mais il y a une sérieuse campagne de prise de conscience et une campagne anti-drogue qui cible les écoles et les communautés.

Peut-être le problème majeur est-il une sorte de point de vue raciste des adultes. La jeunesse, fondamentalement, n'a pas le goût des distinctions raciales et tout ça, mais quand on arrive à un certain âge, disons trente ou trente-cinq, on commence à se rendre compte de ce qu'est le vraiment le racisme, et c'est en train de fragmenter notre pays. Je crois que le racisme était sous-jacent à l'ancien système colonial britannique et il n'a fait que continuer. Tout le monde le prenait comme une réalité de la vie, on le prenait pour acquis. Je ne dirais pas que c'est du racisme déclaré, non-déguisé, comme dans le cas Rodney King ou un autre du même genre. À Fidji nous avons une situation appelée coexistence. Par contre, les fidjiens tendent à avoir un niveau de vie plus bas comparé aux indiens, principalement parce que les indiens contrôlent le commerce. Dans ce sens beaucoup d'indiens ont les moyens d'avoir deux voitures, des télévisions et un bel immeuble tandis que la dimension moyenne d'une maisonnée fidjienne serait 10 pieds par 10 pieds et ça accommoder 6 personnes. Dans certains petits villages c'est pas mal ça, dans des centres urbains ça peut être plus grand.

King case or something like that. In Fiji we have a situation called coexistence. However, the Fijians tend to have a lower standard of living compared to the Indians mainly because the Indians control the business. From that standard many Indians can afford two cars and television sets and a nice building whereas the average size of a Fijian house would be 10 feet by 10 feet and will house 6 people; and in some of the small villages that's the basic size; in urban centres, houses or apartments might be bigger.

PH: What you've said about coexistence reminds us of Canada's two solitudes. We haven't really talked about integration that much. Living in the same space, side by side, but not really knowing what's happening on the other side of the boundary. Do the people live in different neighbourhoods, a Fijian neighborhood, an Indian neighborhood?

Chan: In the urban centres it's very much integrated. There are some villages which are only Fijian and some villages which are only Indian, but those are few and far between. A lot of people, about 80 or 90%, speak three languages - Fijian, Hindustani, and English. I come from a metropolitan area so I speak only one language. English is the language of education but Fijian and Hindustani are also taught.

PH: What is the impact of the return of customary rule on youngsters and women?

Chan: That's a very deep question! Communalism, basically, is still the way we live. In terms of women, women have been crying out a lot to have more participation, and that's really happening. We have several women's organizations, particularly the Fiji Women's Rights Movement. They've been very strong and vocal about issues like the family, human rights, child and sexual abuse.

Youth have to be empowered to do a lot of the things. One of the problems I felt was some of the youth are lethargic, they don't want to do things. It seems that everybody at this conference has some qualification or distinction and they're only 23 or 24. We have a strong youth movement but I think a lot of the people there are more into the 26-35 age range. A lot of the young ones (17-23 or so) are doing positive work but I think a lot of them still have commitments to the family first and to the youth second.

PH: Can you talk to us about the problem of young people in relation to land and fishing rights?

Chan: A lot of youth don't have problems with the land rights or fishing rights. It's the elders who run most of these things. If you want to fish in a particular area, you must ask the chief who's usually an elder. A lot of the young people have left the village settings to go to the urban area to find work and to be educated. They very rarely come back to the villages.

PH: Ce que vous dites à propos de la coexistence nous rappelle. On voit au Canada deux solitudes. Nous n'avons jamais beaucoup parlé d'intégration. Habitant dans le même espace, côte à côte, mais ne sachant pas vraiment ce qui se passe de l'autre côté. Y a-t-il des quartiers où ils habitent, un quartier fidjien, un quartier indien?

Chan: Dans les centres urbains c'est très intégré mais il existe des villages qui sont seulement fidjiens et des villages qui sont seulement indiens, mais ils sont rares. Bien des gens, environ 80 ou 90%, parlent trois langues: le fidjien, l'hindoustani, et l'anglais. Je viens d'une région métropolitaine alors je parle une seule langue. L'anglais est la langue d'enseignement, mais les langues vernaculaires comme le fidjien et l'hindoustani sont aussi enseignées.

PH: Quel est l'impact du retour du droit coutumier sur les jeunes et les femmes?

Chan: C'est une question très profonde ça! Le communalisme, au fond, est encore notre façon de vivre. Au niveau des femmes, elles se sont beaucoup écriées pour avoir plus de participation, et c'est vraiment en train d'arriver. Nous avons plusieurs organisations de femmes, en particulier le Mouvement Fidjien pour les Droits de la Femme. Elles ont été très fortes et très bruyantes sur des sujets comme la famille, les droits humains, l'abus des enfants et l'abus sexuel.

Les jeunes ont été habilités à faire beaucoup de choses. Un des problèmes que je ressentais était que certains jeunes sont léthargiques, ils ne veulent pas faire grand chose. A cette conférence, tout le monde a la distinction d'avoir travaillé ici et là, ils ont les compétences pour ci ou ça, et ils n'ont que 23 ou 24 ans. Nous avons un bon mouvement jeunesse mais je crois que bien des gens impliqués là-dedans sont plutôt dans l'échelle des 26 à 35 ans.

PH: Pouvez-vous nous parler des problèmes auxquels les jeunes font face en relation aux droits fonciers et aux droits de la mer?

Chan: Bien des jeunes n'ont pas de problème avec les droits agraires ou de pêche. C'est au fond les aînés qui sont en charge de la plupart de ces choses. Si vous voulez aller pêcher à un endroit particulier, vous devez demander au chef, qui est habituellement un aîné. Beaucoup des jeunes gens ont quitté les villages pour aller trouver du travail en ville et s'instruire. Ils reviennent rarement aux villages.

PH: Quelles sont les possibilités économiques pour les jeunes qui décident de rester dans les villages?

Chan: C'est une question qui nous dérange depuis quelque temps parce qu'on essaie d'encourager les gens à retourner dans les villages. Le ministère du développement rural essaie activement d'amener des

PH: What are the economic possibilities for young people who decide to stay in the villages?

Chan: That's an issue that's been bothering us because we're trying to get people to go back to the villages. The Ministry of Rural Development has been trying actively to bring small business programmes to the villages, e.g. lobster fishing, that will keep the young people there. But I think the lure of bright lights, entertainment, etc. still draw people to go to the cities. I don't think people are too optimistic about staying in the village. They want to experience something of the urban settings. They might go back to visit occasionally but not to live.

PH: How do youth feel about environmental issues?

Chan: There's a lot of land areas which are still virgin forests. We want to develop those forests so that they can become more export oriented, and sell logs and wood chips to Japan, Malaysia, and Indonesia. That's relatively new though, and we're getting worried because it's an environmental issue as well. We do have environmental groups that feel very strongly about marine life because we're bordered by seas everywhere on the Pacific. We feel very strongly about nuclear weapons in our part of the Pacific. The other issue that we feel strongly about is driftnet fishing because we depend a lot on our ocean resources for our living.

We're very worried because it has been estimated that, about the year 2025, half the atolls in the Pacific would be under water because of a change of temperature which will mean a sea level rise. It means relocation of many people; and relocation is a nasty issue, because where are they going to go? Every habitable atoll and island is already occupied and some are overcrowded. We don't have a great percentage belonging to international groups like Greenpeace. We sympathize but we may not have the resources to join. But we do have strong environmental groups, like the University environmental group which is very active.

PH: You talked about an active youth and youth movement, and you also mentioned a certain lethargy with youth; is this different groups of young people or is it dependent upon the issue involved?

Chan: Let's say lethargy is my own view point. It's probably not representative of all the youths. They'd probably say, "Oh, we're very strong and dynamic!". I think motivation depends on the issue - some issues motivate youth, others don't. Some young people are trying to motivate other young people to become more aware of political issues, more aware of the things that unite or divide us. So I think the political and social changes as well as the economic changes in our country are concerning young people. And finally, there's some young people who are becoming very open, and beginning to understand their own small part in this large world.

programmes aux villages qui vont y garder les jeunes. Mais je crois que l'attrait des feux de la ville, des divertissements et des spectacles encouragent encore plus les gens à aller s'installer en ville. Il y a quelques programmes pour faire rester les jeunes chez eux: ils ont établi des petites entreprises, de pêche aux homards par exemple. Les gens ne voient pas d'un oeil trop optimiste l'idée de demeurer dans les villages. Ils veulent essayer quelque chose du paysage urbain. Ils peuvent retourner, à l'occasion, à leurs villages, mais pas pour rester.

PH: Comment les jeunes réagissent-ils aux questions environnementales?

Chan: On a encore plusieurs régions qui sont des forêts vierges. Nous voulons essayer de développer ces forêts pour qu'elles deviennent plus accessibles à l'exportation, et vendre ces billots et ces éclats de bois au Japon, à la Malaisie, et à l'Indonésie. Par contre, c'est assez nouveau et on commence à s'inquiéter parce que c'est aussi un problème écologique. Nous avons groupes environnementaux à qui la vie marine tient beaucoup à coeur, parce que nous sommes entourés de mers partout au Pacifique. Nous avons de fortes opinions aussi à propos des armes nucléaires dans notre coin du Pacifique. L'autre mobilisateur d'opinion publique est la pêche au filet parce que nous dépendons, pour vivre, sur nos ressources marines. Conséquemment nous sommes très inquiets; il a été estimé qu'à peu près en l'an 2025, la moitié des atolls dans le Pacifique seraient sous l'eau à cause du changement de température qui causera une hausse du niveau de la mer. Ça signifie la relocalisation de beaucoup de gens. La relocalisation de personnes est une méchante question, parce que où voulez-vous les mettre? Chaque autre île ou atoll est déjà surpeuplé. Nous n'avons pas un grand pourcentage de gens appartenant à des groupes internationaux comme Greenpeace. Nous avons beaucoup de sympathies mais n'avons peut-être pas les ressources pour nous joindre à eux. Mais nous avons de forts mouvements environnementalistes, comme celui de l'Université.

PH: Vous avez parlé d'un mouvement de jeunes actifs, et vous avez aussi mentionné une certaine léthargie chez les jeunes; faites-vous références à différents groupes de jeunes, ou cela dépend-il de l'intérêt en cause?

Chan: Disons que la léthargie est mon point de vue personnel. Je crois que ça dépend des questions et particulièrement de quelles sortes de questions motivent les gens. Certains jeunes essaient de motiver d'autres jeunes à devenir plus sensibles aux questions politiques, plus conscients des choses qui nous unissent ou nous divisent. Donc je pense que les changements politiques et sociaux, autant que les changements économiques dans notre pays, concernent les jeunes. Et pour terminer, il y a des jeunes qui commencent à comprendre leur petite part dans ce monde plus large dans lequel nous fonctionnons.

USING CULTURAL PRIDE AS A BASIS FOR PROMOTING HEALTH

Jodrikdrik Nan Jodrikdrik Ilo Ejmour (Youth to Youth in Health) is a Marshall Islands youth organisation that promotes cultural pride and action by young people on health and social problems. This article was prepared by members of Youth to Youth in Health.

"Thank you a hundred-fold for bringing your programme here. All the children to this day are singing your songs and talking about your skits and teachings. You really can never possible comprehend the extent of the success of Youth to Youth having come here. It really has boosted the youths' self-esteem and pride."

Response following youth to Youth in Health community health outreach visit to Ailinglaplap Atoll, August 1989.

A report prepared by independent consultants for the Asia Development Bank and Marshall Islands Government concluded in June 1992: "Quality of Life indicators...in the Marshall Islands show a declining health status. Increasing rates of diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, sexually transmitted diseases, tuberculosis, malnutrition, high suicide rate for teenage males, and high teenage pregnancy rate are negatively impacting on maternal health status..."

With 70 per cent of the 50,000 population under 25 years of age, young people are bearing the burden of these serious - but preventable - health and social problems. In the mid-1980s the Marshall Islands family planning programme launched its first concentrated efforts to provide birth control, counseling and health services to the population. But in 1984 and 1985, when the programme was born, few clients sought its services. Family planning staff realized that the key to the problem was the involvement of young people. In 1986, Youth to Youth in Health was established as the outreach promotion and education wing of family planning. Family planning clients leaped from a few hundred in 1984 and 1985 to more than 3,000 by the early 1990s - a statistic promotion provided by Youth to Youth in Health (YTYIH) staff and volunteers. YTYIH has grown steadily since 1986 and is now a chartered, non-profit organisation. It has a close working relationship with the Ministry of Health by way of a formal agreement signed in mid-1992 and is a major component of the Ministry's primary health care promotion programme.

Dr. Neal Palafox, the Ministry's long time director for preventive services, in 1991 said: "From a health standpoint we have been trying and trying for years to reach the youth and couldn't reach them in many ways until this youth group came by. Without any reservations it is one of the strongest parts of our health programme...They are our greatest ambassadors for health here in the Marshall Islands."

The Marshall Islands present unique logistical problems to any health programme. The two chains of low-lying coral atolls are scattered across about 500,000 square miles of ocean area. All told, the 1,000 island in the Marshalls comprise barely 70 square miles of dry land. About 70 percent of the population is crowded in two urban centre, Majuro (the capital) and Ebeye (the bedroom community for Marshallese who work at the U.S. missile range at Kwajalein). Marshall Islanders, though rapidly westernizing, have strongly maintained their traditions, language and clan-system of land tenure. This provides a unique cultural environment that cannot be ignored in developing effective health campaigns.

YTYIH believes that the key to improving deteriorating family health and tackling urgent social problems requires young people's involvement and action. To accomplish this, young people must take pride in their identity and their country. The YTYIH programme has a three-pronged approach that emphasizes cultural pride, knowledge of health, and ecumenical religious values and responsibility. Since 1986, YTYIH has provided a unique role model of young people who are proud of



Two Youth to Youth in Health staff lead young children in singing a health song on an outer island in the Marshalls.

Photo by Giff Johnson

their culture and taking action to improve health and social conditions in their islands. Youthful volunteers between the ages of 14-25 - high school students, college students and out-of-school youth - are the core of the YTYIH programme. YTYIH has gained widespread community acceptance and support because of the involvement of the families of youth members in the programme's activities. The community supports the aims of the programme because YTYIH has initiated an active programme that fits with the cultural norms of Marshallese society.

Youth Health Leadership Seminars

YTYIH trains youth between 14 and 25 as peer educators during summer Youth Health Leadership Seminars. Eleven seminars, training more than 200 Marshallese peer educators, have been conducted since 1986. These trained peer educators are the backbone of the programme, participating in health promotion programmes for elementary and high schools, church groups, parent-teacher association meetings and communities on isolated outer lying atolls, as well as staffing the family planning clinic.

