

Reviews of French Polynesia, Tuvalu, and Western Samoa are not included in this issue because of circumstances beyond our control.

AMERICAN SAMOA

The year under review in American Samoa was in several respects similar to 1989 and 1990. Hurricane Val ravaged the Samoan Islands for three days, from 7–10 December, with greater force and duration than Hurricane Ofa of February 1990. Remarkably, injuries directly related to the storm were few, with only one reported fatality.

Off-island assistance was made available immediately through the Red Cross; church, military, and community donations; and through the Federal Emergency Management Agency, which set up five Disaster Assistance Centers for loan applications. By mid-January, the agency had received more than 9500 damage claims, providing an average of US\$2000 for every man, woman, and child in the territory. Direct aid from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, which completed its assistance in late April, amounted to US\$14.5 million in temporary housing assistance, US\$15 million in individual family grants, and a US\$16 million obligation to the government for repair of public buildings. Another US\$24 million was provided in low-interest federal loans through the Small Business Administration.

Government financial problems continued into fiscal year 1992, exacerbating

difficulties in the normal operations of government. A public outcry over the deteriorated condition of public school restrooms prompted a *fono* investigation and brought criticism of Commercial Design Corporation for delays in repairs that were supposed to have been completed by the start of the school year. Governor Coleman announced in September 1991 that education would be his number one priority for the year. Adopting the “America 2000” educational program of President Bush, the governor declined to include recommendations put forth by the American Samoa Educational Summit, which met earlier in the year. The summit had identified three main issues to be addressed: leadership, an elected board of education, and a greater role for taxpayers in voting on sources and control of funding for education. Concern has also been expressed in the public and private sectors about politicization, teacher qualifications, substandard language and math proficiency levels among secondary students, school disrepair, and financial mismanagement. These problems are likely to remain unattended without reform efforts that address specific local educational needs.

Controversy between the territory’s congressman, Faleomavaega Eni Hunkin, and the governor’s office erupted in December 1991 over the issue of local minimum wages. Hunkin’s letter to the governor in support of the Murphy Bill (which proposes to place territorial minimum wages at par with those in the main-

land United States) appeared in the *Samoa News*. Dyke Coleman, the governor's son and chief of staff, responded in the press to the congressman's blindside of the canneries and the American Samoa Government by first opposing the inclusion of tuna under the Magnuson Act, and then unexpectedly supporting the raise in minimum wages. Hunkin later clarified his position as neither supporting nor opposing the Murphy bill, though he feels it is time to determine "why hard-working people cannot make a decent wage to lead a life with dignity" (*Samoa News*, 4 June 1992).

The House Interior Subcommittee on Insular and International Affairs conducted hearings in Washington, DC, in May on the General Accounting Office Report on the territory's deficit crisis. Territorial officials' testimony before the committee played heavily on two themes: budget deficits are universal; and outside (eg, US officials') insensitivity to, or ignorance of the "uniqueness" of American Samoa's culture, history, and inexperience in self-government. Governor Coleman's views on the report were justifiably critical of deficits carried over from previous administrations and other uncontrollable "cause-and-effect events" affecting government revenues. His statements that "the draft report contains no finding of graft, fraud or corruption in [his] administration," however, is misleading (*Samoa News*, 26 May 1992). The report duly noted that government officials guilty of "apparent violations of the law" had not been held accountable.

The General Accounting Office audit was perceived by many local offi-

cial as the result of a political move by Congressman Hunkin, who requested the review after appropriate responses from the Department of Interior were not received. The report attributed the government's growing deficit problem to poor financial management practices, inadequate tax collection, failure to enforce existing procurement laws, and prohibiting anti-deficiency spending. The Department of Interior was also blamed for lack of oversight in efforts to improve the territory's financial management practices.

By the end of June, the government faced bankruptcy again and presented yet another request to the *fono* to borrow millions from the retirement fund. Approval by the previous year's *fono* of a us\$5 million retirement fund loan was contingent on administration promises to follow through with revenue generating and saving measures. During the year, the public was faced with serious shortages in medicine at the hospital, procedural violations in hiring and awarding salary raises, and other questionable, illegal, or unethical acts. The latest request for us\$15 million has created widespread public outrage and generated charges that the administration is incapable of setting its house in order.

With elections coming up in November 1992, several new candidates for gubernatorial and congressional representative have announced their intention to run. Incumbent territorial attorney general, Tautai Aviata Fa'alevao, and former *fono* representative, Tuika Tuika, Jr, have declared their candidacies for the US house seat currently held by Congressman Eni Hunkin. Former deputy director of the

treasury Tumuataua Falema'ō Pili seeks election to the office of governor, as does Galumalemana Frank Pritchard, former director of agriculture and one-time legislator from Leone. Pritchard has chosen former director of medical services Dr Nofo Siliga as his running mate, while former governor A. P. Lutali has selected Tauese P. Sunia, previously education director, as his lieutenant governor. All challengers face the upcoming elections with the formidable task of attempting to undo what the politics of dependency and, some would say, greed have created in American Samoa.

BILL LEGALLEY

COOK ISLANDS

Culture and debt were the themes that dominated the year under review. The two are related in a number of ways.

Prime Minister Sir Geoffrey Henry has a strong personal interest in and deep knowledge of culture, and a clear vision of its role in giving Cook Islanders confidence, national cohesion, and a unique identity. No one else is as skilled in using culture as a political tool, also a forte of the first head of government, his late cousin Albert Henry. The priority being given to cultural matters is far beyond that in any other Pacific nation—or anywhere else we know of in the world. The Ministry of Culture (Tauranga Vananga) was established in 1990 and is now bearing some quality fruit. This is in encouraging contrast to its predecessor, Albert Henry's Tumu Korero, which started with noble sentiments but degenerated

into a crass political machine and was finally abolished in 1978.

In October 1992 the Cook Islands hosts the Festival of Pacific Arts, an enormous—even courageous—undertaking for so small a nation. Every person in every village on Rarotonga is involved in preparations for this major Pacific event—village beautification schemes with significant prizes, planting programs to feed the extras, preparations for accommodating, catering for, and entertaining two thousand participants plus more than that number of visitors. This means a doubling of the adult population of Rarotonga. Enormous efforts are involved, but it is an integrating and unifying challenge for the nation. Rarotonga's roads are being put into better condition than ever, its water supply upgraded, public buildings renovated, and the main town foreshore is being expanded and made more attractive.

