

## Political Reviews

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*Micronesia in Review: Issues and Events, 1 July 2010  
to 30 June 2011*

JOHN R HAGLELGAM, DAVID W KUPFERMAN,  
KELLY G MARSH, SAMUEL F MCPHETRES,  
DONALD R SHUSTER, TYRONE J TAITANO

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LORENZ GONSCHOR, HAPAKUKE PIERRE LELEIVAI,  
MARGARET MUTU, FORREST WADE YOUNG

Reviews of American Sāmoa, Cook Islands, Hawai'i, Niue, Tokelau, Tonga, and Tuvalu are not included in this issue.

#### FRENCH POLYNESIA

The period under review was not particularly rich in new events. While no economic recovery was in sight, local politicians, fed by French subsidies, continued their games of making and unmaking majorities in the Assembly of French Polynesia, culminating in the eleventh change of government since 2004. The only possibly interesting development is that the new pro-independence majority now wants to internationalize the country's problems and get it out of the grip of Paris.

As the review period started, the ongoing political instability continued to worsen as President Tong Sang's minority government became more and more immobilized. Tong Sang had been leading a coalition government between his own To Tatou Aia (Our Country) party and Gaston Flosse's Tahoeraa Huiraatira (People's Rally) since November 2009, but the coalition virtually broke apart in April 2010. However, there had not been a motion of no confidence against Tong Sang because Tahoeraa could not agree on a common platform with the opposition Union Pour La Démocratie (UPLD, Union for Democracy), led by Oscar Temaru. Cabinet ministers from Tahoeraa refused to resign, even though the party leadership

claimed Tahoeraa to be an opposition party. During a budgetary debate on 2 August, Tahoeraa representatives charged Tong Sang with incompetency to lead the country and called on him to resign (TP, 2 Aug 2010).

Tahoeraa's confusing attitude of attacking the president and demanding his resignation, while at the same time allowing its members to keep their cabinet portfolios, can only be understood by looking at the peculiarities of French Polynesia's political system. As long as Tong Sang did not resign, he could only be overthrown by a constructive vote of no confidence, which would require an overall majority and entail the automatic election of a successor. A resignation, on the other hand, would provoke a new presidential election, which could take up to three rounds of voting. In this scenario, Flosse, through clever tactics, might have had a chance to become president once more, since a relative majority would be sufficient in the third round (see articles 1 and 5 of the 2007 Organic Law of French Polynesia).

While the stalemate continued at home, the battleground for Tahitian politics was temporarily shifted overseas. During the annual Pacific Islands Forum meeting in Port Vila, Vanuatu, on 3–6 August, Vice President Edouard Fritch asked that his country finally be granted full membership. After having been granted observer status in 2004, French Poly-

nesia became an associated member in 2006, which Fritch considered an unjust, second-class status since it precluded the country's representatives from participating in some of the Forum's important political and economic discussions. The request for full membership was denied by the majority of Forum member countries because, according to the Forum's statutes, full membership is limited to independent or fully self-governing countries (such as those in free association), while French Polynesia is considered only a partially autonomous territory under French sovereignty. Assembly Speaker Oscar Temaru, who also attended the Forum meeting, underlined that as long as the country was not independent, full membership was not possible (TP, 4 Aug, 8 Aug 2010). In this sense, Fritch and the other pro-French politicians have been acting hypocritically—at home they staunchly refuse independence from France while at international meetings they act as if their country is a sovereign state.

At the same time, irresponsible behavior had been common in domestic issues as well. In mid-August, the employees of the municipal administration of Teva I Uta on Tahiti's south shore went on strike because UPLD Mayor Tina Cross had demanded that her employees accept a reduction in salaries after misspending by the previous Tahoeraa municipal administration had brought Teva I Uta to the brink of bankruptcy (TPM, Sept 2010). It was nearly three months before the conflict was resolved and municipal services resumed on 3 October (TPM, Nov 2010).

A few days later, on 5 October, the

assembly passed a law prohibiting outsider companies from establishing mobile telephone services in the country. This protected the monopoly of the local Postal and Telecommunications Service, which has led to French Polynesia's mobile phone rates being among the most expensive in the world (TPM, Nov 2010). When the French State Council declared the law unconstitutional on 7 February 2011, Ia Mana Te Nunaa, one of UPLD's constituent parties, characterized the council's decision as an act of colonialism (TP, 8 Feb 2011).

On 15–17 October, French Minister of Overseas Territories Marie-Luce Penchard visited the country. One of her agenda items was to discuss proposed changes to the election mode for the next assembly elections, but the changes were staunchly rejected by the three main local political parties, while a few hundred demonstrators demanded immediate early elections. In an interview before her departure, she was quoted as saying that local politicians give her a headache (TPM, Nov 2010).

Since local politics give headaches to others besides Mme Penchard, more and more people are pursuing alternatives to the current official political system. One alternative is the creation of self-proclaimed governments. The most colorful and controversial among these, named "Hau Pakumotu," once again made headlines when its "king" was crowned in front of the assembly in July (TPM, Oct 2010). In October, its adherents also occupied a property in Outumaoro, Punaauia, on Tahiti's west coast, with their uniformed militia intimidating other claimants to the property (TP, 18 Oct). The month of

October also saw the birth of another royalist political movement, led by Gaston Tetuanui, demanding the formation of an autonomous entity in the Leeward Islands and the creation of a “Kingdom of Hawaiki Nui,” thus combining the popular themes of royal restoration and outer island secession into one movement (*TPM*, Nov 2010).

The latter theme, outer-island autonomy from “Tahitian imperialism,” received a new boost with the creation of a “Community of Municipalities” in the Marquesas Islands, an initiative by the six municipalities in the archipelago to create a common structure in order to facilitate direct negotiations with Paris and bypass bureaucracy on the country level. On 17 December, Joseph Kaiha, the mayor of Ua Pou, was elected president of the community (*TPM*, Jan 2011).

On 24 October, the new territorial hospital in Taaone, in the city of Pirae east of Papeete, was inaugurated after nine years of construction. By late November, all patients were transferred from the old Mamao hospital in Papeete. With an overall floor surface of 65,000 square meters, 546 beds, ten inner courtyards, and a giant glass-covered hall twenty-three meters high, the complex in Taaone is one of the largest hospitals in the Pacific. The hospital was one of the prestige projects of former President Flosse, whose administration had begun construction of the project in 2001. Since then, however, construction had been slowed many times because the country government had not been able to afford the high costs and the French government was at first reluctant to step in to cover the difference. Altogether, construction of the hospital

cost about 40 billion CFP francs (approximately US\$400 million), an enormous sum for the small country. After they had already staged a protest in front of the presidential palace in July 2010 following the inauguration, several construction companies set up protest billboards at the entrance of the hospital because the country government had not paid their bills yet (*TPM*, Aug 2010; *TP*, 25 Oct 2010).

Critics say that the maintenance costs for the huge complex will be so high that the country government will need more subsidies from Paris in order to cover them. Furthermore, the hospital’s energy supply depends entirely on external power sources, as no one thought to cover the gigantic roof with solar cells or to use the cold water of the nearby ocean as coolant for the air conditioning system (*TPM*, Nov 2010). More generally speaking, it is quite problematic that the current health policy of the country government focuses almost entirely on Tahiti Island, where cutting-edge medical technology is made available in a giant hospital, while medical care on the outer islands often remains precarious.

Another improvement in infrastructure occurred on 1 September, when the underwater cable between Tahiti and Hawai’i, named Hono-tua, was put into service, enabling high-speed Internet access for French Polynesia (*TPM*, Oct 2010). However, in mid-March 2011 the cable project also led to a judicial investigation of various politicians and administrators, including President Tong Sang, because there were irregularities in the awarding of the contract to telecommunications company Alcatel (*TPM*, April 2011).

But there was yet another, more severe scandal. Reynald Temarii, the vice president of the Fédération Internationale du Football Association (FIFA [soccer]), was suspended from office on 17 October 2010 because he was under investigation for corruption. Temarii, as well as the Nigerian Amos Adamu, FIFA executive board members for Oceania and Africa respectively, were charged with attempting to sell their votes for the 2018 Football World Cup host country decision. Journalists from the *London Times* posing as American lobbyists had asked Temarii how much it would cost to convince him to vote for the United States, and he had suggested a sum of several million dollars. Even though the secretly recorded interview reveals that Temarii did not want to take the bribe personally but rather have it invested into the comparatively poor Oceania Football Federation, it was clearly a case of illegal bribery.

Former professional football player Temarii had served then President Gaston Flosse in various positions since 1991, had founded the Taheraa youth organization Jeun'Orange, and was cabinet minister for youth and sports from 1998 to 2004. After Flosse lost power in 2004, Temarii founded his own splinter political party but then left local politics when he was offered a high position in FIFA. In January 2010 he was promoted to FIFA vice president, the first representative of Oceania ever to hold that position. It goes without saying that this was the climax of a brilliant career envied by many a Tahitian, which made his irresponsible behavior all the more saddening (*TPM*, Nov 2010). On

18 November, FIFA decided to permanently remove him from the executive board, suspend him for one year from all sports activities, and fine him 5,000 Swiss francs (about US\$5,675) (*TPM*, Dec 2010).

On 1 December, an opinion poll revealed that 97 percent of the population was unsatisfied with the political situation, 90 percent had no trust in any of the current politicians, and 57 percent wanted early elections in order to replace them with different leaders as well as a referendum on independence within the next five years (*TPM*, Jan 2011).

The New Year started with a personnel change in the local representation of the French government. High Commissioner Adolphe Colrat, in office since July 2008, left his position on 7 January 2011 and returned to France to assume another administrative post. He was replaced by Richard Didier, who was inaugurated on 22 January. Since Didier was an advisor of former French President Jacques Chirac (a personal friend and sponsor of Gaston Flosse), speculations arose that his appointment was part of a still-functioning Chirac-Flosse support network (*TPM*, Feb 2011).

The Union Pour La Démocratie, on the other hand, has its French supporters as well. On 23 January, former French Minister of Overseas Territories Christian Paul visited Tahiti to renew the convention of partnership between his French Socialist Party and Temaru's pro-independence Tavini Huiraatira (People's Servant) party, the leading component of UPLD (*TPM*, Feb 2011).

Meanwhile, judicial investigations and trials of various past corruption

scandals continued throughout the review period. Former directors of the territorial television station TNTV, Eric Monod and Loïc Brigato, were sentenced to suspended prison terms and fines for misuse of company property on 10 August (*TPM*, Sept 2010).

