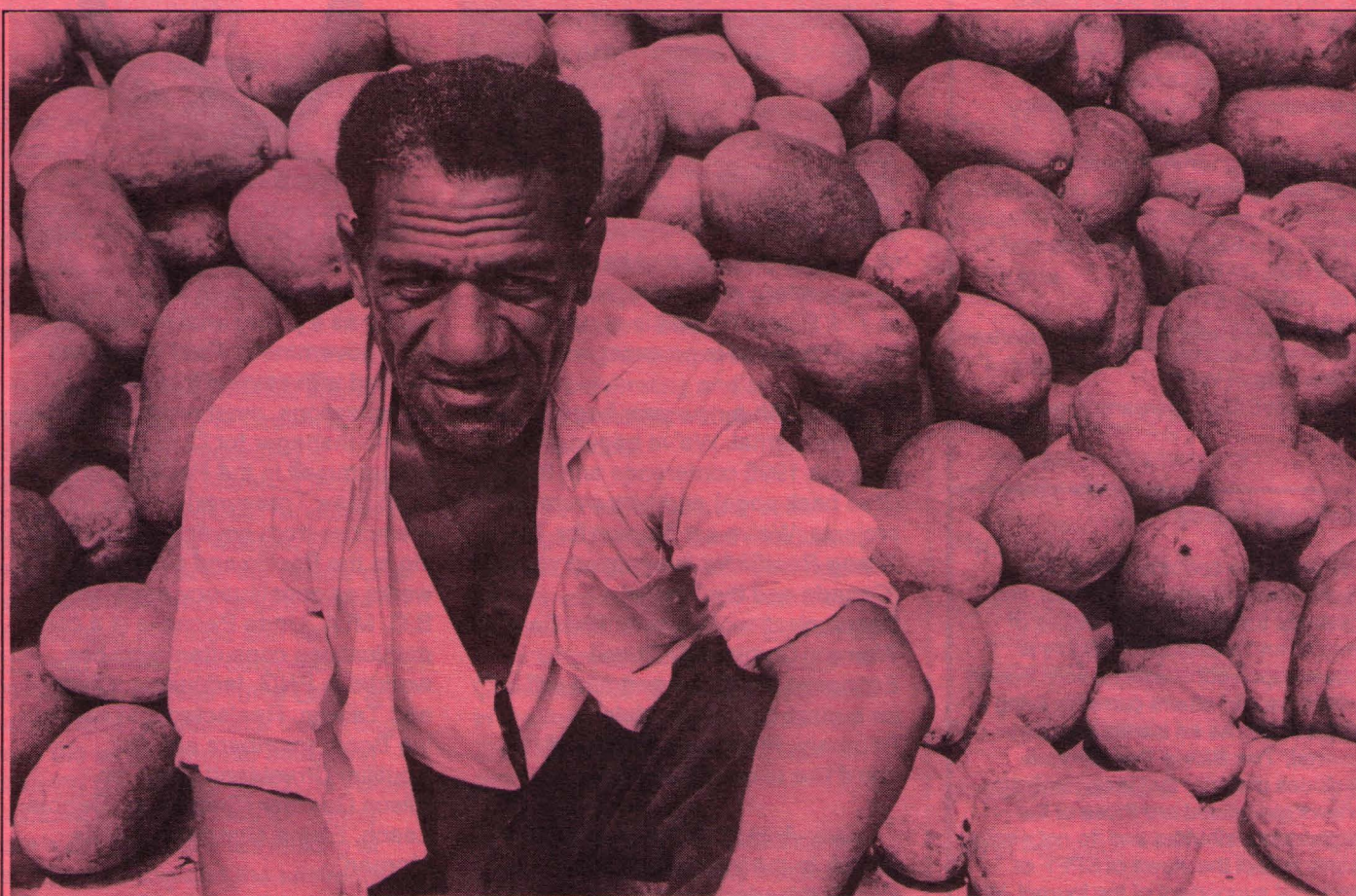


Tok Blong Pasifik

***A Quarterly of News and Views
on the Pacific Islands***

August/November 1994, #48

Victoria, BC, Canada



Watermelons, marketplace, Nukalofa, Tonga

BT Squire

Featuring ...Jeremia Tabai on "The South Pacific Forum and the New World Order"
...A Nuclear Waste Dump for the Marshalls?
...Waste Management through Mushroom Cultivation
...Environmental Education and Squash Farming in Tonga
...Women, Land and Custom in Vanuatu
...Art and Cultural Affirmation
...Life in Pitcairn and Kiribati

About this journal...

Tok Blong Pasifik is a phrase in Pidgin, a language used in parts of the Pacific. A rough equivalent in English would be "news from the Pacific". **Tok Blong Pasifik** is published by the South Pacific Peoples Foundation of Canada. SPPF's major aim is to promote awareness of development, social justice, environment and other issues of importance to the peoples of the Pacific Islands. Through the journal, we hope to provide readers with a window on the Pacific that will foster understanding and promote action in support of Islanders in their struggles for development and social justice. SPPF gratefully acknowledges financial support for **Tok Blong Pasifik** from the Canadian International Development Agency.

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Editorial Policy

We welcome contributions to the journal and readers' comments, suggestions for articles and notices of events and materials. A priority is placed upon contributions from Pacific Islanders and others currently living in the Islands. As an issues based journal, **Tok Blong Pasifik** often includes material that is contentious. Views expressed are those of the authors/contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of SPPF or financial supporters of the journal. We reserve the right to edit material.

Subscription Rates

Subscription is by annual donation to SPPF of at least the following amount: Subscribers in Canada should remit a minimum donation of \$15 for students, \$25 for individuals and \$40 for organisations; all other subscribers should remit a minimum donation of US\$15, US\$25 or US\$40 as appropriate.

SPPF Update

A Busy Year ends...Another begins

With over 70 educational events and activities in 1993-94, four issues of the journal, numerous requests for information and an unprecedentedly well attended Pacific Networking Conference, we can look back on a very productive year. We also supported the efforts of our Pacific partners, funding literacy training with the PNG Integral Human Development Trust, soliciting funds for the Pacific Concerns Resource Centre, profiling the activities of many groups in the journal and assisting with requests for information and other support. On the negative side, we continued to struggle with inadequate funding and capacity in the face of escalating demands on SPPF. We fell behind on several projects and have lapsed into a pattern where the publication of **Tok Blong Pasifik** is regularly late. This issue is no exception.

Still, with a new year hope springs eternal. We've begun planning our 1995 conference and tour (See back page) and new overseas projects. We've set themes for **Tok Blong Pasifik** for the coming year (Canada and the Pacific; Decolonisation; Voices of Pacific Women; Community Based Economic Development) and will be on a more timely schedule by February. Please get in touch if you'd like to contribute.

July-August provided a hectic launch to the year, with many Pacific Islanders visiting Victoria under the auspices of other groups. SPPF took advantage of this with events of our own, including very successful evenings with the Narasirato Are'Are Panpipe group from Solomon Islands and the Mapuapua Dance Troupe from Cook Islands.

Our annual meeting in October saw the election of four new Board members. Vicky Berry took an



interest in Pacific issues while working for the World Council of Churches in Geneva; she now works as a policy analyst with the B.C. government. Paul Finkel has worked with several international organisations, most recently serving as the manager for CUSO's programmes in the Pacific. Tony Gibb (new Treasurer) retains fond memories from several years of sailing in the Pacific and currently works as constituency assistant to a B.C. MLA. Linda Pennells is a communications consultant who has worked in PNG, Indonesia, China and Taiwan. Reelected and continuing Board members are Jim Boutilier (President), Eta Epp, Alison Gardner (Secretary), Debbie Leach, Elaine Monds and Chris Morgan.

Our work would not be possible without the support of our members, donors, subscribers and volunteers. We thank you all and look forward to your continued support and involvement. We'd also like to thank the Canadian International Development Agency, which has renewed its crucial financial support to SPPF for another year.

Stuart Wulff for SPPF

Something for Everyone?

In This Issue....

An August/November issue? We've finally bitten the bullet. Previous issues of *Tok Blong Pasifik* have fallen increasingly behind schedule. We decided to do a combined issue for August and November to get back on track. February will be an expanded issue to make up for this temporary decrease in your *Tok Blong* diet.

For those with an interest in the political scene, we are pleased to offer an article by Ieremia Tabai, Secretary General of the South Pacific Forum, on "The South Pacific Forum and the New World Order". Mr. Tabai examines the implications of changing global realities for the Pacific Islands region.

On the environmental theme, Bunny McDiarmid of Greenpeace raises concerns regarding a proposal that the Marshall Islands might become a global repository for high level nuclear wastes. Enrico Neri Imperio shares the results of a successful attempt to turn waste newspaper into food and cash through mushroom cultivation. SPPF also profiles Tukia Lepa, an environmental educator from Tonga, and the environmental education training programme which he visited Victoria to attend. Also on Tonga are a couple of articles looking at squash farming and the environmental issues arising from this farming.

A loose thread linking many articles is their origin in recent visits to Victoria by South Pacific people. Eileen Ligo contributed an article on "Land Use and Custom in Vanuatu" while Andy Lynch spoke about efforts in Vanuatu to address the issue of violence against women. Many of the visitors are active in the arts and cultural expression. Albert Wendt talked with SPPF about



Pacific literature. Members of the Narasirato Are'Are Panpipe group and Mapuapua Dance Troupe talked about the importance of maintaining, celebrating and sharing their cultures in the face of pervasive outside influences.

One Pacific Islander even managed to make local headlines. Marcus Stephens' triple gold medal performance at the Commonwealth Games made him one of the few athletes to break the Australian and Canadian lock on Games headlines in the local media. The article from the *Times-Colonist* newspaper is reprinted on Page 5.

Rounding out the selection are a short article on literacy training in Papua New Guinea, an overview of life on Pitcairn Island and a couple of articles from students in Kiribati.

We decided to make a change to our format starting with this issue. The news updates that have been featured at the back of *Tok Blong Pasifik* will now appear at the front (Page 7-10 in this issue). Book reviews and resource notices will continue to be carried at the back of the journal.

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Letters to the Editor

Concerns Raised About Book Review

As an issues focused journal, *Tok Blong Pasifik* often includes contributions that are contentious and which may on occasion give offence to some parties. Contributions to the journal reflect the views of the author(s) and are not a statement of the views or position of SPPF. However, it is also our policy to provide reasonable space to an offended or disagreeing party to provide a rebuttal in the form of a letter to the editor or an article with an alternative viewpoint. A book review in the May 1993 edition of our journal made allegations which are disputed by colleagues of the author and which gave offense to those individuals. We are thus providing space to these individuals to rebut several points in the book review. The writers of the letter have expressed a concern that SPPF's printing of the book review has potentially damaged their reputations and affected their research interests in the Pacific. SPPF regrets any damage that may have been inadvertently caused by our printing of the book review.

Dear Editor:

In its May 1993 issue, *Tok Blong SPPF* published a 'book review' by Dr. Shaista Shameem. This publication referred to anthropologists in an unnamed university department in New Zealand.

As colleagues of Dr. Shameem in that department, and as the unwilling subjects of her 'review', we are concerned that many of her claims about us are inaccurate and incomplete. Because Dr. Shameem does not seem willing to publish internationally any retraction or apology, in the interests of academic fairness we request *Tok Blong SPPF* to

publish without editorial amendment this response to her accusations.

Comment on four main issues, in the order in which they originally appeared, is appropriate:

1. Dr. Shameem alleges that the former professor (who retired in late 1990) 'had barely settled into his comfortable retirement when the department slowly and inexorably began to split into two sections - sociology and anthropology. Within two years (ie. by 1992), the two sides were, farcically, teaching the same subject matter under different prefixes without making any attempt to discuss the parameters of either knowledge base or to critically examine the overlap' (p.28).

There is some dispute about when, precisely, this division between Sociology and Anthropology began, but two points are more important here. Firstly, there has only ever been one case of 'the two sides' of Dr. Shameem's department 'teaching the same subject matter under different prefixes'. According to the computerized records of the university concerned, undergraduate Economic Sociology was taught from 1976 and Economic Anthropology from 1989, well before the former professor's retirement. Outlines for the courses Anthropology of Gender and Sociology of Sex, both established in 1991, demonstrate that their subject matters were quite different. Had this not been the case, Dr. Shameem herself would have been guilty of precisely the behaviour she complains of, since she established and taught Sociology of Sex in the department from 1991 to 1993.

Secondly, the new professor assumed duty in Dr. Shameem's department in August 1992. Four months later, the department had agreed to a total restructuring of its majors in both Sociology and Social Anthropology, in which past

overlaps in teaching were removed and new, joint courses with contributions from both disciplines were created (including 'Economy and Society'). By April 1993, presumably when Dr. Shameem wrote her 'review', this restructuring had already been approved by the department and the faculty-level Board of Studies and was before the appropriate central university committee for approval. In 1994 it was implemented. Dr. Shameem was well aware both of the content of the restructuring and of the approval processes, but did not mention in her 'review' such fundamental changes in departmental philosophy and practice.

In her department, reputedly long beset by dispute and conflict, the publication of Dr. Shameem's 'review' risks fracturing the difficult process of reconstructing relationships of trust among colleagues.

2. Dr. Shameem claims that her experience 'was the most direct experience of racism I have had in New Zealand' (p.28). While such an accusation realistically can be neither proved nor disproved, we nevertheless completely and utterly reject it. In this particular instance, we suggest, the charge of 'racism' belongs more to the realm of fiction than it does to that of fact.

3. On p.29 of her 'review', Dr. Shameem writes: 'About two years ago (ie. mid 1991), again in my department, an anthropologist now "moving into" Melanesia exhibited large photographs of Melanesian men in loincloths.' It is unclear to us whether this reference is to the 40 X 60cms photographs taken in the early 1960s by the former professor, or possibly to the 8 X 11cms ones taken in 1990 by a younger colleague. Both sets showed men in ceremonial Highlands dress (not colonial 'loincloths') as examples of the continuity both of cultural display and of the department's research

interests in Papua New Guinea. The 1990 photographs were taken at the request of their subjects, who subsequently received prints.

4. There is an implied link between her reference to photographs and Dr. Shameem's later (p.29) statement that 'A Melanesian expert in my department recently went to Papua New Guinea without a permit.' In the department, following the retirement of the former professor, only one member has a real interest in PNG and is obviously the subject of this particular claim.

From August to October 1992, the unnamed anthropologist in question was in fact formally affiliated as a research associate with the parastatal National Research Institute in Boroko. Although it is technically correct that he actually arrived in Papua New Guinea without a research permit, research clearance was arranged on his arrival. The Institute recently published his two papers, arising from the research he did as their associate, as "The Informal Sector and Household Production in Papua New Guinea" (NRI Discussion Paper no. 71, ISBN 9980750553). The implication that he undertook research without official knowledge or permission is incorrect. It is damaging to his reputation (he was informed of Dr. Shameem's publication by colleagues in PNG, who identified him from what she wrote) and potentially to the research interests of all anthropologists working in the Pacific, not only those from New Zealand universities.

Keith Barber, Lecturer
Angela Cheater,
Professor
Wendy Cowling,
Lecturer
Edward Te Kohu
Douglas, Senior
Lecturer
Ngapare Hopa,
Associate Professor
Judith Macdonald,
Lecturer
Tom Ryan, Lecturer.

Japanese Groups Challenge Pro-Nuclear Tour

Dear Editor,

From October 4-9, an invitation-
al seminar was held for government
officials from several South Pacific
countries including Australia, Cook
Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, PNG, Vanuatu
and the Marshall Islands. This semi-
nar was sponsored by the Science
and Technology Agency, Foreign
Ministry and Ministry of International
Trade and Industry of the Govern-
ment of Japan. All expenses includ-
ing return airfare and hotel
accommodations were covered by
the Japanese government and the
Foundation for the Promotion of
Nuclear Power.

The seminar included visits to
the new fast breeder reactor and
other Japanese nuclear power
plants. Two years ago, there was
strong opposition to the ship Akat-
suki Maru, which brought plutonium
extracted from nuclear waste from
Japanese nuclear plants back to
Japan, crossing the Pacific. Accord-
ing to an article in the 10 October
1994 *Asahi Shimbun*, the Science
and Technology Agency believes
that the "opposition came from ig-
norance about nuclear power"; the
seminar was planned to educate
government officials concerned with
energy and/or environmental issues.

The same article quotes par-
ticipants as saying that the seminar
was "a waste of time and money"
and that it involved only "one-way
explanations and advertising about
nuclear power". Participants also
said there "was not enough time for
questions" and that, when they at-
tempted to ask questions during the
power plant tour, they were told that
"there are no experts available to
answer questions at this time" or
were rushed off to something else.

