



News and Views  
on the Pacific Islands  
published by  
South Pacific Peoples Foundation

March/June 1995

Vol. 53, No. 1/2

# Tok Blonza Pasifik



**Fiji's Veterans of  
Nuclear Testing on Kiritimati**



# Contents

## THEME FEATURES

- 4 Fiji's Nuclear Veterans
- 11 Confronting Neo-Liberalism: The Peoples Coalition Government in Fiji
- 13 Solving the Hawaiian Labyrinth: Evidence Refutes Legality of US Takeover
- 17 Lomé What???: The Pacific Islands and the European Union
- 19 Reflections of a Travel Writer - Interview with David Stanley
- 22 Disability and Employment in Vanuatu
- 26 Reflections of a VSDP Field Worker
- 28 Fighting Violence Against Women: The Fiji Women's Crisis Centre
- 30 Direct Micro-Expelling of Coconut Oil
- 32 Canada Fund: Supporting Community Initiatives
- 36 Book Review: Pacific Women Speak Out
- 38 CSPOD Supports Gender Review
- 39 New Resources from the South Pacific Forum
- 40 Forum Secretariat Addresses Fisheries Development and Marketing

## COLUMNS & DEPARTMENTS

- 1 Tok Tok
- 2 PPP in Action - Tok Blong Pasifik Committee
- 3 PPP in Action - Indigenous Peoples Science Project
- 35 Resource Reviews
- 37 Window on the Arts by Paul Modde
- 42 Window on the Arts: Meet Ake Lianga



Recycled and chlorine free papers are used in the production of Tok Blong Pasifik

## ABOUT THE MAGAZINE

**Tok Blong Pasifik** is a phrase in Pidgin, a language used in parts of the Pacific. A rough equivalent would be "News from the Pacific". **Tok Blong Pasifik** (ISSN: 1196-8206) is published by the South Pacific Peoples Foundation of Canada (SPPF). Our aim is to promote awareness of development, social justice, environment and other issues of importance to Pacific Islanders. Through the magazine, we hope to provide readers with a window on the Pacific that will foster understanding and promote support for Pacific Island peoples. SPPF gratefully acknowledges support for this publication from the Canadian International Development Agency.

### For further information contact:

SPPF, 1921 Fernwood Road, Victoria  
British Columbia, V8T 2Y6, Canada  
TEL: (250) 381-4131 FAX: (250) 388-5258  
E-mail: sppf@sppf.org  
Website: www.sppf.org

GUEST EDITOR: Randall Garrison

TOK BLONG PASIFIK COMMITTEE: Alison Gardner,  
Elaine Monds, Linda Pennells, Marianne Scott,  
Arlene Wells

### LAYOUT & PRINTING:

Hillside Printing, Victoria, BC Canada  
www.hillside.bc.ca

Canadian Publications Mail Product Sales Agreement  
No. 0881058

## EDITORIAL POLICY

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

## SUBSCRIBE TODAY

Annual subscription rates for **Tok Blong Pasifik** are as follows:

CANADA	Student	\$15
	Individual	\$25
	Organisation	\$40
PACIFIC ISLANDS	Individual	US\$10
	Organisation	US\$15
OTHER	Student	US\$15
	Individual	US\$25
	Organisation	US\$40

Out of Canada subscribers please remit funds in cheques drawn on a US bank or international bank draft only.



# Tok Tok

## THE NUCLEAR LEGACY

Despite the triumphalism of the United States, I would argue that it may be too soon to judge who "won" the cold war. From our armchair perspective only a decade after the break up of the Soviet Union, there is the danger that we may confuse "collapsed later" with "won the cold war." Certainly the drain of the cold war was a factor in undermining the economy of the Soviet Union, but the long-term impacts of militarism on the US are not yet known. During the cold war the siege mentality on both sides weighed heavily against progressive change, against any move toward democracy in communist states and against any move toward socialism in the "free" world.

The cold war kept both sides to their own narrow paths. The US supported brutal dictatorships to avoid "loss" of territory to communism. The Soviet Union invaded neighbours like Czechoslovakia to save them from western decadence. And in one of the most perverse and ongoing outcomes, the US has applied its full weight to the attempt to strangle the Cuban revolution, merely for demonstrating a more just and humane model for development in Latin America.

Looking backward we tend to view the cold war as a "virtual" conflict, a perspective that invites us to ignore its many real casualties. For the cold war was all too hot in the many conflicts where the tensions between the superpowers were played out in armed combat, in Vietnam, Cambodia, Korea, Mozambique, Angola, Nicaragua, and El Salvador to name only a few. We ignore the mountains of resources wasted in the arms race, while hunger and disease flourished.

By this point you may well be asking yourself, what has all this got to do with the Pacific? Yet our cover story reminds us of what indeed may be some of the most tragic legacies of the cold war, the damage inflicted on the Pacific Islands by militarism and nuclear testing. Readers of *Tok Blong Pasifik* will be all too familiar with the story of the direct effects of testing on health of Pacific Islanders, from birth defects and thyroid

cancer in the Marshall Islands to high rates of cancer and ciguatera fish poisoning in Te Ao Maohi (French Polynesia). In the Marshalls some atolls were wiped off the face of the earth and others will remain too hot to be resettled for all time, if time is measured on a human scale. And we had all better hope that the pessimists are wrong about the potential damage to the Pacific Ocean of the leaking French nuclear test site at Mururoa.

Even if we choose to ignore the direct effects of nuclear testing in the Pacific, the indirect effects still stare us in the face. Both France and the United States have worked to deny real independence to their Pacific territories, in order to preserve their own military options. In Micronesia, with the Compacts of "Free" Association the US has offered a future of welfare dependency in return for ongoing military access, including the right to conduct missile tests using Kwajalein as a target. In Te Ao Maohi, France has created a false economy built on military spending and subsidy and worked to replace Polynesian culture and language with French.

We all owe a debt of gratitude to local organisations who have struggled to ensure that we do not forget the nuclear legacy and that justice be done. That is the real significance of the Pacific Concerns Resource Centre's project documenting the experiences of Fiji's nuclear veterans. In Te Ao Maohi, the local NGO coalition Hiti Tau has worked to break the wall of silence imposed by France on the health impacts on testing and, specifically, on the fate of workers at the site. Even more valiantly Hiti Tau is working to build alternatives to the false economy and culture imposed on "French" Polynesia.

Of course there is much more than just the nuclear story in this double issue. Much of it is devoted to efforts of local organisations to make real improvements in daily life for Pacific Islanders. The Vanuatu Society for Disabled People and the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre still struggle on a daily basis without adequate resources. And from Fiji we bring the story of the new coalition government and its attempt to chart a different path for Fiji.

It has been a pleasure to be working on Tok Blong Pasifik again more than seven years after my stint as editor. Things have changed to be sure, but not all that much. Despite technological change Tok Blong Pasifik remains a collaborative effort, one involving volunteer writers, production volunteers and this time a volunteer editor. Occasionally this process breaks down and in this case that has meant a considerable delay in getting this issue out. For that we do apologize, but I think you will still find the articles as timely as ever.

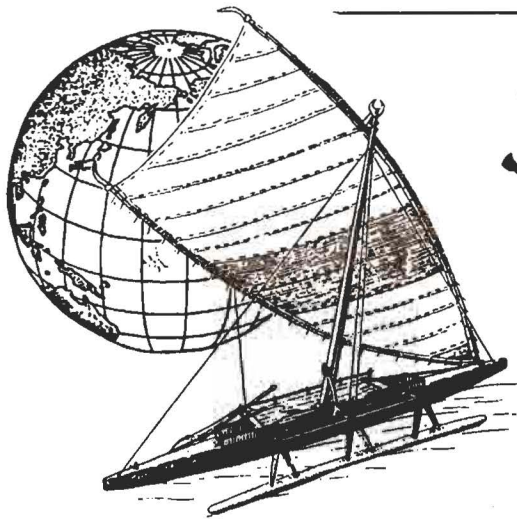
Randall Garrison  
Instructor, Pacific Rim Studies  
Camosun College, Victoria, B.C.



Photo: Loata Masi

Fiji's Nuclear Veterans





# SPPF in action

**T**ok Blong Pasifik is a product of the collective work of many people. Of course, it is our contributors of articles, photos, and illustrations who convey messages about Pacific issues so eloquently. And it is the editor, Stuart Wulff, who does the lion's share of what needs to be done. I want to introduce you to another group of people who share in creating the Tok Blong Pasifik vision and, through hard work behind the scenes, help to transform that vision into reality - the members of SPPF's magazine committee. They were listed for the first time in the March-June 1998 issue of Tok Blong Pasifik.

The Tok Blong Pasifik Committee meets several times annually for discussion and recommendations about issues such as magazine themes, editorial policy, marketing, production and distribution. Its members bring a richness of talent and experience, both to these discussions and to their voluntary contributions to production tasks.



voluntary contributions to production tasks.

Rachel Bourne is SPPF Board Secretary and has been a volunteer here for several years. Her Maori

heritage, a BA in Pacific and Asian Studies and travel in the South Pacific have contributed to her interest in development and cross-cultural issues. She is Administrative Coordinator to the British Columbia Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks. She is the Magazine Committee Recorder and Board Liaison.

Sarah Cox is a Victoria freelance journalist with a focus on globalisation and justice issues. In particular, she has researched and written about Indonesian sweatshops. Writing and editing are the skills she contributes to Tok Blong Pasifik.

Alison Gardner, a full time writer and magazine editor, served on the SPPF Board for several years and is a longtime Tok Blong Pasifik Committee member. As a freelance travel journalist, she has visited Fiji, Aboriginal Australia, and Aotearoa New Zealand. Alison has written several articles for Tok Blong Pasifik. As well, she frequently contributes proofing and editorial expertise.

Elaine Monds, a director of the Alcheringa Gallery in Victoria which features exhibits of Aboriginal art of the North Pacific, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, and Australia, has a great love for Indigenous art. She was born in Australia and often travels to the Pacific to meet artists and bring back their work. As SPPF Board Vice President, Elaine co-chairs the Tok Blong Pasifik Committee and provides Board liaison. Her business and publication experience inform magazine production decisions.

Linda Pennells is a consultant in gender and development communications. In her words, "The women of Papua New Guinea have taught me so much about courage and the cost of human rights. When it looked like my Simbu friend, Margaret, was going to be elected to Parliament, opponents riddled her home with gunfire. One-third of the women who participated in a meeting I co-facilitated said they risked being beaten by their husbands when they returned home. *Tok Blong Pasifik* is one of my links to these and many other women" Linda worked with the PNG government and NGO women's networks for three years and has done participatory evaluation in Vanuatu. This former SPPF Board member now sits on the Gender and Development Committee. She has written and edited reviews and articles for Tok Blong Pasifik.

Dr. Marianne Scott, who has a writing and consulting company in Victoria, is a natural researcher with an intense curiosity about the world and all that is in it. Her interest in the Pacific Islands region began when she spent half a year in French Polynesia. She provides editorial services for the magazine.

*cont'd on page 3*





Photo: Chris Bradley

*Crafts produced from water hyacinth fibre by SPPF supported Ecowoman project.*

*cont'd from page 2*

Karen Weggler, who discovered a love for the Pacific Islands through travel and work with Indigenous organisations, shares Islanders' concerns about intellectual property, environment, and social justice. She brings knowledge of media arts, artists' coalitions and oral traditions. While Subscription and Advertising Manager for Tok Blong Pasifik in 1997, Karen launched SPPF's web page and internet presentation of the magazine. She now contributes creative graphics and layout as well as occasional editing and writing.

I am Arlene Wells, Assistant Editor and Tok Blong Pasifik Committee co-chair. I am a community development facilitator with the Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria as well as an independent researcher, writer and educator. Past work with women survivors of violence informs my ongoing commitment to justice and equality for women. I was employed by SPPF in 1997, and currently also volunteer on the Gender and Development Committee. I have been involved in all aspects of production, from writing to editing to mailing.

Stuart and I thank these women for helping to make Tok Blong Pasifik a quality publication.

Arlene Wells,  
Committee Co-Chairperson

## Indigenous Sciences Project

### *Building Bridges Across the Pacific Ocean*

SPPF has launched a three-year project concerning Indigenous Peoples in Canada and the Pacific Islands. It is anticipated that the people involved will gain a deeper awareness of the similar issues that Indigenous people are faced with regarding the use of natural resources found within their traditional territories. The theme of the project is Indigenous science (e.g. traditional resource use, traditional medicine, traditional environmental knowledge and resource management) and what it can contribute to sustainable development for Indigenous peoples and the broader global community. Another key component of the project focuses on the role of women in sustaining and practising Indigenous science.

Troy Hunter, a member of the Ktunaxa nation from southeast British Columbia has been hired by SPPF as the Indigenous Sciences Project Coordinator. He will be working with an Indigenous elder from Vancouver Island, as well as members of WAINIMATE in Fiji. In August, Both Troy and the Vancouver Island elder will travel to Fiji and Vanuatu. While in Fiji, they will meet and be hosted with members of WAINIMATE and when in Vanuatu, they will be at the Vanuatu Cultural Centre to attend the Pacific Islands Museum Association annual conference. In September, two members of WAINIMATE will tour in Canada for meetings with several Indigenous communities.

The purpose of the meetings is to link up Indigenous Peoples within the Pacific and Canada to explore areas where they can learn from each other. Both are struggling to assert their rights and improve the welfare of their communities. Both are concerned about the erosion and theft of their traditional knowledge. Both feel that Indigenous science has much to offer in supporting sustainable development for their people and both are seeking the right balance between traditional and introduced approaches to development for their peoples.

Women have always played a central role in both Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities in conserving and practising traditional knowledge. The need to recognise and respect the importance of women in Indigenous science and what it can offer to sustainable development is a key theme within the project. The choice of WAINIMATE and the Vanuatu Cultural Centre is no accident in this respect. WAINIMATE is a women focused organization and one component of the Vanuatu Cultural Centre is to look at the role of Indigenous women vis a vis marine science and resource management.

The South Pacific Peoples Foundation gratefully acknowledges the financial support for this project given by the Canadian International Development Agency, the Anglican Church of Canada, and the United Church of Canada.



# KIRISIMASI

## Fijian troops at Britain's Christmas Island nuclear tests

*by Pacific Concerns Resource Centre (PCRC).*

Together with British and New Zealand military personnel, nearly 300 Fijian soldiers and sailors travelled to the central Pacific for Britain's nuclear testing program in 1957-58. These Fijians were witnesses to the development of Britain's hydrogen bomb at Malden Island and Christmas (Kiritimati) Island. Forty years on, many of these Fijian veterans are suffering health problems that they attribute to exposure to radiation from Britain's nuclear tests.

On 23 June, Fiji's Minister for Home Affairs Joji Uluinakauvadra launched a new book "Kirisimasi", which tells the story of Fiji's nuclear veterans. The book, published in English and Fijian is edited by Losena Tubanavau-Salabula, Josua Namoce and Nic Maclellan, and published by the Pacific Concerns Resource Centre (PCRC) in Suva Fiji.

The health and environmental impacts of nuclear tests are one of the lasting legacies of colonialism in the Pacific. At the time of the tests, Christmas Island was part of the British colony of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands - today, as Kiritimati Island, it is part of the independent nation of the Republic of Kiribati. In the 1950s, the nation of Fiji was also under British administration (British colonial rule in Fiji only ended at Independence in 1970).

In the 1950s, the British government followed the United States and the Soviet Union in the development of atomic and hydrogen bombs. Britain needed an area with little population to test their nuclear weapons,

and searched the map for an isolated outpost of the British empire. Fearful of public reaction, planning was conducted in secret for the British testing program in Australia (from 1952-7) and the Pacific islands (1957-8).

In Australia, Britain conducted thirteen atom bomb tests in the atmosphere at Maralinga and Emu Field in the deserts of South Australia, and at the Monte Bello Islands off the coast of Western Australia. The indigenous Aboriginal people, on whose land the bombs were tested, suffered the disruption of their livelihood and health.

The British Cabinet Defence Committee secretly decided to construct a hydrogen bomb at its meeting on 16 June 1954. The agreement with the Australian government stated that hydrogen bomb trials could not be conducted in Australia for "safety reasons", so the British government was forced to seek a new testing site. Britain had to rush to establish testing facilities in the Pacific. The United States and Soviet Union were moving towards a treaty banning atmospheric tests, following widespread international protest over the dangers of radioactive fallout after the March 1954 US nuclear test at Bikini Atoll, codenamed Bravo.

Britain downplayed possible health and environmental impacts of the tests, especially for indigenous people living near the test sites, and on the civilian and service personnel who helped establish and staff the bases.

Official British documents from 1956, trying to define the danger area around the test site, noted that "independent authorities agree that ... only very slight health hazard to people would arise, and then only to primitive peoples". Safe levels of radiation exposure were calculated at different levels for British troops and people on the neighbouring islands in Kiribati and the Cook Islands. Classified British reports from 1956 note: "For civilised populations, assumed to wear boots and clothing and to wash, the amount of activity necessary to produce this dosage is more than is necessary to give an equivalent dosage to primitive peoples who are assumed not to possess these habits"!

*cont'd on page 5*



THE MAIN CAMP, CHRISTMAS ISLAND, PACIFIC



*cont'd from page 4*

By the end of 1956, tens of thousands of tons of equipment had been brought from England to establish the military base on Christmas Island, and two thousand soldiers, sailors and civilian scientists were living under canvas on the island. A forward base and airstrip was established on Malden Island, located 600 kilometres from the Christmas Island base.

In May and June 1957, Britain conducted three nuclear tests near Malden Island. These tests were code-named Grapple 1 (Short Granite), Grapple 2 (Orange Herald), and Grapple 3 (Purple Granite). The nuclear devices were detonated high over the ocean after being dropped from a Valiant bomber – by exploding the bomb in the air rather than on land, it was designed to reduce radioactive fallout.

The tests at Malden Island were monitored by a British naval task force and aircraft flown from Christmas Island. The light aircraft carrier HMS Warrior was the command vessel, supported by British warships and two New Zealand frigates, HMNZS Pukaki and HMNZS Rotoiti.

Thirty nine sailors of the Fiji Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve (FRNVR) were sent to the central Pacific for four months between March and July 1957 as part of this operation. On arrival at Christmas Island, the Fijian sailors were transferred from the New Zealand frigates to HMS Warrior for the Malden Island nuclear tests in May and June 1957. The sailors lined the decks of the Warrior to witness the tests off Malden Island. The FRNVR sailors were visited by a group of dignitaries from Fiji for the second test on 31 May 1957, including Ratu Penaia Ganilau, one of Fiji's highest chiefs who was later knighted and served as Governor General and President of Fiji.

Official statements issued in London after the tests argued that there had been no radioactive fallout. But the nuclear tests near Malden Island in 1957 were massive explosions, and Malden was contaminated by radiation. After observing the second Grapple test, Ratu Penaia Ganilau went onto the island. His feet were then washed down after exposure to radiation during their visit. (Ratu Sir Penaia died of leukemia in 1993 after a long illness).

With the Malden Island tests, the British government stated that it had achieved a thermonuclear explosion in the megaton range. Privately however, scientists calculated that the blasts were only 0.2 to 0.7 megatons, and further tests were needed. The British government decided to conduct further tests in a hurry.