The main targets of judicial activity, however, were the numerous misdeeds of former President Flosse. The investigations received a new twist in January, when Oscar Temaru and his attorney, Stanley Cross, surprisingly withdrew their earlier complaint that a presidential intelligence unit that Flosse had established in violation of French law had spied on them and thus invaded their privacy (*NT*, 5 Jan 2011; *DT*, 8 Jan 2011). Fears arose that the whole affair would be buried because of Flosse's still-influential protection networks (*TPM*, March 2011). However, Annie Rousseau and journalist Alex du Prel, two of the other original plaintiffs, refused to withdraw their suit, and the court announced that it would pursue investigations (*TPM*, April 2011). On 18 April, another trial started in the Papeete Court against Flosse and eighty-six co-defendants for so-called fictional employments during Flosse's semi-authoritarian presidency in the late 1990s and early 2000s (*TPM*, May 2011).

While Flosse has so far politically survived all trials, another leading politician, Émile Vernaudeau, the former mayor of Mahina on Tahiti's east coast, was indefinitely removed from politics, receiving a sentence both literally by the judiciary and figuratively by the voters. While serving as minister for sports, postal services, and telecommunications in Oscar Temaru's

cabinet between 2004 and 2006, Vernaudeau had embezzled about 170 million CFP francs (about US\$1.7 million) from the postal budget for private purposes. During the last general municipal elections in March 2008, Vernaudeau had been reelected mayor in absentia while in detention awaiting trial. One year later, in another corruption affair of a smaller scale, he was sentenced to a suspended jail term, which removed him from office. When his probation term expired in late 2010, several of his party's municipal councilors resigned in order to provoke a special election so that Vernaudeau could be reelected to the council and regain the mayoralty. However, during the campaign in mid-January 2011, Vernaudeau was convicted of embezzlement, sentenced to five years in prison, and sent to jail immediately (*TP*, 18 Jan 2011). A Court of Appeal confirmed the sentence on 23 June (*TPM*, Aug 2011). The special municipal elections on 30 January and 6 February were won by a non-party-affiliated list, and their leading candidate, Patrice Jamet, was elected mayor by the newly constituted municipal council. Vernaudeau's list came in third, behind the local Tahoeraa list of Nicolas Sanquer (*TP*, 6 Feb 2011). Evidently, the people of Mahina have had enough of their formerly popular mayor's escapades, but besides this purely local interpretation, the election results were also significant as an indication of a general dissatisfaction with the traditional party system. By voting for an independent list, Mahina's citizens rejected not only Vernaudeau but also all the political parties represented in the assembly.

Another scandal made headlines in mid-January when the president of the University of French Polynesia, Tahitian linguist Louise Peltzer, was accused of plagiarism because parts of her 1999 essay “Des Langues et des Hommes” (Languages and People) were found to be remarkably similar to the French translation of the 1993 book *La ricerca della lingua perfetta nella cultura europea* (The Search for the Perfect Language in the European Culture) by Italian author Umberto Eco. Peltzer first reacted defensively and charged her critics with racial prejudice against her as the first Tahitian at the helm of the university, but after she lost the confidence of most of the faculty, Peltzer resigned on 1 April (TPM, May 2011). Eventually, archeologist Eric Conte was elected to succeed her (TP, 23 June 2011).

As the New Year progressed, the political crisis worsened. By February 2011, the political stalemate had gone on for more than nine months with no end in sight. Tong Sang was still president but leading a minority government with no chance to pass any legislation in the assembly. Since the opposition UPLD as well as the semi-opposition Tahoeraa refused to endorse the president’s 2011 budget proposal, Tong Sang suggested dissolution of the assembly and fresh elections to the French government, but at the same time kept refusing to resign (TP, 11 Feb 2011).

Because the 2007 modification of the Organic Law of French Polynesia provides severe consequences if the assembly does not pass the annual budget by March each year (see article 34, section II, 2007 Organic Law of French Polynesia), pressure on the

representatives increased. Finally, on 20 February, a modified version of the budget proposal was passed by a solid majority of 43 votes out of a total of 57 assembly members. This majority included UPLD and Tahoeraa, as well as Ia Ora Te Fenua (May the Land Live, a splinter group led by Jean-Christophe Bouissou that had earlier broken away from To Tatou Aia), while the minority government caucus of To Tatou Aia abstained (TP, 20 Feb 2011).

In a press conference, Tong Sang denounced the assembly vote, arguing that according to the Organic Law a budget vote could only be legitimate with the president’s approval. Therefore, the French State Council (the highest court of France) was asked for its opinion (PIR, 28 Feb 2011). Without waiting for the court’s decision, Tong Sang issued a decree that published his budget proposal in the official bulletin as the actual 2011 government budget. By enacting a budget by executive decree, Tong Sang clearly overstepped his authority, and this unconstitutional act was the final nail in the coffin for his government. When five of his cabinet ministers, including Vice President Fritch and the other ministers from Tahoeraa, refused to endorse his budgetary decree, the president summarily dismissed them on 28 February. Among those dismissed was Minister of Economic Reconversion Teva Rohfritsch, who received the news of his immediate dismissal while representing French Polynesia at a conference of European Union-affiliated Overseas Territories in New Caledonia. This did not help to improve the international image of the country, already tarnished by years

of political instability (TP, 28 Feb 2011).

Now reduced to a splinter group with only a handful of supporters in the assembly, Tong Sang's minority government was still holding power since the opposition parties remained unable to find a common candidate and form a common platform that would enable a constructive no-confidence vote. During the last weeks of March, however, UPLD, with the largest caucus in the assembly, carefully maneuvered behind the scenes to gather a bare majority of its own, without having to rely on the two other, pro-French opposition groups, Tahoeraa and Ia Ora Te Fenua. A motion of no confidence was introduced on 24 March (TP, 24 March 2011). This was made possible when a few To Tatou Aia representatives from the outer islands switched sides. In order to consolidate the new majority ideologically, UPLD required its new adherents to sign a declaration demanding French Polynesia's reinscription on the United Nations list of non-self-governing territories (from which France had unilaterally removed the country in 1947), a core element of UPLD's platform. Following negotiations that took place until the last minute, the political stalemate of more than a year was finally over, at least for the time being, when Tong Sang was overthrown on 1 April in a no-confidence motion and replaced once more by Oscar Temaru by a bare majority of twenty-nine votes (TP, 1 April 2011).

On 6 April, Temaru presented his new cabinet of eleven ministers, most of them UPLD members as well as several newly "converted" former To

Tatou Aia members from the outer islands. The new vice president is Antony Geros, who had already held the position in earlier Temaru-led cabinets (TP, 6 April 2011). On 14 May, UPLD caucus chairman Jacqui Drollet was elected Temaru's successor as Speaker of the assembly (TPM, May 2011).

This change of government marked the end of Tong Sang's third term in office since 2006 and the beginning of Temaru's fifth term since 2004. What is interesting about this most recent act in French Polynesia's political drama is the fact that the country is now headed for the first time by a government that has an explicit mandate to push for decolonization on the international level. Temaru's earlier majorities had always failed in this respect because they included representatives opposed to independence who accused Temaru of breaking his promise to them to remain neutral in the decolonization question in exchange for their political support.

Another project of the new Temaru government is the introduction of a progressive income tax, which is currently nonexistent (TP, 4 April 2011). This would be an important step to curb the drastically increasing social inequalities in the country. But this plan is just as bold politically as the decolonization initiative, since politicians and government officials are the main profiteers of both the French government subsidies and the current unjust taxation system.

During the period under review, the government took the first steps to curb its spending by selling off unnecessary prestige objects. On 15 October, the Tong Sang government sold the historic Rocklands Hostel in Auckland to

a New Zealand real estate agency for NZ\$5.1 million (US\$4.2 million), much less than the purchase price paid by an earlier Temaru government in 2005 (TP, 15 Oct 2010). On 10 March, the presidential airplane, bought by the Flosse government in the early 2000s and thus nicknamed “Air Flosse One,” was sold to a European syndicate on behalf of the Bhutanese national airline Druk Air for 6.2 million euros (about US\$7.5 million) (TPM, April 2011).

A more drastic step was taken by the new Temaru government when it decided to move the presidency out of the Flosse-era luxury presidential palace and into an older government building and to lease the palace to businesses. Vice President Geros stated that a colonial-style palace did not suit modern Tahiti and that when he and his colleagues entered the palace, they felt out of place. According to unconfirmed rumors, a Chinese bank and a hotel chain were interested in leasing the building (TPM, May 2011). Following this trend, in late April, the French Development Agency told the French Polynesia government to sell the building that houses its office in Paris as well; otherwise the country would no longer receive loans from the agency (TPM, June 2011).

While all of these measures may have important symbolic meaning, it would be far more prudent in light of the country’s disastrous economic and financial situation for the administration to cut the excessive salaries of politicians as well as those of countless officials in the numerous and often unnecessary and incompetent government departments, since the sum of all these salaries by far exceeds the

maintenance cost for a few pretentious buildings. The only politician who has dared to take initiative in that direction thus far is Sabrina Birk (UPLD), who threatened to resign in protest of her colleagues’ refusal to enact drastic pay cuts. She decided to stay in the assembly but chose to accept less than one third of her monthly salary of 630,000 CFP francs (about US\$6,300) and donate the rest to a children’s aid organization. She also announced that she would pay her staff the same salary as herself and also make a charitable donation out of the rest of the 580,000 CFP francs she receives monthly to pay staff members (TPM, June–July 2011).

On 19 April, Papeete saw another union-led demonstration against the failure of successive governments to improve the economic situation. The whole protest, attended by about 2,000 participants, was rather hypocritical, however, since it was once more led by people who benefit the most from the system (TPM, May 2011). A few days before, assembly member Hiro Tefaarere, a former union official with a notorious past as a political turncoat, surprisingly told the naked truth on the floor of the assembly, denouncing both politicians and union officials and warning that the system could not go on like this (TP, 12 April 2011).

At the same time, the economic and social decay of the country is becoming more and more visible. Not only has the number of homeless in the streets of Papeete increased dramatically (TPM, May 2009), one can also see more and more abandoned buildings in downtown Papeete, some corners of which are

beginning to look like ghost towns. The reason is usually property owners' lack of funds due to the bad economic situation (*NT*, 28 Dec 2010).

With no solution for the economic crisis in sight, it is not surprising that more and more people are leaving the country. Due to the artificial economic growth brought about by French subsidies in the past, French Polynesia used to be among the Pacific Island entities with the lowest number in the diaspora, but this is slowly changing. Tahitian expatriate communities are beginning to grow, mainly in New Caledonia, France, and francophone Canada (*TPM*, Aug 2010), but also in New Zealand, Hawai'i, and the US West Coast.

One has to wonder why the local politicians, with quite a large amount of policy-making powers at their disposal, have been preoccupied with power struggles and have completely failed to make any significant improvements in the economic and social fields over the last couple of years. Attentively following the developments since the early 2000s, I have lately begun to speculate whether the irresponsible, and in the long run self-destructive behavior of the political elites might not be a kind of subconscious response to French colonial patronizing policies of the past and present. Since Tahitian politicians have been constantly treated like children (who are either to be repressed or to be spoiled), their reaction has indeed been to behave like children.

