

Polynesia in Review: Issues and Events,
1 July 1994 to 30 June 1995

Reviews of American Samoa, Hawai'i, Tuvalu, Wallis and Futuna, and Western Samoa are not included in this issue.

THE COOK ISLANDS

"Wealth, health, and happiness without cost or effort" might be the slogan of the year under review. The opportunistic "quick fix" epitomized approaches to problems of personal and government finance, of body and soul. The advertisements that flood television screens with messages of instant gratification have become the basis of public policy and private practice, beginning with the national purse.

The truth was particularly elusive this year. Gossip about huge and shady international deals was officially dismissed until in January 1995 the *Cook Islands Press* revealed that the government had issued Letters of Guarantee for US\$1.1 billion, equivalent to all government income for the next twenty-one years at present levels. The New Zealand Government feared it might be obligated through its associated state relationship with the Cook Islands, and the fact that the Cook Islands dollar was tied to the New Zealand dollar. Eventually the Cook Islands Government agreed to an investigation by Jerse Halliday of the Reserve Bank of New Zealand. The Cook Islands prime minister told an anxious public that Halliday's report

proved no risks had been taken and all was well. He would not release the report, but the New Zealand minister of Foreign Affairs did. It described the Cook Islands Government as a gullible victim of an attempted fraud perpetrated by others. The author did not think Sir Geoffrey Henry or other government officials had acted for personal gain, though they naively hoped the deal would yield US\$26 million in commissions for the nation.

Government assurances that the Letters of Guarantee were risk-free and with reputable financiers were false. A Television New Zealand documentary showed that the key players included a bankrupt Irish fraudster with a prosecution for tax evasion, another man claiming to represent a company that Television New Zealand found had been deregistered since 1978, an American living in luxury in the Bahamas and wanted for questioning in the United States, and a former plumber who financed various things including pornographic video.

James Byrne, an American expert on international bank fraud, told Television New Zealand he did not expect any benefit would reach the Cook Islands from such transactions even if carried through (*TVNZ Assignment*, 25 May 1995). Tony Molloy, QC, noted that the Cook Islands Government had "demonstrated in other spheres recently that it has a vulnerability to advice that appears to be pres-

tigious, and perhaps it is just fairly easily sucked in. They're terribly impressed with all the jet-setting paraphernalia that goes with these things" (*CIP*, 25 May 1995). The head of the New Zealand Serious Fraud Office, who investigated the New Zealand intermediary, stated that at least some of the people the government dealt with were known fraudsters, and that the Letters of Guarantee were intended for illegitimate use in "prime bank instrument fraud" (*CIN*, 3 June 1995). The Cook Islands Government tried to "protect" itself with a secret "blocked funds letter," whereby it would not honor the guarantees. The Serious Fraud Office report spoke of the "Alice in Wonderland quality" of "giving the appearance, but not the reality, of financial substance."

The Letters of Guarantee have been canceled. Nothing was gained, though how much the government lost in travel, fees, and other expenses is not known. It gave "insufficient attention to the risks . . . to the international reputation of the Cook Islands" and did not heed warnings in its own files about the criminal reputation of those involved. Fortunately, despite pressure from "the instigators of the scam, the safety nets held—but only just." Otherwise the nation could have lost its assets and incurred vast debt.

The "Wine Box Affair" was another running media event. It began in October 1992 when the New Zealand Serious Fraud Office received a wine-box full of evidence of massive tax dodges by New Zealand companies and individuals. The commissioner of Inland Revenue castigated the ethics of those who designed the scheme, which he

said showed massive and blatant tax avoidance, while a prominent criminal lawyer, Peter Williams, described it as the "biggest tax evasion scam" in New Zealand's history. Most used European Pacific, the largest "trustee company" (the polite term for tax-haven banks) in the Cook Islands. Although some of New Zealand's leading financiers and financial institutions were implicated, the New Zealand Government was reluctant to act. The leading names were big donors to the governing party's election funds. But pressure inside and outside Parliament led to a judicial enquiry, which gets prime-time television coverage in New Zealand and much of the Pacific. That drama continues.

The Cook Islands Government promised to set up its own enquiry but is not expected to unless it can protect those to whom it is obligated. The architect of the tax haven, Mr David Lloyd, gave \$6 million in 1993 to pay for the national cultural center, which the government rated as its top priority project. Mr Trevor Clarke, former national head of European Pacific Bank, is now Prime Minister Sir Geoffrey Henry's financial adviser.

Winston Peters, the New Zealand politician who led the pressure for the enquiry, might have been discredited as "racist" or "colonialist" for criticizing the Cook Islands, were he not Māori and Minister for Māori Affairs after that department was caught in international loan scams. He has no sympathy for a government that gets most of its foreign aid from New Zealand taxpayers (NZ\$14 million a year for 20,000 people), while creating schemes to defraud them of hundreds of millions.

Mr Peters says the infamous Bank of Credit and Commerce International, which dealt in "political bribes, laundering money, guns, nuclear weapons and with figures such as Noriega and Marcos," and whose top executive was jailed for eleven years for massive fraud, was involved in the Cook Islands "international finance center." Cook Islands Government claims that the tax haven is "squeaky clean" are no longer heard. Mr Peters' advocacy of canceling New Zealand aid to the Cook Islands is gaining support there, as many New Zealand taxpayers feel "ripped off" by the Cook Islands tax haven. Aid will not be canceled, although sympathy for special concessions to the Cook Islands has been eroded. While this year New Zealand maintained previous levels of aid to other South Pacific countries, and increased funds for East Asia, it trimmed aid to the Cooks by 5 percent.

Growth in gross domestic product in the Cook Islands was high throughout the 1980s (6 to 10 percent per year) but only 1.7 percent in 1993 and 1.5 percent in 1994. In 1994-95 it is likely to be negative. The main cause was poor economic policy and poorer economic practice. The engines of the economy have worked well—tourism (the biggest industry) grew during the past decade faster than anywhere else in the Pacific. The second industry, marine resources, is booming on the basis of pearls and tuna. Fresh fish prices are high and demand exceeds supply. Agricultural products sell well to hotels, the local market, and for air-freight to New Zealand and the United States—with producers unable to fulfill orders.

However, in recent years, unpredictable implementation of stated policies, dense regulatory processes, lack of confidence in the currency, and adverse international publicity seem to have deterred investors of integrity and attracted those lacking it. The new ostrich-farming industry and proposed investments in tourism and other fields were put on hold. Reasons for the 1995 decline in tourism, the largest single industry, included "negative publicity with respect to the economy, currency, and the dengue epidemic" according to the director of tourism (*CIP*, 25 May 1995).

Meanwhile, government enterprises have not done well. There was no progress during the year on the most expensive construction project ever undertaken in the country—another government-owned hotel. Five years after construction began with Italian finance and builders, it remains an empty shell. The most recent official estimate of its value is understood to be one quarter of the cost to the government so far. The head of the company that initiated the project has been indicted in Italy for Mafia activities. Several years ago the government bought the long-abandoned St Helen's Hospital in Wellington, New Zealand. This year it sold it at a heavy loss in real terms. The government pearl-culture farm in Manihiki is a financial disaster, despite heavy subsidies, while private operators pay their own costs and make profits. The government pearl venture in Suvarrow was abandoned after heavy expenditure and no income.

Government revenues should be buoyant, for taxes are very high rela-

tive to services provided. There is a 10 percent value added tax on all transactions, plus income tax of 37 percent at \$35,000 (about US\$21,000), as well as many other government charges. One problem is inefficient collection. Overdue taxes increased from C1\$7.3 million (27 percent) in 1992 to \$9.3 million (36 percent) in 1993, some of it due from government-owned commercial enterprises. No later figures are available.

Government borrowing has been the popular solution to these economic problems, but after certain limits were reached, "regular" financiers were reluctant to help. When overdrafts from commercial banks reached NZ\$4.5 million, and the banks refused to lend more, the government found a temporary solution in credit from suppliers. The firms have not been repaid, and the government is months (even years) behind in paying for goods and services. Some firms have had to shorten work hours, lay off staff, or close.

There were also plans to stimulate the economy through loan-financed projects, and two confidential "wish lists" of projects were drawn up. The projects to be funded were mainly non-productive, the main one on the A List being a new government building (including some premises for rent), and on the B List, a new parliament building. Some C1\$64 million (US\$43 million) in funding for A List projects was to be raised from La Deuce Credit and Finance Limited in Houston, Texas, through a Samoan intermediary. With interest, A List funding would have lifted government debt from almost nil in 1987 to C1\$246 million in 1994, to

\$338 million in mid-1995. B List funding would have boosted government debt to C1\$400 million.

The main cause of government overexpenditure is a public service of excessive size and generally low efficiency (despite some remarkable exceptions). Public announcements about a freeze on hiring for the past two years contrast with the reality of more government employees than ever before. Rather than retrench the many who do very little, and constrain frivolous expenditure, the government in May 1995 raised the tax on diesel by 83 percent, petrol by 55 percent, and cigarettes by 45 percent, with similar raises on some other commodities. While announced reductions in the public service remained largely unimplemented, government-financed workers on wages did have their hours reduced by one per day, and those on salaries offered to accept NZ\$500 less pay over the next six months to avoid larger proposed cuts.