Rather than send a naval task force and thousands of men back to Malden Island – hundreds of kilometres from the base of operations – it was decided to test at Christmas Island. This decision reduced the enormous logistic problems of conducting the tests so far away from the main base, saving over two million pounds. But it brought the tests to the doorstep of the island where British and Fijian personnel were stationed.

From August 1957, there was a major build-up of the Christmas Island base. Soldiers from the Royal Fiji Military Force (RFMF) took part in this build-up, under British military command. Fijian soldiers worked as engineers, labourers on construction sites, and as stevedores for the loading and unloading of ships. Some forty Fijian navy personnel also served ashore in 1957 and 1958 in various capacities. The Fijian troops were paid less than their British counterparts, and unlike the UK troops they were forbidden to buy beer from the mess.

Between November 1957 and September 1958, a further six nuclear tests were conducted at Christmas Island. The first test on Christmas Island, codenamed "Grapple X", was held on 8 November 1957. A second test, "Grapple Y", was held on 28 April 1958. These were followed by four "Grapple Z" tests in August and September 1958. Two of the Grapple Z tests were of smaller atomic weapons, which were tethered from balloons 450 metres in the air and exploded over the south-east corner of the island. The two larger Grapple Z tests were hydrogen bombs exploded over the ocean at a distance to the south of Christmas Island.

During the Christmas Island tests, service personnel were ordered to line up in the open, to face away from the explosions, and remain with their backs turned with eyes closed for twenty seconds after the explosion. At sea, crews lined the decks of the naval task force. On land, soldiers and civilian personnel were

*cont'd on page 6*

*Photo: Loutia Masi*





*cont'd from page 5*

grouped on the beaches at various points of the island only 25 miles from the centre of the blast. The local Gilbertese population - mainly plantation workers - were taken offshore during the tests, and housed aboard British naval vessels to avoid the blast.

The British government argues that the veterans were far enough away from the centre of the detonation to avoid being exposed to harmful levels of radiation. British and Fijian nuclear veterans dispute this, and some argue that they served as guinea pigs.

Well before the series of Grapple tests, members of the British military bureaucracy clearly saw that personnel could be exposed to radiation as part of the nuclear test program. Documentary evidence from the British archives shows that one of the purposes of the tests was to study the effects of nuclear detonations "on personnel and equipment". Defence committee memos from 1953 state that: "The Army must discover the detailed effects of various types of explosion on equipment, stores and men, with and without various types of protection".

Radiation dose levels for service personnel on Christmas Island were not systematically monitored. (A

1958 memo from Air Commodore WR Staum states: "if a person was examined and found to be normal before posting to Christmas Island and who later developed leukemia, it might be difficult to refute the allegation that this was due to radiation received at Christmas Island"). Limited protective gear was issued to some troops for the early tests (such as white cotton suits to reduce the risk of flash burns). Most veterans testify, however, that they never received such gear, and served their term wearing standard army boots, shorts and shirts. Most testify that they were given no medical check-ups on their return from Christmas Island.

In October 1957, after the Maralinga tests, five Canberra aircraft of the 76 squadron had flown across the Pacific to Christmas Island for the next series of tests. En route, they landed at Nadi Airport in Fiji for maintenance and refuelling. Although they had been cleaned on the outside, their engines were still coated with radioactive material. An October 1957 memo from the RAF nuclear Task Force Commander in Australia notes: "The fact that an engine may be 'hot' should be concealed from the Nandi authorities unless they ask."

Other Fijian personnel argue that they were exposed to radiation hazards. After each test on Christmas

*cont'd on page 7*

## **PCRC's Christmas Island project**

**W**ith the last nuclear test at Moruroa atoll in January 1996, it seemed that the age of nuclear testing in the Pacific was over. But "Kirisimasi" shows that the effects of nuclear testing last for decades, especially in the health of people affected by fallout from nuclear tests in the atmosphere. The Pacific Concerns Resource Centre (PCRC) in Suva, Fiji has raised awareness about the effects of nuclear testing for people affected by US tests in the Marshall Islands and French tests at Moruroa and Fangataufa.

PCRC began gathering information in 1996 about the British tests at Christmas Island and Malden Island, in response to requests from Fiji veterans seeking compensation from the British government. After PCRC's lobbying, Fijian soldiers and sailors who served at Christmas Island can now have medical tests at the Fiji military hospital in Suva.

PCRC supported a court case in 1997 by British Christmas Island veterans, who are seeking compensation and damages for health problems they face after service on Christmas Island. PCRC researched the health of a number of Fijians who had participated in the Christmas Island tests, including the late Ratu Sir Penaia Ganilau. In 1997, material on six Fijian veterans was submitted before the European Court of Human Rights. The cases brought by British veterans were initially lost 5-4 on technical grounds, but the verdict is currently under appeal.

In April 1999, the SVT Government under former Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka agreed to amend legislation so that for the first time Fiji's Christmas Island veterans can come under the provisions of the Fiji Service's After Care Fund and Pensions Act. The Cabinet also gave the mandate to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade to establish dialogue with the British Government on the issue of compensation for Fiji's Christmas Island veterans.

With support from PCRC, a Fijian veteran has also submitted a court case for compensation before the European Court of Human Rights. This case will be heard later in 1999. The book "Kirisimasi" is published by PCRC to support these efforts, and to record this important piece of Fijian history.



*cont'd from page 6*

Island, soldiers were involved in clean-up operations, including disposing of thousands of birds that were maimed, blinded or killed by the nuclear explosions. Many Fijian soldiers were involved in these clean-up operations. In his testimony, navy veteran Paul Ahpoy also describes dumping drums of nuclear waste into the ocean from his small boat (see box).

Another area of concern is the effects of the second test at Christmas Island on 28 April 1958. This test, codenamed "Grapple Y", was a massive explosion estimated at 2.8 megatons. Many reports suggest that the explosion was lower than expected, and the detonation sucked up quantities of water and debris into the mushroom cloud, irradiating them in the process. Irradiated water and debris then fell to ground, contaminating an area estimated at 50 to 100 miles. Some veterans have also expressed concern over the possible radioactive contamination of freshwater supplies and fish.

Today, the Fijian Christmas Island veterans report a range of medical complaints. Many attribute these problems to their service at Christmas Island. The failure of the British government to conduct medical studies before and after the tests reinforces the difficulty of documenting the changes in the Fijian veterans' health. (One veteran Emori Ligica notes: "We were all medically examined and were healthy when we left for Christmas Island. When we returned we were never medically checked.") But the Pacific Concerns Resource Centre (PCRC) in Fiji has collated evidence that shows many Fijian Christmas Island veterans are affected by serious illness that can be related to radiation exposure.

There is evidence that the experience of the Fiji Christmas Island veterans parallels that of the British and New Zealand veterans, and that there are serious health problems facing some veterans and their families. The book *Kirisimasi* documents examples of veterans suffering from illnesses such as chronic myeloid leukemia, aplastic anaemia and leucopenia. The book also contains testimony from widows of Christmas Island veterans, who recount problems for the family members of the veterans (including cases of multiple miscarriages, sterility, and disability in children)

The veterans' struggle for recognition and compensation continues - as summed up by one of the veterans when he said: "We should be remembered because we took Fiji's name there. We did not go of our own free will. We went as Fijian soldiers... We should be remembered."



**Edited extracts from the testimony of Fijian veterans, published in the book "Kirisimasi"**

**Paul AHPOY – FRNRV 1140**

**I**n July 1957 as a member of the Fiji Navy, I travelled to Christmas Island. I was posted with three other ratings to the Landing Craft Squadron of the Royal Marines, to man a lighter engaged in ferrying cargoes from ships to the port where they were unloaded by soldiers or civilian labourers.

During my first six months on the island, I witnessed three hydrogen bomb tests. I came back home on rest and recreation leave in January 1958. Later, I was promoted to Leading Mechanic Engineer and posted back to the lighter Prowler as its coxswain. I witnessed another four bomb tests during my last six months of service on the island.

I remembered vividly the month of April 1958. We were told that the next test would be the last of the dirty bombs and it was going to be a really big one. Oh boy, it really looked dirty with its big black mushroom cloud before it turned white.

On a normal test day, weather permitting, all civilians would be loaded on a Landing Craft Mechanised (LCM) and transported to a Landing Ship Tank (LST) anchored off the island. They would remain there and watch movies until the test was completed.

With us service men it was a different story. We would all get up at 4 am, have breakfast and move to the assembly area by 5.30. In our case, we would all board about eight LCM with its motor running - fifty men to a LCM. The loudspeakers in the port area would be issuing orders. We could hear the Valiant bomber jet engines being warmed up at the airfield.

We would then be ordered to disembark once the white painted Valiants were in the air. We would then assemble on the beach in lines of three, all 400 personnel of the Port Camp. At about 7am we could clearly see two bombers in the sky about 10 miles away.

- 0700 Music has stopped, all sit down and face west opposite the test area.
- 0745 Remove all eyeglasses and press palm of hand to both eyes.
- 0800 Bomb gone. Immediately I could see the flash of white light through my closed eyelids and the palms of my hands and the searing heat though my shirt on my back to the inside of my bones.

*cont'd on page 8*



cont'd from page 7

I started squirming. The speakers ordered to keep still. "You may release your palms, open your eyes but don't turn back". Get ready for the shock waves and after shocks. A big one first which lifted sand and stones into the air. Then the after shock came. The sand and stones moved around.

0805 Stand up and turn around. First thing I saw was a big new sun. Then slowly it turned into a giant ice cream cone with white cream dripping over its side. Then into a giant mushroom cloud. Then two Canberra fighters would fly and scoop samples from the side of the mushroom and then keep on flying all the way to the UK to deliver the test samples within 24 hours. They were refuelled in the air by airborne tankers.

0900 The sun would disappear, strong winds would start to blow and we would be ordered to take cover in our tents, where we would shelter from the rains that followed. Sometimes it would rain for only a few days. Once it did for two weeks.

One clear sunny day there wasn't much traffic in the port area. A huge truck arrived alongside our vessel. The normal stevedores did not load the special cargo into the *Prowler*, our lighter. Some Air Force personnel did the loading supervised by a Royal Navy Sub-Lieutenant. My three crew and I gave a hand and I happened to sit on one of the 44-gallon drums after all the sixty drums were loaded. All of a sudden a Marine

Sergeant came and pushed me off the drum and we both fell down on the deck. I thought he was only playing.

As we got up, he took me to one side and told me: "Do you know what's your cargo son?" I answered: "No Sarg". He told me: "Since you are the Skipper of this tub, I'll let you in on what you are about to do. Don't ever sit or touch those drums, they contain nuclear waste. You will take it out to sea and dump them over the sides when we were about five miles west of the island."

The Navy Officer came to me and said: "What say Cox'n, are we far enough?" I answered that we were beyond the four miles limit and it's time we head for home. He said: "Right ho, boys!" The RAF boys and our crew started rolling the drums over the side and we returned to port.

About a month later I returned home. In 1960 some tufts of my hair and fingernails began to fall off. My gums started bleeding and teeth got loose. I suffered from migraine headaches until I was about 35. One of my knee joints would just swell up whenever I bump something. Only my right wrist is troubling me up to this day. I have to wear dark glasses most of the time. A doctor in the USA removed 59 round growths from under my skin all over my body.

## Vilame CAGILABA - FRNRV 1189

I entered the Fiji Naval Volunteer Reserve in 1956. I was to go on training for three months on the frigate *HMNZS Rotoiti*.

I did not know that this trip to Christmas Island was to do with the testing of the hydrogen bombs. When we went there, all we knew was that it was for naval training. We got to like this training trip very much because we saw and experienced new things. However when we reached Christmas Island, we came to hear of a different story altogether. We were taken there just for the testing of the hydrogen bomb.

We reached Christmas Island and were transferred on a big British aircraft carrier, the *HMS Warrior*. We stayed on the aircraft carrier and underwent training. We were also lectured on the hydrogen bomb and how dangerous it was to human life. We then realized there the dangers that we were facing.

Photo: Cagimude Lewen.louo



RFMF in cotton overalls

cont'd on page 9



*cont'd from page 8*

While I was there, we saw three bombs. The first one was dropped on Malden Island at the south of the equator (Christmas Island was north of the equator). We sailed towards Malden Island about 160 miles from Christmas Island where this bomb was to be dropped. When the day of the test came, no one knew beforehand. The daily routine orders came and "Today is D-Day" was written on it. That meant the bomb was to explode on that day. Then they gave us overalls, head covers, gloves, everything including goggles. Not any part of your body was to be exposed. The goggles were so weak because we could see the sun with them. It was like looking at the moon at night.

Three planes brought in the bomb, coming all the way from Christmas Island. They circled the target area where the bomb was to be dropped three times. On the third run we were told to sit with our backs to the area where the bomb was to be dropped.

We were all dressed up and ready. No part of your body was to be seen or any clothing to be torn, because you might burn your skin from the heat of the bomb. You wore the goggles because of the light given off by the bomb. We then sat down with our backs towards the target area. We were also facing the wind. We then sat, and they called out for us to shut our eyes. We then pressed the palms of our hands against our closed eyes. You should not open your eyes or see any bit of light.

When the bomb dropped, it was being dropped behind us. It took about one minute for the bomb to drop from the sky and reach ground level. Then just before it blew, they called out 10,9,8,7,6,5,4,3,2,1. They called out "The bomb has exploded!" At that instant we were not able to hear anything. We only felt the heat brush past our backs.

So in 1957 I witnessed three explosions. Since Britain used people this way when their lives were at risk, it should give compensation for the damage done to the soldiers and servicemen. It was a time of colonial rule with Fiji under British protection. The British government should provide monetary compensation to all servicemen who served on Christmas Island during the hydrogen bomb tests.

When we returned in 1957 something always happened to me. Headaches became a normal thing for me. When I had these headaches, I was not able to look at the light. I also could not stand the heat. The headaches would go on for weeks. From 1957 until 1984, I suffered from this illness. I also suffered dental problems. My teeth kept falling out. My gums never bled. Sometimes while moving my tongue around my mouth one tooth would fall out with no bleeding at all. The remaining teeth were then pulled out. I now wear a full set of false teeth. I also would suffer body aches.



*Photo: Loda Masi*

*Inspection photo*



# Confronting Neoliberalism: The Peoples Coalition Government in Fiji

*Satendra Prasad*

Fiji's historic 1999 general elections completes the process of the review of the 1990 Constitution in Fiji that commenced in 1994.

It brought into power a new Peoples Coalition Government headed by Prime Minister Mahendra Chaudhary of the Fiji Labour Party (FLP). The new government came into power on a wave of popular discontent with structural adjustment reforms, disillusionment with the previous regime's commitment to economic restructuring and an expressed desire to move away from the politics of race.

## **The military coups and structural adjustment**

The military coups of 1987 removed from power a coalition government that was led by the Fiji Labour Party. Internationally, the FLP's support for socialising sectors of the economy such as mining, its strong support to the anti-nuclear and colonial movements had sent some alarm bells ringing. Domestically the FLP had derived its support from the working classes of Fiji. Numerically, people of Indian origin had dominated waged employment in Fiji until very recently. Indigenous Fijians had been more intensely concentrated in agricultural and subsistence sectors of the economy.

During the period 1987 to 1999, the Fijian economy stagnated, inward investment shrank, the country lost thousands of its skilled and professional workers through migration, and the public services declined both as a consequence of racist employment practices and little investment.

A direct consequence of the coups was the adoption of harsh structural adjustment measures which were promoted by the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and the IMF. These measures promoted devaluation, privatization, deregulation of industry and labour markets, implementation of a range of reforms in the public sector designed to improve cost recovery.

Associated with the structural adjustment programmes throughout the 1990's was the import of a large number of development aid agency supported consultants into the public services. These consultants drove the restructuring programmes.

Development aid, especially from the New Zealand and Australian governments, became more focussed on driving forward economic and public sector reforms that were part of the overall structural adjustment programmes. Critics of these interventions, including the Fiji Labour Party and the Fiji Trades Union Congress, argued that the Rabuka led SVT government had lost political control over economic policy by the mid 1990s.

The 1990 Constitution, which arose out of the military coups of 1987, entrenched indigenous Fijian dominance of the parliament, reserved key public offices for indigenous Fijians and was

recognized as being overtly racist. Under this constitution it had become next to impossible to unseat the SVT government. This government had relied solely upon the support of indigenous Fijians, who comprise slightly more than 50 percent of the whole population, to remain in power.

## **1997 Constitution and emergence of multiracial government**

In 1995, Fiji began the difficult task of reviewing the 1990 constitution. A three member commission, headed by the former Governor General of New Zealand Sir Paul Reeves, received submissions from citizens, political parties, NGOs and invited expert opinion on a range of matters. Its report became the basis for discussion by a joint parliamentary subcommittee aimed at developing a consensus for a new constitution.

The new constitution that was accepted unanimously by Fiji's parliament has as its key feature a compact that obligates the government to promote consensus between the communities, and maintain as a protective principle the rights of the indigenous community. But it also introduced a less race based system of voting. This, together with the constitutional provision for multiethnic government forms the backdrop to the defeat of the SVT Government in the May polls.

These general elections are exceptionally significant in several ways. These were the first elections held under the 1997 constitution, which itself was a product of negotiation and compromise between the main political groupings. This contrasted with the 1990 constitution, which was imposed by a military backed regime. Secondly, it removed from power a government that had firmly supported a neoliberal reform programme. Thirdly, the elections were the first in Fiji's history which resulted in its citizens of Indian origin being able to fully participate in government.

It led to the first real multiparty government. The new cabinet is comprised of 11 indigenous Fijians and 11 members from the Indo-Fijian and other communities. This contrasted with the governments that were formed after the 1992 and 1994 elections, which had no members from the Indo-Fijian population.

## **Background and outcomes of the May general elections**

A key feature of the electoral arrangements that were adopted by Fiji was the introduction of the "alternative voting system" (AV). This system was adopted to overcome the excessive communal orientation of elections. It gave incentives to parties to seek votes of other communities, and it thereby helped promote both the consolidation of multi-racial parties and cooperation between racially based parties.

The main parties that contested the 1999 general elections were:

*cont'd on page 12*



## New book on Pacific nuclear tests!

# KIRISIMASI:

Na Sotia kei na Lewe ni Mataivalu e Wai ni Viti  
e na vakatovotovo iyaragi nei Peritania mai Kirisimasi

Fijian troops at Britain's Christmas Island  
nuclear tests

In 1957-8, Britain conducted nine atmospheric nuclear tests at Christmas Island and Malden Island in the central Pacific. Together with British and New Zealand troops, nearly 300 Fijian soldiers and sailors witnessed the development of Britain's hydrogen bomb. This book, published in English and Fijian, is the story of Fiji's Christmas Island veterans in their own words. It tells the history of Fijians at Christmas Island and documents the lasting health and environmental effects of Britain's nuclear testing in the Pacific.

edited by Losena Tubanavau-Salabula, Josua Namoce  
and Nic Maclellan.