Just prior to the seminar, an
article ran in the Osaka *Asahi Shim-
bun*. Japanese individuals and
groups opposed to nuclear power
and the transport of nuclear substan-
ces through the Pacific wrote the

following letter opposing the tour
and went to the hotels where
participants were staying to give
them a different viewpoint. But the
Japanese government did not allow
discussions with local citizens.

We are very concerned about
the government's nuclear policy and
its implications for the safety of the
entire region. We are sending this
letter to convey to the people of the
Pacific that there are many people
in Japan, including experts in the
field, who are opposed to the posi-
tion of the Japanese government
with regard to nuclear issues.

For further information, you can
contact:

Ronni Alexander FAX: 81-78-803-
0260.

Citizens Nuclear Information Cen-
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Plutonium Action Network Kyoto
FAX: 81-375-702-1952

Sincerely,
Ronni Alexander, Ph.D.
Professor of International Relations
Kobe University

Letter to:

The Honorable KONO Yohei, Mini-
ster of Foreign Affairs
The Honorable HASHIMOTO
Ryutaro, Minister of Internation-
al Trade and Industry
The Honorable TANAKA Makiko,
Director General, Science and
Technology Agency

We first learned that the
Japanese government was planning
to invite government officials from
the Pacific Island Countries to at-
tend an 'SPF Seminar' and tour
nuclear power plants from an article
in the evening edition of the *Asahi
Shimbun* on 1 October 1994.

In the article, the Science and Technology Agency's Nuclear Fuel Division Director Moriguchi was quoted as saying "the purpose of the seminar has nothing to do with Japan's nuclear power policy, but is rather designed to enable the participants to deepen their understanding of nuclear power from a neutral perspective."

When Japan transported plutonium through the region in 1992-93, opposition and concern was voiced throughout the Pacific. This invitational tour is clearly related not only to Japan's plans to begin the ocean transport of high level nuclear waste next spring, but also to long term plans concerning the processing of spent fuel abroad. In particular, it is clearly a strategy of persuasion being used in an attempt to stem opposition related to plans for 100-200 trips to transport plutonium, depleted uranium, high and low level nuclear waste and other nuclear products over the next 10-15 years.

If in fact the government is truly taking a "neutral perspective", then it naturally follows that the seminar should not merely advertise nuclear power, but should address the dangers as well. Delegates should be given a chance to meet people who represent views different from those of the Japanese government and who are concerned about and opposed to nuclear power.

We therefore express our strong opposition to the invitational tour and call on the government to create an opportunity for us to meet and talk with delegates during their stay in Japan. In addition, according to the same newspaper article, "the Pacific countries said they were anxious to learn from Japan". This expression implies that the present tour was held at the request of the Pacific Island countries and we would very much like to know the basis for this implication.

There is not much time left before the Pacific Island government officials leave Japan, so we

would like to hear from you immediately as to when we can meet with them.

Citizens Nuclear Information Center
Japan Catholic Committee for
Justice and Peace
Anti-Nuclear Pacific Center Tokyo
Plutonium Action Network Kyoto
ODA Study Group
Ogiso Miwako (Fukui Prefecture
Citizens Against Nuclear Power
Plants)
Kansai Electric Co. Customers for
Non-Nuclear Power
Asia Pacific Microstate Study Group
Ronni Alexander (Professor, Kobe
University)

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photo by Shimada Kei

Protesting the construction of the facility at Rokkasho-Mura

"The world's largest nuclear facility is now under construction in Rokkasho-Mura, a village at the neck of the Shimokita Peninsula on the northern tip of Japan's main island, Honshu. The facility is made up of four parts: a fuel reprocessing plant, which is the core of the nuclear fuel cycle; a uranium enrichment plant; a low level waste disposal facility; and a high level waste storage center."

"Much of the power generated from nuclear plants provides electricity for the major cities like Tokyo, but it is not the residents of the megalopolis who have to bear the burden of living with the waste; it is people in isolated communities. This is a form of environmental racism." [AMPO Special Issue. Vol 25 No 2. *Nuclear Curse: A Report from Rokkasho-Mura* by Shimada Kei]

Palau Celebrates Independence; UN Terminates Trusteeship Status

The Republic of Palau became independent on October 1, bringing to an end the long process of repeated votes on a Compact of Free Association with the US. The Independence Day festivities drew large crowds and representatives of other countries. The Compact grants Palau's "independence", but in an association with the US which gives the US important rights in exchange for financial support to Palau. These rights, particularly those regarding a potential US military presence and US takeover of local lands, led to Compact defeats in numerous referenda over the past decade. While a change in voting requirements led to Compact approval in the latest vote, opposition to the arrangement remains significant. Even many supporters of the Compact regard the new status as quasi-independence, but the best that could be obtained given US control over Palau. There is also concern that the US financial support is for 15 years while the US rights are for 50. Despite these concerns, independence and the Compact are now a fait accompli, a fact recognised by the UN Security Council when it officially terminated Palau's status as a UN Trust Territory on November 10. [From: Palau Gazette, No 21, Sep 30/94; Pacific News Bulletin, 9:11, Nov/94; Europe-Pacific Solidarity Bulletin, 2:8, Dec/94]

Papua New Guinea Gets New Prime Minister, Faces Financial Crisis

Sir Julius Chan is the new prime minister of PNG, replacing Paias Wingti. He was elected by Parliament on August 30, defeating former Parliamentary speaker, Bill Skate. The vote followed the decision by the PNG Supreme Court that Paias Wingti's engineered reelection by Parliament in September of last year was invalid due to procedural irregularities [See

Tok Blong Pasifik #45]. In the subsequent political manoeuvring, Wingti was forced to concede that he didn't have the support for reelection and withdrew his candidacy. Chan secured victory when his Peoples' Progress Party joined forces with Opposition parties. Former Opposition leader Chris Haiveta of the Pangu Party is the new deputy prime minister and minister of finance and planning, while former Pangu Party leader and prime minister, Rabbie Namaliu, is Parliamentary speaker. Chan retained the foreign affairs and trade portfolio for himself. Chan was prime minister from 1980-82 and has been a key figure in coalition governments since then, including serving as deputy prime minister in the recent Wingti Government. Chan said that his initial priorities as prime minister would be to restore fiscal discipline, resolve the Bougainville crisis (see next story) and restore discipline and control to the PNG Defence Forces. Chan and Haiveta were left little time to savour their victory before having to confront the increasing crisis in PNG's financial situation. The Wingti Government has been running massive deficits. The crisis has forced the new government to first devalue and then float the kina. The government has also moved to sell off assets, including investments in mining and oil projects, and raise taxes. [From: Post-Courier, Aug 26/94 and Aug 31/94; PNG Times, Sep 8/94; Pacific Report, 7:16, Sep 1/94; PNG Times, Oct 13/94; Pacific Report, 7:21, Nov 15/94]

Bougainville: Ups and Downs for Peace Process Although hopes for peace in Bougainville were raised by the Arawa Peace Conference and by the recent signing of The Charter of Mirigini, the continued impasse between the PNG government and the Bougainville interim Government remains a major issue.

Key representatives of the secessionist movement were not present at the Arawa Peace Conference due to fears for their safety. The agreement signed between BRA military commander Sam Kauona and Prime minister Julius Chan provided for all combat forces in Bougainville to maintain static positions, but rebel leader Francis Ona and his deputy Joseph Kabui reportedly refused to attend the conference unless every PNG soldier was first withdrawn from the island.

The Charter of Mirigini signed by the PNG Prime Minister and a group of Bougainville leader, outlines a process for a transitional Bougainville government to act as a constituent assembly, review the provincial Constitution, and begin discussion with the national Government to establish a new government structure for Bougainville. Prime Minister Julius Chan said the Charter builds on the resolutions of the Arawa Conference.

The Bougainville Interim Government is not a signatory to the Charter and representatives of the Interim Government say that until the Interim Government is included, the Charter is doomed to failure.

The conflict in Bougainville has added to the PNG national deficit. Former Minister of Finance and Planning, Masket langalio has said that the current government has budgeted only K10 million for the normalization process when the costs of the process have already reached K60 million per year. [From: Pacific Report, Vol 7, Nos 20 (Oct 31/94) and 21 (Nov 15/94)]

Mamaloni Back as Solomons Prime Minister Solomon Mamaloni began his third term as Prime Minister after defeating former Governor General Sir Beddeley Devesi in the November 8 parliamentary election called after the October 31 resignation of PM Francis Billy Hilly. Hilly resigned after two weeks of

constitutional crisis brought on when current Governor General Moses Pitakaka tried to dismiss Hilly, on grounds that he no longer commanded a majority government in the 47-member Parliament, and appoint Opposition Leader Mamaloni in his place. Hilly, while acknowledging that he no longer had majority support in Parliament, had refused to step down arguing that only Parliament could revoke his mandate, a view ultimately upheld by the courts. In his resignation speech to Parliament, Hilly stated that there were strong grounds for suspicion by the Government that apart from elected politicians there were "external elements" and certain local interest groups that sought to bring down his government. He was perhaps referring to opposition to his Government's tightening of controls over logging practices, especially controls on export of raw logs. [From: Pacific Report, Vol 7, Nos 20 (Oct 31/94) and 21 (Nov 15/94)]

Kiribati Elections Bring Major Shift The National Progress Party of President Teatao Teannaki was the big loser in the Kiribati election (held in two rounds on July 22 and July 29). The NPP Government fell in a vote of non-confidence in May. Of the 39 seats in Parliament, only 8 were retained by the NPP; 5 Government ministers lost their seats. The Maneaban Te Mauri group, a coalition of two opposition parties, won a majority of seats. The new Parliament met in mid-August and selected four candidates for president in a September 30 election. Teburoro Tito, a former school teacher, won by a landslide, winning more votes than the other three candidates combined. He assumed office on October 1. [From: Pacific Report, Vol 7: Nos 15 (Aug 15/94), 16 (Sep 1/94) and 18 (Oct 3/94)]

South Pacific Forum Addresses Resource Management Under the theme of "Managing Our Resources", the 25th South Pacific Forum meeting was held in Brisbane at the beginning of August. Leaders of the 15 member countries agreed to develop a multilateral approach to negotiating access to fisheries resources in the Islands with "distant water fishing nations". It was also agreed that catch levels should be set at sustainable levels and that the Forum Fisheries Agency should be strengthened to ensure more effective management of fisheries resources. Leaders of the timber producing countries (PNG, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji, New Zealand, Australia) decided that an enforceable code of conduct should be developed to control logging in the region. The urgent need to increase monitoring of logging operations was noted and Forum leaders commended recent moves by Vanuatu and Solomon Islands to halt unsustainable logging practices. Logging companies from Malaysia, Indonesia and Korea were singled out for strong criticism. Australian Prime Minister Paul Keating offered the Solomons A\$2 million towards its structural adjustment programme in return for a ban on all logging in the Marovo Lagoon area. The importance of private sector development, economic diversification and increased trade were noted as means to address development in Pacific Island economies. The leaders also agreed to look at possibilities for a regional rationalisation of air services, with Australia's Keating noting that regional airline losses equalled the combined aid coming into the region from Australia and New Zealand. While most assessments of the meeting were positive, there was some criticism. Tuvalu Prime Minister Kamuta Lataasi and Greenpeace were critical of the Australian and New Zealand governments for not lowering their

countries' levels of greenhouse gas emissions. Keating responded with a harsh attack on Greenpeace. The focused theme approach was credited for the productive quality of the meeting, but also criticised for consigning important regional issues such as the Bougainville conflict to silence. [From: Pacific Report, 7:15, Aug 15/94; Pacific News Bulletin, 9:8, Aug/94; Globe & Mail, Aug 3/94]

Tabai Reappointed as Forum Secretary General; Forum Granted UN Observer Status Ieremia Tabai has been reappointed to a second three year term as secretary general of the South Pacific Forum. The Forum will also have a permanent observer seat in the United Nations General Assembly as the result of a consensus resolution at this year's meeting of the General Assembly. [From: Pacific Report, 7:15, Aug 15/94; Pacific News Bulletin, 9:11, Nov/94]

Canada Announces Major Pacific Aid Programme The long period of uncertainty regarding the future of Canada's programme of ocean development aid to the Pacific Islands has come to an end. Canada used the opportunity presented by the South Pacific Forum meeting in Brisbane to announce an extension of the Canada-South Pacific Ocean Development Programme (CSPOD) to 2001. Raymond Chan, Canadian Secretary of State for Asia-Pacific made the announcement and noted that the budget for CSPOD will be \$14 million over the next five years. The programme will fund regional training and management programmes in marine studies, fisheries and marine management. The confusion created by the previous Canadian Government's closing of the International Centre for Ocean Development (ICOD), which had administered the initial phase of CSPOD, had left many in the Pacific

wondering about the future of Canada's commitment to CSPOD. Forum leaders thus welcomed the Canadian announcement. (A more detailed examination of Canada's Pacific aid programme, including CSPOD, will be featured in the February issue of *Tok Blong Pasifik*.) [From: *Victoria Times-Colonist*, Aug 4/94]

Law of the Sea Finally Takes Effect The United Nations Law of the Sea Convention, adopted in 1982, finally came into effect on November 16. It has taken twelve years to obtain ratification by a sufficient number of countries to bring the Convention into effect. The convention has many features, including the creation of 200 mile economic exclusion zones in coastal waters and marine navigation rights. It also provides for the establishment of a UN International Seabed Authority. The most controversial provisions of the Convention were with regards to deep seabed mining, including control of such mining and who should benefit from deep seabed mining. While many countries, including Canada and several South Pacific countries, have unilaterally proclaimed 200 mile zones, few were willing to ratify the Convention until the dispute over mining was resolved. A recent agreement on the mining issue, adopted by the UN General Assembly on July 28, paved the way for widespread ratification of the Convention. The Canadian Government approved the new agreement and hopes to ratify the Convention in the near future. Widespread acceptance of the Convention should reinforce the rights of Pacific Island countries over their large marine zones. [From: unpublished sources; *Insight*, Sep 26/94; *Maclean's*, Nov 28/94]

"Canada-style" Logging in PNG Prompts Concern Steps by the PNG government to establish a "Timber Supply Area" management system for PNG's forests has generated considerable concern among local landowners and environmentalists. The TSA system is modeled on similar, and controversial, models of industrial logging in Canada and is being spearheaded by the new Canadian general manager of the Forest Authority, Conrad Smith. As proposed, the new system would create 25 large TSA forest concessions for all of PNG, with each concession controlled by one company. The system would seemingly negate local landowner control of the forests, control mandated in the country's constitution, and makes no allowance for other forest uses apart from large scale industrial logging. Current logging concessions would be integrated into the new system, while companies would bid for control of new TSAs. Only the company controlling the TSA would be able to negotiate with landowners and the company would have the right to extract up to 90% of the available timber in a TSA. Critics contend that the TSA system has led to resource conflicts in Canada and, given the system of land ownership in PNG, will contribute to even more conflict there. Critics also allege that the system will lead to logging far beyond sustainable yield levels and undermines other important uses of the forests. Legislation to enact the TSA system is in preparation. [From: *reg.newguinea*, Jun 5/94]

PNG Forest Authority Hit by Arson Investigators have concluded that a fire which destroyed vital records at the Forest Authority was the result of arson. The fire destroyed a building that housed thousands of critical documents and occurred despite increased security measures at the Authority after

officials began receiving death threats and important documents disappeared. Conrad Smith, general manager of the Authority, stated that the loss of documents could hinder the ability of the Authority to manage PNG's forests. There was speculation that logging companies might be behind the fire. [From: *New York Times*, Jun 18/94]

Landowners Challenge Ok Tedi in Court Broken Hill Proprietary Company Ltd. (BHP), controlling partner in the Ok Tedi copper mine, is the target of an Australian \$4 billion class action suit by landowners in PNG's Western Province. The landowners claim that pollution of the river system from the mine has damaged the environment and destroyed their traditional lifestyle. The claim has been filed in Australia by an Australian legal firm with experience in such suits. Public opinion and government reaction to the suit has been mixed, with sympathy expressed for the landowners, but considerable hostility towards the case being handled outside PNG by an Australian legal firm. Concern has also been expressed about the impact the case could have on investment decisions by other multinational resource companies. In response to these concerns, Prime Minister Wingti announced that the PNG Government will introduce legislation and establish a tribunal with exclusive power to deal with landowner compensation claims. Concern about Ok Tedi is not new. Despite the employment created by the mine and company expenditures in support of local community projects, local and international criticism of the mine has been frequent. Dumping of mine tailings directly into the river system has been particularly controversial and is blamed for much of the environmental damage and negative impacts on downstream communities. The landowners' suit filed

calls for BHP to build a tailings dam, which could add another \$2 billion to the potential cost to BHP of losing the suit. Despite PNG Government support for mining, individual members of the Government, including the current Environment Minister, have been highly critical of Ok Tedi. Environmental concerns in Germany about the mine resulted in the withdrawal from the Ok Tedi Mining Ltd. consortium of three German companies (though Metall Mining Corporation, a Canadian subsidiary of one of the German companies, will now own 18% of OTML as a result of the restructuring). The mine accounts for 17% of PNG's total export earnings. [From: Pacific Report, 7:9, May 16/94; Pacific Report, 7:10, May 30/94; Pacific News Bulletin, 9:5, May/94; Asia-Pacific Network, May 7/94; reg.newguinea, May 21/94]