The critical limelight was attracted by such spectacular expenditures as chartering a plane to take a team of dancers, politicians, and officials to welcome the arrival in Tahiti of two traditional voyaging canoes from the Cook Islands that were joining a trip to the Marquesas and Hawai'i. Despite an outcry about that, another team went at public expense to welcome them again in the Marquesas, and yet another to receive them in Hawai'i. It was hoped there would be canoes from all of Polynesia, but the only others were three from Hawai'i (with US federal funds) and one from New Zealand, neither of which brought in dance teams or politicians. This accen-

tuated the CI\$668,282 spent by the government this year on the canoes. Former Prime Minister Sir Tom Davis designed and supervised both vessels and commanded the larger one to Hawai'i. There was public support for the project, but not for the scale of expenditure on "hangers-on" at a time of extreme shortage of funds for medicines in hospitals, books in schools, and to reconnect telephones disconnected from government departments because of nonpayment.

Another indication of spending beyond need was apparent in December 1994 when seven of nine government ministers traveled internationally. Ministers take their wives at government expense on one trip annually—usually the most expensive. Government expenditure on travel for ministers and officials probably absorbs a larger share of national income than for all but a few countries in the world. Budget details in June 1995 showed that while most other items had been cut, travel by members of parliament had increased by 34 percent.

A full high commission (embassy) was set up in Canberra, where a part-time nondiplomatic representative formerly met the need. There was debate about whether the costs were merited relative to the benefits. Although less important than other overseas posts, running costs are much more, about \$420,000 a year plus such capital costs as a \$498,000 house for the high commissioner. Until his appointment he was an influential politician who, severely criticized by the chief justice for misuse of power, was considered unable to win his seat again.

The government released an increasing volume of unbacked currency, which lost its value and integrity. Exporters to the Cook Islands insisted on tradeable currency, and the banks imposed exchange controls on nontrade transactions. As a result, the government abandoned Cook Islands currency in May 1995 and reverted to New Zealand currency. The arrangement is common in the Pacific—Kiribati, Nauru, and Tuvalu all use only Australian currency; the Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia both use only US currency. Nevertheless, it was a symbolic blow because Cook Islands national currency was an emblem of sovereignty and identity, even though its value was tied at par to the New Zealand dollar.

Meanwhile in the wider society, there has been a parallel move to "quick fix" religions, and away from the now conventional Catholic and Protestant churches. Denominations that promise more, better, faster, and longer-lasting results on earth and in heaven, are fruitful and multiply. They are US-derived, fundamentalist, evangelical, and pentecostal—particularly the Apostolic and the Assemblies of God. For a while, these became the middle of a moving road, as the New Kingdom was born, founded by a woman who claimed to be Jesus Christ. While fundamentalists concentrate on sorting out the soul, the New Kingdom promises to fix body and soul at one fell swoop. Her compound was frequented by the head of state, some members of cabinet, some ministers of other churches, a Catholic nun, and hundreds of others. The Master (as the spirit in her body was known)

occupied government quarters rent-free and received unofficial concessions from the government.

When the woman's body did not take on all the attributes of a man, as the prophecy required, numbers waned, and a new revelation explained that the Devil persisted in deceiving the people. Jesus needed support, so the body became known as the Tokorima (The Five), and was occupied by Jesus, the Virgin Mary, God the Father, God the Holy Ghost, and Joseph. Yet the membership kept falling. A new prophecy was needed. It was that the government would change. The new prime minister would be Norman George, who mentioned the Tokorima in respectful tones in his election addresses. Alas, Mr George's party gained only two seats out of twenty-five. The following dwindled to an incorruptible core. The Tokorima and the faithful few were evicted from government buildings in December 1994 and the New Kingdom headquarters shifted to the island of Aitutaki. A few weeks later the Tokorima departed for Tahiti.

While Christian fundamentalists look back to a selective interpretation of the story of Jesus, cultural fundamentalists see solutions to today's problems in the "Tangaroa Cult" a "return" to a sanitized version of ancient beliefs, values, and life-ways as epitomized by the great god Tangaroa. There is both conflict and congruence between Christian and traditional fundamentalists. Some leading individuals expound both (but don't practice much of either). Both are protective reactions against external global forces, as well as a convenient cover

against allegations of being guided by foreign models of consumption, behavior, and values, or manipulated by foreign fraudsters.

This year's crop of transient "culture based" medicinal remedies included magic mushrooms and a potion made from coconut husks. Equally transient "cultural solutions" to social, psychological, and political problems abound. A plethora of shortcuts to personal financial prosperity follows a similar pattern, with an amazing range of fund-raising techniques, from raffles to lotteries, roadside collections, telethons, soliciting, and many more by "small fry," and massive theft, fraud, and misrepresentation by large operators.

Although it did not become public, the government tried to negotiate with New Zealand for a further "evolution" in the associated state relationship. The reason given was economic, that some aid donors will not give to the Cook Islands under its present status. This has not concerned most donors. It constrained European aid through the Lomé Convention to Africa, the Caribbean, and the Pacific, but only because the African bloc objected.

The goals of this year's negotiations with New Zealand were three, in the following order of priority: First, membership of the Commonwealth; second, formalization of Cook Islands citizenship and passports; and third, separate diplomatic accreditation.

Although all 51 Commonwealth nations are nominally equal, a country like India with 900 million people may not regard a country with 20,000 people as really equal, although Tuvalu and Kiribati are full members. Some

countries object to Cook Islands membership lest the associated state relationship compromise its independence. The Cook Islands wanted to join in time for Sir Geoffrey Henry to attend the 1995 Commonwealth Prime Ministers Conference, a hope not likely to be realized.

Some Commonwealth countries may object to Cook Islands membership without modifications to its constitution (see next two items). The same may still apply to the Lomé Convention, but probably not to the United Nations, membership of which the Cook Islands is now considering. Countries with much less "independence" than the Cook Islands are full members of the United Nations (eg, Monaco, San Marino, Andorra, Liechtenstein) so the key question is likely to be cost rather than constitutional status.

As a formality, Cook Islanders travel on New Zealand passports, although separate citizenship is firmly in place, created through a Cook Islands Immigration and Departure Act rather than a citizenship act in order to obfuscate the reality of dual citizenship. Any Cook Islander can enter New Zealand at any time without restriction and has full rights to vote, work, draw social security benefits, and so forth. However, no New Zealander has comparable rights in the Cook Islands, which has not granted permanent residence to any person since 1989, despite many requests. During that time thousands of Cook Islanders moved freely to New Zealand and Australia.

Separate passports would allow restrictions on the entry and rights of

persons of Cook Islands descent who live elsewhere (and that is most of them). It would also allow the sale of passports to rich stateless foreigners from such places as Hong Kong and Taiwan—as is done by Tonga and the Marshall Islands.

The New Zealand position has long been that if Cook Islanders want to sever the associated state relationship, they will agree immediately. However, the Cook Islands Government did not tell the people of the negotiation because they know that the public opposes severing a tie from which they gain so much. Also, as New Zealanders, they have free access and full privileges in Australia as well. Some 40,000 Cook Islanders live in New Zealand and about 10,000 in Australia. Only 28 percent choose to stay at home. There are limits to how much cake New Zealand will allow the Cook Islands Government to eat and keep at the same time.

New Zealand and Australia deal with the Cook Islands diplomatically as they do with all Commonwealth countries, by accrediting a high commissioner to each other's capital. However, some countries—notably Japan—do not treat the Cook Islands as fully independent. This is a question of status more than material gain, for Japan gives foreign aid to the Cook Islands.

One of New Zealand's concerns in granting further privileges to the Cook Islands while Cook Islanders retain New Zealand citizenship and rights, was the doubtful financial transactions for which the Cook Islands is getting an undesirable reputation and for which New Zealand is at times criticized.

In national politics, complaints about the government were louder this year than ever since 1977-78. Loss of jobs and income, as well as media exposure of what had been suppressed, increased awareness and concern. Usually in a parliamentary democracy such as the Cook Islands that leads to calls for the opposition to take over, but the opposition remains weak and divided, and few regard it as a credible alternative government.

The government blames the media for the negative episodes, but the media here are more restrained than in most countries. Television and radio news comes only through government-owned stations, the main owners of the daily newspaper are expatriates on work permits that the government can cancel, and the weekly *Cook Islands Press* was set up by a European permanent resident. Equivalent government actions in most OECD countries would attract more aggressive media attention.

One defense against attacks from media and political opponents was the prime minister's assertion in Parliament (where he is protected from defamation suits) that the *Cook Islands Press* and TVNZ were financed by the CIA to spread propaganda as part of a US plot to overthrow his government. The prime minister knows that most voters probably sympathized with the image of him and them being under attack from evil foreign sources.

With the year going badly for the government, and with deepening disunity and despair, the divided country needed a common external enemy at whom hostility could be redirected. Salvation came when President Chirac

announced that France would resume nuclear testing. In view of the Cook Islands' continuing debts to France for power, water, and other projects, and hope for more, the prime minister sent a token protest but said there would be no public protest or boycott of the coming South Pacific Games in Tahiti. In this he misjudged the public pulse.

Norman George, leader of the opposition Alliance Party, organized a protest. As minister of foreign affairs he had been wined and dined at Moruroa as an honored guest of the French government and was very subdued about bombs—but now that he is in opposition this was a heaven-sent opportunity. The public reaction was overwhelming, with radio talk-backs, letters to the newspaper, and gossip all galvanized against France. The prime minister astutely shifted tack, making an impassioned plea for public support for a protest march, which he led in triumph, eclipsing Mr George. He urged public servants to join, promising them full pay, and pleaded with church leaders, businesses, chiefs, sports groups, youth groups, women's groups, tourists, and all to join in with their people. It was the biggest and most unified demonstration the nation has ever seen.

The entry of women into local politics was the highlight of the 1995 elections for island councilors. Previously, the mayor was elected by and from the island councilors. Under a new law the mayor is elected by the public from outside the council, and becomes ex officio chair of the council. At the last election, in 1992, the only woman candidate (for the island of Manihiki) was not elected. In 1995, partly due

to the official who organized the elections emphasizing women's right to stand, partly to a local television program encouraging them to stand, and partly to indirect pressures for more equality for women, three women stood for mayoral posts and two as island councilors. None succeeded, although one nearly became mayor of Aitutaki.