(202 pages, with photos and maps, in Fijian and English)  
ISBN 982-9018-01-6

Published by Pacific Concerns Resource Centre (PCRC)

Order your copy now from PCRC for US\$10  
(includes postage)

Pacific Concerns Resource Centre  
83 Amy Street, Toorak  
Private Mail Bag  
SUVA, FIJI  
or fax (679) 304755



Photos: Nancy Atkin

Co-authors of *Kirisimasi* (from left: Losena Tubanavau-Salabula, Nic Maclellan and Josua Namoce)



Photos: Nancy Atkin

Fiji's Home Affairs Minister Joji Uluinakauvadra at the *Kirisimasi* book launch on 23 June, with PCRC Director Lopeti Senituli



1. The **Sososoqo Ni Vakavulewa Ni Taukei** (SVT)- the dominant indigenous Fijian political party to emerge after the coups of 1987.
- 2 The **National Federation Party** (NFP)- the principal opposition party since independence in 1970, deriving its support largely from the Indo-Fijian community.
- 3 The **Fijian Association Party** (FAP)- a parliamentary break-away from the ruling SVT party promoting more progressive social and economic policies.
4. The **Fiji Labour Party** (FLP)- set up in 1985 with the support of the Fiji Trades Union Congress and coalition partner in the deposed 1987 government. The only political party that maintained some semblance of multiracialism after 1987.
5. The **Veitokani Ni Lewenivanua Vakaristo** (VLV)- an exclusively indigenous Fijian party which emerged during the lead-up the 1999 general elections.
6. The **Party of National Unity** (PANU)- also emerged in the run up to the 1999 elections, drawing its support mainly from the Fijian provinces on Western Viti Levu.
7. **Nationalist Vanua Takolavo Party** (NVTLP)- successor to the Fijian Nationalist Party with a strong nationalist and anti-Indian agenda.

A key feature of Fiji's voting system is that each voter has two votes, one for a member representing the ethnic community (reserved) and another for a member from any community (open seats). The Parliament in 1997 accepted that 23 seats be reserved for indigenous Fijians, 19 for Indo-Fijians, 3 for general electors and 1 for the Rotuman community. However, in contrast to the 1990 constitution, it also accepted that there be 25 seats open to all voters.

	Reserved Seats	Open Seats	Total No. of Seats
SVT	5	3	8
FLP	19	18	37
FAP	9	2	11
VLV	3	0	3
PANU	4	0	4
NVTLP	1	0	1
NFP	0	0	0
UGP	1	1	2
Independent	4	1	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>71</b>

## Results of 1999 Elections

While the FLP had a clear majority to form government on its own, the 1997 constitution forces parties to cooperate in governance. This is achieved through the requirement that all parties with 8 or more seats in parliament be included in the cabinet.

Thus, the FAP is a part of executive government - its leader, Adi Kuini Speed also being a Deputy Prime Minister. But in line with the FLP's commitment to promote multiracial government, the PM also included both the VLV and PANU in the cabinet even though they did not have the requisite numbers. The SVT, however remained outside the government and together with a small number of independents provides parliamentary opposition.

## Labour's reform project

By the end of July, the FLP led government had commenced a bold programme to unwind many elements of the structural adjustment reforms. It reversed the corporatisation of the Civil Aviation Authority. It took equally decisive measures to reverse corporatisation in the electricity, water and other utilities. But this has not been without opposition.

Within the first week of the new government coming into power, the private foreign Banks ceased commercial lending to protest the implementation of legislation that attempted to protect consumer interests. By the end of July, other forces of reaction appeared to be gaining momentum. Defeated SVT and nationalist politicians had already begun to cultivate opposition to the FLP by enflaming racial sentiments, using traditional land owning groups to undermine governments efforts to resolve issues surrounding the expiry of agricultural land leases.

Fiji's powerful privately owned bus operators similarly ceased services to stop the government from enabling independent mini bus operators to service the main trunk routes. The Employers Federation has opposed a national minimum wage and vigorously undermined initiatives to promote tripartism as the basis for industrial relations.

It is not clear how these forces of reaction will affect the medium term prospects for the new government at this stage. No other government in Fiji's recent history has faced so considerable challenges and threats during its first few months of power.

## Reclaiming development

Expectations of ordinary citizens, workers, farmers and local communities are high. A decade of adjustment and reforms has extracted a heavy price from ordinary citizens.

During this period, unemployment had risen in real terms to in excess of 15 percent. The economy has been able to generate less than 1000 jobs for roughly 10,000 new entrants into the labour market annually. The UNDP estimated that one in three of its people lived below the official poverty line and that income distribution had severely worsened.

At the same time the new government faces considerable challenges as a result of globalisation. Preferential prices and access of its sugar, garments and other manufactured products into Europe, Australia and New Zealand the US is under pressure.

The new government has demonstrated its political will to take far-reaching decisions - which are almost unparalleled in the developing world today. This has brought it into direct confrontation with multilateral institutions and powerful commercial and corporate interests located or operating in Fiji.

With over 80 percent of seats in parliament, the People's Coalition has the obvious popular support to promote an alternative developmental policy that is more firmly grounded in Fijian society - even if it is at odds with the prevailing international orthodoxy.

*Dr. Satendra Prasad is a lecturer in Sociology at the University of the South Pacific and a member of the steering committee of the Citizens Constitutional Forum.*





# Solving the Hawaiian Labyrinth

## Evidence Refutes Legality of US Takeover of Hawai'i

by *Umialiloa Sai*

### Truth as a Victim of Conquest

**D**uring the attempted overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom in 1893, one of the first acts of the Committee of Safety, also known as the provisional government, was the usurpation of the Hawaiian throne, and thus the lawful Government. As their seizure of the Hawaiian nation embarked on its 106 year duration, historical truth was the next logical victim of the oligarchy; suppression, rewriting and distortion became institutionalized. The struggle against this seemed hopeless; you against the 'State', and one way or another, one would eventually resolve to one of two choices, conformity, or isolation.

For over a century, the battle between the usurpers and Hawaiians has epitomized the antithesis between truth and deception. In the words of Conquest: "It would be incorrect to call this merely a struggle of ideas, for it has been a struggle of the mere facts."

Today, due to the sacrifices of many, the doors which once imprisoned the truths of Hawai'i have been pressed open, and through their breaches stream a wealth of irrefutable information, as if exhumed - treaties, compacts, congressional records and transcripts of classified documents speak to the world for the first time void of biased interpretations. That Hawai'i is not a part of America, is not a claim. It is a fact. The proof is overwhelming.

### Human Nature

So what is it that inhibits us from accepting an ugly truth? One of the main elements which prohibits Hawaiians from accepting this truth is good old-fashioned fear; fear of ostracism, fear of reprisal, fear of the unknown. It should be obvious that Hawaiians are acutely aware of what we as a people are up against in our battle for self-governance, and that matters of this nature are easier spoken than achieved. Nevertheless it remains to be said - in order that Hawaiians will endure the trials and tribulations of this cerebral revolution, we must hold fear in contempt. We must transcend our pre-conditioned modes of thought, and confront the truth. Woodrow Wilson once said, "...There is such a thing as a nation being so right that it does not need to convince others by force that it is right."

### The Fine Points

Consider that in 1893, American marines under the orders of the American Minister to Hawai'i, John L. Stevens, landed in Honolulu (without provocation) and assumed a battle-ready position directly opposite the Iolani Palace. That as a result of this unprovoked aggression on the part of United States naval forces, the constitutional monarch, Queen Lili'uokalani yielded her executive authority to the United States Government, in the person of its president, as a fact

finder only.

Consider that in response to the Queen's letter of protest, an investigation commissioned by the President into the events surrounding the attempted overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom Government (the Blount Report) concluded that the United States diplomatic and military representatives had abused their authority and were responsible for the attempted overthrow of the Hawaiian Kingdom Government.

Consider that on December 18th of that same year, US President Grover Cleveland, in his message to Congress, reported fully and accurately on the illegal acts surrounding the overthrow, and described said acts as "...an act of war, committed with the participation of a diplomatic representative of the United States and without the authority of Congress..." and acknowledged that by such acts the government of a peaceful and friendly people was overthrown. Cleveland reminded the United States Congress of the special conditions of Queen Lili'uokalani's surrender of Hawai'i's sovereignty, where she "...surrendered not to the provisional government, but to the United States. She surrendered not absolutely and permanently, but temporarily and conditionally until such time as the facts could be considered by the United States..." Cleveland carried it one step further by stating (on the record) that, "...a substantial wrong has thus been done which a due regard for our national character as well as the rights of the injured people requires we should endeavor to repair" and called for the restoration of the Government of the Hawaiian Kingdom. He concluded "...that the United States could not, under the circumstances disclosed, annex the islands without justly incurring the imputation of acquiring them by unjustifiable methods. I shall not again submit the treaty of annexation to the Senate for its consideration..."

And then there's 1898. Ah yes, the infamous annexation of the Hawaiian Islands. After two failed attempts to procure a treaty of annexation, the United States, in what could be argued as perhaps one of its darkest moments regarding its foreign policy, resorts to a simple resolution to acquire Hawai'i.

The document which purports to secure Hawai'i to the United States, Joint Resolution no. 55, 55th Congress, Second Session, July, 7th, 1898, finally reveals itself for what it actually is, a Joint Resolution. It is not a Treaty. For the past 100 years we have assumed that the Joint Resolution, to some degree or another, possessed the power of a treaty, and no one has ever questioned its effect. However, Joint Resolution 55 is now exposed for its true qualities, or in this case, the lack of. Joint Resolution 55 simply put, is an American "municipal law." It is a fundamental logic, and legal principle, that the power of any lawmaking body - in this case the United

*cont'd on page 14*



*cont'd from page 13*

States Congress - ends at its borders. To further qualify this point, the Supreme Court ruled in the case of "The Appollon. Edon, Claimant" (9 Wheat 362) that the "...municipal laws of one nation do not extend, in their operation, beyond its own territory." So how, in 1898, does a United States' "municipal law," whose legal effect ends at the shores of California, span some 2,500 miles of the Pacific ocean to affect a foreign territory? It cannot now, as it could not then.

Williamson Chang, a Professor of Law at the University of Hawai'i, is one of a growing number of academics who have stepped forward to refute America's claim of sovereignty in Hawai'i. Professor Chang states, "It is a simple point. The Joint Resolution was an act of Congress. It was an act of both the House and the Senate, it was not an act of both nations...Claiming that Hawai'i was part of America. America had no more power to incorporate the islands than wishful thinking...The only means for transferring sovereignty legally is by treaty."

These points for consideration are further augmented by the fact that the treaty of Friendship, Commerce and Navigation of 1850, and subsequent conventions between Hawaiian Kingdom and the United States, were never terminated, and in observance of the legal maxim: *pacta sunt servanda* - agreements must be honored - it begs to question, can the territory known as the Hawaiian islands legally exist as the 50th State of the Union? No.

## THE COMPLAINT

On August 6, 1998, a Motion for Leave to file a Bill of Complaint alleging treaty violations by the United States Government, was hand delivered to the Clerk of the United States Supreme Court to be filed under the Court's original jurisdiction by Plaintiff David Keanu Sai, as appointed Regent of the Hawaiian Kingdom, pro tempore, and serving in the capacity of Ambassador of the Hawaiian Kingdom to the United States of America, on the basis of Article III, §2 of the United States Constitution, and 28 U.S.C. §1251(b)(1), against the United States of America and William Jefferson Clinton, President of the United States, to enforce the rights of the Hawaiian Kingdom and its Subjects under the treaties entered between the Hawaiian Kingdom and the United States, the law of nations, and customary international law.

On August 12, 1998, Francis J. Lorson, Deputy Clerk of the Supreme Court notified the Office of Regent, by correspondence letter, that the "...motion for leave to file a bill of complaint and appendix were received August 6, 1998, and must be returned." The Clerk cited that Regent Sai was not an attorney admitted to the Bar of the United States Supreme Court, and therefore he could not represent anyone other than himself. The Clerk further stated that the Court does not have original jurisdiction over a complaint filed by the Hawaiian Kingdom.

In response to Lorson's letter, on September 17, Regent Sai requested Professor Francis A. Boyle, an American attorney and Professor of Law at the University of Illinois, serving as legal advisor to the Hawaiian Kingdom and the Office of Regent, to speak with

Lorson, to assure him that the complaint and Sai's capacity as Regent of the Hawaiian Kingdom were filed in good faith and therefore should be placed on the docket under the Court's original jurisdiction. When Boyle expressed his concern that both the Rules and the precedents were sufficiently flexible to permit the docketing of the complaint, Lorson conceded that he "...was acting pursuant to verbal instructions issued to him by the Justices of the Court."

The decision by the United States Supreme Court to evade the facts contained in the complaint was not at all surprising, after all, the question regarding the effect of Joint Resolution 55 is not new to the Supreme Court. In 1903, the Supreme Court ruled directly on the Joint Resolution. A divided Court held 4-2-3 that Hawai'i was not incorporated into the United States by the Joint Resolution, which prompts one to ask, is the Supreme Court's attitude really one of indifference, or merely an effort to avoid redundancy? What ever the case may be, Hawaiians are not resigned to sit idle.

## THE NEXT STEP

After a century of deception and fraud, of sovereignty stolen, and the national identity of an entire country misplaced, the United States Government now appears prepared to do what is necessary to avoid the courtroom for reasons which are obvious to all.

In response to the Supreme Court's apparent indifference to Hawaiian claims, Regent Sai, states, "It is somewhat disheartening when the highest court in America suggests its inability to discern politics from law. The actions of the United States Supreme Court regarding the Complaint, infers much more than a suspicion, it represents a clear and present danger which compromises the proper administration of justice."

He admits that "...the picture is now clear as to where Hawai'i's assertion of its right to self-governance shall be heard. We have no other choice but to present our case to an international Court. So far as the United States is concerned, we are satisfied that we have exhausted every possible remedy in the American system."

## THE CHALLENGE

In voicing his thoughts advocating the right Hawai'i possesses as an independent sovereign state, a sentiment shared by many in the islands, Sai agrees that there must be a greater emphasis placed on historical education, if Hawai'i is to effectively present its claims to an international audience, i.e. the World Court. "It is one thing to argue a case based purely on legalities. One man may, in good conscience, be supported by law, if not a nation. It is entirely another thing altogether to present a case of national sovereignty to an international tribunal without the support and understanding of that nation." That support and understanding will be the result of hard work, courage and ultimately education.

For more information and the full text of the Complaint and other historical documents, visit the history of the Hawaiian Kingdom on the internet at "HawaiianKingdom.org"

*Umialiloa Sai is a freelance writer who resides in Honolulu, Hawai'i. He is the program director of the popular talk radio show 'Perspective' on KCCN 1420 AM.*





# Annexing Hawaii by Joint Resolution

by Carl Schurz

*This article and the following editorial appeared in the February 26, 1898, issue of Harpers Weekly Magazine.*

The Hawaii annexation treaty lags in the Senate. The number of votes needed to make up the required two-thirds majority, it seems, will not come forth. The advocates of the scheme are now preparing to resort to the expedient of accomplishing their end by means of a joint resolution, which may be put through by a simple majority in each House of Congress. It has even been suggested that, in order to avoid the danger of being balked by dilatory tactics on the part of the opposition, the resolution should be attached as an amendment to an appropriation bill. This, however, is hardly probable. For the idea of rushing through Congress a measure of such incalculable importance as the annexation of a distant country by such a trick is so monstrous that even the most fanatical Jingo may well recoil from it.

This might be brought home to doubting minds in Congress by moving for the joint resolution, above quoted, a substitute containing a plain statement of the facts, somewhat in this wise: 'Whereas, in January, 1893, the native government of Hawaii was overturned by a revolutionary uprising which was actively aided by the minister of the United States and a detachment of United States forces landed at the minister's request from a United States man of war; and whereas the said revolutionary uprising was made and a provisional government set up avowedly for the purpose of effecting the annexation of Hawaii to the United States; and whereas the present government of Hawaii is the offspring of the said revolutionary movement and is in part composed of its very leaders; and whereas the said government is essentially an oligarchy admitting only a small minority of the people to the exercise of political rights; and whereas the said oligarchy offers to transfer the sovereignty of Hawaii to the United States without the assent of the Hawaiian people, it being well known that an overwhelming majority of the Hawaiian people are opposed to such transfer - be it resolved, etc., etc.' The truthfulness of the preamble being conceded, which it must be, as the facts recited are notorious, it may well be questioned how any American solicitous of the honor of his country can think of following it up with a resolution favoring the proposed annexation.

## Editorial: *Seizure by Resolution*

We propose to take these islands, simply because we want them, by means of a joint resolution. Chief Justice Marshall held that the power of Congress to acquire territory resulted from the power to make war and the power to make treaties... We are not at war with Hawaii, and therefore we cannot take the territory as security from a hostile power. It is true that we might take the islands by treaty, and this would be the proper Constitutional method, but the annexationists cannot secure the necessary number of votes in the Senate for the ratification of the treaty...

In other words, if Congress should strictly obey the Constitution, annexation could not take place. Therefore the annexationists resort to a short-cut, and they propose to turn their backs upon the Constitution...

The Newlands resolution is, moreover, a legislative assault upon Hawaii, and is contrary to the essential character of our own government. If our republic means anything, it is that the people of every country have the right to govern themselves. They have the right to determine the form of government under which they will live. We have insisted upon this right for ourselves; we have fought for it, and we have won it. Under what system of logic, then, can we reach the conclusion that we may deny to the Hawaiians what we have asserted for ourselves, under the general principle that every people in the world have the right "to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them?" We have set up our own government for our own affairs and we have neither had the intention to govern others, nor have we the machinery to carry such an intention into effect.



# Many Thousands of Native Hawaiians Sign a Protest to the United States Government Against Annexation

by Miriam Michelson

*This article appeared in the September 30, 1897 edition of the **San Francisco Call** newspaper.*

"Stand firm, my friends. Love of country means more to you and to me than anything else. Be brave; be strong. Have courage and patience. Our time will come. Sign this petition - those of you who love Hawai'i. How many - how many will sign?"

She (Mrs. Campbell) held up a gloved hand as she spoke, and in a moment the palms of hundreds of hands were turned toward her.

"What is it?" I asked the interpreter. "What did she say?"

He laughed. "A reporter is here," she says. She says to the people, "Tell how you feel. Then the Americans will know. Then they may listen."

A remarkable scene followed. One by one men and women rose and in a sentence or two in the rolling, broad voweled Hawaiian made a fervent profession of faith.

"My feeling," declared a tall, broad-shouldered man, whose eyes were alight with enthusiasm. "This is my feeling: I love my country and I want to be independent - now and forever."

"And my feeling is the same," cried a stout, bold-faced woman, rising in the middle of the hall. "I love this land. I don't want to be annexed."

"This birthplace of mine I love as the American loves his. Would he wish to be annexed to another, greater land?"

"I am strongly opposed to annexation. How dare the people of the United States rob a people of their independence?"

"I want the American Government to do justice. America helped to dethrone Lili'uokalani. She must be restored. Never shall we consent to annexation!"

"My father is American; my mother is pure Hawaiian. It is my mother's land I love. The American nation has been unjust. How could we ever love America?"

