

EAST-WEST COMMUNICATION INSTITUTE

EAST-WEST CENTER
East-West Communication Institute
Honolulu, Hawaii

Pacific Islands Communication Newsletter

American Samoa
Cook Islands
Eastern Carolines
Marianas
Marshalls

New Guinea
Papua
Tonga
Western Carolines
Western Samoa

August 1971
Honolulu, Hawaii
Volume 2:2

The only groups among leaders in four Western Polynesia countries who disagree with the idea of some firm government "guidance" of the mass media are practitioners in the mass media themselves and political leaders in one of the countries.

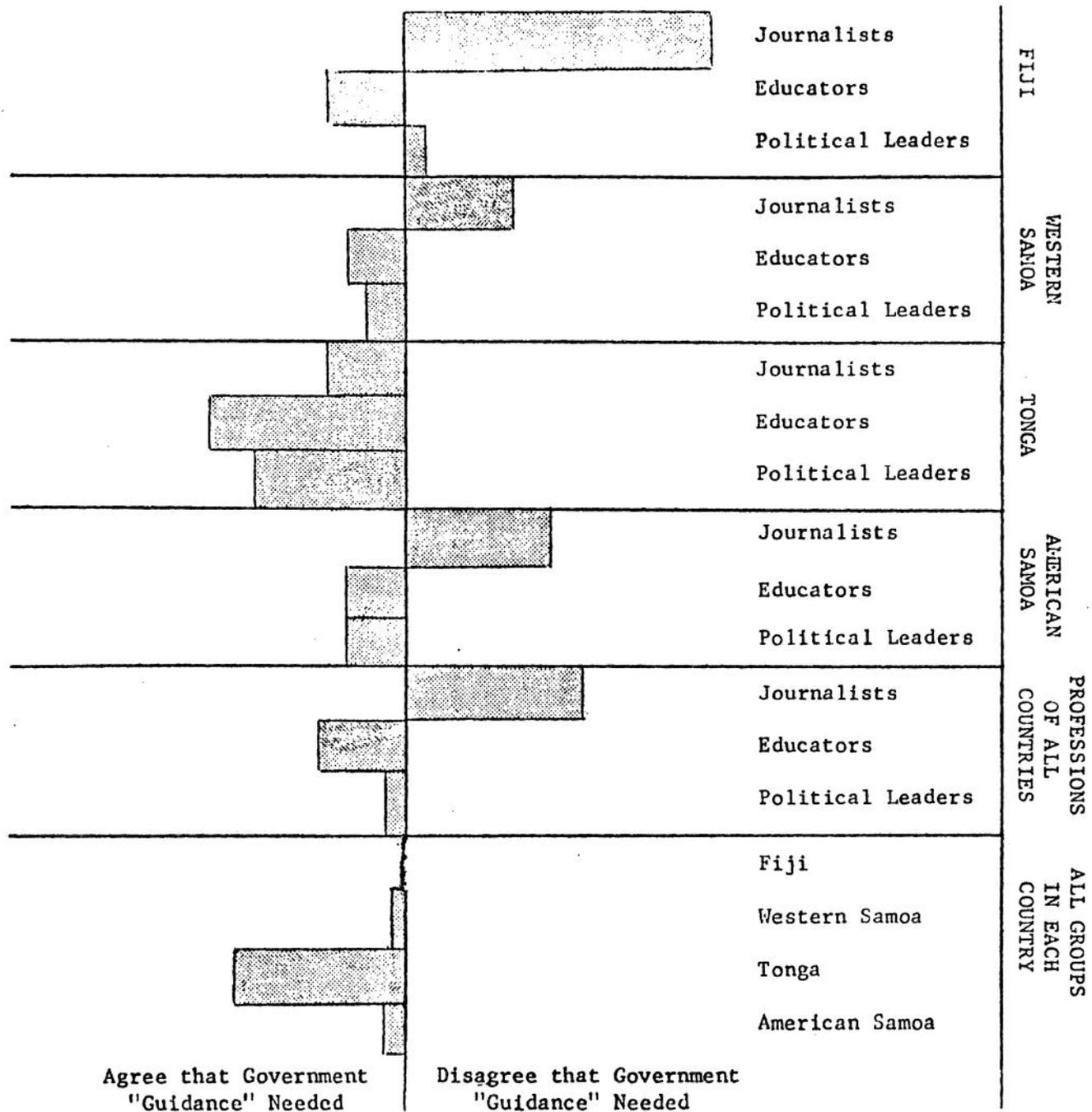
This was a part of the findings of a study of the mass media and leadership attitudes in Fiji, Tonga, American Samoa and Western Samoa during May and June 1970 by Dr. Ralph D. Barney of the Church College of Hawaii. The journalists in these countries, Dr. Barney found, demonstrated an uncertainty as to the contribution they could or were expected to make to the development of their country. This was a feeling which was widely shared by members of other groups, who demonstrated a rather strong residue of feeling which would support government controls, based on a general feeling of dissatisfaction with the performance of the press in their countries. Some 220 persons responded to the study questionnaire.