The first week of the two-week Youth Health Leadership Seminar bombards the youth participants with information about problems and challenges within their community. Presentations are made by doctors, nurses and health educators, as well as business and church leaders. Films and slide shows are presented as part of the seminar. In addition, each morning and afternoon, the participants learn to sing many of YTYIH's health songs. The second week of the seminar is set aside for the participants to take this information and put it into health education materials for presentation to the community. The youth create skits, compose songs, draw posters, prepare slide presentations and produce other means for communicating health information. The group then puts on a program for their parents, instructors and friends at the conclusion of the seminar.

Dr. Salesi Katoanga, the World Health Organisation's maternal and child health/family planning consultant for the Pacific commented in July 1992 after participating as a trainer in a Youth Health Leadership Seminar: "This program is fantastic. It's one of a kind in the Pacific region."

The YTYIH programme, which is based in Majuro, is now focusing more of its efforts on youth living on rural outer islands. During the summer of 1992, the programme chose six atoll communities that YTYIH had previously visited, and with which it had established a strong relationship, to bring in youth to attend the seminar. Youth participants were chosen by the local health assistants in conjunction with youth organisations on their island to stimulate community participation from the very start of the programme.

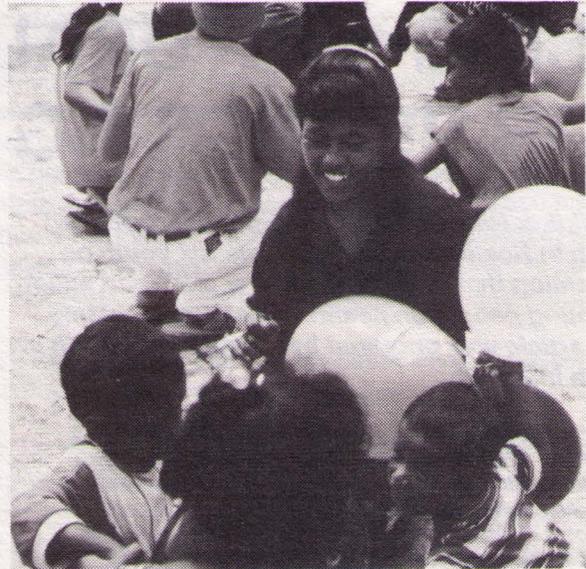


Photo by Giff Johnson

Health fairs that involve island children are one feature of YTYIH's outreach education program.

Outreach education programs

Though based in Majuro, YTYIH has contact with the remote outer atolls through periodic YTYIH team visits, visits by individual YTYIH staff in conjunction with Ministry of Health teams, and the new peer educator programme launched in 1992. YTYIH recognises that the rural outer atolls are beginning to develop many of the same problems as Majuro, and moreover the rapid migration of youth from the outer islands to Majuro and Ebeye is a major cause of over-population and concern to the community.

An August 1992 visit to Wotje Atoll provides an example of the remarkable energy of the youth peer educators and what the programme does. The outreach trip to Wotje was made at the request of the major, local council and the four health assistants on the atoll. The visit included a team of 50 peer educators and Ministry of Health staff. The outreach education visit to Wotje provided the 20 newly trained outer islands peer educators with practical experience in community health promotion work which will help them when they return to their home atolls. During the outreach visit to Wotje, the YTYIH members put on "health fairs" for the community and presented 'health/cultural shows' in the evenings. Music and dance are an integral part of the Marshall Islands custom and music is at the centre of every YTYIH programme. All of the performances of the health shows for communities on these two atolls involved special health presentations using songs, skits and slide shows. The presentations on teenage pregnancy, nutrition, cancer, hazards of smoking, alcohol abuse and family planning have a message that is as much for adults as it is for youth.

During the daytime, the youth put on health fairs for the communities, particularly young children. Health displays on a variety of health themes, health videos and slide shows were shown simultaneously in different



Photo by Gift Johnson

Youth to Youth in Health on Wotje, a remote outer atoll, screening residents for hypertension.

parts of the Wotje community centre. While the audio visuals were being shown, and youth and adult residents were looking at the health displays, other YTYIH members were singing with and teaching their health songs to children who had assembled for the programme outside the centre. The kids sang and danced with YTYIH and received promotional balloons, pencils and yoyos for taking part. When we leave the islands, the songs are alive with the children singing them promoting the messages of health and cultural identity. Meanwhile, as the live music was being played and involved the children, other YTYIH members had set up a station for hypertension screening where they were weighing and taking blood pressure of island residents. The YTYIH members log the names and blood pressures of each individual, referring those at risk to the local health assistant.

YTYIH presented a health/cultural show each evening on three inhabited islands in Wotje Atoll, during which the YTYIH members presented anywhere from five to ten of their original health/cultural dramas and skits, song-skits, traditional dances, contemporary island music and health songs. On Wotje more than 500 people - virtually the entire population on three different islands - participated in the YTYIH programmes. The communities poured out their welcome to YTYIH, providing dozens of baskets of local food each morning and evening, singing for the youth and participating whole heartedly in the activities. This implemented another goal of YTYIH, promoting and strengthening youth and community pride in Marshall Islands culture as a basis for taking action on health concerns.

Of equal importance is the impact these outer islands visits have on the YTYIH peer educators themselves. The majority of the peer educators are from Majuro, born and raised in the urban centre. For many of them, these trips are their first time outside of the

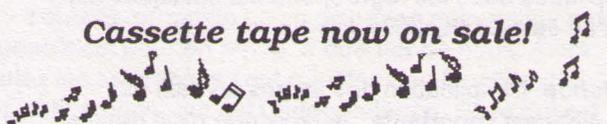
urban centres. YTYIH members have time to fish, hunt for lobsters and crabs, climb coconut trees to get coconuts for drinking, start fires using coconut husks and coconut shells as charcoal and cook island food.

In Majuro, YTYIH conducts health programmes several times each week on average for schools, health training programmes and conferences, churches and the community at large. YTYIH utilises a variety of promotional materials to get its message across to the community and to involve youth and the community in promoting health awareness and cultural pride. These include hats, key chains, pencils and pens, yoyos and posters, as well as videos of its programs for broadcast on local television and for community showings.

In August 1992, YTYIH's first cassette music tape was released. The tape was recorded in Hawaii when a group of 19 youth members visited as part of a cultural/educational exchange programme. The tape has 11 songs on it, many of them original compositions of the youth in the programme. Health songs focus on family planning and population, personal hygiene and primary health care. Other songs challenge youth to wake up and get involved. The entire tape is testimony to what young people in the Marshall Islands can do to face challenges in their country. The cassette tape is being sold throughout the Marshalls, having the two-fold effect of helping YTYIH raise funds for its ongoing activities and at the same time promoting health and cultural awareness.

Several years ago, Majuro Mayor Amatlain Kabua wrote to YTYIH following one of their programmes: *"On behalf of the council of Majuro, the staff of Majuro Atoll Local Government and myself, we would like to recognise and give out sincere appreciation for all your efforts and hard work in promoting health and culture throughout our community."*

Cassette tape now on sale!



**One of a kind island music by
Jodrikrik Nan Jodrikrik Ilo Ejmour
Youth to Youth in Health**

A great gift for all. Enjoy lively, upbeat and original music of the Marshall Islands. Catch the excitement of Youth to Youth in Health on a tape professionally recorded in Hawaii. Off-island orders send \$US12 per tape. Write: YTYIH at Box 672, Majuro, Marshall Islands, 96960.

All proceeds go to further youth activities in the Marshall Islands.

LA PAROLE AUX JEUNES de Kanaky

Géro Atchee, 2e secrétaire adjoint au sein du FLNKS et responsable, par intérim, de la section des jeunes, a participé à la Première Conférence Internationale des Jeunes Leaders. Il est marié et père d'une famille qui habite la région du grand Nouméa

Puhi-hau : Croyez-vous que les jeunes ont un rôle à jouer dans le processus d'indépendance ?

Géro Atchee : Ils ont déjà démontré leur volonté avec les événements de 1984 et 1988 et je crois que dans le cas de l'indépendance ils vont aussi jouer un grand rôle. Il faut qu'on arrive à trouver les moyens pour qu'ils continuent à trouver leur place dans le système des institutions pour être prêt au moment de l'indépendance.

C'est pour cela qu'on accorde une grande importance au niveau des sections de jeunes pour qu'ils soient informés par rapport aux projets et ce sur tous les plans sociaux. On a mis l'accent là-dessus pour ne pas que les jeunes se sentent abandonnés.

Aujourd'hui, les jeunes se réorganisent à travers le sport sur la Grande Terre comme sur les îles Loyauté. Ce qui fait que les jeunes sont pris à organiser les entraînements, à s'occuper aussi des plus petits. Ils sont aussi occupés avec les diverses associations qui se sont créées (culturelles, musicales). Ainsi, le nouveau mot d'ordre que nous avons lancé aux associations reconnues juridiquement, c'est précisément de profiter de leur statut pour bénéficier des stages de formation et des subventions pour des projets. Alors, tous les jeunes sont impliqués dans l'une ou l'autre de ces activités. En fait, c'est sur le terrain qu'on peut voir quelle est l'ampleur de cette mobilisation.

PH : Maintenant, les jeunes sont-ils autant impliqués dans les regroupements politiques ainsi qu'au sein du FLNKS ?

Atchee : L'implication des jeunes au sein du FLNKS est importante. Je crois que c'est depuis la prise de conscience kanak (identité ethnique à l'échelle nationale), à partir de 1980, où Tjibaou a commencé à faire prendre conscience aux kanaks d'abord et aux jeunes par la suite. Les jeunes qui naissent aujourd'hui sont des jeunes qui naissent dans le processus kanak, c'est-à-dire l'indépendance. Les jeunes s'impliquent de plus en plus et ceux qui font des hautes études c'est pour leur pays.

PH : Pensez-vous que le fait d'obtenir votre indépendance pourra freiner les problèmes de délinquance et de violence chez les jeunes

Les Voix de Géro Atchee et Iréné Poulawa

Atchee : Dans tout pays indépendant, il y a toujours ce genre de problèmes qui demeurent. Ce qui se passe aujourd'hui c'est qu'on essaie de faire le maximum pour tâcher de régler les problèmes. Mais c'est sûr que tant qu'on aura pas obtenu l'indépendance, ce genre de problèmes demeureront. Je crois qu'il faut vraiment axer notre travail sur l'information.

Je crois que le problème de la délinquance est lié à tout le système auquel nous sommes confrontés : problème de chômage à Nouméa mais aussi dans les Loyauté et dans la province nord comme dans la province sud. Je crois que ce problème est mondial. Les jeunes qui n'ont pas d'emploi, comme dans la province nord par exemple, il n'y avait pas de projet bien précis avec la possibilité de créer des emplois, ce qui fait que tous ces jeunes étaient laissés à eux-mêmes. La seule distraction qu'ils avaient était justement la délinquance.

Il faut savoir que la délinquance aujourd'hui n'est pas uniquement un problème pour les jeunes Kanaks. Également, les jeunes Wallisiens sont confrontés à cette délinquance et le pourcentage augmente. Pour eux, c'est surtout un problème de logement et de terre.

Mais aujourd'hui, je crois que cela s'améliore. Il reste tout de même que c'est dommage. Depuis le

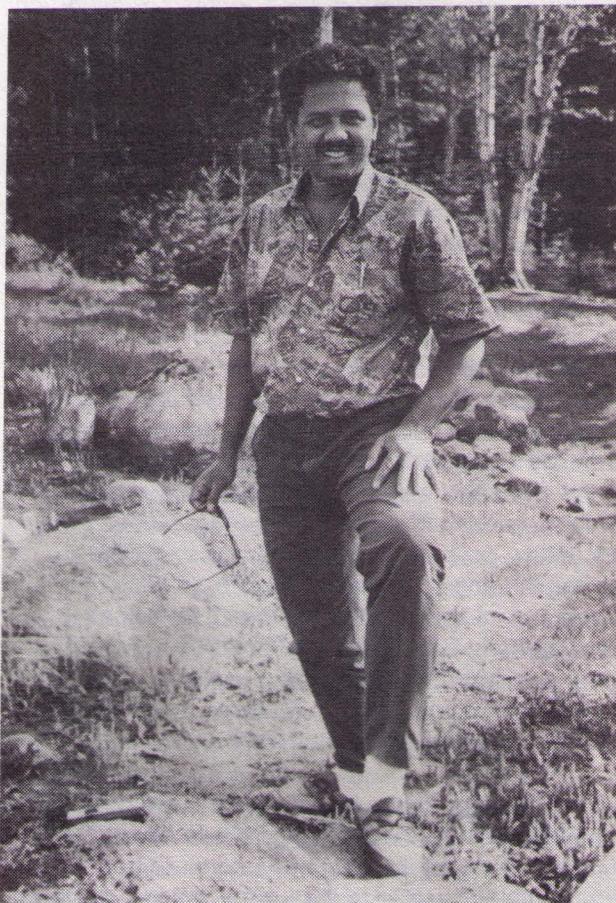


Photo: Benoît Tallifer

Géro Atchee de Kanaky

temps que les Français sont là, il était temps qu'on s'active à faire quelque chose aujourd'hui, alors qu'on aurait pu faire quelque chose depuis longtemps avec tous les différents statuts qui ont passés. Mais le problème est là...manque d'emploi et tous les problèmes des jeunes qui ne leur laissent pas d'autre solution. En plus qu'aujourd'hui, chez nous, le cannabis constitue un autre problème. Cela ne demande pas beaucoup d'efforts et cela rapporte. Je parle des jeunes délinquants qu'on arrive pas à contrôler soit socialement soit politiquement.

PH: En tant que responsable de la jeunesse au sein de votre parti politique, avez-vous tenté d'élaborer des solutions pour réduire le problème de délinquance chez les jeunes?

Atchee: On travaille surtout sur la prévention et l'information. Aujourd'hui il y a les mouvements de femmes qui sont dynamiques et qui nous aident beaucoup dans nos démarches par rapport au problème d'alcool, par exemple. Chez nous, dans la culture en général, les femmes occupent une grande place dans la société kanak, notamment dans l'éducation des enfants. Et aujourd'hui par rapport à l'évolution politique, les femmes ont aussi joué un grand rôle pendant les événements qu'on a vécu. On constate que les femmes prennent de plus en plus de responsabilités au sein des associations.

PH: Mis à part le problème de délinquance y a-t-il d'autres problèmes majeurs qui concernent la jeunesse?

Atchee: Les échecs scolaires constituent un problème. Les jeunes arrêtent l'école à l'âge de 15-16 ans et maintenant, pour trouver un emploi chez nous, il faut un morceau de papier. Et le problème de nos jeunes c'est la timidité. Quand ils arrivent devant un patron et qu'il faut discuter, il suffit que le patron sorte des grands mots pour que le jeune ne revienne plus. Ils manquent d'assurance et d'estime de soi. Il y a aussi l'éducation et la main-d'oeuvre venant de l'extérieur qui font que nos jeunes se retrouvent sans emploi. La délinquance repose aussi sur tous ces facteurs.

