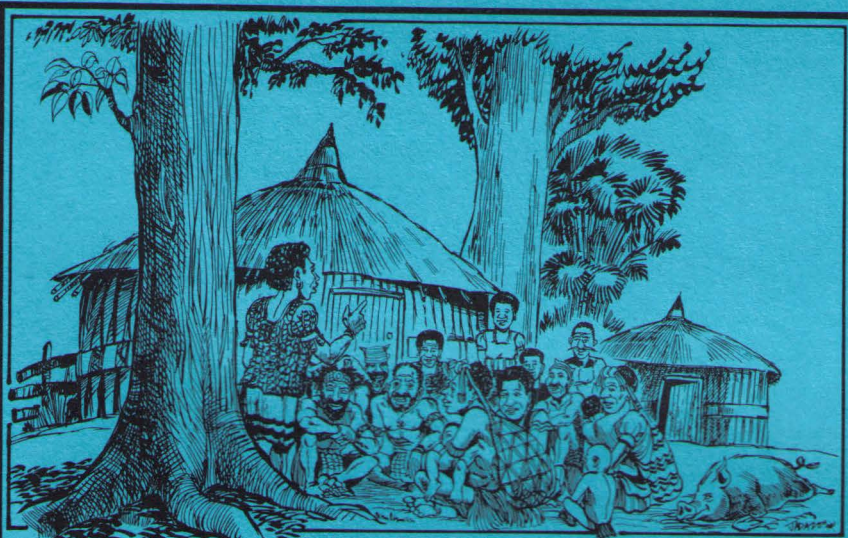


Tok Blong Pasifik

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

Sept-Dec 1995, Vol 49 No 3/4

Victoria, BC, Canada



**MAMA CRAUN I STAP
OL MERI I MAS BOSIM CRAUN BILONG OL.**

**HAHINE BE TANO BIACUDIA.
HAHINE BE TANO ENA CAUKARA IDIA GUNALAI.**

**WOMEN ARE LAND HOLDERS. WOMEN HAVE THE
RIGHT TO MAKE DECISIONS ABOUT THEIR LAND.**



Shadow of the Bomb

**France resumes nuclear
weapons testing in Polynesia**

- ...Nuclear notes
- ...Anti-nuke fashion show
- ...Bastille Day in Tahiti
- ...The Canadian connection

Women's Voices

**Pacific women speak their
minds on regional issues as
women gather in Beijing**

- ...Making the most of the
Beijing Forum
- ...Environmental racism
- ...Speaking through poetry
- ...Desert sage and the dress
- ...This land is like a book
- ...Foreign loggers descend
on PNG rainforest
- ...Voices of Bougainvillean
women
- ...Women need legal literacy
- ...Women speak out: Pacific
and Caribbean voices

Special report

**...Witnessing for East Timor:
Commemorating
the 1991 massacre**

Artwork and Layout by Julia Wilson
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This poster is a joint project of the Individual and Commu-
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Environment Foundation (MEF). For more information con-
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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 *Tok Blong Pasifik*, 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.

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Editorial Policy

We welcome contributions to *Tok Blong Pasifik* 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 focused magazine, *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 magazine. We reserve the right to edit material.

Subscription Rates

Subscription rates for addresses in Canada are \$15/year for students, \$25 for individuals and \$40 for organisations; all other subscribers should remit US\$15/year for students, US\$25 for individuals and US\$40 for organizations. Out of country subscribers please remit funds in cheques drawn on a US bank or international bank draft only.

SPPF Update

Good News! ... with an apology

We've struggled recently to produce *Tok Blong Pasifik* despite losing half our budget when the Canadian government closed its funding programme for the education work of groups like SPPF. We apologize for combining our September and December issues into one. But circumstances are looking up! The Canadian International Development Agency has agreed to fund a project to improve the format of *Tok Blong* and develop a larger support and subscription base for the magazine. We aim to have a better publication and one that can survive without further government subsidies.

CIDA has also agreed to fund SPPF projects in the Pacific and we've just learned that they'll fund a project to support the Vanuatu Society for Disabled People. The BC government and private donors are also supporting this project. While the days of annual core funding from government are gone forever, we welcome the news that some SPPF programmes will continue to receive support.

As we adjust to the new funding realities, we have been particularly gratified by the increased support from our members and other donors. Also of note has been extra support from the Anglican and United Churches of Canada. We thank you all.

SPPF meeting approves global membership, condemns French testing

SPPF's annual meeting listened to an inspiring speech from special guest Archbishop Ellison Pogo of the Church of Melanesia. Speaking



about the environment and development challenges facing people in "the world's largest liquid continent", Archbishop Pogo noted that "there is only one world so let us look after it". He was critical of Canada for not doing more to challenge French nuclear testing. The meeting mandated SPPF to communicate with the Canadian and provincial governments about the need for further action (SPPF's Board of Directors has already communicated with the French, Canadian and BC governments about the testing issue).

In a move to broaden SPPF's base of support and involvement, the meeting approved a change in the by-laws to open SPPF membership to nationals of any country who support SPPF's aims.

"Sailing Tales" to reach new audiences

As an experiment to broaden our outreach, SPPF is collaborating with Roger and Evelyn Miles and Air New Zealand to sponsor the Victoria and Sidney shows of "Sailing Tales of the South Pacific". The traveling road show will tour Canada, the US and Europe. It is intended to promote awareness of the region and to encourage people to travel in the South Pacific. SPPF is supporting the awareness aspect and hoping that the shows will also make new audiences aware SPPF. The shows are February 5 in Sidney and February 6 in Victoria. Call SPPF for information.

In this Issue

Women's voices - speaking our piece

This past September 50,000 women gathered in Beijing at the Fourth World Conference on Women to talk about our place, our roles, our needs, our expectations, and ways to overcome the barriers that we, who "hold up half the sky", face. The draft Platform for Action would, according to some, further advance our forward march for justice and equality while others pointed out that it contained statements much weaker than what already was on the books. Odd, isn't it, that we would retreat from demanding that nations live up to commitments already made? Pondering this juxtaposition, I asked a friend in the Pacific for her thoughts on Beijing and was emphatically told that the money sending her country's delegation to Beijing would keep most rural aid posts supplied for a year or more and could prevent countless infant deaths! Did that mean that we, the "eternal caretakers", should stay home and deny ourselves this unique opportunity to talk with each other so that we could better nurture our babies?

Those concerns notwithstanding, we went en masse (me in spirit, not body) to Beijing. Hundreds of issues were addressed including the official draft Platform for Action that dealt with 12 areas of concern that to us make good sense and are fair but which to others are the epitome of threats.

Some of these concerns were addressed in the June 1995 edition of *Tok Blong Pasifik* by Susanna

Ounei in her article "*Decolonising Feminism*" and in this issue we present you with more articles written by Pacific women. Haunani-Kay Trask, in her lengthy article on environmental racism, raises numerous points while Déwé Gorodey uses poetry as her medium. We also offer two articles written in unusual styles for this publication. Hinewirangi Morgan's piece is akin to stream of conscious while Arlene Griffen's is a comparative look at Caribbean and Pacific women poets. Two articles deal with land issues, the one focusing on Regina McKenzie, an Aboriginal woman of Australia, while the other, written by Ursula Rakova, looks at forestry practices in PNG. Imrana Jalal, a lawyer in Fiji, writes about women's need for legal literacy and the women of Bougainville, so long shut off from the rest of the world by their own national government, speak to us through a selection of quotations.

The other focus of this issue of *Tok Blong* is the French nuclear testing programme but we also look at the links between it and uranium mined on Indigenous lands in Saskatchewan, one of Canada's prairie provinces. France has said the programme will end in early 1996, but what remains forever is the environmental damage, health questions and the toxic garbage left with the peoples of the Pacific. And to close, we are pleased to publish an eye witness account of the November commemoration of the 1992 Santa Cruz massacre in East Timor. Margaret Argue for SPPF

In Memoriam

SPPF pays tribute to two long time SPPF supporters, **Rod Esmonde** and **Malia Southard**. Rod Esmonde, whose initial interest in SPPF came through his son Phil, the first Executive Director of the foundation, gave his support and encouragement to SPPF for 10 years until his death this past November. Malia Southard, founder of the Tropical Rainforest Action Committee of the Sierra Club of British Columbia and active worker in the local Amnesty International group, at the time of her death this past summer was bringing to completion a book documenting Canadian aid and trade policies in Indonesia and their effects on the environment and indigenous peoples, a project in which SPPF was involved. Malia attended the 1990 NFIP Conference in Aotearoa as a member of the delegation from Region V.

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Canada to Refine Focus of Fisheries & Marine Aid

With Phase I of the Canada-South Pacific Ocean Development Project (CSPOD) approaching completion in 1997, the Canadian government is making changes for Phase II. Aiming to increase the effectiveness of its development assistance and strengthen its South Pacific relationships, Canada has decided to focus its assistance by selecting areas of strategic interest and reducing the institutions eligible to receive support. The focus areas will be fisheries and human resource development and natural resources management in the marine sector. Within all areas, there will be a focus on environment, women and the private sector (with a Gender Equity Advisor and a Private Sector Advisor at the Forum secretariat). The government believes that these foci will best combine what Canada has to offer with the needs of South Pacific countries. Given limited resources, it was felt that Canada should focus on fewer organizations: the South Pacific Forum secretariat, the Forum Fisheries Agency, the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme and the University of the South Pacific. The South Pacific Commission and the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission can access CSDOP funds until 1997, but will not be included in Phase II. CSPOD II is expected to commence in June 1996 with a five year budget of C\$14 million.

[From: information provided by CIDA]

Vanuatu Election Brings More of the Same

Vanuatu's November election has resulted in another coalition government led by the Union of Moderate Parties (UMP). Walter Lini's National United Party is the UMP's partner, as it was after the 1991 election. The new prime

minister is Serge Vohor of the UMP. Former UMP PM Maxime Korman is the Parliamentary speaker and Lini is the deputy prime minister. The opposition Unity Front and allied MPs won the most seats (22 of 50 followed by the UMP at 17 and NUP at 9) and was expected to form a government with support from a UMP faction led by Vohor. Vohor and Korman have long been at odds, but UMP leaders brokered a deal between them. Lini then gave his support, giving the coalition a one seat majority.

[From: Pacific Report, Vol 8 No 23, Dec 18/95; Washington Pacific Report, Vol 14 No 6, Dec 15/95]

Autonomy Moves in French Polynesia

The Territorial Assembly of French Polynesia has passed a statute that, if approved by France, would give more autonomy to the territory. With elections due in March, President Gaston Flosse is pushing the statute in response to local sovereignty sentiments that have been intensified by the resumption of French nuclear testing. Pro-independence leaders want a referendum on independence, but this has been rejected by French President Chirac. The statute would give the territory control over territorial waters, marine and land resources, aviation, foreign investment and licensing of local media. The French Constitutional Council and National Assembly must both approve the new statute before it would become law.

[From: Pacific Report, Vol 8 No 24, Dec 20/95]

Efforts Continue to Resolve Bougainville Crisis

Meetings on the Bougainville conflict took place in Cairns, Australia in September and December. The meetings brought together leaders of the PNG-supported Bougainville Transitional

Government and the rebel Bougainville Interim Government and Bougainville Revolutionary Army. The December meeting included observers from the UN and Commonwealth Secretariat, a concession by PNG Prime Minister Sir Julius Chan, who insists that Bougainville is a purely internal matter for PNG. While the meetings have yet to arrive at a consensus, all sides expressed satisfaction and agreed to continue talks in 1996. However, low level conflict continues to take lives on Bougainville. The aim of the talks is to arrive at a mutual understanding prior to direct talks with the PNG government.

[From: unpublished sources, Washington Pacific Report, Vol 14 No 6, Dec 15/95; Pacific Report, Vol 8 No 23, Dec 18/95; Europe-Pacific Solidarity Bulletin, Vol 3 No 5, Sep/Oct/95]

Structural Adjustment Creates Turmoil in PNG

The PNG Government approved in August a stringent and unpopular structural adjustment programme (SAP) negotiated with the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. The approval comes despite widespread protests, some violent, within PNG and the opposition of some Government members. Due to the policies of recent governments, PNG was in a serious financial crisis. Aid donors were also withholding approval of new loans needed to stabilize PNG's finances until the Government accepted the SAP. The SAP's 26 conditions include cutting the size of the public sector and freezing public sector wages, abolishing minimum wages, managing health care and post-secondary education on a cost recovery basis, eliminating restrictions on foreign investment, reducing government deficits, increasing foreign reserves, implementing market driven liberalisation of the local economy

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and implementing reforms to the forestry and natural resources sectors. The SAP element which has provoked the most opposition is that requiring registration of land ownership, seen by the World Bank and IMF as a way to facilitate economic development, but viewed by opponents as a means to undermine customary land rights. Following SAP approval, international donors pledged up to US\$600 million in loans and aid.

[From: unpublished sources; The Independent, Jul 8/95; Uni Taur, Vol 21 No 7, Jul 21/95; Pacific Report, Vol 8 No 14, Aug 14/95; Pacific Report, Vol 8 No 18, Oct 9/95]

PNG Leads Way on Waste Treaty

Papua New Guinea has become the first country to ratify the South Pacific Forum's Waigani Convention on Hazardous and Radioactive Wastes. The treaty bans the import of hazardous and radioactive wastes into member countries from outside the region and ensures that any transport of hazardous wastes within the region is conducted in an environmentally sensitive fashion.

[From: Pacific Report, Vol 8 No 23, Dec 18/95]

PNG Abandons Rabaul

PNG's government has decided not to rebuild Rabaul, devastated by volcanic eruptions in 1994. The deep ash cover and risk of further eruptions prompted the decision. A new East New Britain capital is being established at Kokopo, south of Rabaul.

[From: Pacific Report, Vol 8 No 23, Dec 18/95]

Legal Battle over Ok Tedi Continues

Australian mining company, Broken Hill Proprietary (BHP), has had its ups and downs regarding the \$4 billion

lawsuit launched by local PNG landholders over its Ok Tedi mining operation (see Nov/94 Tok Blong Pasifik). The landholders contend that mine pollution has destroyed the environment and damaged their lifestyle. The PNG government passed legislation, drafted with BHP's help, to bar foreign courts from hearing PNG resources compensation claims. But BHP's role in facilitating this end run on the Australian legal system prompted the Australian court to find BHP guilty of contempt of court. US consumer advocate Ralph Nader has also vowed to lead an international campaign against BHP.

[From: Europe-Pacific Solidarity Bulletin, Vol 3 No 5, Sep/Oct/95; The Australian, Sep 7/95]

Australia Wins Timor Gap Case by Default

The Australian Government claimed victory after the International Court of Justice rejected Portugal's case concerning the Timor Gap Treaty. The treaty between Australia and Indonesia

ignores the illegality of Indonesia's East Timor occupation and divides up potential petroleum resources in Timorese waters between the two countries. However, the Court decision falls short of vindicating Australia. In its 14 to 2 decision, the Court said that it can only decide on a case if all parties agree to the Court's jurisdiction. As Indonesia was not a willing party, and as Indonesia's right to administer East Timor and conclude such a treaty was at issue, the judges felt they had no basis to proceed further.

[From: Insight, Jul 25/95]

US Government Cancels Insurance for West Papua Mine

Despite intense lobbying that included Indonesian President Suharto, the US government's Overseas Private Investment Corp. has cancelled a \$100 million risk insurance policy for Freeport-McMoran's giant mine in West Papua (Irian Jaya). OPIC cited environmental concerns for its decision. The Freeport mine has also been a centre of controversy with regards to human rights

New Pacific Solidarity Programme in US

The American Friends Service Committee has launched a new Pacific programme. The coordinator, based at the AFSC office in Honolulu, is Kilali Alailima. Born in Western Samoa and raised in Hawai'i, her previous work has included public housing, employment training and advocacy on chemical weapons issues. Her work with AFSC already includes attention to the problematic US chemical weapons incinerator on Johnston Atoll and French nuclear testing. Future work will address many of the same issues that make up the work of SPPF. We at SPPF congratulate Kilali on her appointment and look forward to working with her.

To contact Kilali Alailima: Write to AFSC, 2426 O'ahu Avenue, Honolulu, HI 96822, USA.



Kilali Alailima

photo courtesy AFSC Hawaii

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abuses, deaths and disappearances of indigenous people in the mine area. The increase in abuses has accompanied local opposition to plans for expanding the mine.

[From: Far Eastern Economic Review, Vol 158 No 46, Nov 16/95; Down to Earth, No 27, Nov/95; Survival International]

Canada Pledges Aid to Indonesia

The Canadian government has confirmed further aid for Indonesia. July saw Canada pledging \$28 million as part of the World Bank chaired Consultative Group for Indonesia package of \$5.36 billion in aid for Indonesia. Canadian Secretary of State for Asia-Pacific, Raymond Chan, also visited Indonesia in July, promising \$11.7 million in aid for the financial sector and \$18 million for policy implementation in the environment field.