In this sense, the initiative of the new Temaru government to internationalize the issue by seeking to reinscribe the country on the United Nations list of non-self-governing ter-

ritories is a bold step. The opposition in the assembly, on the other hand, is running up against Temaru's decolonization plans. When a resolution to support reinscription was introduced by the cabinet to the assembly committee on institutional issues, the three "autonomist" (ie, anti-independence) opposition caucuses of *Tahoeraa*, *To Tatou Aia*, and *Ia Ora Te Fenua* denounced the government's plan in a joint press statement and announced that they would fiercely resist the passing of the resolution. This led to an adjournment of debate on the resolution on the assembly floor until mid-August (*TP*, 21 June 2011).

Despite claims by the "autonomists" to the contrary, colonialism is alive and well in French Polynesia. Nothing shows this more clearly than the French government's policy toward the Tahitian language. In May 2011, the French ministry of education announced plans to abolish the *CAPES* (*certificat d'aptitude au professorat de l'enseignement du second degré* [certificate of ability to teach in secondary education]) diploma for the teaching of so-called regional languages (including Tahitian) by 2012. This could jeopardize the official position of the Tahitian language in French Polynesia's education system, in which Tahitian can be chosen instead of a foreign language in *collège* and *lycée* (middle and high school) and in which Tahitian can be taken to satisfy the foreign language requirement in the *baccalauréat* (high school diploma). Representatives of various political parties, of the Maohi Protestant Church (the country's largest denomination), and the Tahitian Academy (the language commission) were out-

raged over the plans. In early June, the Assembly of French Polynesia passed a unanimous resolution denouncing the education ministry's plans and demanding to maintain the diploma. Speaker Jacqui Drollet stated that this was part of a colonial political strategy by the French government to further undermine Polynesian identity through language assimilation (TP, 14 June 2011). Senator Richard Tuheiaava, one of the two representatives of the country in the French Senate, considered the plan to be contradictory to the French constitution (which since a 2008 amendment recognizes "regional languages") as well as the UN Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, which France ratified in 2007 (TP, 30 May 2011). Led by the Tahitian Academy and the Maohi Protestant Church, hundreds demonstrated on June 26 in front of the Pouvanaa a Oopa monument in Papeete for the maintenance of the diploma (TP, 26 June 2011).

It is quite apparent that Tahitian and other Polynesian languages are indeed threatened. Already, most young people speak French more often and more fluently than they do Tahitian, as a recent study by a French scholar has shown (Ferment Mear 2010), and the French government's colonialist policies are reinforcing the trend. On 6 October, the European Human Rights Court rejected a complaint by assembly member Sabrina Birk against an earlier French government ban on the official use of Tahitian in the assembly (TP, 6 Oct 2010).

A continuation of French colonialism is also apparent in the treatment of the victims of nuclear testing. Even though in 2010 France passed the

so-called Morin Act, a law to enable the compensation of former test workers suffering from radiation-related illnesses, the law contains numerous bureaucratic hurdles that prevent many victims from receiving recognition of their sufferings and, as a result, adequate compensation. Local nuclear test victims' association Moruroa e Tatou repeatedly denounced the failings of the compensation process and demanded a revision of the Morin Act (TP, 17 Nov 2010, 30 June 2011).

Despite France's continuing colonial policies, however, its long-term interests in the country are becoming more and more dubious. An indication of this is the continuing military pullout. At the end of 2010, the commander of military forces in French Polynesia, Rear Admiral Jérôme Régnier, announced that 1,000 positions, including 750 military personnel and 250 civilian employees, will be cut by 2016 (DT, 20 Dec 2010).

Finally, yet another change in the political system is under way. After consultation with some of the leading local politicians, French Minister for Overseas Territories Marie-Luce Penchard introduced into the French legislature a bill for a new amendment to the French Polynesia Organic Act of 2004. After some debate, it was passed by the French Senate on 31 May and was thereafter transferred to the National Assembly, the other legislative chamber of the French Republic, where it was adopted at the end of June (TP, 30 June 2011). The bill proposes to restore the one-third-of-seats bonus for the leading party, which was part of the 2004 organic law but had been removed in the last amendment of 2007. The election mode in two

rounds, on the other hand, with a 12.5 percent threshold for admission to the second round, first introduced in 2007, will be retained. Besides, the six current constituencies are to be deleted and replaced with a unitary constituency with several sections. Furthermore, constructive no-confidence votes will henceforth require a 60 percent majority of representatives. All of these changes are supposed to create more solid majorities and thereby decrease the country's chronic instability. Unlike the 2007 amendment, Penchard's bill is not intended to lead to a dissolution of the assembly and early elections, but rather it is supposed to be applied to the next regular assembly elections in 2013 (RNZI, 1 June 2011; TP, 2 June 2011, 15 July 2011).

In French Polynesia, the bill met mixed reactions. Many Tahitian politicians favor the creation of a unitary constituency, since this would lead to a more appropriate representation of the political will of the country's body politic. Representatives from the outer islands, on the other hand, criticized the deletion of the separate constituencies because they feared that this would lead to an even stronger dominance by Tahiti Island, which holds more than two-thirds of the country's inhabitants, and further marginalize the outer islands. On 14 April, the Assembly of French Polynesia adopted a "reserved" (ie, neither for nor against, but skeptical) opinion on the bill, and the two French Polynesia deputies in the National Assembly both criticized the adopted text and called for further modifications (TP, 30 June 2011). Altogether, however, the local political scene

reacted far less critically than in 2007 when Paris imposed the organic law reform against the explicit will of the assembly's majority.

Leaving controversial politics aside and looking at some positive events in the cultural field, the period under review was also marked by milestones in the revival of traditional navigation. The race by two neo-traditional canoes to reach the 2010 Shanghai World Expo before its closing was won by neither team. One of the two canoes, *O Tahiti Nui Freedom*, reached Shanghai on November 22 after a voyage of 114 days. After leaving Tahiti on 11 July, the voyage led through the Cook Islands, Niue, Tonga, Fiji, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, Indonesia, and the Philippines. The goal of the voyage, led by Tahitian scientist Hiria Ottino, was to reversely duplicate the historic migration route of the Austronesian peoples—from southern China, through Taiwan and Southeast Asia, and into the insular Pacific—and thereby promote French Polynesia among the Expo visitors. Slowed by damage from several storms, the canoe arrived too late for the Expo, but the crew was nevertheless enthusiastically received by the Chinese authorities and greeted with a military honor guard in Shanwei Harbor, Guangdong (TPM, Dec 2010)

The voyage of more than 15,000 kilometers was one of the longest in the history of the modern revival of Polynesian navigation. The competing canoe, *Upoo Tahiti*, with owner Clément Pito and navigator Teiki Pambrun, was less fortunate. Pito and Pambrun, who had originally collaborated with Ottino on one single

project before having a falling out, chose a straight route through central Polynesia and Micronesia and decided to sail without an escort vessel or official permits. Unfortunately, damage and other problems ended the voyage in Tuvalu, where the canoe was abandoned, and the crew returned to Tahiti (*TPM*, Oct 2010).

Another highlight in Polynesian navigation took place when a fleet of seven neo-traditional canoes, named Tavaru 2011, sailed from French Polynesia to Hawai'i between April and June 2011. The fleet, sponsored by German philanthropist Dieter Paulmann and his marine protection foundation Okeanos, consisted of the Tahitian canoe *Faafaite*, one canoe each from the Cook Islands, Sāmoa, and Fiji, two from Aotearoa/New Zealand, and one with a pan-Pacific crew. The canoes had first gathered on Fakarava atoll in the Tuamotu Archipelago, then sailed to Nuku Hiva in the Marquesas Islands, and from there to Hilo on Hawai'i Island, where they were enthusiastically greeted by Hawaiian religious and cultural leaders. The voyage of more than 4,000 kilometers between the Marquesas and Hawai'i took the fleet only twelve days. After a tour of the Hawaiian Islands, the canoes plan to make a trip to the US West Coast and to hold a reunion in the Marquesas in November. Most significantly, *Faafaite* is the first neo-traditional Tahitian canoe to sail to Hawai'i, a somewhat belated response to the famed voyage of the Hawaiian vessel *Hōkūle'a* to Tahiti in 1976.

Besides these wonderful events, the country's cultural scene suffered a terrible loss during the year under

review. On 12 February, Jean-Marc Teraituatini Pambrun passed away in Paris at the age of fifty-seven. Pambrun was one of the most renowned contemporary Tahitian writers and artists. Among his numerous works are *Le Sale Petit Prince* (a collection of satirical short stories); *Les Parfums du Silence* (a play based on Paul Gauguin's last years in the Marquesas Islands); and the novel *Le Bambou Noir*. Most of his literary works featured his own drawings. In 2006, Pambrun, a lifelong pro-independence activist, was appointed curator of the territorial museum, Musée de Tahiti et des Iles, in Punaauia by then President Oscar Temaru. As curator, Pambrun was responsible for a thorough renovation of the museum and several special exhibits featuring Polynesian artifacts from around the world. His last great literary work was a biography of famed Tahitian poet and filmmaker Henri Hiro (1944–1990), which came out in late 2010. Strictly following his will, Pambrun's funeral on Moorea Island was a rare occurrence, as it was celebrated with purely traditional, non-Christian ceremonies (*TPM*, March 2011).

Besides Pambrun, a few other notable personalities passed away. Pierre Vérin, a former president of the University of French Polynesia, died in July 2010 at the age of seventy-eight. Vérin was a French linguist and anthropologist who had become famous for his research in the Austral islands (*TPM*, Aug 2010). On 14 August, Chinese-Tahitian painter Francois Teriitehau passed away at sixty-five (*TPM*, Sept 2011), and on 11 September, fisherman Tavae Raioaoa died at age sixty-four.

Raioaoa had become famous in 2002, when, following engine damage, he survived 118 days drifting on an open boat before reaching Aitutaki in the Cook Islands, where a museum was subsequently built in his honor. His adventure has also been told in a book published in French and Tahitian (*TPM*, Oct 2010). Finally, on 16 January 2011, René Calinaud, a former magistrate and legal expert on land tenure matters who had served on the bench since 1959, left this world at the age of eighty (*TPM*, Feb 2011).

On a final note, the Catholic Church, the country's second largest religious denomination, had an important change in leadership. On 31 March, Archbishop Hubert Coppenrath, in office since 1998, retired at the record age of eighty. In his stead, Pope Benedict XVI appointed Father Bruno Mai to serve as apostolic administrator of the archdiocese until a new archbishop is nominated (*TPM*, April 2011).