At the same time, a large new National Cultural Centre is under construction in Avarua. The expected cost of US\$6 million is reasonable for the structure being erected, but enormous relative to the size of the nation. It is the equivalent per person of Papua New Guinea or New Zealand spending US\$1200 million on such a center. Maintenance and operating costs will also be high. The two-week Festival of Pacific Arts is budgeted to cost US\$3 million. As an indication of the priority being given to culture, though not to negate its value, this is equivalent to Papua New Guinea or New Zealand spending US\$600 million on such an event.

Tourism, the main economic force

in the country, also depends to a significant degree on cultural expression. Most of the wide range of competitions and performances in the expressive arts are financed, directly or indirectly, by the travel industry. Although Fiji and other island destinations were struggling, the Cook Islands enjoyed higher-than-ever tourist numbers in 1991–92. Nevertheless, most government efforts to provide tourist services over the years have been economic disasters. This year saw further losses, and further unsuccessful attempts to sell off the three government hotels. At the same time, the government was pressing ahead with construction of a new luxury hotel to be managed by Sheraton.

Five years ago the Cook Islands was virtually debt free. Today, government debt is approaching the equivalent of two years' gross domestic product, an extremely high figure. The main sources of debt have been expenditures on culture and tourism. The National Cultural Centre is the largest of several projects being financed by a loan from the government of Nauru. The loan for the hotel was CI\$71 million, but may be as much as CI\$100 million by the time it opens in 1993. Sympathetic and knowledgeable people do not think it possible to repay the loan from revenues generated by the hotel itself. The National Cultural Centre, of course, will not bring in significant revenue. The money is to be repaid through a scheme involving reloaning the Nauru funds to others at higher interest rates. As the government declines to reveal the details, there is some concern about the deal.

Loans for telecommunications, electricity upgrading, water supply, housing, pearl culture, business development, agriculture, and so on, all have the potential to be repaid and to generate economic growth, provided the projects are well managed (though the track record in this regard is very mixed). Those for roads are within the capacity of the government to repay. Most of the loans are nominally "concessional," though this ties the government to lenders' requirements (and sometimes contractors'). In some cases the costs are higher than a commercial loan with open bidding.

Another concern is debts to international organizations, some of which are far in arrears. The government is also well behind in payment of bills to businesses within the Cook Islands. The arson of the main government buildings in May 1992 may add \$10 million or more to the national debt. When it took office the present government canceled insurance on government buildings in the hope that foreign aid would cover any losses. The hope was misplaced.

The government maintains that the loans are within the nation's capacity to pay, with the exception of that for the "Sheraton." Critics allege that the Cook Islands is following a familiar pattern of overindebtedness characteristic not only of many Third World countries but also of many higher income countries such as Australia and New Zealand. This is fine for those spending other people's money, but creates long-term suffering for the next generation, who have to pay it back or undergo the humiliation of having

some of it canceled in return for stringent external controls. Which of these or other scenarios eventuates will not be known for some time.

Hopes for economic growth include the possible exploitation of seabed minerals on the Manihiki Plateau (still some way off and with as yet unpredictable financial results). Expanded pearl culture is planned for Manihiki, pearl culture by families is due to begin in Tongareva in 1992 with some USAID assistance, and a government-associated corporation is expected to develop the industry in Suwarrow. Even if the last two have no development problems, it will be some years before significant returns are available. Some see a good future in aquaculture. Short-term prospects in tourism appear good, and further growth is expected. Other hopes lie in the Australian lottery, Lotto, which began operation in 1992. The resultant government revenue is to be used for sport and youth activities, though the drain of foreign exchange to Australia will also be significant.

The international finance center seems to thrive, but the international ship registry has failed to bring in the expected revenue. Five of the twenty ships registered so far have sunk! International insurers are very cautious about vessels registered in the Cook Islands.

After a dearth of sea transport and a series of marine disasters over some years, early 1992 saw the introduction of a plethora of private interisland shipping services. Not all of these enterprises are likely to survive in such a small market. A new airline, Avaiki Air (chaired by Member of Parliament

and businessman Norman George), lost one of its aircraft with several lives, and was not operating at the end of the review period.

Social tensions, which derive in part from economic changes, are creating political problems. Perhaps the greatest social tension within families concerns land rights. Cook Islanders inherit land from both parents, four grandparents, eight great-grandparents. (This is not ancient custom, though many believe it is). About 76 percent of Cook Islanders live in New Zealand, Australia, French Polynesia, or elsewhere. Demands for land by the growing number of returnees, and by those remaining overseas but claiming what they consider to be "their share" back home, are now a significant source of friction. Whereas full employment used to be the norm, 30 percent of Cook Islanders in New Zealand are now unemployed, as automation, specialization, and deregulation do away with low-skill occupations.

The impact is strongest in Rarotonga, where the population increasingly concentrates, rapidly making it a different world and lifestyle from the outer islands. However, tensions are also apparent in Manihiki and Tongareva as residents and returnees compete over land and water rights for potentially lucrative pearl culture projects.

Returnees also create other problems, including disturbing increases in burglary, rape, and other violent crime. The chief magistrate estimates that most crime is caused by the small percentage of people who have lived overseas for a long time, but not achieved their goals and come back as

“failures.” However, locals contribute too, and eleven cases of arson over Easter weekend 1992 were the work of local youth. The building complex housing the Prime Minister’s Department, Cabinet offices, Post Office, Justice Department, Survey, Internal Affairs, and others, was burnt to the ground a few weeks later.

Other changes with political and social implications are driven by the international agencies, whose funds, staff, and resources pour in (and are sucked in) in return for the opportunity to influence policies. Top of the pops this year, in terms of funding, were environmental and nutritional issues. Chair of the Board of Health Hugh Henry noted that Cook Islanders have the Pacific’s second worst incidence of nutrition- and lifestyle-related diseases. Chief Nutritionist Ta’iora Matenga-Smith, said the incidence of heart disease in Rarotonga multiplied ten times over the last four years, due mainly to increased consumption of junk food.