Toutes les écoles alternatives comme les EPK, (écoles populaires kanaks), les ALEP (annexes au lycée d'enseignement professionnel) et les MFR (maisons familiales rurales) sont des outils qui ont été mis en place par nous. Ce sont des outils qui demandent beaucoup de moyens matériels et financiers, donc on ne peut pas trop les répandre. Même si les écoles occidentales ont beaucoup d'avantages, on se doit de prendre tous les moyens pour conserver ces écoles. Tous les jeunes, au prise avec des échecs scolaires, se retrouvent dans ce genre d'institutions surtout au niveau des ALEP et des MFR qui constituent, en quelque sorte, leur dernier recours.

Aujourd'hui, il y a encore des EPK qui fonctionnent, notamment à Ouvéa et à Canala, mais il faut dire

que ces EPK sont encore au stade expérimental. Ces écoles concernent davantage les jeunes en bas âge, jusqu'au niveau de la maternelle, qui vont apprendre leur langue vernaculaire tout en recevant une éducation coutumière. En somme, ces écoles représentent une autre forme d'éducation et d'expression pour lesquelles nos responsables politiques attachent une grande importance.

PH: Est-ce que la coutume revêt une place fondamentale pour les jeunes Kanaks?

Atchee: Oui, cela doit demeurer l'élément de base pour nous. Par exemple, avant on faisait la coutume avec les produits de la terre et de la pêche, aujourd'hui on fait la coutume mais avec des cigarettes et de la monnaie occidentale. Pour nous ce qui est le plus important dans cela c'est le geste et la parole. Quand on fait la coutume, on prononce des paroles qui sont significatives (fortes), qui restent. La coutume a évolué, mais en fait seuls les objets changent et la parole reste.

La terre revêt aussi une signification particulière pour les Kanaks. La terre est très respectée. Aujourd'hui on fait de la terre des lieux symboliques (sacrés). On s'aperçoit que les endroits où les vieux sont morts et où il y a eu des histoires, sont toujours importants et bien entretenus. Moi, je parle à mes enfants de la coutume et ses origines. Si les enfants sont intéressés à parler de cela, ils apprendront au fur et à mesure à connaître leur histoire.

Le kanak a une manière de vivre en collectivité qui est à la base de sa culture et le sens du partage est très développé chez nous. Moi j'ai de l'éducation alors que mes frères en n'ont pas du tout, ce qui fait que je vais tout faire pour les aider. C'est pour cela qu'on dit que nos jeunes ne sont pas malheureux parce que chacun s'aide beaucoup dans la mesure de ses capacités et c'est là notre culture de base. Et puis, aujourd'hui, on a l'expérience de nos leaders qui ont combattu avec nous, et à part de porter la cravate, ils restent simples. C'est ce genre d'exemples que nous envisageons de transmettre à nos enfants.

Toute la formation qu'on dispense aujourd'hui aux jeunes c'est pour en arriver à être fier de nous. Alors toutes les aspirations sont orientées en fonction de l'objectif premier qui est l'indépendance. Et ce qui est bien aujourd'hui au sein du FLNKS c'est que plusieurs jeunes prennent des responsabilités politiques. Cela veut dire que ce que nos aînés nous ont apporté jusqu'à aujourd'hui, c'est une prise de conscience et que c'est nous qui continuons cette prise de conscience. Nos responsables politiques font beaucoup confiance aux jeunes parce qu'il y a eu beaucoup de responsables importants qui sont morts (notamment Éloi Machoro, Pierre Declerc, Jean-Marie Tjibaou, et les jeunes d'Ouvéa). Donc, je crois que ce que nos aînés ont préparé c'est pour que nous, demain, on suive le même chemin et que nos enfants suivent le même chemin. Je pense qu'on a une aspiration

commune, et ce, même avec les autres partis indépendantistes qui ne font pas partis du FLNKS.

PH: Y a-t-il des disparités culturelles entre les kanaks qui vivent en milieu urbain et ceux qui vivent en milieu rural?

Atchee: L'exode rural pour nous n'est pas un problème d'espace. C'est un problème de travail d'animation. Quand on est jeune, on a besoin de s'éclater et dans les tribus on ne trouve pas ce que les jeunes recherchent. C'est tout le problème de l'évolution. Les jeunes aujourd'hui évoluent, il y a la télévision, mais en ville on retrouve également le cinéma et les boîtes de nuit.

Mais quand on parle d'exode rural, on fait surtout référence à un problème de recherche d'emplois. Le problème, c'est que tout le développement a été concentré sur Nouméa pendant toute la présence française. Nouméa n'a pas de problème d'infrastructure et les accords de Matignon ne font que favoriser l'offre d'emplois disponibles dans cette ville, alors que pour nous que le développement économique dans nos régions prendra un certain temps avant de se concrétiser. C'est pourquoi les jeunes sont attirés par Nouméa, mais ils retournent tous chez eux.

Aujourd'hui, la jeunesse kanak est en train de vivre deux styles de cultures différentes (traditionnelle, occidentale) mais la culture traditionnelle prime. Quand nous rentrons chez nous, on reste kanak et on respecte les traditions qu'ils s'agissent des morts, des mariages et des naissances. Mais plus on va avancer (dans le cadre d'un pays indépendant), plus on sera confronté à deux civilisations et c'est à nous à faire le choix.

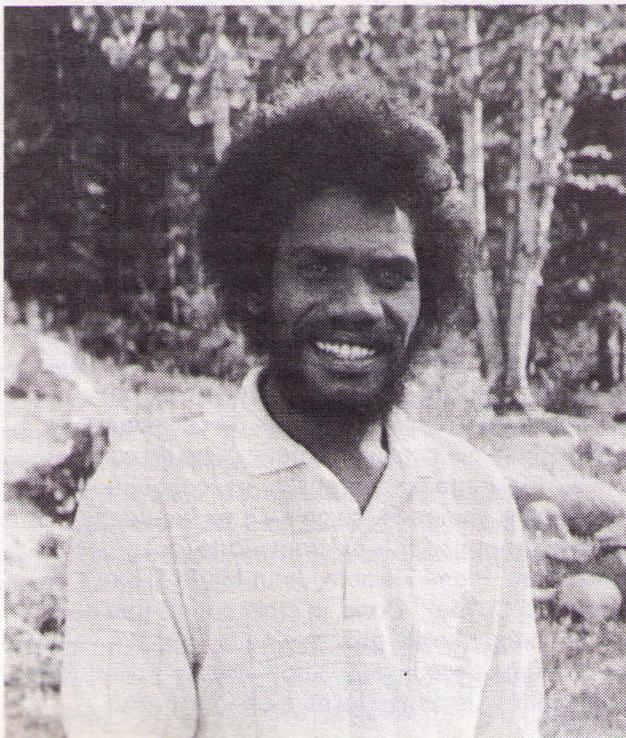


Photo: Benoît Tallier

Iréné Poulawa de Kanaky

Iréné Poulawa, Kanak de l'île d'Ouvéa en Nouvelle-Calédonie, a participé à la Première Conférence Internationale des Jeunes Leaders. Il est père de famille et agriculteur.

Puhi-hau: Quels sont les principaux obstacles à surmonter pour les jeunes qui constituent un pourcentage élevé de la population Kanak actuelle?

Iréné Poulawa: En ce moment nous sommes dans une période où le peuple kanak doit travailler fort pour développer le pays parce qu'il faut parvenir en 1998 à vraiment obtenir notre indépendance sur le plan politique aussi bien qu'économique.

Donc, d'abord il faut bien expliquer aux jeunes le problème de la Calédonie. Parce qu'il est vrai qu'il y en a qui le savent, mais il y en a qui ne savent pas. Ceux qui ne savent pas se promènent un peu partout, ils vont à Nouméa, ils sont un peu perdus par rapport à l'argent, ou dès qu'ils touchent quelques choses, et puis ils vont traîner à Nouméa, la ville, parce que c'est là que ces jeunes convergent. C'est un problème chez nous!

PH: Quand vous dites que les jeunes vont traîner à Nouméa, référez-vous bien aux jeunes qui ignorent les problèmes de la Kanaky?

Poulawa: Les jeunes qui connaissent bien les problèmes de Kanaky savent ce qu'ils doivent faire. Si jamais ils ont de l'argent, bon...ils peuvent faire autre chose mais il y a beaucoup de jeunes qui vont gaspiller de l'argent à Nouméa. Par exemple, les JSD (jeunes stagiaires pour le développement). Soit qu'ils travaillent ou bien ils vont faire des formations, et ensuite, ils touchent de l'argent par mois. Dès que c'est fini, ils vont traîner parce qu'ils ont de l'argent en poche. Et quand ils en ont plus, ça y est, ils se replient sur la tribu. Il y aussi l'alcool actuellement. Beaucoup de jeunes sont influencés par l'alcool, ces jeunes boivent beaucoup et régulièrement. Ils utilisent l'argent pour déconner par-là et picoler. Il y a aussi le problème de la drogue. Les jeunes fument un peu trop. Par rapport à la coutume, c'est défendu de fumer le cannabis parce que cela n'existait pas avant. C'est comme l'alcool, cela n'existait pas avant l'arrivée des Européens. Nos vieux ne veulent pas que nos gens fument le cannabis et, même avant, Jean-Marie Tjibaou mentionnais qu'il ne faut pas que les gens gérants l'indépendance de 1998 soient sans force et mal foutus à cause du cannabis. Il faut donc essayer de réduire cela.

Pour nous, la coutume est très sévère. Chez moi, dans ma tribu, quand les jeunes boivent de l'alcool et qu'ils crient sur la route, les hommes mariés descendent et ils les tapent à coup de poing. Parce que chez nous il y a la coutume et on a les polices, les policiers de la coutume (bénévoles). Il a toujours été comme ça. Donc, c'est nous qui surveillent tout ce qui se passe à l'intérieur de la tribu. Et quand il y a des gens qui fument le cannabis, par exemple, devant un vieux, ce dernier prévient les policiers de la coutume qui l'amènent à la

chefferie (maison du chef). Là, on prend une arme fait de racines longues et costaudes et on "astique" le jeune devant le chef.

PH: Pour en revenir à la coutume, peut-on dire que les jeunes de la tranche des 15 à 25 ans ou ceux qui sont plus sujets à consommer du cannabis respectent moins la coutume que les gens qui sont mariés et un peu plus vieux?

Poulawa: Moi, je respecte beaucoup la coutume parce que c'est la première politique du Kanaky. Maintenant on dit la politique puisque la coutume s'associe à la terre ainsi qu'au peuple kanak. Cela est toujours l'esprit de la coutume kanak. C'est pourquoi maintenant le kanak revendique tout ce qui est associé à la coutume.

PH: Au sujet de la politique, il ya a eu des événements horribles à Ouvéa en 1988. Dites-nous de ça.

Poulawa: Quand on a décidé de faire les événements, il y avait une réunion Calédonie, c'est là qu'on a décidé de faire le boycott actif. On a commencé à se réunir toutes les nuits. C'est juste quelques personnes qui vont essayer d'occuper la gendarmerie mais pas de coup de feu. On voulait descendre le drapeau français et installer le drapeau de Kanaky. On a réuni les hommes mariés de 30 à 35 ans et a décidé que c'est Chanel qui y irait puisqu'il est bien connu du chef des gendarmes. Alors le matin quand Chanel est passé devant le poste de gendarme, le chel l'a appelé et il est rentré et il a frappé son copain. A ce moment-là, les événements sont devenus mal tournés. Trois gendarmes sont morts et ils ont tué 19 kanaks, 14 ou 15 à la grotte de St. Joseph et la reste après. Les jeunes sont pas d'accord avec les gendarmes et avec les autorités. Maintenant on essaie de les situer par rapport avec les accords de Matignon. Mais juste après les événements, cela a été dur. La situation était très tendue juste après Tjibaou a signé les accords. Ça bougeait encore à Ouvéa - il y a des barrages partout, personne ne circulait la nuit. Et là un responsable est venu vous expliquer les accords de Matignon et après un mois ça c'est calmé. Mais ça ne s'oublie pas. **Les événements d'Ouvéa, ça été un choc pour tout le monde.** Le premier événement qui c'est passé à Ouvéa a été tragique pour nous et pour toute la Kanaky. Ces gens qui sont tués les 19 kanaks n'ont même pas été condamnés n'y blâmés. Seul le commandant du commando a démissionné parce qu'il dit qu'il ne voulait pas être responsable de cette tuerie. Son geste témoigne au moins qu'il y a eu des gens qui ont été tués bêtement.

PH: Comment définir la coutume puisque ce terme regroupe différents aspects de votre organisation sociale?

Poulawa: La coutume c'est la culture!

PH: Mais les adolescents, en général de 15 à 20 ans disons, respectent-ils la coutume?

Poulawa: Oui! Je pense personnellement qu'ils respectent quand même la coutume. C'est vrai puisque quand on leur dit de faire ça ou de faire ça, ils le font quand même. Mais, ils sont difficiles à contrôler parce que chez nous quand on est jeune on fait n'importe quoi!

Avant l'arrivée des Européens, la coutume existait comme elle existe encore aujourd'hui. Mais c'est depuis l'arrivée des Blancs que nous avons de la difficulté. Les jeunes ont plus entré dans la modernité. Ils sont un peu perdus là-dedans. Dès qu'on est dedans c'est dur, c'est difficile de faire un retour. Donc actuellement, chez nous, ce qu'on fait c'est de commencer à enseigner la coutume à nos enfants. Comme cela, ils ne vont pas faire comme les autres jeunes.

PH: Croyez-vous que les jeunes Kanaks soient au prise avec des problèmes d'identité dans la mesure où ils sont partagés entre les valeurs coutumières et les valeurs occidentales qui les entraînent, entre autres, à déjouer les règles coutumières en consommant de l'alcool, en cultivant du cannabis alors que la coutume le défend?

Poulawa: Non. Les Kanaks sont fiers d'être kanaks. Je ne sais pas pourquoi ils font cela, mais ce n'est pas une question d'identité. Les conneries que font les jeunes sont des problèmes de jeunes. C'est toujours comme ça, les jeunes. Ils sont libres, ils font ce qu'ils veulent. Mais quand on parle de problèmes économiques, ils sont là à écouter et si on leur dit il faut faire ça, c'est parti, ils le font. Ils respectent encore l'autorité des vieux.

PH: Selon vous, quels seraient les ou les plus grands défis pour les jeunes face à l'avenir et dans une perspective d'indépendance?