LORENZ GONSCHOR

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### MĀORI ISSUES

The year under review was one of shocking upheavals for Māori in more ways than one. In August and September 2010 we lost some key leaders. In September 2010, in February 2011, and in June 2011, Christchurch suffered a series of earthquakes that left many Māori families devastated and feeling abandoned as recovery aid passed them by. On the political scene, Prime Minister John Key finally got his wish when the Māori Party forced Hōne Harawira out, only to have Harawira win a by-election for his Taitokerau seat and return to Parliament as the leader of the new Mana Movement. But the most bewildering development was the Māori Party turning its back on its constituents and supporting the passage into law of the racist Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Bill.

On 17 August 2010, two very different leaders from different parts of the country passed away. In Taranaki, Te Miringa Hohaia died unexpectedly at the age of fifty-eight. He was a scholar, artist, and activist who spent his adult life fighting the injustices perpetrated on his Taranaki people by the British. He was trained and deeply skilled in the traditions, customs, and history of his ancestral home, Parihaka, a place renowned for the atrocities that the British committed there over many years. In the 1970s he was involved in the eventually successful Treaty of Waitangi claims against the Crown to stop the pollution and despoliation of the seafood beds off the north Taranaki coast. In the 1990s he was one of the leaders of the complex and successful Taranaki Treaty claims. In 2000 he co-curated the hugely successful landmark exhibition *Parihaka, The Art of Passive Resistance* at Wellington's City Gallery, and in 2005 he created the Parihaka International Peace Festival, which has become an annual celebration of the heritage of Taranaki (Ashworth, Hond, and Hohaia 2010; Māori Party 2010a). An obituary noted, "In life he was akin to his tupuna [ancestors], becoming perhaps the most hated person in the province among Pakeha in the 1980s as he fought the injustice of the pittance paid by leaseholders farming confiscated Taranaki Maori reserve land. . . . Opponents vilified him, echoing the 19th century settler reaction to the non-violent campaign of Parihaka founders Tohu and Te Whiti" (Ashworth, Hond, and Hohaia 2010, 9).

On the east coast, Te Kapunga (Koro) Matemoana Dewes passed

away. He was staunchly Ngāti Porou, a scholar, a thinker, and the architect of the Māori Studies Department at Victoria University in Wellington. There he challenged the dry, dusty approach to university teaching and scholarship imported from Britain, writing the first MA thesis in the Māori language. However, he was passed over as the inaugural head of the department, so he left academia and returned home to his Ngāti Porou roots to farm and work for his people. It was many years before Victoria University recognized his contributions. In 2004 they awarded him an honorary doctorate in literature (Fox 2010).

In September 2010, Sir Archie John Te Atawhai Taiaroa passed away. He was Te Atihaunui a Pāpārangi, Ngāti Tūwharetoa, and Ngāti Apa and chairman of the Whanganui River Māori Trust Board. He played a key role in one of the nation's longest running court cases—the Whanganui River claim. He took a number of leading roles tribally, nationally, and internationally. He was at the heart of the protracted Māori fisheries struggles and a leader of the Māori broadcasting litigation that spanned over twenty years and led to Māori radio and television. He traveled to the United Nations, the International Whaling Commission, and the Privy Council in London to defend the rights of Māori and indigenous people (Māori Party 2010b; Harawira 2010).

On 8 September, the first earthquake hit Christchurch. It measured 7.1 on the Richter scale and, while there was extensive damage to buildings in the central business district in particular, there was no loss of human life. Hundreds of aftershocks followed,

and a magnitude 6.3 quake on 22 February 2011 claimed 181 lives and caused widespread damage, mostly to buildings and infrastructure already weakened by the September quake. On 13 June, a third quake, again of magnitude 6.3, followed a magnitude 5.6 tremor, causing more damage. A major problem, particularly in the eastern suburbs, was liquefaction—liquid mud and silt forced above ground by each major quake.

In September and then again in February, the news media focused on the central business district where there was significant loss of life. While most suburban areas, including the more wealthy areas, were not severely damaged, the poorer eastern suburbs, which are home to many Māori, were greatly impacted. Water, power, and other services were quickly restored to the wealthy suburbs, but a fortnight after the February quake the eastern suburbs were still without power, water, sewerage, food, shops, money, petrol, passable roads, and other necessities. One Māori reporter noted that “officials from the Prime Minister down . . . were seemingly oblivious to the real life human tragedy taking place where tens of thousands of people were without . . . necessities we take for granted in modern society” (Fox 2011, 11). In the days following the February quake, thousands left Christchurch, making their way home to their own tribal areas. Many marae (Māori communal meeting places) north of the disaster area looked after weary, shaken travelers, who arrived with only the clothes on their backs, hungry, unwashed, and with little fuel in their tanks (Fox 2011, 12).

In July 2010, Professor James Anaya, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, warned the government about its mistreatment of Māori. In a preliminary statement issued at the end of his weeklong visit he said, “I cannot help but note the extreme disadvantage in the social and economic conditions of the Māori people” (Anaya 2010). His 2011 report to the UN Human Rights Committee acknowledged the advances the New Zealand government had made by, for example, formally expressing support for the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2010. However, Anaya also pointed out a number of serious ongoing problems, including the lack of adequate legal protection for the human rights of Māori as citizens and their rights to their lands and resources; the shortcomings, inadequacy, and unfairness of the treaty settlement process; and the extreme disadvantage in the social and economic conditions of the Māori people in comparison to the rest of New Zealand society (Anaya 2011).

One of the areas the special rapporteur warned about was the Marine and Coastal Area (Takutai Moana) Bill that was before the House. He pointed out that the bill “should be in line with international standards regarding the rights of indigenous peoples to their traditional lands and resources” (Anaya 2011, 2). As a result of the agreement entered into by the ruling National Party and the Māori Party, the government agreed to repeal the previous government’s loathed and discriminatory Foreshore and Seabed Act 2004. It was to be replaced by the Marine and Coastal

Area (Takutai Moana) Act 2011. The Māori Party gave assurances that the legislation would respect Māori wishes and the influential National Iwi Chairs Forum conducted extensive discussions with the government to ensure that it would uphold Māori rights. In the end, the National Party government ignored both of them. It drew up legislation that was just as racist and discriminatory as the 2004 act and then looked to its coalition partner, the Māori Party, to get it past the inevitable Māori objections. Much to the dismay of Māori, rather than rejecting National's racist bill, the Māori Party supported it, and in doing so, turned its back on its constituents. The 2011 act, like the 2004 act, confiscates the foreshore and seabed territories of 660,000 Māori while protecting the 12,500 non-Māori title holders who occupy land in the same area. The only Māori Party member of Parliament prepared to fight for Māori rights to their lands and resources was Hōne Harawira, and his refusal to stop criticizing the bill, the government, and his Māori Party colleagues resulted in the Māori Party dumping him.

Despite repeated advice from Māori groups regarding their opposition to the bill, the Māori Party continued to claim that they had support for it. In December and again in February, the Māori Party co-leaders appeared before the National Iwi Chairs Forum and made the bewildering statement that because they were now part of the government, they were now the Crown. As such, they argued, they had little choice but to accept the National Party's bill as the "best they could do." The magnitude of the Māori Par-

ty's betrayal of its constituents became clear when submissions regarding the bill that had been made to the Māori Affairs Select Committee were analyzed. Of the seventy-two submissions received from representatives of traditional Māori groupings throughout the country, only one had supported the bill—and that was a tribal body, Te Rūnanga o Ngāti Porou, that had negotiated their own deal with the government. The seventy-one other submissions either opposed the bill in its entirety, demanding its withdrawal, or insisted on significant amendments (Kaitiaki o te Takutai, 2011).

The dumping of Hōne Harawira caused disquiet in the Māori community, and it was not only the Māori Party's failure with regard to the Marine and Coastal Area Bill that was troubling. The dumping itself was a clumsy affair that looked suspiciously like the Māori Party was carrying out the prime minister's frequently and publicly expressed admonitions that they get rid of him (Mutu 2011a, 227–229; Francis 2010). Yet the National government, which the prime minister leads, with its policies of looking after the wealthy, was causing increasing hardship for many Māori families and communities. Having seen and heard the pain of Māori families, Harawira had become increasingly strident in his criticisms of the government. He also reminded his own party that its mandate was to represent Māori, not to kowtow to the National Party. Yet the Māori Party seemed unable to recognize that being wedded to National was alienating them from their constituents. In the months after his dumping, Harawira launched a new political movement, Mana, which

advocated Māori leadership to protect Māori, workers, the unemployed, the poor, and the disenfranchised. Mana drew support from both Māori and non-Māori. In May, Harawira resigned from Parliament, forcing a by-election for the Taitokerau (Māori) seat. Despite vigorous campaigning by other parties, he was returned to Parliament as the leader of the Mana Movement with a comfortable majority. The Māori Party candidate received only 8 percent of the vote.

Harawira's criticisms of the government echoed mounting unease and dissatisfaction in the Māori community. Concerns had been increasing across the board as the government seemed intent on opening its coffers to the wealthy while increasing the taxes of the poor. NZ\$1.7 billion was paid out to the investors of the failed South Canterbury Finance Company (NZH, 11 April 2011); more than NZ\$34 million in incentives and subsidies along with changes to New Zealand employment law were given to Warner Brothers to keep the filming of *The Hobbit* in New Zealand (NZH, 28 Oct 2010); and NZ\$36 million was paid to fund Team New Zealand's challenge for the 2013 America's Cup yacht race (NZH, 28 April 2011). On top of this were the tax cuts whose main beneficiaries are the wealthy. Offsetting these costs was a 2.5 percent increase in the goods and services tax (to 15 percent), a tax that hits low-income earners hard and the unemployed and social welfare beneficiaries even harder. Māori unemployment is at 13.5 percent, more than twice the national rate of 6.5 percent (Department of Labour 2011), and 31 percent of Māori receive social welfare

benefits. Additionally, the NZ\$1 billion budgeted in 1994 to settle all Māori historical Treaty of Waitangi claims has still not been spent. Despite international advice and Māori insistence that the lands, territories, and resources that have been stolen from them be returned along with adequate compensation, the government continues to impose settlements valued at an average of 0.1 percent of the estimated value of the assets stolen (Mutu 2011b, 157) and refuses to pay compensation. Each settlement is assigned a monetary value, but most of that is retained by the government as it forces claimants to pay for their own lands. One Far North iwi (tribal grouping), Ngāti Kahu, has referred to these retained funds as "ransom monies" and has refused to pay them. Instead they have returned to the Waitangi Tribunal to seek orders forcing the government to return their lands and to pay compensation. Since the 1990s, governments have vowed to repeal the tribunal's powers to make such orders if they ever attempt to do so (Mutu 2011b, 108).