Letters of Guarantee, "shonky" loans, the return of Jesus, and embezzlement have not yet solved all the problems of the Cook Islands, but believers in any of these and other remedies feel they are worth a try, and note that things might have been worse without them. While some await the next "quick fix," the solid economic growth was provided by those who devoted skill and effort to the task—the producers of fish, pearls, farm produce, tourist facilities, small but profitable innovations like *maire fern* (which supplies the Hawai'i market), local cosmetics and perfumes, hand-made pottery, and other proven income generators. Many local enterprises do well for themselves and for the community. Following the announced change of government practices, tourism was picking up again, the ostrich industry resumed on Mangaia, and an alpaca industry is being considered. The Cook Islands may also be the world's first nation to evolve commercially viable and environmentally sound exploitation of seabed minerals, if Bechtel Corporation's assessments, planned for 1995, confirm expected prospects.

The leaders in government now acknowledge—verbally so far, and hopefully in practice before long—that

errors have been made, and that quality, integrity, skill, efficiency, and commitment pay better in the long run than the slick pseudo-solutions that characterized all but the end of this year.

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SEVERAL knowledgeable and helpful persons kindly commented on the draft but wish to remain anonymous.

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FRENCH POLYNESIA

The period under review was typical of political life in Tahiti. It was marked by sporadic conflict between state and territorial authorities, splits and defections within and between political parties, two electoral campaigns, and industrial disputes too numerous to mention. Once again, the shadow of the nuclear testing center loomed large following President Chirac's announcement of a resumption of testing.

Tensions between the territory and the state emerged in late 1994. The biggest rift occurred over the state-run

Administrative Tribunal's decision to annul the Territorial Solidarity Contribution tax on 29 July. The territory's first income tax ever, this had been approved by the Territorial Assembly and 2 billion French Pacific francs (FCFP) had already been collected. When the tax was annulled by French judges because it was unconstitutional, reimbursing taxpayers and forgoing anticipated revenue created major difficulties for the territorial budget. It also raised questions about the government's ability to provide universal social welfare, which was to be funded by the tax. The Territorial Assembly has attempted to make the tax law compatible with the constitution, but without success. As in the past, the state's ability, and preparedness, to revoke laws duly passed by the assembly led to calls for reform to the Statute of Internal Autonomy.

With regard to party politics, the troubles plaguing the Here Ai'a party continued. Jean Juventin had allied the party to Gaston Flosse's government majority in September 1991, but conflict between the two leaders finally came to a head in August 1994. Juventin deserted the majority and led an attempt by the opposition to topple the government via a motion of censure. Two other Here Ai'a members, Maco Tevane and Tony Hiro, gave up their ministries to participate in the rebellion. They obtained only 18 signatures for the motion, whereas 21 were needed for the political coup to succeed.

In a fit of pique over the failed takeover bid, Juventin adopted a disruptive strategy. In his capacity as president (speaker) of the Territorial Assembly, he refused to convene it for several

months. (The same tactic was employed by Emile Vernaudeau in 1992, after he had fallen out of favor with Flosse's governing coalition.) Meanwhile, a mutiny erupted in the ranks of Here Ai'a as the beleaguered Juventin refused to relinquish the leadership. Two of Here Ai'a's leading lights, Tinomana "Milou" Ebb and Raymond Van Bastolaer, left in October and created a new party of their own called Te Avei'a Mau.

According to Ebb, a principal goal of Te Avei'a Mau is to campaign for a political status of independence in association with France similar to the Cook Islands' arrangement with New Zealand. President Flosse attended the launch of Te Avei'a Mau. The new party is closely aligned with Flosse's Tahoeraa party and benefits from this patronage. Van Bastolaer is still a government minister, while Ebb replaced Juventin as president of the Territorial Assembly in April.

The parliamentary opposition was thrown into disarray in February when Emile Vernaudeau's Ai'a Api party once again affiliated with the ruling majority of Tahoeraa. This switch in allegiance seems surprising, as the personal enmity between Vernaudeau and Flosse runs very deep and their previous coalitions in 1982 and 1991 lasted only a few months. But the mayor of Mahina is a master of pragmatism. Moreover, his relations with allies in the opposition had become increasingly tense since the failed attempt to oust Tahoeraa from the government. In return for Vernaudeau's newfound loyalty to the government, his director of cabinet, Patrick Bordet, was made a minister in April.

As in 1993–94, the French courts were busy prosecuting Tahitian politicians for abuse of office. Juventin's fortunes plummeted to a new low with his conviction for corruption in dealings with the Tamara'a Nui rubbish disposal company. He received a six-month suspended sentence and a 1.8 million FCFP fine. Juventin and his counterpart, Maco Tevane, were also being investigated for corruption in relation to Pape'ete town hall's funding of the Pare Nui cultural association. Napoléon Spitz, a mayor and territorial councillor, was convicted of electoral fraud. He was one of the longest serving and wildest politicians in the territory, and a major promoter of sport. In late May, Spitz died of natural causes.

Former President Alexandre Léontieff experienced the ignominy of spending a few months in a Parisian jail while he awaited the results of a corruption trial. He was detained and imprisoned because he had repeatedly breached the probation condition that he was not to meet with Juventin. Léontieff and Juventin were both accused of receiving kickbacks from a Japanese investor in connection with the proposed Opunohu golf course development at Moorea. Flosse was more fortunate in the courts. After two years of appeals, he finally succeeded in having a corruption conviction over his Erima land acquisitions overturned.

The two rounds of the French presidential elections were held on 23 April and 7 May. Local politicians campaigned earnestly on behalf of their preferred candidates. The outcome provided some indication of the influence enjoyed by territorial parties. Pre-

dictably, Flosse campaigned in favor of his long-standing friend and colleague in the *Rassemblement pour la République*, Jacques Chirac. Personal loyalties aside, Flosse expected the territory to receive preferential treatment if Chirac were president and had obtained guarantees to this effect. Whereas the Balladur government had failed to forward funds committed under the Development Contract for 1994 and 1995, Chirac promised these monies would be transferred promptly to the territory under his presidency. Moreover, Chirac agreed to consider transferring control over French Polynesia's exclusive economic zone to the territory. Finally, Chirac gave an assurance that the state would cover the cost to the territory of reimbursing the annulled income tax.

Juventin, the Léontieff brothers, Senator Millaud, and Francis Sanford all lent their support to then French Prime Minister Edouard Balladur. Jacqui Drollet's Ia Mana party was the only one to back the socialist candidate, Lionel Jospin. Of the main presidential aspirants, Jospin was the only one to categorically rule out a resumption of French nuclear testing. Despite their antinuclear policy, Oscar Temaru and his party, Tavini, did not support Jospin. Instead, they advocated abstention. Since 1981, Tavini has boycotted elections for the French presidency and the European Parliament as a way of signaling its desire for the territory to be granted independence.

In the first round of the poll in French Polynesia, Jospin received only 12.5 percent of the votes cast, Balladur 25 percent, while Chirac was a clear favorite with 52 percent. In the second round, when only two candidates

remained, Jospin obtained 39 percent while Chirac, with 61 percent of the territorial vote, enjoyed a far more comfortable win than he had in metropolitan France. Strong support for Chirac can be attributed to intense campaigning by Flosse. Another factor was that, because of the time difference, Tahitians already knew Chirac was the victor when they went to the polls. Overall, participation was very poor, with only 50 percent of eligible voters casting a ballot. To what extent this can be ascribed to the pro-independence boycott or to apathy and bad weather is unclear.

Of far greater importance to Polynesian voters are the municipal elections, held every six years, in which they have the opportunity to vote for someone they know will lobby for their interests. They also seek rewards for their loyalty in the form of patronage dispensed by the successful candidate. Politicians view control over municipal councils as essential to launching an entry into territorial politics. In 1991, half the councilors elected to the Territorial Assembly were mayors.

Loyalty to individual leaders means that mayors are virtually impossible to dislodge in French Polynesia. The municipal elections held in June 1995 followed the established pattern whereby the overwhelming majority of mayors retained office. Three-quarters of incumbent mayors were returned with an absolute majority in the first round of voting. Gaston Flosse and Oscar Temaru entrenched control over their respective municipal power bases in Pirae and Faa'a, with more than two-thirds of the vote. Emile Ver-

naudon was also comfortably returned in Mahina with 60 percent of the vote. Boris Léontieff's popularity was confirmed with a landslide victory in Arue.

The most hotly contested municipality was the capital, Pape'ete. The three candidates who reached the second round were Jean Juventin, Michel Buillard, and James Salmon. After controlling Pape'ete town hall for eighteen years either directly, or indirectly via Louise Carlson since 1993, Juventin saw this prize fall to Buillard. Juventin's loss was self-inflicted. He had been implicated in at least three cases of corruption, two of which concerned misuse of municipal funds. This may not have been enough to destroy his reputation, but under his leadership the Pape'ete council had become bankrupt and suffered the indignity of having its administration taken over by the state. The new mayor, Buillard, is vice-president of both the Tahoeraa party and the current government. His municipal list included government ministers and was supported in force by the Tahoeraa party machine. Buillard won with over 50 percent of the vote against Juventin's 32 percent.

In terms of party trends the municipal elections reinforced Tahoeraa's dominance. Overall, Tahoeraa claimed 60 percent of the votes in these elections. In addition to retaining incumbent mayors, Tahoeraa made new gains including Pape'ete and Moorea. For the first time the pro-independence party, Tavini, had the wherewithal to field lists throughout the territory. It improved on its 1989 performance, doubling its share of the vote to roughly 17 percent of the total.