[From: ETAN Newsletter, Summer-Fall/95]

Logging Conflict Continues in Solomons, Vanuatu

The November killing of an anti-logging activist on Pavuvu Island has prompted further accusations in the ongoing dispute over logging in the Solomon Islands. Greenpeace has accused a Malaysian logging company of complicity in the death and claims that the Solomons government has failed to investigate the killing. The Mamaloni government has been a keen supporter of foreign logging companies. 1995 has also seen logging conflicts on the island of Espiritu Santo in Vanuatu. Local chiefs on the west coast of Santo are opposing the logging operations of Frank Gallo, a French citizen based in Noumea.

[From: unpublished sources; Pacific Report, Vol 8 No 23, Dec 18/95]

Australia to Limit Timber Imports

Australia has announced that it will ban imports of timber from countries that do not have

sustainably managed forests. Australia recently signed the UN Tropical Timber Agreement and committed to sustainable management of its forests. It wants to ensure that management standards for timber it imports are compatible with those for timber it produces.

Australia imports timber from such countries as Canada, PNG, Solomon Islands, Indonesia and Fiji.

[From: Pacific Report, Vol 8 No 23, Dec 18/95]

Nauru Election Leads to New Government

Nauru has a new president, Lagumot Harris, and cabinet. While former president, Bernard Dowiyogo, and his entire cabinet were reelected in a November election, the election of six new MPs (including Nauru's first ever woman MP) shifted the balance of power in the partyless Parliament. Harris won election as president by a 9 to 8 vote.

[From: Washington Pacific Report, Vol 14 No 5, Dec 1/95]

Kanak Independence Movement Elects New Leader

Rock Wamytan has been elected president of the Kanak Socialist National Liberation Front (FLNKS), the umbrella body for the Kanak independence movement. Wamytan, who was the vice president, replaces former president Paul Neaoutyine. Wamytan comes from the largest independence party, the Caledonian Union, while Neaoutyine is leader of the Kanak Liberation Party (Palika). The parties independently contested recent provincial elections. The split vote led to some losses and strains within the FLNKS. Saying that he no longer had the confidence of all FLNKS members, Neaoutyine resigned but stressed that Palika will remain within the FLNKS.

[From: Pacific Report, Vol 8 No 23, Dec 18/95]

FSM and Marshalls to Adopt Economic Reforms; Kabua Wins Another Term in Marshalls

Facing severe economic problems as US compact funding declines, the Federated States of Micronesia and Marshall Islands governments are planning economic reforms. The reforms include public sector cuts and privatisation, tax reform and increased emphasis on private sector development. A December meeting of international aid donors with FSM and Marshalls representatives endorsed the reforms and indicated that future aid would be tied to their implementation. Following a November general election, Amata Kabua was elected by the new Nitijela (Parliament) to a fifth 4-year term as president of the Marshall Islands.

[From: Pacific Report, Vol 8 No 23, Dec 18/95; Washington Pacific Report, Vol 14 No 5, Dec 1/95]

US Budget Standoff Hurting Pacific

The fight between President Clinton and the Republican controlled Congress over the 1996 US budget, which has closed down large parts of the government twice, is creating hardship in the Pacific. While some departmental budgets have been resolved, those for the State and Interior Departments, Peace Corps and USAID have not. These departments and agencies include staff and funds for the Pacific. Particularly vulnerable is American Samoa, which depends on the US federal government for substantial budgetary support.

[From: Washington Pacific Report, Vol 14 No 6, Dec 15/95; Washington Pacific Report, Vol 14 No 7, Jan 1/96]

NUCLEAR NOTES

French Testing Proceeds Despite Protests

Despite a world-wide chorus of protest, the French government has conducted five nuclear weapons tests in 1995. The current series of tests began on September 5 at Mururoa. Further tests followed on October 2, October 28, November 22 and December 27.

[From: Nuclear-Free Pacific Campaign Newsletter, No 2; Victoria Times-Colonist, Dec 28/95]

But International Pressure is Having an Impact

While France insists that it will not yield to international public opinion, it is clear that the opposition is having an impact. While France originally announced a series of 8 tests leading up to May 31, 1996, President Chirac has now said that there will probably be 6 tests. Defence Minister Millon has announced that the tests will be over by the end of February. More significantly, France has announced that it supports a zero yield comprehensive test ban treaty and that it will finally recognize the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty. These two steps would ensure that the latest round of tests in the Pacific will be the last.

[From: Nuclear-Free Pacific Campaign Newsletter, No 2; Victoria Times-Colonist, Dec 7/95]

Western Powers to Recognize Pacific Nuclear Free Zone

France, the US and the UK announced on October 20 that they will sign by mid-1996 the protocols recognizing the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty. The treaty was approved by South Pacific governments in 1985 and nuclear powers were invited to sign the protocols. The USSR and China signed, but the three Western nuclear powers which have tested in the Pacific refused. Responding to the massive international uproar over renewed French testing, the three governments have shifted

their position on the Nuclear Free Zone.

[From: Nuclear-Free Pacific Campaign Newsletter, No 2; Victoria Times-Colonist, Sep 10/95]

But US and China Say No to Asian Pact

A new Southeast Asia Nuclear Weapons Free Zone Treaty, similar to the South Pacific one, was signed in mid-December by 10 Southeast Asian countries. The treaty bans possession and production of nuclear weapons in the region. The US and China immediately announced that they would not recognize the treaty because it would restrict their use of nuclear weapons in the area. No nuclear weapons states have supported the treaty.

[From: Washington Pacific Report, Vol 16 No 6, Dec 15/95]

"Comprehensive" Test Ban Will Still Allow Testing

With the major nuclear powers saying that they will conclude a comprehensive nuclear test ban treaty in 1996, many observers are optimistic that a long sought step away from the nuclear precipice is at hand. An

end to nuclear weapons testing is widely viewed as a critical move in reducing weapons proliferation. While mostly not disputing that it is a step in the right direction, others question how "comprehensive" the ban will be. The nuclear powers have only agreed to pursue a physical test ban now that they can simulate explosions by computer and thus continue the development of new nuclear weapons via that means. The French insisted that their "final" series of tests is intended to perfect their computer testing. On November 3, the US also announced that it will conduct 6 nuclear weapons tests in 1996-97. The US says that the tests will be conducted in such a way that they are stopped short of a nuclear chain reaction, thus resulting in "zero yield" nuclear weapons tests. The nuclear powers are insisting that the "comprehensive test ban treaty" allow such "zero yield" testing. While some celebration may soon be in order, the test ban treaty being negotiated will seemingly fall well short of ending all testing.

Continued on p. 8/see Nuke notes



Victoria activists carrying mock missile labelled "return to sender" on their 60 km. protest march to the French Consulate in Vancouver, BC

photo: B. Arbes

South Pacific Forum Suspends France

The South Pacific Forum has spearheaded efforts of Pacific Island governments to protest French testing, making repeated protests and sending a delegation to Paris to present their concerns directly to the French government and people. The September meeting of Forum heads of government took a strong stance against the testing and warned that further testing could see a suspension of France's status as a Forum "dialogue partner" (a status held by 7 other countries including Canada). Following the October 2 French test, Forum Chair Sir Julius Chan of PNG announced that France was suspended, the first such suspension in Forum history. Several Pacific countries also boycotted this year's South Pacific Games, which were held in Tahiti; in other cases where governments approved participation, individual athletes chose to boycott. [From: Nuclear-Free Pacific Campaign Newsletter, No 2; miscellaneous reports]

NFIP Movement Opposes Tests

The secretariat of the Nuclear Free and Independent Pacific Movement, the Fiji-based Pacific Concerns Resource Centre, has spearheaded several regional calls for action against the French and has participated in a number of local protest actions against the nuclear tests. NFIP members in many Pacific Island and Pacific Rim countries have also been active in the anti-testing campaign. [From: unpublished sources]

Tahiti Protests Challenge French Colonialism

Local reaction to the resumption of French nuclear testing has been vociferous, broadly based and sustained. It has also been closely linked to popular support for an end to French control over Tahiti-Nui, thus going well beyond the anti-nuclear focus that predominates elsewhere. While mostly non-violent, a major exception was the reaction to the first nuclear test. Thousands of people participated in a spontaneous

Continued on p 35/see Nuke notes

300 attend world's first anti-nuke fashion show

by Sophie Foster

Protests against French nuclear testing have been widespread in the Pacific. One of the more unique protests is described in this article reprinted from the Fiji Times (Aug 18/95).

The world's first anti-nuclear fashion show was staged at the Suva Travelodge to a crowd of 300 people. The show, called Pret-a-Protest, featured designs by Jean Ragg, Lambert Ho, Ruby Va'a, Fijiana and was the debut for Katerina Teaiwa and Letitia Mitchell.

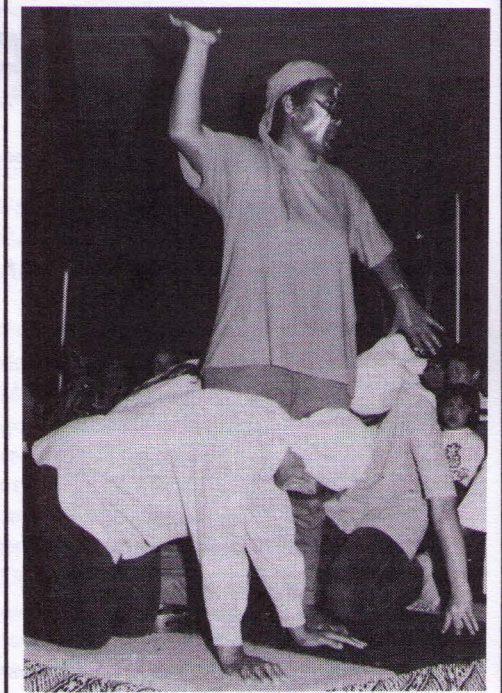
"We must assert that as Islanders and Pacific people, we too have the potential to create and innovate - we need not let the first world dictate to us," the show's programme said.

Pret-a-Protest was part of a series of actions by non-governmental organisations to protest the resumption of nuclear testing in the Pacific. Organisers had also sponsored the anti-nuclear petition and marched through Suva last month, and were planning a rock concert to increase public awareness of the issue.

The show was originally the idea of young designer Katerina Teaiwa, who had been inspired by her older sister's research on militarism and tourism in the Pacific. Teresia Teaiwa said the concept was based on the fact that in 1946 a French designer launched a two-piece bathing suit known as the "bikini".

"What the world has chosen to forget is that the bikini bathing suit was named to celebrate the US nuclear testing on Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands," she said.

She said the bikini had generated a multi-million industry which had "piggy-backed" on the multi-billion dollar tourist industry on which the Pacific relied.



Fijian theatre group, Women's Action for Change, protests nuclear testing

photo:S. Wulff

"The whole history of nuclear testing in the Pacific; the displacement, dispossession and degradation of Bikini Islanders and the continuing resistance by Islanders to nuclear testing and colonialism... all these histories have been marginalised by the teeny weeny bikini bathing suit," she said.

Compere Salamo Fulivao of the regional Young Women's Christian Association said the Pacific had borne the brunt of over 300 nuclear tests.

"We remember not just Bikini and Mururoa, but also Christmas, Emu Field, Enewetak, Fangataufa, Johnston, Malden, Maralinga and Monte Bello. These are the sites of all the tests conducted in the Pacific, including Australia, since 1946," she said.

Pret-a-Protest was funded by Greenpeace Pacific, the Pacific Concerns Resource Centre, USP Students' Association, Women's Action for Change, David Campbell of South Seas Computing and FANG.

Money raised from the show was to go towards future anti-nuclear actions in the Pacific.

Bastille Day in Tahiti

by Stephen F. Eisenman

France's announcement that it intended to resume nuclear testing in Polynesia led to immediate local protests. Stephen Eisenman was in Tahiti shortly after the French announcement and reports on activities that took place during Bastille Day. Stephen teaches at Occidental College in Los Angeles.

On July 14, 1995, 12,000 people - roughly 10% of Tahiti's population - lined Papeete Harbour to welcome the Greenpeace ship Rainbow Warrior II and to demand the end of French nuclear testing in the Pacific. Their protest occurred on Bastille Day, a holiday with great salience for the Francophone world. The taking of the notorious Bastille prison on July 14, 1789, and the freeing of its inmates marked the awakening of a dream of liberty among the common people of Paris. On that hot summer day some two hundred years ago, the French Revolution was begun and the world was forever changed. The recent Bastille Day celebration in the Pacific was not so momentous as its progenitor, but for the indigenous people of Polynesia it was a chance to broadcast their demands for equality and independence from a despised French *ancien regime*. As Tahitian Evangelical Pastor Temarama succinctly stated in a news conference on board the Rainbow Warrior II: "One cannot be anti-nuclear without being anti-French. *La Bombe, c'est la France.*"

In an epoch often described as "post-colonial", the status of French Polynesia is an anachronism. Along with New Caledonia and Wallis and Futuna, it remains a colony of France. Officially labelled a *territoire d'outre-mer* (overseas territory), the people of French Polynesia were granted partial autonomy in 1984 after two decades of struggle, but in all important respects they are still controlled by Paris. French Polynesia elects its own territorial assembly and president and is represented in

Paris by a senator, two deputies and a councillor. It is organized into 48 communes, each with an elected council and mayor. Real authority, however, resides with the French appointed territorial high commissioner in Papeete, as well as with the legion of bureaucrats, military officers and civilian elites centered in the capitol. They control everything from taxation and spending to the media to the educational and legal systems. French is the official language in all legal proceedings, business transactions and schools.

French soldiers and bureaucrats are paid vastly more for their labour than either their counterparts at home or indigenous Polynesians and are thus visibly - often ostentatiously - more wealthy than longtime natives. They are granted voting rights immediately upon their arrival in the islands, thus skewing election results in favour of candidates allied with the governing party in Paris. Despite this handicap, a near-plurality of voters in recent elections have chosen candidates from independence parties. As in the 1960s and 70s, self-government and economic independence

are once again the goals of the majority of the indigenous people of French Polynesia. Added to this is a demand to revive the history, culture and language of the Maohi people. In French Polynesia, anti-nuclear sentiments have thus been joined to the movement for political independence and cultural nationalism.

Bastille Day has been a holiday in Tahiti since French annexation of the island in 1882, but rarely have its colonial contradictions been so starkly displayed as during this year's festivities. Two competing celebrations were held, one displaying the military power of the metropole and the other exhibiting the culture and identity of the Maohi people. The day began with an 8:00 AM volley of cannon fire marking the commencement of a parade of French foreign legionnaires, marines, sailors and gendarmes. They marched in a phalanx down the broad Avenue Pomare to the large, central Place Tarahoi near the offices of the high commissioner. There they presented arms and received various medals for distinguished service to the overseas territories and France. By 11:00 AM the



Young protestors view a French frigate in Papeete Harbour

photo: S. Eisenman



photo: S. Eisenman

Pareo-wearing protestor marches with flag aloft in the Independence Parade on Bastille Day

official festivities were over. The French and high born Metis (people of mixed ancestry) were attracted to the high commissioner's garden party, while indigenous Polynesians were drawn toward the nearby quay where an alternative celebration had been organized by the anti-nuclear and pro-independence Tavini Huiraatira No Te Ao Maohi (Polynesian Liberation Front) led by Oscar Temaru. From the harbour, Tahitian drumming and singing could be heard mingling with the chants and slogans of the leading independence party.

Tahitians lined Papeete harbour for a half-mile, waving the blue, white and gold flags of the Tavini Party or banners with the yellow and black emblem of Hiti Tau (The Time is Now), an umbrella group of non-governmental organisations led by Gabriel Tetiarahi. Hand painted bed-sheets displaying nuclear mushroom clouds or skulls and captioned with slogans in English, French and Tahitian billowed with the breezes. Some men in the tightly packed

crowd wore calf-length pareus (wrap-around skirts), permitting them to show off elaborate tattoos on arms, shoulders, calves and ankles. Others wore tee-shirts with pro-independence and anti-nuclear slogans stencilled on them, along with shorts and baseball caps. Some women wore long missionary dresses while others wore brightly coloured pareus with hats woven from dried pandanus leaves.

A few people on the quay stood quietly while a number of others shouted vulgarities at the French sailors leaning over the side of a frigate docked at the wharf. An old woman carrying bundles of banana leaves explained that they were to be presented to Oscar Temaru when he and others on board the Rain-

bow Warrior II came ashore. She also said that a nearby mat of woven banana leaves was where the honoured guests would be served their welcoming meal of fish, taro, poi, pineapple, melon and coconut milk. This explanation of Maohi customs was interrupted by her companion, a slightly younger woman, who insisted that I write down her words: "The bomb is bad for children. Independence oui! Chirac est le Anti-Christ! Chirac est le Diable!"