Vanuatu Government Moves to Restrict Logging As a result of a recent environmental study conducted by the Department of Forestry, the Vanuatu Government has taken steps to ban all round log exports as of June 15, to set annual limits on the total amount of logged wood and to restrict the number of licenses issued to foreign logging companies. The moves followed increasing concern within Vanuatu and internationally about the increasing scale of local logging activities. [From: Pacific Report, 7:10, May 30/94]

Greenpeace Releases Report on Climate Damage to Coral Reefs A report by University of Sydney scientist, Dr. Ove Hoegh-Guldberg, documents a severe outbreak of coral bleaching in French Polynesia. The report notes that the bleaching is almost certainly due to abnormally high sea temperatures in the area. Coral bleaching occurs when the organism's symbiotic algae are expelled in response to environmental

stresses, such as changes in water temperature. The increases in sea temperature and associated coral bleaching, showing up in many parts of the Pacific and other seas, are consistent with predictions of global warming and its impact. [From: Pacific Report, 7:11, Jun 13/94]

Report Claims Mineral Wealth for Cook Islands A report funded by the Hawai'i-based Pacific Islands Development Program says that the Cook Islands have the most valuable known manganese ore deposits owned by any one country. The sea-bed deposits are found within the country's marine Exclusive Economic Zone. Manganese nodules are rich in copper, cobalt and nickel and could eventually earn revenue of millions of dollars annually for the Cook Islands. [From: Pacific Report, 7:10, May 30/94]

Fiji: Cabinet Shuffle; Constitutional Review Process slowly moves forward Fiji Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka recently announced changes and additions to Cabinet. Senator Felipe Bole returns to Cabinet taking on Foreign Affairs with special responsibility for the slated Constitutional Review and for the Agricultural Landlords and Tenants Act. Berenado Vunibobo was appointed to Finance and Economic Development, Jim Ah Koy to Commerce and Industry with the former Minister, Harold Powell, retaining Tourism and Civil Aviation. Ms Seruwaia Hong Tiy heads Health and Social Welfare bringing the number of women in the Rabuka Cabinet to 3. Others appointed were Leo Smith to Public Works and Militoni Leweniqila to Labour and Industrial Relations.... The Constitutional Review process moves forward slowly. A parliamentary joint select committee of 17 was named in late August. Members come from

the ruling SVT/General Voters coalition government and the two Indian opposition parties, the National Federation and the Fiji Labour Party, while the third opposition party, the Fijian Association Party, was excluded. The mandate of the committee is to advise the Government and Parliament on the Review. Originally the Government planned a 12-member commission but when agreement on makeup could not be reached, its numbers were cut back to three - one representing the Government, one the Opposition and the third to be appointed with the approval of both Government and Opposition. A decision about who should chair the Constitutional Review remains undecided. The Government feels the chair should be appointed locally from Fiji while the Opposition feels the position should be filled by someone from outside the country. Mr. Bole, the Minister responsible, in an interview with Pacific Report, said that in spite of the delays re appointing the chair and the three members, he hoped that the review would begin in early 1995 with a first interim report presented in July to the Parliamentary Joint Select Committee and then referred to Government, Parliament, the Council of Chiefs and the public for debate and discussion. Bole hopes that the review will be completed by the middle of 1996. [From: Pacific Report, Vol 7, No 16 (Sep 1/94) and No 22 (Nov 28/94)]

The South Pacific Forum and the New World Order

by Ieremia T. Tabai

Ieremia Tabai is the Secretary General of the South Pacific Forum. He was previously the President of Kiribati.

It has already become almost a cliché to refer to a new world order as a consequence of the end of the Cold War and the continuing immense changes in the global political and economic environment. Cliché or not, international and regional circumstances are now drastically different from those that prevailed in 1971 when the South Pacific Forum was established. There is an urgent need for the Forum to reassess its role. Last year's Forum Heads of Government meeting in Nauru, recognising this, established a Ministerial Working Group to examine the new challenges and opportunities arising from this dramatically changed environment and recommend strategies for the future. In this article, I will look at some issues that have been discussed in the Group's work.

For a regional organization which has always focused closely on economic development issues, there are two emerging international trends of particular importance. One is the way international relations are now driven increasingly by economic considerations as the security imperatives of the Cold War have died away. This is certainly making an impact on traditional donor funding resources available in the South Pacific. However, on the plus side, our situation in the middle of the Asia-Pacific, the most economically dynamic region of the world, presents some enormous opportunities.

The other trend is towards increasing roles for regional organizations and regional cooperation

generally, as the two large ideologically based power blocs of the Cold War are breaking up to a greater or lesser degree. Within the Asia-Pacific, we have seen the establishment of APEC and its rapid development into a powerful group with enormous potential to influence the course of economic growth in the region, the creation of NAFTA, and the strengthening and probable expansion of ASEAN.

Perhaps the Forum can pride itself as an innovator, as having discovered the virtues of regional approaches long before they became more widely popular. It was established in 1971 from a desire by leaders to develop a collective response to common regional concerns. As more island nations achieved independence or self-government, the membership has grown to fifteen - the thirteen independent or self-governing island states of the South Pacific, ranging as far north as the Federated States of Micronesia and the Marshall Islands, plus Australia and New Zealand.

Originally, the Forum was solely a consultative mechanism for discussions amongst leaders and the annual gathering of Heads of Government is still by far the most important event that takes place under Forum auspices, the occasion for policy decisions on the directions of regional cooperation for the year. But at only their second gathering in 1972, Forum leaders decided that a permanent regional trade bureau should be established to prepare proposals on trade and economic areas of special concern to the Forum Island Countries. This Trade Bureau has grown into today's Forum Secretariat, with a greatly widened mandate to tackle a broad range of issues relating to the

practical problems of the economic development of its island members. Programmes now include trade, investment, shipping, civil aviation, energy, telecommunications, regional law enforcement and economic development generally.

The imperatives of sustainable development will remain central to South Pacific regional cooperation and the role of the Forum. But a complementary role as regional spokesperson in the international arena, trying to use the collective weight of the Forum to advance individual national interests, is developing rapidly. At recent meetings, the Forum has placed increasing emphasis on this external dimension of its activities, with particular priority on strengthening links to Asia and the Pacific Rim.

Finding our feet in the wider international community is of course part of a natural evolutionary process. The South Pacific is well into the post-colonial era; most Forum Island Countries attained independence or self-government at least ten years ago. Increasing self-confidence in dealing with the outside world, and a capacity and preparedness to look past traditional historical ties, are only to be expected. The Forum itself has come of age as a regional, indeed international, institution. It is widely recognized as the premier organization in the South Pacific and its views are sought by an increasingly wide range of international partners.

The unprecedented speed and nature of changes in the international environment in recent years have made this process of coming to grips with the outside world even more important. With the end of the Cold War, we have to adjust to the loss of a familiar framework within which we

have conducted our foreign policies for the whole period of our independent existences. There are many pluses in this - no-one will mourn the lessened risk of a nuclear holocaust - but we indubitably face a more complex and uncertain world.

It is pleasing that the Uruguay Round, after struggling for so long, has at last come to a successful conclusion which commits the major trading nations to continued support for an open multilateral trade system. But there are certainly suspicions that developed countries will do better from the Round than developing countries - especially small ones without a substantial manufacturing base, like most of the Pacific Island Nations. There are also emerging trade issues, like the trade and environment linkage, which the Round did not address. Add in the implications of the recent proliferation of various special regional trade arrangements, and island countries have some real doubts about the future direction of world trade. Most of their export industries are small, but their development is vital to sustained economic growth in the region. Continued growth in international trade and access to world markets are very important to the Forum.

Canadian readers are closer to these developments than we are in the islands. However, although island countries may be small and far from the centre of events, our future is profoundly affected by them. We are inseparably bound into the world economy. We need to know what is happening and respond appropriately. Indeed, in some ways we have potentially even more at stake than larger countries. Because we are small, we have little capacity to influence events, even those that will directly affect us. We are always forced into a reactive role. Slight policy changes by our major international partners can sometimes have a devastating impact on our narrowly-based economies. Small countries are vulnerable countries.

Of course, the new international environment presents opportunities as well as threats. Today's climate of greatly reduced East/West tension is

much more conducive to making progress on several issues of vital and long-standing regional concern. An obvious example is French nuclear testing; the region was very pleased at the suspension of the programme and is doing what it can to persuade the French Government of the need to make the suspension permanent.

One major plus is the serious attention now being given by the international community to environmental issues, certainly in our region's interest. We are immensely concerned in particular by the threat to our countries posed by sea level rise and climate change. For some, physical and national survival is at stake. Preservation and proper management of the region's fisheries stocks - one of the few economic resources most of our generally resource-poor states possess - is also making progress as a result of the greater global recognition of the need to grapple with conservation before it is too late. In this area, Canada and the Forum share many common concerns and have worked effectively together in international efforts to create a regime to manage high seas fisheries stocks.

The Forum has a good record of responding to the opportunities presented by the new global environment agenda, in particular through its skilful use of the Forum's collective voice to get its concerns acted upon internationally. The effective role played by the Alliance of Small Island States - based around Forum Island Countries - at the UNCED meeting in 1992 and more recently at the May Global Conference in Barbados on sustainable development of small island states is one example. Earlier, the Tarawa Declaration adopted by the Forum in 1989 was a major step in giving impetus and political credibility to the global campaign against driftnetting - a campaign which, in a remarkably short time, has effectively rid the world of an environmentally disastrous method of fishing.

But it would be idle to pretend that the changing international scene

is all pluses for the South Pacific, that no threats to our interests are emerging. At the broadest level, we clearly face a challenge in the post-Cold War environment to maintain the same level of engagement in the region by our main extra-regional partners. Perceptions of the region's strategic importance to the West underpinned much of the increase in attention it got during the 1970s and 80s. The weight of such considerations has of course now diminished sharply. New preoccupations have emerged for the international community in coping with the after-effects of the disintegration of the Soviet bloc.

As developing countries, we must also look carefully at changing attitudes to economic assistance in donor countries. There are increasing financial constraints on many of them, derived from fiscal deficits and more doctrinaire policies on government spending - this at a time when the emergence of new needs in East Europe and elsewhere is producing more competition for a cake that is not growing. In addition, several donors are increasingly attaching explicit strings to assistance - linking it for example to perceived good behaviour on human rights, military spending, or patterns of democracy; to environmental policies; or to the introduction of more market-oriented economic policies.

While many of these strings are intended for the Iraqs of this world, not the South Pacific, we are small countries with little political clout. The longer term implications of the overt and subjective introduction of highly political considerations into decision-making about economic assistance need careful thinking. The evidence already in is not reassuring.

Earlier this year, the United States announced that it was closing its two South Pacific regional aid offices. The reasons, publicly announced, were blunt: In an environment of rapidly changing world events and limited resources, there are higher priorities for US assistance, particularly in East Europe. The United Kingdom recently

announced its withdrawal from the South Pacific Commission for similar reasons. Canada's decision in 1992 to close the International Centre for Ocean Development, albeit largely for budgetary reasons, has also impacted adversely on our region. With Australia and New Zealand, traditional supporters of the region and Forum members themselves, also having budgetary difficulty in maintaining their level of assistance to the region, the prospects for future economic assistance are not bright.

The Forum Secretariat is doing its best to help create mechanisms that will keep donor resources flowing into the region - to ensure aid is better utilized, to show donors they are getting value for their money. A regional development strategy is being drawn up. It will provide a framework for identifying sectoral strategies and aid programmes to be implemented at the regional level, for agreeing on priorities and for identifying appropriate modalities for implementation. It will emphasize strengthening the capacities of countries to identify their priority needs and allow them to choose how best these might be met.

There is also now a regular meeting between the Pacific Island Countries and their development partners. Instituted in 1991, this is the first and only regionally-based aid consultative mechanism. One focus of discussion has been how to strengthen countries' capacity for macroeconomic planning. The right macroeconomic policy framework to support growth is essential, not only to ensure effective utilization of aid, but also to promote private investment. Forum countries are well aware that private investment will have to be an increasingly important part of financial resource inflows to the region.

Adapting to changed international realities means much more than attempts to maintain levels of economic assistance. It requires a basic reappraisal of the Forum's external linkages, adapting and diversifying relationships to meet the Forum's goals as a regional

organization. Here we run into some fundamental issues relating to the limits of regionality. The South Pacific is a huge area. The countries have diverse interests and equally diverse historical and cultural backgrounds. Papua New Guinea, for example, has natural links into South East Asia. Fiji is also beginning to look more in that direction. At the northern end of the region, the Federated States of Micronesia and the Marshall Islands look naturally towards Japan and the United States. Size and level of economic development come into it too. PNG and one or two of the larger states are taking a close interest in APEC, but it is doubtful that the small island states will benefit from APEC to the same degree.

It would be a fallacy to think that the region as a whole can carve out

a single place for itself in the world. What it can do is identify issues where there is sufficient commonality of interest that the collective voice of the Forum can assist in advancing individual national goals. The Forum's genesis was in the failure of previous regional institutions to adapt adequately to evolving political realities and it has a good track record in responding to external developments which bear on common regional interests. The Forum is the natural vehicle to focus the substantial collective political clout of the fifteen member countries.

An important mechanism through which these efforts can be channelled is the Post-Forum Dialogue, established in 1989. After each Forum meeting, there is a ministerial level Dialogue with representatives of seven major powers with interests in



South Pacific Forum Secretary General, Ieremia Tabai shakes hands with Australia's Prime Minister, Hon. Paul Keating, host of the 1994 Forum meeting.

photo from Forum Secretariat News

the region, including Canada. The Dialogue is still relatively new and perhaps needs a bit more focus and preparation to get the best out of it. But it has already made a significant impact in increasing knowledge of Forum concerns in the international community.

The Forum is also aware of the need to make better use of other existing mechanisms which include the Forum alongside its extra-regional partners. A clear example is APEC, as we try to take advantage of the opportunities presented by the economic dynamism of the Pacific Basin, particularly East Asia. The Forum has some natural advantages in attempting to plug into the growth of the Pacific Basin. The islands are geographically part of the region, the P in APEC. There are a number of linkages already in place. Australia, New Zealand and PNG, members of the Forum, are leading participants in the development of Asia-Pacific cooperation, with membership in APEC and institutional links with ASEAN. Perhaps most importantly, the Forum is represented, on behalf of the island countries, at observer level in APEC.

We need to work harder to take advantage of that status. The immense progress APEC has made as a vehicle for fostering regional prosperity is evidence of how important APEC is becoming to our interests. The work it has begun on regional trade liberalisation is particularly important. APEC economies now take three quarters of all Forum Island Country exports. That said, APEC is still young and the benefits it can deliver to the island countries is still far from clear. Several of its working groups, in the scale and technical complexity of their activities, seem designed to cater for the interests of larger members. Particularly given the Forum's lack of resources, participation will have to be carefully focused.

The island countries themselves must take the lead in participating in APEC activities. They can do so under the Forum umbrella and the Forum certainly encourages this. The only way the region will establish a

substantial and meaningful relationship with APEC is through the active interest of the countries themselves. It is, though, something of a chicken and egg situation; without clear benefits in sight, small countries with resource constraints have difficulty in justifying active involvement.

The United Nations can also be mentioned in the context of adapting and diversifying the Forum's international links. Forum leaders are well aware of the expanded role the UN is playing in the post-Cold War era, especially over security issues, but also in economic and trade areas directly relevant to development in the region. With the UN beginning to work more closely with regional organisations in pursuing its new agenda, serious consideration is being given to applying for observer status for the Forum at the UN.

In all such efforts to seize new opportunities, the very limited personnel and other resources of the Forum Secretariat and South Pacific bureaucracies always force hard choices about priorities. While the potential importance in the medium term of, say APEC, is recognized at the intellectual level, at the practical level we are often overwhelmed by urgent short term demands. We cannot respond as effectively as we would like to longer term opportunities and will always rely to some degree on support from our traditional partners, including Canada, to ensure that the region's interests are taken into account in these developing international processes.

At the end of the day, it is difficult or impossible to conclude where the South Pacific Forum fits into the new world order. Some major questions and challenges are clear; the responses, in still rapidly changing international and regional circumstances, are not. But the Forum, in its own Pacific way, is doing its best to come to grips with the new realities.