On top of all this, the government incurred the wrath of two large East Coast iwi, Ngāti Porou and Te Whānau a Apanui, when it allowed the Brazilian oil giant Petrobras to start exploring for oil in their territorial seas. Apart from the fact that the oil belongs to those iwi, the threat to the well-being of the seas was of major concern. A flotilla of protest vessels authorized by the iwi shadowed the company vessels until they packed up early and left. Shameless government appropriation and exploitation of iwi oil and gas resources have resulted in at least two Waitangi Tribunal reports

upholding iwi claims to ownership of their own resources. Yet in Taranaki, where governments have been making many millions of dollars every year for over one hundred years from oil and gas, not one cent of the income has been shared with its rightful owners.

Despite the inevitable animosity that this type of behavior fosters between governments and Māori, the so-called settlements continued around the country. Office of Treaty Settlements reports indicate that since 1989, twenty-six claims have been “settled” and ten await their settlement legislation to be enacted. Fourteen claimant groups have signed some form of Agreement in Principle, and twenty claimant groups are in negotiations with the government (Mutu 2005, 204; OTS 2011, 6–8). Those completed over the past year include Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi, which received a NZ\$14.5 million contribution toward the costs of establishing its Māori-focused tertiary institution following a successful claim to the Waitangi Tribunal in 1999.

On a brighter note, the Independent Māori Statutory Board to the Auckland City Council has proved far more effective than the three seats for Māori on the Council, which the government refused to create. Legislation setting up the board has ensured Māori representation on all relevant city council committees, much to the annoyance of several outspoken non-Māori council members. But the annoyance turned to fury when funding requirements set out in the legislation meant that the council had to adequately fund the board. Attempts by the racist elements within the council to cut funding for

the board failed when the board took the council to the high court in order to force it to abide by the legislation (NZH, 13 April 2011).

Another bright spot occurred when the Black Ferns, New Zealand Women’s Rugby team, won the Women’s Rugby World cup. Most team members are Māori, and they won despite a lack of funding and the New Zealand Rugby Union withdrawing support (Māori Party 2010c).

MARGARET MUTU

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## RAPA NUI

Conflict between Rapa Nui people and the Chilean state escalated during the review year and peaked in December 2010 as Chilean military and police forces committed state violence against Rapa Nui. While the intensity of conflict has lessened since December, Rapa Nui continue to engage in large-scale public demonstrations against the Chilean state as of June 2011. Interpreting the conflict is problematic given that there are competing discursive grounds by which it can be framed (see Young this issue; Young 2011), and because most of the information available is represented in Chilean media, not controlled by Rapa Nui people. Herein I focus on representations of the conflict primarily in terms of the ways it is portrayed by scattered Rapa Nui voices in the international media.

At the close of the last review (Gonschor 2011), Rapa Nui were noted as embroiled in demonstrations sparked by the Chilean state appointment of Petero Edmunds Paoa as the new governor of Rapa Nui. Following the solar eclipse celebrations in July, conflict intensified as a number of hua'ai (extended families) reclaimed hua'ai lands currently occupied by Chilean state institutions and businesses, such as the Ministry of Public Works, the Ministry of the Interior, the municipality, the public school, part of a museum, and the Hangaroa Eco Village and Spa (Indigenous News,

3 Aug 2010). Lands began to be reclaimed on Friday, 30 July (EMOL, 2 Aug 2010). By Wednesday, 4 August, a total of eleven lands occupied by state institutions had been reclaimed (EMOL, 4 Aug 2010). Among the hua'ai reportedly involved were Atan, Chavez/Teave, Haoa, Hito, Huke, Hotus, Ika, Pakarati, Pate, Rapu, Tepano, and Tuki (EMOL, 2 Aug 2010; The Clinic, 15 Sept 2010; ST, 4 Aug 2010; Te Rapa Nui website, Aug 2010)—some of the largest and most powerful of the thirty-six total hua'ai on the island. Hua'ai members set up tents, cooking grills, and fire pits on the reclaimed lands (The Clinic blog, 15 Sept 2010).

Hua'ai members who were directly or indirectly involved in the conflict represented the reclaiming of land as a response to a range of problems. Some hua'ai reclaimed lands against privatization. This was the case in the attempt of the Hito hua'ai to reclaim land occupied by the new high-end hotel, the Hangaroa Eco Village and Spa. The US\$50 million hotel is a development of Cristoph Schiess, the chief executive of one of the largest private companies in Chile, Empresas Transoceanica (AP, 7 Feb 2011). Resistance to privatization was also fundamental to the Haoa hua'ai's reclaiming of lands occupied by municipal institutions. Reina Haoa, an eighty-five-year-old woman, emphasized that she had provided the municipality land to use in order to improve the functioning of the town at the request of her son Alfonso, who was mayor at the time. On learning that new state leaders hoped to privatize and sell this land she stated, "I went from my home and I came to get my land and I will stay

here until I die" (The Clinic blog, 15 Sept 2010; translated from Spanish).

Some hua'ai members stressed broader social and cultural problems. Piru Huke Atan, a hua'ai member involved in the reclaiming of land at the Chilean governor's building in Rapa Nui, represented the reclaiming of ancestral lands as part of a struggle to retain the integrity of Rapa Nui as a people (PIR, 17 Aug 2010). Hua'ai members felt threatened as a people, in part because of increasing Chilean settlement on the island. Angela Tuki Chavez complained, "Everything they do here goes badly. Especially immigration—it's not immigration, it's an invasion. The state doesn't listen to us as a distinct ethnic group" (National Public Radio, 9 Sept 2010). Valeria Pakarati saw the conflict in terms of social inequality; she emphasized that Rapa Nui are reclaiming land in a context where Chilean officials have housing while Rapa Nui increasingly have nowhere to live (LT, 3 Aug 2010). Such concerns were echoed by other Rapa Nui. Tiare Paoa emphasized problems of health, pollution, power, and assimilation resulting from current state policies in Rapa Nui (EC, 9 Aug 2010). One anonymous Rapa Nui commentator stated that "the reality we live in today is one of being crammed into a ghetto called Hana Roa. Our families are fighting for a couple of crumbs of land for the children and grandchildren, and there is no space to plant even a potato" (EC, 9 Aug 2010; translated from the Spanish).

Other hua'ai members framed the issue in more political terms. Tuhiira Tuki conceived of hua'ai resistance as a struggle for "a better future for

our children, and not a life as we live in today. To reach this end, we have to be in charge of our lives, our land and everything that goes with it: laws and social development” (EC, 9 Aug 2010; translated from Spanish). Santi Hitorangi, a member of the hua‘ai that reclaimed the land occupied by the Hangaroa Eco Village and Spa, contextualized the conflict in terms of international and national law. He stated, “The root of the current revolution is based in the Chilean’s continued occupation and systematic abuse of the Rapanui people, in violation of the United Nations laws on political decolonization and today also the International Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People, to which Chile became a signatory in 2007. Chile’s actions also violate Chile’s own Indigenous Laws, which make it illegal for non-Rapanui people to own land on the island. The Chilean government has continued to condone abuses relating to health, usurpation of lands, and endangerment of the fragile environment and eco-system of the island by unrestricted immigration of foreigners and Chilean nationals” (PIR, 17 Aug 2010). Alfonso Rapu Haoa, the leader of resistance in the 1960s that led to the end of military rule and to some civil rights for Rapa Nui in Chile, also emphasized the conflict as a struggle for self-determination. In a letter addressed to Chilean President Sebastián Piñera that was later circulated in the media, he stated, “We want issues to be decided on Easter Island where it belongs: in this territory and by the Rapa Nui people” (EC, 16 Sept 2010).

Hua‘ai members were supported by Rapa Nui leaders working within

and outside of Chilean institutions on the island. Luz Zasso Paoa, mayor of the Chilean-organized municipality of Haja Roa, and Governor Petero Edmunds Paoa were sympathetic to the hua‘ai in some reports. Governor Edmunds Paoa framed the actions as part of decades of Rapa Nui conflict with the state; Mayor Zasso Paoa represented the conflict as a response to ongoing state failures to reduce Chilean migration to the island, to reconstitute hua‘ai lands, and to establish real autonomy for Rapa Nui (ST, 4 Aug 2010). Leviante Araki, current president of the grassroots political organization Rapa Nui Parliament, threatened that the conflict could lead to Rapa Nui independence from Chile (EMOL, 4 Aug 2010). (The Rapa Nui Parliament developed from the original hua‘ai-based Rapa Nui Council of Elders, which disbanded when a faction led by Alberto Hotus was incorporated into the Chilean state; the council retained the name but its makeup was no longer determined by hua‘ai.) Mario Tuki, who is an elected member of the Chilean state-based Development Commission for Easter Island (CODEIPA) as well as a member of the Rapa Nui Parliament, supported Leviante’s call for independence (EM, 6 Aug 2010).

Initially, the state responded to the August events diplomatically. Raúl Celis, mayor of the fifth region of Chile, which includes Rapa Nui, met with Rapa Nui elder representatives of all thirty-six hua‘ai along with Chilean officials to discuss the conflict in a series of meetings. He acknowledged that Chile had failed to fulfill promises dating to the 1960s and earlier. Celis proposed to resolve conflict with

amendments to current Chilean land tenure laws. Interestingly, while Celis dismissed the threat of independence by the Rapa Nui Parliament, Mata Atan, a leading representative of the hua'ai, emphasized that the call for independence was reasonable in light of the decades of Chilean state failures in Rapa Nui (EMOL, 5 Aug 2010).

In a move to reduce tensions and facilitate conflict resolution, Governor Petero Edmunds Paoa resigned on 9 August 2010 (BBC Mundo, 12 Aug 2010). He resigned under accusations of corruption for supporting the contested development of the Hangaroa Eco Village and Spa (Torrealba 2010), and for favoring other Chilean-based developers who supported him as mayor and helped him gain appointment as governor (ST, 8 Sept 2010). To readers of past reviews of Rapa Nui in this journal, conflict regarding Petero Edmunds Paoa should come as no surprise. Edmunds Paoa, like Alberto Hotus, the president of the Chilean state-organized Council of Elders, has often supported lucrative development projects and policies strongly contested by the majority of the Rapa Nui population, such as a casino on the island (Gonschor 2008, 239) and a watered-down autonomy bill composed with little formal dialogue with Rapa Nui hua'ai members (Gonschor 2007). Carmen Cardinali Paoa was ultimately appointed to take his place (ST, 8 Sept 2010).