In party politics, the opposition continued its downward slide. Another opposition member of parliament, Nihi Vini of Penrhyn, defected to the government in return for concessions to him and his electorate (including his becoming an assistant minister). The opposition Democratic Party (formerly Democratic Taokotai Party) met to consider its leadership crisis. Mr Norman George (a former minister for foreign affairs) had given notice of a challenge to the incumbent Dr Pupuke Robati. Dr Robati stood down but Dr Terepai Maoate was elected leader, with Mr Iaveta Arthur as deputy leader. Mr George, who claims to have more support among the rank and file

of the party, said he would “consider his options.” He is known for energy and innovation, Dr Maoate for tact and diplomacy. Together they could make a strong team, but they publicly vilify each other. The party is in tatters.

A snap election is likely late in 1992, or early in 1993, a year before it is due. The government may decide to ride the wave of public euphoria caused by high levels of employment and spending from the loans, by a good year for tourism, by the Festival of Pacific Arts, and by the lack of a realistic opposition. Moreover, the government has fulfilled more of its election promises than most governments in most places. The prime minister was awarded a knighthood, which is likely to be electorally popular and taken as a sign of royal approval. Most of the public are not aware that such honors are awarded on the recommendation of the government concerned. Sir Geoffrey has also been selected as chancellor of the University of the South Pacific, a titular post held by heads of government or heads of state of the twelve member countries in turn. Again the public will not be aware of the selection process and it is another propitious sign for the success of the ruling Cook Island Party in an election.

In international relations the prime minister, once the strongest critic of French nuclear testing, cautioned the people against negative action, and explained the French position. The change was no doubt due to two “development” loans from the French government, and a request for French help with transport, equipment, and catering for the Festival of Pacific Arts. Moreover, France now helps with sur-

veillance of the Cook Islands exclusive economic zone, and has provided emergency transport and technical services. The opposition criticized the government for its changed stance on nuclear testing, but the majority seem to feel it is a good deal for the Cook Islands. The issue was rendered moot when France suspended its testing program in April 1992.

A highlight of the year was the inaugural meeting of the G5, consisting of the heads of government of the five smallest member nations of the South Pacific Forum (Cook Islands, Niue, Tuvalu, Kiribati, and Nauru). They claim to get the smallest slice of the aid and related cakes, and that they can cooperate in areas such as transport and marine surveillance. The meeting, which was Sir Geoffrey Henry's idea, was hosted by the Cook Islands and the participants felt they achieved useful objectives.

It was a stimulating, positive year, throbbing with activity. We hope the next generation will not have to pay for our joy!

RON CROCOMBE

MARJORIE TUAINEKORE CROCOMBE

MAORI ISSUES

In March 1991, new Minister of Maori Affairs Winston Peters released his ministerial planning group's document, *Ka Awatea*. The planning group recommended the establishment of a Ministry of Maori Development to replace the Iwi Transition Agency, which in turn had replaced the old Department of Maori Affairs. The report targeted the four areas of Maori health, educa-

tion, employment, and business enterprise, which had to be developed to close the gap between Maori and Pakeha. The plan was based on the assumption that the NZ\$239 million budget of the Iwi Transition Agency would be retained, at a time when Minister of Finance Ruth Richardson was bent on pruning government expenditure.

Ka Awatea was not well received by Mr Peters' cabinet colleagues because it was contrary to the government's policy of "mainstreaming." Under this policy, services to Maori provided by the Iwi Transition Agency, such as Maori Access (an employment training scheme), land, Maori trustee, housing, welfare, and education, would be integrated into matching programs provided by mainstream government departments. The budget of the Iwi Transition Agency would shrink through its redeployment to other departments.

Maori suspect that mainstreaming is a new word for the old policies of integration, assimilation, and the maintenance of Pakeha hegemony. In the 1980s the Department of Maori Affairs became more user-friendly, as Maori were promoted by Chief Executive Officer Kara Puketapu from the middle levels, where they had been kept, into managerial positions. The government made moves to regain control. Against the wishes of Maori leaders, the department was abolished in 1988 and replaced by a Ministry of Maori Policy whose only function was to recommend policy to the government. In the meantime, an Iwi Transition Agency, with a life of five years, was established to implement the government's policy

of devolution and mainstreaming. It was the only government department that, if successful, would put itself out of business.

For the Maori, there is no guarantee that mainstreaming will benefit them in departments that are staffed and controlled by Pakeha. Consequently, when *Ka Awatea* was launched, it was endorsed by Maori leaders in the national Congress of Tribes, the Maori Women's Welfare League, and the Maori Council. The only dissenting Maori voice against Peters, was that of the influential Sir Graham Latimer, president of the Maori Council and Maori vice-president of the ruling National Party.

In July 1991, Sir Graham urged Prime Minister Jim Bolger to sack Winston Peters, ostensibly for breaching the principle of "collective responsibility" for Cabinet decisions. Peters had vehemently criticized the monetarist policies of the government for inflicting economic hardship on the people and widening the gap between the "haves" and "have nots." In April, at a time of chronic unemployment, the government cut welfare benefits and increased housing corporation rentals to bring them up to market rates.

Although Mr Peters' criticism of government policy was the ostensible reason for Sir Graham wanting him sacked, the covert reason was the minister's opposition to the Quality Inns deal. The buyers of this chain of thirteen hotels in New Zealand were a mix of American and Maori investors. Sir Graham Latimer and Kara Puketapu, as principals in Maori International, persuaded twelve Maori trust boards and corporations to pledge NZ\$10 mil-

lion toward the purchase price of NZ\$57 million. They also persuaded the Maori trustee to act as guarantor. Since the Maori trustee is answerable to the minister of Maori Affairs, Peters was not happy with the deal. He criticized the Maori trustee's guarantee of such a large sum as "imprudent." His worst fears were confirmed when the trust boards defaulted on their pledges. Wira Gardiner, chief executive officer of the Iwi Transition Agency, had no alternative but to sack Maori Trustee Neville Baker for mismanagement of his fiduciary responsibilities. Despite the correctness of that sacking, the State Services Commission stepped in and negotiated an early retirement package for Mr Baker, thus preventing a challenge in court.