Poulawa: Il faut qu'ils changent et qu'ils arrêtent de déconner. Les jeunes qui ne sont pas responsables, au niveau de la politique, doivent réintégrer leur tribu et commencer à travailler un peu dans la coutume et à respecter la coutume. Ainsi, ils seront chez eux, dans leur tribu, avec les vieux et la coutume. Je préfère qu'ils retournent dans leurs tribus et travaillent à apprendre la coutume que de rester à Nouméa, où ils traînent sur les routes, ne font rien et déconnent. Avec la culture ils peuvent, petit à petit avancer.

La coutume c'est le respect et le partage, mais surtout le respect. Si jamais on lèche la coutume on va devenir des individualistes. C'est le fondement de l'identité kanak la coutume.

STRUGGLING FOR INDEPENDENCE FOR A COUNTRY I'VE NEVER SEEN

by Inaria Kaisiepo

Inaria Kaisiepo is a young woman born and raised far from her people of West Papua. She writes about the experience of being a young exile and her hopes for her people and a land she has never seen.

It's not because 1993 is the year of indigenous peoples, it's not because the environment is a serious issue today, and it's not because I would like to visit my father's country without causing problems that I am concerned about the people I too belong to. I'm referring here to the people of West Papua and I hope that my motivation for sharing my thoughts with you will be clear by the end of this article. I would like to clarify the current situation in West Papua and share with you my ideas about the political struggle for an independent state, West Papua, and the role young people like me can contribute to the cause.

Since I was born and raised in the Netherlands, it's very easy for me to be open about West Papua and to struggle in the diplomatic field. Although I get frustrated once in awhile because things are not going the way I would like them, still the possibilities to do your work are numerous. I know I am very fortunate to be in this position.

In order to understand the current situation in West Papua, it's necessary to tell you something about the history of the country. West Papua was a Dutch colony since the end of the 19th century (Dutch New Guinea). In the early 1960s, while the Dutch were preparing West Papua for independence, the recently independent Republic of Indonesia laid claim to the territory. The United States supported Indonesia because they were afraid that the USSR was going to have a strong position in South-East Asia by supporting Indonesia; so the US tried to stay ahead of them. Under pressure of the United Nations (very much influenced by the US), the Dutch government signed an agreement with Indonesia in 1962 concerning West Papua. This "New York Agreement" contained a process which should have led to observance of the right to self-determination of Papuans.

Administration of West Papua was transferred from the Dutch to the United Nations Temporary Executive Authority (UNTEA) on October 1, 1962. UNTEA was supposed to ensure the performance of the right to self-determination.

The Papuans have been suppressed by Indonesia for over 30 years now. Considering the current situation in West Papua, something went very wrong in the 1960s. It has to have been because nationalism in West Papua and the aspiration for an independent state were (and still are) very vivid. The country already had its own name (West Papua), national anthem (Hai Tanah Ku Papua) and flag (the Morning Star). I wasn't born yet in the 1960s, but I don't think that's necessary to conclude that the way the UN interpreted the word "right" is not as we (and international standards) would like it to be interpreted. In 1969, already six years after the UN gave authority over West Papua to Indonesia, the so-called "Act of Free Choice" took place under UN auspices. This "Act" was supposed to be some sort of referendum in which the indigenous people of West Papua would determine their own future. However, only 1025 people chosen by Indonesia were allowed to vote to determine the future of the total population of 1 million people. They were held in detention camps in preparation for the "Act of Free Choice". The people could vote to "sever the ties with Indonesia" or to "stay with Indonesia"; they were made to unanimously choose the latter.



Bosnik villagers on the way to market in Biak town, on Biak Island.

Photo by Hewitt Roberts

During the "Act of Free Choice", a team of UN observers was present in West Papua. The Special Representative of the UN Secretary-General, Mr. Ortiz-Sanz, wrote a very critical report about the "Act". According to his report the people had not been free to choose, the "Act" was totally controlled by the Indonesian authorities and UN observers had no say in the process. Mr. Ortiz-Sanz's report was discussed in the UN General Assembly in November 1969. The Brazzaville Group, a group of African countries led by Ghana, objected to the way the "Act of Free Choice" was executed and proposed a new "Act of Free Choice" to be held within a certain period of time. This proposal was rejected and it was generally accepted that Indonesia had given itself another province, the 26th province of "Irian Jaya".

At this moment, human rights are violated on a large scale in West Papua. The expropriation of land to the benefit of large exploitative companies and Indonesian immigrants occurs on a large scale. If this process continues, Papuans will be a minority in their own country within a few years. The culture of Papuans will disappear and all the resources of West Papua will get into the hands of people it does not belong to.

The thought of being a remainder of a forgotten people frightens me. Thinking about the future of our country makes me scared. The population will be smaller, the number of Indonesian immigrants will be even larger, land destruction will still occur and violations of human rights will continue. These predictions can often make me sad, but they also make me realise that we have little time and have to use that time efficiently in order to change something about the situation in West Papua.



Photo by Hewitt Roberts

Canoe building in Agats, Asmat

Since 1965 the Organisasi Papua Merdeka (OPM) has been struggling to protect her people and country. I can hardly imagine that some young people who are fighting in the country at this moment were not even born 30 years ago when their future was being determined. They carry on the struggle for independence. While for them it's a struggle for life, I hope that young people who were born outside West Papua like myself will also continue to support the struggle like our parents did. For us outside West Papua, it's very easy to do this. We don't have to worry about food, clothes, education, etc. Therefore I think that at the same time rights were taken away from people in West Papua, we were given certain duties and responsibilities. I hope this sense of duty will be expressed by more and more people because together we can make an even larger contribution to the struggle of the OPM.



Photo by Hewitt Roberts

Minding the babies in Sawa village, Asmat

One thing must be evident; as long as Papuans in the country do not give up the struggle for independence, this struggle will continue. I know that this struggle is going to get more and more support from the outside world. Until the time comes that the whole world will know about West Papua, there is much work to be done. In the Netherlands, we are trying to unite our young people. At the same time, we are trying to set up a communications network with other indigenous youth organisations in order to learn from and support each other in the struggle for self-determination.

When I think about the right to self-determination of a people, the meaning is very clear to me; a people determines its own destiny, its own future, it makes its own decisions concerning the land, etc. For a country like West Papua, this is very important. Only when the people of West Papua are able to live the way they did for ages will the environment of West Papua be safe. For only they know how to live in harmony with nature or how to take from the land without destroying it. That's a valuable skill nowadays and I think we should acknowledge that we can learn from it in the Western "Modern" world.

THE FUTURE THROUGH TODAY'S EYES: YOUTH IN THE COOK ISLANDS

by Kathleen Pratt

Two young Canadian women, Kathleen Pratt and Kim Zimmerman, were sent to the Cook Islands in 1990 by the volunteer sending organisation, Canadian Crossroads International. Their work involved research on youth. Kathleen reports here on the results of that research.

The majority of our time was spent on Rarotonga, working for the Ministry of Youth and Sport. The Ministry was established in 1989 and no preliminary research or statistics had been done. Our social science backgrounds were taken into account when we were given the task of investigating problems of youth in the Cook Islands. Reports and recommendations had been made in the past, but our research was the first based on a survey of youth. Information was gathered from interviews with government officials, youth groups leaders and community members, and from a survey administered to 250 youth aged 13 to 24 years. The primary research was on Rarotonga, with smaller samples on the islands of Atiu and Mauke. Recommendations were made with hopes that the Cook Islands government could implement them with help from aid organizations.

Employment Preparations

The Secretary of Education reported that 50-70% of students leave school after Lower Fifth Form. Many of these students go overseas and find they are qualified only for factory work. We emphasized the need for guidance counselling in the schools to provide students with information about employment, scholarships and overseas opportunities.

Several people said there was an abundance of jobs in agriculture which needed to be promoted. The community needs to be educated about the losses which result from importing goods which could be produced locally. We recommended that the Ministry of Agriculture implement a programme to provide youth with agricultural training aimed at self-employment. Such a programme should be based on a supply and demand study to determine which products are

needed. The government could lease plots of land from families who live overseas and give it to groups of youth free of charge for one year, until their crop is producing and they can pay the lease back. There also needs to be incentives and promotion of agricultural and fishing opportunities for females, who are under-represented in these fields.

Health

Underage drinking is a problem, particularly on Rarotonga where 10% of 13 to 15 year-olds drink alcohol. The incidence of drinking is much higher on Rarotonga than on the outer islands where alcohol is less available and community sanctions are stricter. On Rarotonga, there were a total of 100 bars and retail outlets where alcohol could be purchased. Our recommendations included tighter controls on liquor licensing and enforcement of the legal drinking age of 18. We strongly supported the institution of substance abuse education programmes to promote awareness of the dangers of alcohol use, smoking and drug abuse. Illegal drugs were not a widespread problem in 1990, but we recognized the need for education to counteract the glamourization of drugs in the media and the threat posed by migration to countries where drugs are a problem.

The incidence of teen pregnancy is increasing. In 1988, 4% of women aged 10 to 19 had at least one child. Implications of teen pregnancy include increased health risk to mother and child, the burden placed on



Photo courtesy of Kathleen Pratt

At a Seventh Day Adventist School, Kathleen Pratt along with the class teacher and the students displays the flag of the Cook Islands.

the extended family and limited future opportunities due to leaving school. The survey found that the majority of 13 to 15 year olds didn't know about methods of birth control. Although knowledge increases amongst teens aged 16 to 19, approximately one in two did not know about contraceptives. We proposed that a family life education programme (including information on reproduction, child rearing, family planning, sexually transmitted diseases and AIDS) be implemented in Form 3. The Minister of Education approved such programmes starting in Form 5. However, considering the number of students who leave school after Form 5, family life education should be offered earlier and before students become sexually active. We believed that a subject which is accepted by the school is more likely to be accepted in the home. Communication between parents and teens is essential, especially since parental permission is required to obtain contraceptives. However, family planning is a sacred issue in the Cook Islands and it was in this area that we thought our recommendations were least likely to be implemented.

Social Life

Youth groups on Rarotonga expressed dissatisfaction with participation in their groups compared to those on the outer islands. Youth groups on Raro must compete with other activities (eg. movie theatre, TV, nightclubs) which aren't available on the outer islands. The fact that teenagers can be found loitering in town any night indicates that present youth group activities don't appeal to them. Many organisers of youth groups complained of lack of leadership. We emphasised the importance of leaders being young themselves so they can relate to youth and give them a position to aspire to. To overcome the lack of recreation equipment and facilities, we suggested that youth groups cooperate and pool resources to organise ongoing, inter-denominational events. The survey identified that 58% of young people were interested in a youth centre to provide games, crafts, music and a library. Such a centre would depend on community support for its establishment and survival. Money and materials to build a centre could be obtained from fundraising, aid organisations and government assistance.

46% of those surveyed wanted to participate in a tutoring programme. Tutoring is a two-way learning process which instills teaching skills and reduces the likelihood that a slower student will drop out of school. A secondary school teacher would coordinate the programme by matching interested senior students with other students who were having difficulty. Atiu College demonstrated to us that academic success can be achieved through the commitment and cooperation of students, teachers, parents, and community. Peer study groups are organized in the evening to enable students to keep up with the New Zealand school system.

A No-Alcohol Dance was popular with 42% of the young people surveyed. One nightclub on Rarotonga had received a good response to its Saturday night teen dances, which gained parental support. We recognized the importance of church approval for such an activity to succeed. The dance could be organized by a rotating committee and held at alternating community halls.

We were concerned about the erosion of the Cook Islands' culture and wanted to see if young people were interested in activities that celebrated their heritage. 24% of youth surveyed said they would participate in a Drama Club which performs cultural plays. The Drama Club is a community-based activity that could bring different religious denominations together.

We supported the strengthening and expansion of three other activities, which were of interest to a small minority of youth. One of these is the making and selling of handicrafts to provide employment and revitalize culture. We also recommended that a country-wide newsletter be produced by a staff of young volunteers. A youth radio show would feature a guest disc jockey and discuss issues of concern to young people. Both a newsletter and radio show would provide youth with a positive outlet to air their feelings about issues.

Crime

The survey found that a majority (58%) of youth on Rarotonga who committed a crime were not caught by police. Crimes included driving without a license (45.8%), entering a nightclub underage (18.5%), assault (7.4%), theft (7.4%), and burglary (6.29%). In 1989, 65.8% of all probationers were between the ages of 13 and 20. We underlined the need for crime prevention programmes organised by the police and implemented in the community and schools.

We recommended that a programme similar to the existing prison Work Release Programme could help unemployed and out-of-school probationers find a job and develop some self-worth. The Work Release Programme allows inmates controlled access to the community and gives them a sense of responsibility by repaying some of their costs and keeping a savings account. Integration in the community is necessary for acceptance to occur.

Future Aspirations

In order to predict the future of the Cook Islands, the future aspirations of its youth must be examined. The results of our survey predicted continuing migration overseas and youth dissatisfaction with opportunities available in their home country. The majority of young people surveyed planned to leave the Cook Islands to pursue education or work overseas. One benefit of migration is that it is a way for youth to help support their families from the higher earnings available overseas. However, it is a loss for the country

when those who obtain education overseas do not return to invest their skills in the Cook Islands. Pride in one's country and the desire to help the country are key motivators to return home.

In 1990 there was no programme to encourage student teachers from the Cook Islands to return home for their two years of practise teaching. Schools are dependent on qualified teachers and volunteers from overseas, and suffer from teacher shortages, particularly on the outer islands. Poor conditions in outer island schools (lack of resources, poor building maintenance, inadequate lighting, out-dated textbooks, overcrowded classrooms) in addition to low salaries have resulted in teachers' complaints of low motivation and morale. School conditions must improve to allow student teachers the same opportunity of learning available in overseas schools. Scholarships were only available to students in Form 7 so less academically inclined students perceived their future educational and job opportunities as limited. Employment opportunities must be made attractive with government support for vocational training programmes and their promotion within secondary schools. Career Days and income-generating projects could be two ways to demonstrate to young people that success can be achieved in their community.

We appreciated the unique opportunity this project allowed us to examine the reality of youth in the Cook Islands. We struggled with the fact that previous reports had been cast aside, but sincerely hoped that our recommendations could be implemented with the help of tools and expertise available to people in the Cook Islands.