As cannon reports signalled the end of the military parade, a dozen or more native pirogues (outrigger canoes), row boats and rafts appeared. They were the landing craft for the Rainbow Warrior II, forced by French harbour police to berth a mile from the main wharf. Two tug boats and three inflatable dinghies from the French navy moved to block the ragged flotilla from docking. A slow motion ballet ensued between the large, lumbering tugs, the fast dinghies and the small indigenous craft powered by a dozen or so muscular Tahitians and Europeans. Each ves-

sel moved carefully forward and back, trying neither to collide nor retreat. The people on board the pirogues later confessed that they were angered by the French response, which could easily have led to disaster. After 10 minutes of parrying, the pirogues and rafts reached the wharves and the triumphant disembarkation was begun.

As the crew and dignitaries from the Rainbow Warrior II stepped onto the welcome mats, they were given leaf bundles and flower garlands (tiare). After a half-hour of noisy greetings, the anti-nuclear activists from Greenpeace, the Protestant and Catholic Churches, the Tavini Party and Hiti Tau sat down on a large green mat and listened to a welcoming himene. Then one by one, the honoured guests rose and gave short speeches broadcast across the harbour.

When Oscar Temaru's turn to speak arrived, he slowly stood and turned to face the French sailors leaning down from the frigate docked yards away. "L'Independence est ineluctable!", he told the sailors and crowd. At that moment, word and deed seemed the same; a demonstration against colonialism became a celebration of independence.

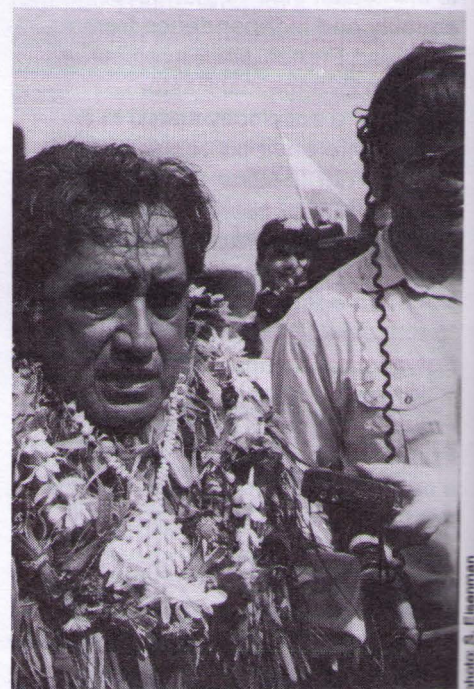


photo: S. Eisenman

Oscar Temaru speaks with the media

An hour later, a few hundred anti-nuclear activists gathered at the Place Tarahoi for a memorial service in honour of the hundreds of Polynesians believed killed by nuclear radiation. Four young men blew conch shells as wreaths were laid before a boulder upon which was written "Moruroa". An oration was delivered by Pito Clement, a supporter of the pro-independence and pro-indigenous Pomare Party, named for the 18th and 19th Century kings and queens of Tahiti. The Tahitian language is ideally suited for public oratory and Pito was a particularly effective speaker; striking the air with his hands, dancing barefoot across the sandy ground, raising and lowering the timbre of his voice, he excoriated the French government, wept for the victims of Moruroa and pleaded for support and solidarity.

For at least the next several hours, divisions between the European anti-nuclear activists and indigenous freedom fighters would be overcome. For every Maohi expression of anti-French sentiment, Greenpeace spokespersons proclaimed their shared desire for peace; for every popa'a (white foreigner) expression of dismay at cold war armaments, native speakers cited their shared embrace of democracy.

Back onboard the Rainbow Warrior, Oscar Temaru stated: "We don't want to be nuclear guinea pigs. We demand a referendum on the nuclear question. We say no to Chirac's raison d'etat and yes to democracy." Temaru later stated his disgust with Tahitian President Gaston Flosse's support for his fellow Gaullist, Chirac. Temaru believes that Flosse's support of nuclear testing could turn out to be the instrument with which the whole colonial web can be unravelled.

Tahitian witnesses to the day's events believed that Bastille Day had been seized from the French and delivered to the Maohi. They were certain that their symbols of identity - pareus, himine, to'ere banana leaf bundles, tattoos, tiare and pirogues - had trumped the old symbols of



T-shirts in the crowd sport independence slogans

colonial France - desert khakis of the foreign legion, white uniforms and gloves of naval officers, the presentation of arms and the hollow boom of cannonfire. Many were sure as well that their commitment and ardour would be enough to convince Chirac to end nuclear testing and even to secure them their full autonomy, more than 100 years after annexation.

The challenge for anti-nuclear and pro-independence forces in the Pacific is not to mistake the partial achievement of cultural autonomy for the full attainment of political and economic freedom. Many in the movement for Maohi power, especially the men and women aligned with the Pomare Party, have already created a complex and fulfilling indigenous way of life. They have seized some state owned lands and planted them with taro, banana, breadfruit and vanilla; they wear mostly traditional clothes, speak and write Tahitian and participate in a full range of indigenous cultural activities. Yet, as Joinville Pomare told me, these freedoms are small when compared with the unfreedom of the community as a whole. Polynesians are denied education and access to the higher professions. They are subject to French law courts, taxation, trade restrictions and especially to the caprice of a string of French presidents committed to an independent nuclear force that threatens to poison them and their environment.

The future of French Polynesia is dependent upon a broad definition of emancipation and Maohi identity. The preservation of natural resources is paramount in the struggle for independence. Tahiti's rich volcanic soils and fertile coral lagoons and seas are viable bases - Temaru, Pomare and others agree - for the economic independence of a relatively small and dispersed population. Tahiti's ethnic diversity is its other great resource, though there is less widespread agreement on this. Most who call themselves Maohi or indigene are of mixed heritage, with ancestors from England, France, the US, China or distant Pacific islands. This metissage (mixing) has created a cultural complexity apparent across the breadth of daily life - in language, food, architecture, dress, music and dance. It has contributed to the very cultural and political foment that now threatens to topple the colonial regime. That complexity must be preserved - no less than Tahiti's ecological diversity - if a vital and peaceful nation is to emerge. These challenges are the work of a generation. They will continue long after the Rainbow Warrior II has left French Polynesia. They will be the difficult tasks of everyday, not Bastille Day alone, and their successful achievement will be as revolutionary as the liberation of a Paris prison two centuries ago.

photo: S. Eisenman

Challenging the French Connection

The Case for Canadian Action on French Nuclear Testing

by Dr. Laurie E. Adkin

Saskatchewan and its uranium play a critical role in France's nuclear programme. Canada is also a major importer of many French products. Laurie Adkin argues that Canada, and Canadians, have an influential role to play in challenging French nuclear weapons testing, if we're willing to rise to the challenge. Dr. Adkin teaches in the Department of Political Science at the University of Alberta.

French Testing in the Pacific

French President Chirac's decision to resume nuclear testing in the South Pacific disregards the rights of the peoples of the region and jeopardizes progress toward general disarmament and an end to bomb testing. The US military hopes to conduct more tests and other countries may well follow suit.

How important is Canada to France's nuclear programme?

Canada mines more uranium than any other country, 11,200 tonnes in 1994. A record 9,350 tonnes were exported, with a relatively small 8% going to France. But Canada's uranium looms much larger in importance for France. France owns over 100,000 tonnes of Canadian uranium reserves, two-thirds of France's total uranium reserves worldwide. As uranium from mines in France and other sources declines, it is expected that Canadian uranium will account by the turn of the century for half to two-thirds of total French production. Because of the integrated nature of the French civilian and military nuclear programmes, and swapping with other sources and spin-off uses, Canadian uranium can be assumed to be finding its way into all parts of the French nuclear programme, including weapons production. This has been confirmed by independent sources, despite claims to the contrary by the Canadian government.

[Source: "The French Connection: Canadian Uranium and the French Nuclear Weapons Program" by Mycle Schneider, WISE-Paris]

The opposition to Chirac's decision has been immediate, widespread, and determined, from across Europe and North America to Latin America, Japan, Australia, New Zealand and the small South Pacific nations. Independence movements in the French territories have taken up French nuclear testing as a symbol of colonial arrogance and disregard for the local populations. The majority of the French population is also opposed to resumed nuclear testing. In France, demonstrators have declared: "Nuclear war is not for practising!" and "Hiro-Chirac, Non!"

Efforts to reverse Chirac's decision have included calls for the boycott of French products (already under way with considerable impact in Australia, New Zealand, northern Europe, Britain, Japan and other countries), a boycott by the union movements of the South Pacific region against the handling of French cargo or the servicing of French transport, the cancellation of contracts or rejection of bids by French companies, the occupation of French consulates, demonstrations, and protests from members of the European Parliament. The governments of Denmark and Norway have officially endorsed a boycott of French products. At the Association of Southeast Asian Nations meeting this August, a resolution was passed calling on France and China to cease nuclear testing. The Parliament of Japan unanimously passed a similar resolution on August 4. The Government of New Zealand tried taking France to the International Court of Justice. Other countries have also taken strong positions.

The efforts of the Greenpeace ships Rainbow Warrior II, Vega and Bifrost to disrupt testing preparations have been widely supported by international opinion; the Government of New Zealand has sent a vessel to the test zone and other private vessels have also participated in protest

flotillas. More than 60 legislators from Australia and New Zealand volunteered to sail to Mururoa, along with Japanese Finance Minister Masayoshi Takemura.

Canadian Responses to French Testing

Canadian Foreign Affairs Minister, Andre Ouellet, called on Chirac to halt the bomb tests. However, official action on the part of the Canadian Government, including the kinds of sanctions already imposed by other governments, have not been proposed.

Various non-governmental organizations, including the Innu people of Labrador and the Anglican Church of Canada, are calling for a boycott of French goods. The international boycott of French wines and liquors is already having an effect on French exporters. Canada also has a unique lever with which to influence the French government, the exports of Canadian uranium which fuel French nuclear programmes.

The Uranium-Nuclear Weapons Connection: COGEMA

Virtually all of Canadian uranium exports to France go through the Compagnie Generale des Matieres Nucleaires [COGEMA]. COGEMA is a wholly owned subsidiary of the French Atomic Energy Commission, which is responsible for both civilian and military nuclear programmes. COGEMA dominates all stages of the nuclear fuel cycle, for both civilian and military purposes, from uranium mining to the treatment of irradiated combustible materials, and the handling of nuclear wastes. The company produces fuel for nuclear reactors as well as fissionable materials for weapons. The installations operated by COGEMA are used to meet both civilian and military demand for enriched uranium.

TABLE 1

Atomic Energy Control Board licensed exports of Canadian-origin uranium, 1994, by country of destination. Metric tonnes of uranium equivalent in concentrated form (U308, UF6, UO2, etc.).

Country	1993	1994
Belgium		115
France		766
United States		4938
Germany		465
U. K.		50
Japan	523	3443 ^a
South Korea		455
Spain		274
Sweden		0
TOTAL		10,507

SOURCE: Information provided by Robert Whillans, Energy Sector, Natural Resources Canada, 17 July 1995.

^a Most contracts for uranium supply are long-term; the buyer may stipulate that the majority (or all) of the purchased amount be shipped at the end of the contract period. In the Japan case, more than one contract stipulated shipping at the same time, resulting in this large increase over 1993. See five-year average (below).

Some of COGEMA's functions are to:

- mine uranium, including in Saskatchewan.
- produce yellow cake (concentrated uranium).
- convert yellow cake into UF4.
- transform UF4 into metal uranium for use in graphite-gas reactors.
- transform UF4 into UF6, enriching it for the production of oxide combustibles destined for water-pressure reactors and the super-generators.
- transform combustible elements into plutonium.
- produce zirconium.

Combustible metal coming from the graphite-gas reactors is used to make plutonium of "military quality". The production of nuclear warheads is carried out by the Direction des Applications Militaires [DAM] and the Atomic Energy Commission [CEA], using nuclear materials provided by COGEMA.

In 1985, "reasonably assured" uranium resources in France were estimated at 56,000 tonnes, but at a cost of up to US\$80.00 per kilogram, making French uranium far more expensive than uranium produced in Canada, the US, Niger and Gabon (France's other suppliers). In 1986,

French uranium production reached 3,252 tonnes contained in chemical concentrates. The quantity obtained from foreign companies or companies with some degree of COGEMA ownership overseas (in the four other countries) was 5,029 tonnes.

French uranium resources have become depleted and investment by French companies in uranium exploration has correspondingly increased abroad, particularly in Canada. French production capacity in 1993 was around 1,570 tU, is expected to be less than 1,000 tU in 1995, and will fall to almost nothing by the year 2000. At the same time, French demand for uranium to fuel its 56 reactors (5 more under construction in 1992) and its military programmes is estimated at 8,000 Tu and predicted to reach 8,600 tU by 2010.

COGEMA-Canada Connections

As may be seen from Tables 1 and 2, France is currently the third largest market (following the US and Japan) for Canadian uranium. In 1994, 7 per cent of Canadian uranium exports went to France. As of January 1, 1991, there were 9,715 tonnes of Canadian uranium under export contract to France.

In Saskatchewan, COGEMA owns the Cluff Lake uranium mine, is a controlling partner in the McClean Lake (70%) and Midwest Joint Venture (56%) uranium mining projects, and is a partner in the proposed Cigar Lake (36.4%) and McArthur River (16.2%) projects. COGEMA also holds the principal interest in the Baker Lake uranium deposits in the NWT. In 1992, 6 per cent of Canadian uranium production and ownership was held by COGEMA.

The Atomic Energy Control Board [AECB] "tracks" Canadian uranium exports as far as the nuclear reactor/utility in the country of destination. After that, the only agency monitoring compliance with the Non-Proliferation Treaty [NPT] is the International Atomic Energy Agency [IAEA], which requires the permission and co-operation of the country's government in order to carry out inspections. The AECB cannot verify that Canadian uranium is not subsequently being used to produce nuclear weapons. In 1993-1994, environmental assessments of four proposed uranium projects (totalling 10 new mines) were carried out in Saskatchewan. The report of the Joint Federal-Provincial Panel on Uranium Mining Development in Northern Saskatchewan noted with concern that:

There is no process whereby exported Canadian uranium can be separated from uranium derived from other sources. Therefore, no proven method exists for preventing incorporation of Canadian uranium into military applications. Current Canadian limitations on end uses of uranium provide no reassurance to the public that Canadian uranium is used solely for non-military purposes.

This concern is particularly valid in the case of France, where civilian and military uses of uranium are treated as a matter of "national security" by a centralised state agency. Nevertheless, the concerns of the Panel, as well as the recommendations of the Inter-Church Uranium Committee, have been ignored by

TABLE 2

Average percentage of Canadian-origin-only uranium exported to various countries, (i.e., five-year average) 1988-1992 and 1990-1994

Country	1990- 1994	1988- 1992
Belgium	0.3	
France	6.9 ^a	8
Argentina	0.2 ^b	
Finland	0.2	
Germany	5.9	7
Japan	20.2	17
South Korea	4.3	5
Spain	0.6	
Sweden	1.3	4
United Kingdom	3.4	8
United States	57.3	50

SOURCES: 1990-1994 data provided by Robert T. Whillans, Electricity Branch, Energy Sector, Natural Resources Canada, 17 July 1995; 1988-1992 data from Robert T. Whillans, "Uranium" (1993 Canadian Minerals Yearbook).

^a The average percentage of Canadian-produced uranium shipped to France over the last ten years was 8.4. However, the absolute quantity of uranium shipped to France has been increasing.

^b Uranium exported to Argentina was to fuel Candu reactors.

the provincial and federal governments.

In any case, by supplying France's "civilian" uranium demand, Canada -among other suppliers - is making it possible for France to use uranium from the remaining French mines for military purposes. As the 1994 brief of the Inter-Church Uranium Committee to the Special Joint Committee reviewing Canada's foreign policy stated:

[I]t is a contradiction for Canada to support a negotiated Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty and continue to supply uranium to a country whose government is openly opposed to such a treaty and preparing to do further testing.

It is clear that Canada is in a unique position to exert influence on the French decision because of the heavy investment of COGEMA in Saskatchewan uranium. The Chretien Government should therefore impose immediately a moratorium on the shipment of uranium to France, until such time as France agrees to permanently halt bomb testing.

It may be argued that, in the short term, COGEMA will merely turn to other suppliers of uranium and that

Canada risks losing its share of the French market. In this regard, it should be noted that another supplier of uranium - Australia - has also been considering a ban (with the support of Australian trade unions), and that the Australian government has hesitated because of its expectation that France would cancel existing purchase agreements with the ERA [Energy Resources of Australia] and turn to cheaper supplies from Russia. In the Canadian case, since the French CEA purchases from COGEMA (Canada), any long-term rupture would essentially be underwritten by the government of France (which has already made a substantial investment in the production of uranium in Canada).