"Let them see their injustice and restore the monarchy!" cried an old, old woman, whose dark face framed in its white hair was working pathetically.

"If the great nations would be fair they would not take away our country. Never will I consent to annexation!"

"Tell America I don't want annexation. I want my Queen," said the gentle voice of a woman.

"I'm against annexation - myself and all my family."

"I speak for those behind me," shouted a voice from far in the rear. "They cannot come in - they cannot speak. They tell me to say, 'No annexation. Never.'"

"I love my country and oppose annexation," said a heavy-set, gray-haired man with a good, clear profile. "We look to America as our friend. Let her not be our enemy!"

"Hekipi, a delegate from Molokai to the league, writes: 'I honestly assert that the great majority of Hawaiians on Molokai are opposed to annexation. They fear that if they become annexed to the United States they will lose their lands. The foreigners will reap all the benefit and the Hawaiians will be placed in a worse position than they are to-day.'"

"I am a mail-carrier. Come with me to my district." A man who was sitting in the first row rose and stretched out an appealing hand. "Come to my district. I will show you 2000 Hawaiians against annexation."

"I stand - we all stand to testify to our love of our country. No flag but the Hawaiian flag. Never the American!"

There was cheering at this, and the heavy, sober brown faces were all aglow with excited interest.





# Lomé What???

The history of the relations between the EC (European Community) and the ACP (African, Caribbean and Pacific) countries has its origins in the negotiations leading to the creation of the European Economic Community in Rome, 1957. France made it a condition for signing the Treaty of Rome that its overseas dependencies would be accommodated in the new Common Market. An 'Association of Overseas Countries and Territories' was therefore added to the Treaty. This association was based on the elements of free trade, right of establishment of firms and development assistance. The EEC countries had an interest in maintaining the trade flows with their overseas dependencies and to keep their economic presence in these countries. The 'solidarity' element materialised with the creation of the European Development Fund (EDF) in 1958. This reflected the "presumption of responsibility" of EC member countries: the new white man's burden.

In 1963, the first Yaoundé Convention was concluded as a contractual and negotiated arrangement between the EC and 18 Associated African and Malagasy States. One more Yaoundé Convention was subsequently signed in 1968 for five years. At the end of the second, changes within Europe and the South caused the need for a new arrangement. The accession of Great Britain to the EC brought with it a great number of colonies and commonwealth countries. A place for relations with these countries had to be found.

In 1975 the Yaoundé Convention was replaced by the Lomé Convention, which linked former colonies of the EC in Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific (ACP) with the EC. Founded in 1975, with the ratification of the Georgetown Agreement, the ACP group has grown from the initial 46 countries to 71 ACP countries. Hence, this Convention provided for trade preferences and development assistance for the ACP countries. The development assistance was paid out of the European Development Fund<sup>1</sup>.

This development assistance is generally divided into two categories. The first category pertains to programmable funds agreed upon by the two parties for the duration of the Convention. The second category pertains to the rest of the EDF used for assistance of a kind that depends on the circumstances, e.g. structural adjustment support, export stabilisation support, minerals export support, emergency aid or refugee aid, and humanitarian aid.

## What is the Lomé Convention?

The Lomé Convention is essentially a comprehensive cooperation agreement between the EU and the African, Caribbean, and Pacific group. As a milestone in South-North dialogue, this Convention has four essential features:

1. It is a ten year contract freely negotiated between the ACP and the EU. Undergirded with the concept of equality of partners, this Convention offers security to ACP countries in planning economies with greater confidence.
2. It is in its essence a state to state agreement. However, since Lomé IV (1990-1995), the Convention has encouraged the participation of other development actors in Lomé funded programmes
3. It is non-aligned in that it respects each partner's freedom to choose its economic system, political regime and development model.
4. It is a comprehensive agreement that combines a whole range of co-operation instruments providing a response to the economic and development needs of the ACP group.

## EU - Pacific ACP Trade<sup>2</sup>

EU's trade assistance to the Pacific region has been in existence since 1976 with the first Lomé Convention. This assistance comes in the form of preferential access to the European markets. Under the Lomé Convention, a list of items is given a zero tariff entrance into the European market. Whilst this may look inviting on paper, the reality is much different. In such cases the company from the ACP country has to look for its own market in Europe. This has been the downfall of the Lomé trade with the Pacific as our relatively small economic base of our countries restricts the range of items that could be traded with Europe. Secondly, the freight cost almost nullifies the potential profits. Therefore, our trade with Europe has been rather restricted. In 1998, total Pacific ACP exports to Europe amounted to 0.5 billion Euro (FJD\$ 1 billion). The relatively small economic base determined that 5 products represented 90% of exports to Europe namely:

- coffee (25% PNG),
- cane sugar (19% Fiji)
- coconut and copra (13% PNG, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Samoa),
- copper ores (8% PNG), and
- preserved or prepared fish (4% Solomon Islands, PNG, Fiji)

In essence the concentration of all Pacific ACP exports on a number of Pacific ACP countries is as follows:

PNG:	66%
Fiji:	22%
Solomon Isles:	7%
Vanuatu:	3%
Samoa:	1%
Kiribati, Tonga, Tuvalu: each less than	1%

*cont'd on page 18*

<sup>1</sup> The European Development Fund, to which the members of the European Union contribute on a voluntary basis, finances projects and programmes in the ACP States and the OCT's. It is administered by the Commission (with the exception of risk capital managed by the European Investment Bank).

The fund is renewed every five years. There have been seven successive funds since the first Yaoundé Convention. The fourth Lomé Convention runs for 10 years (1990-2000) thus implying two financial protocols defined as the 7th (1991-1995) and the 8th EDF (1996-2000). The total size of EDF VIII is 13,132 MECU

<sup>2</sup> Figures from Eurostat report.

<sup>3</sup> Summary of Decisions of Pacific ACP Ministers Meeting on Trade, Forum Secretariat, June 1999.



In contrast to our export figures, imports from the EU have remained rather small at 0.1 Billion Euro in 1998. The ratio of 5 to 1 is what current analysis go by when determining EU-PACP trade. This ratio does not depict the disparities of the preferential access that currently exists as stated above.

### **EU Development Aid to Pacific ACP countries**

The EU has accorded the Pacific ACP countries an estimated ECU 1,186.30 million from 1976 till 1995. This financial assistance has come in various forms eg: trade preferences, humanitarian aid, sectoral aid, financial assistance to the region, financial and technical assistance, and programmable and non-programmable aid.

Since the mid-term review of the Lomé Convention in 1995, the Pacific ACP States have signed new development cooperation agreements with the EU (National Indicative Programmes) granting these countries further aid and assistance.

### **The Mirage**

At every conference or regional gathering, the EU representatives do not hesitate to mention that the EU is one of the largest donors to the Pacific region and has assisted the region from many development perspectives. They also do not hesitate to flaunt the amount that they provide for the development of Pacific Island countries. Whilst, there is a certain truth to this statement, it does not really portray the difficulties which accompany the attempts to access this financial assistance. The complex, opaque, and heavily bureaucratic procedures to access EU funds often hamper the swift usage of this important fund. Several allocated funds for certain development programmes of Pacific countries that were agreed to way back in the early 90's are still being processed today, almost a decade later!!

### **Decentralised Cooperation (DC): A window for Civil Society in the Lomé Convention**

Recently, there have been attempts to foster a new type of relationship within the Lomé framework with other actors of development, namely civil society. To simplify the shift, one could state that Decentralised Cooperation seems to be the Lomé Convention's version of the concept of participatory development.

The concept of participatory development is not a new concept to the Pacific Island Countries. This concept is utilised in most Pacific Island societies as traditional Pacific Island societies are founded on communal aspirations. Everybody in the traditional society participates in its development. When transposed to the donor-recipient relationship, this concept establishes and consolidates the relationship.

The Lomé Convention in the Pacific is virtually unknown to civil society. There is scarce utilisation of Lomé funds by NGOs in the Pacific and there is very little indication as to how the process of DC could be implemented. The Lomé Convention merely gives us the direction in which increased and more efficient cooperation could be achieved.

Significant progress has been made in Fiji, Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Tonga whereby civil society groups have devised programmes, utilising the DC process within the respective National Indicative Programmes. These come as a result of seminars on the DC process in the respective countries. Perhaps, the most advanced country at this stage is Tonga where the programme has received approval for funding by the EU. Seminars are being organised for the rest of the Pacific ACP countries as well as the 3 French territories

### **Recent Developments**

The Pacific ACP countries have agreed to consider the EU offer of a Regional Economic Partnership Agreement (REPA). This would constitute one of the principle components of the future EU-Pacific ACP relations under the new EU-ACP umbrella agreement. In their deliberations, it was clear that the contents of the REPA would remain the prerogative of the recipient region so to speak. By the tone of the decisions, the Pacific ACP group has a lot of uncertainties that need further studies to ensure equitable benefits are derived by the Pacific ACP countries.

The key phrase in this summary of decisions is that "the Pacific ACP Trade Ministers noted that the REPA proposal by the EU was not confined to trade but also involved a whole host of development co-operation measures". This would in effect be of benefit to the Pacific nations as they will shape the REPA to their liking. However, it puts the onus on the Pacific ACP countries to agree as to what should be the content of the REPA. Furthermore, do we in the Pacific have the capacities to attend to such matters? And lastly, does this "whole host of development co-operation measures" actually undermine the overall issue of the ACP solidarity? I recall that this REPA proposal was first and foremost an economic proposal far independent of other "development co-operation measures" so to speak. Is the EU actually pulling the wool, or the coconut husk, over our eyes? I fear that the acceptance to even consider this REPA would actually open up a crack within the ACP group and would thus undermine the principle of the Georgetown Agreement. Only the future will be the judge.

*Feiloakitau Kabo Tevi  
July 1999.*

*Assistant Director -SHD PCRC Inc.  
Suva, Fiji.*

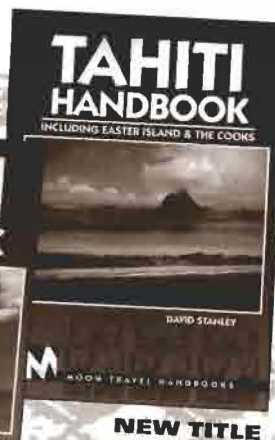
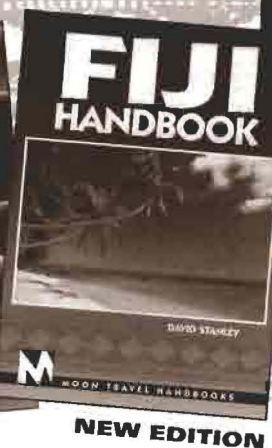
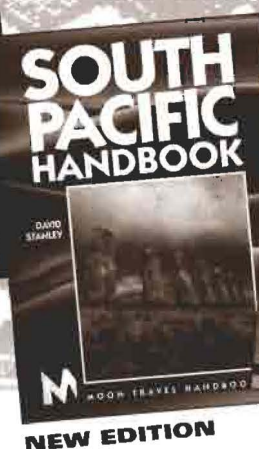
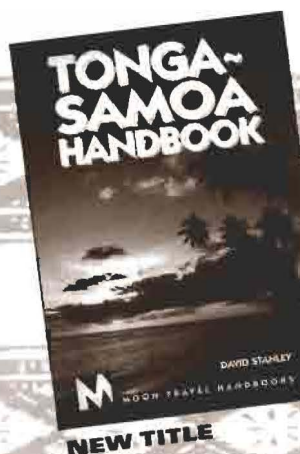




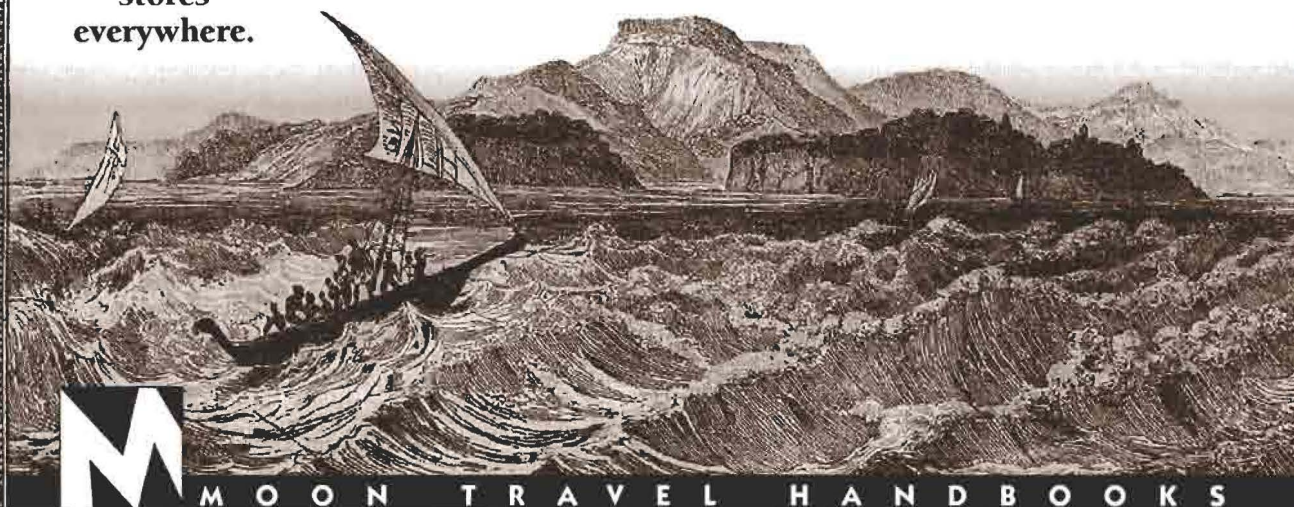
# The Pacific at Your Fingertips

Encyclopedic in scope, precise in detail, and rich in spirit:  
**MOON TRAVEL HANDBOOKS**

"I know of no other guidebooks to the Pacific  
which can match the comprehensiveness and sensitivity  
to local perspectives that one finds  
in David Stanley's books"  
~Europe-Pacific Solidarity Bulletin



Available at  
book and travel  
stores  
everywhere.



MOON TRAVEL HANDBOOKS

[www.moon.com](http://www.moon.com)



# DISABILITY AND EMPLOYMENT: WHAT DOES IT MEAN IN VANUATU?

*By Altaire Butler*

Arthur Simrai waits patiently surrounded by friends while the twin prop plane sits on the grass landing strip preparing for take off. The crew load luggage and baskets of fruit destined for the capital, Port Vila, into the cargo hold. It's time to go someone indicates and Arthur heads for the plane. He hops out of his wheelchair and crawls aboard, but not before stopping first to make sure his wheelchair has been safely stowed away. With a flash of his enormous grin Arthur waves a final goodbye to clients and friends that he may not see again for six months. He has lots to smile about as he heads home for Port Vila. As a field worker with the Vanuatu Society for Disabled People (VSDP) Arthur is unusual in Vanuatu. Not only does he have a disability, but he also has a job. An unusual combination in a country with a high unemployment rate.

The concept of paid employment is a relatively new one in Vanuatu. The economy is essentially based on subsistence agriculture. This means that for eighty percent of the population much of the day is spent in planting and harvesting food.<sup>1</sup> In the past people supported themselves and the community by fishing and working in their gardens. Produce that was collected fed the family and

excess was traded for other goods that might be wanted or required. This system supported all members of the community. As consumer goods were limited there was a limited need for disposable income. Nowadays however most people produce at least small amounts of cash crops such as copra (coconuts) and kava in order to provide an income for themselves.

In this day and age the need for disposable income is a very real necessity for everyone in Vanuatu. Parents need money to pay for children's school fees. Those living in urban areas that no longer have access to land for planting gardens must purchase food. As people travel farther and more frequently money is needed to pay bus, taxi and plane fares. A variety of consumer goods is now widely available and supply is meeting demand. Items range from clothes, alcohol and cooking utensils, to vehicles, ghetto-blasters and toys. These goods have often replaced traditionally used items. Whether able-bodied or disabled, the need and desire for these items is great.

As Vanuatu has become more industrialised opportunities for paid employment have increased. This is particularly true in the urban areas of Port Vila and Luganville.

---

## "WHO IS VSDP?": ADDRESSING

*by Alta*

The field workers of the Vanuatu Society for Disabled People (VSDP) don't just provide community based rehabilitation services (CBR) to people with disabilities and their families. Equipped with videos, brochures and posters printed in Bislama the field workers have become PR agents for VSDP and their clients. Advocacy and awareness raising has become a new and important part of their role.

Recent mini-evaluation workshops held by VSDP's staff indicate that a large part of Vanuatu's population still don't know about or understand the services that VSDP provides. This is despite the fact that VSDP has been offering CBR services throughout the country since 1991. It was also found that the general population isn't aware of the rights of people with disabilities. This lack of understanding results in many clients going without services that are available or being referred to the field workers too late for services to be effective. It also means that both children and adults with disabilities are regularly being denied their rights.

In February 1996 VSDP joined forces with the South Pacific Peoples Foundation on a joint project to provide organisational strengthening and skills training to those at VSDP. A Disability Advisor was provided through CUSO with funding from CIDA, the BCGDF and a number of private donors. The project identified a number of key awareness raising areas to focus upon.

These were:

- services offered by VSDP.
- who are VSDP's clients (who should be referred).
- how to make referrals to VSDP.
- the importance of early referrals.
- the rights of people with disabilities.
- gender issues (or the need for joint care-giving between men and women).



Local, provincial and federal levels of government are the largest employers, followed by areas such as tourism and logging. Leitangi Solomon is one of the country's civil servants. She has been the switch board operator at the Department of Health for many years. Like Arthur she counts herself lucky to have a job and knows it is her skill and dedication that keeps her in her role. For many people with physical disabilities however work in government offices would be impossible. A survey completed by VSDP in early 1997 indicated that no government buildings in Port Vila were fully wheelchair accessible. There is hope that proposed changes to the building code will ensure accessibility to government and public buildings in the future.

There are now more opportunities for paid employment in Vanuatu than ever before. But have the number of jobs increased for those with disabilities? The answer is no. Very few people with disabilities in Vanuatu are engaged in paid employment and there is little opportunity to access or retain work. This isn't to say that people with disabilities in Vanuatu don't work. There are many examples, although most of them do not take the form of paid employment. The types of work that people with disabilities take part in are as varied and interesting as those in the able bodied community. This businessman, who runs a small village store on the island of Malekula, is also visually impaired. "I feel good that I can support my family",

he says. "I've learnt to tell by size and feel what denomination the bills and coins are that people give me and my wife helps with ordering and stocking the shelves." Another example is Waiwe from Futuna. She is both deaf and unable to walk due to having polio as a child. Her handicraft skills make her an important member of her community as she weaves costumes for the popular Futunese custom dance troupes. The quality of her baskets, mats and grass skirts mean they are in demand. By selling her handicrafts to local villagers and tourists she is able to contribute to the support of herself and her family. Francis is an actor with the local company called Wan

*cont'd on page 22*



*Arthur at work- VSDP Fieldworker and role model*

*Photo: Altaire Butler*

## THE NEED FOR PROMOTION

*Altaire Butler*

The Disability Advisor ran training sessions for the field workers on "How to Run an Effective Workshop". With these new skills and confidence, the field workers run regular workshops for community groups, teachers and health care workers alike. "Things We Don't Talk About", a video produced by Wan Smol Bag Theatre that looks at disability issues in the South Pacific, is used in these workshops to stimulate group discussion.