Tavini's candidate in Pape'ete, Salmon, came a poor third with 14 percent of the vote, but Temaru was satisfied that since the last elections their share of the vote in the capital had increased from 600 to 1360.

The most momentous development of the year for French Polynesia was President Chirac's announcement on 13 June of a final nuclear test series to be held at Moruroa and Fangataufa. Chirac had made numerous references to the possibility of a test resumption, but after three years of moratorium the majority of Tahitians had come to support a permanent test ban. Nevertheless, either they were not fully aware of Chirac's plans or antinuclear sentiment was not strong enough to counter other factors in favor of Chirac's candidacy, as he received a clear majority in the presidential elections.

Opposition to a test resumption was almost unanimous. In the view of territorial politicians, the past advantages of hosting the testing center were now outweighed by numerous costs. The state had already agreed to compensate the territory for the economic loss incurred by a closure of the test site under a ten-year plan. The financial gains involved in hosting a final series of eight tests were not sufficient to warrant supporting the decision on economic grounds. In addition, Chirac's decision aroused concern about the impact on tourism and relations with South Pacific neighbors. A specific focus for anxiety was the potentially adverse effect of a test resumption on attendance at the Tenth South Pacific Games to be hosted by Tahiti in August.

President Flosse, hitherto a sup-

porter of the testing center's presence, expressed his opposition to a test resumption only days before the decision was announced. He said it would provoke territorial protests and opposition throughout the region. However, he qualified his position in saying, "As a Polynesian and President of the government I am not in favor of a test resumption, but I am also French. If it is in the interests of the nation and if it is a decision of the President of the Republic, we can only bow to that decision." It was somewhat humiliating for Flosse when Chirac told him not only to wear the test resumption but to defend it against criticisms from the region. Flosse complied by arguing that the French nuclear deterrent upheld the Gaullist tradition and contributed to world peace. Furthermore, tests were necessary to maintain the credibility of the deterrent.

Flosse and Tahoeraa were alone in their attempts to justify the test resumption. All other leading politicians and parties, numerous trade unions, nongovernment organizations such as Hiti Tau, environmentalists, and churches came out against the tests. Anti-testing activities reached a climax on 29 June. This date coincided with the eleventh anniversary of internal autonomy and the arrival of the Greenpeace ship, *Rainbow Warrior II*, en route to Moruroa. Two week-long marches from either side of the island of Tahiti met up in the capital. Between six-and-twelve thousand people participated in the peaceful rally, making it Tahiti's biggest ever antinuclear demonstration. This contrasted with the government's celebration of autonomy in Pirae, which only four hundred

invited guests attended. When local authorities denied the *Rainbow Warrior* the right to moor at the town center, antinuclear protesters mounted barricades at entrances to the capital, blocking traffic access for three days.

Flosse's response to these developments has been that the best form of defense is attack. He charged antinuclear protesters with deliberately using the test issue to destabilize his government and to promote the pro-independence cause. In the face of virulent antinuclear protests from Australia and New Zealand, Flosse accused those two countries of inciting Pacific Island hostility to the French presence in the region.

Overall, developments over the past year have strengthened the position of Flosse and Tahoeraa. Their majority in the Territorial Assembly was reinforced by the Here Ai'a defectors and by Ai'a Api changing sides. Tahoeraa's fortunes received a further boost with the election of its favored candidate to the French presidency, followed by a strong performance in the municipal elections. In addition, the opposition was in disarray. With the virtual demise of Juventin and Here Ai'a, and Alexandre Léontieff languishing in prison, Tavini constitutes the only organized opposition. Yet Tavini's influence is constrained by holding just 4 seats in the 41-seat Territorial Assembly. The one factor detracting from Tahoeraa's grip on territorial politics is that the government, and Flosse personally, have become associated with the unpopular decision to resume testing. Nevertheless, a pronuclear position has not done Flosse much harm in the past, and the Tahoeraa

party appears well placed for the territorial elections due in 1996.

KARIN VON STROKIRCH

MAORI ISSUES

During 1994, the New Zealand government sorely tested Māori patience in respect of settling grievances arising from breaches of the Treaty of Waitangi. On Waitangi Day (the day on which the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi and the birth of the nation of New Zealand is commemorated), 6 February 1995, Maoridom's anger boiled over for all the world to see and the commemorations at Waitangi had to be truncated. In the months that followed more than twenty instances of different tribal groupings taking over and reoccupying lands that had been stolen from them were reported in the national media. Many more took place quietly, away from the glare of media attention.

For the first time in many a decade Māori were almost totally united on an issue. The country had watched the government's stance move from a swaggering confidence that it had finally found the solution to Māori grievances, to hurt and bewilderment as one by one each of the major tribal groupings totally rejected the government's proposals for settlement, to outbursts of indignation at increasingly vocal Māori demands for Māori sovereignty, and finally, to a very quiet admission that they had totally misread and underestimated Maoridom.

Seeds of Māori discontent with the present government had started to mature in 1992 over the settlement of

fisheries claims. The Māori negotiators were men chosen by the Crown and none of them held or sought a mandate on the final terms of the settlement. Negotiations were reportedly conducted with strong emotional overtones. Such simple commercial considerations as the size and value of the fishing resource, and a careful examination of the viability of either the international fishing industry or the fishing company purchased as part of the settlement deal, were accorded very little attention.

The settlement deal exchanged the exclusively Māori right to a multi-billion-dollar fishing resource for a NZ\$150 million half share in the fishing company, 10 percent of all fishing quotas, a Crown-appointed commission to allocate the quota among the tribes, and a reduction of customary fishing rights from full protection under the law, to regulations to be promulgated by the minister of fisheries. Despite a huge outcry from many tribes once Māori gained access to the Deed of Settlement, the government and the negotiators remained firm, and legislation was rapidly put in place preventing any further legal action by Māori against the Crown in respect of commercial fishing rights.

Then early in 1994, Māori had the option of enrolling on the Māori electoral roll. In the past large numbers of Māori have simply not taken part in general elections and were not registered voters. The advent of the new system of mixed member proportional representation was seen as an opportunity to improve Māori participation in the electoral process and increase the number of Māori seats in Parliament

from 4 (out of 96) to possibly 7 or 8 (if all eligible Māori adults were to register). However, the opportunity for Māori to register was very poorly advertised, and at the end of a very short period allowed for enrollment, the number of those enrolled had increased sufficiently to allow only one extra seat. Despite Māori protest and (unsuccessful) legal action, the government refused to reconduct the enrollments to ensure proper coverage of the Māori population. Māori discontent with the government's attitude was increasing.

Throughout 1994 rumors emanated from Wellington about Crown proposals being drawn up for the settlement of Treaty of Waitangi claims. However, Māori, whether tribal representatives or state servants were not permitted to take part in drawing up the proposals. Alarm grew as very oppressive and divisive parts of the proposals were leaked to the media. In October an excivil servant of the Ngāti Kahu tribe of the north, Mike Smith, successfully brought the matter to the nation's attention by attempting to cut down a very prominent tree on the Auckland skyline, the lone (nonindigenous) pine tree that stands on One Tree Hill. The incident caused outrage in Auckland in particular, but the media also gave very good coverage of the reasons for the protest.

Although some Māori condemned the action, most gave strong support to the political statement it made about the government's refusal to give proper consideration to the settlement of the more than five hundred claims currently before the Waitangi Tribunal. Only approximately 15 percent of

these claims have been investigated and reported on. The great majority of the reports from the tribunal have been a great embarrassment to the Crown, and they clearly wish to avoid any further information about breaches of the treaty being publicized through this forum.

In early December the government published its *Crown Proposals for the Settlement of Treaty of Waitangi Claims*. Maoridom's worst fears were confirmed. The proposals sought to restrict the investigation into and settlement of all treaty claims to a process of direct negotiation between Māori and the Crown. But the proposals stated that the Crown would completely control the negotiations and settlement process and that essentially once the Crown had decided what each tribe could have in compensation for breaches of the treaty in their particular territory, that would be the end of the matter. Māori would have to forgo any and all legal remedies once they started to talk to the Crown, but would have to accept that before the Crown started talking to them, it would have already decided what the settlement would be. Tribes, however, would not know what the proposed settlement was before they talked to the Crown. All tribal settlements would be full and final, and tribes could not return in later years once other breaches were uncovered. This condition was proposed even though most tribes have still to carry out research on the full extent of the breaches in their areas.

The Crown would then consult with different tribes regarding what they thought the extent of another tribe's

settlement should be, a clear attempt to set tribe against tribe. Furthermore, although the present law allows only Crown land to be used to settle claims, most of that would not be available to be used for settlement. The proposals simply decreed that lands held for "conservation purposes," which amounts to one-third of the country, would not be available for settlement. It is no coincidence that most tribal claims include large areas of "conservation" lands.

Likewise the Crown would not return natural resources such as water, river and lake beds, geothermal energy, foreshores and seabeds, sand, shingle, and minerals, even though the treaty guaranteed Māori full, exclusive, and undisturbed possession of everything they valued. Similarly lands that Māori had gifted in the past for certain purposes, but had been sold or used for other purposes by the Crown, would not be returned unless particular restrictive conditions were applied.

The final insult came when a fiscal limit of NZ\$1 billion dollars was put on the total value of all assets returned (including the 1992 fisheries settlement) plus the expenses associated with bringing the claims and reaching a settlement. By the time the *Proposals* were published, over one-third of that budget had already been expended. Within four months a tribal settlement of NZ\$170 million reduced the available settlement pool to just over half a billion dollars.