Photo courtesy of Kathleen Pratt

Kim Zimmerman and Kathleen Pratt with the Minister of Justice, Mr. Tiki Matepo, and Chief Executive Officer John Tangi

PNG Environmentalist Visits Canada

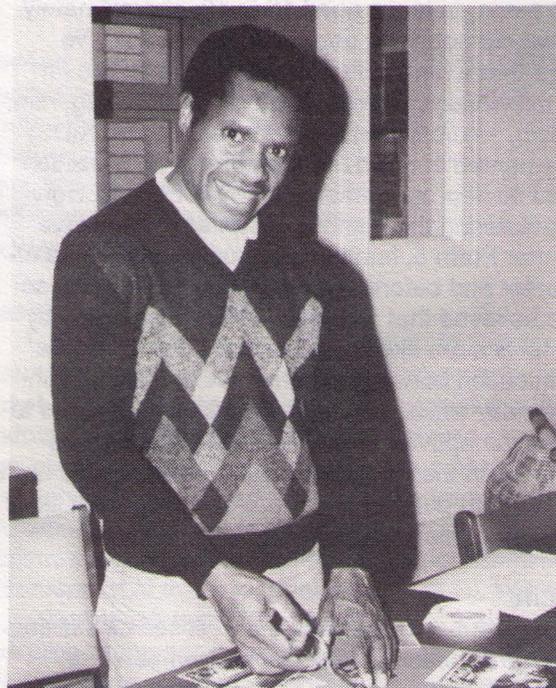


Photo by Stuart Wulff

Chris Kia Aina is a 24 year old Papua New Guinean from Simbu province. Eighteen months ago he began volunteering with MEF, the Melanesian Environmental Foundation, a PNG environmental non-government organisation formed several years ago through the efforts of the Melanesian Council of Churches. This past September Chris, for the first time, left Papua New Guinea and journeyed to Canada under the sponsorship of CUSO. He spent 3 weeks in Canada managing to visit 3 provinces - Saskatchewan, Manitoba and British Columbia where his programme was organized by SPPF.

In Saskatchewan Chris headed for the International Indigenous Youth Conference in Prince Albert. He spent 4 days there taking part in discussions and cultural activities with delegates from all over the world and identifying many points of common interest - land struggles, human rights struggles, environmental questions. A high point for him was spending time with the Saskatchewan First Nations and Metis Elders. He also took part in a tipi raising and spent time in a sweat lodge.

His first workshop, "Keeping Our Languages: the Importance to Indigenous Youth" was a real eye opener for him. Chris, who speaks Golin, his clan language, as well as 5 other languages (Tok Pisin, Iast Kambia, Bomai, Kumau and English) discovered that many indigenous youth in Canada have lost their clan language. He feels that it is very important for indigenous people to know their own language and is happy to speak his own.

[Continued on page 22]

YOUTH TALK from Aotearoa

New Zealander in his late twenties, Todd Michael Muller is the elected Student Representative of Waikato University, where he obtained his Master's degree in Politics and English. He recently stepped down from the chair of a division of the Young Nationals, the youth wing of the party in power.

Puhi-hau: Can you tell us about problems young people face?

Todd Michael Muller: I think the environment is one of those concerns which has always been prevalent in New Zealand, precisely because we've got such a fantastic environment. We can taste the air in New Zealand, it's so clean. It also fits very easily into the Maori culture because it is so strongly linked to the land. It's a spiritual link, not a physical link, so the Maori response is even stronger than that of the non-Maori.

Our major concern is the ozone layer. If you walked out in the middle of the New Zealand summer, in 15 minutes your arm would be pink, and that's on a cloudy day. We're sitting at the bottom of the world, and we're being affected by what other countries do. That has always been our problem and our frustration in New Zealand. Excuse the cynicism, but when has anyone listened to our country? When it has suited them, and only when. An example of the frustration that a New Zealander has on the world stage is the relationship at the moment between the New Zealanders and the French. It is related obviously to the French bombing of the Greenpeace ship, the Rainbow Warrior. France threatened to block out our meat and dairy produce in Europe. The two agents convicted were supposed to be imprisoned at Mururoa for two years. After only six months, they were freed and now one of them gets an award. I mean if that happened to you, or in Europe, there would have been an uproar. But because it happened way down here, it didn't matter. That just typifies the frustration of being very little and very far away. It was a hard blow to take, we thought that we were winning, that yes, the little guy can actually make a difference, and then something like this comes along and we realize that actually no, the little guy can't make a difference. That is my fear for New Zealand, is that the knowledge that we are so dependant on other people's patronage. That really is most unfair.

This conference has been frustrating in some respects, and it's been an eye-opener. We all started at the beginning of the week to be together, we were going to turn the four corners of the world into a circle. But when you actually listen to everybody speak, and when the traditional prejudices and the traditional ways of doing things and the cultural approaches start taking over, it's discouraging. I see the Americans and the Canadians, and I feel very foreign, even being a

LA PAROLE AUX JEUNES de Aotearoa

Néo-Zélandais à la fin de la vingtaine, Todd Michael Muller est le Représentant Élu des Étudiants de l'Université de Waikato, où il a obtenu sa Maîtrise en Politique et en Anglais. Il a récemment quitté la présidence d'une division des "Young Nationals", l'aile jeunesse du parti politique présentement au pouvoir.

Puhi-hau: Pouvez-vous nous parler des problèmes auxquels les jeunes font face?

Todd Michael Muller: Je crois que l'environnement est une des préoccupations qui ont toujours été de grande importance en Nouvelle-Zélande, précisément parce qu'on a un environnement si fantastique. L'air est si propre en Nouvelle-Zélande qu'on peut le goûter. Ça s'intègre aussi très facilement dans la culture Maori parce qu'ils sont fortement liés à la terre. Le lien est spirituel, pas physique, alors leur réaction est encore plus forte.

Notre majeure inquiétude est la couche d'ozone. Si vous sortiez en plein été Néo-Zélandais, en 15 minutes votre bras serait rose, et ça c'est un jour nuageux. Nous sommes installés à l'autre bout du monde, et nous sommes affectés par ce que les autres pays font. La frustration est typique pour un très petit pays très loin, simplement les gens ne nous écoutent pas. On a cru un jour qu'on pouvait faire une différence dans ce genre de relations internationales, mais avec ce qui est arrivé avec l'incident du Rainbow Warrior, on a vu que non, les petits n'ont pas vraiment de voix. Pardonnez le cynisme, mais quand est-ce que qui que ce soit a jamais écouté notre pays? Quand, et seulement quand, ça a fait leur affaire.

Cette conférence a été frustrante à certains égards, et elle a été révélatrice. On a tous commencé au début de la semaine, et on allait être tous ensemble, on allait transformer les quatre coins du monde en un cercle, et ça ça sonne bien, c'est sûr. Mais quand tu t'arrêtes à vraiment écouter le discours des gens, et les préjugés traditionnels et les façons de faire traditionnelles, et les approches culturelles qui commencent à prendre le dessus, et tu observes les américains et les Canadiens, et je me sens très étranger, même en étant un occidental. C'est parce que je me sens très insécure de venir d'un pays si minuscule à l'autre bout du monde.

Notre voix est entendue, mais elle n'est jamais écoutée. J'ai trouvé tout ceci réellement révélateur, parce que moi je viens de la culture dominante en Nouvelle-Zélande, qui a à faire face aux mêmes plaintes de la part du peuple Maori. Alors j'ai beaucoup appris parce que j'ai dû venir à la conférence du "grand monde" pour me sentir étranger. Je n'étais pas dans le coup, à cause du style des ateliers, et de la manière dont certaines cultures dominent. Les canadiens ont été dominants pendant les ateliers. Ils s'emparaient du microphone. Tu sais, ils le prendraient d'un africain

westerner. I feel very insecure coming from such a tiny country at the bottom of the world. Our voice is not listened to. It may be heard, but it's never listened to. And there's a lot of that going on here. I think it was summed up by this guy who I was speaking to, who said "I'm surrounded by people who know a lot, but very few people who understand."

I find this most enlightening, because I come from the dominant culture in New Zealand, which is having to deal with the same complaints from the Maori people. I've learned much, but I've come to a "big world" conference to feel foreign. I've felt out of it because of the style of workshops, and the way the Canadians are dominating the workshops. They grab for the mike, you know they'll pull it off an African because they want to speak. It's very hard for us, you just withdraw. And I'm European - Maori New Zealanders would feel a hundred times more alienated.

PH: I don't know how much you're know about Canadian politics, but I think we can relate to what you're talking about as Québécois. It's a communications problem, negotiations with English Canada happen with English-Canadian concepts and understanding of what nationalism, what nation, what culture are... But we're not here to talk about Quebec. You talked about the environment. What is another issue facing New Zealand youth today?

Muller: The second problem is dealing with the Maori people. A treaty was signed in 1840 with the British guaranteeing the Maori 50% of almost everything. About 1970, the Maori people started getting annoyed that they'd lost so much and they wanted a lot more. It really started in the mid 1970s when our economy started to fall apart. The first sectors to go were the unskilled, the semi-skilled, and that's when all the problems of the Maori began. They were really in trouble because they lost their jobs and now find themselves in a cycle of poverty that is very hard to break.

In their eyes, to get more of the wealth back, more of the power, they want more of their land back. So they claimed to parts of New Zealand and took it to the tribunal. And they won it, because the treaty stood up in law, and they were given their land back. Of course then, almost all of New Zealand was claimed, they've claimed about 80% of the country (which obviously poses some problems).

PH: One of the themes of the conference is nationalism. When we think of nationalism in Canada, we've got Quebec and English Canada, we've also got First Nations, the aboriginal peoples. What can you tell us about New Zealand national identity?

Muller: Firstly, everything I say is from a European perspective. I came here thinking that we'd talk about GATT, and liberalism and protectionism. But I have not learned a thing about that. What I have learned is something probably more valuable, and that is an under-

parce qu'ils veulent parler maintenant. C'est très dur pour nous, on se replie . . . Ce n'est pas mal ou un tort, c'est seulement leur façon de faire, mais ce n'est pas la nôtre.

PH: Je ne sais pas jusqu'à quel point vous êtes au courant de la scène politique canadienne, mais nous pouvons nous identifier, en tant que québécois, à ce dont vous parlez. C'est un problème de communications, les négociations avec le Canada anglais se font avec une compréhension canadienne-anglaise de ce que sont une nation, une culture, etc. Mais nous ne sommes pas ici pour parler du Québec. Vous avez parlé de l'environnement, quel est un autre problème chez vous?

Muller: Un autre problème est nos relations avec le peuple Maori. Un traité a été signé en 1840, à l'arrivée des Anglais, qui garantissait aux Maori environ 50% de tout. En 1970, les Maori ont commencé à être contrariés d'avoir perdu tant de choses, et ils en voulaient beaucoup plus. Ça a vraiment débuté à la mi-décennie quand l'économie a commencé à tomber en morceaux. Le premier secteur à disparaître était les manoeuvres. C'est à ce moment que tous les problèmes des Maori ont commencé. C'est un sérieux ennui parce qu'ils ont perdu leurs emplois, ils ont atteint ce cycle de la pauvreté qui est très difficile à briser.

A leurs yeux, pour récupérer plus de richesse, plus de pouvoir, ils doivent récupérer plus de terres qui leur appartenaient. Alors ils ont fait des réclamations concernant certaines parties de la Nouvelle-Zélande et sont allés en cour. Ils ont gagné parce que le traité a été considéré par le tribunal, et on leur a rendu leurs terres. Bien sûr, ils ont alors déposé des réclamations concernant presque toute la Nouvelle-Zélande, environ 80% du pays (ce qui pose évidemment quelques problèmes)

PH: Un des thèmes de la conférence est le nationalisme. Que pouvez-vous nous dire à propos de l'identité nationale Néo-Zélandaise? Quand nous pensons au nationalisme au Canada, il y a le Canada anglais, le Canada français, les peuples aborigènes.

Muller: Tout ce que j'ai à dire, c'est d'une perspective européenne. Je suis venu ici en pensant que nous allons parler du GATT, du libéralisme et du protectionisme. Mais je n'ai rien appris à ces sujets; ce que j'ai appris par contre a sûrement plus de valeur, et ça c'est la compréhension des différentes cultures et de leurs perceptions et de leurs préjugés, et du fait qu'on peut être assis là ensemble et dire: "ouais, on est une grande famille", en sourdine bien sur l'idée "tant que vous croyiez en ce que je dis". Et tous au début de la conférence de hocher de la tête et d'acquiescer, mais c'est de l'absolue foutaise. Nous ne sommes pas une grande famille. Il y a une forte culture occidentale qui envahit dans bien des cas les cultures traditionnelles. Je ne crois pas qu'elle y parviendra.

PH: Pourquoi?

standing about different cultures and their perceptions and prejudices, and the fact that we can just sit there and say "yeah, we're just one big family". Juxtaposed to this is the idea "just as long as you believe in what I say". Everyone at the start of the conference just nodded and agreed, but it's just words. We are not one family. There is a strong western culture that is attempting to override, in many cases, the traditional cultures. I do not believe that it will succeed.

PH: Why?

Muller: Because our culture is too shallow compared to the cultures that we're trying to take over. The western culture is not spiritual. That is why in our negotiations with the Maori people the words of justice and equality are the catch-cries, not dollars.

I was given, and I performed last night with, a cloak from the local tribe where I come from. Before I left, it was blessed in a huge ceremony and when I return I will give it back with a gift from Canada. To me, that cloak has incredible spiritual importance. Yesterday when I walked into the foyer with it, someone said "What's that, a blanket?" It was like a dagger struck me. I am not a Maori myself, but it's because I come from that area and have personal connections with the people who bestowed the cloak on me. I was a part of the ceremony where it was blessed, and by God it isn't a blanket.

PH: Do you think there are a lot of non-Maori New Zealanders who perceive things as you do?

Muller: I would like to think so - South Island New Zealanders less so than North Islanders because they haven't had much contact with the Maori people who live mainly in the North Island. Many South Islanders won't see a Maori until in their twenties, whereas a North Islander's first class in school will be 10 to 15% Maori. The Maori renaissance is incredible in our country. It is a huge part of the education process. This is absolutely brilliant because it's through education that the generations will become more open and culturally sensitive.

PH: You were talking of the land and spirituality. Does that mean religion, or is it in a broader sense?

Muller: It's not religion. Religion is primarily a western framework. It's a spirituality which you can actually feel. There is a rugged and deserted beach on the West Coast of New Zealand about an hour away from where I live. It's where I go when I want solace, when I want to be away from the fast pace of New Zealand, (which of course would be really slow to you) and I think every New Zealander does that, more or less. That's why we will work it out. Because the land is so incredible that you cannot help but be affected by it. It's so clean and so pure and you can be so alone. It's so alive, but it's not a brash aliveness, it's not a commercial aliveness, it's a real aliveness. That's what real life is all about.

Muller: Parce que comparée aux cultures traditionnelles qu'elle essaie de supplanter, notre culture est trop superficielle. Ce n'est pas spirituelle. C'est pourquoi dans nos négociations avec le peuple Maori les mots de justice et d'égalité sont les mots d'ordre, pas le capital.