Wasting Proposed

by Bunny McDiarmid

Bunny McDiarmid is the Auckland based Co-ordinator of Greenpeace's Pacific Campaign.

The Marshall Islands Government has decided to go ahead with a preliminary feasibility study regarding use of one of their islands as the world's repository for nuclear waste. The proposal, which was developed for the government by US attorney Ted Kronmiller in February this year, suggests that the Marshall Islands could "make a major contribution to the US and other nuclear waste producing countries... by providing a long-term storage facility and a permanent repository for nuclear substances."

Marshall Islands' Ambassador to the US, Wilfred Kendall, who also chairs the National Commission for Protection and Maintenance of Global Health, Environment, Peace and Security (set up by President Kabua to move the proposal forward), has been sounding out the idea with various countries. Informal talks have been held with South Korea, Japan and Taiwan; all three expressed interest in the pre-feasibility study.

In a speech to the South Pacific Forum in Australia in early August, President Kabua said, "The geographical position of my country in the Pacific Ocean would permit the nuclear power countries of the northwestern Pacific Rim to make nuclear materials shipments direct to a permanent disposal site in the Marshall Islands without infringing upon the territorial waters or 200-mile wide EEZs of other countries."

It is clear that countries such as Japan, Taiwan and South Korea are where the hard sell might bear fruit, given the problems these countries face dealing with nuclear waste and the concerns that have been raised

Away in the Marshalls?

Nuclear Waste Repository Prompts Concerns

about transporting such waste. At the Post-Forum Dialogue, Japan offered to host a seminar on nuclear energy for Pacific countries in early October. The seminar can be seen as a PR exercise by the Japanese government to allay the region's concerns regarding a 1993 plutonium shipment, which passed through several countries' EEZs, and next January's planned nuclear waste shipment. The Japanese seminar will no doubt be a further opportunity for the Marshalls Government to peddle its proposal.

More recently, Hazel O'Leary, the US Secretary for the Department of Energy, told the Marshalls that the US doesn't support the plan. O'Leary drew attention to drawbacks such as the volcanic rock type of the Marshalls, problems with bad weather and ocean transport.

The Marshall's proposal rides on the coat tails of further releases of US classified information about the extent of radioactive contamination of the Marshalls by the US testing programme in the 1950s. The recent disclosures expose the fact that, not only has the US been lying to the Marshall Islands for years about the degree of contamination, but the Marshallese people were deliberately exposed to radioactive fallout from the Bravo test of 1954 so that they could be used as guinea pigs in a US medical experiment called Project 4.1.

In the horrible logic that the Marshallese Government has applied to this situation, the argument goes something like this: Given the contaminated state of the islands and the unsatisfactory attempts so far to clean up the mess, shouldn't we make best use of a bad situation? It's true that development prospects for small island states demand ingenuity and enterprising thought, but it is hard to know where to begin or end in the long list of disadvantages and risks that such a scheme presents.

Small island states like the Marshalls have been accorded special status within the current international climate negotiations, where they are recognized for their particular vulnerability to climate change. More frequent and severe weather events such as cyclones are predicted in a warming world and the Pacific's cyclone pattern is already beginning to reflect this. Earlier this year, Polynesia experienced the worst case of coral bleaching ever recorded due to unusually high water temperatures. So claims that the Marshall Islands is suitable as a nuclear waste dump due to its geological stability may be seriously undermined by climatic instability.

Since its creation, the disposal of nuclear waste has been a monumental problem. Until 1983 a lot of it was dumped into the sea, but international scientific research increasingly argued against the practice. Pacific countries were instrumental in achieving an international ban on dumping at sea in 1993. At the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio, it was agreed that "radioactive wastes should not be stored near the marine environment".

Over the past ten years, the dumping of waste from industrialized nations on developing countries has become a major international issue. As the costs and regulations concerned with disposing of and storing toxic or radioactive waste in industrialized countries grew, so too did community opposition to living next door to dump sites. It was much "cheaper" to pay a developing nation, strapped for cash, to take the waste. As one waste export scheme after another was exposed as dumping, many developing regions passed laws banning the import of hazardous wastes.

The Marshall Islands is currently involved in regional negotiations to develop a hazardous waste exports ban in the Pacific. Known as the

Waigani Treaty, the latest draft includes radioactive waste in its list of hazardous waste to be banned from import.

Concern about the proposal is coming from within the Marshall Islands, a country which is no newcomer to the "nuclear age". The Marshallese people know more than most the long term problems associated with radioactivity. Yet in his speech to the South Pacific Forum, President Kabua said the Marshalls was the ideal nuclear dump site as it was far from population centres. But what of his own people, many of whom do not want to become part of yet another nuclear experiment?

The proposal is already straining relations in the region. The Marshalls' nearest neighbour, the Federated States of Micronesia, has written to the Marshall Islands Government expressing concern. In 1988, when a similar proposal was mooted by the Marshall Islands, South Pacific Forum concern for the proposal was enough for the Marshalls to reconsider. But thus far, the Forum has taken only a "wait and see" approach.

Ambassador Kendall claims that, if the plan goes ahead, it will be done according to the International Atomic Energy Agency's regulations and safeguards. However, IAEA regulations are not legally binding, but are simply guidelines. Meanwhile, the Pacific's long fought for international standing as a "nuclear free" region is being put at risk.

The economic imperative which has driven the Marshalls to consider offering itself as a nuclear waste dump, while understandable, should not be the only consideration. Sending the world's nuclear waste to the Marshalls will not solve the problem. It will simply shift it, at great risk, to another part of the planet.

Turn Your Trash into Cash!

Waste Management through Mushroom Cultivation

by Dr. Enrico Neri Imperio

Enrico Imperio is the Director of the Community Development Institute, Guam Cooperative Extension, of the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences at the University of Guam.

The management of waste is a serious and continuing problem in Micronesia. According to the February 7, 1993, issue of *Pacific Daily News*, the only landfill on Guam is overflowing. Guam generates more than 200 tons of solid waste per day, with waste paper making up 37.5 percent of the total volume. A similar article stated that the problem is not confined to Guam. Saipan also has a problem with its bulging eyesore, the Puerto Rico dump. Given the solid waste problems in the islands, it would be prudent to explore practical options for handling such materials. In response to this concern, the Waste Management team of Guam Cooperative Extension at the University of Guam was formed.

In April 1992, the team was in its infancy and we were struggling to come up with an innovative idea that could utilize a major polluting refuse, waste paper, as a resource. Various agencies, both government and private, have made proposals on how the problem could be solved. An incineration plant is being planned. However, environmental groups have registered opposition to this proposal due to the danger of toxic smoke emissions. Mulching and composting are also in practice, but these have had little impact. We felt that what was needed was a safe and practical process that could degrade waste paper into humus and produce a food product while decomposition was occurring. As an option, the waste generating process could also be a means of generating additional income.

Microorganisms are efficient degraders of dead plant debris. However, we haven't found any indigenous species that could effectively and rapidly degrade the

waste paper generated on Guam. But we had observed edible mushrooms growing on plant organic wastes. Following this lead, we were able to isolate one indigenous species, *Volvariella* sp. (straw mushroom), into pure culture. Another species, *Pleurotus sajor-caju* (oyster mushroom), was obtained from the Mycological Collection Centre at the University of the Philippines at Los Banos.

Oyster mushroom retails for \$7.50 per pound on Guam. Anticipating that this high price could be an incentive for residents to engage in mushroom cultivation, the team started experimenting with growing this species on materials that are abundant on Guam, waste paper and limestone. The waste paper originates from old newspaper, office paper and cardboard. These cannot be shipped off island for recycling since the freight cost is very high, nor could they be processed since there is no paper processing plant on Guam. Limestone is the main constituent of the soil on Guam and can be dug up for free in one's backyard.

The newspaper we are utilizing uses soybean based ink. Unlike petroleum based ink, there is less danger that the ink may contain heavy metals. The local US Department of Agriculture office is also utilizing shredded newspaper and office paper for composting. Their findings indicate that the heavy metal content is below minimal toxic level.

The assumption we started with was that most substrates used for growing mushrooms have high cellulose content, as evinced by the use of rice and wheat straws in most mushroom producing countries. There was a possibility that waste paper, which is of plant origin, could be used as a substitute for straw, which is not available on Guam, in the cultivation of mushroom. The addition of lime is intended to in-



photo by Enrico Imperio

Guam farmer, Mr. Gene Naguit shows off his mushroom bed planted with straw mushroom. Plastic covering maintains high humidity.

crease the pH, thereby lessening the possibility of infestation by moulds present in the natural environment.

After several attempts, we finally obtained encouraging results with 350 grams waste paper, 350 grams limestone and 350 grams cracked corn mixed together in polypropylene bags. 700 ml water was added and the bags were sterilized for 1 hour at 15 psi. Pure culture was transferred to the bags. After a 1 month incubation period, during which the substrate was gradually covered with the white cottony mycelial growth of the fungus, the bags were opened and placed inside a high humidity chamber. Pinhead formation commenced 3 days later and mushrooms were ready for harvest in another 2-3 days. We estimated that one kilogram of mushroom could be produced from 2 kilograms of waste paper. Harvesting of mushrooms was done for 2 months.

After this period, the composted material was used as mulch in the garden. The demonstration garden is planted with indigenous plants that are high in vitamins and minerals. The plants are growing very well without any application of inorganic fertilizers.

Since December of 1992, we have conducted monthly training workshops. After a 6 month period, we did an assessment of the program. One finding was that the trainees were not putting into practice what they had learned from the workshop. Through phone interviews, we realized that the main drawbacks were the need to buy equipment such as humidifiers and sprinklers to maintain a high humidity environment and the meticulous nature of the procedure. This proved to be a drawback in the adaption of this technology in spite of the high retail price of mushrooms.

With this realization, we introduced another species, the straw mushroom, which is indigenous on the island and less demanding with regard to temperature and humidity requirements. We also modified the production of spawn, using soaked sterilized grain instead of the



photo by Enrico Imperio

Oyster mushrooms coming out of plastic bags which had been inoculated with spawn 30 days previously. Bag contains newspaper, grain and limestone.

combination of waste paper, limestone and corn. This technique facilitated a faster rate of spawn production. The spawn was used to inoculate rolled newspaper piled in 2m by 3m plots. These were covered with plastic sheets to maintain a humid condition. Watering was done with a sprinkler every 5 days. After 14-21 days, mushroom buttons started coming out. These were ready for harvest 2-3 days after emergence. Mushrooms normally come out in flushes. The mushroom bed continued to be productive 60 days after spawning.

Our mushroom cultivation technique has been publicized in the media. The Future Farmers of America (Guam Chapter), with the support of the Guam Resource Conservation and Development Council and Guam Cooperative Extension, has started a fund raising venture by producing and selling spawn for \$5 per pound. We've also started workshops in the middle schools and high schools. After the workshops, pupils construct their own mushroom beds of newspaper placed inside circular meshed wires whose diameter is 1 meter. Mushrooms emerged from the side of the meshed wire 21-30 days after spawning. This technique has been a good mechanism for creating awareness among teachers, students and parents on the possibility of utilizing organic waste as a resource since they can actually see

the mushrooms emerge from the side of the meshed wire bed.

We have already been invited by the Northern Marianas College in Saipan and the Department of Natural Resources in Tinian to conduct workshops. Growers on Guam are selling the straw mushroom they harvest for \$7 per pound. These are mostly sold in roadside stores and in the flea market. Other individuals have started producing and selling mushroom spawn.

Our future plans are geared to utilizing *Leucaena* sp. wood chips, which grows profusely on Guam, and fast food restaurant wastes as possible substrates for growing straw mushroom. We're exploring the combination of wastes to determine which would be best for the fruiting of the mushroom. Another possibility is the utilization of the compost obtained after the productive life of the mushroom bed is over for the growing of vegetables and as feed for ruminants such as goats and cattle.

The quest for the utilization of waste as a resource is never ending. As a region, we should think of what we can provide to the other islands in terms of non-formal education and training. It is only through the sharing of this knowledge that we can help in minimizing and alleviating the waste problem in the Pacific region for a cleaner and safer environment.

Tongan Environmental Educator Attends Canadian Environmental Institute

by Stuart Wulff

It was "Cultural Evening" at the Harmony Foundation of Canada's annual Summer Institute for Environmental Values Education. The participants were enjoying a break from the often serious environmental discussions as various individuals shared, with much good humour, small samples of culture from their home countries. But one participant could not resist the opportunity to entertain and do a bit of environmental education at the same time. Sione Tukia Lepa demonstrated several dances and songs from his home of Tonga, pointing out the ways in which the "entertainment" revealed the close relationship with the environment of his people.

Tukia (with several Sione's in his office, he goes by Tukia) works in the Environmental Planning Unit of the Ministry of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources. He is based in Nuku'alofa and has been working for the Environmental Planning Unit for five years. His responsibilities include work with schools and the community in the area of environmental education. He also uses the media to spread his environmental messages to a broader audience.

Tukia spends about three days a week giving presentations in secondary schools. The curriculum now

includes environmental education and the Environment Planning Unit staff are the only people who have the training to do this education. Tukia addresses a wide range of environmental issues in his presentations: logging and deforestation, coral reef harvesting, pollution, waste disposal, etc.

Community and media presentations focus on local environmental issues, helping people to become aware of the issues. The goal is to encourage local communities to take action themselves. People are encouraged to form community groups in each village and the response has been very positive. Many villages now have such groups and they take on volunteer projects such as tree planting and rubbish collecting. The initial focus has been to have such projects during the annual Environmental Awareness Week, but the ultimate aim is to keep people working together on environmental issues. Programmes initially focused on the main island of Tongatapu, but are now moving out to other islands, though funding remains a constraint.

Tukia used to work at the Tonga Telecommunications Commission and he's put this experience to good use in his current position. He prepares a bi-weekly 15 minute radio programme. Following a two week media training workshop in Apia, he has expanded his media activities to include TV and weekly newspaper articles. Public feedback on these programmes and articles has been enthusiastic.

Unlike some Pacific Island countries, Tonga does not yet have any environmental NGOs. Thus, the role of the Environmental Planning Unit is doubly important. The Unit also has a role in assessing environmental impact studies for development projects.

While missing his wife and three year old son, Tukia was pleased to be visiting Canada as a guest of the

Victoria based Harmony Foundation of Canada. The foundation focuses its efforts on environmental education and initiatives to improve environmental practices. Perhaps its best known initiative is its annual Summer Institute for Environmental Values Education. While the Harmony Foundation brings environmental educators from around the world to attend the annual programme, Tukia was the first Pacific Islander to participate. The July 9-16 institute included 45 participants and featured a range of workshops on broader philosophical issues, specific environmental issues and particular educational methodologies.

Tukia felt that his attendance at the institute was very worthwhile and expressed his hope that more people from the South Pacific will be able to benefit from the programme. His wish may come true. Michael Bloomfield, executive director of the Harmony Foundation, noted the positive role that Tukia played during the institute and stated his hope that other Pacific Islanders will be able to attend in future years.

Tukia also had the pleasure of returning to Tonga knowing that he and Tonga are not alone, that there is a network of new friends around the world working, like him, to make people aware of the importance of sustainability for the environment.



photo by Stuart Wulff

Tukia Lepa in Victoria



For more information about the **Harmony Foundation of Canada and its Summer Institute for Environmental Education**, or for an application for the 1995 Summer Institute, contact:

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Tonga's New Squash Experts In Demand

The Tongan expertise in the growing and the exporting of squash pumpkin to Japan is in demand throughout the region and Sevele Consult, a Tongan consultancy company, has recently signed a contract to manage the industry for the Vanuatu government.

Consultant, Dr. Feleti Sevele, said that he has also received inquiries from Western Samoa and Fiji about exporting squash to Japan.

"The good thing about the Vanuatu project is that we can employ some Tongans there and we can help the ni-Vanuatu develop their own country. In the old days Tonga used to send out missionaries to the neighbouring islands; now we are sending out squash experts such as Siaosi Puloka and Minolu Nishi," said Feleti.

Feleti is also the president of the Squash Export Company Ltd., one of the biggest squash exporting companies in Tonga.

Last year Tonga's total foreign currency earnings for squash amounted to \$22 million pa'anga and it is expected to continue to grow. Other islands in the region want to follow Tonga's success.

However, there is a running battle between the three major players in the industry, the growers, the exporters and the Ministry of Labour, Commerce and Industries, which issues export licences and allocates quotas for the exporters.

The quality of the squash that is exported has become the big issue, following complaints by Japanese importers of poor quality shipments during the 1991 squash season. Government then restricted the amount of squash that should be exported each season by setting criteria on who could hold export licences, assessing squash exporters' performance, and establishing a quota system based on past performance.

Feleti said the Squash Export Company Ltd. has been opposing the Ministry's restrictions. "The quota system allows favouritism, and if the major concern is quality then why are they issuing new licences to exporters who obviously do not qualify under the criteria that they have set out."