The government naively misread the initial silence over their proposals as indicating a measure of acceptance. Late in January 1995, Sir Hepi Te Heuheu, the paramount chief of the

Tuwharetoa tribe of the central North Island convened a national *hui* (gathering) of all tribes to discuss the proposals. Tuwharetoa has never lost its *mana ariki* because they were one of the very few tribes who managed to retain their land base. At the *hui* Maoridom indicated very clearly that they found the proposals most insulting and unanimously rejected them. They called for some basic changes to the country's constitution so that these matters could be properly dealt with.

The government responded by referring to the people who attended the *hui*, who included a great many of Maoridom's elder statesmen and women, as a bunch of radicals. Those leaders chose not to get into a personalities slanging match and simply did not respond to the insults. But the insults were not taken lightly, and Maoridom's anger boiled over for all to see at the Waitangi Day celebrations the following week. Protesters successfully disrupted the proceedings, replaced the New Zealand flag with a Māori independence flag, taunted and insulted the prime minister and other members of his cabinet in attendance until the minister of Internal Affairs finally canceled the rest of the proceedings.

The media went into a frenzy, with wildly varying reports of what had happened. The prime minister vowed to abolish Waitangi Day and attacked Maoridom for not keeping its radicals under control. Threats of prosecutions against protesters resulted in only one arrest. A conviction for spitting at the governor-general was later achieved by the Crown, and the protester was eventually jailed for six months. Māori

commentators noted that it appeared that this one person had had to bear the brunt of Pākehā anger for what had happened at Waitangi and that, in deciding the sentence, scant regard had been paid to the far worse indignities and atrocities that Māori had experienced at the hands of the Crown over the past one hundred fifty years.

In the months following Waitangi Day a series of occupations took place where different tribes in different parts of the North Island publicly reoccupied lands that had been stolen from them. The media again went into a frenzy, with demands that occupiers be removed. Initially some authorities signaled that they might use heavy-handed tactics. All that achieved was huge influxes of supporters, both Māori and Pākehā, from all parts of the country, to assist the occupiers. At one site in Auckland, however, occupiers were forcibly removed in full view of the media. The result was that private purchasers to whom the government had offered the land refused to complete the sale.

In March, despite the obvious outrage of Maoridom at its proposals, the government embarked on a series of consultative *hui* around the country to get a "true" gauge of Māori opinion. Only at this stage did the government call on its Māori state servants to assist with the consultation process. Staff of the Ministry of Māori Development were sent ahead of ministers in an attempt to smooth the path for them. These staff came under severe attack wherever they went, and reports appeared in the media about them suffering from "battle fatigue." Within six weeks of the end of the consultative

round, the chief executive of the ministry announced his resignation.

At every one of the thirteen *hui* called, the proposals were once again rejected. Slowly, the minister of treaty negotiations started to concede that maybe the government had misread the situation. He acknowledged that Māori did not accept that conservation lands could not be used for settlement, or that gifted lands should only be returned under certain conditions. He also accepted that the Crown alone could not determine and control the negotiation and settlement process. He went as far as saying that Māori self-determination and a Māori parliament were not pipe dreams and deserved serious consideration and open debate by all New Zealanders. But the prime minister was quick to squash any notions of Māori sovereignty, stoutly declaring that there could only ever be one Parliament and one law for all.

By late May and June the government was sending out feelers to see if it could perhaps settle some of the bigger claims before next year's general election. Again it chose to seek the advice of the fisheries negotiators it had chosen in 1992, but this time the tribes moved to stop those individuals selling them out again. At present the media is reporting major disruptions among some tribes as they try to rein in leaders who no longer hold the tribal mandates they may have had five or ten years ago.

MARGARET MUTU

NIUE

The year 1994-95 was one in which political partisanship took new forms in Niue's politics. In December 1994 the 20-member Niue Assembly became deadlocked when the opposition failed to pass a motion of no confidence. The 10-10 vote came in what was the third motion of no confidence brought against the administration of Premier Frank Lui in 1994.

The first, oddly enough, resulted in the government retaining office with an increased majority (Levine 1995, 157-158). A second motion, introduced in the Assembly in November 1994, embraced somewhat convoluted logistical, constitutional, and political calculations. As has occurred previously, the motion was submitted while Cabinet ministers were overseas. Because Niue's constitution (section 6 [2]) provides that the motion must come before the Assembly within ten days, the two ministers, Terry Coe and Sani Lakatani (half the Cabinet), were able to return to Niue, and so save the government from defeat, only by catching the one flight per week to the island. Matters became more complicated when Lakatani, who had lost his finance portfolio during a Cabinet reshuffle in October (he retained responsibilities for economic development), resigned from the Cabinet on 8 November, two days before the scheduled debate on the no-confidence motion. That debate never took place, however, as Niue's chief justice upheld a challenge to the vote that had been filed in the High Court by Premier Lui. Justice Dillon ruled that the motion of no confidence was unconstitutional

and invalid, because it had not been moved by the required minimum of four Assembly members "who are not Ministers" (section 6 [1] [b]). As there was no longer any motion to debate, the Assembly did not have to convene until called by the Speaker at the request of the premier (section 22 [1]). The opposition, which could have presented a new and constitutionally valid motion, was, at least momentarily, thoroughly outmaneuvered.

The nine days in November between the introduction of the second no-confidence motion and the chief justice's decision saw an unprecedented campaign by the premier, Cabinet ministers, and progovernment Assembly members, involving rallies and meetings in Niue's villages at which people were urged to persuade their representatives to support the government. As with previous attempts to unseat the government, the dispute in the Assembly was reflected in divisions not only around the island but within the families of the twenty Assembly members as well.

By late November the opposition had regrouped, declaring itself the Niue People's Party. Its parliamentary leader was Young Vivian and its spokesman, and later its president, was the former secretary to government, Terry Chapman, who had been defeated in a bid for election to the Assembly at the 1993 general election. On 7 December, the next sitting of the Assembly, 1994's third motion of no confidence was moved, with Chapman claiming that internal divisions within the Cabinet were causing political instability and that there had been no

progress for Niue under the island's current leadership.

As the vote approached, Premier Lui, 58, a former New Zealand public servant and at one time a New Zealand champion wrestler, was reportedly considering holding a snap election in a bid to prevent his ouster. His constitutional options were limited, however. Under Niue's constitution (section 6 [3]) the premier would have had five days after losing a no-confidence vote to determine whether to resign or call an early election. If he chose an election, it would have to be called within six weeks (section 26 [2]); otherwise, the constitution prohibits governments from calling elections (except when defeated on confidence motions in the Assembly) earlier than three months before the expiry of its three-year term (section 26 [1] [b]). Consequently, the earliest date for an election called by the premier would be December 1995.

In January 1995, in the aftermath of the 10-10 vote, the opposition lodged an appeal to the governor-general of Niue (and of New Zealand), Dame Catherine Tizard, resident in Wellington, urging her to intervene to end the "hung Assembly" stalemate by dissolving the Assembly and calling for new elections. The next month, following consultations, Dame Catherine rejected the opposition's petition, saying there were no constitutionally valid reasons for her to become involved in what was essentially a political dispute.

Although the premier has argued subsequently that he still has a mandate to govern, the opposition has made it difficult for him to do so. Only

three bills have been enacted since the 10-10 vote and these were passed while members of the opposition were not present in the Assembly, which meets infrequently. The Niue People's Party has prevented passage of legislation (relevant to a New Zealand-funded tourism project) to set up a Niue tourist authority, a success that marks the first time government legislation has been blocked since New Zealand granted self-government in 1974.

Following the failure of the tourist authority bill to pass its second reading in the Assembly, and faced with the Niue People's Party's declared commitment to prevent consideration of all motions and legislation, the government withdrew further bills. Instead, it resurrected a twenty-five-year-old colonial ordinance (introduced in 1970 by New Zealand) as the means of establishing the four-person tourist board, which is responsible for marketing, tourism promotion, and planning. Its establishment was considered both vital and urgent, because New Zealand had indicated it would no longer provide special funding to a tourist authority unless a formal statutory body were set up to administer the funds.

The premier has vowed to govern even if the opposition were successful in blocking passage of the government's budget, which was presented to the Assembly (which neither approved nor rejected it) in late June. Its passage could be deferred for some months, as 25 percent of the government's budget can be spent in advance of Assembly approval. However, the failure to pass an appropriation bill would begin to

present difficulties by late September or early October: a particularly awkward time, as Niue commemorates the twenty-first anniversary of Constitution Day on 20 October and large celebrations are planned. Indeed, the Lui administration scaled down the annual event in 1994, saving its energies and resources as it looked ahead to a major event in 1995 to which Pacific Island leaders and dignitaries were to be invited. Premier Lui, having in effect deprived himself of presiding over the 1994 celebrations, wants to remain in office at the very least through the 1995 Constitution Day festivities.

The Niue People's Party claims to be ready for an early election, with candidates selected for each of the twenty Assembly seats and a party platform being developed. The approach to government taken by its leading figures, including Lakatani, is more in keeping with the stance taken by Niue's first (and longest serving) premier, Sir Robert Rex, favoring more interventionist policies for the state based on ongoing support from the New Zealand government and other aid donors. This stance, which tends to see Niue's economic development as inevitably dependent on externally supported government programs, is at variance with New Zealand's resources and priorities. These have led to cuts in recent years in assistance for budgetary purposes (which went hand in hand with a major reduction in the size of Niue's public service). The Lui government, seeking to move Niue forward in such an environment, has been seeking to reduce Niue's dependence on New Zealand and on government initiatives.