Despite not wanting anything to do with the Quality Inns deal, Prime Minister Bolger wished the Maori partners in the venture every success. He portrayed himself as pro-Maori over a multimillion-dollar deal to which his rebellious minister of Maori Affairs was opposed. Portraying himself as pro-Maori helped prepare the political ground for his sacking of Mr Peters in October. The sacking effectively sounded the death knell of *Ka Awatea* and some measure of Maori control over the process of mainstreaming.

In the meantime, Wira Gardiner was appointed chief executive of the new Ministry of Maori Development. His first job was to turn a small establishment unit into a Ministry of Maori Development by January 1992. This ministry replaced both the Ministry of Maori Policy and the Iwi Transition Agency. At the outset, Gardiner committed himself to the goals of *Ka Awa-*

tea, but with the sacking of its architect, the grand design was cut down to size. More than two hundred fifty staff lost their jobs in the restructuring. The new ministry, named Te Puni Kokiri, has a staff of only two hundred and a budget of NZ\$30 million. By June 1993, most of the programs inherited from Maori Affairs and the Iwi Transition Agency will have been transferred to other government departments; the only effective role left for Te Puni Kokiri is to monitor the delivery of service to Maori by other departments.

Although the demise of a department whose *raison d'être* was to serve Maori needs is a setback for Maori, there is cause for optimism on Maori land claims before the Waitangi Tribunal. In a memorandum to the Cabinet Strategy Committee in March, Minister of Justice Doug Graham recommended a more conciliatory approach. The previous government made the mistake of opposing Maori claims because of its unwillingness to concede that breaches of the Treaty of Waitangi had occurred. This resulted in the Crown being taken to court by Maori in a succession of ten cases that the Crown lost, the most celebrated being the Maori fisheries claim, the Tainui claim against the sale of land by Coalcorp, and the claim against the transfer of Crown land to State Owned Enterprises. The reason for this discomfiture of the Crown is the elevation of the treaty almost to the level of a constitutional instrument by its inclusion in twenty-one statutes. Accordingly the minister recommended that it would be better to balance the principle of *kawanatanga*, the right to govern ceded to the Crown in the first

clause of the treaty, with the principle of *tino rangatiratanga*, absolute chieftainship, guaranteed by the Crown in the second clause. To this end Mr Graham recommended the settlement of claims by "chiefs meeting chiefs." Under this formula, the minister of justice, supported by an "A team" of chief executives and top officials, would meet the "chiefs" of tribes to settle their claims by negotiation.

RANGINUI J. WALKER

NIUE

The year 1991-92 saw continued public service restructuring as Niue adjusted to reduced levels of New Zealand budgetary support. The size of the public service fell to approximately 420 (from nearly 600 in 1990), and progress was made in privatizing government-run businesses. Other cost-saving measures included closure of the never more than lightly populated Niue prison adjacent to the island's golf course.

As in the past, efforts to promote economic development through trade and tourism were hampered by air transport problems. Niue Airlines' fortnightly air service became increasingly irregular with flights canceled at short notice because of insufficient patronage. The government finally suspended the airline's license when it was unable to provide bank guarantees to purchase aviation fuel. In June 1992 Niue announced that it was terminating its agreement with the Auckland-based company and would enter into discussions with other airlines. For the island's embryonic tourist industry,

now encompassing several small motels as well as the expanded and refurbished state-owned Niue Hotel, a reliable air service linking Niue with New Zealand, the Cook Islands, and Western Samoa remains essential.

The effort to develop the *Mouli Faka Niue* 'Niuean Life' program, based on small-scale exports of root crops and Niuean crafts, was more determined. A forestry project also gained momentum as leasing arrangements were negotiated with landowners.

The Niue Concerted Action Plan (Levine 1990, 174) came to an end in June 1992 and was succeeded by a project-based approach to New Zealand-sponsored economic development. Talks between Niuean and New Zealand officials on aid-related issues in March 1992 were followed by a one-day visit in May by New Zealand Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs Don McKinnon. His discussions with Premier Sir Robert Rex, and subsequently with the entire Niue Cabinet, reaffirmed New Zealand's commitment to its obligations under the 1974 Niue Constitution Act, including the periodic consultations between the two governments specified in Clause 8.

The NZ\$7.5 million aid package, a reduction of \$2 million from the previous year, drew some criticism from members of the Niuean community in New Zealand concerned about growing unemployment on Niue and its effects on migration. However, the November 1991 census suggested that Niue's population (recorded as 2244, little changed from 1989) may have stabilized, with unemployment in New Zealand making migration a less

attractive option. Plans are being considered for increasing to 100 percent (from 50 percent) the payment of New Zealand superannuation benefits to eligible Niueans who return to Niue.

New Zealand aid includes NZ\$2 million earmarked for development support (roughly half for new aid projects). The Niue government's proposals for assistance include the forestry program, with New Zealand funding a forestry adviser and equipment. Assistance has also been sought for the land titling program, necessary for forestry leasing and other activities. Other New Zealand aid programs seek to strengthen Niue's private sector by making expertise and seed money available for small businesses. Australia has also provided aid, permitting reconstruction of an important wharf access road. United Nations Development Program funds, like those from New Zealand, have emphasized private sector development (although some UNDP aid has also gone to Niue's health sector).

Increasingly frail, Sir Robert Rex announced in May 1992 that he would be stepping down in 1993 when voters elect a new Assembly. Although the experienced Minister of Finance Young Vivian has represented the premier at international meetings, his rivals include Robert Rex, Jr, former Cabinet member Frank Lui, and possibly Secretary to Government Terry Chapman. Lui can claim credit for a nonbinding resolution passed by the Assembly to award public servants (an overwhelming majority of the island's work force and electorate) a 10 percent cost-of-living increase, their first in four years.

Niue has been invited to prepare a

report for the United Nations Economic and Social Committee considering whether New Zealand has met its constitutional obligations to Niue. New Zealand has agreed to a request from Niue to make a joint statement clarifying Niue's international and constitutional status, an important issue for its multilateral and bilateral relations.