Feleti said some of them are inexperienced and have approached him for advice on how to find a market and to set up their exporting programme.

Last year the maximum allocation for export was 13,000 tonnes and it produced a tug of war when Feleti's company wanted to increase their quota of 2250 tonnes. At first Cabinet approved it, but then

Minister of Labour, Hon. Tutoatasi Fakafanua, reverted the decision. However, in the end Squash Export exceeded their quota by 340 tonnes.

Tonga exported a total of 17,464 tonnes last year.

Feleti said that over the years they have established their name with Japanese importers and with local growers. He complains, "But somehow this company has not been given the acknowledgement by the ministry that it deserves. After their good performance last year, the quota for 1994 remains at 2250 tonnes while the quota of other exporters has been increased...I just don't know how some of these decisions are being made." [Reprinted from *Matangi Tonga*, April-May/94]



photo from *Matangi Tonga*, June/July 1994

Tonga's squash exports have become an important source of income for the Kingdom.

Squash - Soil destruction causes crisis on the farms

by Pesi Fonua

Tonga's squash industry has reached the Crisis and Disaster phases of its development, says 'Ofa Fakalata, Head of the Research Division of the Ministry of Agriculture.

'Ofa believes that if action is not taken now to correct the squash growing method of Tongan farmers, the squash industry will die a natural death because the environment and the soil cannot sustain the industry. Tonga soon will not be able to maintain the quality and the quantity of squash required by the Japanese market.

"The main problem is the attitude of squash growers," he says.

Tongatapu now has 3000 acres under squash, where there are 1300 growers. They have been growing for less than five years, but 'Ofa points out that most of the squash plantations in Tongatapu have already reached the Crisis Phase. These growers in the Crisis Phase are finding that they continually have to increase the amount of fertilizer to maintain their yield at a certain level.

Disaster

A few growers who have already reached the Disaster Phase are facing the fact that it does not matter how much fertilizer they put into the soil, their yield is actually dropping. Another problem is an increasing number of pests.

"Once they disrupt the ecosystem by cutting down trees, there is an imbalance in the environment, giving pests an advantage to attack the crop. The natural defence mechanism has been destroyed, and the only alternative is to spray the crop with pesticide, which is an additional expense for farmers, and it is not good for the environment in the long run," says 'Ofa.

Sophisticated

The growing of squash requires a sophisticated approach to farming

because of the special demand of the plant on the soil and the environment and the quantity of chemicals that have to be used. The Ministry of Agriculture, in an effort to teach growers the proper method of growing squash, is offering a free advisory service. "Our involvement begins when a grower decides that he or she wants to grow squash. We look at the land and give advice on where squash should be grown, how to prepare the land, the amount of fertilizer to be used and when to apply it, when to plant, and how to look after the plant as it grows. Our involvement continues with the harvesting, packing and the transporting of squash to exporters, and eventually to the wharf where it ends. Our Quarantine Division takes over from there, but their service is paid for by the growers," says 'Ofa.

The squash industry, as Tonga's number one export earner, is well supported by government, which through the Tonga Development Bank allocates loan funds to squash growers. It sounds all very simple - the free advisory service offered by the Ministry of Agriculture and the availability of loan money for squash growers from the banks, particularly from the Tonga Development Bank. So what has gone wrong?

Not listening

The problem 'Ofa says, is because about 80 percent of the growers are not taking their advice. "They are rushing into it to grow as many acres of squash as they possibly can, cutting down trees and clearing the land, and in a lot of cases either overfeeding or underfeeding the squash with fertilizer."

Pesticides

In Tongatapu alone it is estimated that 150 tonnes of fertilizer and 25 tonnes of pesticides are put into the ground every squash growing season, from July to December. This volume will continue to rise as the number of growers increases. The Ha'apai group will be growing this year for the first time, with 60

new growers where each is restricted to grow only one and a half or two acres. There are no acre restrictions on the 100 growers in 'Eua, 300 in Vava'u and 1300 in Tongatapu.

'Ofa says it is difficult to be rational in a situation where an opportunity to make money is laid before people who are desperately in need of a source of income to meet their daily needs.

"When we went to Ha'apai to prepare growers for the introduction of squash to the islands, we took with us an environmentalist, an economist, and other officials from the Ministry. The environmentalist expressed his concern over the possible damage the growing of squash could do. The economist presented his view on the contribution squash exports will make to the economy of the country. At lunchtime food was prepared under a mango tree and again speeches were made, focusing on the possible damage to the environment." 'Ofa says he compared their gathering to the last supper of Jesus and his disciples when a commitment was pledged to the teachings.

"We have been talking about the possible damage to the environment that the squash industry will bring, but then we all go out and grow squash because we want to buy a new boat, a car, and a television. There are houses to be built, school fees, water bills, power bills and telephone bills to be paid," 'Ofa says.

"We have already chosen to ride on this boat called Development, we are all on board and the boat will not sail to where we want to go until we pay our dues. There is a price that we have to pay. The growing of squash offers an opportunity to make some money, and the best that we could do is to try and maintain a balance between our desire to get some money and the damage that we will do to the environment and to our lives."

Wasted effort

The application of fertilizer is important to growing squash. But 'Ofa explains that, if the timing and the quantity of fertilizer is wrong, then the squash will flower at the wrong time and there will be problems with pollination. The female flowers should come first, followed by the male flowers, while the female flowers are still blooming. "At this point beehives may be introduced into the area to help with the pollination, this is very important."

"However, if growers do not follow the fertilizing procedure correctly, the flowering will be wrong, female flowers will wither away before the male flowers bloom. Then the growers have wasted their effort and their money because the yield will be very low."

'Ofa says that this problem is more common with big growers, because they usually run into management problems, whereas small growers could manage their one or two acres of squash more efficiently and therefore produce very high yields of between eight to ten tonnes per acre. The average yield is between three and five tonnes per acre.

'Ofa believes that each grower should grow only two acres of squash. "It suits our eight-acres tax allotment land tenure system, and it also means that growers will be able to practice mixed farming, sustaining their yield at a high level because they will be able to leave their two acres fallow for a number of years before they grow squash on it again. With two acres in squash, he will be able to grow one acre of vanilla, one acre of yams, one acre of taro and maybe one acre of kava." With this system of farming 'Ofa believes that the environment is preserved, pests are easier to control, and less fertilizer is required.

"The classic example of commercial farming that went wrong was the cotton industry. This is an example that agriculturalists around the world have studied and are trying to avoid. The cotton industry brought in big money for farmers in North America

and in parts of South America, but the problem was they could not sustain the yield. The industry went through four phases: Subsistence Phase, Exploitive Phase, Crisis Phase and Disaster Phase. During the Exploitive Phase, farmers unconsciously went out of control, they cut down trees and cleared acres and acres of new land in their rush to make a lot of money; and because the soil was still very fertile, the yield was high. But that took them to the Crisis Phase, when they had to use fertilizer to maintain a high yield, and it did not take them long before they found themselves in the Disaster Phase."

'Ofa says the revival of the cotton industry meant adopting an Integrated Approach, or mixed farming, which is actually Tonga's traditional method of farming.



Hot Spots

"Our squash industry has already moved from the Exploitive Phase to the Crisis Phase and some plantations are already in the Disaster Phase. Those in the Disaster Phase are in what we call Hot Spot areas in Tongatapu, and if nothing is done now to deal with the problem these Hot Spots could spread and contaminate the whole country."

'Ofa believes it will take 20 years for a Hot Spot area to restore the balance of its ecosystem. Hot Spots are big areas of land that have been cleared, with hardly any trees left, and where the land has been farmed continuously for a number of years. 'Ofa says that the structure of the soil in these areas has been destroyed and the soil no longer can absorb water to feed the plants with.

"Our average rainfall is only 1742 millimetres per annum, which is very small. The ideal rainfall should be 3,000 to 4,000mm per annum. In our situation it is important for the soil to retain its natural structure in order to absorb the rain water."

The structure of the soil can only be improved if it is mixed with rotten organic matter; therefore it is important for the ground to be left fallow for a while. Then in preparation for growing the ground is ploughed and the weeds allowed to rot. "The frequency of the ploughing of the land in preparation for the planting will depend on the thickness of the bush and how long the land has been left to fallow. To plant in July, the first ploughing of the land should be in February, second plough in April, third plough in June. In March, nutrient beans should be planted in the area so by May it is ready to be ploughed into the soil, and by July the ground is ready for planting."

'Ofa predicts that there will be problem in this year's squash season, because there was a delay in the releasing of loan money from the banks and therefore a delay in land preparation.

New Ideas

"Over the years new ideas have been developed by the Ministry which they are trying to introduce into the industry. 'Ofa says that they are now advising growers to allow a space of 10 feet between rows and 18 inches between each squash plant. Growers are also encouraged to direct the squash to grow only in one direction, instead of letting the squash become tangled so at harvest it is difficult to tell which plant the squash belongs to. The growers are also encouraged to pluck off some of the shoots, allowing one plant to produce only two healthy squash.

Despite the problems of education, 'Ofa is optimistic that the squash industry has a future in Tonga, but only if the growers will develop a more sophisticated approach to the farming of squash.
[Reprinted from *Matangi Tonga*, June-July/94]

Women, Land and Custom in Vanuatu

by Eileen Ligo

Eileen Ligo is active in community based economic development in Vanuatu. She attended SPPF's 1994 Pacific Networking Conference.

All land in pre-European Vanuatu was owned by the tribe. No one individual owned land. There were three distinct means of distribution of land between tribe members:

- a) father (chief) to son (chief)
- b) the roymata peace system
- c) the matrilineal system

This article looks at the matrilineal land system, drawing upon the example of Pentecost Island.

Land Tenure is Linked to Women's Activities

The tribe is comprised of about four to eight extended families and land is divided among those families. The matrilineal land system in Vanuatu is a complicated network with the acquisition and distribution of land through the social and tribal rights of women. Vanuatu's women take the lead in practically all events that make the tribes complete in functioning day-to-day. Women play very important roles in ceremonies of births, deaths and marriages. Women feature in important parts of the pig-killing ceremony. Hava, the special woman's dance (in the northern islands), has a place of honour in the pig-killing rituals. A house without a woman is empty and cold; a garden without a woman is unfruitful; an abundant reef without a woman is a waste. Without her, the tribe would die. She is the livelihood of the tribe. She sings in times of happiness; she dances at festivals; she mourns the dead; she weaves the Bwana and the Barl; she feeds the pigs.

Land tenure is linked to a woman's activities in many different ways. Various factors determine the allocation of land. For a new garden, they include: the woman's position in the ranking system of the tribe; the size of her family; the condition of the family (disabled, widow, old age); the

success of the last harvest; and any particular skill or talent the woman has (eg. midwife, traditional healer, herbalist). For a new house, the factors include: proximity to close family; health; and the reason for the new house. For sacred ceremonies or rituals, the nature of the ceremony is key.

How Does She Qualify for the Job?

The aunt is fully responsible for the training of her niece in the affairs of the tribe concerning women - dances, rituals, tribal chants and songs, mourning, behaviour in public, how to sit, stand and walk in the presence of men, and so on. The girl learns from her aunt, but nothing is free. She has to buy certain privileges from her aunt. Women in the tribes have ranking systems. There are high women just like high chiefs. The high woman is the highest ranking woman in her extended family and she must continue to maintain this place.

The girl must climb a ladder of increasing status and there is a price for each rung of the ladder:

1. As a baby, before sitting, the child lying on her back plays with her wrists and hands. So the aunt gives her a bangle of coconut shell. The parents pay the aunt for this.
2. As a baby struggling to sit independently, the child continuously clutches her ankles for support. The aunt gives her an anklet to play with. The parents pay the aunt for this.
3. When she walks, the aunt weaves her a first barl (loin-mat). The parents pay the aunt for this.
4. She buys the right to wear a necklace.
5. She buys the right to wear two long necklaces of beads slung over each shoulder from the neck.
6. She buys the right to wear a feather in her hair.
7. She buys the right to wear the paint of the tribe on her face.
8. She buys the right to carry a bum-bune (umbrella).

9. She buys the right to wear a mat as a top, wrapped around the chest.
10. She buys the right to dance with her aunt in the pig killing ceremony and to lead the dance.

How Did Women Come to Have Important Responsibilities and Rights?

Before the whiteman, the tribe had a chief (who got to be chief by achieving all requirements through the pig killing ritual). The tribal chief was the Ratahigin Vara. Each extended family had a chief, the Ratahigin Bavavana. The tribal chief looked after the boundary of the tribe's land, protecting it and ensuring that other tribes didn't steal any of it. The extended family chiefs looked after their extended family land boundary to ensure that all worked fairly within their limits. It was the extended family chief who decided on land distribution. He allocated land to family members for uses such as pig fences, houses, gardens and sacred rituals.

Around the early 1600s, things began to change. Other islanders arrived in war canoes. The tribesmen were constantly called upon by the tribe's warriors to assist in fighting and guarding tribe landings to keep away strangers. During the cyclone months, the men were free because the canoes did not come. But during the good months at sea, the tribesmen were always guarding the coast. During these times the work and decisions in the villages were left to the women. The chiefs were not home to look after family affairs. Additional responsibility was given to women, especially rights to the nakamal meetings which used to be just men.

By the late 1700's, the men went away even more than before. More tribal responsibilities, such as marriages and death rituals, were given to women.

Then "blackbirding" came to Vanuatu. Good strong men were

taken away and sold to cane planters in Queensland. Even teenagers were taken. Planters took the men to work in the plantations. They paid them tobacco, calico and strong drink. They left home. There were only women and children left. At this stage all land distribution rights were left to the women, who took total charge of all family and tribe affairs. They were valuable. Because some men never came back, the women's responsibilities doubled. Some of these responsibilities have continued into current times.

For example, yams are planted when men are away. They are planted in good soil, the family's best plot. Sometimes a whole higao is cleared and divided between tribe members. It is important that the best plots (best soil and drainage, access to main footpath, etc.) are allocated to the chiefs and men of higher ranks. It is the women who allocate best. They know yams; they know soil. They also know how to rank the men and young men. Sometimes there is no Bolololl for a whole season and circumcisions take place alone; yet rituals must be taken into consideration and a young man assisting in the ritual jumps a rank. You cannot wait for another Bolololl. He must be considered for better land for this year's yam planting.

The Bolololl (Pig Killing Ritual)

The Bolololl is a huge festival celebrated in all of the northern islands. It is sometimes a week long. For the host it lasts two weeks from start to finish. The Bolololl is a colourful ceremony, rooted in the land. It is a time of feasting, dancing and exchange of gifts, a time of buying status, respect and power, sealing it all with the blood of slaughtered pigs (up to 100 at a time).

At the start of the ceremony, the host paints himself. At the end of the ceremony, he must live in the nakamal alone for three days. He cooks his own meals and has no contact with women. After the three days, he washes away the paint. This act is sacred. First he must find land that can stay tabu for a minimum of two years. It must be tribal land not required for the yam planting

or other tribal arrangements. He will wash off the paint on this land, then called Aragogona, and state how long it will stay tabu. The Namele leaf he wore at the Bolololl is secured to a tree at the spot. No-one will garden here till the time is up.

When the time is up, a man is chosen who has a connection to the land. He will give the Bolololl man a tusked pig, "TAVSIRI". The land will then be distributed amongst members of the tribe. They plant a new yam crop on this land. Other crops are also grown. But nothing is taken from the gardens until the Aragogona is opened in yet another ceremony. The gardens are checked to ensure a good time is chosen. On that day, all gardeners go to the site, bringing Bwana and Bari. A tusked pig is given to the Bolololl man. The gardeners give their Bwana or Bari to the man who gave the pig. They can then harvest the yam crop and eat from their gardens. The wife of the man who gave the pig collects the "MARAHA" (Bwana & Bari). She identifies the value of the harvest from the quality and quantity of Maraha. She will advise her husband when it comes to exchanging of gifts at the next Bolololl. If the harvest was poor, she will compensate families. At the next Aragogona, she is obliged to give Bwana to secure good plots for them. It is essential that there is peace. It can only come in fair play.

Missionaries Undermine the Role of Women

When the missionaries came, many changes took place. They brought new ideas. Although many good things were born, they also preached that men were the heads of families and tribes. They preached that women must not lead, that women should not decide. The young men listened to them. They wanted to please the missionaries. They did all they could to take away decision making from the women. A lot went wrong. The intricate network of obligations and honourary rituals almost disappeared.



Crop marketing is women's responsibility

Young men found that they could not cope with the responsibilities so they shared them. Today there are many different chiefs in one tribe and many chiefs in one village. For example, the Ratahigin Sinobu (Chief of the people) is responsible for the social Affairs of the people, the Ratahigin Boe (Chief of the Bolololl) is responsible for affairs associated with ranked men of the society, and the Ratahigin Talu (Chief of the land) is responsible for the distribution of land for various uses. Although this sharing of tasks has helped in the immediate solving of problems, it has left many loose ends, things that have not been considered.