Although the island has been polarized by the political stalemate, the government has taken a relaxed attitude toward developments. The apparent rise of party politics on Niue, and the legislative stalemate that has been one of the immediate consequences, marks an important change for Niue's politics. Previously, Niue could be characterized as a "no party" state, its elections and constitutional government proceeding without aid (or hindrance) from formal party structures. Sir Robert Rex saw this as a virtue, advising me, in December 1980, in an interview in his office in Niue's capital, Alofi, that Niue had no need of party politics, that its introduction would be contrary to the Niuean way, and that party competition would prove too divisive for Niue's small size and limited population.

But party politics was not the only cause for division on Niue during 1995. Cabinet declared a seventy-seven-year-old Australian priest, Father Kevin Glover, who had been resident for five years, to be a threat to the "peace, order and good government" of Niue and ordered him deported. In response, Father Glover took legal action to prevent the order being carried out, and in due course the dispute between the government and the priest brought Niue some rare (if unwelcome) publicity. Father Glover and Premier Lui (among others) featured in an inquiry (not very favorable to the government's position) broadcast in New Zealand and the Pacific on the television program, "Sixty Minutes."

The government maintained that allegations made by Father Glover

meant that he was no longer physically safe on the island and that, in any case, his conduct had breached the terms of his residence permit. Minister of Education O'Love Tauveve Jacobsen claimed that Father Glover had been "culturally insensitive" and that his deportation would send a message overseas that Niue's laws were to be upheld and Niueans respected. While the premier accepted that Father Glover had not broken any laws, he argued that his departure was necessary following some of the critical statements he had made (that were broadcast on Niue).

Inevitably the dispute became associated with freedom-of-expression issues. Chair of the Niue Broadcasting Corporation Tiva Tongatule reported that the premier had told her to withdraw Father Glover's radio prayer program because the "prayers" contained too much political content, including personal criticism of government officials. Despite some concerns about government censorship, the program was banned on the grounds that its content did not meet the criteria set down by the broadcasting corporation. A complaint about the material had also been made by Jacobsen, whose responsibilities include religious affairs and broadcasting.

Other conflicts involving freedom of expression arose as feelings about Father Glover's deportation order, and the possibility of government censorship, became more heated. Although it was argued that Father Glover's criticisms could be expressed in Niue's weekly newspaper, the *Niue Star*, rather than through the broadcast media, the newspaper was also

attacked by the premier for biased political reporting. Furthermore John Rex-Woods, an Australian economic adviser employed for two years by the government and the husband of the paper's former part owner-editor, was also served with a deportation order that was subsequently challenged in the High Court.

Although there are only about one hundred forty Catholics on Niue, a petition circulated on the island, supporting Father Glover and calling on the government not to proceed with the deportation order, gathered a large number of signatures (about half of the adult population). Some of this support arose as the controversy merged with pro- and antigovernment sentiments: the Niue People's Party, not surprisingly, backed Father Glover, supporting the petition at least in part as an antigovernment move.

In April 1995 the case was adjourned after a ten-hour hearing. Niue's chief justice, noting that the issue was polarizing Niue and that it was in everyone's best interest to reach what he described as a voluntary solution, asked lawyers representing the government and Father Glover to try to resolve matters out of court. Following this request, the Niue Cabinet met to reconsider its position and agreed to revoke the expulsion order on condition that Father Glover "voluntarily" leave Niue by the end of June. This approach, it was stated, would provide Father Glover with the chance to leave with dignity while preserving Cabinet's view that he was no longer welcome on the island.

With matters still unresolved, Father Glover found it necessary to

leave Niue for medical treatment, delaying court proceedings. However, on his return to Niue, legal proceedings resumed. When the Cabinet's decision was read out to him, the chief justice announced that he was happy that the out-of-court settlement had been reached, saying that it had been resolved "the Niue way." On the priest's departure the deportation order was to be canceled. At the same time the Catholic Church was to provide a replacement for Father Glover, whose other legal dispute, a defamation suit, came to an end when he apologized to education officials who had brought the action against him.

Apart from his involvement in the second no-confidence motion and the Father Glover dispute, the chief justice was also prominent in emphasizing the need on Niue for a women's support group to help victims of sexual abuse. He made this statement during the sentencing of three men on separate charges of indecent assault and incest, saying that he found it incredible to learn that a victim had been shunned by her extended family and by people in her village after reporting the offenses. The needs of Pacific Island women were also on the agenda at the third meeting of Pacific Island women television producers, held at Alofi in December. The gathering, which included women from Fiji, Western Samoa, the Cook Islands, and Niue, was part of a UNESCO project encouraging more participation by women and a greater emphasis on locally produced television programs.

Niue's growing participation in international and regional organizations was also reflected at the United

Nations social summit in Copenhagen. Niue's national planning and economic development minister, Aokuso Pavihi, stated at the summit that many Pacific Island countries had been denied the assistance needed to develop. Describing Niue as a welfare state, the minister put the blame on the international community, arguing that "failures of the development efforts so optimistically handed out in the '60s have put Niue there": "it is time to lend a hand to reverse this situation." Another move toward greater external involvement saw Niue attend the Asian Development Bank conference in New Zealand as an observer. Niue has since applied for membership of the bank, which would make it eligible for loans and technical assistance.

As for Niue's ongoing challenges—retaining its population and promoting economic viability—the year 1994–95 brought mixed developments. The island experienced its first recorded instance of population growth for twenty years, with numbers rising by 82 (to 2321) since 1991. In October 1994 public servants received their first pay raise in six years, the government awarding a 10 percent cost-of-living allowance. However, a review found the economy stagnant, with a lack of confidence in the business sector; tourism was described as at an all-time low, its poor performance in turn having a dramatic (and negative) effect throughout the island's economy.

One sparkling success was a taro export program, which earned us\$74,000 for growers (mostly former public servants made redundant by budget cuts) in one month alone. The record shipments of taro to Auckland

were carried on the Cook Islands National Line and brought nearly half a million New Zealand dollars into Niue's economy in the twelve-month period. Even this silver lining was not untarnished, however, as agriculture officials warned producers not to replant plantations for up to five years or to clear rainforest prematurely. Niue's soil cannot sustain frequent rotational cropping, and overuse of land would have devastating long-term effects for its agricultural productivity.

Despite the earnings from taro exports, levels of bank deposits remained low, government revenue was below expectations, and a task force was appointed to consider new taxes. These might include increased port charges, a 10 percent duty on all imports, introduction of a sales tax, payment for water supplies (now provided free), and a closer scrutiny of personal and company tax returns. The Niue government remains the envy of many governments in one respect: it is debt free, and consequently the proportion of its budget required for debt servicing is nil.

With privatization having reduced the range and magnitude of government-run services, some further sales, including Niue's radio station and the lucrative state-owned liquor stores, are being contemplated. With news, public affairs, and even religious programs sensitive topics, control over broadcasting is bound to remain a delicate matter. So too is anything to do with the sale and distribution of alcoholic beverages, as evidenced by the Assembly's rejection of a proposal that would have allowed the sale of beer in Niue's villages. The proposal had generated

strong opposition from church leaders, which is not to say that Niue is "dry": there are seven licensed premises on the island.

Another perennial problem for Niue, ensuring the stability of air transportation links necessary for tourist development, was back on the agenda. Air Nauru is now the only airline with regularly scheduled flights to Niue, with a weekly service between Auckland and Niue. Polynesian Airlines' service was discontinued in September 1994, and there is now no scheduled air link between Niue and Rarotonga. However, Niue may have direct air services with Tonga and Western Samoa in the near future, following discussions with Royal Tongan Airways regarding a Nuku'alofa-Niue-Apia service.

New Zealand's major aid project on Niue centers on the extension of the airport runway, which would permit a fully loaded 737-400 to fly to Auckland without refueling in Tonga. With tourism considered the way forward for Niue, the project to extend the airport runway has a "field of dreams" character to it: "build it and they will come." The land being used for the runway extension was acquired by the government from six families. Following an independent valuation, the government offered the families a sum one-third higher than the land's market value. Ultimately, however, the government needed to use its powers to take land after negotiations with the landowners failed to produce an agreement on compensation. There was also disagreement over conditions of land use, and the matter went to arbitration by Niue's Land Court. Nevertheless ten-

ders were called in May, the extensions to be carried out by a New Zealand company (and project manager) using Niuean labor. The 690-meter extension will cost NZ\$6.9 million.

Concerns about Niue's fragile environment led to a ban in March on the import of beer bottles and small cartons of fruit juices and soft drinks. The step was taken to prevent bottles and drink cartons from littering the roadside. Ironically, this follows the successful development of a program to collect beer and soft-drink cans from around Niue, for export and recycling overseas (Levine 1994, 189). The person responsible for developing that program, who will not now be remembered on Niue solely for that initiative, was Father Glover.

STEPHEN LEVINE

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TOKELAU

A United Nations Mission visited Tokelau in July-August 1994, following earlier visits by UN missions in 1976, 1981, and 1986. The mission, which included representatives from Chile, Papua New Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Tunisia, was accompanied by Administrator of Tokelau Lindsay Watt and held meetings with the leadership and people of Tokelau on each of the three atolls. What especially dis-

tinguished this mission was that it heard first from the three atolls separately, and then, at the end, for the first time, from the people of Tokelau together, speaking with one voice through the *Ulu-o-Tokelau* (head of Tokelau).