The staff of VSDP, together with others, developed a number of tools that are now used regularly to promote both their work and to raise awareness about people with disabilities. A three-poster series was designed and launched in conjunction with the 1997 International Day of Disabled Persons. The posters promoting the rights of people with disabilities, the importance of early referral and gender equality in the care of those with disabilities, are printed in easy to understand language and have already gone into a second printing as they have proven so popular. A brochure about VSDP is now mailed out to all organisations that might have an interest in its work with copies given to clients and families as well.

VSDP now receives regular media coverage with participation in local events, such as the Children's Day March. Regular newspaper articles and radio shows hosted by VSDP discuss disability issues and the society's activities.

The mini-evaluation workshops made the need for promotion very clear. And VSDP has embraced the need for these changes wholeheartedly. Plans are in place for VSDP to use TV for awareness raising activities and to hold workshops with the Red Cross and National Women's Groups to discuss their involvement in these areas. In the future, with its new devotion to awareness raising, no one will be asking "Who is VSDP?"



cont'd from page 21

Smol Bag Theatre. He also happens to walk with crutches. His opportunity to act came when the theatre company was looking for an actor for a play entitled "Things We Don't Talk About" about disability rights. Francis is now a regular actor with the company playing a variety of roles.

Arthur and Leitangi understand the difficulties faced by people like themselves who are disabled and looking for work. They are the founding members of VANDICAP, a fledgling group for disabled people that will enable them to advocate in the area of disabled rights on their own behalf. A joint project between the South Pacific Peoples Foundation (SPPF) and VSDP that began in 1996 is looking at ways of supporting this group. Recent renovations to the VSDP office by Rotary Club International included office space for VANDICAP to encourage and facilitate meetings on a regular basis.

Discrimination against people with disabilities is high in Vanuatu. This is in part because the public's awareness about the rights and potential abilities of people with disabilities remains limited. For many, the perception is that having a physical disability means being mentally disabled and unable to care for yourself as well. VSDP's poster about disabled rights (developed through funding from the SPPF project) tries to shatter the myth that people with disabilities don't share the same urges as other people for companionship, achievement, the prospect of their own future and a home. Although in comparison to Vanuatu, the developed world has a long history of advocacy the concerns of those with disabilities are strikingly the same. In a recent conference held for Afro-Caribbean

and Asian people with disabilities in the UK this message was heard.<sup>i</sup> "There is no recognition that we need and deserve to have the same opportunities, advantages, disadvantages, frustrations, rights and responsibilities as others do." The focus of much of VSDP's work is now in the areas of advocacy and awareness raising. See Sidebar entitled "Who is VSDP? Addressing the Need for Promotion".

Being employed offers one a greater scope of choices, both economically and socially. Therefore, it can be assumed that the majority of Vanuatu's disabled population have a limited degree of choice. Finding jobs for people with disabilities is not part of VSDP's current aims. It has supported some clients in the past and is regularly asked to find jobs by clients, caregivers and other aid agencies. Instead, VSDP works to empower its clients by promoting their rights to employment and education, thus hopefully enabling them to achieve an income in the future and increase their available choices. The field workers work with clients to determine their skills and encourage them to put their skills and talents to work for them. After a fall from a coconut tree left her disabled, a woman from Tanna discussed her worries about no longer being able to contribute to her family. Although it doesn't pay very much, the field workers encouraged her to sell the handicrafts she makes at the local market. She later said this made her feel valued because she was contributing to her family again.

One woman, a skilled seamstress, rents a sewing machine and sells the dresses that she makes. She explained that she isn't able to earn enough money to purchase her own sewing machine and finds raw materials are expensive and difficult to get from town. "I'd like someone to loan me the money to buy my own machine. Then I could pay them back when I've earned enough money from selling my dresses". In the Solomon Islands the Disabled Peoples Rehabilitation Association (DPRA) and the Community Based Rehabilitation Programme have set up a small loans scheme to help people such as this woman set up their own businesses. Although a good idea they have faced difficulties due to poor management and no such scheme is currently being planned for Vanuatu.

As part of the joint project with SPPF, VSDP has decided to increase its empowerment focus by developing a strategy for empowering people with disabilities. It will be done in part by funding the typing and computer skills training of a client named Edwin Sipa. Afterwards he will be employed as a part-time office assistant by VSDP. This will serve as a powerful role model for other businesses in the region.

cont'd on page 23

Photo: Altaire Butler



Leitangi Solomon- Ministry of Health switchboard operator

<sup>i</sup> David Harcombe and Denis O'Byrne. *Vanuatu: a Lonely Planet travel survival kit*. Lonely Planet Publications, 1995.

<sup>ii</sup> Race and Physical Disability Group for Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. *Speak Out Make a Difference: The Views of Black Disabled People and Carers in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire. Report of the Race and Physical Disability Group Conference*. Nottinghamshire County Council Social Services Department, May 1998.

<sup>iii</sup> Mrs. Sue Bareleo. *Vanuatu Society for Disabled People: A short report about the society*. Vanuatu Society for Disabled People, August 1992.



# DISCOVERING CONNECTIONS:

## *a Guide to the Fun of Bridging Disability Differences.*

By Linda Hill

Welcome to a hands-on, participatory guidebook bringing diverse people together through the universal language of fun. Bridging Disability Differences is much like any cross-cultural experience, with changes similar to the new outlook people bring home from world travels.

Beautifully designed and illustrated, this passport to inclusive communities is filled with information, ideas, creative activities, and new experiences for everyone. Your travel guide is Linda Hill, a psychologist with more than 25 years experience exploring disability and other diversity issues in Canada and internationally. Linda has written this book with the help of the Cowichan Valley Independent Living Centre, a consumer-run, cross disability organization.

**Can \$24.95, discount options for ten or more copies.**

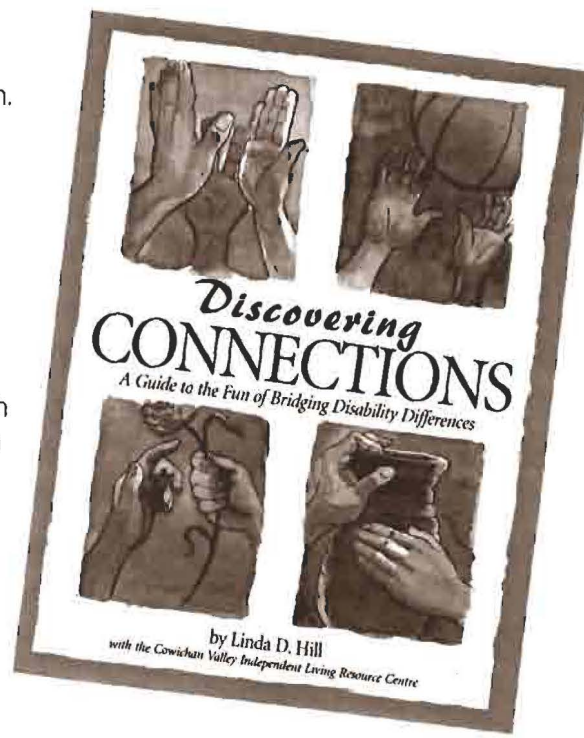
For more information or to place an order contact:

### **BUILDING BRIDGES**

P.O. Box 156, Duncan B.C., Canada V9L 3X3

Phone/Fax: (250) 746-1529, TTY: (250) 746-1539

email: BRIDGES@ISLAND.NET



*cont'd from page 22*

A local businesswoman in Port Vila practices her own form of affirmative action. When opening a small corner store recently she came to VSDP requesting the names of people with disabilities that might be interested in working for her. She later hired two people. When asked why she had chosen to hire people with disabilities her answer was simple. "A person who is disabled can work just as

well as you or I, but they are given so few chances to do so. I thought I'd give them a chance."

The issue of employment for people with disabilities in Vanuatu is a complex one. Many of the current issues are those faced in developed countries years ago, others are strikingly similar and still others are different; related to custom beliefs and geography. According to a survey conducted in 1992 only 1.46 percent of the population of Vanuatu had a disability (although this number has risen since that time).<sup>iii</sup> Therefore their voice is very small. Long held beliefs and misunderstandings about disabilities must be overcome and innovative approaches to educating the public about disability rights must be used. The Vanuatu Society for Disabled People has taken on this challenge. Through its involvement and commitment to the joint project with the South Pacific Peoples Foundation VSDP's field workers are now holding regular community awareness raising workshops throughout the country. Posters and pamphlets are widely distributed and VANDICAP is receiving support for its work. Through these efforts VSDP is working to give people with disabilities the skills and resources they need to have a voice that will be heard throughout Vanuatu in the future.



*Photo: Altaire Butler*

*Francis- Actor with Wan Smol Bag Theatre Group*





# YOUR CANADIAN GUIDE:

## *An Interview with DAVID STANLEY*

**D**avid Stanley is a Canadian travel writer best known for his comprehensive and authoritative South Pacific Handbook, first published in 1979, and now in its seventh edition. David can be reached through his website, the South Pacific Organizer, at <http://www.southpacific.org>. PPP Executive Director interviewed David Stanley earlier this year.

**SW:** *What prompted you to become a travel writer and what drew you to focus on the Pacific as a subject?*

**DS:** I sort of stumbled into travel writing. In 1976 I spent several months roaming around Indonesia with a slim red guidebook called {Indonesia, a traveler's notes} in my backpack. When I returned to Canada I mailed the author, Bill Dalton, a few notes of my own and got a cordial handwritten response. The following year I was planning to visit the South Pacific and wrote back to Bill suggesting that I provide some notes on the area for inclusion in his Indonesia guide as a sort of "Onward Travel" appendix. Bill replied that his Indonesian notes were already billowing out of control and that a separate book was called for. He said he'd be co-author (and publisher) if I did all the field research. Not knowing what I was getting into, I agreed, and the first edition of {South Pacific Handbook} appeared in June 1979, the second in the Moon Travel Handbook series which now numbers 85 titles. With the second edition in 1982 I took over as sole author and Moon is now preparing a seventh edition for publication around the end of this year. Bill sold Moon Travel Handbooks in 1989 but he's still the author of {Indonesia Handbook}.

**SW:** *What philosophy or principles guide you in how you approach travel writing and writing about the Pacific?*

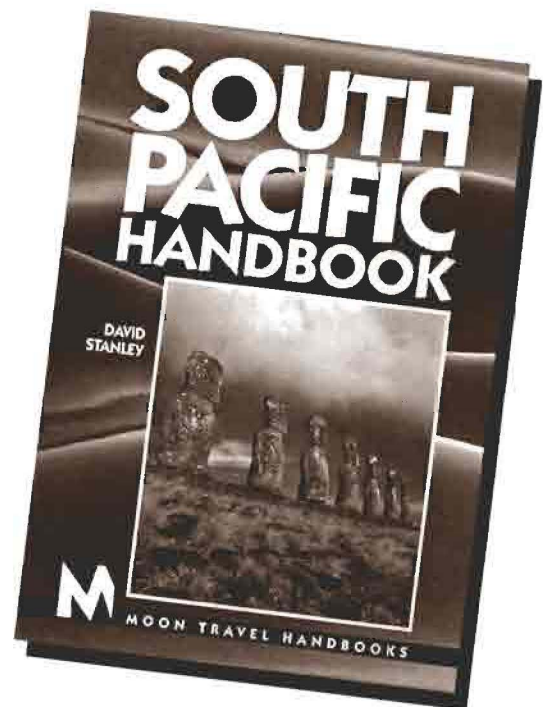
**DS:** Frankly, I look at everything from the point of view of my readers because they're the only ones who are paying me. I neither solicit nor accept "freebies" from the travel industry and refuse to be chaperoned by local visitors bureaus. In fact, I make a point of not identifying myself while in the islands. This certainly isn't the easiest way to go but I like being able to tell it like it is without any favors to repay. I also try to see things through the eyes of

island residents, which is often quite different from the way local tourism businesses and even governments see things. Governments are supported by taxation, and revenue providers like hotels, airlines, tour companies, and overseas assistance advisors usually dominate policy making. The impact of tourism on local communities is often considered only as an afterthought. I try to tell my readers how to put their dollars directly into local pockets with as little leakage as possible.

**SW:** *What has been your most memorable experience of covering the Pacific as a travel writer?*

**DS:** I can still remember vividly my visit to Beqa Island off the south coast of Viti Levu in 1981. I'd met some Fijian firewalkers at Pacific Harbor and they said they were going back to their village in a couple of hours and I was welcome to come along. Of course, firewalking is only performed at the big resorts and almost never on Beqa itself, but those people were magnificent. That evening all of the men of Naceva village gathered in the chief's bure and I was treated as a guest of honor in a manner I most certainly did not deserve in any way. I learned more about Fijian culture that weekend than I had during several weeks of hotel travel and it continues to influence my writing.

*cont'd on page 25*





**SW:** *After covering the Pacific as a travel writer for so many years, what changes have you seen - as a destination, in the nature of the travel experience, in the level of services, in how it is marketed, in the scale of tourism, etc?*

**DS:** Things are a lot easier for travelers now than they were two decades ago. On my first visit to Taveuni I had to grovel before the expatriate district officer for permission to camp beside the government rest house at Waiyevo. Today there are 23 official places to stay including several commercial campgrounds. I remember during my first visits to Suva there were no Indian restaurants; now there are many. Tourism has become accepted and visitors to Vanuatu and Solomon Islands are no longer met with overt suspicion, as they were as recently as a decade ago. Some aspects of travel have become more commercialized, especially what's called "soft adventure travel," but it's still easy to do your own thing. The only islands which seem in danger of being overwhelmed by tourism are Moorea, Bora Bora, and Rarotonga. Elsewhere arrivals are still extremely light compared to Hawaii or the Caribbean. The internet has been an equalizer in the marketing and promotion fields with small countries like Cook Islands able to mount websites as good as those of tourism giants like Britain and France.

**SW:** *What changes, for better or worse, do you see in how the Pacific is being viewed by outsiders?*

**DS:** With airfares continuing to fall, the South Pacific is becoming more of a "Pacific paradise" for transnational tour operators marketing consumer packages. The recent arrival of Canada 3000 charter flights to Fiji and Rarotonga is part of this. Being a playground for affluent outsiders can benefit the island economies, so long as local residents and the environment are protected.

**SW:** *The new mantras of travel seem to be in niche tourism - eco-tourism, cultural tourism, etc. Do you agree? Is this really anything new or just clever marketing? What are the implications of this for the Pacific?*

**DS:** I hate to say it but most of what is called "eco-tourism" in the South Pacific is merely money-making endeavors by expatriate business interests. The most farcical example of this I've seen is the "eco-tour" by helicopter offered in Apia, Samoa. Yet they may have a point: Visitors in a helicopter probably

have far less impact on the environment than four-wheel-drive tourists or hikers. I'd say the test of an eco-tour should be who gets the profits and what impact there is on the environment. Village-operated eco-tourism, such as the fale resorts on the southeast side of Upolu, is low-tech and culturally empowering. I'm always watching for tourist facilities actually owned and operated by local people, or even better by whole villages collectively, and feature them in my guides. Governments have a role here and there should be controls over the way even local people exploit the environment. National parks and reserves are the best way to go as these provide the basic framework for the sustainable development of tourism while serving as tourist magnets in themselves.

**SW:** *What advice would you give to a first time Pacific visitor?*

**DS:** I'd suggest they not book any tours or hotel accommodations in advance but just get on a plane and go. With a good guidebook in hand they can arrange everything upon arrival at less cost and with more flexibility than they ever could from home. I'd say they should lower their comfort and convenience expectations and "go native" as much as they can. Otherwise a package tour to Hawaii or the Caribbean will work out much cheaper than the same to Fiji or Tahiti.

**SW:** *What advice would you give to Pacific islanders who want to promote tourism as an economic development option for their people?*

**DS:** You're talking about island visitors bureaus and governments, right? I think they should let their people run simple tourism businesses without imposing all sorts of arbitrary accommodation standards and licensing requirements. If any type of tourism needs to be controlled it's the packaged consumer tourism which creates little foreign enclaves in exotic locations. Programs should be established which help local villages establish visitor facilities which provide employment and income opportunities for the community as a whole. Such programs should not be run by overseas advisors or travel agents who may only try to duplicate expatriate-operated tourist facilities. Everything should be island style in harmony with local economic conditions. Governments should also enact strict laws to protect their marine environments, especially the reefs and everything around them. Some of this is already happening.



# REFLECTIONS OF A FIELD WORKER

by Dorah Johns

**M**y name is Dorah Johns and I am twenty-four years old. I began working with the Vanuatu Society for Disabled People (VSDP) in March 1996. I had never worked with people with disabilities before, but I felt it was an opportunity to help them live more fulfilling and independent lives. To help them develop functional abilities and to let them know that there is no difference between their rights and the rights of people who don't have disabilities.

VSDP is a non-profit, non-government organization and the only one in Vanuatu looking out for the needs of people with disabilities. Since 1991 it has been providing community-based rehabilitation services to people of all ages. Its clients include people with all types of disabilities, including physical, visual, hearing and intellectual impairments. The three main aims of VSDP are:

1. to facilitate the fullest possible integration of and participation by people with disabilities in all aspects of their lives;
2. to assist with the prevention and early intervention of disabilities through education and public awareness campaigns;
3. to facilitate cooperation and collaboration with government and non-government organizations to ensure that the disabled have the fullest access to all rights guaranteed to all citizens by the constitution of the Republic of Vanuatu.

The field workers provide the hands-on work of the society out in the many island communities that make up Vanuatu. Prior to 1991 the society provided centre-based services to clients in the Port Vila area only. The first four field workers were hired and trained in 1991. They have been providing community-based rehabilitation services since that time. In a country where people change jobs frequently, I took it as a good sign that all of the original field workers were still with VSDP when two additional new field workers, Albert and myself, were hired in 1996. Each of us is responsible for one of the six provinces. Me, I am responsible for Shefa province which includes the island of Efate where Port Vila, the capital of Vanuatu, is situated.

## TRAINING

Our first year was spent in training and learning "on the job." The bulk of the training was provided by the other field workers and the executive director of the society. Its focus was on teaching community based rehabilitation (CBR) skills and learning about specific disabilities and how to manage them. I learned about common causes of disabilities in Vanuatu and measures

used to prevent them. Most importantly I learned how to care for and assist people with disabilities to develop their functional skills and to live as independently as possible. A number of experts from other fields also provided short-term training in other areas such as first aid and family planning.

As part of our initial training Albert and I spent two-four week periods out in the field with one of the existing field workers. It was a chance to put all the theory we had learned into practice. This was a very important part of the training and a great learning opportunity. During the first four weeks I toured Tanna and Futuna, two islands in the southern waters of Vanuatu. It was an enjoyable first experience out in the field and I learned a lot. I especially had the chance to develop my skills in building adaptive equipment using locally available materials. But it wasn't all easy.