On m'a donné, et j'ai fait une présentation hier soir, une cape de la tribu locale de mon patelin. Avant que je parte, elle a été bénie dans une grande cérémonie et à mon retour je la rendrai avec un cadeau provenant du Canada. L'importance que revêt cette cape pour moi est incroyablement grande. C'est un objet spirituel et j'en ai totalement conscience. Hier j'étais dans le hall et quelqu'un m'a demandé "hé! qu'est-ce que c'est? Une couverture?". Je ne peux expliquer ce que ça m'a fait, c'était comme un poignard. C'est quelque chose plus important. Je ne suis pas Maori, mais je viens de cette région et j'ai fait partie de la cérémonie de bénédiction, et bon Dieu ce n'est pas une couverture. C'est pour cela que c'est bien plus puissant d'avoir une cape que de percevoir quelque chose comme une simple couverture.

PH: Croyez-vous que bien des Néo-Zélandais d'origine européenne perçoivent les choses comme vous-même?

Muller: Je crois que oui. Tout dépend de qui vous êtes et de votre éducation; mais les gens de l'île méridionale, non. Ils n'ont eu aucun contact avec la majorité des Maori, qui habitent l'île du nord. Beaucoup d'insulaire méridionaux n'auront jamais vu un Maori avant d'avoir vingt ans, tandis que dans le nord les classes de première année primaire sont composées de Maori à 10 ou 15%. La culture Maori est maintenant fortement promue. La renaissance Maori est incroyable dans notre pays. C'est une grande partie du processus d'éducation maintenant - ce qui est absolument brillant parce que si on veut une génération qui sera beaucoup plus ouverte et sensible au point de vue culturel, c'est par l'éducation qu'on y arrivera.

PH: Vous parlez de la terre et de la spiritualité. Est-ce que ça veut dire religion, ou est-ce dans le sens plus large?

Muller: Ce n'est pas de la religion. La religion est un concept occidental. C'est une spiritualité qu'on peut en fait sentir. Il y a une plage en Nouvelle-Zélande qui est à une heure de l'endroit où j'habite, qui est vraiment très accidentée, personne n'est jamais là. C'est là où je vais quand je veux être loin du rythme effréné de Nouvelle-Zélande, ce qui serait très lent pour vous, mais qui est quand même vite pour nous; alors quand on veut toucher à l'immobilité complète, c'est à cet endroit qu'on va. Je crois que chaque Néo-Zélandais a, jusqu'à un certain point, ce même... et c'est pour cela qu'on y arrivera, que tout finira par s'arranger. Parce que le pays est si incroyablement beau qu'on en est affecté. C'est si propre, si pur. On peut y être si seul. C'est tellement vivant, mais ce n'est pas une vivacité impétueuse, ce n'est pas une vivacité commerciale, c'est une vraie vivacité... c'est ça la vraie vie.

After the conference he went to Saskatoon spending time with the Saskatchewan Teachers Federation, with environmental groups and visiting the Indigenous Cultural Survival School. Chris then went on to Regina where he visited the International Indigenous Centre, a school he has since decided he would like to attend.

Chris didn't spend all his time in meetings. In the company of delegates from Tanzania and South Africa, he headed north to a logging blockade on indigenous land - where arboreal forest is being logged for pulpwood - and related it to similar blockades back home. He heard about the same thing in British Columbia from the Environmental Youth Alliance, a group of young high school students who have set up blockades to try to stop the logging of the Walbran Valley, one of the last stands of old growth timber on Vancouver Island. Chris could not imagine the same dedication and action for an environmental cause coming from high school students in PNG. The commitment comes at a later age apparently - witness Chris who has been an unpaid volunteer with MEF for almost 2 years, receiving food and bus fare in return for volunteering in MEF's public education programme to raise awareness about environmental issues in PNG. At least 7 hours work a day he says and so much to do in so little time as the clear cut logging pace quickens in PNG.

"What do you think about Canada?" we asked. "It's cold!", said Chris. He had fun driving a huge tractor on a wheat farm in Manitoba - didn't go far but he drove it! The mountains, the landscape, the vast open spaces, the big cities all impressed him. He thought Victoria was a beautiful city situated as it is on the Pacific, but the opposite side to the Pacific he knows.

He noticed other things too. People living on the streets and begging. "At home", he said, "if we don't have a job we can go to the village, to our family land and live a simple life and have enough food to eat. Here, if you are unemployed and poor, it must be very hard." He also visited a seniors' care centre where he showed slides and talked about Papua New Guinea to a captivated audience. "I really enjoyed telling them about my country and answering their questions. It's different in my country. We take care of our old grandfathers and old grandmothers, we have a different way." What way do you prefer we asked. "I like my own way better - to look after them because they looked after our parents and us, we look after them when they are old."

So the themes of the conference he attended were acted out in his presence - the land struggles, the importance of maintaining tradition and culture, the struggles to protect the environment, the caring and sharing - from all perspectives. Not a bad trip we thought.

[From a taped conversation between Chris Kia and SPPF staff]

Youth and Music: Can music rock body and soul?

by Roland Batarii



Today in the Solomons youths are involved in many different activities. These include sports, religion and social events. But of all these activities music seems to be one of the most important things. Many may not be talented enough to play a guitar, keyboard or panpipes but they all want to listen to music or watch it on videos.

One of my school mates, who is now a member of the Iron Joules band, developed his love for music at school. In fact that's where all his energy went. He hoped to be one of the boys that hold a guitar and stand in front of a microphone on the stage at Lawson Tama. He was one of the lucky boys - he really is a member of a band that plays for the Lawson Tama crowd.

Some youths just like listening to music on the radio; others enjoy listening to their own cassettes or watch music on videos or live onstage. Not many young people like Country and Western music. Some like traditional music and others the European style orchestras, jazz, reggae, or even Pacific Island music. The most crazy love pop and heavy metal - Guns and Roses - the best. It's the crazy ones who say all the other types of music, even Solomon Islands traditional music, are useless and unprogressive.

After questioning many youths I realized the type of music young people prefer affects the way they act and behave. Those who go for pop or heavy metal must draw a picture of their favourite group on their shirt or jeans. The ones who like country music dress in long shirts and a cowboy hat. Plenty of boys make their hair coil like the reggae singers, Bob Marley and Lucky Dube. Often youths sing as they walk along the streets, pretending to play their guitar or drums with whatever they are carrying - even if it is just a tin of Milo.

Liking songs often leads to young people wanting their own instruments. Some are like Eric Clapton and only interested in guitars; others want bass or keyboards. The heavy metal fans want the latest in effects - compressors, choruses and drums. The reggae rastas like to buy their own microphone. They all want something different and they all need money to get it. Music really influences the way young people spend their money. They need to pay for instruments, cassettes, Lawson Tama entrance tickets, clothing and even night club fees. All this does not leave much spare cash for their families. What is happening is music is influencing people so much that it fills their time completely, changing young people's whole way of living. Perhaps the family is taking second place now that music is the new god. My friend from Iron Joules agrees: "Music is my life." [Reprinted from *Link*, No 24, March/April 1992]

A VISIT TO PNG'S EAST SEPIK

by Elaine Monds

Our August Tok Blong SPPF featured an article on the SPPF-supported Marasin Meri primary health care programme in the East Sepik region of Papua New Guinea. Marasin Meri is also supported through SPPF by a Victoria, B.C. art gallery, Alcheringa. Elaine Monds of Alcheringa provides this report on her recent visit to the East Sepik.

We arrived in March during the wettest rainy season since 1974. To be certain of arrival date in PNG, one needs to arrive by plane. Any other transportation requires a combination of superior negotiating skills and sheer good luck. Neither seemed to be sufficient in Wewak last March. Before leaving for our visit to villages in Maprik and Wosera, we needed to wrest our packing materials (shipped from Canada) from Customs. This plus rental of a vehicle took us four days and we finally had to settle for a smaller truck than we had hoped to arrange. I should explain that we include Hilda Tutton, my friend and associate at Alcheringa, plus Cletus Yambon, our friend of many years from Korogo village in the mid Sepik River area. There was a dual purpose to our visit. Hilda and I planned to buy Abelam carvings for sale in our gallery. At the same time, we were keen to see an operating marasin meri post.

Maprik is known as a dangerous town but this time, due to a provincial liquor ban, it was a much more peaceful place and felt safer than it had on any previous visit. On arrival we drove to the women's centre. This house was designed in the style of a Sepik meeting house by Lucy Goro's father (a Sepik man). Lucy is the dynamic leader of the women's group in this area. Just one of the purposes of the centre is to accommodate paying guests such as ourselves. We strung up our nets and slept comfortably among several others on the second level. We enjoyed the treat of being able to store our food in a little fridge with a door that wouldn't quite close. As I'm sure the ants would have found a way in anyway, this facility allowed them to come and go at will, the only ants in PNG to enjoy the luxury of air conditioning!

That evening we talked at length with Lucy about the Marasin Meri Programme. She talked of the isolation of many villages and the tragedies that occurred prior to the programme when attempts would be made to convey desperately ill people to the hospital in Maprik; frequently the patient would die before arrival. Now because of the availability of chloroquine, malaria patients could be treated early and many lives saved.

Most villages where marasin meris are active are administered by a village development committee and the marasin meri is a member of this body. Lucy felt that, as a result of the programme, women in this area have a greater sense of empowerment in the community, that they worked together in other village situations with a greater sense of co-operation than before. However, she expressed concern that in recent months men had also been trained as aid givers, which perhaps would not be so threatening in a less male dominated society, but which the women felt could be a veiled attempt to remove their hard won authority in this area. The difficulty of obtaining drugs to refurbish the village medical kits was also a concern. Though we were not able to discover why this was a problem, it seemed to be more than a regional concern. But overriding all was a very clear message that the Marasin Meri programme had done much to lessen suffering at the village level and to enhance the position of women in the community.

Early the next day, we set off among many warnings that the roads were impassable and we would never reach Wosera. The fears were not unfounded; we had mud up to the bottom of the doors and we crossed one partially collapsed bridge. Our driver marched grimly across to test what remained and we proceeded to creep slowly across. Fortunately we went in a large circle and didn't need to retrace our steps. The roads were choked with pedestrians on their way to political rallies for the upcoming national election. Otherwise most frequently sighted were women returning from gardens with back breaking loads of produce and wood.



Photo by Hilda Tutton

Lucy Goro, of the East Sepik Council of Women, Maprik Branch

When we arrived at Kolakim village's aid post, we found that the marasin meri, Robina, was working in the garden. After a few minutes, she arrived with her two small children. She showed us her medicine box, in need of refurbishing, and explained how difficult it was to find time to walk the one and a half hours to the Wambisa Government Centre to obtain supplies which usually lasted two months. This walk could also prove dangerous at times when a liquor ban did not exist. Kolakim had a water tank but it was worn out and empty. Robina received her training in 1987 and so was among the first women to be trained. Lucy feels strongly that these early marasin meris need refresher courses to update skills and provide encouragement. (NB: Refresher courses have been provided since this visit.)

As always when travelling in remote areas of PNG, we had by this time acquired several loquacious companions all wanting to take us somewhere else. So it was that we ended up in the village of Bukibalikm, where there is no aid post as yet. There had been a recent yam stripping and we were able to purchase the finely woven masks made for these yams that grow the size of men. Traditionally these are discarded after use. A great treasure from this village was an exquisite woven headdress used in yam harvest ceremonies. The poverty in this village was worse than any other area that we visited and we were pleased to be able to buy so much and contribute to the local economy. There seemed to be nothing at this time to eat and it was easy to understand why yam rituals had become such a dominant part of this culture.

In Sarikm village, we found some of the exquisite ceramic serving bowls for which this area is famous. This is the home of master carver Niakra Kuarkle, who has a well worn letter from a government official declaring him to be an important artist. How good it will be if eventually notable artists in each village can have a



Aid post at Kolakim village, East Sepik

Photo by Hilda Turton

more permanent way of announcing their status such as a plaque. We are working towards such a goal. Niakra carves intricate and detailed designs into the handle and shaft of cassowary bone daggers. All of this beauty in a barren landscape, made by people who are rarely far from hunger.

In Sarikm, we met one of the newly trained medicine men. In this case the medicine kit was well supplied and of a new design so that the medications could stand upright and labels were easily read. Paul also obtains his medicines from Wambisa Centre, two hours walk from Sarikm. He was trained in 1990, and in this village the water tank is new and overflowing.

On our return to Maprik, I was able to meet with Mark Kupundu, the Primary Health Care Coordinator at the Maprik Hospital and the person in charge of the Marasin Meri programme. He talked of the difficulties of maintaining the programme in areas of such isolation. Maintenance of a vehicle alone is a major expense; we did not need convincing of this. Mark defended the departure from only training women by saying that it was necessary in some cases as men resented the position of leadership achieved by the marasin meri and made it difficult for her to do her job.

That evening over a bowl of deep fried banana chips prepared for us by Lucy's mother, we talked of the importance of the women's centre in the town of Maprik, of how the centre on occasion serves as a haven for victims of domestic violence, and where each morning a pre-school meets and children are being taught in their own regional languages. These children are the fortunate few whose mothers have been reached by the women's literacy programme, launched in several areas in East Sepik Province with enthusiastic support from many women we met.

There can be little doubt that, despite problems that inevitably present themselves when trying to administer a programme in such a remote area with limited experience, the marasin meris have made a major contribution to the lives of villagers in the Maprik and Wosera areas.



Photo by Hilda Turton

Waiting for school to begin at the Women's Centre, Maprik

Conference report WOMEN OF THE PACIFIC: CONFRONTING THE CHALLENGE

by Gayle Nelson

On September 26th, 1992, the Institute for Global Security Studies in Seattle hosted a conference on Pacific women. The title of the conference "Women of the Pacific: Confronting the Challenge" established a framework for participants to discuss shared concerns and common struggles. Within this framework participants were given the opportunity to understand the linkages that exist between women in both developed and developing countries of the Pacific Rim and the Pacific Basin. The objectives of the workshop were "to identify and link the issues and strategies that empower and mobilize women to affect public policy and public consciousness." The four key speakers at the conference galvanized participants with their ideas on those topics. They offered perspectives based on a range of regional and theoretical experience, raising the questions and challenges prominent in their different fields of work:

- **Shaista Shameem**, an Indo-Fijian journalist and film-maker who teaches at the University of Waikato in New Zealand, spoke on "*Strategies to Empower and Mobilize Pacific Women*", using an examination of her films made in collaboration with Indo-Fijian women in Fiji. The goal of the films is to raise consciousness and political awareness among Fijian women in order to empower them to act on their own behalf.
- **Doris Chargualaf**, is a Chamorro woman from the island of Guam who is currently Executive Director of the Bureau of Women's Affairs in the Office of the Governor. She presented a fascinating chronology of the ways in which Chamorro women have maintained their matrilineal ethos in their struggles to resist a succession of colonial oppressors. Her talk was entitled "*Women: Their Impact on Public Policy*"
- **Angela Davis**, U.S. social activist and Professor of History of Consciousness at the University of California at Santa Cruz, delivered a strong statement of solidarity, calling on women to look outside their own borders and understand the common threads of domination and resistance; and
- **Patricia Keays**, an educator and consultant on gender and development who is based in Powell River, British Columbia spoke on "Women in Development". Patricia's discussion provided a historical overview and a dynamic analysis of how development policy has sidestepped women's



strategic interests over the past 3 decades, and how women themselves are mobilizing to have their interest heard and acted on at both global and local levels. This perspective provided an excellent closure to the conference by both recapping and contextualizing the presentations of the prior speakers.