As Tokelau has no airstrips, the mission traveled by freighter (a two-day voyage) from Western Samoa, arriving first in Atafu. They were welcomed by the *pulenuku* (village mayor), who thanked the United Nations for its support, mentioning in particular the participation by the UN Development Program in the building of a seawall and the implementation of Tokelau's water management program. Bearing in mind that the mission was to consider progress toward an act of self-determination in Tokelau, the *pulenuku* took the opportunity to remind the mission of Tokelau's refusal, years earlier, to become part of either Western Samoa or the Cook Islands. The *faipule* (elected head of each atoll), in his address, also emphasized Tokelau's desire to continue its relationship with New Zealand. Atafu's *taupulega* (council of elders) took the opportunity to remind the mission of the unity of Tokelauans, bound by a common language and ancestry. Although aware that the year 2000 is the General Assembly's target date for the eradication of colonialism, the elders argued that the time frame did not allow them sufficient time to comprehend fully the implications of a final act of self-determination, nor did it enable them to ensure a secure foundation for Tokelau's future.

Arriving next at Nukunonu, the visitors were informed by the *faipule* that

despite apprehensions associated with an act of self-determination, the community were becoming increasingly ready to proceed with it because a decision would give them more control over their own affairs. However, the *pulenuku* expressed concern over the question, noting Tokelau's past self-sufficiency, when "almost nothing was imported and when good, practical items were made of locally produced or available materials" (UN 1994, 12). With Tokelau now heavily dependent on imports, he questioned whether it would have the necessary resources to sustain its present level of development following the act of self-determination, and concluded that more time was needed to assess Tokelau's financial capabilities. This view was echoed at an informal meeting with representatives of the community, at which the mission was advised of Tokelau's need for improved telecommunications links and "the development of a better sea transport system and the construction of airstrips on the atolls," all of these priorities needing to be resolved "before addressing the question of self-determination" (UN 1994, 13). The absence of a direct transportation link with New Zealand (all contacts must pass through Western Samoa) was also stressed, participants reiterating that they would be in no position to make a decision on self-determination before the year 2000.

On Fakaofu the mission's meeting with the *taupulega* elicited comment on other issues. The acting *faipule* raised the question of Swains Island (Levine 1992, 207-208), stating that in the past the chief of Fakaofu had instructed people to live there. The act-

ing *faipule* stated that advice had been received that suggested it would be better to address the question of returning Swains to Tokelau prior to the exercise of Tokelau's right to self-determination. Even the *ulu's* "solemn declaration," delivered to the UN mission on 30 July in the name of "the emerging nation of Tokelau," made reference to this territorial claim. In his opening remarks of welcome he told the visitors "you have now visited all the three atolls of Tokelau and, according to our forefathers, sailed past the fourth" (UN 1994, 26).

The mission's report to the United Nations' fourth committee, the Special Political and Decolonization Committee, concluded that the people of Tokelau were "ready and willing, although not without a natural apprehension, to continue evolving politically, economically and socially." The mission described Tokelau's National Strategic Plan, "which contains the principles that will chart the course for the nation of Tokelau," as "a document of great importance," and considered recent moves toward greater internal self-government a "necessary step on the path to self-determination." It concluded that the people of Tokelau "were all in favor of assuming more responsibility in conducting their own affairs, and that they were well on their way to building nationhood and becoming self-governing." While noting a preference, "expressed unambiguously," for "a future status of free association with New Zealand," the mission also observed that "the exact content and nature of this free association" required "further discussion." There were some reflections on the

voyage to and from Tokelau: "the Mission had the opportunity to experience firsthand the hazardous conditions under which passengers and cargo were ferried from ship to shore and recommends that appropriate facilities, including improvement of the access channels and the building of wharves, should be taken under active consideration" (UN 1994, 22-25). The mission also gave its support to the further studies proposed by the New Zealand government of the feasibility of constructing at least one airport in Tokelau.

On 9 December 1994 the General Assembly adopted a resolution that noted "with appreciation that for the first time Tokelau came together as one people and one nation . . . in order to address the question of Tokelau's act of self-determination." The resolution went on to confirm that in its view the people of Tokelau retained the "inalienable right" to "self-determination and independence," notwithstanding "such factors as territorial size, geographical location, size of population and limited natural resources." The General Assembly also took note of the "solemn declaration read by the Ulu-o-Tokelau" and the "strong preference for a future status of free association with New Zealand," as well as progress being made toward the attainment of self-government under a constitution.

These developments involving Tokelau, New Zealand, and the United Nations took place against the background of Tokelau's newly approved National Strategic Plan, adopted in June 1994 (Levine 1995, 163). The plan was designed to set forth some of

the cultural assumptions underlying the political and social direction Tokelau is seeking to take. It establishes a Tokelauan consensus about fundamental cultural commitments from the outset: "Tokelau is permanently founded on God. This foundation is manifested in the way the country and its people cooperate; live peacefully; live happily." The plan also includes sections on government ("we value the voice of all our people in all the decisions we make"), culture ("we will place first and continue to value our culture and customs"), learning ("we place great importance on the learning of things Tokelau, we also value modern knowledge"), and the nation itself ("the processes we use for the raising of our families will be the same methods we will use to make national decisions"). A section on "beliefs," describing aspects of "the Tokelau way," concludes with an affirmation that "our way of life is based on Christian and Tokelau values which provide a way for people to live peacefully; be honest; respect each other." As a plan for future development, there is also a statement of Tokelau's "weaknesses," focusing on threats to cultural integrity, resource scarcity, the need for greater accountability and improvements to the public service, and, finally, the observation that "there are almost no symbols that signify that Tokelau is a country."

Reviewing Tokelau's foreign relations—its "external opportunities"—the plan emphasizes difficulties Tokelau has experienced "due to our contacts with the outside world." These have contributed to the weakening of "important elements of our culture,"

environmental degradation, adverse effects on health, and encroachments "in our waters" by foreign fishing vessels.

Concluding with a "Challenge for the Future," the plan reviews "critical issues" and the steps needed "to remedy our weaknesses." An undertaking was made to "develop and adopt national symbols," including a national anthem, a national flag, and national color(s), and to establish links with other countries and organizations wherever possible. All deliberations and decisions were to be considered against the background of one overriding question: "How will Tokelau's culture, environment, health and international relations be affected by this decision?"

Although Tokelau's is a predominantly oral culture, the national plan was but one of two documents to gain prominence during the year 1994–95. The other, the "Voice of Tokelau," was presented to the UN mission on the last day of its visit in the presence of, and on behalf of, the elders, Council of Faipule, the three *pulenuku*, and representatives of the women, youth, and churches. "Today," it stated, "we come together as Tokelau." What was unique was that "for the very first time in its history, and on its own soil, Tokelau is talking to the United Nations as one people, and one nation." Describing "changes in attitude" and "a new assertiveness," the *ulu* drew attention to a "new sense of nationalism" stemming, in part, from a desire "to halt the process of erosion of [Tokelau's] cultural norms": "in the pursuit of making its act of self determination, Tokelau is determined that it

should not undermine its social, religious and cultural values." The National Strategic Plan, the embodiment of Tokelau's "dreams and hopes," was "a rudder for Tokelau's canoe"; its constitution, whose development was now underway, would "provide the trunk from which a new canoe to carry Tokelau into the next century will be carved." The *ulu* stated that Tokelau would have a national flag approved during 1995. Also on the agenda, and stressed by the *ulu*, were plans to advance self-government (through amendments to New Zealand's Tokelau Act) by giving Tokelau a national legislative power to match its newly acquired executive authority and judicial structure.

In his annual report to the New Zealand Parliament, summarizing the progress being made toward an act of self-determination, Tokelau's administrator referred to the effort to "devise a long-term relationship with New Zealand which provides necessary reassurance, yet allows Tokelau to stand taller, its pride and dignity intact, while fulfilling its instinctive desire to be self-reliant to the greatest extent possible." The result, he noted, was likely to be "a Tokelauan Constitution, rather than a Constitution for Tokelau copied heavily from constitutions elsewhere." The year 1995 has been declared Tokelau's "Year of the Constitution," and workshops on constitutional issues are being held on each atoll. In May 1995 Tokelau's special representative told the UN special committee's subcommittee on small territories that these constitutional workshops had both "reinforced the concept of the *nuku* (village) being the

foundation stone from which the nation of Tokelau is to grow" and demonstrated that "Tokelau is already functioning as a nation, as one people," the "desire to become 'one' " as well as "three" very much in evidence.

Tokelau's special representative transmitted a message from the Council of Faipule that reviewed recent developments: "the delegation of powers of the Administrator in January 1994, the coming together of the three atolls to build a National Strategic Plan in June, and the delivery of the 'Voice of Tokelau' to the United Nations Visiting Mission in July." These were characterized as "the springboard from which Tokelau is launching its search for an act of self-determination appropriate to its size, location and institutions, both modern and traditional." In similar spirit was a statement by the administrator in November 1994 to the *taupulega* of each atoll, telling them that they "had a unique chance to become the founding fathers of the new nation which itself would serve to re-empower traditional village institutions."

The administrator delivered a statement to the UN subcommittee in May 1995, noting Tokelau's stated wish (through the "Voice of Tokelau" and the National Strategic Plan) to assert its distinctive character and to be as self-reliant as possible. But he observed that Tokelau had indicated its ongoing need for "a partner" and concluded: "Really the bottom line for Tokelau is quite simple. Here is a precariously situated country of 1600 people whose long-term security would be significantly enhanced under free association

of a style that fosters the feeling that Tokelau retains a meaningful connection with a wider whole, and thereby achieves not only the human connection, but also the possibility for broader material support and assistance."

As part of the effort to devise a constitution and gain greater insight into political status alternatives, the Council of Faipule has held talks in New Zealand, Fiji, Niue, Western Samoa, and Tuvalu. A national competition to design and approve a national flag has been launched. Tokelau's principal policy-making body, the General Fono (General Council), has decided to allow Tokelauans living in New Zealand to send representatives to Fono meetings. This step reaffirms links among Tokelauans generally and is consistent with efforts to attract expatriate Tokelauans back to Tokelau. A meeting held by the UN mission with Tokelauans resident in New Zealand found that most wanted to retain a voice in Tokelau's affairs. There was support for the "Voice of Tokelau," a preference for free association with New Zealand, and backing for the direction taken by Tokelau's leadership with respect to constitutional developments leading toward a future act of self-determination.