As the bar chart shows, the journalists of Fiji, American Samoa and Western Samoa were joined to some degree by the political leaders of Fiji in disagreeing with a statement that "firm government guidance" of the press is needed. Educators of all the countries, on the other hand, were in strong agreement that some guidance was necessary.

The various disagreements between groups tended to even out the overall national feeling in all countries but Tonga, which demonstrated strong support for government guidance.

The survey was a part of a study which also included analysis of newspapers and radio broadcast content to determine whether the media are contributing substantially to their nation's development and whether they are likely to become strong participants in national development programs.

The article above is part of a broader study conducted by Dr. Ralph D. Barney. He is now a Fellow at the East-West Communication Institute, and is finishing a monograph which goes into considerable detail on his findings. One



Agree that Government
"Guidance" Needed

Disagree that Government
"Guidance" Needed

of his central findings--one with serious implications for development in the Pacific--is that there is "little, if any, purposeful and/or effective contribution by the media to national development." He also notes the "shallow mass media penetration, particularly in the vernacular," in both the print and electronic media. Dr. Barney is moving to Utah in September to teach in the Communication Department at Brigham Young University but he will continue working on projects involving communication and development in the Pacific. Below is a formal abstract of his study, "The Mass Media, their Environment and Prospects in Western Polynesia," which was also his doctoral dissertation.

* * * *

The Problem -- Designed to assess the developmental capability of a nation based on the achieved level and measured capabilities of its mass communications system, this study hinges on the observable phenomenon that no nation has been able to develop or modernize itself without a highly developed mass media system.

Moving a step beyond usual studies, which measure the media as they are, the effort here is to also measure attitudes to provide a predictor of mass media development capability and projected direction of development.

Procedures -- Four areas of analysis are utilized in attempting to make this determination for the four island areas of Western Polynesia, Fiji, Tonga, Western Samoa, and American Samoa. A mass media history and media census were compiled to indicate depth of media penetration, a content analysis provides a view of current media performance in national development, an attitude survey of three opinion forming groups provides a predictor of capability and direction of development, and an analysis and comparison of national variables with similar statistics of other nations indicates a current level of development, both nationally and of the mass media, as well as provides correlative indications between media attitudes and national variables.

A Media Governance Scale allows for three basic results from the attitudinal sector. The opinion leaders and the influentials could demonstrate a Suspicious-Negative collective attitude, reducing the probabilities that the media would develop or be allowed a role in national development.

The two development oriented scale values are Pragmatic-Libertarian, an attitude which encourages media development and participation and also tends to stimulate political participation as well as economic development; and the Positive Control value which tends to indicate media development capability, but under some control, and an attitude which tends not to stimulate political participation. Developmentally, this attitude is economic centered.

Summary of findings -- Two basic determinations of this study are that the island groups studied have experienced a history of shallow mass media penetration, particularly in the vernacular, either from printed or electronic

media, and that the developmental performance of either of these forms is demonstrably low, leading to a conclusion that there is currently little, if any, purposeful and/or effective contribution by the media to national development.