Niue's involvement in regional affairs became more visible when it took part in pre-South Pacific Forum meetings in 1991 and 1992 with four other small Forum member nations (Kiribati, Tuvalu, Nauru, and the Cook Islands) in an attempt to enhance cooperation and focus on their distinctive development concerns. The group, known as the Small Island States, was given formal recognition by the Forum. In 1992 Niue also hosted a meeting of the Forum Fisheries Agency attended by more than a hundred delegates.

Following a constitutional review, the Niue Assembly voted to amend the 1974 Constitution for the first time. The proposals presented by the Constitution Review Committee to the Niue Assembly in September 1991 were far less sweeping than those discussed in 1989 (Levine 1990, 174-175; 1991, 204). According to their proponents, these were conservative measures designed to enhance Niue's national identity without jeopardizing the special relationship with New Zealand. Some of the amendments would, as Finance Minister Young Vivian put it, "bring home to Niue our own institutions" by placing certain administrative and judicial functions more firmly under the control of the Niue government. Others changed the qualifications for voting and Assembly candidacy.

Following final Assembly approval in May 1992, a referendum (as required under the Niue Constitution) was held the following month in which 86 percent of the island's registered voters participated. The amendments were approved by 67 percent of those voting, with majorities in favor in thirteen of Niue's fourteen village electorates. The constitutional changes (which did not require any action by New Zealand) came into effect in July 1992.

The successful use of the amending procedure increased confidence in Niue's ability to revise its own constitution. Young Vivian's claim that the Constitution Amendment Act helps establish Niue's self-governing status suggests that the initiative, in conjunction with the forthcoming joint statement on Niue's political status, was intended in part to clarify Niue's position as a self-governing political entity and so enhance its capacity to develop international connections.

A new feature of the relationship with New Zealand began with the appointment of a nonresident defense adviser. New Zealand remains constitutionally responsible for Niue's defense, acting under authority delegated to it by the Niue government. At Niue's request, New Zealand carries out maritime surveillance in the exclusive economic zone, and a small defense assistance program is being developed. Niue's competence to make defense decisions was highlighted when the government agreed to allow an American warship to visit Niue in July 1992. Such visits to New Zealand ports ended with the introduction of its anti-nuclear policy in July 1984.

STEPHEN LEVINE

References

- Levine, Stephen. 1990. Political Review: Niue. *The Contemporary Pacific* 2: 173-176.
- . 1991. Political Review: Niue. *The Contemporary Pacific* 3:203-205.

TOKELAU

Further progress was made toward Tokelauan self-government in 1991-92. Following inconclusive discussions about administrative matters at the September 1991 General *Fono* in Fakaofu, the Nukunonu meeting in May 1992 approved proposals put forward by Tokelau's new administrator. Brian Absolum, a New Zealand career diplomat with extensive service in the Pacific, was appointed to a three-year term beginning in February 1992.

The administrator recommended that the General *Fono*'s power to make policy and pass laws for Tokelau be legally recognized by New Zealand. He also proposed the establishment of a Council of *Faipule* to act as the government of Tokelau, responsible for the day-to-day management of the territory. A third suggestion would authorize village councils to take over the management of various programs such as public works, agriculture, fisheries, health, and administration.

These ideas build on established leadership structures and institutions, and received strong support from the May 1992 *fono*. The proposed legislative changes would formally recognize existing practice, since Tokelau is already effectively responsible for internal decision making despite the absence of a legally constituted territorial government. The measures appear

part of an organic process of political development likely to lead ultimately to some sort of formal act of self-determination.

A working committee was established at the May *fono*, comprising five representatives from each island together with the administrator and New Zealand advisers, to consider ways of implementing the three-part package or related options. It is expected to report its findings to the August 1992 *fono* in Atafu. The committee complements Tokelau's other major administrative working group, the Budget Committee, which considers expenditure and project proposals and presents an annual budget for adoption by the *fono*.

The May 1992 initiative was highlighted in Tokelau's June statement to the United Nations Committee of Twenty-Four during its annual consideration of the "question of Tokelau." In their statement, Tokelau's three *faipule* advised the United Nations (through a New Zealand representative) that the territory had "reached a certain degree of self-government," but that it still lacked "a formal constituted government structure to recognize it." Thus the *fono* had approved proposals designed to "strengthen our wish to eventually take on more of the running of our own affairs."

The statement also noted problems arising out of the ongoing separation of Tokelau's political leadership (resident in Tokelau) from the administrative headquarters of its public service (based in Apia, Western Samoa). Tokelau remains committed to relocating the Office for Tokelau Affairs from Apia to Tokelau, but this is a delicate undertaking, complicated by efforts to

ensure that each atoll take equal responsibility for hosting part of the senior elements of the public service. Meanwhile, progress continues to be made in overcoming inadequacies in transport and communications that have helped to delay relocation.

The United Nations Development Program, Tokelau's largest aid donor after New Zealand, has devoted the bulk of its funding to upgrading Tokelau's telecommunication facilities. It is cooperating with the New Zealand government in a design study aimed at providing expanded telecommunication facilities for the three atolls, considered essential if the relocation of the public service is to proceed.

The launching in November 1991 of a new interatoll ferry marked a significant step toward overcoming some of Tokelau's transportation problems. The New Zealand-funded ship was purpose-built in Auckland at a cost of NZ\$1.3 million and was named MV *Tutolu* 'the three standing together' following a special competition. The vessel, which rode out its first cyclone in December while berthed in Apia harbor, is expected to provide a weekly service among the atolls, facilitating further efforts toward a more integrated Tokelauan entity. Meanwhile, the search continues for a vessel to replace the one owned by a Fiji-based company presently operating the Apia-Tokelau service. A ship chartered from the Tuvalu government has been used for *fono* meetings and by scholarship students returning from overseas during Christmas holiday breaks.

Although Cyclone Val produced some adverse effects in December 1991, it was much less disruptive than

Cyclone Ofa in 1990. New Zealand provided emergency assistance of food, shelter, and first aid to the value of NZ\$25,000 per atoll, while villagers repaired damage to sea walls. On the whole the gabion baskets installed in the wake of Cyclone Ofa (Levine 1992, 206) were a success, and a United Nations Development Program design study is investigating additional seawall protection.