However, Edmunds Paoa's resignation did not lead to any resolution or significant change in the conflict. By the latter part of August, Rapa Nui hua'ai had reclaimed an estimated thirty-five lands (Torrealba 2010). On 9 August, Chilean Minister of the

Interior Rodrigo Hinzpeter formed a committee to address three specific issues: the special status of the island, immigration regulation, and land conflict. The committee's mandate was to propose solutions to the conflicts within sixty days. Dialogue between hua'ai members and the Chilean state dissolved as Celis threatened state violence against Rapa Nui and requested that forty-five members of Chilean special forces be brought to the island to assist conflict resolution. Raul Teao, a Rapa Nui CODEIPA member, emphasized that because Celis threatened violence, Rapa Nui ceased negotiations (ST, 9 Aug 2010). Rapa Nui Parliament leaders responded by sending a letter to the Pacific Islands Forum and Chilean President Piñera, requesting independence from Chile (OTR, 18 Aug 2010). At gunpoint, the majority of an estimated 1,000 Rapa Nui were forced to end reclamations of ancestral land occupied by colonial Chilean institutions on 17 August (ST, 18 Aug 2010). Hito hua'ai members continued to reclaim the lands occupied by the Hangaroa Eco Village and Spa, despite risking harm and death (PIR, 20 Aug 2010).

In September, the government announced that more than thirty land titles for land in the Vaitea region would be released to Rapa Nui hua'ai within sixty days. While some Rapa Nui who were to receive titles were excited about the prospect, Marisol Hito, the main spokesperson for the Hito hua'ai (the hua'ai in conflict with the Hangaroa Eco Village and Spa), emphasized that the lands scheduled for titles in the Vaitea region had nothing to do with the ancestral lands being reclaimed in Haŋa Roa (ST, 16

Sept 2010). Not surprisingly, hua'ai members began to reclaim the lands that they had been forced from in August. Despite the September promise of titles, by October a reported eighteen of the total thirty-six Rapa Nui hua'ai had reclaimed buildings they had been forced from in August (*ST*, 12 Oct 2010).

Amid the protracted conflict, the annual celebrations usually held on the island to celebrate the annexation of Rapa Nui by Chile on 9 September and the independence of Chile on 18 September were suspended. Governor Cardinali in part canceled the event because the place where it is usually conducted had been reclaimed by hua'ai members (*EMOL*, 9 Sept 2010). Though it was later reported that she had initially hoped to have the celebration (*EMOL*, 17 Sept 2010), she ultimately saw the event as inappropriate in the political context (*EMOL*, 9 Sept 2010). In contrast, Alberto Hotus, president of the Chilean-organized Council of Elders—a man whom many Rapa Nui derogatively nickname both “Kete” (pockets, as “in the pocket” of the Chilean government) and “Hokotahi nō” (someone who stands alone)—once again demonstrated his lack of connection with the Rapa Nui people he is formally supposed to represent. He conducted a private celebration of annexation with Chilean officials aboard a navy ship off the coast of Rapa Nui (*EMOL*, 9 Sept 2010).

In October, at the international level, attorney Leonardo Crippa of the Indian Law Resource Center (ILRC) in Washington DC filed precautionary measures with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights

(IACHR) to stop Chilean forces from using state violence against hua'ai members who were reclaiming lands (*ILRC*, 7 Feb 2011). The measures were filed on the basis of a fact-finding mission Crippa had conducted in August and in light of the September eviction of Hito hua'ai members from Hangaroa Eco Village and Spa, the arrival of additional Chilean forces, and the history of Chilean violence toward its indigenous peoples (Crippa, pers comm, June 2011). As the sixty-day Interior Ministry committee review drew to a close in October, the Chilean government announced its proposals for resolving conflict in Rapa Nui. The state highlighted an “investment plan” of US\$203.4 million (*PIR*, 26 Oct 2010), which would utilize more than twenty times the total amount the state appropriated for Rapa Nui over the past fifteen years. The proposal included bills to improve land title transfers, clarify the boundaries of the national park, improve health care, increase infrastructure, and improve the conservation of the environment and cultural heritage (*ST*, 25 Oct 2010). Minister of the Interior Hinzpeter discussed the investment plan and other matters of concern (land titles, migration, and the special status of the island) with select Rapa Nui at the public school auditorium for five hours (*EMOL*, 23 Oct 2010).

While some Rapa Nui appear to have been interested in the state's proposal to resolve the conflict with promises of financial investment, more discussion, and further commitments, many clearly were dissatisfied. Mario Tuki emphasized that that the proposal did not really address the

concerns of Rapa Nui hua'ai, and that only some hua'ai had been invited to the meeting with Hinzpeter. Mario further stressed that the land titles were limited to just three extended families while the rest were not addressed. Hinzpeter alienated the Hito hua'ai, as he did not meet with the family members to discuss their conflict with the Hangaroa Eco Village and Spa (*ST*, 25 Oct 2010). Nor did he meet with members of the Rapa Nui Parliament (*PIR*, 27 Oct 2010). Raul Teao, a CODEIPA member, characterized the state's development plan as mere "pills" that did not address the more fundamental demands for true political autonomy for Rapa Nui (*EMOL*, 26 Oct 2010).

Thus it was no surprise that as Hinzpeter tried to fly away, demonstrations at the airport delayed the departure for an hour (*EMOL*, 26 Oct 2010). As Angela Tuki Chavez noted is typical of the Chilean state, it appears the officials "ina he hakarongo" (did not listen). None of the comments made by Rapa Nui explaining the reclamations of land mentioned earlier in this review explicitly discussed a need for a new Chilean "investment plan" or lands in Vaitea. At issue were ancestral lands in Hapa Roa and the island as a whole, as well as demands for self-determination and independence. While it supposedly does address some of the social concerns mentioned by some Rapa Nui, it is clear that Chile's plan failed to confront the more fundamental concerns regarding ancestral Rapa Nui lands and the question of autonomy or independence for Rapa Nui. Interestingly, Erity Teave, executive director for human rights within the Rapa Nui Parliament and long-

time spokesperson for Rapa Nui at the United Nations, has recently emphasized that the investment plan is not actually focused on problems of the Rapa Nui people at all (pers comm, Aug 2011). Her research has suggested that the plan is primarily connected to Chilean international trade interests as projected participants in various Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) programs. According to Erity, the investment plan centers on the development of a new port, as well as a project for airport expansion to increase international trade between Asia and Chile.

On 3 December, Chilean military and police forces began acts of state violence against unarmed Rapa Nui men, women, and children. Violence began at dawn as forty-five Chilean special forces entered a house reclaimed by members of several hua'ai at the center of town, under a court order requested by Special Prosecutor Guillermo Felipe Merino and signed by local Judge Bernardo Toro (*EC*, 3 Dec 2010). Esther, Roberto, and Verena Ika Pakarati, as well as Margarita Pakarati Tuki, Ricardo Hito Tuki, and Miguel Tuki Atan were arrested (*EC*, 3 Dec 2010; *EMOL*, 4 Dec 2010; *RNP*, 5 Dec 2010). According to Verena, "The police arrived at the house, knocked loudly and violently entered. It was like a war between us and them. We were all crushed" (*LS*, 4 Dec 2010; translated from Spanish). State violence occurred in spite of the fact that Claudio Hito Tuki confronted the Chilean special forces with paperwork indicating the precautionary measures filed with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. Following the arrests,

Chilean special forces burned Rapa Nui flags that surrounded the house (EC, 3 Dec 2010).

As Rapa Nui began to protest the violent eviction, conflict escalated further when the special forces proceeded to fire rubber bullets and tear gas into the gathering crowd of Rapa Nui (RNP, 3 Dec 2010). Twenty-one Rapa Nui were reported injured during the events, which long-standing social anthropologist of Rapa Nui Grant McCall characterized as “government thuggery” (2010). Four children were reported injured (Indigenous Peoples Issues and Resources website, 4 Dec 2010). Mario Pakarati, Zita Atan, Pia Vargas, Claudio Tuki, Enrique Tepano, Honu Tepano, and Santi Hitorangi were all shot with rubber bullets (RNP, 3 Dec 2010). A total of seventeen were hospitalized (LT, 4 Dec 2010). Jose Riroroko was beaten on the head with a police baton (RNP, 3 Dec 2010). Ricardo Tepano was the most seriously injured: he was shot in the face at close range and lost an eye (RNP, 5 Dec 2010). Rapa Nui Parliament President Leviante Araki was shot in the hip twice (RNP, 3 Dec 2010), as well as strangled and beaten to the ground by four policemen (EC, 3 Dec 2010). He and Ricardo Tepano were flown to Chile for medical care. Rapa Nui emphasized that those arrested in the conflict were denied medical care and sufficient heat while incarcerated (EM, 4 Dec 2010). Violent state evictions continued in late December. On 29 December dozens of Rapa Nui were beaten with clubs by one hundred Chilean special forces around the central plaza of Haja Roa (ST, 3 Jan 2011).

Chilean officials responsible for

the violence represented the evictions as necessary; however, other Chilean leaders questioned the use of force. Chilean President Piñera thought that the evictions were justified methods for reestablishing social order (ST, 14 Jan 2011). Regional Mayor Raúl Celis claimed that the actions were necessary given Rapa Nui resistance (EMOL, 4 Dec 2010). According to Minister of the Interior Hinzpeter, “The police forces acted in compliance with a court order. That’s how institutions function, and we all must follow them. There is a limit to these things and it was reached when there are illegal takeovers that cause damage to the island” (*New York Times*, 4 Dec 2010). Chilean Senator Alejandro Navarro, on the other hand, was concerned that excessive force was used against the Rapa Nui (EM, 4 Dec 2010). Chilean Senators Juan Pablo Letelier and Ricardo Lagos Weber also questioned the treatment of Rapa Nui and wondered if the state had adequately discussed alternative solutions with Rapa Nui (EMOL, 4 Dec 2010). Senator Letelier accused the judge who administered the court order of abuse and violation of United Nations International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention 169, which had been ratified by the Chilean government (ST, 6 Dec 2010). Chilean Congressman Hugo Gutiérrez also condemned the actions of the Chilean government and urged officials to immediately develop an autonomy statute for Rapa Nui (McCall 2010).

In January 2011, Rapa Nui characterized the island as “a war zone.” Three Chilean war ships were observed circling the island. Julie Brown Tuki was beaten outside her

home by twenty police and arrested for criminal trespass along with her cousin Tony Tuki (RNP, 21 Jan 2011). The Hito hua'ai encountered some success, however, as the Valparaíso Court of Appeals disqualified Chilean Judge Bernardo Toro in Rapa Nui from presiding over the criminal case against seventeen hua'ai members on 12 January (LT, 12 Jan 2011). As a result, the court deferred the criminal case against the Hito hua'ai members until 8 February (PIR, 13 Jan 2011). In response, the police in Rapa Nui intensified their harassment of hua'ai members. On 13 January they cut off the Hito hua'ai members from receiving food and water from outside the hotel. This immediately jeopardized the health of Tita Hito, a diabetic, who was subsequently hospitalized with police accompaniment (RNP, 21 Jan 2011).