The *real issues for Canadians* are where we stand in regard to the rights of the peoples of the Pacific region to a safe and healthy environment, and in regard to the goal of global disarmament. The banning of Canadian exports of uranium to France is the strongest statement we can make in defence of these interests.

Actions for Solidarity with South Pacific Peoples

1) Write letters and gather names on petitions demanding that the Canadian Government impose a

moratorium on the export of Canadian uranium to France (to be sent to Prime Minister Chretien and opposition leaders. Ask Prime Minister Chretien and Foreign Affairs Minister Ouellet to speak out strongly against nuclear weapon tests.

2) Write opinion pieces or letters to the editors of your local newspapers promoting the boycott campaigns. Companies like Remy-Martin, Perrier and French wine producers are already feeling the effects of boycotts in the South Pacific and Europe.

3) Encourage your neighbours, co-workers, union or any other organizations to which you belong to boycott French products until France signs the test ban treaty and halts weapon testing in the South Pacific.

4) Leaflet in front of liquor board stores and other sites where French products are sold.

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Making the most of the Beijing Forum

By Penny Baba

SPPF is working with the South Pacific Action Committee for Human Ecology & Environment (SPACHEE) to develop a long term programme on women and the environment called Ecowoman. The pilot phase of Ecowoman, in which SPPF was not directly involved, was funded by the Canada Fund. The following article, reprinted from the Fiji Times (Oct 5/95), reports on some of Ecowoman's early activities.

Imagine not having a fridge, but still being able to have a nice cool drink of water and keep meat fresh for five days. Or getting your cassava boiling in the morning and putting it in a hay box where it cooks in its own heat during the day. Or drying your fruits in one day rather than a week.

All these things are happening around the world, but it took the NGO Forum in China to expose them so others can benefit. Lautoka-based Young Women's Christian Association community worker, Nai Dakua, went to the forum under the auspices of the YWCA, the Ecowoman project and SPACHEE, and came home full of ideas that will make life at the grassroots level easier for women. With another delegate from Fiji, she was based at the enormous Once and Future Pavilion, which aimed at making science and technology simple and accessible to women, often incorporating traditional knowledge into the "new technology".

"One of the things I learnt from China was to bring the old and the modern and blend them to improve women's lives and the environment," Mrs. Dakua said.

"Two of the more exciting demonstrations were the charcoal cooler and hay box because they can directly benefit women in Fiji. The water cooler/food preserver from Zimbabwe is so simple."

The cooler has a wooden frame with chicken wire sides that are stuffed with charcoal, preferably from hardwood trees. Old cloths are draped across a tray on top and kept wet with water. The cloths absorb the water, which then drips off the end of the cloths onto the charcoal, creating the refrigerator.

"It would be so useful for areas without electricity or people without refrigerators," Mrs. Dakua said, pointing to the model cooler in the corner of her room.

"The hay box is good for working mothers. Food is cooked to boiling point then placed inside the woven container filled with straw and lined with nylon bags. By the end of the day, the food is cooked."

Mrs. Dakua said she learnt many things which she would teach to women in Fiji, but there were so many more sessions she was unable to attend because of time constraints. Other appropriate technologies for village communities that were demonstrated included making soap, vaseline, water filters and stoves. Potential fundraising projects included making T-shirts, indigenous sweets and candies, new paper from old paper, and games and toys from readily available waste materials.

There were also displays on how women have been innovative in agriculture and developed energy saving devices and solar cookers. Mrs. Dakua said she was very enthusiastic about the compost toilet, which is being used in developed and developing countries and is more environmentally friendly than water toilets.

There were more cerebral sessions on the role of women and how women can be empowered in science, but Mrs. Dakua said she was more interested in going to the sessions where grassroots women could benefit. She has already begun running workshops for the Lautoka

YWCA clubs, so they can go out into their communities and spread the knowledge.

Mrs. Dakua said Fiji's appropriate science and technology exhibition at the Once and Future Pavilion proved popular. She had photos of traditional medicines and shared her knowledge on them with others, while Vina Ram of the Traditional Fishing Network had photographs and demonstrations of traditional fishing practices in Fiji and the Pacific.

Mrs. Dakua said traditional medicine was important because it saved money and conserved biodiversity and indigenous knowledge. She found a lot in common with other traditional medicine delegates and brought back some new recipes that she would pass on to interested people.

"Most of the medicines brought to the forum by an Indian delegate can be found in Fiji, but have different cures and different methods of applying," she said. "I've tried one since returning, and found it to be very effective."

Eighty non-governmental organisations were represented at the Once and Future Pavilion, which aimed to promote sustainable development. Mrs. Dakua and Mrs. Ram were sponsored under the Ecowoman project, a Pacific wide project funded by Canada. The project provided funding for women from Fiji, the Solomon Islands, Samoa and Kiribati to go on the trip and undertake post-trip activities to share their experiences with others.

"We took little, but came back with a lot," Mrs. Dakua said. "Science and technology affects us in almost every part of our lives and is critical to the advancement of women in education, poverty alleviation, production and economic development."

Continued on p. 35/ see Beijing

Environmental Racism in the Pacific Basin

by Professor Haunani-Kay Trask

Haunani-Kay Trask is a leading Hawaiian sovereignty activist and member of Ka Lahui Hawai'i, the largest Hawaiian sovereignty group. She is the Director of Hawaiian Studies at the University of Hawai'i at Manoa and a published poet and writer. The following speech was delivered at the Conference on Environmental Racism held at the University of Colorado at Boulder in September 1993.

In Polynesian cultures, genealogy is paramount. Therefore I greet you with my familial origins. I am descended of the Pi'ilani line of Maui on my mother's side, and the Kahakumakaliua line of Kaua'i on my father's side. I am Native Hawaiian, indigenous to Hawai'i and the islands of the South Pacific from whence came my ancestors.

Genealogically, Hawaiians descend from Papahānaumoku-Earth Mother and Wakea-Sky Father who created the sacred places of Maui,

O'ahu, Hawai'i, Moloka'i, Kaho'olawe, Lana'i, Kaua'i, Ni'ihau and hundreds of smaller islands. From these islands came the taro, and from the taro came the Hawaiian people. As in all of Polynesia, so in Hawai'i: younger sibling must care for and honour elder sibling who, in return, will protect and provide for younger sibling. Thus Hawaiians must nourish the land, our ancestor. This relationship is more than reciprocal. It is familial. The land is our mother and we are her children. This is the lesson of our genealogy.

Despite American political and territorial control of Hawai'i since our forcible annexation by the United States in 1898, Hawaiians are *not* Americans. Just as the Tahitians are *not* French and the Maori are *not* British, so we Hawaiians are not Americans. But neither are we Asian or European. Nor are we from the Pacific Rim.

No, we Hawaiians are indigenous people, Native to Hawai'i Nei. Our country is called Hawai'i

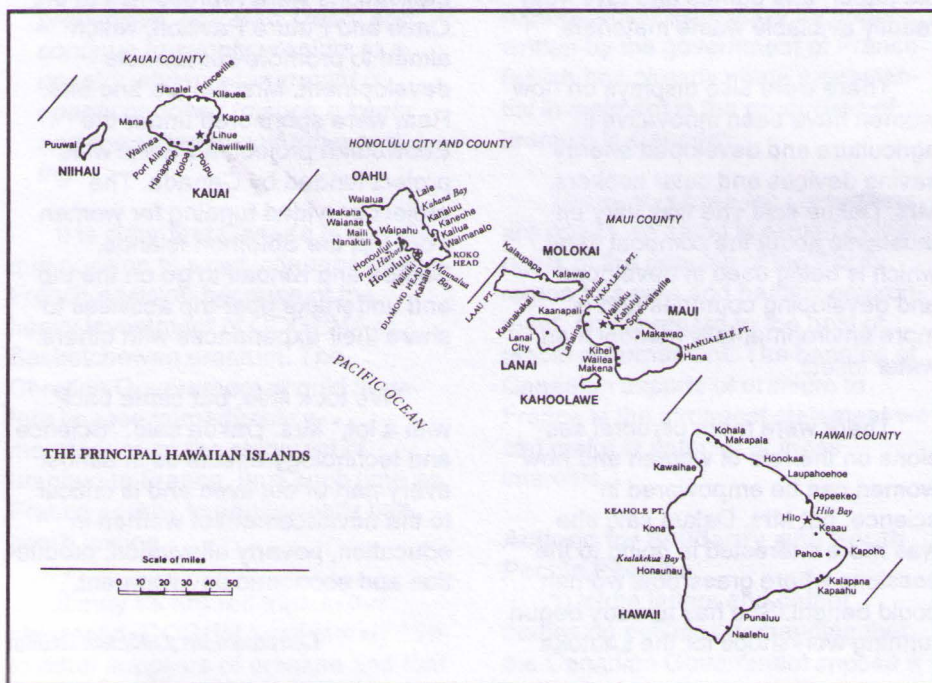
and our place of origin is the Pacific Basin.

For a dozen millennia, the vast Pacific has been our home. As island peoples, we have lived in our mother's keeping and she in ours. But with the dawning of imperialism, our islands have been overrun by Europeans, by Americans and by Asians. The colonial stranglehold began with the taking of ports and bases in the 18th and 19th centuries. It escalated with a war of Japanese imperialism, known as the Second World War. And it continues with superpower nuclearization of the region, toxic dumping, ocean and land mining, and the latest form of exploitation, mass-based corporate tourism.

To most Americans, however, the Pacific is still primarily a region known by its Rim Countries: North and South American, Asian and Russian. Added to this ignorance is the tourist version of our region as a romantic paradise peopled by friendly Natives. Indeed, for both Asian and American tourists, the Pacific archipelagoes are filled with tiny fantasy islands more reflective of a predatory "state of mind" than an actual geographic and cultural place.

But for the toxic waste brokers, the multinational corporations, the superpowers like the US and Japan, the regional forces like Korea, Taiwan, Australia, France and Indonesia, as well as the world's nuclear establishment, the Pacific is the final frontier for rapacious capitalism, the last place on Mother Earth to be plundered before the rape of the solar system begins in earnest.

As a region, the Pacific Basin is part of the colonized half of the equation that divides the world's rich from the world's poor, the ruling countries



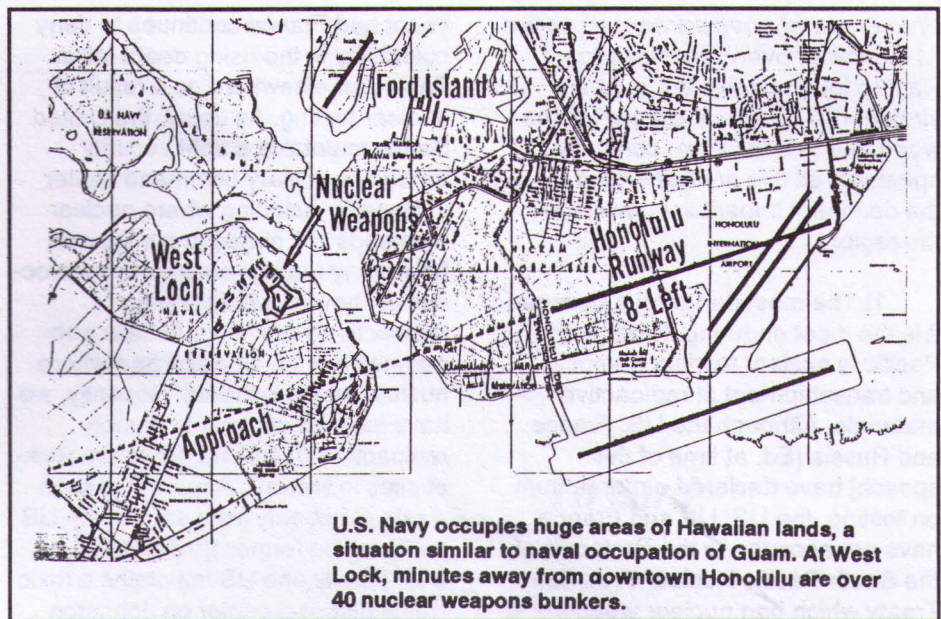
from the oppressed countries. It is not only an equation of North and South, but of Euro-Americans and Asians dominating Polynesians, Micronesians and Melanesians. In our vast ocean home, nations like Japan, Taiwan and Korea are just as menacing to our survival as the United States, Britain and France. Along with their enormous industrial output, the Asian countries have increased their volume of industrial waste and their nearest dumping grounds are in the Pacific Basin.

If, as the prevailing propaganda would have it, the 21st century is the Pacific century, it will be a century of intense exploitation. A century of massive toxic dumping in the waters and seabeds of the Pacific; intensive excavation of mountainous regions for gold, nickel, copper and even geothermal energy; overfishing through gill netting and long lining; commodification of indigenous cultures and their replacement with trashy, ornamentalized tourist cultures; and severe encroachment on native sovereignty, including control of borders, fisheries and regional security.

In other words, despite nominally independent micro-states in the region, the future for the Pacific Islands is a dependent, colonial one. And environmental racism is part of the colonial future.

Now, although the term "environmental racism" is of relatively recent coinage, the practice of siting hazardous waste production and disposal in communities of colour is nothing new. As a continuation of the discrimination people of colour endure at all levels of American society, from housing and education to employment, health care and legal services, environmental racism forces people of colour, in the words of the Rev. Ben Chavis Jr., "to bear the brunt of the nation's pollution problem".

Of course, Chavis is here referring to environmental racism in the context of the United States. He is interested to show how African Americans, Latinos, Asians, Pacific Islanders and Native Americans



within the confines of the United States are exposed to greater health risks because they are trapped in polluted environments. Moreover, these communities are subjected to such risks because they are powerless to resist racist policies.

Arguing that communities of colour are deliberately targeted, Chavis defines environmental racism as racial discrimination in environmental policy making, in the enforcement of regulations and laws, in the official sanctioning of the life-threatening presence of poisons and pollutants, and in the exclusion of people of colour from decision-making bodies charged with determining municipal, state and federal environmental laws.

Examples of environmental racism abound. Called by some, "human sacrifice zones", these include Chicago's South Side, Louisiana's "cancer alley", East Los Angeles and several Indian reservations. But other examples come from places where mining occurs, such as southern Colorado, or where pesticide use is rampant, such as the rich agricultural plains of California where farm workers and their families live. And of course, the military is a major purveyor of environmental racism, particularly in military colonies like Hawai'i where nuclear waste has transformed one of our best fisheries known as

Pu'uloa into a poisonous nightmare called Pearl Harbour.

These examples illustrate not only the horror of environmental devastation, but the greater harm endured by people of colour as a result of that devastation. The same white racism that gave birth to the United States on the land of American Indians, on the backs of African-American slaves, on the theft of Chicano land and labour, on the indentured servitude of Asians, and on the homelands of Pacific Islanders explains why people of colour suffer more pollution than white people.

Cases of environmental racism are now receiving national attention, including Congressional oversight, as communities of colour are joined in the struggle by such national civil rights organizations as the United Church of Christ Commission for Racial Justice. The work of individual scholars, like Robert Bullard, has gone far in focusing attention on the issue while environmental groups begin to expand their agendas to include the neglected arena of pollution in communities of colour.

But if some consciousness is brewing on the national scene, very little attention is being paid to the Pacific Basin where predator nations have been poisoning our Native peoples for decades.

Five areas of environmental racism

At the risk of over-generalization, I want to touch on five areas of environmental racism in our part of the world and to show how, culturally speaking, all five are generated by the dominant imperialist powers in the region.

1) The most dangerous because it is the most enduring threat to the Pacific is nuclear testing, dumping and transshipment of radioactive materials. Although the US, France and Russia [Ed. at time of this speech] have declared a moratorium on testing, the US, UK and France have not acceded to the Protocols of the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty which ban nuclear weapons altogether. In addition, Australia continues to export uranium. Of course, the Treaty does not include Hawai'i - which has the largest porting of nuclear submarines in the world - nor the Trust Territories, which are wholly subjugated to the United States.

Meanwhile, Japan continues to transship radioactive waste across the Pacific and has plans to bury nuclear waste in the Marianas Trench. Russia has been dumping nuclear waste in the North Pacific for

years and France continues to deny culpability in the rising death toll in Tahiti and elsewhere as a result of nuclear testing. As usual, the United States maintains a tight security around its military command center in Hawai'i, including where nuclear warheads are buried in our islands, how many nuclear accidents have occurred, how much dumping of radioactive water from nuclear submarines has taken place and where nuclear waste is stored. Recently, we have learned of plans to launch radioactive waste into orbit from rocket sites in Hawai'i. Apparently, such waste is not only from sites in the US but from the former Soviet Union as well. Finally, the US maintains a toxic waste disposal center on Johnston (Kalama) Island, the safety of which is seriously in doubt.