Despite these protective efforts Tokelau remains highly vulnerable to rises in sea levels. In their statement to the United Nations, the *faipule* noted Tokelau's involvement in United Nations preparatory meetings for the earth summit in Rio de Janeiro, expressing the hope that the industrialized nations would curb activities leading to global warming and other forms of climate change. Environmental concerns were also apparent in their approval of the decision to suspend nuclear testing at Moruroa in French Polynesia.

While reminding the United Nations of "the unique character" of Tokelauan society, the *faipule* stressed that regional and international participation assists in the development of a national identity. A November 1991 census revealed some changing aspects of that identity. Both Fakaofu and Atafu registered a 10 percent population drop in five years, while Nukunonu experienced a slight rise. The result is a more balanced distribution of population among the three atolls. A more serious trend suggesting some erosion in "national identity" was emphasized in outgoing Administrator Graeme Ansell's final annual report. Rapid increases have occurred in sev-

eral diseases—hypertension, diabetes, heart disease, and gout—arising from a heavy dependence on imported foods and high rates of sugar, alcohol, and tobacco use. Although a health education program has been begun, it will be difficult to reverse patterns of consumption associated with profound changes in Tokelauan lifestyle.

STEPHEN LEVINE

Reference

Levine, Stephen. 1992. Political Review: Tokelau. *The Contemporary Pacific* 4: 205–208.

THE KINGDOM OF TONGA

The shock waves of political change that some people predicted would follow the rumblings of Tonga's "prodemocracy movement" have remained little more than ripples this past year. Accusations of "traitorous activities," "betrayal of Tonga's interests," and "disloyalty to the Crown," are bandied about by elite and conservative elements. But prodemocracy spokespersons stress that they are not trying to do away with the present system by attacking the monarchy or the special estate of nobles for which most people still hold a customary respect. The so-called radicals want to retain the three-tier system, but to have it work as written in the Constitution, without flagrant abuse of common people's rights. There is talk of holding a constitutional conference later in 1992, when some of these issues might be discussed by the country's leaders. In the meantime, prodemocracy supporters, led by

some church officials, intellectuals, and the people's representatives in parliament, continue to press for their objectives, which are to ensure the accountability of government ministers to the people and to parliament and to secure a broader basis of political representation for the common people.

At present, some twenty-seven titled nobles are represented by 9 nobles' representatives, while the rest of the ninety thousand Tongans voting at home are also represented by only 9 representatives. Nobles in concert with the ministers of the Crown (who are not elected but appointed by the king) easily outvote the people's representatives on issues running counter to elite interests. They are sufficiently concerned by the criticism increasingly leveled at them to have ordered the minister of police to conduct a secret inquiry into the activities of prodemocracy activists among Tongans living abroad. Increasing numbers of expatriate Tongans would like to influence politics at home, perhaps by exercising in the future some form of nonresident voting rights.

In addition, the fact that ministers of government departments are not only not elected but also have no retiring age imposes a severe ceiling on the ambitions of those below them in the civil service hierarchy. One current fear is that numbers of good, committed, young graduates will become so frustrated with lack of opportunity or promotion that they will leave Tonga. These sentiments were being more openly expressed in November 1991, when New Zealand amended its Immigration Act and placed additional pressures on Polynesian "overstayers." Despite subsequent moves by the

Tongan government and bilateral discussions in both Nuku'alofa and Wellington, Tonga might find itself having to accommodate five thousand reluctant returnees.

The "radicals" have continued to try to enforce greater accountability of government ministers to parliament and to the people of Tonga for their use of government monies by invoking the law to charge ministers with misuse of funds. People generally are becoming more aware of the power of law in defense of their rights. Squash growers brought a case against one of the directors of a major squash export company, who is also the king's nephew, for his supposed mishandling of growers' agreements. People are acutely aware that this is not just the first time a royal person has been brought to court, but part of more general moves to control nobles' abuse of privilege. The failing health of the last prime minister, HRH Prince Tu'ipelehake, it is generally felt, made it difficult for him to control certain of the more renegade ministers, who all have noble status. His successor, Baron Vaea, whose daughter is married to the king's youngest son, has yet to show whether or how he might seek to restrain abuses of ministerial power and privilege.

The group pressing for greater democracy in Tonga seeks to inform the commoner electorate of relevant issues by means of kava parties and other informal talking sessions throughout the kingdom. In Tonga there has been no tradition of ordinary people being encouraged to look critically at their own society. The "radicals" believe that if they alter the groundswell of opinion in Tonga,

change will eventuate. Many observers in the country feel that the "radical" people's representatives have gone too far in the relentless criticisms of their social superiors within and outside parliament, and in their constant harping on issues, such as the series of scandals concerning the sale of Tongan passports to nonnationals. Since their election in 1990, the unified thrust of the "radical" representatives has been increasingly frayed by their various business or other personal interests, individual ties of noble patronage, or different church affiliations. Only two, 'Akilisi Pohiva and Uiliame Fukofuka, effectively continue the more heated debates in parliament. Nevertheless, the parliamentary session that began in June, and will lead up to the country's next general election early in 1993, quickly became fiery. On the positive side, relatively free discussion and wide media coverage of controversial issues may be expected to defuse any potential violence arising from political discontent.

The country's current economic problems continue to be the most serious issues discussed. The minister of finance is again on the firing line, for his handling of the nation's budget and for his economic policies, which many people think are inappropriate for the small island kingdom. The government finished the fiscal year with a heavy deficit and a shortfall of T\$3.5 million for its recurrent expenditure. It has already reported a T\$19.4 million deficit for the first quarter of 1992, an increase of T\$4.1 million or 26.6 percent compared with the first quarter of 1991.