The varied backgrounds of the presenters and their wide-ranging commitment to feminist analysis of the current development processes combined as warp and weft to bring together into a richly textured overall statement on the need for women to work together across the boundaries that separate developed from developing countries. One of the main messages, echoing throughout both the main presentations and the interspersed small group discussions, was that women of the North have a great deal of listening and learning to do from their southern sisters. This learning will allow us to overcome our political naivety and become creative in subverting the power structures which continue to oppress and exploit the natural and physical resources of Pacific countries.

The organizers of the conference attempted to provide an opportunity for women to meet each other and exchange views by structuring small group discussions in between each presentation. This format was positive but unfortunately the day was not long enough to accommodate the packed schedule. While a number of participants expressed some exhaustion, and frustration with the double-booking of their brain power, we were all stimulated by the challenging thoughts presented by the main speakers. The exchange between the diverse group of women and men who attended the conference continued into the evening with a post-conference social hour followed by dinner in the International District.

The thought provoking discussions on the need for collaboration between Pacific women have made a lasting impact on me, and I look forward to the production of the proceedings which are currently being transcribed from audio tape. The entire conference was also video taped and should be available for educational purposes.

For more information on the proceedings, contact the **Institute for Global Security Studies**, 225 N. 70th St., Seattle, WA, USA 98103.



Photo courtesy of Don Cam

The Pitcairn Islands, a British dependency, are one of the most isolated places in the Pacific. The islands number four - Pitcairn, the largest and a high island, Henderson Island and Oueno and Ducie atolls. Its population is tiny, 60 people at most in full time residence, and access to Pitcairn is by boat alone. There is no air strip and no harbour. Visiting ships 'stand to' offshore and supplies and people are landed via the famous Pitcairn longboats, now powered by outboards, or by aircraft supply drops. The most regular form of transport to Pitcairn is a sailing vessel that operates out of Mangareva in French Polynesia. SPPF keeps in touch with Pitcairn through The Pitcairn Miscellany. (available by subscription - about \$10NZ/yr). The video, "Pitcairn: A Gem in the Pacific" (available on a loan/rental basis from our Resource Centre or direct purchase from TIBI Productions) depicts life on Pitcairn. TIBI's Don Cam tells us that another video is in the making and that all filming is done by Pitcairners. TIBI does the marketing and proceeds from sales go to the Pitcairners. The photo, one from a series illustrating an aircraft supply drop, was taken by a Pitcairn resident and sent to SPPF courtesy of Mr. Cam.

Pitcairn's isolation ended this past April 17. On that day the Island Magistrate of Pitcairn made the first telephone call ever out of Pitcairn via the new Inmarsat A Satellite Communications System. You too can use the system! Telephone is 872-144-5372 and fax is 872-144-5373. Ham radio is no longer the only voice contact with the world for the islanders.

Pitcairners protecting their heritage: the Pitcairn Island Scientific Expedition

In 1988 UNESCO accepted the UK Government's proposal that Henderson Island be adopted as a World Heritage site. That was the germ for the recently completed 15-month Pitcairn Island Scientific Expedition involving specific archaeological, flora, fauna, and marine studies of Henderson Island. Ian Hepburn was a member of the expedition team. One of his responsibilities was to prepare a plan to ensure that the unique and important characteristics of the island be protected. SPPF has excerpted the following from an article he wrote for The Pitcairn Miscellany (Vol 34, No 5, May 1992).

Henderson is certainly unique. It probably started life as a volcano and in its present state is a raised coral island. While it has not remained untouched by human activities, its isolation has ensured that alterations from its natural state are limited. As well as being an important island because of its endemic plant and animal communities, it is a valuable cultural and economic resource. Pitcairners continue to harvest tau and miro from the woodlands for their curios. So the main targets of the Henderson Island management plan are to maintain its biological interest and to protect the Islanders' interest in its resources.

The maintaining of the biological interest, the elements which make Henderson unique in the natural world - is easily achieved by preserving its isolation, and by avoiding the introduction of alien species. So far it appears that introduced species have had a limited impact. The greatest damage was done by the Pacific rat, which, in combination with Polynesian hunting, was probably responsible for the extinction of over 5 Henderson bird species. Rats continue to plague the petrels which rest on the island. The more visitors that the island attracts increases the risk of unintentional introduction - that must be guarded against.

Management of miro wood is more complicated and requires specific and positive action. The back woodland of Henderson is the part of the island most influenced by humans. Miro, growing only in certain parts of the island, is introduced as are the pandanus and coconut. Miro stocks are reducing faster than they are replenishing, a combination of more frequent visits by motor powered longboats, more efficient extraction methods, i.e. chainsaws, and poor miro regeneration. There are plenty of seedlings, but survival rates are low. If miro is to continue to be available for harvesting, then stocks must be increased now. As it is a slow growing species, quick government support and action is needed to make regeneration successful.

Public pressure, both from Pitcairn and outside, can influence the final decisions on how well the natural and cultural importance of Henderson will be maintained. In the end, it is those closest to hand who have the most influence - the Pitcairners themselves.

BELAU ELECTION and CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT PROPOSAL

In November voters in Belau elected their new president and also approved a proposal that could clear the way for lifting a ban on transit of nuclear weapons through the country.

Former Vice President Kuniwo Nakamura won the Presidential election defeating Johnson Toribiong by 101 votes. Total count was 4848 votes for Nakamura to 4707 for Toribiong. Sandra Suman Pierantozzi, the first woman to run for executive office in Belau, was defeated in her bid for the Vice-Presidency by former Senator Tommy Remengesau by a margin of 323 votes.

Fourteen of Belau's 16 states voted yes in the referendum on a proposal to ease the rules for amending the nuclear free constitution which prevents storage and transit of nuclear weapons and nuclear powered vessels in the country. Until now, the provision could be overturned only if 75% of voters in a referendum agreed. This proposal asked voters if they wanted the rule changed to a simple majority. Amending the constitution would make for easy passage of the Compact of Free Association, an agreement between the government of Belau and the US that, if signed, would see Belau become an independent country and guarantee extensive US aid in the millions of dollars. Since the early eighties, Belauans have voted a total of 13 times on either amendment of the nuclear free constitution or acceptance of the Compact, the required 75% never having been reached. [From: Pacific Report, Vol 5 No 22, Nov 16/92; Honolulu Star-Bulletin, Nov 12/92.]

EAST TIMORESE RESISTANCE LEADER CAPTURED

Xanana Gusmao, chairman of the National Council of Maubere Resistance and commander of FALINTIL, its armed wing, was arrested in Dili, the capital, by Indonesian soldiers November 20 in a dawn raid in a house belonging to the mother and sister of Abilio Araujo, the Fretilin leader in Portugal. The two women also were arrested as were more than a dozen members of Xanana Gusmao's family. There are reports of hundreds more East Timorese being rounded up. The arrest of the 46-year-old leader has been claimed as a major victory by Indonesian military leaders. Xanana is currently being held under military detention in Denpasar, Bali where he was undergoing 'intense questioning' according to Indonesian authorities. The International Committee of the Red Cross was refused access to Xanana. November 23 Indonesian television footage of Xanana showed him to be in apparent good health. The arrest is being followed closely by many human rights groups, including Parliamentarians for East Timor and Asia Watch.

Even before the arrest of Xanana the situation in East Timor continued to be tense following the October 1991 Santa Cruz massacre. Indonesia's choice of Abilio José Osorio Soares for new governor following the 1991 massacre has been called a sign of impending brutality in the territory. The new governor is reported to have said that a thousand people should have been killed at the Santa Cruz massacre (instead of 273).

Spurred on by an unprecedented condemnation by the UN Subcommission on Human Rights, Indonesia may be preparing to enter into peace talks with Portugal and representatives of East Timor over the future of the territory, which the UN recognizes as a Portuguese colony under illegal Indonesian occupation. [From: Parliamentarians for East Timor, Canada. November 25/92; ETAN/US Vol 17, Nov 20-29/92; The Activist/East Timor Update, October/92; TAPOL, Bulletin No 114.]

TOXIC SOIL BOUND FOR THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

UNOCAL Corporation plans to ship thousands of cubic yards of petroleum-contaminated soil from its Hawaii service stations to a road project in the Marshall Islands, a move that environmentalists say would be the first foreign dumping of U.S. toxic waste in the Pacific. But officials in the Marshall Islands say the shipments are an experiment they hope will solve a chronic shortage of building materials that has resulted in the blasting of reefs surrounding the country. The contaminated soil is to be laid out at Kwajalein to aerate out the petroleum contaminants and then used as fill for a causeway being built between two of the atoll's adjacent islands. According to Thomas Miller, construction administrator in the Kwajalein Atoll Development Authority hydrocarbon contamination from gasoline, diesel, and other petroleum from leading tanks doesn't constitute a hazardous material under US Environmental Protection Agency rules. He also said the contamination is somewhere above the 200 parts per million, four times the safety standards for hydrocarbons in Hawaii. [From: Honolulu Star Bulletin, Nov 12/92; Washington Pacific Report, Vol 11, No 4, Nov 15/92]

PNG AND FIJI CONTRIBUTE TO THE KANAK TRAINING SCHEME

Papua New Guinea has paid the \$F140,000 it promised to kick off a special training scheme for Kanaks living in New Caledonia. Former PNG Prime Minister Rabbie Namaliu floated the idea for the Kanak Fellowship Fund at the 1991 Forum meeting and guidelines for the scheme were endorsed at the 1992 Forum meeting in Honiara. Kanaks will be able to undertake training both in and outside New Caledonia under the scheme being administered by the Forum Secretariat. The aim of the fund is to assist in the social, economic and political development of New Caledonia's

SPPF NEWS UPDATES**SPPF NEWS UPDATES****SPPF NEWS UPDATES**

74,000 Kanaks as the Territory prepares for a crucial national referendum on independence in 1998. Forum members hope that the Fund will open up training opportunities in and outside the region for the Kanak people who represent 44.8% of the population in New Caledonia. The Fund is being seen as complementing efforts by the French Government to assist the development of the New Caledonia people. The Fiji Government has contributed \$50,000 toward the Fund. [From: Forum News, No 6, Sept/92]

BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT IN NEW CALEDONIA

The Kanak-controlled northern province of New Caledonia has become the largest hotel owner in the territory with the purchase in early November of two major Noumea hotels and the Casino Royale. The Northern Province, where the majority of the seats are held by the Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front (FLNKS) has bought a controlling interest in New Caledonia's largest luxury hotel, the 260-room Le Surf Novotel and the Ibis Hotel, along with the Casino Royale. It has purchased a 53% shareholding in SOCABA, which owns the hotels, casino and two other hotels in Waitangi, New Zealand. The purchase was made through the Tourism Investment Company (CIT), a subsidiary of the South Pacific Mining Company (SMSP) which was sold to the Northern Province over two years ago by businessman and conservative political leader Jacques Lafleur. The \$A21 million share purchase was financed largely through profits generated by the SMSP, and was made jointly with the large French hotel group, Accor, which has a 17% holding.

But the purchase has raised the ire of Lafleur, who, along with other Noumea businessmen, was offered a chance to buy the company. He declined, unaware of the FLNKS negotiations. He has described the purchase as unacceptable, as "a perversion of the Matignon Accords" and threatened to take steps to have the purchase overturned.

A statement released by CIT chief executive Raphael Pidjot and Accor's Asia/Pacific General, Manager R. Capdevila, says the investment was made "as part of an international strategy to harmonize tourism development of the interior and the islands using Noumea, the natural entry point of visitors to the Territory." Accor, which is the world's leading hotel group, plans to make New Caledonia an important part of its Asia-Pacific development by allowing the CIT, which owns two smaller hotels in the Northern Province to benefit from the quality hotel links in Noumea.

Lafleur, as President of the Southern Province, has retaliated by issuing regulations to restrict the operating hours of the Casino Royale, with further restrictions scheduled for January 1993. Lafleur's action has led to the suggestion that he wants to destroy the profitability of the casino. In his anger at the purchase, Lafleur has also upset Australian and French authorities by pulling out of a visit to Australia by the three Provincial Presidents and the French High Commissioner, forcing its cancellation. The visit was to promote the well-being of the Matignon Accords in the lead-up to the midterm review, due to be held early in 1993, and to encourage Australian investment in the three provinces of New Caledonia. Instead, Lafleur is warning that the Accords are being seriously undermined by what he has termed "misappropriation of the resources of the Northern and Islands Provinces." He said that under the Accords economic rebalancing was to take place in the North and the Islands through the assistance of taxpayers in the South (where the majority of the Europeans live). Lafleur said this meant that placing the wealth of the North into enterprises in the South was unacceptable "...because it's exactly the opposite of the aim defined together at Matignon, which was, in particular, to create enterprises and jobs in the North and the islands". All political and judicial means will be used to overturn the purchase, Lafleur warned. [From: Pacific Report, Vol 5 No 22, Nov 16/92]

BOUGAINVILLE: RENEWED OFFENSIVE LAUNCHED IN LATE OCTOBER - WINGTI SAYS REBELLION IS "ALL OVER"

The PNG Cabinet has reportedly given the go-ahead for the Department of Defence to "clean-up" central Bougainville, a decision apparently taken while Foreign Affairs Minister John Kaputin was out of the country. He is known to oppose a military solution for Bougainville. While the north and south of the island are to the large extent controlled by the PNG government forces, the centre of the island where the largest number of Bougainvilleans live has been deliberately cut off and isolated. An international church delegation was recently stopped from visiting the central area and the International Red Cross has been prevented over and over again from getting supplies into central Bougainville.