While the South Pacific Forum countries - comprised of the independent nations of the South Pacific - have called for a total ban on the dumping of radioactive waste at sea, none of the guilty countries have complied.

2) Although nuclear testing and dumping are the most serious

problems we confront, other kinds of hazardous waste dumping are a close second. As the regional imperialist nations, like Japan, Korea and Australia, find their nations inundated by garbage and waste, they are driven to dispose of it wherever they can. The quickest escape is the ocean.

The notion that the Pacific can swallow up anything without a trace is called the BOT, or the Big Ocean Theory. The obvious difficulty with the theory, however, is that waste is merely circulated not annihilated. Thus nuclear testing poisons our oceans and the island people who depend on them. Medical waste and refuse from the huge American military fleets that circulate throughout the Pacific wash up on the beach at Waikiki, on the shores of Belau and in the Antarctic. Meanwhile, migratory ahi, or tuna, retain radiation, injuring those who eat it. Ciguatera poisons our best fish, killing our people.

Of course, ocean dumping is not the only kind of waste disposal. Toxic landfills abound in the Pacific Islands as they do on the continents. But, as in communities of colour in East Los Angeles and the South, we are targeted for waste from other parts of the country and indeed the world. Thus, enterprising American "waste brokers" - a new, high-growth occupation with the same moral conscience as arms dealers - have approached provincial governments in Papua New Guinea to build toxic waste incinerators in rural areas. The Japanese have offered the Kingdom of Tonga a very lucrative deal to bury mountains of toxic garbage in that Pacific island. And the Americans, as ever, are busy burying military waste all over Micronesia and of course in my homeland of Hawai'i.

3) Multinational corporations, First World coordinating committees like the World Bank, and the First World nations themselves practice what is called "toxic colonialism" by planning large-scale relocation of "dirty industries" to the Third World.



The welcome sign on Johnston Atoll, a U.S. national wildlife refuge for birds and site of a toxic waste storage depot and malfunctioning incinerator for toxic waste.

Continued on p. 31/see Trask

Armature

La parole
des rivières du pays
armature de la grande case
lit des clans de la terre
vallées pour vivre ensemble
partager
la coutume
nos luttes
notre histoire
des ancêtres dieux totems oubliés
terres saccagés
pierres magiques tuées
alliances généalogies démantelées
contes légendes discours étranglés
* "âdi" découpés nattes déchirées
ignames taros déterrés

histoire de têtes coupées exilées

et celle de ceux qui collaborent encore

La parole
armature des rivières du pays
tôt ou tard
les eaux rejoignent l'océan
le monde

Déwé Gorodey
Ponérihouen, avril 1980

* "âdi": perles de coquillages, minuscules conques, os de roussette... enfilés symbolisant l'alliance des clans.

To Gird

The word
of the rivers of the land
girder of the Great House
bed of the clans of the earth
valleys for the common life
the shared
custom
our struggles
our telling of ancestors
totems gods forgotten
mounds pillaged
stones of magic killed
lineages alliances dismantled
stories legends language
strangled
unstrung "adi" * torn tresses
roots unearthed

a telling of banished heads decapitated
that also tells of those who stayed for pay

The word
the girding of the rivers of the land
soon or slowly
the waters join the water
the world

Ponérihouen, April 1980

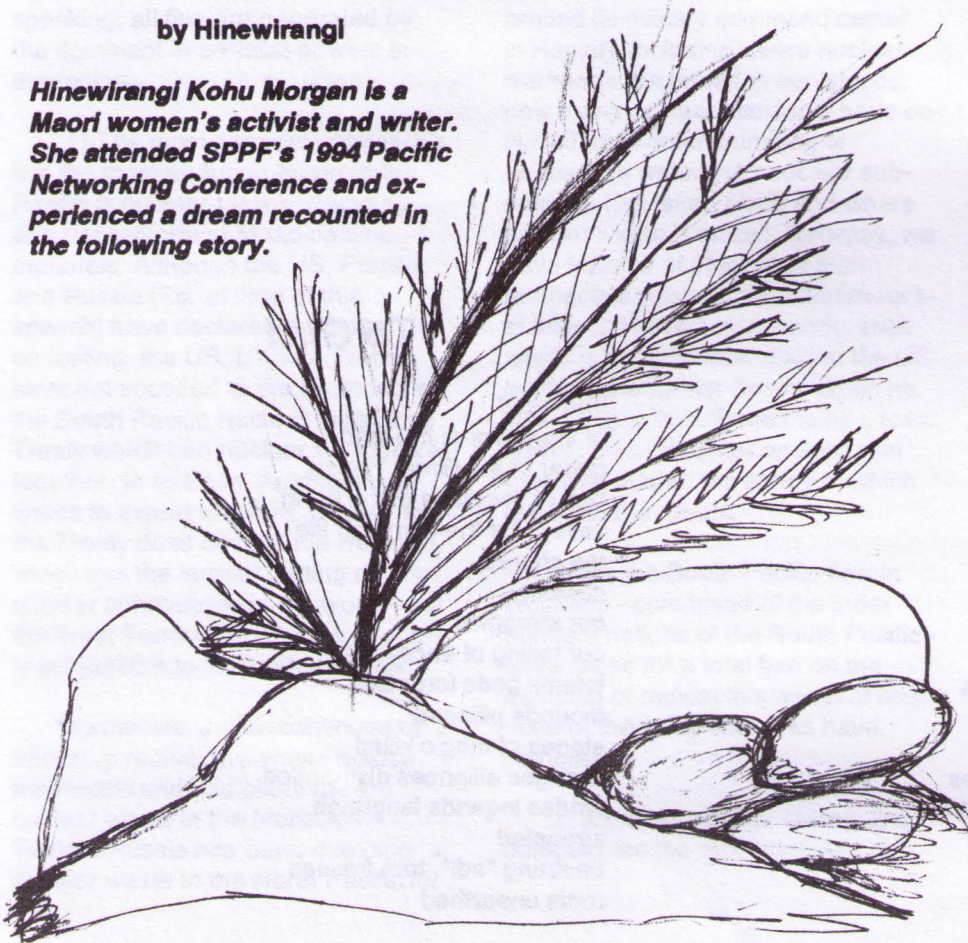
* "adi": shell beads, minute conches, flying-fox bones...threaded to symbolise the alliances of clans.

Translated by Anne Freadman

Desert Sage and the Dress

by Hinewirangi

Hinewirangi Kohu Morgan is a Maori women's activist and writer. She attended SPPF's 1994 Pacific Networking Conference and experienced a dream recounted in the following story.



It was a warm time to travel to Vancouver Island. I was excited because I had never been to Vancouver Island. When I arrived I wanted to take my shoes off, touch the papa and pay my respects to the whenua, the earth. I wondered who had come to meet me, but I guessed they would find me standing barefoot in the garden outside. It was the first plot of earth I saw.

I thanked the earth mother and said that I brought with me the mana of the earth mother in my own part of the world. I was silently saying a prayer when I heard a voice: "You must be Hinewirangi from Aotearoa". Turning around, there were three women, a Fijian woman living there and a mother and daughter from Balaui living in Hawaii.

We drove to the office of the South Pacific Peoples Foundation. They said they would leave me in the office, get some lunch and be back soon. I needed the time to ground myself and be alone.

I was looking through the window onto the street below when I noticed a tall man. I assumed him to be Indian; he had long plaited hair with denim jeans and jacket. He looked up and smiled, then disappeared through the door below. Some minutes later he walked in the door and greeted me, introducing himself as Alvin Manitopyes, a Plains Cree/Anishnabe Indian. We talked about the conference, ourselves and our peoples before lunch came. During the next few days, we always managed to sit close together during sessions and even facilitated

together the session on Indigenous religious beliefs.

At the end of the conference, we went up country to attend another healing conference to which we were all invited as international guests. Before we attended that conference, we were billeted out to different reservations. I traveled with other women to Alkali Lake. It was a 3-hour ride which I loved. It gave me time to look at the landscape and gather my thoughts of how I would interact with these people.

On the last night of our stay I had a powerful dream. The dream was vivid, full of colour, full of movement. I dreamt I was walking in a desert. It was what I had imagined the plains to look like. It went off in all directions for many miles and on the horizon were ragged mountains. The sky was panoramic. Clouds raced towards me; the rhythm and movement of the clouds danced to the beat of a drum.

I felt like I was in a bowl where I could reach out and touch the clouds as they were racing. I looked down at my feet, which were surrounded with sage brush. The sweet smell of the sage rose in my nostrils. I was captivated by its beauty. I knelt to talk with the sage, but to my horror the bush was covered with thousands of ticks, little animals that would get into the skin and suck blood. I began to panic thinking that these ticks would get all over me.

I stood up and looked for a way to get off these plains. I was afraid of the ticks, yet I felt that somehow I was here to clean the ticks. I looked across the plains and recognized a human form walking towards me. Within moments he was standing next to me.

"Alvin," I said in total surprise, "What are you doing here?"

He smiled a knowing smile. "You know why I am here." He looked me

in the eyes and said, "Burn the sage, Hinewirangi, put a light to it."

"What," I said, "Don't be stupid."

"Hinewirangi, burn the sage," he said firmly.

Before I knew it, he was gone, but I could see him at the other end of the plains. I took a match from my small waist purse and, checking the wind, lit the sage. To my dismay the flames were instantly big and engulfed me. I was burning. I was alight, but somehow I wasn't hurting.

As I stood in the flame, before my eyes came a lot of TV screens. In each screen was a segment of my life. One image showed my dishonesty, the fact that I was dishonest not in what I was saying, but what I didn't say. I hid my truth inside, never revealing, and when asked about it I said nothing. The image burnt and another came.

The next image was of me not listening to the higher self, not listening to the promptings, to the lessons I had to learn. Again the image burnt to the next. This image was a hard one, one that I had not wanted to listen to, one that I was born to do, but hid because it was too much self sacrifice.

I said, "You were given the skills of healing, so why don't you use that. You see beyond the seeing, hear beyond the hearing, but none of these things you do. Why not?" When I had learnt that lesson and faced myself, the image burnt away and another image came.

Image after image after image came. My whole life being exposed, not the good parts but the parts I hated to acknowledge, didn't want to know. I found myself crying and in a great deal of pain. My soul was being wrenched. I didn't know whether or not I would survive, but I was standing taller than ever.

I began to see my story and to gentle within, to finally know that I must use the skills that were given to me long before I made the choice to

come to this earth. I realized that I was a century walker, with a special job to do, and that I had not been doing what I was supposed to do. I realized that Alvin was also a century walker who had come to heal me and remind me of my responsibility. I realized lots about myself and knew as I stood in the fire that the old skin, the old habits, were burning away, giving way to the new skin below. I saw the burning away of the old self and recognized the new but ancient self beneath the old skin. I felt like a snake shedding its skin.

When my lessons were full, I looked across the plains and once again noticed Alvin walking towards me. He was soon at my side, smiling that wide beautiful smile and saying, "Burn me Hine, light me also."

Looking him directly in the eyes, I reached to touch his face and he began to burn. Just like me, his life was presented in TV screens and as he acknowledged each one, each one faded. I turned my back, allowing him the time to discover those things he needed to discover for himself.

Finally he turned me around and said, "Now you and I must clean the sage. You go that way, clockwise, and I the other, crisscrossing the plains touching each sage brush to cleanse them of the ticks. Then we will meet down there". He pointed to the horizon. I nodded and began to clean the sage brush. I looked behind me, and saw each sage brush I had touched standing tall, full and healthy. On closer examination there were no ticks.

When I reached the other end of the plains Alvin was waiting for me. Reaching into his medicine bag he gave me an Eagle feather, saying, "The eagle glides high above looking down and there was a time when he saw beauty and goodness upon the earth. He felt the power of the creator in the winds which gave him strength to fly at magnificent heights, seeing the sparkling raindrop become rivers and lakes, clean and sparkling, emptying into the great oceans. He observed his brothers and sisters the buffalo moving across the plains,

recognizing the healthiness of the earth mother's children. He has seen Indigenous people striving to live in harmony and perfection with all nations of children on the earth. He has seen colonisation and its ability for destruction, killing, polluting, destroying our earth mother with no care, no love, no needing to preserve. He has seen how Indigenous peoples are striving to preserve the sacredness of their ceremonies, struggling to maintain their people and bring them back to the sacred ways."

"He sees the century walkers walking, instilling the power of the sacred back amongst all nations of people. He sees you, a strong and sacred woman who needs feeding also, so gives you this sacred part of him to wear in times of ceremony, in times of your personal need to grow within yourself. You are beautiful. He has given me the sacred responsibility of working with my people and you with yours and at times we will come together to revitalize each other."

He then tied the feather into my hair saying, "This feather must never touch the earth. If it happens to fall, pray to the creator before you pick it up. You must complete your sacred ceremony clothes. You will make a dress. At the top will be the colours of the sky, for you are a sky woman. In the middle will be purple, the colours of the spirit, for women are sacred in their birthing channels, and greens to browns in the skirt will represent the colours of the earth mother. Your feet will walk in moccasins, beaded with love, with patterns and designs of your people the Maori. Around your neck you will wear all that belongs to your people, what your people hold sacred. At your waist you will carry several of your medicine bags for the healing of our people. You will wear your own feathers as well as this eagle feather in your hair. Then you will be complete in the work that you must do from this day on." He kissed me on each side of my cheek.

Continued on p. 33/see Sage

The land is like a book:

In the following interview, Regina McKenzie explains the Aboriginal relationship with the land and the reasons for a land claim which she has lodged in South Australia.

[This article is reprinted from Pesticide Monitor, Vol 3 No 4, and first appeared as an interview by Friends of the Earth Australia in Chain Reaction, No 71.]

"What is happening now is just a continuation of what happened in the past. In the early days they shot at us. Now we have the mining companies. The government is always at the people, treating them with contempt and a biased attitude. So we don't get the support we need."

Regina McKenzie is from Port Augusta. She is an Aboriginal woman of the Luridga people and has recently lodged a land claim on behalf of the Eringa Aboriginal Corporation for a portion of the traditional lands of the Southern Aranda and Luridga people. Under the Native Title Act, pastoral leases overrule Native title. However, Aboriginal people from the Oodnadatta and Finke area as well as other areas have maintained their links to the area despite dispossession and forced relocation. The country under claim is in the far north of South Australia. This land is under threat from mining and unsustainable land use, especially overgrazing.

Gina's mother was born in the Eringa area in 1919. She is of the Luridga people. Her mother was a full blood Luridga woman and her father was Irish, making her a 'half-caste'. In 1926 she was captured by the police for the crime of being 'half' European, separated from her family and taken to the Colebrook Home in Oodnadatta, then to Quorn, where she spent many years. In those days, the full blood people were treated as animals and they took her from her family so that she would grow up as a 'European'. She was sent to Quorn to work as a domestic servant for

station owners and this was nothing less than child slavery.

Eventually she married a man of Adnyamathna descent. It was 38 years before she was re-united with her family. Speaking of her ancestry, Gina says, "In the Aboriginal way, you are what your mother is, so that makes me Luridga." Gina was taught her Aboriginal ways by her aunt on her mother's side, Jenny Stewart. It was Jenny who told her that her Dreaming was Perenti. Gina's Dreaming area is one of those under threat from mining exploration.

"If the mining companies rip up my Story, what will I have to pass on to my kids? The land is like a book - the stories of our people and ancestors are in the land. Mining takes those stories and destroys them as surely as if they were ripping pages from a book. If our Dreamings are gone, it will mean the end of our culture." Gina explained that many non-Aboriginal people misunderstand what 'Dreaming' or 'Dreamtime' mean. "Dreamings give our history, our origins, where we started from. They are not made-up stories, they are factual events from long ago. Our people have made them into stories so that they are easier for the children to understand. Once people are initiated, they learn all the details about the whole story. Traditionally, our people kept no written history; the stories are written in the land. Sometimes these stories overlap - where this happens it forms a Dreaming path. Our Dreaming determines what sort of people we are; it gives us a path into the future while giving us an understanding of the past. Mining is one enemy of the Dreaming because when people give their Dreaming away (by allowing mining) it is damaged or destroyed, and so they give away their history and origins."

"Aboriginal people can never be a family until they get their land. The culture is part of the land; it is in the land. We look after the land and live

with it, never against it. Modern (Western) society is different - it has forgotten many things and forgets about the land. It uses land as a thing that has no life of its own. There is much to learn from Aboriginal people."

"We have been affected in many ways by losing access to our lands. We've lost our native foods because of the grazing. There have been many extinctions of native animals. We have lost our medicines. Things have gone that we will never see again." It is clear Aboriginal people have an understanding of the environment that is based on observation over thousands of generations. Non-Aboriginal people have substituted science for observation in their attempts to understand the environment.