State violence continued in February, though court proceedings and international action increasingly supported the plight of Rapa Nui. On 6 February, fifty policemen broke through glass doors of the Hangaroa Eco Village and Spa and physically forced Hito hua'ai members from the hotel. The hua'ai members were taken to the local jail in buses owned by the Hangaroa Eco Village and Spa. Armed police prohibited any photography of the events. Trini Farada, who tried to photograph the process, was immediately assaulted by the police forces and jailed. A nineteen-year-old male was also assaulted for taking pictures, but was not jailed. Oscar Vargas, the defense attorney for the Hito hua'ai, was "roughed up" by the police force and was not initially allowed to consult with the hua'ai members. Accord-

ing to Vargas, the police removed the hua'ai members without a court order and in defiance of the fact that a court order had been denied on two separate occasions in Valparaíso by Judge Maria Cristina Cabello. Rapa Nui defense attorney Rodrigo Gomez thought that the actions were based on a fear that the court was going to decide against the Hangaroa Eco Village and Spa and in favor of the Hito hua'ai members on 8 February (RNP, 6 Feb 2010).

Internationally, Chile's violent actions against Rapa Nui people have been generally criticized. Fe'iloakitau Tevi of the Pacific Conference of Churches emphasized solidarity with Rapa Nui and asked the Red Cross to intervene with medical care (PIR, 8 Dec 2010). The Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs (UBCIC) condemned Chile's actions as "ugly, unbelievable and reprehensible" (UBCIC, 4 Dec 2010). Amnesty International officially called for investigations into excessive force and violations of the United Nations ILO Convention 169 (Flemish Center for Indigenous Peoples blog, 10 Dec 2010). The United Nations appointed University of Arizona Law Professor James Anaya as a special rapporteur to investigate the Chilean use of excessive force against Rapa Nui (ST, 14 Jan 2011). US Senator Daniel Akaka of Hawai'i and Congressman Eni Falemavenga of American Sāmoa wrote letters of support for Rapa Nui to Chilean President Piñera and US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton (OTR, 11 Feb 2011). On 16 February, Congressman Falemavenga spoke to the US House of Representatives about the conflict in Rapa Nui and urged President Barack

Obama to discuss the issue during his forthcoming visit to Chile. On 7 February the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights granted the precautionary measures filed by the Indian Law Resource Center in October. The commission demanded that Chile stop the use of armed violence against Rapa Nui people and adopt a number of measures to ensure their safety and integrity (OTR, 12 Feb 2011). Attorney Crippa of the Indian Law Resource Center commented, “The action by the IACHR validates our concerns that human rights are being violated on Rapa Nui island. The Chilean government must review its policy on Rapa Nui issues, take measures to comply with international human rights law, and begin a fair dialogue with the Rapa Nui nation.” The measures were filed by Crippa at the request of Rapa Nui representatives of twenty-nine of the total thirty-six hua‘ai (ST, 8 Feb 2011).

Legal support for the Hito hua‘ai has shifted over time. On 8 February, Chilean Judge Cabello suspended the charges against the seventeen Hito hua‘ai members, given that the Supreme Court has not adjudicated regarding who officially owns the land (PIR, 9 Feb 2011). The Schiess family subsequently lost an appeal of the decision on 23 February in Valparaíso (RNP, 23 Feb 2011). Oddly, however, Chilean Minister of the Interior Hinzpeter, following dialogue with the Schiess family responsible for the development of the Hangaroa Eco Village and Spa Hotel, proposed a thirty-year lease of the land to the Schiess family as a “final solution” to the conflict. At the culmination of the thirty-year period the hotel and

land would be transferred to a Rapa Nui foundation (ST, 20 Feb 2011), which would be composed of Rapa Nui business associates of the Schiess family—among them Petero Edmunds Paoa, the former governor at the center of the conflict initially (RNP, 21 Feb 2011). Jeannette Schiess asserted that the hotel owners would continue to press charges against the seventeen Hito hua‘ai members involved in reclaiming the lands occupied by the hotel (ST, 20 Feb 2011). Minister Hinzpeter did not discuss the matter with the Hito hua‘ai, and the hua‘ai members are explicitly excluded from the foundation under the terms of the proposal (RNP, 21 Feb 2011). Rapa Nui hua‘ai responded with a march through the main street on 26 February. Marisol Hito emphasized at the march that given that the Hito hua‘ai was not consulted, Minister Hinzpeter’s solution disrespected and mocked Rapa Nui people (RNP, 26 Feb 2011).

Though legal actions in February seemed to support the Hito hua‘ai, in May decisions began to shift in favor of the hotel. On 24 May, criminal charges were reinstated against the Hito hua‘ai by attorney Julian Lopez on behalf of the Hangaroa Eco Village and Spa Hotel. Measures were also filed by attorney Lopez to restrict the Hito hua‘ai from approaching the hotel, as work to complete the hotel was scheduled to proceed. How hua‘ai members are to deal with these restrictions given that they live across the road from the hotel remains unclear. Oscar Vargas, the defense attorney for the Hito hua‘ai, subsequently filed an appeal in the court of Valparaíso against the resumption of criminal

charges against the hua'ai members and also contested the legality of resuming work at the hotel (ECDM, July 2011).

On 12 June, a new group was elected to the Development Commission for Easter Island (CODEIPA). A total of 1,196 votes were cast—30 percent more than in the prior election for the commission. Five people were elected from among thirty-seven candidates. Jose Rapu received the most votes with 226, followed by Osvaldo Pakarati with 218, Jorge Pont with 167, Anakena Manutomatoma with 164, and Mario Tuki with 153 (ECDM, July 2011). As is established by the Ley Indígena (Law 19253), those elected serve four-year terms. Unlike the municipality elections, only Rapa Nui people are allowed to vote for the commission; Chilean settlers on the island are not able to vote. Interestingly, while visiting the island in August 2011, I noted four of the five people elected were present in many of the Rapa Nui Parliament meetings and projects. The election results thus suggest that radical political economic change on the island is supported by Rapa Nui people. Of course it is not clear that the commission can ever generate major changes. The five elected Rapa Nui members sit on the commission along with four Chilean ministers, the Chilean-appointed governor of Rapa Nui, the mayor of Hapa Roa (elected by Chilean as well as Rapa Nui voters), the non-elected president of the Chilean-organized Council of Elders, and three other members who are typically Chilean (the directors of Chile's Indigenous Development Corporation, the Chilean Economic Development Agency,

and Chile's National Forest Corporation). A unified Chilean block of votes within the commission easily cancels the votes of the five elected Rapa Nui members.

As the year in review closed, it did not appear Chile had addressed or resolved the long-standing conflicts Rapa Nui hua'ai have had regarding ancestral lands and self-determination. In May, Amnesty International expressed concern with Chile's failure to constitutionally recognize all of its indigenous peoples (PIR, 14 May 2011). On 13 June, over three hundred Rapa Nui again marched through main street Hapa Roa. They marched for ancestral lands, in support of the Hito hua'ai, against Chilean treatment of Rapa Nui generally, and in protest of the closure and possible privatization of lands in Vaitea (RNP, June 2011). In August, Crippa of the Indian Law Resource Center and an international team working with the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights scheduled public meetings in Rapa Nui, Santiago, and Valparaíso to discuss international legal measures and procedures for establishing true self-determination for Rapa Nui and the return of all ancestral lands to the Rapa Nui people. The Rapa Nui decolonization struggle continues.

FORREST WADE YOUNG

CONTEMPORARY NEWSPAPERS *and other publications on and off the island of Rapa Nui increasingly use the name "Rapa Nui" to refer to the culture, language, and people as well as the island. Spelling the name as two words is consistent with other Polynesian languages, where "nui"*

is typically represented as a distinct word. The shift from using a different spelling—"Rapanui"—for the people, language, and culture of the island also avoids implying a separation between these and the island itself. The letter "ñ" (as in *Haja Roa*) is pronounced like the "ng" in the English word "singing."

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### WALLIS AND FUTUNA

*Because no reviews of Wallis and Futuna were published in TCP since 2007, this review covers the 2007–2011 period.*

On 7 May 2007, a chapter of the modern history of 'Uvea Island (also called Wallis) closed with the death of Lavelua (King) Tomasi Kulimoetoke. The lavelua's passing also affected the social and political landscape of the whole Territory of Wallis and Futuna (Angleviel 2008). Participating in the funeral procession were the two kings of Futuna, his majesty Tuiagaifo from Alo kingdom and his counterpart, Tuisigave, from Sigave kingdom. In his closing address at the very moving ceremony, Tuiagaifo Soane Patita Maituku reminded the crowd of the late king's work and courage in bringing modernity to 'Uvea as well as his efforts to maintain tradition and local customs. Tomasi Kulimoetoke was native to the southern district of Mu'a on his father's side and from the central district of Hahake on his mother's side. He had been appointed king of 'Uvea in 1959 with the support of Pelenato Pulufegu Fuluhea, an influential personality from Mu'a who was also the former lavelua (1947–1950). Lavelua Tomasi Kulimoetoke's reign was mostly one of political and social stability. After his death, the

island remained kingless for fourteen months.

In January 2008, a new health care center, encompassing the existing Sia Hospital and new extensions, was established in Mata Utu, the territorial capital, on 'Uvea. In accordance with the French Ministry of Health's 13 January 2000 mandate, the health center became the Health Agency of the Territory of the Wallis and Futuna Islands. The agency also encompasses another hospital (Kalevele) on Futuna and three dispensaries, in Mua, Hahake, and Hihifo (IEOM 2010, 90–92). The agency is a national and public establishment with administrative and financial autonomy and a primary mission—to protect people's health. The year 2008 also marked the beginning of work extending and improving the runway at Vele Futuna airport, which was undertaken mainly for security reasons. In the economic arena, the Monitoring Committee of the Ninth European Development Fund (EDF) met in Mata Utu on 3 April to discuss the development contract between the territory and the European Union (EU). Among the difficult issues discussed during the meeting was concern over elementary and high school enrollments, which dropped by 5.8 and 5.1 percent, respectively, in 2010; this trend is expected to continue due to low birth rates and youth emigration and may require education system restructuring and class closures in the future (IEOM 2010, 88). Another thorny problem was the extension of Mata Utu harbor, which was delayed not only due to lack of materials but primarily because no local company was able to handle the job. Finally a

French company was hired to undertake the project.

