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.

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.

* * *

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

Ron Crocombe and Marjorie Tuainekore Crocombe

References


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 Vernaudon 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 Vernaudon'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 Vernaudon 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 Vernaudon'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 FCPF 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 wiliest politicians in the territory, and a major promoter of sport. In late May, Spitz died of natural causes.

Former President Alexandre Léontieff experienced the ignoming 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. Predictably, 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 supporter 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