The concerns about Tokelau's telecommunications and transport links are being addressed. Progress is being made toward using a satellite earth station for communications purposes, while alternatives to the freighter used by the UN mission are being explored (as a matter of some urgency because the charter arrangement has come to an end). The question of airstrips, con-

sidered in the past (but rejected by Tokelau), is back on the agenda, with a principal issue continuing to center on a willingness to sacrifice scarce land to permit one or more airstrips to be built.

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THE KINGDOM OF TONGA

The formation and naming of Tonga's first political party, in August 1994, bitterly divided leading parliamentary People's Representatives and other prodemocracy supporters. Futa Helu, a prominent intellectual force behind political reform, said that he thinks Tonga is not ready for an independent political party, and repeated the adage that in Tonga the churches *are* the political parties. On 11 August 1994, however, it was announced that five of the elected People's Representatives, 'Akilisi Pohiva, 'Uiliami Fukofuka, and 'Uhila Liava'a, the first, second, and third, respectively, of the People's Representatives for Tongatapu, and Teisina Fuko and 'Uliti Uata, the first

and second People's Representatives for Ha'apai, had organized the Tonga Democratic Party in an effort to build a "strong, united" political platform for the reform movement and to ensure that the People's Representatives in the Legislative Assembly voted in a bloc. Pohiva noted in an interview that the kingdom's legal system has no provision for the registration of political parties. Nevertheless, a party constitution that allows anyone to join had been approved by party members. The party's aim, Pohiva said, is to bring about a more democratic government, accountable to the people, who would have a greater part in decision-making. "We believe in and are pursuing common goals," he said of the founding members. "If there are individual differences, we will compromise" (TC, 11 Aug 1994, 1).

Serious differences among the founders soon surfaced, fired by the change of name to the "People's Party" by 20 August, when the constitution was signed. Helu was particularly furious with the decision to leave out the term *Democratic*, and orchestrated a vigorous criticism of the parliamentarians responsible in a number of letters appearing under a variety of names in local newspapers, particularly *Taimi 'o Tonga*. A great deal of his concern appears to have revolved around his not being consulted about the key decisions. "It seemed that there was a lot of secrecy associated with the formation process—for these five members of parliament did not call a meeting of supporters to consult with them on their constitution or their plans," he told *Lali* magazine. "They met by themselves, approved their own consti-

tution, voted themselves in to hold all the positions of authority in the party, then they announced that the people can now become members. . . . this is not democratic. It's downright dictatorial!" (*Lali*, Oct 1994, 17). Pohiva joined Helu in opposition to the cofounders of the party in a move that reflected earlier, long-standing, differences of opinion between them over his more confrontational actions and the means and goals of reform. Helu has philosophical reasons and Pohiva personal and political reasons for pursuing avowedly democratic goals; others in the reform movement are less certain about them.

The fuss over the party's name does not merely indicate conflict about a formal movement toward democracy in Tonga, although that conflict exists among the party's leaders. It points also to a very much underplayed but fundamental split over Christian beliefs, or the lack of them, held by reformers and the role that religious commitment should play in the life of the newly formed party. Helu's values and distinctive mode of critical enquiry are based on qualities he associates with an ancient Athenian elite, an intellectual and ethical debt expressed in the name 'Atenisi, given to the educational institution he founded. He opposes all types of oppression of the common people, which, he believes, were imposed by traditional notions of rank in Tonga and have continued in the modern social and political order largely through the support of the order by the Christian churches. He and many of his students and followers are openly atheistic and agnostic. Other people in the prodemocracy

movement pursue the goals of social justice and political reform because they believe it to be their duty as Christians. They would not welcome reform won at the cost of religious commitment. Their point of view was expressed simply in a brief statement released by the party in early September. "The People's Party . . . seeks to apply Christian principles to political affairs as the only way of 'protecting the dignity of mankind'." It reiterated its members' loyalty to the monarch as the head of state, together with the party's aim of "representing the voice of the people" and seeking the redistribution of political and economic powers to allow citizens greater participation in the institutions that shape and control their lives. (*TC*, 1 Sept 1994, 6). The chairman of the People's Party, 'Uliti Uata, hit back at Helu's criticisms, saying discussion about democracy had gone on for too long in Tonga without a firm basis. The strongest objection to the formation of a party had come from the 'Atenisi Institute, which "publicly stated a few months ago that it was definitely not the right time yet to set up a democratic political party. It was on this ground that they were not consulted when the constitution was drafted" (*Lali*, Oct 1994, 18).

Predictably, the establishment has come to the party by questioning the need for any reform because, it maintains, the government of Tonga has been essentially democratic since the 1875 Constitution. Prime Minister Baron Vaea of Houma claimed that, despite revisions, the Tongan system of government was originally based on the British Westminster model to

which the People's Party aspires. He nevertheless wished the People's Party "good luck" and reminded people once again of his own attempt in 1992 to launch a Christian Democratic Workers of Tonga Party to contest the early 1993 general elections (*Lali*, Oct 1994, 11). This was the first attempt in Tonga to start a political party, but the government bid for popular support failed to win the approval it needed from church leaders and was put aside. Joining the confusion surrounding democracy in Tonga was the comment from a journalist, Erina Reddan, broadcast over Radio Australia in March 1995, that the king had told her, in November 1994, that "democracy is inevitable in Tonga." The king immediately denied having made any such improbable statement or having said that "a fully elected government is only a matter of time" (*TC*, 23 March 1995, 1). The king later reiterated that Tonga has no laws covering the operation of a political party and that there was no recognized political party in Tonga.

By June 1995, a beleaguered 'Uliti Uata was tending to agree with his monarch. "The People's party is standing still because of dissatisfaction among members," he said (*MT*, April-June 1995, 5). The most serious split within the party continues to be that with its vice-president, Pohiva, who continues his colorful litigious career, although it is proving costly. In July 1994, he was served by the Tonga Supreme Court with a garnishee order that stopped his parliamentary salary because of the T\$10,402 he still owes Crown Prince Tupouto'a's lawyers after the prince won a defamation case

against him. To that point, in 1994, Pohiva had paid ₺\$56,000 in fines to various people who had taken him to court on defamation cases (*MT*, June–July, 1994, 5). His behavior caused Uata, the chairman of the party, to call him “unreliable” and refute Pohiva’s criticisms of the party that he had helped found. In November 1994, on the closing day of the Legislative Assembly session, Pohiva was the cause of further dissension when a petition signed by four hundred women was presented to the House seeking action to be taken against him because he had called the king a “dictator” in an interview he had given to a US newspaper. Pohiva apparently is not honoring his parliamentary oath of allegiance to the king when he goes about telling reporters that the king is a dictator. The unusual petition was tabled by three of the executive members of the newly formed party, but then the members voted against one another over whether or not the petition should be accepted. This outcome seems to contradict one of the party’s goals that members should toe the party line (*MT*, Oct–Dec 1994, 41). In addition, Pohiva threatened to sue 26 members of parliament for what he claimed were unlawful overtime payments during the annual parliamentary tour, 4 of the 26 in question being executives of the new party. For publishing the criminally libelous claims in the periodical *Kele’a*, of which he is both editor and publisher, he was fined a further ₺\$600 on 29 May 1995. Despite the several setbacks occasioned by the opposition of first Futa Helu and then Pohiva, the People’s Party members are continuing their

working program, explaining their aims to church, village community, and professional leaders (*MT*, Jan–Mar 1995, 6).

Personalities continue to dominate the political scene. Minister for Finance Cecil Cocker was forced to resign on 12 May 1995, after being censured by New Zealand’s Acting Prime Minister Don McKinnon, over allegations of misconduct at the Asian Development Bank Conference in Auckland earlier that month. Cocker was alleged to have sexually harassed three women during the meeting, including his official driver. Cocker denied the allegations and imputed the unfortunate interpretation of his behavior to “cultural misunderstanding” (*MT*, April–June 1995, 7). Cocker was also reportedly affected by alcohol when he delivered his speech to the meeting, during which he was asked several times by the chair to stop when he repeatedly attacked the Asian Development Bank for denying Tonga a loan for a hotel.

The Finance portfolio has been taken by the Honourable Tutoatasi Fakafanua, who is also acting minister for Labour, Commerce and Industries and acting minister for Tourism. The minister made the news earlier in the year when he was the target of a shooting incident. Two men, unhappy with the government’s refusal to approve increases of 3000 tonnes to the pumpkin squash export quota, set at 17,000 tonnes, fired guns outside his house in November 1994 and damaged a van belonging to him. On 6 December, the Honourable Fakafanua formally pardoned the men in a traditional cere-

mony of forgiveness. The squash quota was not altered.

The visible trade deficit for 1994 hit T\$72.7 million, an increase over the 1993 visible deficit of T\$61.8 million that was attributable largely to the poorer performance of squash on the export market than in previous years. Despite the loss in tariff revenue, Tonga would be better off joining the World Trade Organization, advised a World Bank report, and the country may soon do so. On the plus side, the kingdom grew bigger with the emergence of a new volcanic island 120 miles north of Nuku'alofa, on the Metis Shoal. Notwithstanding the 67,000-square-meter increase to his kingdom, the king, in his address at the opening of the 95th Legislative Assembly, in June 1995, again drew

attention to proposals to lease land in Sarawak, and possibly also in Papua New Guinea, to ease Tonga's acute lack of resources.

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