One very memorable experience I have is of making a rail bar for a young girl who couldn't walk. I was frustrated at first when I was trying to measure her. She was afraid of me and crying bitterly. In my haste to be finished quickly the measurements were incorrect and I had to go back and measure her a second time. She was shaking when she saw me coming towards her and cried even more. All I wanted to do was give up. I tried to comfort her but my voice was trembling. I hadn't come across anything like this before, and even I cried. The reassurances of both the field worker and the Disability Advisor helped give me the confidence to finish the job. Later I proudly watched as she and her mother practised standing and walking in the newly made rail bars. What a sense of accomplishment. After that experience I'll now happily build rail bars on my own.

*cont'd on page 27*



Photo: Altaire Butler

*Re-learning to walk after a fall*



## NEW SKILLS FOR ALL

In early 1996 VSDP launched a new project with the South Pacific Peoples Foundation. The main goal was to provide organizational strengthening to the society by way of a Canadian occupational therapist working as a Disability Advisor. A big part of her work was working with the field workers, helping to organize field visits, running in-house training workshops, providing on the spot assistance with various clients, etc.

Valuable training workshops were held for us throughout 1997. Together we developed a new set of client forms, which help us effectively record client progress. We learned basic occupational therapy skills, how to make adaptive equipment out of locally available materials, goal setting for clients, and how to run effective workshops of our own. Again I enjoyed learning how to build adaptive equipment to help improve a client's abilities. It was very satisfying to finish the training by delivering several pieces of equipment we had completed. Among them were a toilet raise for a 16-year old girl with muscular dystrophy and a walking frame for another girl who has both physical and visual impairments.

Since that time I've made a number of pieces of equipment for other clients. And that isn't the end of it. More equipment needs have been identified and are planned to be made and sent out.

One of the most effective skills I have acquired is how to write goals and objectives for my clients. A goal is a client's final achievement. To reach a goal the client has to go through certain steps. These steps are the enabling objectives. Writing goals and objectives is very useful because they help indicate whether the client is capable of doing the activities identified, if they are too difficult, or if they aren't related to the client's functional abilities. Setting goals and objectives acts as an evaluation for myself and helps monitor a client's progress.

The general public's knowledge of disability issues in the island communities, and throughout Vanuatu is very limited. Some people don't know how to care for those with disabilities. They may panic or quit, especially if the child is the first born of a young couple and/or when the disability is new to them and new to the community. There are many misconceptions about why disabilities happen. This causes people to misunderstand or be afraid. Some parents and care givers try their best to look after their disabled family members. They need support, training, and information about what to do. VSDP is working to improve people's knowledge of disability issues through community workshops, use of the video by Wan Smol Bag Theatre group entitled "Things We Don't Talk About", bi-monthly radio programs, and a new series of educational

posters. Development of VSDP's three new educational posters was also an excellent learning opportunity for all of us at VSDP.

## CONTINUED CHALLENGES AHEAD

After a full year of being responsible for Shefa Province, I have come to realize that every field visit my co-workers and I take has its challenges. Vanuatu's population of 156,000 is widely dispersed over more than eighty islands. Mainly we travel by truck, ship, small boat, and plane. In places where there are no roads and trucks and boats cannot reach, we must walk. There are more than 160 active clients in Shefa province.

Due to the great distances to cover and the difficulties with transport I am usually only able to see each client one to two times per year. I am forced to rely heavily on care givers following up on the goals identified and the program devised. However, poor awareness about the needs and rights of those with disabilities affects the follow-up care that people with disabilities receive. Lack of care giver follow-up with a client's program is common. Thus the client fails to make progress and meet her potential. This means that I often have to start again from the beginning. An ongoing challenge for me is to find a way to help care givers understand the importance of continuing with a client's program even when I am not around.

## INTO THE FUTURE

I have a number of things I hope to achieve in the year to come. My biggest goal is to continue to organize regular awareness campaigns around Shefa province. This is consistent with VSDP's plans for the coming year. It especially hopes to work on a campaign to increase the awareness of all people throughout Vanuatu about the needs and rights of people with disabilities. I want to focus on using those skills that we have learned over the last year and try to put them into practice.

The Disability Advisor's final task has been to develop a VSDP Field Worker Manual. It consolidates all of the information that we need when working independently in the field. We all look forward to using it as it will make our work easier and more effective. It will also help us provide the best service possible for our clients, the people with disabilities throughout Vanuatu.

VSDP, like other non-government organizations, faces financial difficulties. There is a continuing search for ongoing funding to support both the running of the VSDP office, as well as the day-to-day activities that take place out in the field. It is hoped that in the future the government of Vanuatu will view services for people with disabilities as part of the comprehensive health program for the entire country.



# FIGHTING VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN

## The Fiji Women's Crisis Centre

In 1983 in Suva, Fiji, two men broke into a woman's house and raped her. A police spokesman at the time of the incident told the press that quite a few cases of rape had been reported that year but there was little the police could do about it. He added that police believed the men in this case had watched the woman undress before they entered the house.

'In some cases, women tempt men by undressing in a room where they can be seen from the street, and in others by going out alone at night. We appeal to women to take more care', the spokesman said.

This incident was a catalyst to a group of women who had already shared their concern at the frequency of sexual attacks on women in and around the city, and the total lack of support services for the victims. They resolved to work towards providing such a service.

Initially the aim of the group was to provide a service for victims of rape. However, the more the women looked into the issues involved in rape in Fiji, the more aware they became of the magnitude of violence against women, particularly domestic violence. They broadened their charter; services are now available to all women and children who have suffered at the hands of men.

The membership of the group has changed too since those early days. It is no longer comprised mainly of women from overseas. From a few volunteers in 1984, the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre (FWCC) has grown into an organisation staffed by 14 paid members and a committed Board of Trustees. Other interested members of the public have joined the Friends of the Centre group. Our Centre operates as a collective with a democratic process of policy and decision-making. We hold regular workshops to review our work and to discuss relevant issues.

The women at the Centre bring to the group not only a rich variety of cultures and races, but different backgrounds, philosophies and motivations. Reasons for joining FWCC include religious beliefs, commitment to feminism, personal or close experience of violence, simple abhorrence of violence against women, strong aversion to injustice, or a combination of all factors. The Centre functions with remarkably little disharmony. It seems that any philosophical differences have become unimportant in the face of a common concern.

FWCC services, originally restricted to counselling, have now expanded to include training, research,

advocacy and public campaigns. We operate other centres in Fiji and have international and regional participation. The development of these services was made possible with stable funding from the Australian Government through AusAID.

Funding is always an area of difficulty for NGOs in the economic climate of the Pacific Islands. In the early years, FWCC depended on donations, fund-raising activities and support from individuals in the community. After many years of effort, we managed to get funding from AusAID through an NGO partnership with Community Aid Abroad/Freedom from Hunger. Now in direct partnership with AusAID for its second phase of funding, FWCC is currently negotiating a 5 year funding contract beginning in mid-1999.

Acceptance in the community has been slow - many people have seen us as radical anti-family feminists. Though initially we took a confrontational stance, we now work more from within certain influential groups. In Fiji, religion (mainly Christian) and culture play significant parts in people's lives. We have taken a human rights perspective and showed how various religious teachings (Christianity, Hinduism, Islam) speak about non-violence, equality and justice. Criticisms have also come from 'academic' feminists, who say we do not have a 'proper' feminist analysis, and established conservative NGOs, who see us as a threat to their power base. But we believe that to change the situation for women without compromising our stand, we should use all ethical methods within our reach.

The Centre has survived - even won respect as a professional organisation - in a country where bureaucratic processes are cumbersome and life moves at the pace of "Fiji Time", where education standards are low and sexism is blatant, where awareness of personal rights and expectations of justice are low. The FWCC has successfully influenced public opinion in Fiji. Many now recognise the need for emergency services and on-going support for women who are subjected to any form of violence.

Through our strong lobby and support from other groups, the Fiji Court of Appeal has recommended a more appropriate minimum sentence for rape, the Fiji Police Force has established a Sexual Offences Unit with specially trained personnel; and the government is in the process of setting up a Child Protection Unit.

*cont'd on page 29*



In September 1995, the Fiji Police Commissioner introduced the "No Drop Policy" whereby every domestic violence complaint must be fully investigated by the police. While in the past a conciliatory approach was taken by the police, this policy states that under no circumstances will police officers attempt to promote reconciliation between the victim and the abuser.

Over the past fourteen years the FWCC has been a pioneer in documenting, analysing and supporting the development of practical programs and services to deal with violence in contemporary Pacific society. Centre staff organised and conducted the first ever Pacific Regional Workshop on Violence Against Women in 1992. With the FWCC as the co-ordinating body, women from 11 Pacific countries formed the Pacific Women's Network Against Violence Against Women. The second regional meeting in 1996 formulated a plan of action to take the Pacific Women's Network into the Year 2000. Network members were involved in the Pacific Women's Documentation Project co-ordinated by the Australia-based International Women's Development Agency. FWCC continues to document stories of women and children who have survived violence. The Pacific Women's Network also publishes a quarterly newsletter which is circulated internationally.

The Centre is now in a position to share its experience and expertise with Pacific organisations who work to end violence against women. We offer two types of training for government and NGO personnel. One is a four week programme in establishing and managing crisis counselling services and organisations. The second is a two week course which covers raising awareness about various aspects of violence against women, seeing it as a development issue, and basic skills in counselling. The training programme runs twice a year. In the last two and a half years, over 50 women and 2 men have been trained.

FWCC has identified the need for research in violence against women in this area. At the beginning of 1998, FWCC initiated the first National Research on Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault in Fiji. The purpose of the study is to gauge the level of violence and investigate associated knowledge, attitudes, practices and beliefs about violence against women. We hope data collected will help to improve services, support action for legislative changes, and influence policies.

The Centre has worked very hard on a media campaign to keep a high profile on the issues. We have used all media - particularly radio, which is accessible to most Fijians. We use every opportunity to write press releases commenting on social issues from a gender

perspective. On International Women's Day, Mother's Day, International Day of Action for Women's Health, 16 Days of Activism Against Gender Violence and other events, the Centre pushes for women's rights. Our public events during the 16 Days of Activism have gained increasing public support. For the 50th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, FWCC initiated the year-long campaign by the NGO Coalition on Human Rights which culminated on December 10, 1998. The Year of the Family gave us another opportunity to address violence within families.

FWCC runs workshops in the vernacular in rural areas of Fiji to encourage women's participation and leadership on the issue of violence against women. Consequently, women are becoming activists in their own communities, organising events to promote women's rights. Our work has been greatly enhanced by participation in global networks of women working on human rights - in short, we think globally and act locally.

It has been a long road for a handful of women. Despite all the set-backs and difficulties, we are able to see some light. Two of the most important things we have learnt are patience and perseverance. The road ahead is also long, but we know we have already helped create a clearer path for others to walk on. Now we no longer ask, we demand our rights.



CUSO is looking for Canadians with skills and experience in agriculture, forestry, fisheries, environment, and community activism to work in volunteer programmes in some thirty countries world-wide. Standard contracts: 2 years, plus language training, basic cost of living and benefits.

Since 1961, more than 12,000 Canadians have gone overseas to work with CUSO's partners. CUSO supports alliances for global social justice. We work with people striving for freedom, self-determination, gender and racial equality and cultural survival.

If the time is not right for you to commit to an overseas posting, you may want to volunteer your time, energy and expertise on a local committee.

Check our web site at [www.cuso.org](http://www.cuso.org) for current postings and information on how to apply or call 1-888-434-CUSO (2876) for the office nearest you.

# D E c o w o m a n

## Direct Micro Expelling of Coconut Oil: *EcoWoman projects*

For Pacific Island communities, coconuts are the most abundant, low input, sustainable agricultural resource, and the main source of cash income for rural people. Coconut oil markets have been in decline owing to competition from other oils such as palm and soybean. The tree is slow growing, and many plantations are aging. Copra is often the only source of cash, and while the market has recently been good, it is subject to long lasting fluctuations.

Other than commercial milled oil, village women have always made domestic coconut oil, used for cooking and as a body oil. This is a long process requiring much squeezing - and tired arms and hands. The product is opaque and often has a strong smell. While this is acceptable locally, it precludes much interest by the export market.

DME bypasses the copra drying process entirely, using a simple press to expel the oil manually from slightly damp, grated coconut meat. Hand- or electrically-driven graters remove the meat from the nut. The meat is dried to about 12% moisture content and loaded into stainless steel cylinders. These are heated to about 60 degrees centigrade and loaded into the press, whereupon the oil can be easily expelled by pulling down the press handle. The oil is very clear and looks like water. It is of high quality, low in free fatty acids but high in natural aromatic compounds. The cold pressed oil is filtered and used domestically or sold, while the press-cake or meal can be used as human food or animal feed.

Apart from a very high quality product, there are several other advantages

- DME saves on transport costs, small bottles are more easily moved than bulky copra.

- there is a considerable energy saving as renewable human energy replaces fossil fuels.
- fresh coconuts are used, giving pure oil without rancidity. The cold press method avoids 'cooked' odours and loss of keeping quality.
- in the long term it is hoped sufficient quantities will be available to replace imported diesel fuel.
- it is a very flexible product for marketing, and maximum 'value-added' occurs at the point of production.

EcoWoman associates in Fiji, Kiribati and Samoa are using DME, and with the help of agencies like the Canada Fund have been able to install units in a number of rural communities.

**Samoa:** The EcoWoman focal point for Samoa is Women in Business. They have 11 units in place, with 3 more soon to be operational. The operators are all families with special needs. Canada Fund provided a vehicle which goes on the ferry to Savaii Island weekly

*cont'd on page 31*



*Demonstration of micro-expelling process*

Photo: Ruth Lechte



*cont'd from page 30*

collecting the oil (and honey from the WIB bee-keeping project). WIB is working on glass bottle production because if the oil becomes solid in colder climates, plastic bottles eventually break when squeezed.

A tonne of oil is sent overseas monthly and 3 shipments have arrived in NZ. Arrangements are being made to have the oil producing villages receive organic certification which will assist in selling to niche markets abroad. The Samoa Trade representative in New Zealand, Gina Moore, is helping with the export process. The response to the product has been far greater than the possible supply, both by Pacific Islanders resident in NZ, and commercial oil users for cosmetics.

For updates contact Adi Tafunai at WIB: [adi@samoa.net](mailto:adi@samoa.net)

**Kiribati:** EcoWoman has been involved in a joint project with Kiribati Dorcas women (SDA church) to provide two Fiji DME experts to train local Kiribati carpenters and women leaders in the establishment and operation of village coconut oil production units. The initial training took place last year, and towards the end of 1998 the Fiji carpenter returned to Kiribati for a further training of operators both at Abamama and the main centre of Tarawa. The latest report on the project notes that "...the trainees are good in producing oil and using the press and as the material is well cooked before pressing they are getting more than one litre of oil in one press, which is very good. The building is finished except for the doors and concrete path around the ovens. They work for one week on the dryer, then take their oil to Betio and Bairiki for one week (a week is 4 days). Each day they produce 8-10 litres of oil. Unfortunately there is a long term drought in Kiribati so they have to buy coconuts for \$10 a bag of 40-50 nuts. I have given them the training manual, the daily batch record sheets and showed them how to clean to equipment carefully. At the moment they are using tomato sauce bottles for the oil and are facing problems procuring plastic bottles and 20 litre containers". Currently EcoWoman is linking Samoa with Kiribati to solve the joint problem of access to bottles, and the details of marketing taking into account the distance of the working villages to the main centre.

**Fiji:** The Department of Agriculture Commodity Development Fund purchased 7 DME units to be placed on the islands of Vanua Levu and Taveuni. The EcoWoman trainer, Yani Ligaiviu is now involved with the ongoing operation of the units. Yani went to Kiribati last year to train the women there.

EcoWoman recently asked Cema Bolabola to visit these areas and report on progress. The village generator at Waivunia was out of order, and so no power was

available to run the grater and stove (electricity is not necessary for DME, but as it was available at Waivunia, the project had been set up to exploit it). The local youth group at Dromuninuku village has been running their project with each member contributing 10 coconuts, their labour and fuelwood. They earn about \$40 a week from sales. There are also commercial producers around the town of Savusavu in Vanua Levu.

The work of government through the Canada Fund in Fiji is to be commended in that it tries to bring income producing ventures to rural areas. However, it must be said that the work in both Samoa and Kiribati benefits from the process of targetting families or groups in special need and therefore making them responsible for their own uplift. By comparison the volume of oil produced per expeller in Fiji has been disappointing (apart from the commercial operators) because when everybody in a community is in charge - nobody is in charge. Further, Agriculture went against the precise recommendation of the Canada Fund and EcoWoman, and of the Ministry of Women & Culture, in allotting the recipients of the technology. This has been a useful learning experience for EcoWoman in terms of all our activities. Small holders and people in remote locations must be helped, but they should be chosen carefully to ensure not only the success of the project, but that discouragement does not set in, thus destroying a marvellous technological achievement.

DME technology was developed by the Australian National University, and especially Dr Dan Etherington, who has made it a personal and highly effective crusade. He visits often and gives his time unstintingly. The women in all three countries thank him most sincerely for his vision which has become a notable example of appropriate technology.

*Patrina Dumaruru & Ruth Lechte  
Pacific EcoWoman Collective*

*Photo: Ruth Lechte*



*Yani using grater*

# Canada Fund Supports Community Initiatives

by Rae Julian

## ***Need financial assistance with a project?***

### ***Go to the Canada Fund.***

That's what many communities and NGOs in the South Pacific think when they come to us for assistance. The Canada Fund works in twelve South Pacific countries (see sidebar) and co-ordinators report no lack of requests for project assistance.

Projects range from equipment and training for the Dorcas Women in Kiribati wishing to begin a coconut oil business, setting up a network of butterfly ranches in conservation areas in the Solomon Islands, to alcohol awareness training and outreach programs for Samoa. The fund is distributed in small amounts: Can\$ 50,000 is the maximum allocation for any project. Most are between \$15,000 - \$25,000.

### ***How funds are administered***

Flexibility is the advantage the Canada Fund has over most similar forms of assistance administered through other countries. No specific areas are excluded from funding, and the evaluation criteria are flexible. We try to ensure geographic diversity among a wide range of project partners. The co-ordinators also try to visit every prospective project, and to revisit it at least once during the implementation stage, although this is not always possible for projects on remote islands. The direct contact means that the Canada Fund has a high profile in the countries where it operates, a visibility which is often disproportionate to the amount of money disbursed.

A quick survey of project partners over the years shows the Canada Fund is now working more frequently with NGOs than with central government. Some countries have few broadly based centralized NGOs, but church groups, women's community organizations, pre-school groups, and school committees are frequent sources of projects.

### ***Local contributions are mandatory***

All funded projects must include local contributions. This contribution usually includes labour, or such materials as sand, gravel or timber when these are available and the project involves construction. A cash contribution is also required for most projects. The amount depends on the scale of the project and the group's financial circumstances.

Some community groups go to considerable trouble to provide their contribution. The men from a water project in Fiji went to work for two weeks in a forestry

project at another part of the island; a public servant in Kiribati gave up his job for six months to supervise the construction of a ferryboat for his island. No one would question their commitment to their projects.