Conclusion

Today there is disunity. There seems to be insufficient land for all. Gardens are scarce, crops small, harvests poor. The happy unity does not exist anymore, though people pretend it is okay. It is only where the woman continues to make decisions or lead the decision making that there is peace and true happiness. It is only there that you find a true island community, because women continue to sing, to dance, to mourn and to decide which plot of land should go to the chief for the yam planting this year.

Vanuatu Women's Centre Addresses the Issue of Violence Against Women

SPPF staffer, Margaret Argue talked about the Vanuatu's Women's Centre with Andonia Lynch, a professional psychologist in counselling, during her visit to Canada last March. Andy lives in Port Vila, Vanuatu, where she has her own business, the Vanuatu Counselling Services. Born and raised in Papua New Guinea, she worked for many years in the union sector in PNG and from 1989 to 1991 she was Treasurer of the PNG Trade Union Congress.

The germ for setting up an organisation to assist abused women came out of the 1992 Pacific Women's Documentation workshop sponsored by IDWA of Australia. Workshop delegates were challenged to look at the issue of violence against women and to act on their findings. The ni-Vanuatu women who had attended set up meetings with various government ministries, with government and police officials, and with the Vanuatu National Council of Women to talk about setting up an organisation to deal specifically with the issue of violence against women. Thus in late 1992 the Vanuatu Women's Centre, or KAVAW (Committee Against Violence Against Women) as it was first called, came into being in space assigned them by the Ministry of Women's Affairs at the old USP Centre in Port Vila.

The aims of VWC are primarily to provide counselling and support to victims and survivors of sexual, physical and mental assault and to raise awareness on the issue. A collective of ten women run the centre on a volunteer basis. Women from all different walks of life are represented - a lawyer, a nursing sister who works with the Department of Health, reps from the Vanuatu Council of Women, a counselling psychologist, a church elder who came aboard because she was concerned about violence and two women police officers. There used to be a rep from the Survivors

of Violence group and the collective is looking at getting a rep from the childhood education field. Andy said "We think that primary schools would be a good place to get the information out so we asked a woman from that sector to join the collective."

Four members of the collective do programming. Educational workshops are happening on schedule, both in Vila and in the islands. In 1993 there were four in total, one in Santo and three around the Port Vila area. The 1994 workshops are scheduled for Tanna and Malekula, and funding permitting, for Ambrym and Santo, Santo for a second time in order to support the new Luganville VWC office. The first year the workshops ran for two weeks, a bit too long to take women out of their situation, so they are now cut to one week. The workshops cover health and legal issues and social and religious issues.

For the awareness side of the programming VWC started the year by going to elementary and high schools to talk about violence and child abuse. Andy said the women talk about violence and abuse in the family and tell the kids that help and a listening ear is there for anyone who wants to talk. In the 1993 year, VWC had a bi-monthly radio programme. During the half hour programme one of the collective would talk about what's happening regarding violence against women not only within Vanuatu but also in other countries. The programme was also a vehicle for making the country aware of the work that VWC does in Vanuatu. Apart from the workshops and radio programmes, the collective gives talks to many community organisations in Vila. They were also asked by the Police Department to talk to the new recruits about the Centre and about how the victims of violence and abuse should be approached by the police. VWC has suggested that a sexual assault unit

with female officers be set up to deal with the victims, and that the police don't treat the victimized woman badly in the manner of the age old attitude that 'they asked for it', but respect her as a human being who is suffering a crisis in her life and who needs help. Andy said that's the kind of message VWC puts across. She feels that they are striking a chord with the Police Department as they have been asked back to address the newest batch of recruits.

Another avenue that VWC is pursuing is publishing a newsletter. At the present time resources aren't available so they are inserting articles in *Nius Blong Ol Woman*, the publication of the National Council of Women. VWC is also following the example of the PNG Law Reform Commission, Women and the Law Committee, in publishing a series of information leaflets on the issue of violence and the legal rights of the abused women. The first one published was focused on domestic violence. Later leaflets will deal with sexual abuse, rape, mental abuse and so on.

VWC has been aided in its work by the Vanuatu International Ladies Group. Members of the group are diplomats' wives and business men's wives who are doing voluntary work in the community. It is this group that funded the first information leaflet.

VWC also feels it is important to keep good records of the programs and workshops they run from year to year so that their programming is consistent. They feel it is mandatory that programmes can be evaluated and assessed. Although the funding of the Centre is a constant challenge, the work goes on because the need is enormous. The collective drive to keep the Women's Centre going is strong.

NB: Donations to the VWC will be gratefully received. Send to Vanuatu Women's Centre, PO Box 1358, Port Vila, Vanuatu.

Teaching Critical Literacy in Papua New Guinea

by Catherine Sparks

Catherine Sparks is a former SPPF staff person now working in PNG. She reports here on one of PNG Integral Human Development Trust's literacy teacher training courses.

SPPF has supported the critical literacy work of PNG Trust. SPPF funding allowed PNG Trust to continue a "training of trainers" programme to create a cadre of literacy trainers/coordinators who can train and support other literacy workers. Ultimately, this will strengthen the self-sufficiency of local literacy groups and reduce the need for costly central training programmes by PNG Trust's national trainers.

On March 18, PNG gained ten new critical literacy teachers. The teachers graduated from a ten-day critical literacy teacher training course sponsored by the National YWCA and run by PNG Integral Human Development Trust.

The participants came from various Port Moresby settlement communities. Once back in their settlements or places of work, teachers "can choose themselves what language they teach in - Tok Pisin, Motu, or their own Tok Ples [local language]," explained Ruth Bae, the Literacy Coordinator at the Port Moresby YWCA.

During the course, students worked from a teacher training manual developed by PNG Trust. The course promotes critical rather than functional literacy. The difference between the two approaches was explained by Adrian Kabeuya and George Koivi, the two PNG Trust trainers running the course. While the functional literacy approach teaches people to read and write, critical literacy "educates students to go a step further, to go beyond just reading and writing to questioning the things they read and write," said

Kabeuya, a University of PNG Language Department graduate. "If someone is taught to read and write uncritically, they just accept the things they read, see on TV or hear on the radio. PNG Trust stresses critical literacy, questioning the things you read, see, hear and write, so that you are reading and writing your own life."

The trainers went on to explain that the Trust's critical literacy approach looks back to literacy in traditional PNG as a model. "Papua New Guinean traditional [oral] literacy is more critical. In traditional times people questioned things. When something happened, people did not just accept it. They sat down together to discuss and question it and look for answers," said Kabeuya.

According to Kabeuya it is vital for people to question: What is literacy? The trainer asserts that by pondering this question one will see that, "Papuan New Guineans had their own literacy before the white man came. When the white man came here, he told us that we were all illiterate and we believed him, but he was wrong. Papua New Guineans were literate, just not in the white man's terms."

The PNG Trust critical literacy trainers course addresses this issue by including a discussion about the nature of literacy and about Papua New Guinean traditional literacy.

Asked if he felt the course was worthwhile, student Augustine Hala said yes and explained, "Before I thought 'development and civilization' came only from an imported culture because the white man came here calling us Kanakas and telling us our culture was nothing. But now I realize that during the many thousands of years that my ancestors have been living here in PNG, they have already been living civilization and development - in education, politics, health and spirituality. Now, I will look at PNG and the world in a new way."

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A Writer Reflects on Indigenous Art, Language and Culture: An Interview with Albert Wendt

Albert Wendt of Western Samoa is widely known as one of the Pacific's foremost authors. He has been Professor of English at the University of Auckland since 1988. Prior to that he was Professor of Pacific Literature at the University of the South Pacific. SPPF's Stuart Wulff interviewed Albert Wendt during his August visit to Victoria for a Commonwealth Writers' Conference.

SW: Oral culture and expression is very strong in the Pacific, perhaps much stronger even today than written expression. What stimulated you to become a writer?

AW: I've always been interested in telling stories. Even though oral culture is still very alive in the Pacific, the respect for oral expression has also been transferred to written language. I write in English because of an accident of history. I went to New Zealand when I was thirteen. I had most of my education in English, so I started writing in English and I've been writing in English ever since, even though I'm still fluent in Samoan.

SW: Given that, do the oral traditions of Samoan society have any influence upon your writing?

AW: I think that the techniques I use in my writing, without even realizing it, are a little bit the way the stories are spoken. But then you put it on the page, so now there's a step between the reader and the storyteller. It's the changeover from oral to written that all countries of the Pacific have undergone. The way of communicating using the written language is quite different from the oral way. If you tell a story the oral way, you can actually see your audience so you tell the story according to the reaction of the audience; in the written form, you have an imaginary audience, usually yourself, then you've got to use other techniques to get across what you're trying to say.

SW: There is a debate going on vis a vis indigenous literature and art. Some people put a strong emphasis on indigenous artists as carriers of tradition and are critical of any deviation from the traditional forms or images of art within the culture. Others see the artists more as individuals drawing on the traditions of their culture, but also drawing on other traditions. How do you see yourself and Pacific literature in terms of this debate?

AW: I've watched it throughout the Pacific; the debate goes on. The so-called purists say that we should continue to produce art that you find in museums, while many anthropologists and western critics say that concept of art is rubbish. I don't like the word "tradition". It's a put down. It's saying "that's 'traditional' art and this is art", "that is folk history and this is history". The arts changed. The artist might use a cultural motif, but use it in a new way. In Samoa, tattooing remained basically in the same form, but within those designs the motifs were put in a different way. The artist had his say. Though he may not have signed his work, you could tell who did the tattoo. Since the coming of Europeans, there has been rapid change in everything; of course art reflects that change. What artists have done is what artists do everywhere. They've taken outside influences and indigenised them, used them in their own way.

Cultural contact is not a one way thing where the colonised remains the victim. I don't believe in the fatal impact theory. It's true that a lot of our culture was destroyed, but how you see this depends on your personal values. A lot of Pacific Islanders think that the destruction of the ancient religions when Christianity took over was tremendous. I don't; I think it was very destructive. But it's personal taste. So for me all cultures are changing and always have been. The changes are now

much faster with television and all that.

The remarkable thing about Pacific cultures and the indigenous cultures of Canada is that they're still alive. I don't think that colonialism in Samoa was as devastating as in New Zealand or Canada. But despite the nineteenth and early twentieth century belief in social Darwinism, a survival of the fittest in which indigenous people would die out, we're still here. Now the rate of population increase in New Zealand of the Maori and Pacific Islanders is three times the rate of Europeans. Cultures change in order to survive. Outsiders have also been enriched by our cultures. We all indigenise things, leading to the development of new blends in art. We've taken the form of the English novel and indigenised it to say our own things. We've taken other art forms and adapted them, even computer art. This is why I challenge the word, "traditional". It's not used when you look at British or Western art; you don't say that was "traditional" and this is "art". There has been continuity in the arts, here as well as there. Many people think there was a break when the Europeans came, but you can see continuity in the art. There was a period when our art was frowned upon, so it went underground. Some art forms went out of existence, but others continued. Art forms continue if they are relevant to the people, so things like dance continued because they remained a part of every day life.

SW: Here in Canada, many indigenous cultural practices were discouraged, even outlawed. Use of indigenous languages was discouraged. The authorities recognised how important these were in the continuation of intact indigenous societies.

AW: You see this all around the world. If you destroy a language, you destroy the heart of a culture. I don't know the history of indigenous

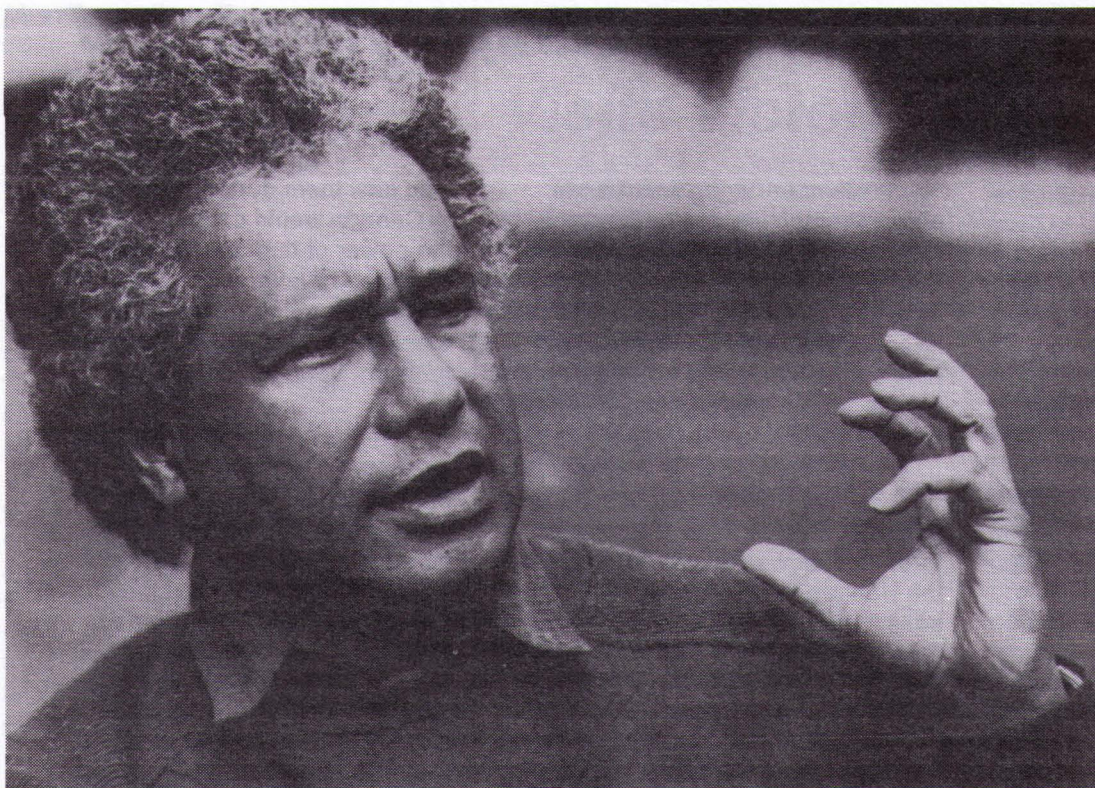


photo courtesy of the Victoria Literary Arts Festival

Albert Wendt

people in this area, but I imagine it was similar to elsewhere. During initial contact the local people were welcoming. Then the diseases started. There was resistance and then the government came down heavily and took over the land. Now indigenous people are regrouping and becoming politically active. The same thing is happening in New Zealand. The strength of this renewal will also be shown in the arts.

SW: One challenge here relates to your point about language and the heart of a culture. A difference we see from the situation in the Pacific Islands is that so many people here have lost their language. So the revitalisation at the political level is often without the touchstone of language.

AW: That's what happened in New Zealand. The Maori language almost died, but it's coming back. It was only through a self-help movement by the Maori people that the language was revived. A very dynamic movement since the 1960s has featured "language nests" for young kids, with total immersion in the language, and it was done by the Maori themselves. The whole education system which

the government set up for indigenous people didn't work. The failure rate remains enormous. When the Maori decided to look after their own education, they succeeded. Now you're beginning to hear little kids talking to each other in Maori, which didn't happen for a long time. It's still a struggle. I think it's only 15 or 20% of the people who still speak Maori at home. The government now has to do its part. The Maori people want to set up schools in the Maori language. Ironically the Maori language has been taught at university for the last fifty years. It was taught for an elite who wanted to study Maori art.

Pacific cultures will continue to survive. There will be difficult periods, as in any culture.

SW: We've been talking mostly about the impact of outside cultures on Pacific art. Do you see evidence of the opposite, that Pacific artistic sensibilities are having an impact on other art?

AW: Just take the novel. As you know, there's not just one type of English coming from England. There are about thirty or forty Englishes around the world. All the ex-colonies

of Britain use the English language and they write in that type of English. It's an enrichment of the language, but it's a different type of English. So the influence now on the novel is not coming from England; it's coming from other Englishes. The most exciting thing for me is to read novels from other countries, not from England. At the moment I can't think of an English novelist that I like reading. So the "empire" is rising back. The most dynamic art movement in the whole of the Pacific is among the Maori in New Zealand. They're carving what looks like traditional, museum stuff, but they're also into

abstract and computer art. It's still Maori, you see, because it was done by Maoris. In New Zealand there is this bullshit debate about what is Maori art, what is indigenous art. They look at a Native American painting in the abstract form and they think he's not Native American; his art is very Western. However, after awhile you begin to see that he may be utilizing some concepts of Western abstract art, but there's something different. The difference is that it comes from a different cultural background; that's its Indianness.