In an effort to raise the necessary

revenue to meet the 1992–93 estimated expenditures, many government departments have increased charges for services. The trust fund set up from the sale of 450 Tongan passports issued to the Hong Kong Consulate, finally audited in October 1991 at

US\$2,191,140 and located in San Francisco, may be called on to help the shortfall of funds. In addition, the current session of the Legislative Assembly has already imposed a round of import duties, particularly on beer, cigarettes, petrol, and diesel fuel; rates on wharfage; stamp duties; a levy of 70 seniti per T\$100 on foreign-exchange transactions; and a room tax on tourist accommodations. These measures are likely to bring sharp increases to the already high cost of living. Remittance earnings in 1991, estimated at T\$22.1 million, declined by T\$3.7 million, or 14.4 percent, compared with the T\$25.8 million received in 1990, so that there is now also less cash coming in from overseas to meet increased local prices for goods and services.

Inflation has been running officially at about 10 to 12.5 percent throughout the year, but, unofficially, in terms of prices at the local market, money appears to go much less far. The prices of local crops rose, most acutely in Tongatapu, as availability fell due to a prolonged drought since October 1991, the worst experienced in the kingdom for eight or nine years. A basket of six yams was selling for up to T\$100 at Talamahu Market in Nuku'alofa at the time of the Free Wesleyan Church Conference in May 1992. This important conference, which brings together all Free Wesleyan ministers in Tonga every three years, was the occasion for the

retirement of the Reverend Dr 'Amanaki Havea, a prodemocracy supporter, as president of Tonga's largest church body (after sixteen years, from 1971 to 1977 and since 1981). He was replaced by the Reverend Sione Lepa To'a.

The scarcity of local foodstuffs has been exacerbated by the use of extensive areas of garden land for the more lucrative production of squash for export to Japan. Tonga had its first ever trade surplus of T\$100,000 in November 1991, from the sale of squash, which at that point had garnered T\$4.6 million. But the profits from the sales of squash are not equally distributed throughout the kingdom.

Nor is there an agricultural export facility for controlling the quality of produce since the Tonga Commodities Board, the country's largest employer, finally folded in 1991. A new government holding company, Tonga Investments Limited, was created in its stead. In February 1992, its new seven-man board of directors, which includes the prime minister, the minister of justice and attorney-general, the minister of labour, commerce and industries, the former general manager of the Tonga Development Bank, who had been seconded to the Tonga Commodities Board, and two private-sector directors, selected managers for five new companies to be launched. Each will operate as a private entity, with facilities and property leased from Tonga Investments, and continue services formerly provided by the Tonga Commodities Board (TCB).

Primary Produce Exports Limited will have the responsibility of exporting vanilla, pumpkins, coconut, and

other agricultural produce. Frisco Company will operate the former TCB building materials and furniture enterprises. Coconut Oil Mills Limited will handle copra purchases and milling. Homegas Limited will take over bottled-gas distribution, while Palm Soaps Limited will continue the manufacture of toilet soaps and laundry products. The old commodity board's construction, plumbing, engineering, and financial divisions, as well as the Have-luloto premises, will be closed. The Pili quarry is to be sold by tender.

Among other issues likely to be raised during the current parliamentary session is the contract given to a Chinese entrepreneur, Dr Sam Ling Wong, for the construction of a projected 86-room hotel next to Fua'amotu International Airport. No Tongan labor will be used, nor will local businesses benefit by the project. More than 7,900 tonnes of construction materials, the biggest such shipment ever to arrive in the kingdom, came from the People's Republic of China in March 1992. It included 44.9 tonnes of foodstuffs to feed the 84 Chinese construction workers. On arrival, the shipment was found to have no proper quarantine papers and to contain insect infestations that necessitated immediate fumigation at a cost of T\$4,000. To date, little work has been seen on the site.

In August 1991, Minister of Defence and Foreign Affairs HRH Crown Prince Tupouto'a led Tonga's delegation to the South Pacific Forum in Pohnpei. The year saw the departure of Chief Justice Geoffrey Martin, who has presided over more than two hundred cases in the Supreme Court since 1984, and the arrival of another British law-

yer as his successor. In September 1991, the kingdom's second television broadcasting service began regularly scheduled transmissions of news, sports, educational, family, and Christian programs to Tongatapu and 'Eua. Tonga's Sixth Development Plan, containing no major departures from the most recent previous plans, was released in October 1991.

Later the same month, Tonga hosted the 31st South Pacific Conference, which brought to Nuku'alofa 250 delegates and observers from more than 27 nations. It was the first such conference and the largest international meeting convened in the kingdom. In his opening address, Chairman the Honourable Dr Langi Hu'akavameiliku questioned the weighting of developmental priorities between economic and social goals, and asked, "Why is it that, as we grow economically and have more, our social problems grow faster?" Further, he suggested that the coming Age of the Pacific refers only to the economically and politically more important Asian and Pacific rim countries. "The Asia-Pacific Economic Council has been established at a meeting in Australia, and we are seen but not heard. Would we be equals even if we could join? We begin to wonder whether we are in the Pacific!" he said. "And, even among ourselves, we don't know whether we are equal or Pacific peoples or clones of the façade of Western society"—sentiments expressed increasingly frequently this last year by Tongan educational and political leaders.

KERRY JAMES

WALLIS AND FUTUNA

During 1991 and 1992, the French Territory of Wallis and Futuna celebrated two significant events in its history. April 1991 marked the one hundred fiftieth anniversary of the death of the Blessed Pierre Chanel, whose martyrdom paved the way for the conversion of the people of Wallis and Futuna to Catholicism; July 1991 saw the celebration of the thirtieth anniversary of the granting to the islands of the status of French Overseas Territory (Territoire d'Outre-Mer, TOM).

However, for Wallis and Futuna, the most notable events of this period were the March 1992 Territorial Assembly elections. The seven thousand voters had to choose among thirty-two electoral tickets, and the results put an end to twenty-eight years of rule by the various right-wing parties in the Territorial Assembly. Following the 1989 election of representative Kamilo Gata, a supporter of President François Mitterrand's majority party, the make-up of the new Territorial Assembly confirms the change of political orientation within the territory.

Thirteen of the 20 assembly members are newcomers. The representatives are split into three political groups. The conservative RPR party (Rassemblement pour la République) holds 9 seats, one more than in the previous assembly, but it must do without the support of other right-wing parties such as the Union Populaire Locale or the Union pour la Démocratie Française, which are no longer represented. The group aligned with President Mitterrand's socialist majority party holds 6 seats, and the non-aligned group now holds 5, against one during the pre-

vious session. For the first time, there are two women members.