In assessing prospects, the hypotheses that all countries would demonstrate some degree of Media Appreciation is accepted. However, the values emerging from American and Western Samoa which tend to place them in the Positive Control sector of the scale, leads to tentative rejection of two of four parts of a second hypothesis that Fiji, American Samoa, and Western Samoa would demonstrate Pragmatic-Libertarian values and Tonga would fall in the Positive Control sector. Pragmatic-Libertarian values dominated in Fiji and Positive Control emerged in Tonga.

A widely held view that the press needs to be controlled, demonstrated by influence groups in all four countries, leads to a general conclusion of little hope for more participatory societies in Western Polynesia. In addition, the generally low level of Media Appreciation attitudes in both the Pragmatic-Libertarian and the Positive Control sectors, would lead to a conclusion that little positive use will be made of the media as a national resource for development.

An anomalous situation of inordinately high literacy and extremely low per capita income combined with the small sampling of nations to make meaningful correlations of the Media Governance and media performance values with other national variables across a broad range of countries statistically impractical.

* * * *

East-West Center scholarships for graduate and undergraduate studies are now open for the 1972-73 school year. Application should be made through EWC contacts, listed below, in each area. The Communication Institute plans to accept about 20 new students for fall 1972, and would like to encourage applications from persons involved or interested in communication from the Pacific Islands.

The scholarship provides for a stipend of \$160 a month, a dormitory room, tuition and books, plus a field education trip to the U.S. Mainland for several months. The Institute is looking for students interested in the use of communication in economic and social development, and in cross-cultural communication. We are also interested in strengthening mass media systems.

Those interested can write to Dr. R. Lyle Webster, Institute director, for more details. Applications must be through country contacts, however, and the deadlines for those vary. Consult the list of contacts below, and write or call them if you are interested, to find out the particular deadline.

* * * *

EAST-WEST CENTER
FIELD SCREENING AGENCIES ABROAD

<u>COUNTRY</u>	<u>CONTACT</u>
American Samoa	Mr. Tony Mailo, Supervisor, Guidance & Scholarship Department of Education Pago Pago, Tutuila, American Samoa
British Solomon Islands	Director of Education Department of Education Honiara, British Solomon Islands
Cook Islands	The Secretary Public Service Commission P. O. Box 24 Rarotonga, Cook Islands
Fiji	American Vice Consul American Consulate Suva, Fiji
Guam	Dean of Students College of Guam P. O. Box EK Agana, Guam 96910
New Guinea	Director Department of Education Konedobu Territory of Papua and New Guinea
Tonga	Director of Education Education Department Nuku'Alofa, Tonga
Trust Territory	Mr. Alfonso R. Oiterong Scholarship and Student Services Officer Office of the High Commissioner Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands Saipan, Mariana Islands 96950
Western Samoa	Mr. Karanita Enari Acting Secretary to the Government Government of Western Samoa Prime Minister's Department P. O. Box 193 Apia, Western Samoa

Gjesdal said the media's most important role in underdeveloped countries is "to help create the motivation for social change which will result in the citizenry actively participating toward this change."

* * *

Asterio Takesy (Pacific Islands Journalism Seminar 1970) visited the Communication Institute recently. Takesy, in Honolulu to confer with the clerk of the Hawaii House of Representatives, has been serving as the clerk of the House of Representatives of the Micronesian Congress.

* * *

Working newsmen in Honolulu have formed the Hawaii Newsmen's Association. Members include newsmen from television, radio, newspapers and news agency bureaus. The group intends to work independently of the Honolulu Press Club, which includes a much wider membership of media-related persons and others. Leonard Ash of the Honolulu Star-Bulletin is president.

* * *

What makes an effective editorial? There has been some research done, and one study reported in the Autumn 1970 Journalism Quarterly offers these ideas to editorial writers:

1. When writing about important and complex issues, write your editorials primarily for the influential persons in your community, and then the arguments will filter by word of mouth to other readers.
2. When dealing with complex and important issues, don't expect to be effective with a short editorial. Write enough to put all your arguments in, and anticipate counterarguments and try to refute or neutralize them.
3. Short editorials about complex and important issues do little more than tell the reader which side of the issue the newspaper is on, and are not very influential in changing opinion.
4. Newspapers that consistently discuss complex issues in short editorials are not very influential.