On 25 July 2008, Kapeliele Faupala, former Kalae Kivalu (prime minister) to Lavelua Kulimoetoke, was enthroned as king of 'Uvea. The Royalist camp had to go through long and hard negotiations before making a choice that not everyone agreed with. There had been riots and calls to depose Lavelua Kulimoetoke after he gave refuge in 2005 to his grandson Tomasi Tuugahala, who had been sentenced to prison for involuntary manslaughter following a car accident (Angleviel 2006, 148). The Renovator (anti-royalist) side wanted every pulekolo (chief) and aliki fa'u (king's minister) appointed during and after that crisis to step down in order to allow time for the two sides to set up a peace process before looking for a new king, but this was not done. Thus, from the outset, neither side unanimously accepted the new king. On 28 July, Philippe Paolantoni was appointed prefect of Wallis and Futuna, succeeding Richard Didier. But while former Prefect Didier seemed to have had cordial relationships with politicians and especially with the Lavelua's Royal Palace in Sagato Soane Place, the new superior administrator did not. Tensions were palpable, and a poisonous atmosphere existed between the French administration and the royal palace.

Also in July, the Territorial Statistical and Economic Studies Service published the first demographic results of the 2008 population census, which showed a population decrease of 10 percent from 2003 to 2008—down from 14,944 to 13,484 inhabitants (Hadj 2009). This alarming fact

reveals the gloomy social and economic climate prevailing in the territory. The decrease resulted from two trends—a reduction in the number of children born per woman and the departure of youth abroad, mainly to France, for training purposes or in search of jobs.

In the political arena, the 21 September 2008 legislative elections saw religious Brother Lopeleto Laufoa'ulu win a second senate term over Socialist Vetelino Nau. Two days later, in an effort to strengthen air service passenger capacity, a second DHC Twin Otter aircraft named *Manulele o Futuna* (Flying Bird of Futuna) entered service alongside the long-serving plane *Ville de Paris* (City of Paris) (IEOM 2009, 83; 2010, 80). In October, the extension work underway at Vele airport on Futuna ran into problems when some landowners threatened to block access to the work site. They denounced the French administration's proposed financial compensation as disrespectful.

After several attempts at peace, the gap between Royalists and Renovators widened, with each group maintaining its own position. On 24 October, the Renovators lost one of their political leaders, Soane Uhila, who had been a founding member of the majority local union, Force Ouvrière, and president of the Territorial Assembly, 1992–1993 and 1999–2000. During a visit to Wallis and Futuna in November 2008, French Secretary of State for Overseas Territories Yves Jégo announced the establishment of a price-monitoring committee charged with annually determining the level and structure of prices in Wallis and Futuna and reporting to the pre-

fect (IEOM 2009, 1440); the setting of a price cap on airfares between Noumea and Wallis; and the creation of a locally adapted military service (*Service Militaire Adapté*). In late 2008, two entrepreneurs were indicted for organized fraud and false use of invoices after an investigation into a tax-evasion scam. The investigation was conducted under the authority of the Court of First Instance of Noumea at Mata Utu and the financial supervision of New Caledonia.

Victor Brial from the *Union pour un Mouvement Populaire* (UMP, the majority party of the French President Nicolas Sarkozy), who served as deputy of Wallis and Futuna from 2002 to 2007, was elected president of the Territorial Assembly on 4 February 2009. He succeeded Pesamino Taputai, who was affiliated with the center-right party *Union for French Democracy–Democratic Movement* (UDF-MoDem) under François Bayrou. President Brial hosted representatives from the European Council who were supervising several projects supported under the ninth European Development Fund. The European Council representatives also helped local politicians in the preparation of applications for the tenth European Development Fund.

The beginning of 2009 was marked by the first social conflict between workers and executive staff of the Health Agency on 23 February. The workers denounced the administrative methods of the director, who had been in office since 2007, and called for higher wages. In response to the workers' demands, the director left the agency on 23 June.

At the end of March 2009, an accord was signed between a represen-

tative of the commander of the French Armed Forces in the Pacific, based in Noumea, and the two kings of Futuna, pursuant to talks with Secretary of State Jégo. This accord laid the foundations of a future *Groupements du service militaire adapté* (GSMA) center, to be based in Futuna Island. This military center will provide training to young unskilled people in various fields such as building, agriculture, security, and grounds maintenance. Since the signing, the kings and the chiefs of Futuna have been charged with finding land on which to establish the GSMA center. This proposal had been turned down several times by both Lavelua Tomasi Kulimoetoke and his successor, Lavelua Kapeliele Faupala. On a broader scale, in Wallis on 27 March, New Caledonia President Harold Martin, Territorial Assembly President Brial, and Prefect Paolantoni held the first meeting of the committee that monitors the special agreement defining relations between Noumea and Wallis and Futuna. The talks orbited around Wallis and Futuna's self-development, with Caledonian support in various fields (education, agriculture, fishing, sport, and so on). On 9 June the Wallis and Futuna price-monitoring committee was officially implemented (IEOM 2009, 144).

As dawn arrived on 30 September, Wallis and Futuna awoke to find that they had avoided the worst effects of a strong undersea earthquake that occurred near Sāmoa. A tsunami alert had been launched in the region, but the alert system did not work in Wallis and Futuna or in the Fijian archipelago.

On 2 November 2009, a new

branch of the Agence pour le droit à l'initiative économique (ADIE), headquartered in France, officially opened in Mata Utu (IEOM 2009, 145). This agency makes small loans available to unemployed people through a micro-credit system, allowing them to implement projects in various sectors such as trade, building, and handicrafts.

On 25 November, the employees of the Health Agency began an indefinite strike, leading to a blockade of the administrative center of Havelu that was not cleared until 2 December. One week later, on 9 December, in the course of the new 2010 budgetary session, Victor Brial was reelected as head of the Territorial Assembly. In light of the economic priority of increasing the volume of imports to Wallis and Futuna, the politicians decided to extend Leava harbor in Sigave, Futuna.

On 13 March 2010, Tropical Cyclone Tomas devastated the island of Futuna, destroying houses, schools, shops, and infrastructure along the main road as well as in several other places. After Wallisian representatives led an aerial reconnaissance mission, they declared the island a disaster area, although fortunately no people were killed. On 'Uvea, it was mostly the plantations that suffered. On 23 March the parent-teacher association of the Mata Utu Public High School, the only high school in Wallis and Futuna, shut down the school. The parents' representatives decried the severely dilapidated building and the lack of security due in part to a dysfunctional electrical supply network. The high school reopened five weeks later, on 12 April.

The social and economic life on

Wallis Island went from bad to worse. On 14 April, the island experienced a general cut-off of power and water when access to the company in charge of the territory's power and water supplies, Electricité et Eau de Wallis et Futuna (EEWF), was blocked by the company's main labor union. The company has offices in Mata Utu (in the central district of Hahake), as well as in the southern district of Mu'a and in the northern district, Hihifo. The union objected to the dismissal of the company's executive manager and questioned the recruitment of a commercial representative. This company is a subsidiary of Electricité et Eau de Calédonie (EEC), which is itself a subsidiary of the world's second-largest power company, GDF (Gaz de France) Suez. EEWF replaced UNELCO, becoming the main power company on Wallis Island in 1975 and on Futuna in 1987. The company became the water supplier for Wallis Island in 1986. (On Futuna, which has rivers and streams, water is directly routed without treatment from source captures to households.) Ownership of EEWF is split among EEC (67 percent), the Territory of Wallis and Futuna (32 percent) and others (1 percent). In the first half of the twentieth century, the reigning kings gave lands to the French administration so it could establish its main offices. In 1975 the administration gave a piece of land to EEWF so the company could build offices. In 1997 a contract renewing and extending the water and power supply arrangement until 2022 was signed by EEWF, the Territorial Assembly, the lavelua's representative, and the French administration.

The EEWF executive manager was

dismissed by the general manager in New Caledonia, Yves Morault, based on numerous charges of interference in company operations. The dismissal resulted in a demonstration organized by employees protesting Morault's decision. Morault argued that the strikers were stealing the company and blamed the French State for its passivity during this crisis, which progressively became an institutional matter pitting EEWf shareholders (ie, EEC, the Territorial Assembly, and GDF Suez) and the French administration against the Lavelua and the Grande Chefferie (the customary government), who have no financial stakes in the company.

A delegation of strikers was granted an audience with Lavelua Kapeliele Faupala and the Royal Council at the Palace Office in Sagato Soane Place. Meanwhile, negotiations continued between the strikers and company representatives who had arrived from New Caledonia. The king ordered the strikers to block access to the company offices, arguing that the land belonged to the king and that he could therefore take it over at any moment. Soon, employees' families and relatives came over and joined in the demonstration. Another issue arose to complicate matters: The Tu'i Mata Utu (the chief of Mata Utu village) intervened on the strikers' behalf, arguing that, since one EEWf office is located in Mata Utu, the company had to provide the villagers with jobs, such as interior and exterior cleaning and maintenance. Also, due to multiple power cuts, the population suffered losses in terms of damaged household appliances. Therefore the local Customers Association asked the

company to reimburse people for these losses. On 14 July, the new prefect, Michel Jeanjean, succeeded Philippe Paolantoni and had to deal with the thorny EEWf issue. Four days later, Lavelua Faupala sent a message to the prefecture announcing his decision to terminate the contract with EEWf and demanding that the company leave Wallis. Moreover, the chieftainship of Wallis Island formed a new water and power company, the Société Wallisienne de l'Eau et de l'Electricité, with the dismissed executive manager as head of the new company. It is important to note that the Wallisian king made these decisions unilaterally, without consulting the Futunan chiefs. On 20 July, when the newborn company began its operations, the whole island experienced power and water cut-offs. Prefect Jeanjean ordered EEWf to resume providing the power and water supplies. Things returned to normal on 23 July. Five days later police reinforcements arrived from Noumea and took possession of the company's offices from the strikers.

The extension work on Mata Utu harbor began on 25 October, supervised by Boyer Enterprises. On 30 November, the digital television service TNT (Télévision Numérique Terrestre) was officially launched with eight new channels instead of the one channel that was previously available. At the opening of the budget session on 7 December, Socialist Siliako Lauhea was elected president of the Territorial Assembly, thanks to a new majority looking for a political alternative to former President Victor Brial of the UMP.

Excitement continued to build in Wallis and Futuna for the central event

of 2011: the commemoration of the fiftieth anniversary of their status as a French territory. In a broader perspective, French President Nicolas Sarkozy declared 2011 the Year of the French Overseas Territories. Wallis and Futuna also faces another challenge: the organization of the next Pacific Minigames in 2013. Sports representatives are working on planning a program and logistics. In February 2011, the Internet provider Pacific Broadband resumed activity on Wallis, being the sole Internet contract holder with the Department of Posts and Telecommunications. In the cultural and religious arena, the Protestant Pentecostals published a Wallisian version of the Bible, surpassing Catholic translation efforts. With regard to the peace process between Royalists and Renovators, members of the Women's Association of Wallis Island from both sides sat down together. After peace talks, they met with the lavelua in order to show his majesty their determination to move toward peace.

HAPAKUKE PIERRE LELEIVAI

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