In contrast, Aboriginal people have been given stories and, because of the strength of their culture, have been able to survive for so long on the continent. Western agriculture and lifestyles have destroyed or degraded huge areas of Australia in only 200 years. This raises questions about the long-term survival of humans in Australia. "Our people remember when the land was tropical, covered in rainforest, even up past Uluru (Ayers Rock). Lake Calabonna was all forested around the shore. Then a great drought came and the big animals died out."

Aboriginal people know exactly what lies under the ground and what the effects will be when the land is mistreated. They know not to dip up yellowcake [uranium-ed] - "that it will poison them, eat them up from the inside. Mt. Painter (in South Australia) should never have been mined."

The Aboriginal people of the interior had to survive the atomic testing that happened in the 1950s. They called the black clouds that burnt the skin and eyes the 'mumoo' (devil) cloud. Many people lost their eyesight, especially children, and

the story of Regina McKenzie

many people died. They were never warned about the dangers of radiation. Gina recounts stories of people who have spots on their skin to this day - spots that appeared soon after the clouds. She tells of hunting kangaroos in the Watson Creek area (near the Maralinga tests). Kangaroos that looked normal had their internal organs mixed up and in the wrong places.

Now her land is threatened once again from radiation. She believes that recent leaks from the tailing dams at the Olympic Dam (Roxby Downs) mine have entered the Great Artesian Basin that underlies much of inland Australia. The basin is the source of drinking water and people are getting boils from drinking the water. Some doctors have suggested that the boils represent the first stages of radiation poisoning.

A State-based tribunal is being set up in South Australia to consider land claims. Gina has great visions for the land once her people have their land back. "We want to make a small community between Elringa and Bloods Creek. We will develop the community on tableland country so as not to affect the water courses. We will live on the land wisely and recycle everything. We can combine the best of today's technology with the knowledge of yesterday so that the culture can live on."

"We want to be able to bring young kids out there and educate them in land management. We would have a cattle herd for our own meat, but don't want huge numbers of animals on the land. We would encourage the land to its natural way and allow native animals to return. The Kidman Cattle Company holds a lease over the area. They have been grazing there in a fragile environment for 100 years; cattle grazing erodes the land, destroys the waterways and is slowly destroying the country."

Mining is a threat for many reasons. "It uses lots of water from

the Great Artesian Basin. The burial sites are dug up. That land is harsh country; water is more precious than gold as all life depends on it. It is like the companies put a straw into a cup of water and are sucking all the water out. Already the water table is dropping and many of the mound springs (unique springs that occur where the Artesian Basin appears at ground level) are drying up. Mining will disrupt the ecosystems of the area. We don't want this. Mining also affects the native flora and fauna; they want to survive as well. The Mound Springs are unique; there are animals in each spring that don't exist anywhere else."

"If we lose them, we all lose something, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. Mining companies are robbing Australia of a unique heritage that we can't get back." There are proposals to put more

mining towns up in the north of South Australia. They will draw more water from the Artesian Basin. Chemicals from the mining are poisoning the water.

"It is important that people understand that this land claim is not some sort of prejudice against white people. It will take all Australians to protect this country. We need to stand up together and say that we don't want it destroyed. Europe has destroyed much of its natural environment. We must learn from this. We don't want our land to end up like America, pollution and acid rain." Gina stressed that it is vital for people to support those who are working to protect the environment. "We need to stand up and tell the government that we don't want any more destruction. We need to get the dream up and running. There can be enough for everyone."



Three Emu Men looking for Water by Linda Syddick Napaltjarri, a painter of the western desert of Australia. Linda says, "The figures in the centre of my painting are three Emu Men who are looking for water. They arrive at the large salt lake of Lake MacKay in the Gibson Desert on the border of Western Australia but find no fresh water. The oval shapes above their heads are their water carriers which look empty. The black circles are empty rock holes. The black lines are spears that Ancestral Emu Men used to pierce the clouds to make it rain. The arc shapes depict Tjapaltjarri and Tjungarrayi, custodians of the Emu and Water Dreaming of this country, my birning place."

Courtesy of the artist and Alcheringa Gallery, Victoria

Foreign Loggers Descend on PNG Rainforest

by Ursula Rakova

Ursula Rakova is the coordinator of the Landholders and Environment Desk with PNG's Individual and Community Rights Advocacy Forum (ICRAF). ICRAF focuses on human rights, alerts landowners to their constitutional rights and provides training and assistance in dealing with logging companies.

They come into our villages wearing neck ties and carrying brief cases. Their arrival is announced by a helicopter's engine. They say, "We will bring development to you if you sign these papers." Aid posts, roads, bridges, schools, water supplies and permanent houses are promises made by all logging companies operating in PNG.

Current trends show that Papua New Guinea's forests will be exhausted within a single lifetime. As other areas in southeast Asia are deforested, Asian logging companies are descending on PNG's rainforests. Logging pressure has intensified because tropical log exports have been banned in all major source countries but Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands.

Foreign logging companies reap massive profits, while leaving PNG with few benefits and widespread environmental destruction. Profits are easily made in a country with vast forest resources, corruption of some politicians and landowners who are easy victims of misinformation or coercion. Many landowners have very little or no formal education and do not comprehend the devastation that logging can bring. Some have been literally forced to put a cross or mark against their names.

American journalist Philip Sheenon recently warned, "Even the last rainforest is now in danger. The

forests of Papua New Guinea - and a way of life they have sheltered since the Stone Age - are threatened by greed as foreign loggers are desperate for new sources of tropical timber." [*Post-Courier*, Aug. 5/95, reprint from *New York Times*]

The people of PNG are losing an asset that has nurtured us for thousands of years, an asset that has the potential to be a long-term source of wealth, if managed sustainably.

In a recent interview with Australia's SBS Television, Justice Tos Barnett said, "It's hard to see any real benefit as far as the people were concerned. They entered into agreements to sell their timber. Basically, the promises that were made to them were very frequently broken and the profits they got were minimal. The people who were benefiting were the foreign companies, Japanese, Malaysian, I think Indonesian, certainly Singapore. Those foreign companies were getting enormous benefits."

Landowner Yalaum Mosol, from the Naru/Gogol area in Madang Province, said of his village's experience with Japan's Honshu Paper Corporation, "When Jant initially came, we were told that we would have roads, bridges, health care facilities, jobs and even houses with corrugated iron roofs. Almost 17 years have gone by. Our trees are gone, our land is left barren, all the wildlife has gone and our rivers have been polluted, but we are still living in houses built of bush material." [*Post Courier* - Aug. 17/93]

The Land

Land is sacred and must be respected for the benefit of future generations. Papua New Guineans were among the world's first farmers, with evidence of gardening going

back at least 9,000 years. Today, 87% of our four million people still live in rural areas. We use a mix of traditional rules and taboos to ensure species survival. We impose temporary bans on hunting and fishing to ensure sustainable yields. We value and nurture our forests.

The state owns 3% of the land while 97% is owned communally by clan members. One individual cannot sell land as he or she pleases. All parties concerned must agree. PNG's patrilineal and matrilineal societies ensure that the ownership and use of land benefits all. The land tenure and social systems are based on sharing and supporting all clan members.

In PNG, land ownership is an established legal right. Following the British pattern, the landowner has title to the forests and other above-ground assets while the state owns subsurface rights as stipulated by the Mining Act and the Petroleum Act.

The Forests

Tropical forests cover an estimated 32 to 36.4 million hectares, representing 70% to 77% of the land base. Our primary forests contain 12 distinct types of vegetation ranging from coastal mangrove to alpine forest. They are rich in plant and animal biodiversity, containing more than 2,000 tree species.

The densely populated highlands have been relatively deforested to create subsistence gardens. The lowland rainforests, which account for 50% of commercially valuable trees, are largely intact and are the key target of foreign loggers. They are most easily accessible and have a high concentration of desired species.

The PNG Forest Authority estimates that PNG loses 1% of its

forests each year to shifting agriculture, mining and logging.

Forest Policy - Government Promises

PNG's forest sector is in the midst of a regulatory transition. Parliament passed a new Forest Policy and Forest Act in 1991. The Act was designed to remedy shortcomings in the legal framework identified by the 1989 Barnett Commission forest inquiry.

Our national Constitution states: "That Papua New Guinea's natural resources and environment should be conserved and used for the collective benefit of all and should be replenished for future generations."

This guides the National Forest Policy objectives:

1. Management and protection of the nation's forest resources as a renewable asset.
2. Use of these resources to achieve economic growth, employment, greater Papua New Guinean participation in the forest industry and increased, viable onshore processing.

The PNG Forest Authority purchases the right to harvest trees, usually for 40 years, from the landowners. Consent of all customary owners is required. The agreement is called a Forest Management Agreement, replacing the former Timber Rights Purchase Agreement. Then the Forest Authority allocates the forest resource to a logging company. Land ownership remains with the customary owners.

Sustainable management of forest production is stressed as the guiding principle, with selective logging prescribed for natural forests. Overall responsibility for sound forest management is vested in the state.

A National Forest Plan (NFP) is to be formulated, based on a national forest inventory. The NFP is to consist of the national guidelines and a program for developing PNG's forests. The NFP is the responsibility of the Minister of Forests. It has not yet been put in place.



Logging site in Papua New Guinea showing large canopy gaps and damaged soil.

The Reality

Logging companies recklessly extract logs. They are only interested in felling trees and dragging them by the closest route to the sea where log ships wait.

Environmental plans are rarely followed. Conditions attached to permits are soon broken. When landowners voice their grievances, the companies call in the police to arrest them. Companies contravene their agreements by logging on hill sides, refusing to log selectively, damaging remaining trees, disturbing water courses, and breaking many other environmental conditions.

Small and medium-sized operators, including Malaysian-Singaporean companies, simply arrive, put their equipment ashore by barge, and start logging. The roads they build wash away and become environmental hazards; their log bridges rot and collapse. Larger companies, particularly Japanese operators who want a long-term stake in PNG, tend to build better roads and bridges.

Foreign logging companies use transfer pricing to avoid paying much of the tax and duty they owe to the PNG government. Many are equally

successful in paying only token royalties to landowners.

The PNG Forest Authority and the logging companies decide how much royalty landholders will get. Some royalties are as low as K1.00 (C\$1.08) per cubic metre.

Decisions are often made by a very few people. More than 80% of the people do not see what is in the agreements. Women are not involved in any way. Many elders are not consulted.

Alternatives

Alternatives to large-scale logging are being developed. Wokabout (portable) sawmills and other forms of small-scale logging can provide a more environmentally appropriate method of logging whereby resource owners can get the most benefit from their resources. Eco-tourism businesses such as guest houses can generate income for communities. Butterfly farming, orchid growing, nut production and other non-timber forest products provide other options.

Logging is not the only possible form of development. There are often alternatives that can bring resource owners a good profit.

photo: T. Vigus in Tropical Forest Update, Vol 5, No 1, March 1995

Women's Voices on the "Bougainville Crisis"

SPPF and Tok Blong Pasifik have followed the Bougainville crisis for several years. In this compilation by Dr. Jared Keil of Carleton University, we are offered the perspectives of a range of Bougainvillean and other Pacific women about the impact of the war. Dr. Keil conducted research in Bougainville prior to the conflict.

[T]here is...an obvious irony in that the price for war is commonly paid by those who have little, if anything, to do with the decision to engage in it. For example, rarely do women make war, but all too often they pay dearly for it. Bougainville is no exception.

[Atu Emberson-Bain in "Cries from mothers of the land", *Pacific Islands Monthly*, 63:4, April 1993]

Probably the most deadly weapon for thousands of Bougainvilleans has been the blockade... The blockade has meant a lack of facilities to deal with anything from childbirth to emergency cases. It has meant pregnant women have died needlessly in childbirth and that babies and young children have died from easily preventable diseases. No babies born after late 1989 have been immunised against killers like TB, measles and whooping cough. For many, the blockade has delivered nothing short of a death sentence.

[Atu Emberson-Bain, *ibid*]

By 1991, according to reports by the International Red Cross, this war had caused the death of 5,000 people. By 1994, the death toll had probably reached between 7,000 and 8,000. I have lived and worked in Bougainville during the last five years of the crisis, and as a nurse educator I have witnessed more deaths recently than in the early part of the crisis. They have largely resulted from preventable diseases. In addition, young Bougainvilleans are today being used as frontliners by the PNG

military, which means that Bougainvilleans are killing each other. I have witnessed this happening.

[Ruby Mirinka in "Development distortions: The case of Bougainville" in 'Atu Emberson-Bain (ed.), *Sustainable Development or Malignant Growth? Perspectives of Pacific Island Women*. (1994) Marama Press, Suva.]

It is the purpose of this report to reveal to the world, including Papua New Guinea (PNG) itself, the truth about the cruel physical, environmental and psychological torture inflicted on Bougainvilleans by the government blockade. It is the belief of the mothers and children of Bougainville, whom I represent here, that the United Nations should develop a workable strategy that will open dialogue between all Bougainvillean leaders and PNG, and find a lasting solution to end the crisis.

[Ruby Mirinka in "Our mothers and children are dying": Military offensives against the Island of Bougainville" in 'Atu Emberson-Bain (ed.), *ibid*]

But the lack of drugs and medical services is not the only reason why people are dying in their hundreds. The blockade has also deprived Bougainvilleans of their basic human rights and needs. People once had good houses, safe water supplies, good lighting, clothes, soap, toothpaste, love, security and education. But these rights have been taken away from them, leaving them as prisoners of war in their own land.

[Ruby Mirinka, *ibid*]

All Bougainvilleans, irrespective of where they are - PNG 'care centres' or bush camps controlled by the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) - are undergoing physical, environmental and psychological torture... In fact, I can safely say that 100 per cent of Bougainvilleans are today living in a state of fear and anxiety, not knowing what tomorrow will bring. This is itself a health

problem. People can no longer continue to endure such conditions.

[Ruby Mirinka, *ibid*]

There may be an air of normality in the army occupied areas of Buka and Bougainville but one thing for sure: there is no peace. People's feelings and rights to express their fears and hopes are being suppressed by the ever presence of military weapons and the users. There is simply no freedom.

[Ruth Savaona-Spriggs in "Women in Crisis in Bougainville", reprint from *Peace News*, 2365, April 1993]

Mothers and children cannot go to the gardens to get food. Many of them...had to hide in caves because of the threat from Papua New Guinea government who used helicopters to spray the people with chemicals.

[Ruby Mirinka quoted in "The enemy must leave", *Pacific Islands Monthly*, 62:8, August 1992.]

In one of the Care Centres in Buka, women told of brutal and harsh treatments they received from the PNGDF in late 1990... In other incidents women were taken to the army camp for questioning over their husbands' activities with the BRA and in two reported cases, women were put in detention without charges for ten days.

[Ruth Savaona-Spriggs, *ibid*]

Stories abound of rapes of young women and resultant pregnancies.

[Atu Emberson-Bain in "Cries from mothers of the land"]

The highest casualty rate occurs among women... Women have to take children and try to carry provisions. Many women are dying. Some have absolutely nothing at all. It is reported some have no clothing - they are ashamed to come out to safety. Rape and violence against women are common - pack or gang rape is usual and women are often

This photo of the Bougainville mine site appeared in a company brochure published in the early 1980s.



killed. Sexually transmitted diseases are increasing with militarization.

[Brenda Fitzpatrick in *Stories of Bougainville: Report of Women's Team Visit, July 1993*, (1993) World Council of Churches, Geneva]

The PNGDF has armed young men to assist in hunting down and flushing out the rebels... Power at the barrel of the gun is being misused and abused. It has enabled young men to settle traditional scores which has resulted in in-fighting within families, relatives and clans. Women and children are of course once again in the thick of this confusing state, in some cases being used as shields for protection and to stop the violence.

[Ruth Savaona-Spriggs, *ibid*]

Men vent their frustrations and feelings of helplessness on mothers and children, they become very aggressive and violent, abusive and in most cases bash up their wives and children.

[Ruth Savaona-Spriggs, *ibid*]

The cries of Bougainville's women, the innocent victims of war, ring out. But will their cries be heard? Are peace and the restoration of a life line too much to ask for?

[Atu Emberson-Bain in "Cries from mothers of the land"]

The cry from the people is "bring back peace". This war has been started and kept going by men who just want to make a name for themselves; who do not care about the good of the people. The people have been set against each other. Hatred has been building -not just with the PNGDF but also with the BRA - and people have been set against people. The island population has been divided... It is their own people, their own mothers and sisters and people that they are killing.

[Brenda Fitzpatrick, *ibid*]

The women want their voices heard. There has been too much suffering. Something must be done. Hear the women's voices... Won't people hear? This is the silent cry of women from Bougainville. There has been not one Bougainville woman heard overseas. The men go and speak. No-one has heard the women.