### ***Local initiatives, locally driven***

Canada Fund co-ordinators do not suggest projects. Their role throughout any project is to act as a catalyst and to advise and educate. They also ensure that projects submitted to the High Commissions for approval comply with the guidelines (see sidebar).

When a project has been funded, it is their job to encourage its implementation, monitor its progress, evaluate the results and obtain the final report.

### ***Canada Fund supports environmental projects***

The Canada Fund supports many projects that have environmental values. One such project is the upgrading of the trails on Mount Talau National Park in Tonga, with the addition of signs and a brochure explaining the main features of the park.

Another was the provision of a patrol boat for the marine conservation area of Funafuti in Tuvalu. The conservation officer now visits the area three times a week, looking for anyone fishing in the protected areas. This is no gentle trip, as the co-ordinator discovered recently. The light aluminum craft must cross two channels and the reef. On a windy day, the first exercise resembles the scariest roller coasters in Disneyland; the second entails all passengers and crew peering overboard, trying to gauge whether the boat is likely to hit a rock or coral. The officer, Samese, remains calm - to him, it is a mail run. He also collects specimens for the forthcoming Marine Interpretive Centre - also funded by the Canada Fund - designed to educate local people, especially school students, about their marine environment.

Using poison to catch fish is a tactic used all over the Pacific throughout history. But with new markets for live reef fish such as grouper and wrasse appearing in Asia, the practice of cyanide fishing has become a serious problem. The squirting of cyanide into the water to stun large fish has been particularly destructive. The cyanide spreads through the water, killing many smaller fish and coral. The Canada Fund is supporting a project from the Marshall Islands Environmental Protection Authority to carry out a public information campaign on the impact of live reef fishing and the damaging practices associated with the industry. The Canada

*cont'd on page 33*



Fund assistance covers a two-week study of the Maloelap Atoll reef fishing industry, and the production of cassettes, brochures and posters.

In Vanuatu, the Canada Fund has enabled the Environment Unit to publish a thrice-annual magazine devoted to environmental issues. The magazine, in French and English, is distributed to all schools in the country. High school students design the cover page of each issue, enabling them to reflect creatively on the environment.

### ***Canada Fund Supports Women in Development***

The role of women is a prime consideration for many projects. There are many active NGOs throughout the region promoting the concerns of women. Some cover the more traditional areas of meeting basic needs, including water, health and education, while others cover human rights issues, or small business development.

The Canada Fund supports a number of Samoa's Women in Business Foundation projects, helping women to start small household businesses, including jewelry making, coconut oil pressing, bee keeping, and fine mat weaving. Church women's groups often have income-generating projects, in such areas as traditional handicrafts and food outlets. The Canada Fund often supports the construction of a building, or a small fund to commence operations.

Women's rights groups have also received Canada Fund support. The Fiji Women's Rights Movement, Mapusaaga o aiga of Samoa, and the Papua New Guinea Women's Refuge and Crisis Centre, for example, have been assisted.

The Canada Fund is supporting the East Sepik Women and Children Health Project aimed at reducing

maternal, child and infant mortality in Papua New Guinea. This project is partnered with two well-known non-governmental organizations, Save the Children Fund and the East Sepik Council of Women, as well as the provincial and district health officials and local communities. East Sepik has one of the largest incidences of maternal and child mortality in the world. The health project currently provides training and ongoing support to 320 village health workers in 160 villages. This is an arduous task in difficult terrain

with no roads and many mosquitoes, swamps and crocodiles.

### ***Canada Fund supports good governance***

The Canada Fund aims to assist both governments and NGOs in their efforts towards good governance, especially when a project is designed to further the relationships between government and civil society. The Citizen's Constitutional Forum (CCF) was set up in Fiji in 1993 to promote dialogue on the critical problems facing

cont'd on page 34

### ***The Canada Fund: Flexible funding for local initiatives***

The Canada Fund finances small scale projects which contribute to economic, social, technical, educational, or cultural development. Funding requests receive quick responses.

Funding for the South Pacific is channelled through the Canadian High Commissions in Canberra and Wellington by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). Canberra approves projects from Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia and Palau. Wellington receives projects from the Fiji Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Kiribati, Samoa and the Cook Islands. A regional fund exists for projects that involve co-operation among a number of countries. Projects from NGOs are given preference.

Priority is given to projects that help people to help themselves, are well planned, do not duplicate other resources, increase the participation of women, support sound environmental development, and enhance good governance. Projects aiming to alleviate poverty through improving access to health services, family planning, education, employment, water supply and sanitation are favourably considered.

The Canada Fund also supports institutional capacity building for NGOs. But scholarships, recurrent administrative costs, or projects for solely religious purposes are not considered for funding.

Projects should be finished within two years. The maximum funding for any one project is Cdn\$50,000, with most projects ranging between Cdn\$5,000-25,000. Project requests must be in writing and must include:

- ✓ background information about the group or organization;
- ✓ the overall goal, objectives, and description of the project;
- ✓ gender and number of those who will benefit, and in what way;
- ✓ any harmful environmental implications of the project;
- ✓ a detailed budget including local contributions;
- ✓ the timeframe for implementation;
- ✓ contact details, including phone and fax numbers of the person responsible for the project.

### ***Partnerships are key to success***

In the Fiji Islands, village development committees, with some encouragement from their District Officers (DO), will often initiate projects. The DO helps with proposal preparation and provides technical support such as engineers' reports, building plans, health reports, or environmental assessments. The proposal is endorsed by the Divisional Office and the Aid Committee of the Ministry of Regional Development and is then referred to a donor.

Some proposals are sent directly from the village committee to the Canada Fund co-ordinator, who then checks with the District Officer to ensure that the project has the necessary documentation and is in a priority area of need for the District.

To ensure that the ownership of the project remains with the village, the Canada Fund grant is sent to a bank account set up for the project. The DO is co-signatory, providing guidance during implementation, and sharing responsibility with the village for acquittals and final reports. Thus local people take responsibility for their own development needs, working in partnership with local government and the Canada Fund.

*cont'd from page 33*

Fijian society. These problems arose from the 1987 coups and the 1990 Constitution, which many citizens considered inadequate to create a favourable climate for the development of a multi-ethnic society. Since that time, the CCF has been active in producing materials on the Constitutional Review system, on the 1998 constitution, and on the new proportional voting system to be used in the 1999 elections. The Canada Fund has been one of financial supporters of these materials.

### ***Changes in the Canada Fund team***

After working for the Canada Fund for nine years, Diane Goodwillie resigned in November 1997 to take a position with the World Wild Life Fund's South Pacific office in Suva. Two new appointments, both based in Wellington, are Don Hunter and Rae Julian. Don covers the Cook Islands, Samoa and Tonga; Rae covers the Fiji Islands, Kiribati and Tuvalu.

Lynne Vassallo is responsible for Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu from Canberra. In addition to Melanesia, Lynne will administer the projects for the newly eligible islands of Palau, the Marshalls and the Federated States of Micronesia, with the help of partners in those islands. We have only just begun implementing the Canada Fund in the North Pacific and have a way to go yet before ironing out all the administrative difficulties.

Another valuable appointment was that of John Taylor, who came to work as a CUSO volunteer for the Canada Fund to assist with NGO strengthening. John works within the UNDP Pacific Regional Sustainable Livelihoods Programme in Suva. He has concentrated his efforts mainly to national umbrella groups, such as the Fiji Council of Churches, and regional bodies, such as PIANGO. John has also visited Tonga and Tuvalu to run workshops with their NGO groups.

*Photo: Don Hunter*



*A Canada Fund project in Tonga*

**For further information or to submit a proposal, contact the Canada Fund Co-ordinator:**

*For Cook Islands, Samoa, Fiji Islands, Kiribati, Tonga, Tuvalu:*

C/O Canadian High Commission, PO Box 12-049, Wellington, New Zealand  
Fax 64-4-471-2082, Phone 64-4-473 9577

*For Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Marshall Islands, Papua New Guinea, Federated States of Micronesia, Palau:*

C/O Canadian High Commission, Commonwealth Ave, Canberra, ACT 2600, Australia.

Fax 61-2-6273-3285; Phone 61-2-6273-3844



# RESOURCE REVIEW

## Film exposes the suffering of Bougainville families *Bougainville: Our Island, Our Fight*

*Review by Linda Pennells*

Wayne Coles-Janess' video shows the wrenching devastation brought to this Pacific island in the violent tug-of-war between the secessionist Bougainville Revolutionary Army and the Papua New Guinea armed forces. The nerve centre of the conflict is the Panguna Mine, one of the world's largest copper mines and the site of on-going disputes over land, compensation, and pollution.

The film explores why the secessionists forced the Australian-owned mine to close and also has excellent footage of the daily life within BRA-held territory. It contains the first filmed interview with BRA president Francis Ona: a coup for the producer and proof of the relationship the production crew had with the rebels.

The strength of the film is the insight given by villagers who now hide in the interior jungle and bush, traumatised by the burning of their coastal villages. Subsistence farmers and coastal fishers talk of their shattered lives. They now have no gardens, no schools, no doctors, little medicine.

The PNG government has blockaded the island since 1990. The blockade attempts to choke the rebels into submission, re-open the mine, and regain the substantial tax revenues that PNG sorely misses.

There is insightful footage of the resourcefulness that comes from

deprivation. Iguana and grubs now replace fish in some diets. BRA soldiers are patching up and using Japanese weapons from World War II in addition to confiscated arms from PNG soldiers. Families are creating interim homes under jungle brush.

Despite the behind-the-lines grassroots depth of the film, it makes no pretence to present balance. Harsh condemnations target the PNG government, Panguna mine management, the PNG and Australian defence forces. Yet, the video gives no space for their positions or rebuttal. This is the video's major weakness. However, viewed through the partisan lens in which it was shot, *Bougainville: Our Land - Our Fight* is a telling portrayal of the human price of war.

The 1997 53-minute documentary is an Ipso-facto Production with assistance of SBS Independent, New South Wales Film TV Office. Producer-Director is Wayne Coles-Janess. *Bougainville: Our Land - Our Fight* has won awards at St Kilda, Bathurst, Chicago and Flagstaff film festivals.

To order the video, contact: Wayne Coles-Janess, Suite 1-40 Smith Street, Surry Hills, NSW 2010, Australia; Tel: 61-4-111-59-454; Fax: 61-4-9770-4263; waynecol@ipso-facto.com.au

*Linda Pennells is a member of the Tok Blong Pasifik Committee.*

## *Lieweila: A Micronesian Story*

*Review by Linda Pennells*

*Lieweila is a 57 minute video produced and directed by Cinta Matagolai Kaipat and Dr Beret Strong.*

This video chronicles the survival of a small Micronesian culture against the forces of colonialism, natural disaster and globalisation. In the mid 1800s, the Refalawasch saw their island disappear under the Pacific Ocean following an earthquake and a typhoon. Survivors clung to treetops and fled by canoe to a small island in the northern Marianas. They were on the brink of starvation. The exodus is telling of the vulnerability of Pacific islands, especially coral atolls near sea level, to the vagaries of nature and global warming. Since then, a volcanic eruption has depopulated their second island home, bringing the Refalawasch to their current abode on Saipan Island located north of Guam in the Marianas. Even in this safer environment, there are often three or four typhoons a year.

The video explores how the Refalawasch play a strategic game of accept-and-reject with dominating cultures to buttress their economic and cultural survival. What unfolds is the strategic tactics that allow this minority to survive. *Lieweila: A Micronesian Story* portrays the Refalawasch as being economically and politically marginalised by waves of colonizers. First, the Spanish, followed by the Germans who bought the islands after the Spanish-American war. Next came the WWII Japanese occupation, devastating Japanese-American crossfire, and today's Americanization.

The story unfolds through the eyes of the first Refalawasch lawyer, a woman whose father was a politician gunned to death while protecting a woman in a domestic dispute. She blames her father's death on the greed and envy she sees as by-products of colonialism and its cash society.

The video successfully uses archival references and footage clips interspersed with interviews and memories. It is a solid and credible mix, supported with good photography. The video ends with a menu of activities being undertaken in reviving Refalawasch language and arts.

A major disappointment in the video is that there is no response or action plan to deal with the land ownership crisis, U.S. military presence, crime, drugs, environmental and other risks raised as threats to quality of life on Saipan Island. The video calls out for a sequel.

The video can be ordered from:

**Cinta Matagolai Kaipat**

Box 2914 Saipan

MP 96950, USA

Tel: 303-440-5499

E-mail: cintakai@itecnmi.com

or

**Dr Beret Strong**

1505 Mariposa Ave.,

Boulder, CO 80302, USA

Tel: 303-440-5499

Fax: 303-440-3961

E-mail: beret@tesser.com

*Linda Pennells is a member of the Tok Blong Pasifik Committee.*

# BOOK REVIEW

---

Zohl dé Ishtar (ed.) **Pacific Women Speak Out for Independence and Denuclearisation.**  
1998 Christchurch, New Zealand: Raven Press.

*Reviewed by Leslie Butt*

It's hard to ignore a book that has an image of a nuclear explosion on its front cover. And yet, the image that ultimately dominates the cover of *Pacific Women Speak Out for Independence and Denuclearisation* is the one in the foreground of the blast, that of a woman and a girl holding hands. The book's contents reinforce the image: eleven statements by Pacific Islands women drive home their pivotal roles in struggles for political autonomy and for control over land in the face of powerful international interests.

This book arises from the concern that, despite the wisdom they carry, indigenous women of the Pacific are rarely heard in the wider international arena. Yet the authority of their voices is compelling. Most tell the story of their political struggles from the perspective of their own experiences. This sets the stage for some harrowing accounts. In Lijon Eknilang's story of her forced relocation from Rongelap for the Bravo nuclear bomb test on Bikini in 1954, she describes in graphic detail how her body felt after the nuclear "snow" fell down upon her and her family. The proliferation of physical ailments that she and her community have experienced over the past 40 years include leukemia, thyroid problems, a high incidence of cancer, and women giving birth to what Marshall Islanders know as "jellyfish" babies. Darlene Keju-Johnson also tells of jellyfish babies - infants without arms or legs, with translucent skin - born throughout the Marshall Islands, and not just in the few select parts of the islands monitored by the U.S. Department of Energy's medical team. Keju-Johnson and Enkilang both tell of women organizing by relocating away from the poisoned air and water of Rongelap, and by occupying off-limits islands in 1982 and 1986 to try and force the U.S. to stop missile testing.

Other accounts that situate political action from the perspective of personal experience come from Isabella Sumang and Cita Morei. These two Belau women were actively involved in establishing the world's first nuclear-free constitution in 1979, and are at the forefront of opposition to a 1994 Compact of Free Association between Belau and the U.S. This present Compact seriously limits Belau rights to land, and it is this which Sumang strongly opposes, for it denies women the right to control and work land as they see fit. As she states, "I found independence by working in the taro swamp with the other women" but the compact allows the U.S. "to take that away...and for any purpose - for military, for nuclear."

Some women recount struggles for independence from within the contested territory: these include Kalama'okaina Niheu (Ka Pae'aina), Pauline Tangiora (Aotearoa) and Tamara Bopp du Pont (Te Ao Maohi). Each of these women discuss the pivotal role that a low-key, grassroots activism by women plays in pushing forward the political objectives of all of their people. In contrast, Nancy Jouwe from West Papua and Ceu Brites from East Timor have to fight for political independence of their people from afar. Brites tells of having to flee East Timor as a child in 1977, her home to which she has never returned. She recounts how women work actively for the right to self-determination from within East Timor, yet she also acknowledges that women often suffer for their involvement, because Indonesian soldiers exact revenge through the rape and humiliation of women. Jouwe, also exiled, criticizes Indonesian policy of assimilation as actually being a policy of genocide, and tells us that "grassroots women...they're left to pick up the mess."

Although all of the accounts are compelling, it is perhaps the tale of Josephine Kauona Sirivi that brings home the similarities in these women's struggles. As the wife of the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) General, she spent several months in the early 1990s hiding in the mountains and in the jungles of Bougainville. During her time as a fugitive, she was pregnant, gave birth, and suffered dangerous post-birth complications. She was sought after by the Papua New Guinea Defence Force because she was perceived as a conduit to her husband, but also because she was instrumental in organizing women's groups on behalf of the BRA. She learned through those experiences to speak on behalf of women for the BRA and to assist in the region-wide peace agreement reached in 1997. Ms. Sirivi embodies qualities that resonate through this book: tenacity, compassion, collaboration, the desire for self-rule, and above all, the desire for a peace brought about through the united efforts of women working together at a grassroots level.

What this book communicates is an overwhelming sense of the potential of Pacific Islander women to defy the odds imposed by colonial and military powers. The book's only shortcoming is its brevity. Readers are left trying to grasp the complexity of each group's political aspirations in a few short pages, when each and every account is so compelling that the reader is left wanting more, much more, about the struggles and successes of each of the women profiled in these short pages.



Now available  
from SPPF

## PACIFIC WOMEN SPEAK OUT

edited by Zohl de Ishtar

"Pacific Women Speak Out is a collection of stories of resistance against incredible odds, stories of survival. Indigenous women speak to us from Aotearoa (New Zealand), Australia, Belau, Bougainville, East Timor, Ka Pae'aina (Hawai'i), Marshall Islands, Te Ao Maohi (French Polynesia), and West Papua (Irian Jaya). They tell of the impacts of invasion and war, nuclear weapons systems, nuclear testing, militarisation, human rights abuses, sexism, tourism, non-Indigenous settlement, mining, industrialisation, imposed economic dependency and all the manifestations of colonialism."

1998, 80 pp. ISBN 0-473-05666-6

**In Canada Can\$10.00 plus 2.00 shipping. Outside Canada US\$9.00 plus \$3.00 shipping.**

Send Canadian or US dollar cheques or bank drafts in US dollars to:  
South Pacific Peoples' Foundation: 1921 Fernwood Road, Victoria, BC, Canada V8T 2Y6

## Window on the Arts

### *Aloha & Greetings to everyone*

**M**y name is Paul Modde, known on air @ 96.1FM as Kia'i, the Producer / Host of Tropical Rhythms of Hawaii & The South Pacific Vancouver, Canada. So you all know something about me I first lived in the Hawaiian Islands in 1969. That was the beginning of my 30-year love affair with Hawaii and South Pacific culture.

I was given a Hawaiian name by Big Island of Hawaii Hula Master, historian, entertainer, and teacher known as Uncle George Naope. I was given this name because of my extensive work in promoting the culture of the islands. My Hawaiian name is Kia'i O Na Mea Nani O Hawaii. This means guardian of all the beautiful things of Hawaii.

I came on the air in September 97 as part of the Production team on North America's First Commercial World Beat Radio Station broadcasting 20 ethnic programs in 15 languages. It has given me a great pleasure to bring the beautiful riddim's of the paradise islands to a West Coast and international audience via my live internet broadcasts.

One of my goals is to establish an annual South Pacific Festival in Vancouver, Canada. If this proves to be successful which I have every reason to believe it will, I plan to eventually tour the event to other major cities in Canada and internationally. Naturally the success of the event will depend on the participation of relevant Embassies, Airlines, Tour Operators, Business Trade, Travel, Cultural & Sports Organizations, Record Labels, Artist Management Companies, etc. I would be very eager to hear from anyone who has any comments, ideas, suggestions, or anyone interested in aiding the project.