The good thing is that non-indigenous artists are now careful about using indigenous art forms. A lot of the motifs are religious, not just art motifs, so you have to be very careful. It used to be believed that you could write novels about Polynesians and write from the head of a Samoan or Maori. Western novelists used to say that native people are quite simple so we can get into their heads and write from a first person viewpoint. That's not on any more. Culturally we're very different.

Solomons Group Promotes Employment and Cultural Pride

by Stuart Wulff

The "bright lights" are beckoning; rural to urban migration is now a fact of life in most Pacific Island nations. The push comes as increasing populations put pressure on limited land and resources at the local level. The pull comes from the jobs and lifestyles that the town or city is presumed to offer. The reality is often another story. Jobs are scarce; those that exist often demand special skills. Without money, those consumer goods and lifestyle options remain tantalisingly out of reach. For the mostly young, male migrants, the urban journey often becomes a dead end trip.

While many wring their hands about the problem, a small group in Honiara is doing something about it. Their initiatives may not change the world, but they are making a local difference. They may also point to a path that can benefit others, the type of path which Pacific nations will need to find with increasing urgency.

You are most likely to first hear of Narasirato Are'Are Panpipe through their weekly performances at the Honiara Hotel. Or if you live overseas, you may have seen them perform during tours to Canada, Australia and England. The audiences, numbering in the thousands,

who saw them during their July tour to Canada would certainly attest to the power of their message. It is a message of pride in their own culture joined with a determination to create employment and economic opportunity for young people.

The individuals involved are from the Are'Are region of the island of Malaita. Some are involved in business, while others work for the government or are professionals. What unites them is that they are successful and they live in Honiara, the urban growth magnet of the Solomon Islands. While Honiara doesn't compare in size to a Port Moresby, it holds a larger proportion of the population of the Solomons than does Port Moresby vis a vis PNG. Thus, the relative scale of urbanisation is profound.

Success in Melanesia brings its own responsibilities. With the wantok system of extended family and clan obligations comes responsibilities for the young men from home villages who are migrating to Honiara. When those young men don't find work, the wantok is expected to look after them. One can encourage them to return to the village (mostly futilely). A few people from Are'Are decided to do something about the problem.

Narasirato, in their local language, means "crying for the sun". They believe that "the sun is the source of life. Crying for the sun is like crying for life, crying for achievement, crying for unity, crying for co-development within ourselves. It basically means crying for something we would like to achieve."

What they have already achieved is employment for almost 50 young men. A key force within the group is Mathew Houaisuta. He and his wife were recently recognized for their efforts by a local civic achievement award. Mathew runs a shop and has provided employment and accommodation for the young men. Other



photo by Stuart Wulff

Narasirato Are'Are Panpipe at the 'pre-opening' concert of the Commonwealth Cultural Festival, the open air concert series which entertained thousands in Victoria in August.

[Are'Are continued]

projects are being developed to provide additional employment. Mathew has also been a key player in the launch and development of Narasirato Panpipe.

Several members of the group noted that there is a tendency in the Solomon Islands today to look down on local culture, to see outside influences as superior. They wanted to challenge that perception and promote cultural pride while creating employment for young men. They chose music and dance because it originates with the Are'Are people and the panpipes are well known in the Solomons. Music has been handed down through the generations and is used for visiting, entertainment, in weddings and in gatherings.

Narasirato members have many dreams for the future. One dream is to build a cultural centre in Honiara. They'd like to create further economic benefits, both among the Are'Are community in Honiara and back in the villages, by developing cultural tourism, taking small groups of visitors to the Are'Are communities. Unlike the more usual tourism, they would like to keep numbers small and emphasise an authentic cross-cultural experience that would leave their own culture intact and engender respect among the visitors for that culture. Such a project would also extend the benefits of Narasirato's work back to the villages and to women.

The success of Narasirato is stimulating the formation of similar groups. After attending the Vancouver Folk Music Festival, Narasirato is interested in the possibility of organising a similar festival within the Solomon Islands.

The cultural pride that Narasirato promotes is not a chauvinistic one. They feel that no culture should dominate, that all should be respected. They hope to learn from other cultures and they share their own culture in hopes that others can learn from it.

Cook Islands Dance Troupe Visits Victoria

The dancers and drummers of the Mapuapua Dance Troupe see themselves as goodwill ambassadors for the Cook Islands. They brought their dynamic style of entertainment to Victoria as part of the festivities surrounding the Commonwealth Games. While here, they also participated in a couple of SPPF programmes, a dance workshop for children and youth, and a potluck picnic and performance attended by almost 200 people.

While the Cook Islands are justly famous for their drumming and dancing and have several well established groups, Mapuapua was formed only seven months ago. The visit to Victoria was their first international tour. However, several troupe members, including lead dancer Taina White, bring strong prior reputations with them.

In an interview with SPPF, Taina explained that most dance troupes are focused on a lead dancer. She wanted to form a group that would operate on more of an ensemble basis, nurturing and showcasing new dancers and drummers as well as

established veterans. The 30 members of Mapuapua range in age from 7 years old to over 60. The tour to Victoria included 18 members, with the youngest being 11.

Mapuapua in the Rarotongan language means rapid growth or luxuriant foliage, but the troupe intends it to mean "natural beauty of the land". The dances that the group performs are traditional and the group members see themselves as promoting the cultural identity of their people. The group includes both female and male dancers. The musicians play several types of drums and the Cook Islands style of ukulele.

Mapuapua members feel that the cultural traditions are still very much alive in the Cook Islands. They pointed to the existence of annual festivals to showcase dancing and drumming as a sign of this. They also noted with pride the international reputation that Cook Islanders have for their dancing and drumming, a reputation that they hope to add to themselves in the coming years.



Mapuapua Dance Troupe

photo courtesy Mapuapua Dance Troupe

Life on Pitcairn Island

by the Students of Pitcairn Island School and Pippa M. Foley

Pippa Foley is the Education Officer on Pitcairn Island. She compiled this letter/article from the contributions of her students at Pitcairn Island School.

So many people want to know about our way of life that we decided to write a class letter to send to everyone.

There are ten children at our school aged from 5 to 14. Our teacher comes from New Zealand as we do the New Zealand school syllabus. We work from 8 AM to 2 PM. Our subjects are maths, spelling, reading, science, sport, social studies, health and art. The older two pupils do correspondence lessons from New Zealand. When you are 16 you can go to New Zealand for schooling, but it means you won't get home for two to four years. Each month we staple and fold *Miscellany*, the Island newspaper. The school gets any profit it makes.

There are about 50 people on the Island. Everyone is related, but not too closely. Each family has its own house. There are only four Island names: Christian, Warren, Brown and Young. Pitcairners have our own dialect, but we also speak English. We have about 6 visitors on the Island at the moment.

We're all Seventh Day Adventists. Sabbath day (Saturday) is a rest day. We go to Sabbath School at 10. After church we sometimes have a picnic or we visit people or go walking. People make bread and do the house work and cooking so they don't have to work on the Sabbath. Every Tuesday we have a prayer meeting in the church. The 13th Sabbath is a very special day because the children sing in the church. A new pastor comes every two or four years.

In summer it can get very humid. Even when it is cloudy, it is so hot

that you feel like standing under a cold shower. The sun is also very hot. We've never had snow or frost and hail is rare - three times in thirty years. In winter it rains a lot; as the roads are dirt, they get extremely muddy. We also get showers in summer. It is hard to tell the seasons have changed because there is little difference.

Economy and Government

We have our own Pitcairn dollar coins. Our currency is the same as New Zealand but we also use US, Sterling, Canadian, New Zealand and Australian currencies.

Pitcairn gets half its income from the production of stamps for collectors. Every three months the stamps are changed. We also sell First Day Covers. They are sent here to be stamped and then delivered back to New Zealand for distribution. All unused stamps are burnt.

We make most of our living by trading and carving. The carvings are sold to ships. We make whales, sharks, dolphins, fish, Bounty models, vases, wheel barrows, longboats, walking sticks and birds. We sell t-shirts with Pitcairn designs on them. We also sell Pitcairn Guides about Pitcairn. Older women make woven baskets to sell and paint designs on Hattie leaves (weird shaped leaves from a tree here).

We have local occupations to run the Island: tractor drivers; foresters; our nurse, usually the Pastor's wife; an assistant nurse who is an Islander; three engineers to fix government machines; two electricians; and five communications staff to run the radio telephone and satellite station. There are four people who work in the post office. We have a small library and a librarian. All these jobs are part time; the people fish and carve as well.

The Magistrate is the highest official and takes care of all government things. He gets the faxes from our

British Commissioner in New Zealand. He is elected by the people every three years. Our Chairman of Public Works is the second highest official. We also have councillors elected annually to the Pitcairn Council.

Food and Water

We eat plenty of fruit like oranges, mandarins, melons, grapes, strawberries, grapefruit, bananas, coconuts, pawpaw, mangos, guavas and pineapples. The bananas are mainly wild, but individuals plant their own as well. The pineapples are cultivated in the gardens. Taro, yam, beans, cabbage, cucumber, tomato, carrots, etc. are grown in gardens.

Recently the fruit fly has been introduced. It gets into the best fruits. The only way at the moment to prevent it is to pick the fruit before it is ripe.

We eat a lot of fish. The men do a lot of fishing and scuba diving. The big fish that they get are traded with the ships for meat or canned goods. We keep the small fish for eating ourselves. The men fish from flat bottomed boats that we call canoes.

We don't drink much milk because it is very expensive; all milk is imported. We get meat from the supply ship. It also brings us dry goods like rice, pasta, flour and sugar. We have chooks and goats on Pitcairn. We catch crayfish in traps. We also get shrimp.

Arrowroot is a big job. When it is ready to be dug, the community gets together and helps dig everyone's arrowroot. When all the gardens have been dug, everyone takes their bags to their homes. Friends come to help peel the arrowroot. Digging up the arrowroot takes at least half a day, but the peeling takes the longest. We start peeling in the afternoon and keep peeling until bedtime. Next morning we peel some more. After that it is all washed and ground. Then we let it dry into powder.

Sugar cane is cut down and taken to the mill to squeeze the juice out. Then the juice is put into a big pan over a fire. We sieve out the dirt and stuff while it boils into molasses. It then cools and you can eat it with pancakes. Delicious!

There is a rose apple, which is a type of tree taking over the island. It was planted for the people to have firewood. They are very tall trees. In season they get fruit that is edible. We also have a vine called Morning Glory. Another vine is wild beans. In season we eat them.

We get water from rain. To catch it, we put in wells. They are dug in the ground and cemented. We also order manufactured tanks for catching water. When it doesn't rain for awhile, water is precious. There is one spring. There is a hive of bees where we get our honey.

We have one store which is open three times per week. It is a Cooperative store which gets its supplies from New Zealand on the supply ship, the same as everyone else.

Getting Around

We don't have any cars, only motor bikes. Every family has at least one bike - mainly four and three wheelers. Because of the mud when it rains, it is easier to get around by bike than to walk. We can get our motor bike licence for 50 cents at age 15 and we don't have to sit a test.

We have no airplanes so we use our longboats to get to our islands of Henderson and Oeno. We can't go to Ducie because it is too far.

All our ordered supplies come by supply ship three times a year from New Zealand. We go out in longboats to collect the supplies because there is no breakwater for a ship to reach the island. This means everything, even house building materials and machinery, has to be carted in the longboats. We have a derrick on our jetty to lift out the supplies, including the diesel and petrol needed to run our generator, machines and bikes. But then everything must be carted up the steep



Sugar cane grinding, the juice is used to make molasses

road from the landing. In the olden days, everything that couldn't fit into a wheel barrow had to be carried. It was very, very hard work until we got a tractor and motorbikes.

Entertainment and Holidays

For entertainment we have community meals and parties. We also entertain visitors from ships. We go to Oeno about once a year. Oeno is a coral atoll with a lovely sandy beach. When a boat is going to leave we sing to them.

Our sports are rounders, longball, soccer, volleyball, rugby and cricket. We play cricket when we have visitors. We often play volleyball on Saturday nights. We now have a tennis court up Flatland and there will be a tennis tournament soon. When visitors come we have sports days and picnics.

Many people on Pitcairn enjoy ham radio. Everyone on the Island has a video because we don't get T.V. Visitors have to get used to not having power all the time. It comes on at 9:00 AM until noon and back on again at 4:00 PM until 10:00 PM. Most families have their own generator in case they need power when the main supply is off. We all have electric fridges and freezers.

On Bounty day, the 23rd of January, we celebrate the Burning of the Bounty. We all go down to the

Landing for a picnic. We go fishing in the longboats, then clean and cook the fish for a community meal. We do a lot of swimming that day. Later in the evening, as it starts to get dark, we burn a replica "Bounty". We make the sails out of cardboard and the hull out of drums. It is towed out to sea where the real Bounty was burnt and we set it ablaze.

Whenever it is someone's birthday, it is a community party. At Halloween we go around and sneak up on people. Then they give us treats. Sometimes we dress up to be scary.

We celebrate Christmas very differently on Pitcairn. We hang up baskets instead of stockings. The adults act as Santa Claus and put gifts in our baskets. In the morning we look in our baskets. Later on Christmas Day we get on our motorbikes and the tractors and go out to find Christmas trees. When we have about ten trees, we take them down to the public square. Here we have pot holes in the concrete, where we plant the trees and water them so they will not fade in the sun. At about 3:00 we hang presents for everyone on the trees. Then some of the men call the names on the presents and everyone runs to get their presents. Then we thank each other. Every family gives every other person on the island a gift, so there is a tremendous number.

Triple-winner a hero in tiny Pacific island nation

by Jeff Bell

Marcus Stephen's athletic exploits in the last two Commonwealth Games have lifted the spirits of the people of the island nation of Nauru - all 7,000 of them.

Stephen, Nauru's weightlifting phenomenon, is packing around a trio of gold medals these days after sweeping his 59-kilogram weight class by topping the field in the snatch, the clean-and-jerk and the combined lift total. Stephen was understandably overwhelmed Wednesday when he was presented as one of the nightly medal achievers at Harbourfest, to a crowd estimated at 70,000 - 10 times the population of his island home.

The compact but powerful Stephen burst on the Commonwealth Games stage in 1990 at the Auckland Games, where he won one gold and two bronze medals. So while his triple gold in Victoria may not have

been a total surprise, it has still been the highlight of weightlifting action so far at the Royal Theatre. And it's pretty heady stuff for a young man from an island between New Zealand and Fiji [sic] that covers only 36 square kilometres.

At least this time around, though, he has a pair of teammates to savor his successes with - fellow weightlifter Gerard Jones and sprinter Frederick Canon. In Auckland, he was Nauru's lone competitor -and the country's first ever in Commonwealth Games competition at that.

Asked if he is a national figure because of his accomplishments, he replied modestly: "You could say that."

You could also assume that he is in for a hero's welcome on his visit to Nauru, just like the one he received on his triumphant return in 1990.

He will also be a star among his training partners in Paul Coffa's gymnasium in Melbourne, where the Australian team trains. Melbourne is also where the 24-year old Stephen attends university, majoring in accounting.

Next up for Stephen is a two to three month layoff from any lifting so that he can recover from a wrist injury suffered in a training competition in Italy two weeks ago. The injury caused him significant pain during Games competition, but it held together well enough for his medal-winning feat.

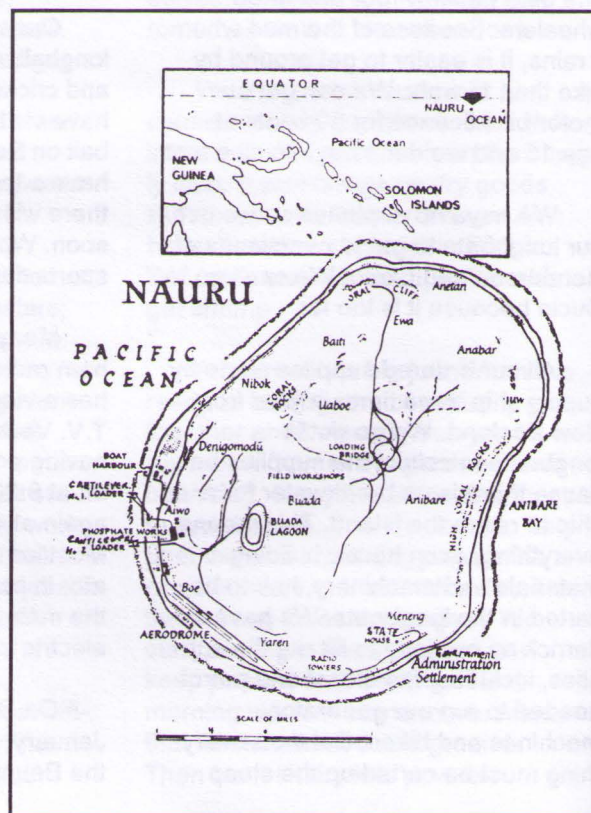
Stephen's long-term goal is to compete in the 1996 Olympic Games in Atlanta, a dream that has been made possible by Nauru's entry into the Olympic family of nations this year.