[Brenda Fitzpatrick, *ibid*]

The women have had enough of the crisis. The women have suffered immensely from the crisis. Six years is a long time for mothers and children to suffer pain, sadness, hopelessness and be denied medicine... The women feel they have no dignity, or sense of self-importance. Look around you in the villages and in care centres. How many women no longer have husbands? How many children

are fatherless? How many children would have been here if they had medicine, access to hospitals, services and so on. Now, at this peace conference, we, the women, do not want to simply negotiate for peace; we demand that we must have peace in Bougainville.

[Agnes Titus, president of the North Solomons Council of Women, quoted in "Rebels to join talks: hopes for peace stir at Arawa, *PNG Post-Courier*, October 12, 1994 (In fact, the leaders of the BRA/BIG did not attend the "peace conference".)]

The effects of the Bougainville crisis on women on the troubled island will be heard at the international level when two Bougainvilleans present their documents at a worldwide Non-Government Organisation women's forum in Beijing, China this August... Mrs. Titus and Hakena will highlight detailed and well documented accounts on the life and hardships experienced by women and mothers of Bougainville and how they have adapted to it in the crisis now in its seventh year.

["Bougainville women's plight to be heard in international forum", *The Saturday Independent*, June 24, 1995]

The enemy must leave and let the people be free.

[Ruby Mirinka quoted in "The enemy must leave"]

Pacific Women Need Legal Literacy

by P. Imrana Jalal

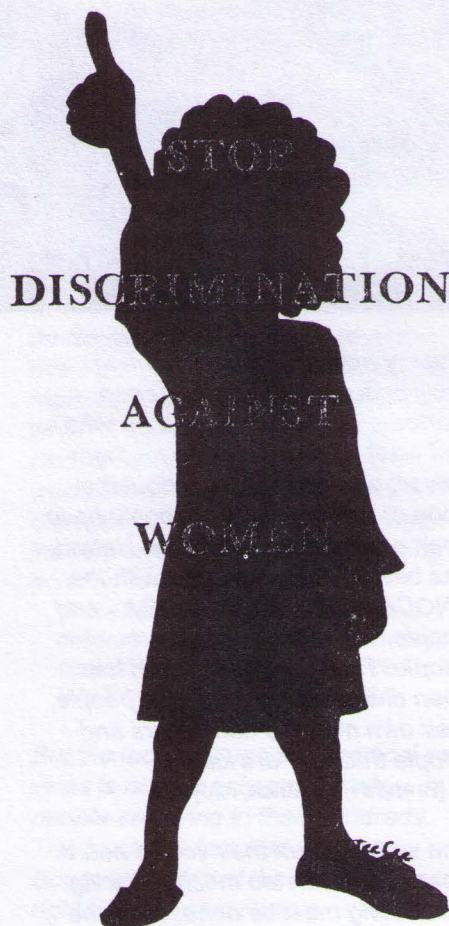
Imrana Jalal is a lawyer and member of the Fiji Women's Rights Movement. This article is adapted from an editorial in Balance, the newsletter of the Fiji Women's Rights Movement.

At an April 1994 seminar hosted by the International Commission of Jurists in collaboration with the Fiji Women's Rights Movement, delegates from Pacific Island countries agreed that women in the Pacific had very little information about the law. The extent of discrimination that women suffer under the law has significant consequences for their ability to obtain basic services and exercise their human rights. Their access to legal literacy, legal aid and therefore justice is severely restricted, which in turn has severe implications for women's participation in development.

The UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women - which has been signed in the Pacific Islands by Western Samoa, Papua New Guinea, the Cook Islands and Niue - has become the model for analysis of the situation of women globally. A primary purpose of the convention is to encourage national action for the enactment and enforcement of laws to provide women with legal protection and access to courts of law. However, legal protection cannot be useful to women unless they are aware of their legal rights. Furthermore, women cannot take effective action to realise these rights unless they become aware of the options available to them. Legal literacy programmes have been identified as of foremost importance in achieving the goals of the convention.

Legal literacy is "the process of acquiring critical awareness about rights and the law, the ability to assert rights, and the capacity to mobilise for changes" (Schuler, 1992).

FIJI WOMENS RIGHTS MOVEMENT



HELPING TO BALANCE THE SCALES

The objective of legal literacy is to upgrade women's legal status through literacy. Ultimately it is about improving women's overall status. The purpose is to increase general awareness of human rights and the legal status of women and to encourage actions to eliminate discriminatory legal provisions against women. Legal literacy is a significant

strategic concern and one basis for securing women's rights. This is not to say that acquiring legal knowledge by itself empowers women. But once empowered, women become proactive social agents who act upon the law to make it relevant and who know how to use the law to shape more adequate forms of social organization that better meet women's needs.

Any legal literacy programme must, in addition to teaching the law, also address the discriminatory aspects of the law. An uncritical understanding of the law carries with it a danger that the corrupt status quo of women in the legal system will be reinforced.

By informing women about their legal and human rights, and translating difficult legal terms and procedures into information that can be understood and used by women, the law can be an effective tool of change for the better. Changes which affect the way the law is formulated and administered by future law professionals will be significant in changing the male bias in the law. Demystification of the law can thus represent a challenge to the established and elitist legal system.

Training community level educators is the best method for carrying out legal education that truly empowers women because it builds the leadership skills of grassroots women and provides them with tools to access the legal system independently. Legal literacy will also make women aware of the flaws of the system so that the groundwork is laid for challenging the present structures.

Acquiring knowledge of the law is a means to an end; it is not an end in itself. It is a tool that may be used to advance women's interests. It is a weapon for empowerment.

Women speak out in literature: Pacific and Caribbean voices

by Arlene Griffen

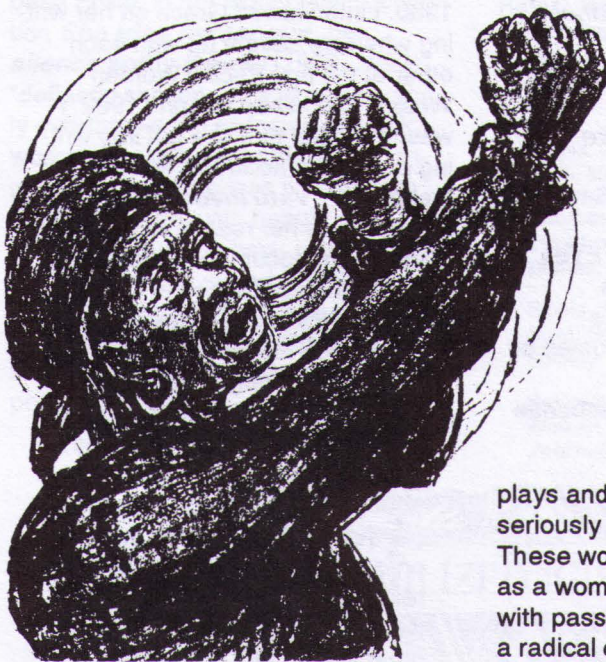
Arlene Griffen teaches post-colonial literature and women's writing at the University of the South Pacific in Suva. Her research interests include feminist literature, post-colonial women's writing, gender in media studies and other women's/gender issues. She is completing a comparative study of Caribbean and Pacific writing for her PhD thesis and is a published writer herself.

The South Pacific and Caribbean have much in common. Both are now largely made up of politically independent small-island nations sharing similarities of tropical geography and a long history of European colonialism and its many consequences. Likewise, there are similarities in the genesis, themes and forms of Anglophone literatures from these regions. South Pacific literature is the younger sister in this relationship, arising in the late 1960s to early 1970s as part of the nationalist drives in Pacific countries. Caribbean literature's first wave is a post-First World War phenomenon, but its 1970s flowering of writing by women coincides with the rise of Pacific literature. This article focuses on selected writing by women from both regions and concentrates on poetry, their favoured art form to date.

Poetry enjoys this preferential position because it is more readily accommodated (versus long fiction or drama) into women's always busy lives and because it allows expression of deeply felt personal concerns in a form which is more readily adapted to women's wordways and worldways.

In feminist scholarship, attention is often paid to identifying and acknowledging the ground-breaking work of women who are considered to be "before their time". These women and their pioneering work

can be inspirational to women in struggle at a later time and in other locations not only because they lead by example, but also because they show what progress has been made in the history of such endeavours. In Caribbean literature, the work of Una Marson (1905-65), the Jamaican black nationalist and feminist writer, merits this kind of attention and has inspirational relevance for writers in the Caribbean and the Pacific.



Una Marson was the youngest child of nine in a devout Baptist family in countryside Jamaica. Her promising high school career in a prestigious boarding school cut short by the death of both her parents, she embarked on a varied working and creative life which included journalism, international travel in the service of black nationalist and women's organisations, ownership and editorship of *The Cosmopolitan* (the first Jamaican women's magazine), publication of three plays and four volumes of poetry, foundation of the

Readers and Writers Club, the Kingston Drama Club and the Jamaica Save the Children Club, activity in the Poetry League of Jamaica and the Pioneer Press, and staunch support for a Jamaican national theatre. While based in London on and off for almost ten years, her international work included being private secretary to Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia through her membership of the League of Coloured People in Britain and beginning the ground-breaking BBC radio programme, "Caribbean Voices", which like *The Cosmopolitan* in Jamaica gave a voice to Caribbean writers and artists, many for the first time.

Marson's great energy and enthusiasm were likewise brought to bear on her own

plays and poetry which she took seriously and evaluated honestly. These works present her concerns as a woman and black nationalist with passion, compassion and often a radical experimentation with literary form, iconoclastic for the times and still exemplary for today's writers. "*Pocomania*" (1938), her most important work, is a play which broke with tradition in its focus on colonial Jamaican religious conflict involving a cult from the country. It is groundbreaking for its treatment of Jamaican issues such as the conflict between Euro-Christian and Afro-Christian religious practices, the ambivalent position of black middle-class women in patriarchal Eurocentric colonial society, and for its inclusion of Jamaican characters and actors, Jamaican dialect not used merely for comedic purpose, and even Jamaican songs and dan-

dances. *Pocomania* was a turning point in what was acceptable on the Jamaican stage at the time.

Marson's poetry shows similar passionate concern with contentious issues affecting women and her country and similar experimentation with conventional poetic form to better express these concerns. Thus an early sonnet expresses her support of international feminism:

*Women of England who in
freedom's name
Work with courageous women of
all lands
For women's rights, yet not for
women's fame
I greet you and to you stretch
friendly hands...
What bitter struggles have their
spirits known
So that just rights to womanhood
should come
For lands can only reach the
greater good
When noble thoughts inspire
sweet womanhood.*

(quoted in Ford-Smith, 27)

Another poem, "*Cinema Eyes*" expresses her rejection of the stereotypical standard of white beauty to which Caribbean women of the time aspired through their colonial conditioning and in response to media images:

*... I will let you go
When black beauties
Are chosen for the screen
That you may know
Your own sweet beauty
And not the white loveliness
Of others for envy*

(quoted in Smilowitz, 63)

Yet she is aware of the alienation felt by the black girl who feels forced to conform to Eurocentric standards of beauty; she highlights such cultural dilemmas by the appropriate use of African-Caribbean dialect and blues rhythm:

*... See oder young gals
So slick and smart
See those oder young gals
So slick and smart
I jes' gwine die on de shelf
If I don't mek a start...*

(from "Kinky Haired Blues" quoted in Ford-Smith, 34)

Marson's unproblematical connection of women's "private" concerns with those more in the public sphere shows her foreshadowing of the later Western feminist slogan, "the personal is political". Her iconoclastic work has inspired other Caribbean women artists such as Louise Bennett and the Sistren collective. In the contemporary Pacific, we find evidence of a similar connection between the personal and political in the work of writers such as Grace Mera Molisa of Vanuatu and Jully Sipolo (Makini) of the Solomon Islands.

Grace Molisa's poetry is polemical and political, arising as it did directly out of her work for the Vanuaaku Pati, which came to power after Vanuatu's independence in 1980. I interviewed Grace on her writing when we caught up with each other at the first Pacific Women Writers' Workshop in April, 1992. I was reminded that she got into writing poetry "by accident" when her first poem, "*Vatu Invocation*", began life as her response to a government document on tourism and was then published in the Vanuaaku Pati paper. Since then, she says she realises that:

"...poetry actually is for me a personal way of filing away subjects that have weighed on my mind, issues that take a lot of thinking about. I find that once I manage to get the essence of such subjects onto paper, then I am able to be relieved and move onto a new issue that might arise... I know other colleagues in positions of responsibility who might find such release in seeking the company of the bottle or taking out frustrations on things or others. There are many, many different ways in which one copes with frustration."

(*New Literatures Review*, # 24, winter south, 1992, p.125)

Grace Molisa's poetry is an intensely personal use of language not to express "emotion recollected in tranquillity" but to wage war with words against the injustices that words help to produce and perpetuate. Her poems make explicit the power struggles that invest human relations and which are mediated through

BLACK STONE



(Poems by Grace Mera Molisa)

language itself; in thus putting the word to work for her, she is able to appropriate it for anti-colonial and feminist purposes, as the poem "*Custom*" illustrates:

*Custom
is an English word
English
a confluence
of streams of words
is a reservoir
of every shade
nuance and hue
sharply
contrasting
Melanesia's
limited vocabulary
supplementing
non-verbal
communication.
Inadvertently
misappropriating
'Custom'
misapplied
bastardized
a frankenstein
corpse
conveniently
recalled
to intimidate
women
the timid
the ignorant
the weak.*

(*Black Stone*, 24)

Similarly, "*Other People*" denounces the continued exploitation of locals by "the notable expatriate" in newly independent nations such as Vanuatu:

...His ideas best serve
to further his career
to feather his nest
to lengthen his C.V.
at the expense of Natives...
He assumes many forms
power-hungry, sex-starved,
money-mad, bible-bashing,
flutter-by-butter-fly
or gay narcissus
(*Black Stone*, 38)

The almost brute force of these elliptical "message" poems compels the reader to concentrate on their meaning alone, for there are no "metres meet" nor aesthetic flights of fancy to beguile attention.

The poems of Solomon Islander Jully Sipolo (Makini) also explore feminist themes and question inter- and intra-cultural clashes. Her poem "*A Man's World*", through a series of contrasting lines, presents female opposition to gender inequity in a patriarchal society:

My brother can sit on the table
I mustn't
He can say what he likes when-
ever he likes
I must keep quiet
He can order me around like a
slave
I must not back-chat
He gives me his dirty clothes to
wash
I wish he could wash mine!...
(*Civilized Girl*, 10)

The title poem of Sipolo's first collection summarises the confusion that can beset an island woman faced with Western standards of beauty, dress and behaviour:

Cheap perfume
Six inch heels
Skin-tight pants
Civilized girl...
Charcoal-black skin
Painted red
Bushy eyebrows
Plucked and pencilled
Who am I?
Melanesian Caucasian or
Half-caste
Make up your mind

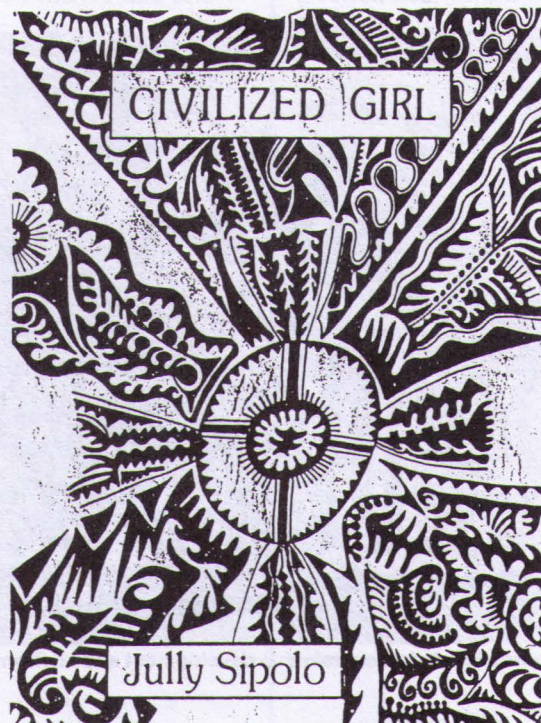
Where am I going -
Forward, backward, still?
What do I call myself -
Mrs Miss or Ms?
(*Civilized Girl*, 21)

Such themes and feminist concerns find sister echoes in the poetry of, for example, Konai Helu Thaman of Tonga and Momoe von Reiche of Western Samoa as well as in the sovereignty poems of Haunani Kay Trask of Hawaii. But, to circle back to the Caribbean (via a spiral into Canada, where this poet now lives), we see they are also brilliantly explored in the balletic wordplays of Tobago's M. Nourbese Philip. This poet takes to the ultimate lucid point Grace Molisa's fierce interrogation of the linguistic colonization of "native" minds by the English language. Nourbese Philip, in her iconoclastic collection *She tries her tongue, her silence softly breaks* (1989, 1993), "defiantly challenges and resoundingly overthrows the silencing of black women through appropriation of language, offering no less than superb poetry resonant with beauty and strength" (blurb on back cover). An extract from this superbly affirming collection can proffer the final taste from this quick dip into the nectar of Pacific and Caribbean women's poetry:

... Where is the woman with a
nose broad
As her strength
if not in yours
In whose language
Is the man with the full-moon lips
Carrying the midnight of colour
Split by the stars - a smile...
In whose language
Am I
Am I not
Am I I am yours
Am I not I am yours
Am I I am
If not in yours
In whose
In whose language
Am I
If not in yours
Beautiful
(*She tries her tongue...*, 27)

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Trask/continued from p. 18

In the Pacific Islands, these include disastrous mining industries in Papua New Guinea, Bougainville and other parts of Melanesia, as well as Australia. For example, mining in Papua New Guinea has caused tremendous environmental damage to the forests, the rivers and the homelands of many tribal peoples. Although nominally independent, Papua New Guinea is in reality thoroughly dependent on Australia and other countries for foreign investment. Predictably, such investment comes at the price of ecological disaster as well as the devastation of the region's tribal peoples.