In relation to the music side of things if you would like your music played on my program please send your Press Kit's to address @ the end of this article or email me for more information. I regularly have artists call and do a live on air interview from Hawaii. If I

am playing your music I would happily do the same for anyone interested. I also talk about sovereignty, political issues, and other concerns relevant to the islands on my radio show.

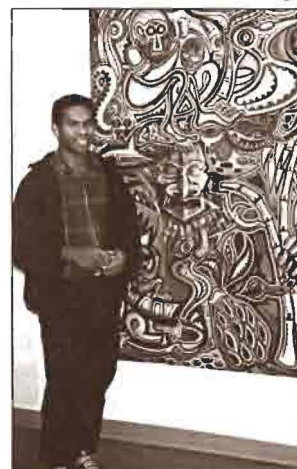
I recently returned from a five year stay in Hawaii where I went to complete my two Mega Musical scripts, "*Hawaii: Death of The Romantic Era*" and "*The Polynesians Discoverers of The Pacific*". I hope to eventually take both of these productions to the world stage and tour internationally. In regards to the second script mentioned I am seeking collaboration from representatives from the major Polynesian Islands knowledgeable in all aspects of Polynesian culture, especially history, music and dance.

In closing I would just like to say that I have found great joy over the past thirty years with my involvement in South Pacific Culture. I truly believe that the islands, have a great storehouse of knowledge not only in music art & culture but the healing arts as well.

### **I can be contacted @ the following numbers:**

Live Internet Broadcasts @  
www.fm961.com, Saturday's  
9-11am, Pacific Standard Time,  
Studio Request Line @  
604-709-9616, Fax: C/O  
Tropical Rhythms @ 604-1201,  
Web Site @ www.

Tropical Rhythms.com,  
Lono International Productions at  
10945A River Road, Delta, B.C.,  
Canada V4C 2R8







## C-SPOD Supports Gender Review in USP's Marine Studies Curriculum

*By Vina Ram Bidesi*

University of the South Pacific (USP), a regional university that serves 12 Pacific Islands countries gives a high priority to its Marine Studies Programme. Recently, a F\$25 million complex was funded by the Japanese Government. As well CIDA has provided funding for a number of activities of the Marine Studies Programme (MSP) through the Canada South Pacific Ocean Development Programme (C-SPODP II). This includes scholarship funds, development of post-harvest fisheries training and aquaculture research.

The MSP's major objective is to develop a world class center for training, education and research for the long term benefit of the Pacific Island people so that they can use and manage their marine resources in a sustainable way. For this to happen, the involvement of both men and women becomes necessary. Gender sensitivity is therefore an important consideration in order to achieve this objective.

Furthermore, commitments have been made by Pacific Island countries towards improving the status of women and are evident in national policy, legislation and constitutions that in many cases are linked to and reinforced by government ratification of international conventions. The South Pacific Organizations Co-ordinating Committee (SPOCC) which consists of the six regional organizations also realizes that there is a need for greater understanding on gender issues and implications of gender analysis among its member organizations and in the countries they serve. USP, which is a member of SPOCC, has identified the need to implement appropriate policies that will bring equal opportunities for both men and women. The USP Strategic Plan, approved by the Council in October last year incorporates gender equity as an important consideration. A recent gender consultancy at MSP therefore has been a timely initiative towards this process.

Dr. Catherine Warren from the University of Calgary in Alberta, Canada carried out a review of the MSP in October last year. The review was supported by CIDA under C-SPODP Phase II. One of the aims was to assist in sensitizing MSP staff and the larger campus. In her report Dr. Warren identified gender sensitive indicators and highlighted areas where changes could be considered. These included both practical and strategic changes.

During the consultancy, Dr. Warren held interviews and seminars with staff and students, reviewed curriculum materials and other strategic university documents. Her report highlighted that there was no marked disparity in attracting female students to MSP. She pointed out, however, that the subtle processes of the curriculum including the content and the language were equally important in encouraging and retaining female students and in promoting gender sensitivity. She emphasized both the "formal" and the "hidden" cur-

riculum in the education process need consideration by staff and students. The report further considered other university wide changes that are also necessary in order to bring genuine equality for men and women on campus and at MSP.

Dr. Warren's task was not always easy, as one may imagine. She needed to convince some people that gender was indeed an important and a relevant issue in the development process and that gender equity is a critical consideration if MSP is to achieve its objectives. The wider implications of gender neutral language such as use of words like "fishers" instead of fishermen, "boat operators" instead of boatmen were also outlined by Dr. Warren. All these issues she said were part of the process of gender awareness and sensitization.

The report makes 50 recommendations, some of which are specific to MSP while others point to changes required at the institutional level within the university. Dr. Warren's report further states that for MSP to take lead and to be pro-active in the process, it should submit an equity statement with its annual report.

The consultancy report highlights that women's culture is as valuable as men's culture in the Pacific Islands. For example, in the fisheries sector where a large part of the production still remains under subsistence, women are key producers who provide food for their families. She outlines ways in which through research, acknowledgement of this fact could be incorporated into the curriculum so that women's culture, their traditional knowledge and efforts can be better documented and understood. The report also states that the content of all MSP courses should incorporate gender issues. This will contribute to achievement of gender equality through improved course objectives, field trips, projects and direct discussions in class. For some Marine science courses, it will mean some radical changes while for some it may mean only minor modifications.

The report recommends the establishment of a committee that could look into the status of women on campus. Dr. Warren said that even though there were men and women on campus working towards the improvement of the status of women, there is a need for a legitimate forum where these men and women can come together to discuss actions and make recommendations to the senior administration. The report is both enlightening and interesting and points out changes required from university policy, to life and living on campus, attitudes in the classroom, content of teaching, and to field trips at sea.

The report will be discussed by the Marine Studies Advisory Board of the University in its April meeting this year.

*Vina Ram Bidesi lectures in USP's Marine Studies Programme.*



## New Resources from South Pacific Forum

Two new resources on gender and development have been published by the South Pacific Forum Secretariat with funding from the Canada-South Pacific Ocean Development Program. See below for brief reviews by SPPF member and advisor on women's programmes, Christine Bradley. Copies can be obtained from the Forum Secretariat for C\$10.00 or F\$13.00 each. As quantities are limited, only one copy of each booklet can be sent to an individual.

### ***Gender Through Pacific Eyes: A Guide to Policy and Programme Analysis***

Congratulations to the South Pacific Forum Secretariat for producing a much needed 'how to' manual on gender analysis in the Pacific context. This is a home grown product, developed by a working group of Pacific-based women and men involved in various capacities - as civil servants, community leaders, non-governmental organisation activists and officers of regional agencies - in promoting gender equity in the Pacific region.

Twenty pages long, the guide describes the concept of gender, the need for gender analysis and the six main steps of policy and programme analysis: identifying the issues and needs, determining

the goals and objectives, the collection and use of information, proposing and assessing possible solutions, communicating the policy/programme, and monitoring and evaluation. Each step consists of a one-paragraph introduction, a list of key questions to be used in building an analysis, and a short example illustrating some of the issues to be considered. The final section gives tips on how to build support for gender sensitive policies and programmes at the community, national or regional level.

The guide is aimed at all those involved in formulating, implementing and revising policies and programmes at national or sectoral levels, and is applicable to both governmental and non-governmental activities. Its clear and simple style and glossary of key concepts mean that it can be used by those with little previous experience of gender or policy analysis. Those already familiar with the concepts and techniques will value the comprehensive overview and the practical examples. All readers will enjoy the attractive presentation and user-friendly layout.

### ***Information Guide: Commitments of Pacific Island Countries to Gender Equality***

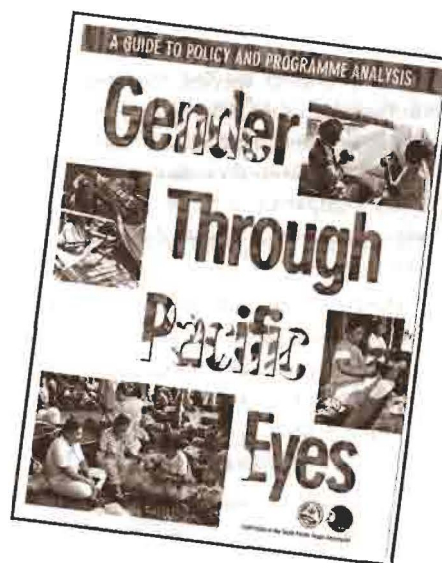
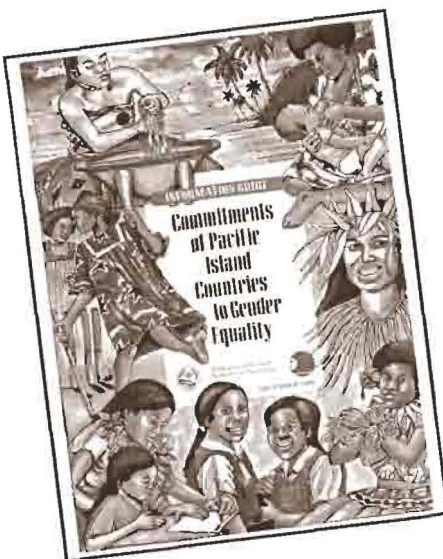
This sixty-page guide is a companion to the Forum Secretariat's *Gender Through Pacific Eyes*. Part One presents information on twenty-one Pacific island countries, conveniently presented in alphabetical order, from American Samoa through to Wallis and Futuna. Each country's commitments under the major international instruments - such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the 1994 Pacific Platform for Action - are described, along with any official progress reviews.

National commitments for each country are arranged under sections

covering constitutional provisions, legislation supporting women, policies and programmes. Much of the material consists of direct quotes from the policy documents, which adds local flavour. There is a description of each country's national machinery for implementing the policies, including the role of non-governmental women's organisations and, for most countries, a list of significant achievements.

Part Two describes the gender policies of the major aid donors in the Pacific, both bilateral (Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand and the United Kingdom) and multilateral (UNDP, UNIFEM and the European Union). This information will help organisations working towards gender equity to target the most likely donor.

The guide is intended for use by regional agencies, Pacific island countries, non-governmental organisations, donors and international institutions. It is a treasure trove of well-organised data that will serve as a baseline for measuring future progress. More importantly, it demonstrates a shared commitment to gender equality that will hopefully nourish a sense of solidarity amongst those working in this field throughout the Pacific.





# Forum Secretariat Addresses Fisheries Development and Marketing

by Mike Mullins

The exclusive marine economic zones of Forum Island countries<sup>1</sup> (FICs) cover some 19.6 million square kilometers and represent some 97 per cent of the total terrestrial and marine territory under their jurisdiction. It is not surprising therefore that FICs look towards fisheries as an essential means to advance their economic development. While in-shore fisheries are essential contributors to household subsistence, it is the oceanic fisheries – tuna species (big-eye, yellowfin, albacore and skipjack) and to a lesser extent deep bottom fish such as snapper and by-catch species including marlin, mahimahi and wahoo – that offer the most potential in terms of export development.

The South Pacific Forum Secretariat based in Suva, Fiji, working alongside the Forum Fisheries Agency and The Pacific Community, are working with member countries to increase the overall sustainable domestic harvest and export of finfish species.

The majority of the region's oceanic fishery is harvested by foreign owned commercial fishing operations and processed overseas, as well as locally at a few canneries. In recent years however, a significant locally based long line fishery has developed. The majority of these companies are exporting fresh chilled tuna and deep bottom species, but some are also targeting other niche markets such as tuna jerky, smoked tuna and frozen tuna steaks. Moreover, they are increasingly private companies either wholly or partially owned and operated by Pacific Islanders.

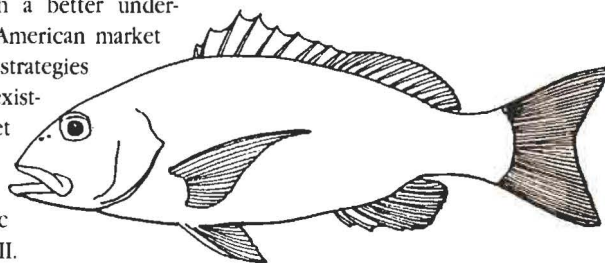
The Trade and Investment Division of the Forum Secretariat has received funding assistance from the Canada-South Pacific Ocean Development Program, Phase II (CSPODP II) to help facilitate the continued development of this trend. It is

pursuing this goal by assisting FIC companies to (a) better understand overseas markets for their products, and (b) organise themselves domestically to engage their Governments in the formulation of appropriate policies for development of the fisheries sector.

With respect to the first goal, the Forum Secretariat has focused on the North American market. It completed an analysis of the opportunities and barriers for the export of selected finfish food products from FICs to the Canadian market in December 1998. This analysis indicated that while FICs were currently not significant suppliers of seafood to Canada, the products they produced were in increasing demand. This was particularly the case of fresh chilled tuna whose imports into Canada over the period 1993-97 doubled. Indications were that the Canadian market was also looking for additional suppliers. The study identified and described various strategies FIC companies might want to consider when entering the Canadian market and provided a list of key wholesalers and distributors in Vancouver, Toronto and Montreal. The Forum Secretariat study was complemented by a similar study done by the Forum Fisheries Agency targeting Hawaii and the West Coast of the United States. Then, in March 1999, the Forum Secretariat and the Forum Fisheries Agency collaborated on a three day marketing workshop in Honolulu that brought together 15 FIC seafood exporters. The workshop was built on these studies and provided participants with a better understanding of the North American market for their products and strategies for taking advantage of existing and future market opportunities. The workshop was funded jointly by the Republic of Taiwan and CSPODP II.

With respect to the second goal, the Forum Secretariat, in collaboration with the Forum Fisheries Agency, undertook a study of the status of commercial fisheries associations in the region with a view to determining development constraints and potential strategies for overcoming them. The study was completed in March 1999 and focused on five FICs – Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Fiji, Tonga and Samoa. It found that with the exception of the Solomon Islands and to a lesser extent, Samoa, fisheries interest group associations have played increasingly important roles in the development of commercial fisheries in these countries. With the exception of Papua New Guinea, however, associations do not have formalised mechanisms with which to relate to Government. Despite this, there was general Government and fishery association support for improved and formalised interaction as a key element of sound development practice. The study also made recommendations as to how consultative processes might be better established in each of the five countries, as well as for a regional strategy to provide national level assistance to strengthen commercial fisheries associations.

The Forum Secretariat, with support from CSPODP II, is in the planning stages of developing follow-up activities to the above-mentioned work. If you are interested in learning more about this work you can contact the Forum Secretariat by fax at (679) 312 226.



<sup>1</sup> Cook Islands, Palau, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu, Samoa, Niue and Tuvalu.



***For further information about C-SPOD, contact:***  
**Kenneth T. MacKay, Field Programme Coordinator**  
**Development & Economic Policy Division**

**Forum Secretariat**

**Private Mail Bag**

**Suva, FIJI**

**Tel: 679-312600 • Fax: 679-312696**

**Email: KennethM@forumsec.org.fj**

**William E. Cross, Vice President, International**  
**LGL Limited, Environmental Research Associates**

**P.O. Box 280, 22 Fisher Street**

**King City, Ontario, L7B 1A6**

**CANADA**

**Tel: 905-833-1244 • Fax: 905-833-1255**

**Email: wecross@lgl.com**

## **TOK BLONG PASIFIK SUBSCRIPTION FORM**

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ TEL: \_\_\_\_\_

FAX: \_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

ORGANIZATION: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ POSTAL CODE: \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTRY: \_\_\_\_\_ AMOUNT ENCLOSED: \_\_\_\_\_

Annual subscription rates are as follows: Canada - students \$15, individual \$25, organisation \$40. Pacific Islands - individual US\$10, organisation US\$15. Other countries - students US\$15, individual US\$25, organisation US\$40. Send to: SPPF (subscriptions), 1921 Fernwood Road, Victoria, BC, V8T 2Y6, Canada.

# Window On The Arts

## AKE LIANGA - ARTIST PROFILE

*by Dale Kojima and Linda Pennells*

Solomons artist Ake Lianga is a growing presence in art circles. Only 23, the fine art student at Canada's North Island College has an eclectic range of commissions. They range from carving a Volkswagen beetle that will be used as a candy factory mould to creating a four by six-foot abstract painting that features traditional Melanesian symbols.

As a child, Lianga was repeatedly spanked by his teachers for doodling and sketching all over his school books. Even in those early days, he could clearly visualise his future as an artist who would explore foreign lands. His first love was drawing, then he explored painting. He cut his hands often trying to gain the carving skills of his forefathers.

Lianga left school in Grade 9 to paint for a living. He specialised in painting murals that make folktales and local stories come to life. He painted these cultural panoramas on display walls of passenger ships and on interior and exterior walls of buildings. As an apprentice to Solomon Island artist Peter Kennedy, he learned sign painting and silk-screening.

Lianga thrived on probing his culture and brainstorming the colourful detail of stories that he would then recreate with his paintbrush. His talent was spotted by the Solomon Islands Artists' Association. At age 19, he was the youngest of all artists featured at the 1995 South Pacific Contemporary Art Exhibit in Sydney, Australia. One of his submissions was bought in Sydney by a leading gallery in New Caledonia.

The following year, his proud mother pressed him to enter a Royal Commonwealth Society arts and crafts competition. He was one of 10 awarded a scholarship from the 350 entrants from across the British Commonwealth. He was awarded Dean's Honours in his first year at art college but had not had the foresight to apply for a scholarship to support the second year of his diploma program. Comox, his adapted Canadian community, came to the rescue. CHEK-6 TV and the local newspaper

rallied so many community sponsors that the costs of Lianga's academic year were totally covered. In fact, he gratefully declined donations that were beyond his needs.

Comox community members saw the value of their investment, last November, at the opening of **Island to Island**. Comox's Muir Gallery was filled with Lianga's art rooted in Melanesian culture and motif shown with Kwakiutl masks created by David Jacobson.

"My ideas are spontaneous. I look at things. I hear things. I think of my Grandma who used to tell stories of the past. That's how our people transferred their knowledge from one generation to the next. Instead of telling stories, I paint. It is my way of telling our stories."

Lianga regrets the weakening of oral tradition and paints to capture what may otherwise be lost. With a fine arts diploma imminent, he has applied for scholarship support to do a further two-year graphic design diploma in Canada. These are the tools he hopes to take back to the Solomons Islands.

His dream is to be a freelance artist who teaches art part-time. "This way, I will contribute my knowledge to my people, my community and my country." In the Solomons, there will be less canvass. It will be largely replaced by concrete walls of buildings, tapa cloth backdrops and wooden ships. He yearns to transform Honiara's western-style cement buildings, through murals, into structures that reflect his culture. His destiny pulls him toward scaffolds and massive exterior paintings. "They capture people. They have the power to overwhelm."

Being in public space, wall art is accessible and belongs to everyone. Lianga, a dynamic blend of the spiritual and the pragmatic, also comments, "It will also be good for the tourist market."

SPPF's new logo was a gift from Lianga. The focus on his design are two people of different colour and culture coming together in the Pacific environment centred on the sun and water.