Soane Mani Uhila, territorial councillor for the small local party Taumu a Lelei (Wonderful Future), listed as non-aligned, was elected president of the Territorial Assembly by 11 votes out of 20, having defeated the incumbent, Clovis Logologofolau of the RPR party. In 1986, together with former territorial councillor Michaële Hoatau and Kamilio Gata, both members of the Mouvement des Radicaux de Gauche party, Soane Mani Uhila, 32, had founded the Union pour Wallis et Futuna. In 1987, he joined the Force Ouvrière labor union and became its general secretary for the territory.

This profound evolution of the political climate in Wallis and Futuna can be traced in part to the recent appearance on the scene of a new form of social organization—the labor unions.

Union Locale Force Ouvrière, first under the leadership of Soane Uhila, then, following his election to the assembly, of Poï Fotofili, is the union that has benefited most from this development. With some six hundred members, Force Ouvrière was at the forefront of a number of militant actions, notably in the matter of water and electricity rates, and of the status of primary school teachers.

With two hundred members, the Union Syndicale des Travailleurs Chrétiens, founded in 1967 under the name Syndicat des Travailleurs Chrétiens, later known as the Union des Salariés du Territoire des Iles Wallis et Futuna, has been opposed to Force Ouvrière, particularly on the question of the status of primary school teachers.

In October 1991, internal problems within the RFO (Radiodiffusion Télévision pour l'Outre-Mer, the French government broadcasting company in the overseas territories) section of Force Ouvrière led to the emergence of a new union orientation, close to the Confédération Générale du Travail, a major French labor union. So far, this new affiliation exists only among the employees of the broadcasting company.

Labor grievances, which had so far been limited to the public and semi-public sectors, began in 1991 to affect the private sector. June 1990 saw the creation of the Management Association of Wallis and Futuna, initially representing sixty private firms, in answer to this growing unionization of salaried employees. During its June 1992 general assembly, this management association voted to grant a third mandate to its president, Frédéric Drouet. One of the association's main concerns has been to defend the territory's preferential tax status, which has led to the establishment there of about fifty off-shore companies.

The growing importance of labor unions and the appearance of new union affiliations are mostly due to economic development, increased employment, a lessening of the territory's isolation, and the spreading of outside influences through the media, particularly television.

Although a major portion of the population is still mostly involved in subsistence agriculture and fishing, the number of salaried employees has increased significantly over the last few years, going from 925 in 1986 to 1648 by the end of 1991, with an increase of

19 percent in 1990 and 17 percent in 1991. The private sector, which accounted for only 17 percent of all jobs in 1986, has shown the fastest growth rate: 32 percent in 1990, and 39 percent in 1991. By the end of 1991, more than a third of all salaried employees (38 percent) belonged to the private sector, while 62 percent were employed by the public and semi-public sectors.

The isolation that has hampered the territory's development in the past began to improve in July 1989 with the opening by Air Calédonie International of a Noumea-Wallis-French Polynesia route to replace the old Noumea-Wallis-Noumea flight. This isolation was further eased when a new shipping company, Translink, began competing with the Compagnie Wallisienne de Navigation which had so far enjoyed a monopoly. Translink provides regular service between Noumea, Wallis, Futuna, and New Zealand via Apia and Pago Pago. This allows for more varied sources of supply (where in the past goods came almost exclusively from New Caledonia) as well as a substantial drop in freight rates. In June 1991, this competition led to some conflicts between the two shipping lines which, although not yet entirely resolved, have been met by a staggering of their shipping schedules. However, the Compagnie Wallisienne de Navigation retains an exclusive agreement with the territorial authorities for all government-related business.

During an official visit to Wallis and Futuna in August 1989, then French Prime Minister Michel Rocard inaugurated an international telecommunications center that allows the residents of

Wallis to watch direct television broadcasts from Radio France Outre-Mer in Paris.

During 1991 and 1992, as in previous years, political and social debates have focused on three main themes: water and electricity rates, airline and maritime services, and the status of primary school teachers.

The high cost of utilities, hard to manage in the context of a low-cash economy, together with the problems caused by obsolete production and distribution equipment, were at the root of a certain amount of social tension. In April 1990, the king of Sigave, high chief of one of Futuna's two kingdoms, was forced to abdicate following a public demonstration demanding a lowering of electric power rates. In June 1990, this action, led by the Force Ouvrière, resulted in the signing of an official agreement by the central government, the Territorial Assembly, and the union leaders to lower power rates in the territory.

In 1969, the Catholic Mission contracted with the government to take charge of primary education in the territory. In September 1990 Force Ouvrière started an action against the terms of this agreement that culminated in a month-long strike. Force Ouvrière's main demands concerned the granting to the teachers of benefits equivalent to those enjoyed by agents in government establishments. A temporary agreement was reached between the education department of the Catholic Church and the national education department. In September 1991 pri-

mary school teacher members of the Force Ouvrière went on strike again, demanding full-fledged membership of the civil service. The agreements were then extended to cover 1991, but although the 1992 school year began without further strikes, the question remains unresolved pending a decision by the new Territorial Assembly.

A recent census confirmed the magnitude of the emigration of Wallisians and Futunans to New Caledonia. In 1989, there were 14,186 Wallisians and Futunans residing in New Caledonia; at the time of the October 1990 census, the islands of Wallis and Futuna were home to a total population of only 13,705.

The Wallisian and Futunan communities in New Caledonia also experienced some political tension. Founded in 1989 to act as a third force alongside the loyalist Rassemblement pour la Calédonie dans la République (RPCR) party and the independentist Front de Libération Nationale Kanak et Socialiste (FLNKS), the Union Océanienne party has been increasingly critical of the RPCR. Union Océanienne went through a major crisis in 1992. Michel Hema, elected president of the party in September 1989 following the death of party founder Kālepo Muliava, was ousted from his post by a dissident group that forced an early general assembly. In July, this general assembly elected a new directing committee chaired by Aloiso Sako, Union Océanienne's former vice-president.

FRANÇOIS SODTER