Prime Minister Paias Wingti is slated to visit Bougainville to show support for security force personnel, Government employees and village people. Wingti said PNG troops have been making steady progress since the renewed offensive was launched in late October and that PNG has now gained control of Central Bougainville. This claim has been denied by secessionist spokesman Martin Miriori. Wingti said he would be taking reporters with him on his visit. However, the ABC correspondent and a television crew were thrown out of Bougainville by the military in spite of having permission from the Prime Minister to visit the island. Meanwhile, the UN mission to investigate the situation surrounding the killing of 2 Solomon Islands citizens in October by PNG security forces arrived in Honiara in early November. It was not clear whether the PNG Government would accept a visit to Bougainville of the delegation. [From: Pacific Report, Nov 5, No 21, Nov 2/92; Pacific News Bulletin, Vol 7 No 10, October/92.]

SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM FOCUSES ON ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMIC ISSUES

The 23rd South Pacific Forum meeting in Honiara (July 8-9) was described by some as "one of the best ever". Following the U.N. Conference on Environment and Development, environmental issues were a focus of the meeting. Economic and trade issues, including the importance of enhanced links with Asia, were also discussed. The harmonious nature of the meeting may have reflected avoidance of contentious issues. Bougainville's rebel government had tried to get the Bougainville issue included on the agenda, but were defeated in this attempt. However, controversy was not totally avoided. The decision to include Taiwan in future Post-Forum Dialogue discussions provoked a threat from the People's Republic of China to boycott such sessions in future. While at the Forum, 13 of the 16 members of the Forum Fisheries Agency signed the Niue Treaty on Fisheries Surveillance and Law Enforcement.

[From: Pacific Islands Monthly, Vol 62 No 8, Aug/92; Pacific News Bulletin, Vol 7 No 8, Aug/92; FFA News Digest, No 4/92.]

BELAU REFERENDUM POSTPONED UNTIL NOVEMBER

THE LATEST REFERENDUM ON BELAU'S PROPOSED COMPACT of Free Association with the U.S., scheduled by President Etpison for July 13, was halted when the Belau Supreme Court ruled that only the National Congress had power to set a referendum. The new date of November 4 was approved by both houses of congress and coincides with Belau's general election. Seven previous Compact plebiscites have failed to receive the 75% vote necessary for approval (75% because the Compact would overturn the anti-nuclear provision of Belau's constitution). The newest referendum attempts to negate this requirement, asking Belauans to vote on whether a simple majority should suffice to approve the Compact. If this is approved, an early 1993 vote would be held on the Compact itself.

[From: Pacific Daily News, July 11/92 & Aug 4/92; Washington Pacific Report, Vol 10 No 22, 15/08/92.]

EAST TIMOR: TRIALS AND OTHER DEVELOPMENTS

The widely condemned Indonesian government inquiry into the Dili massacre placed some blame on the military for over-reacting and for not having prevented the demonstration, but assigned most of the blame to East Timorese agitators. This line has continued in a series of trials and other measures that have taken place in recent months. Three officers were dismissed from the armed forces and several others disciplined for laxity in not preventing the demonstration. Ten lower ranking soldiers were given sentences of 8-18 months for actions during the massacre. In contrast to this, East Timorese charged in relation to the Dili demonstration and later protests in Jakarta have received much stiffer sentences. Several people charged with "subversion" re the Dili demonstration have received sentences ranging from five years to life. Two students charged with "subversion" for organising a Jakarta protest received sentences of nine and ten years while others received shorter sentences for "expressing feelings of hostility, hatred or contempt toward the government". While the government's actions have been widely criticised, most Western governments and aid donors have expressed satisfaction with the steps taken. At the new Consultative Group for Indonesia meeting in Paris in July, donor countries and agencies pledged increased aid to Indonesia for 1992-93 of \$4.94 billion. However, while the Bush administration has remained a strong supporter of the Indonesian government, the U.S. Congress has been increasingly critical. A number of bills have been put forward in recent months to sever or curtail U.S. aid. Meanwhile, Jose Ramos Horta, Special Representative of the National Council of Maubere (East Timorese) Resistance, has proposed an immediate ceasefire to be followed by negotiations to establish a 7-12 year period of East Timorese self-government under Indonesia. A referendum on self-government, including the independence option, would be held at the end of this period.

[From: Inside Indonesia, No 31, Jun/92; Pacific News Bulletin, Vol 7 No 6, Jun/92; East Timor Action Network/U.S. Documents on East Timor, Vol 15.]

FRANCE JOINS NUCLEAR NON-PROLIFERATION TREATY...BUT WILL TESTING RESUME?

The French government has followed up its suspension of nuclear weapons testing by finally joining the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). The French National Assembly approved the NPT on May 20 and accession documents were filed on August 3. The decision marks a sharp change in French government policy since the 1960s and likely reflects the Socialist Government's efforts to court the Green vote in upcoming national elections. However, the government is apparently under strong pressure from the French military and others to resume nuclear weapons testing in 1993. A number of French military and Atomic Energy Commission officials have gone public in recent weeks with calls for a resumption of testing.

[From: Newscler Notes from France, Nos 5 & 6, Jun & Jul/92; Vanuatu Weekly, 08/08/92.]

SPPF RESOURCES

focusing on youth

PRINT MATERIALS & BOOKS

Youth Link. Quarterly newsletter from the South Pacific Commission, BP D5, Noumea CEDEX, New Caledonia. Editor: Jean Tuarae, Youth and Adult Education Programme. Covers the whole Pacific, therefore a good overview of regional programmes and initiatives. Also offers health information, resources and publications information. 20 pp.

Link. Bimonthly newsletter of the Solomon Islands Development Trust. While not focusing solely on youth, the subjects dealt with are of direct concern to them. An excellent and topical publication on the Solomon Islands.

Truk Suicide Epidemic and Social Change. Francis X. Hezel, S.J. Research paper published in Human Organization, Vol 46, No 4, 1987. 5 pp. Also see other papers by Hezel.

Truk State Runaway Study. Mariano N. Marcus and Martin Doyle, S.J. Youth Link and Micronesian Seminar. 1986. Working paper. 19 pp.

Pacific Studies. Special Issue: Domestic Violence in Oceania. Ed. Dorothy Ayers Counts. Vol 13, No 3, July 1990. 302 pp.



AUDIO VISUALS

Stap Isi (Take It Easy): 30 min. 1989. VHS/NTSC. In Tok Pisin with English subtitles. A teaching video to reduce violence in the family in PNG. Rental bookings through SPPF.

Em i Graun Blong Yumi: (This is Our Land) Popular Theatre and the Melanesian Environment. 59 min. VHS/NTSC NOW ON SALE AT SPPF - NTSC copies \$60 each or rent it from SPPF. (In the Pacific, buy PAL or NTSC versions directly from CUSO Vanuatu, PO Box 158, Port Vila, Vanuatu). Broadcast quality. Available in French or English. Highlights the work of Seil Akson Tim in Solomon Islands, Wan Smol Bag Theatre in Vanuatu and Raun Isi Theatre with the National Theatre of PNG. *Environment is the key theme. Youth are the messengers.* Excellent.

****Conference****

Constitution Building and Indigenous Rights: A South Pacific Perspective

Organized by the Centre for Asia-Pacific
Initiatives and the South Pacific Peoples
Foundation of Canada

Friday January 22, 1993
9:00 am - 5:00 pm

University of Victoria Senate Chamber

Keynote speakers

Randall Garrison:

*"Indigenous Rights and Decolonization
Professor Yash Ghai:*

*"Ethnicity and Democracy:
The Asia Pacific Experience"*

Prior Registration Required

Call (604)721-7020 or fax (604)721-3107

Registration is free but numbers are limited.
Provide name, address, affiliation and
phone/fax numbers with registration.

announcing the publication of:

Island Boy: An Autobiography

by Tom Davis Pa Tuterangi Ariki

Published by the Institute of Pacific Studies,
University of the South Pacific

"A great man of the Pacific - from Rarotonga to Harvard to medical researcher to Prime Minister of the Cook Islands, Sir Tom expresses his views clearly, and admits what he failed to achieve or wished he had done differently. His power of description.... is tremendous."

advance notice

1993 Pacific Networking Conference
and
NFIP meeting

Globalization and Development:
A South Pacific Perspective

May 7,8 and 9, 1993 (tentative date)



GRASS-ROOTS LITERACY PROGRAMMES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE

Literacy and Young People in the Changing Pacific Community was the topic at a recent conference jointly sponsored by the Commonwealth Youth Programme/South Pacific Centre and the Baha'i International Community in Nadi, Fiji this past October.

Delegates from 17 Pacific countries focused on grass-roots literacy programmes for young people. Most participants were already involved in small-scale village literacy programmes and were thus able to share their vast experience. Among the topics of discussion was the problem of obtaining resources and technical assistance at the local and national level. The question of the irrelevance of many formal education policies and curricula which are exam-oriented was also dealt with. It was apparent to delegates that formal education as such produces a narrow mentality which sees proficiency in a foreign language, mathematics and the sciences as the only key to success. Delegates working on literacy programs at grass-roots level are actually providing an alternative for children and young people who are being pushed out of the formal system and are classified as failures. The delegates stressed the need to standardize the measurement of literacy levels throughout the region so that useful comparisons can be made between countries and effective programmes can be implemented. They also acknowledged the value of culture, custom and traditional values in any education system and that these must have a central place in any literacy programme.

[Information courtesy of H.G. Alatoa, Regional Director, CYP South Pacific Centre, c/ USP, Box 1168, Suva, Fiji]

Send a bit of the Pacific to a friend through a gift subscription to Tok blong SPPF

Enclosed is my donation of \$25 for a gift subscription to:

Name _____
Address _____
_____ Postal Code _____



I want to support SPPF. Enclosed is my donation in the amount of:

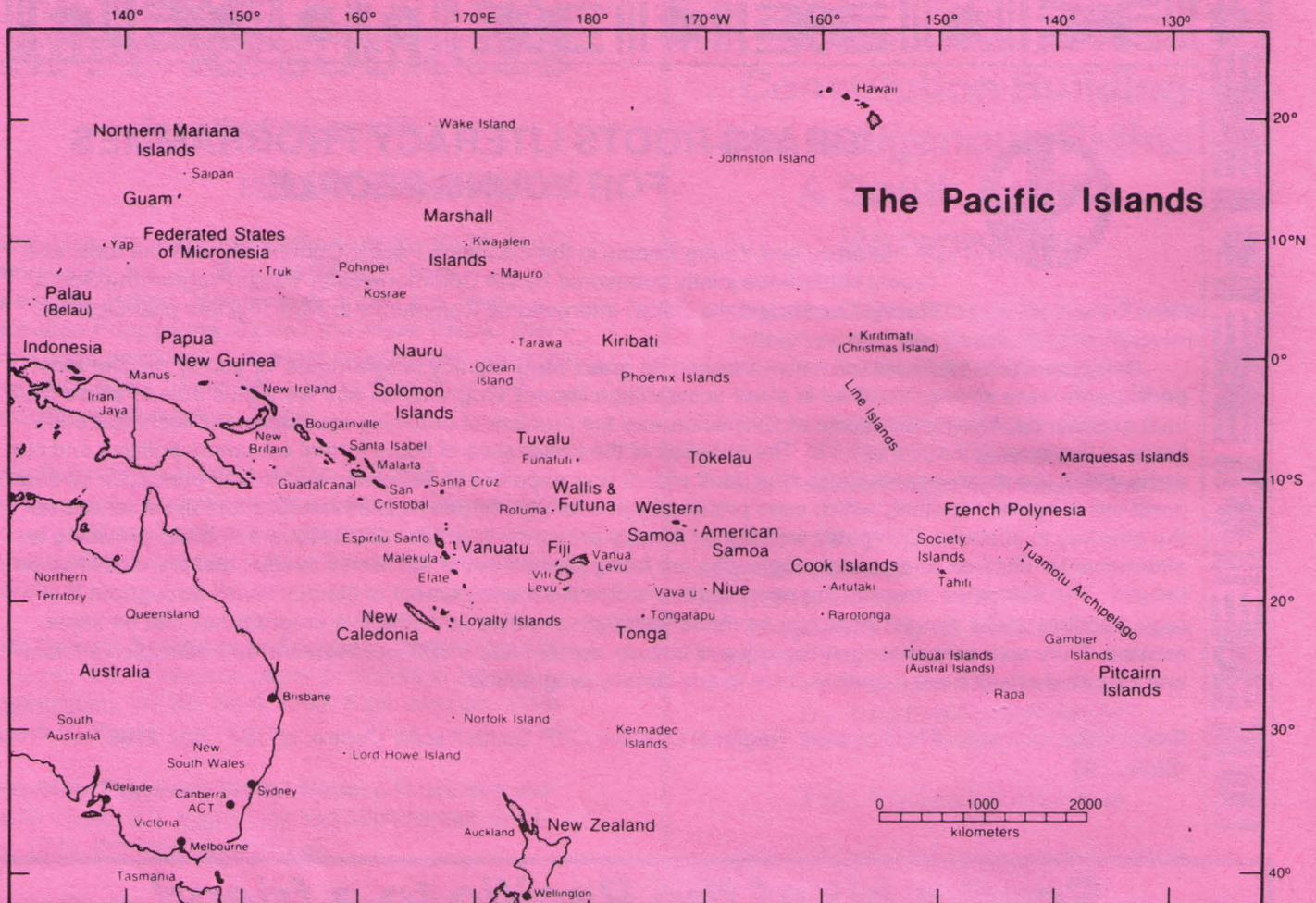
\$35 \$45 \$100 \$200 \$500 Other \$ _____

Please direct my donation to:

- education programmes
 overseas programmes
 the area which SPPF feels is most in need of funds

Name _____
Address _____
_____ Postal Code _____ Telephone _____

(SPPF is a registered charity. Canadian donations are tax deductible.)



Strong Families Sought For South Pacific Research Project

Suva, Fiji --- People who live in strong families -- good families, emotionally healthy families, happy families in which people feel good about themselves and each other -- are encouraged to write the University of the South Pacific and tell their story.

"We have been studying strong families around the world for more than 15 years now," said Dr. John DeFrain at USP. More than 10,000 people in 24 countries have participated. But, to date, no study has focused on the strengths of families in the South Pacific. DeFrain is seeking family members in 22 Pacific island countries.

"If you feel good about your family, please write me a letter, like you were writing a friend. Tell me why your family is so special. Answer the following four questions:

1. Who are the members of your family, and in what kind of community do you live? How old are the family members? What do family members do for a living? Give me a good picture in words of what your family is like.
2. What are the strengths of your family? What makes your family a good, healthy family? Please write each strength down, and a paragraph or two explaining each strength.
3. What are the challenges or problems your family faces in life? In other words, what are some things that you would like to see change?
4. Please write a story which best illustrates the strengths of your family, that is to say, why your family is such a good one.

You may find after writing about your family that you want to keep what you have written. Please send a copy to: Dr. John DeFrain, University of the South Pacific, P.O. Box 1168, Extension Services, Continuing Education, Suva, Fiji.



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, 415-620 View Street, Victoria, B.C., CANADA V8W 1J6.