[Reprinted from *The Times-Colonist*, August 26/94]



The Nauruan Commonwealth Games Contingent with medal winner Marcus Stephen (standing fifth from left)

photo by Stuart Wulff



New Books

Aboriginal Self-Determination in Australia. Christine Fletcher (editor). Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Report Series. Aboriginal Studies Press. Canberra. 1994. 204 pp. Ppbk. "This volume represents the proceedings of a conference celebrating the International Year for the World's Indigenous Peoples, held in Townsville, Queensland, in 1993. At the time of the conference, the Prime Minister was meeting with Cabinet to decide the shape of native title legislation, and many of the Aboriginal conference speakers were desperately rushing around the country defending Aboriginal rights and calling for justice. Somehow, they found time to analyse the key issues for the conference and for this volume: Aboriginal self-determination and federalism."

Addressing the Key Issues for Reconciliation. A series of 8 issue papers accompanied by an introductory volume published by the Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation. Australian Government Publishing Service. Canberra 1993. Ppbk. Titles are: #1 Understanding Country, #2 Improving Relationships, #3 Valuing Cultures, #4 Sharing History, #5 Addressing Disadvantage, #6 Responding to Custody Levels, #7 Agreeing on a Document, #8 Controlling Destinies. Along with **Making Things Right: Reconciliation after the High Court's Decision on Native Title** - "a booklet which introduces the process of reconciliation and describes some of the implications of the High Court's decision on native title, also known as the Mabo decision".

The Morning Star in Papua Barat. Nonie Sharp in association with Markus Wonggor Kaisiepo. Arena Publications. 1994. 140 pp. Ppbk. An interweaving of the personal history of Markus Wonggor Kaisiepo and the struggle for the independence of the Papuan people of Papua Barat, also known as Irian Jaya, the eastern most province of Indonesia.

Tonga Fisheries Bibliography. 1st Revised Edition. PIMRIS, USP. Suva. Compiled by R. Gillett. 1994. 115 pp. Ppbk.

Papua New Guinea, a Travel Survival Kit. 5th Edition. Tony Wheeler and John Murray. Lonely Planet. August 1993. 374 pp. Ppbk. "It's not easy to produce a guidebook for PNG - the expenses are high and the market is small", says John Murray. The value of this book is all 374 pages focusing on Papua New Guinea. A well done guidebook with maps, charts, colour plates and solid information.

Transit of Venus: Travels in the Pacific. Julian Evans. Minerva Press. 1992. 276 pp. Ppbk. Bibliography. Not your usual paradisiacal travel book - the *Times Literary Supplement* says "jaundiced but sharp, quick to tick off the mess that's been made of things but still attentive to those too-few moments when the old dream of islands asserts itself ... *Transit of Venus* presents a vivid inventory of corruption and loss".

The Epidemiology of Malaria and Filariasis in the Ok Tedi Region of Western Province, Papua New Guinea. Gerrit J.T. Schuurkamp. PhD Thesis. 341 pp. Cloth. Maps, colour plates, charts, bibliography. In March 1982, Dr. Schuurkamp took a temporary assignment with Ok Tedi Mining Limited to establish a programme to control malaria at the mine site. The "temporary assignment" stretched to the present as he is still with OTML Medical Department and resulted in this doctoral dissertation.

Audio Visuals

Mama Bilong Olgeta: Protecting the Rainforests of Papua New Guinea. Video and information kit. Rainforest Information Centre. Lisimore, Australia. 1994. VHS/NTSC. Excellent. Rent it for educational purposes from SPPF. \$15(+ \$1.05 GST in Canada) plus shipping.

He Alo A He Alo: Hawaiian Voices on Sovereignty

Editor: Roger MacPherson Furrer. Published by American Friends Service Committee-Hawai'i, 1993, 175 pages.

by Stuart Wulff

More Canadians travel to Hawai'i than all other Pacific Islands combined. Many of us probably think that we know the place. But much of the Hawai'i we experience is a manufactured illusion. This very readable book provides an excellent introduction to another Hawai'i, a Hawai'i as seen through the eyes of its indigenous people. It also provides a useful introduction to the multifaceted Hawaiian sovereignty debate and movement. It should be required reading for anyone visiting the islands.

He Alo A He Alo (meaning Face To Face) is worthwhile reading for anyone interested in indigenous rights and sovereignty movements. While many themes will be familiar to anyone who is aware of the general treatment of indigenous people, it does contain surprises. Perhaps most surprising is that Native Hawaiians have less rights under U.S. law than other First Nations in the U.S. While some in the Hawaiian sovereignty movement are pushing for independence, others are seeking the same "nation within a nation" status that other Native American First Nations already have.

AFSC-Hawai'i has wisely avoided espousing a particular position in the sovereignty debate, other than a general solidarity with the aspirations of Native Hawaiians. A wide cross-section of Native Hawaiians, reflecting alternative viewpoints, are gathered together in the book. It thus provides a useful introduction to many issues and viewpoints, though anyone with a serious interest will find that it simply whets the appetite for more.

He Alo A He Alo is available from SPPF for \$15.00 (Canadian residents add \$1.05 GST). Add shipping & handling charges of \$2.50 (Canada), \$3.25 (US) or \$5.00 (overseas).

Book reviews...

Sustainable Development or Malignant Growth? Perspectives of Pacific Island Women

Edited by 'Atu Emberson-Bain
Marama Publications. Suva, Fiji.
Autumn 1994. 290 pp. Ppbk.
References, illustrations.

Talk about women and sustainable development has been around for some time but this just published book is one of the first to actually document the issues. The collection of essays and poems edited by 'Atu Emberson-Bain is an important milestone for the subject matter, not only for the region but also for the world outside. The impetus for the collection arose directly from the December 1992 DAWN (Development Alternatives with Women for a New Era) Pacific regional meeting on women, environment and development. Compiling works from 28 different women, Emberson-Bain has organised the book around four main themes: "Challenging the Regional Development Agenda", "Conflicting Interests in Resource Use", "Resource Use and Abuse", "Cultural Fall-out: Migration, Tourism and Imperialist Pursuits", "Political Frameworks and Perversions", and "Rethinking Sustainability in the Pacific: Women's Perspectives". Contributing authors include V.R. Bidesi, Emberson-Bain, P. Fairbairn-Dunlop, A. Griffen, V. Griffen, R. Miranka, C. Morei, S. Ounei-Small, K. Ram, N. Rooney, O. Sepoe, P. Singh, C. Slat-ter, L.M. Torres Souder, I. Sumang, K.H. Thaman, U. Underhill-Sem, D. Gorode, G. Molisa, D. Obed, T.M. Pasilio, S. Paulo, V. Rasmussen, N. Simi, C. Sinavaiana, J. Sipolo, M. Vaai, and M.M. Von Reiche.

Available from SPFF \$19.95
(Canadian residents add \$1.40 GST).
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(overseas).

Custom Marriage in Kiribati

by Tanginibwebwe Ioteba

Tanginibwebwe is a student at Immaculate Heart College in Taborio, North Tarawa.

Before the missionaries came, marriage customs were very important and strictly followed.

Couples were engaged when they were young, sometimes still babies! This was arranged by their parents. The parents of the girl looked for a boy who had a lot of land. The boy's parents did this also. When the parents of the boy were satisfied, they went to the girl's parents and talked about an engagement. When the girl's parents were satisfied, arrangements for the engagement began.

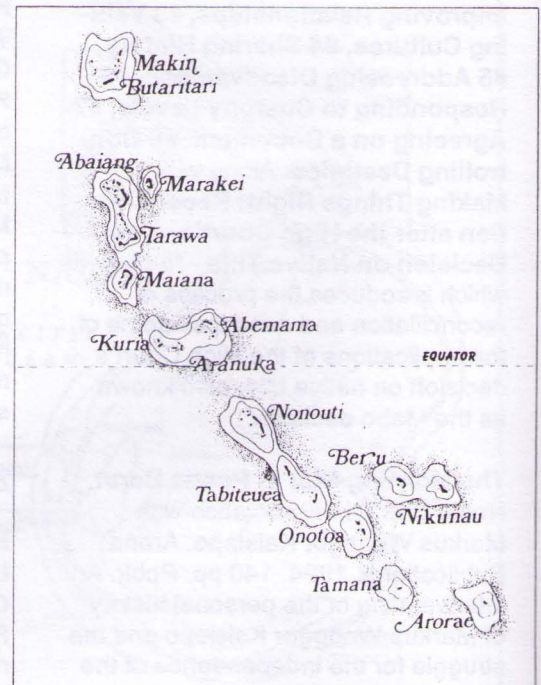
When they reached adolescence, the boy would help the girl's family, but he was not allowed to sleep there. As she grew up, the girl was kept in a house. She could not see anyone except her mother and grandmother. Everybody kept an eye on her house because they didn't want her to go outside or the sun would take away her beauty. She ate her meals inside her house and worked there weaving mats. When she had her first period, she was allowed to go outside, but was always accompanied. The wedding could take place at any time after this.

The marriage custom was different from today because the couple were not married by a priest but by someone in the family. Then the couple went to the maneaba to be blessed by the old men. A party was held with dancing and "te katabe". Te katabe is sung on very special occasions by old people without musical instruments. It was a shameful thing for the girl and boy if pigs were not killed, so many pigs were killed for the feast.

After the party, the couple was sent to their new house, which was supplied with a mat. After they made love, the boy's aunties went to the house to see if there was blood on the mat. If there was, the aunties took the mat and went to the girl's house, shouting with joy. The girl was bathed by the old women. Then the boy's uncles carried the girl to the village on their shoulders, singing happily as they made their way to the girl's house.

Every girl had to be a virgin when she was married; if she were not, her relatives, especially her father and mother, would be very embarrassed. They would kill her or send her away.

Every I-Kiribati knows this marriage custom, though it is not as strictly followed as it was. Couples sometimes arrange everything for themselves. But on outer islands, the "rules" of the marriage custom are still followed.



Kiribati the central chain of islands

Welcoming Visitors to Kiribati

by Kiritome Teekawa

Kiritome is a student at Immaculate Heart College in Taborio, North Tarawa.

It is very important for us to take care of a stranger who visits Kiribati.

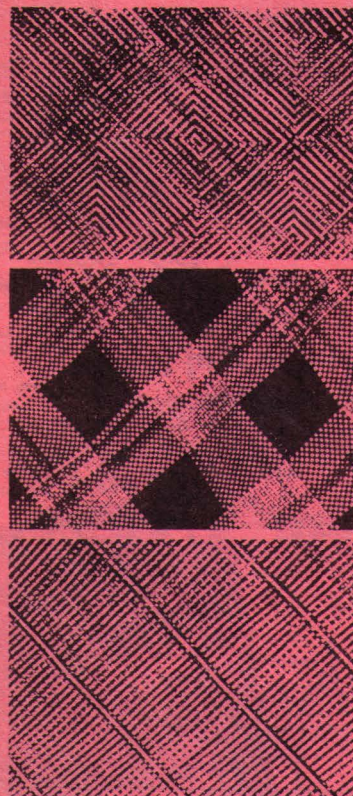
If you visit a family's home, they will feed you special foods like babai, a cream made from pandanus fruit and fish. Please don't refuse to eat and drink what is offered; this might upset your hosts. While you enjoy your meal, they will tell you about the history of the island you are visiting or their ancestors. Lastly, they will give you a gift, usually a locally-made handicraft like a hat or fan. These are woven out of pandanus leaves.

If you visit a village, the villagers will place you in the maneaba (meeting house) and give you something

to eat and drink. Don't be surprised if you are just about to eat or drink and the dancing begins. The villagers will sing at the top of their voices, making a beautiful sound, then the dancing will begin.

People will stare at you and, wherever you go, children will be with you. People might show you the special islets belonging to the ancient gods - Nareau, Auriaria and Tituabine - or sights such as a well at the edge of the sea. Please do what the people tell you; otherwise you might have some difficult experiences.

If you are interested in learning how to cut copra, weave baskets and mats, sail in a canoe, swim in the lagoon, fish or work in a babai pit, then I think you would enjoy visiting Kiribati. We would be happy to welcome you to our country.



are you a film buff?

could you help us round out the SPPF video collection?



OOPS!!

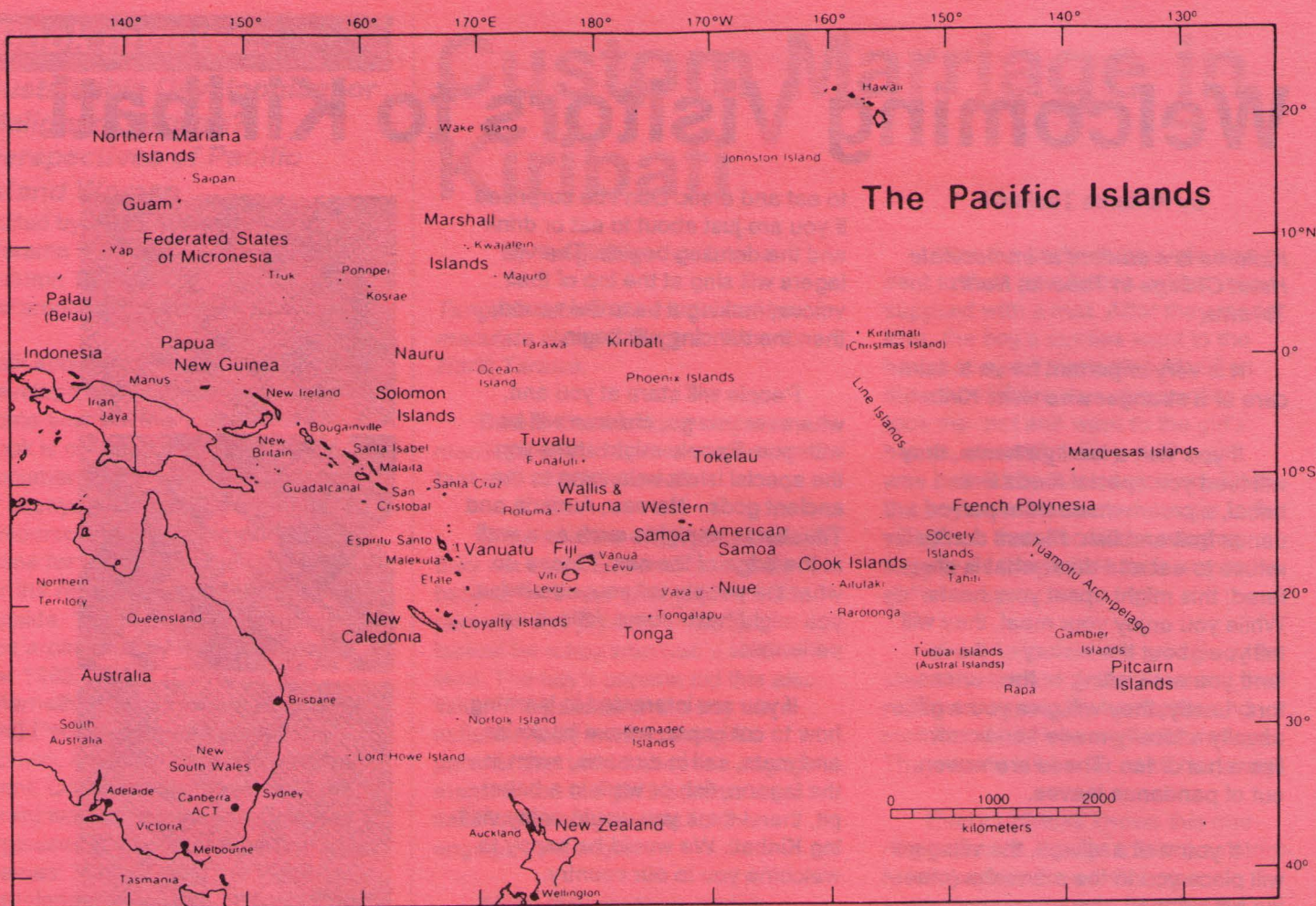
On our wish list are these excellent productions from Film Australia:

- ☐ Black Harvest
- ☐ Bounty Experiment
- ☐ Change in Tuvalu
- ☐ Atoll Life in Kiribati
- ☐ Western Samoa: I can get another wife but I can't get parents
- ☐ Pacific Paradise?
- ☐ Vanuatu - Struggle for Freedom
- ☐ Yap...How did you know we'd like TV?
- ☐ Man Without Pigs



Wish list totals nearly \$1100 and our total budget for resources is \$1600 There is definitely a challenge here!

**Please help us by sending a donation to the funding pool for audio visuals.
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