4) Mass-based corporate tourism is rarely considered in the same league as "dirty industries," but when such tourism approaches the level it does in Hawai'i, the environmental effects are disastrous. Hawai'i suffers perhaps the world's largest number of tourists relative to its land base and population. About seven million tourists visit Hawai'i every year. This means seven tourists for every resident and 35 tourists for every Native Hawaiian. Relative to land area, this is roughly equivalent to 115 million tourists - almost half the population of the United States - descending on Colorado for fun in the sun every year.

These tourists consume enormous amounts of water, produce huge amounts of sewage and generate hazardous amounts of air pollution from cars. Massive resort areas with restaurants, entertainment areas, second home developments and recreational compounds cause tremendous scarring of our fragile island including extinction of plant and animal life. Water is wasted and polluted by the tourist industry. At this moment, little Hawai'i has as many of officially endangered species as do all the other 49 states combined. Energy demands generated by the tourist industry result in the construction of coal-burning plants and state plans for geothermal drilling, as well as mining of the seabed for manganese nodules.

Contrary to industry propaganda, tourism is not a "clean industry". Far from it. In Hawai'i, hotels are built on our ancient burial grounds, their restrooms constructed on our ancient temples. Native Hawaiians are evicted from areas scheduled for development and thereby driven into makeshift beach villages or city slums. Our bays, once sources of plentiful seafood, are now heavily silted and cluttered with jet skis, wind surfers and sailboats. Not only does tourism pollute, but by its sheer size, mass-based corporate tourism

forecloses traditional Hawaiian culture. For example, taro farming and shoreline and deep-sea fishing are foreclosed by resort development and its resulting pollution. Hawaiians are then left the "opportunity" of selling their culture in the tourist industry through entertaining, waiting on tables and cleaning up after tourists. This is nothing but cultural prostitution, selling a false version of Hawaiians and our culture to tourists. Cultural prostitution is one aspect of environmental racism in Hawai'i.

For sheer physical damage to our land and waters, golf courses are hard to beat. In Hawai'i, they require more pesticides, herbicides and insecticides than any other kind of land use. Runoff from golf courses kills fish, pollutes estuarine environments, including wetlands, and poisons our beaches and bays. On the most populated island of O'ahu, which is about 607 square miles, more than 70 golf courses are planned or built. Only five are open to the public. Most of the courses are owned by Japanese investors.

O'ahu island is home to about 900,000 residents, millions of tourists annually, more than seven military reservations, an international airport and the US military command center for 75% of the earth's surface. O'ahu is the site of the capitol of Hawai'i, the city of Honolulu, which encompasses the entire south shore of the island. As a point of comparison for those who find this mind-boggling, O'ahu is smaller than Boulder County.

Apart from direct damage to the natural environment, massive tourism degrades the living conditions of Native people by forcing them into ghettoized areas with poor housing, few municipal services and no open space. Tremendous crowding has created densities that, in areas like Waikiki, are among the highest in the world, equivalent to Hong Kong, Singapore and Tokyo. Predictably, such crowding results in high rates of burglary, drug use and murder, not to mention a general lowering in the quality of everyday life.



photo: S. Wuiff

Mass-based tourism has created unsustainable development and environmental problems in Waikiki.

Continued next page

5) Lastly, there is a kind of environmental racism that comes from what I call, with other Native Pacific Islanders, cultural pollution. For those of us whose culture is based in a belief that the cosmos is a unity of familial relations, that land is our mother and we are bound to protect her, the rape of our land is the rape of our mother.

To industrialized countries, land is an exploitable resource, not a living entity. For people from these cultures, racism is a way of life; rape is a way of life. Indigenous people are tourist artifacts; consumption is a necessity; pollution can be exported. Here, domination of the earth is seen as God-given, that is, wholly natural and defensible.

To us, this kind of thinking is a form of pollution. We are contaminated, then, by American culture, by Japanese culture, by any culture which views destruction of the natural world as inevitable. In our historical past, first contact in the 18th century with Western contamination resulted in a population collapse of some 95%. Since then, our Native Hawaiian people have continued to decline every year. Like so many other indigenous peoples, we have never recovered from Western contamination. Perhaps there will come a time when this beautiful earth will have no Native people left to care for her, because we will all have succumbed to Western diseases, both biological and cultural.

To me, and to other Native people who believe as I do, the fate of the earth rests in the fate of the Native people. Because of our genealogy, that is, our familial relationship to the cosmos, the wisdom of our creation is reciprocal obligation. If we husband our lands and waters, they will feed and care for us. In our language, the name for the relationship is *malama 'aina* - care for the land who will care for all family members in turn.

This indigenous knowledge is not unique to Hawaiians, but is shared by most indigenous peoples throughout the world. The voices of Native peoples, much popularized in these frightening times, speak a different language than old world nationalism. Our claims to uniqueness, to cultural integrity, should not be misidentified. We are stewards of the earth, our mother, and we offer an ancient, umbilical wisdom about how to protect and ensure her life.

This lesson of our cultures has never been more crucial to global survival. In recent years, there has been much talk among those who care about the environment regarding the need for "biodiversity". To put my case in technological terms, *biodiversity is guaranteed through human diversity*. No-one knows how better to care for our island homes than those of us who have lived there for thousands of years. On the other side of the world from us, no people understand the desert better than those who have inhabited her since time immemorial. And so on, throughout the magnificently varied places of the earth. Forest people know the forest; mountain people know the mountains; plains people know the plains. This is an elemental wisdom that has nearly disappeared because of industrialization, greed and hatred of that which is wild and sensuous.

If this is our heritage, then the counter to environmental racism on an international level is not more uniformity, more conformity to the Western industrialized model. Indeed, it is the opposite. That is, more autonomy, more localized control of resources and the cultures they can maintain. Human diversity ensures biodiversity.

The survival of the earth depends on it.

Then I awoke and the sun was beginning to rise. I sat there for a long time until Delyse came in inquiring whether I wanted a cup of tea. She asked if I was all right, which I reassured her I was, but said, "I had this magnificent dream. Let me tell you about it."

We traveled to Kamloops to join the others who had been at other reservations. I said that I wanted to stop along the highway somewhere where I could pick some sage to take to the conference. The hum of the car soon put me to sleep. I was wakened by loud exclamations: "What's happening? Hinewirangi, this is the place we thought we would stop to pick sage, but something's happening."

We got out of the car and noticed people standing by a small fire truck. There was smoke rising from the hill and we saw it was burning. I had stepped onto the hill to get some sage when a fireman came up and said, "Be careful, that sage has ticks on it."

Sage burning and ticks on the sage. This couldn't be true.

I was glad to get to the conference site, where I bumped into Alvin.

"Hinewirangi, you're just the person I need to see. You have been in my thoughts and last night the Creator visited in a dream..."

"Yes, Alvin," I said, "let me tell you."

"Don't forget to make your dress, Hine."

Lighting candles a security risk in East Timor

by Danie Botha

Danie Botha is from Namibia. He recently participated in an international delegation that visited East Timor.

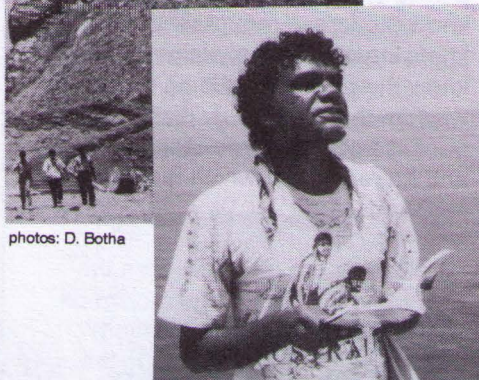
This year saw the fourth commemoration of the November 12, 1991, massacre of about 300 innocent civilians at the Santa Cruz cemetery in Dili, capital of Indonesian-occupied East Timor.

The Asia-Pacific Coalition for East Timor (APCET) organised an international peace pilgrimage to Dili to light candles and pray for the victims, the survivors, and above all for peace and freedom for East Timor. However, the Indonesian Government was not going to allow this to happen. Most of the pilgrims were prevented from entering East Timor including the group's leader, Japanese Catholic Bishop Aloisius Soma, European Parliamentarian Patricia McKenna, Irish Senator David Norris, Maori leader Naida Pau and New Zealand Anglican minister Reverend Ann Batten.

I was part of the group which managed to get into Dili on November 8. The city seemed deserted. When we came across locals, they generally seemed excited that there were foreigners on their island. Foreigners, we were later told, should witness what is being done and make it known in the outside world. One sixteen year old youth bicycled past us, stopped, ran up to me and with a quick handshake said, "Independence or death - Free East Timor". Eight year olds at a primary school waved and shouted "Viva Timor Leste!" We also noticed the large numbers of police and military around government buildings.

That evening, we had supper with some Timorese in a local restaurant which had more security and immigration people than foreigners at its tables. We later found out that after we left the staff were questioned extensively. With no public

transportation available, we walked back to our hotel along completely deserted streets. We were the only people outside. Several trucks and jeeps full of soldiers passed us and made clear why people remained inside. Back at our hotel we gathered on the beach - about 20 yards away - to discuss our program for the next day. Soon two vehicles stopped and about 15 soldiers dressed in full riot gear and armed with whips, batons and guns aggressively surrounded us demanding to know what we were doing outside. We were interrogated for some time and eventually ordered to go inside.



photos: D. Botha

Delegation participant from Australia witnesses for East Timor. Indonesian government statue of Christ high on the hill looks back to Dili, East Timor's capital and site of 1991 massacre.

The next morning at seven we were called to the lobby by immigration officers who warned us that we should not engage with local people "because we might stimulate them to show their feelings." Later the same morning we were told that Jakarta had ordered us to leave Timor. Three Filipinas (looking more like locals) managed to stay one day longer and light some candles in a local church.

We persuaded the immigration officials to take us to the massive statue of Christ before escorting us to the airport. It is an imposing Rio type Christ being built by the government on a hill overlooking Dili. It is standing on a globe with outstretched arms, praying for peace. In spite of its political connotations and because of our own situation, it seemed like an appropriate place to hold our ceremony. We lit candles and prayed for an end to the violence and repression in East Timor. Our only witnesses were the immigration officers and the builders of the Christ statue.

It was clear there is no peace in East Timor. We were told by locals of the terror waged by paramilitary units, especially directed at young people. Many have been beaten severely, for example on the kidneys, and some had sustained permanent injuries.

"They treat us like animals. But the more they beat us, the more our resolve grows to resist them."

At the Bali airport in Bali, those of us pilgrims who had managed to enter Indonesia lit candles from the ones brought out from East Timor and unfurled a banner depicting our commitment to support the people of East Timor in their struggle to be free. Each of us carries a candle which we will light again in solidarity actions all over the world.

In another message of solidarity, Bono and the Irish band **U2** sent the following words to the East Timorese:

*"There is no silence deep enough
no black-out dark enough
no corruption thick enough
no business deal big enough
no politicians bent enough
no heart hollow enough
no grave wide enough
to bury your story and keep it from us".*

Our challenge is to translate these words into concrete actions.

Nuke notes/continued from p.8

uprising and two days of riots that trashed the airport and saw widespread looting of mainly French owned stores. Estimates of damage exceeded \$15 million.

[From: Maclean's, Sep 18/95; Victoria Times-Colonist, Sep 9/95]

International Protest has Been Strong

The latest series of French and Chinese nuclear weapons tests has drawn an unprecedented level of international protest. A grassroots campaign has been significant in focusing attention on the issue and public boycotts in many countries have led to significant drops in consumption of French products. There has also been pressure from other governments and inter-governmental fora. The UN General Assembly voted 85 to 18 in early December for a resolution which "strongly deplores" the tests and "strongly urges" an end to all nuclear tests. In November, the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting issued a strong statement condemning nuclear testing; only the UK, which has supported French testing, refused to endorse the statement. Resolutions condemning the tests have also been passed at recent meetings of the 112-nation Non-Aligned Movement and the ASEAN Regional Forum of Asian governments. Noteworthy, given Japan's close nuclear cooperation with France (including sea shipments of plutonium that were the major Pacific nuclear issue until the resumption of French testing), there has been very strong condemnation from the Japanese government and non-governmental groups. Following the most recent test, a major Japanese business federation cancelled a planned visit to Paris. In France itself, public opinion polls show that 60 percent of French citizens oppose French nuclear testing in the Pacific. [From: Nuclear-Free Pacific Campaign Newsletter, No 2; Washington Pacific Report, Vol 14 No 5, Dec 1/95; Washington Pacific Report, Vol 14 No 6, Dec 15/95, Victoria Times-Colonist, Sep 10/95]]

Continued on p. 36/see Nuke notes

Beijing forum/continued from p.15

According to the organisers of the pavilion, the Once in Future Action Network based in Jamaica, linking formal and non-formal science and reclaiming women's traditional knowledge of resource management and conservation will help facilitate sustainable development which would improve the lives of women and their communities.

"We envision a future in which women are not merely the recipients of science and technology, but active participants in defining the direction of scientific research, in policy making and in the implementation of science and technology," the organisers said. "The pavilion

activities aim to demonstrate ways in which women have contributed to development through their work in formal as well as non-formal science and technology."

While in China, Mrs. Dakua took part in the protest march for a nuclear-free Pacific: "I was chosen to be the chanter and carry the banner as Fiji led the Pacific women in the protest."

She said she was thrilled that some Japanese and French women joined the protest. "We showed the world that Pacific women care about their environment and the future of their children."

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◆ At a time the United States has been rapidly withdrawing from the region, Jacques Chirac's decision to resume France's testing program has refocused Washington's attention on the islands. American officials are watching carefully to see if unrest continues in Tahiti and what effect that might have on the future of American territories, especially in light of massive financial cutbacks proposed by Congress.

◆ Although not the major outside player in the independent islands, what the United States will or won't do WILL have a major impact on those who are the major forces, including Australia, New Zealand, Japan and, increasingly, Taiwan and Canada.

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**Official Canadian Reaction:
Condemnation but No Action**

The Canadian Government greeted the resumption of French nuclear testing with a statement deploring the first test. At the same time, the government said it welcomed France's support for a test ban treaty. Reactions to subsequent tests have been muted and the government has ignored calls for stronger action such as a moratorium on uranium sales to France. In a move that shocked many, Canada withdrew its co-sponsorship of a UN resolution condemning nuclear testing, though it did vote for the resolution. The Government of Saskatchewan, Canada's uranium producing province, has remained silent and continued its close cooperation with the French nuclear programme. While writing to President Chirac to convey his Government's concern, British Columbia Premier Mike Harcourt refused a call for a BC boycott of French wines.

[From: correspondence; press release; Globe & Mail, Nov 7/95]

Canadian Protests

Despite evidence of widespread Canadian public opposition to nuclear testing, the response to French testing has been limited to small protests, outside the French embassy in Ottawa and consulates in other cities, and letter writing to the Canadian and French governments. Several groups, including Greenpeace and SPPF, have raised the issue through the media and educational events. A new coalition opposing French and Chinese tests, the Coalition Against Nuclear Testing (CANT), has been formed in Ottawa. In Vancouver, End the Arms Race has been active and in other cities local peace groups have taken up the issue. While some individuals have chosen to boycott French products, the level of activity happening in other countries has been noticeably lacking here. Wine retailers report no discernible impact on French wine sales despite calls for a boycott.

[From: unpublished reports; Maclean's, Oct 9/95]

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Adrian Raeside, reknown Canadian political cartoonist, made his statement against French testing. Now YOU CAN WEAR IT! Thank you, Mr. Raeside.



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