* * *

Here are some excerpts from the Fiji Broadcasting Commission's account of October 10, 1970 Independence coverage, as published in the December 1970 ABU Newsletter, a publication of the Asian Broadcasting Union:

From Radio Fiji's point of view the approach to Independence meant many weeks of intensive planning and preparation by every member of its staff....

This co-operation, a very important and happily an ever-present quality in Radio Fiji's multi-language broadcast system, was evident when Independence was first mooted some months ago. The Deputy Manager was appointed to the Central Independence Celebrations Committee, and so broadcasting was kept up to date with all developments. Special equipment was sought, bought and installed. The sites of the various direct broadcasts were inspected. Then came the question of

logistics - of getting Fijian, Hindustani and English-language commentators, plus technicians, plus equipment - from Point 'A' to Point 'B' in time for the broadcasts. It meant the booking of hotels and transport, the chartering of aircraft and at the same time maintaining our normal three-language services....

The three-language broadcasts, English, Fijian and Hindustani were linked from Suva for the main events. The entire events of the Independence celebrations and the presence of the Prince of Wales wherever he happened to be, were recorded....

There were 20 actuality broadcasts covering Fiji's Independence and the Royal Visit. A considerable amount of additional technical equipment was needed and this was purchased from as far away as England, Europe and Australia. Especially long microphone cables had to be prepared, and in the case of Albert Park, plastic piping capable of carrying several circuits was buried beneath the ground.

High quality distribution amplifiers were installed at Albert Park and TV and Film Units had access to the broadcast sound effects of the ceremonies and performances as they were taking place.

Facilities were provided in the Suva Studios for overseas correspondents to relay reports and commentaries to their respective countries by means of Compac Cable.

Outside broadcasts followed the Royal Tour to many parts of the Dominion. There were broadcasts from eight locations outside of Suva....

A special transmission on 11.895 Mhz was used during the two main days to provide overseas listeners with a direct broadcast of events as they happened. This transmission provided a coverage of up to 2000 miles from Suva, and interested listeners reported good reception from as far away as Malaysia, the Marshall Islands and Victoria.

All events were recorded as they occurred and special circuiting enabled the sounds of the major ceremonies to be recorded without the voice of the broadcasting commentator. Up to 21 miles of magnetic tape was recorded on.

Apart from Radio Fiji's coverage, world coverage was provided by 75 press, radio, TV, and film personnel who had been sent from many Commonwealth countries, the U.S.A., and the USSR.

The Australian Commonwealth Film Unit was commissioned by the Government of Fiji to record the entire Independence Celebrations.

* * *

People in Hawaii are interested more in what's going on immediately around them than in news from the rest of the world, according to Bob Sevey, news director of KGMB-TV in Honolulu.

Sevey, talking to a Rotary group in December, said, "People in Hawaii are interested first in news of their family, then their neighborhood and community, and then the State. After that, there's a dramatic drop-off in interest, and then they want news of the Western U.S. and Asia, and after that the rest of the U.S. and the world."

Sevey, noting criticism that there are not enough TV documentaries, said that "what people say they want to see and what they watch, I'm afraid, are two different things."

* * *

Jon A. Anderson, former Honolulu radio and television newsman, has joined the Public Information Office of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands as an information specialist. Anderson visited the Communication Institute recently and discussed radio development training programs.

* * *

Ralph Barney of Church College of Hawaii has gathered a good deal of material on the press (including radio) in Western Polynesia, and plans to work with Glen Wright in Western Samoa on a history of the press in the South Pacific. Barney is in the very final stages of finishing his doctorate for the University of Missouri.

* * *

The Pacific Islands Communication Newsletter is published occasionally by the East-West Communication Institute at the East-West Center. The first two issues were called Pacific Islands Journalism Newsletter, and were developed as a continuing follow-up to the June 1970 Pacific Islands Journalism Seminar at the Center. The new title reflects the broader communication interest in the Pacific Islands, with journalism continuing to be a strong but not only interest. Contributions to the Newsletter are welcome, and are needed to keep abreast of communication activities. Persons wishing to receive the Newsletter should write to the editor, Jim Richstad, at the East-West Communication Institute, East-West Center, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822.