

THE ORIGINS OF INDIGENOUS POLITICAL PARTIES  
IN POLYNESIA AND MELANESIA

Ira Wolf  
February, 1981

TABLE OF CONTENTS

I.	INTRODUCTION	1
	Identifying Political Parties	1
	Function of Political Parties	2
	Generalizations	4
II.	PAPUA NEW GUINEA	10
	Pangu Pati	10
	Independent Members' Group	14
	United Party	15
	People's Progress Party	17
	National Party	17
	Other Political Parties	18
	Summary	19
III.	VANUATU	21
	Vanuaaku Party	21
	UPNH	22
	ACNH/UCNH	24
	MANH	25
	Nagriamel	26
	Other Political Movements	27
	Summary	28
IV.	COOK ISLANDS	30
	Cook Islands Party	30
	Early Opposition Parties	32
	Democratic Party	33
	Summary	33
V.	FRENCH POLYNESIA	35
	Autonomists	35
	Conservative Parties	37
VI.	FIJI	38
	Alliance Party	38
	National Federation Party	41
	Issues	42
	Fijian Nationalist Party	45
VII.	NEW CALEDONIA	47
VIII.	CONCLUSION	49
	SOURCES	52

TABLES

	<u>Following page</u>
Papua New Guinea--Some Key Political Developments, 1964-1973	10
Vanuatu--Political Parties	21
Fiji--Evolution of Political Parties	38

## I. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to examine the formation and the early development of indigenous political parties in Polynesia and Melanesia in a search for common features in the origins of these parties.

### Identifying Political Parties

Using T. Hodgkin's formulation of political parties allows for the broadest scope in studying political party activity in the South Pacific. Thus, political parties are

all political organizations which regard themselves as parties and which are generally so regarded. (Hodgkin 1961:15-16)

Somewhat surprisingly, especially in light of the European models available to the South Pacific nations as independence drew near, political parties are present in few countries of the region.

The oldest indigenous political parties still functioning in the South Pacific are those in French Polynesia, although the names of the parties and the key personalities have changed over the years. (French Polynesia also has parties that are extensions of Metropolitan France's political system. They will not be discussed here.)

The party system operating in Fiji since the early 1960's is unusual in the Pacific by virtue of its communal nature. In Papua New Guinea, multiple parties were active by 1971, principally as Parliamentary groupings and soon thereafter in active pursuit of electoral support. Parties in Vanuatu, with one prominent exception, began to develop in the early 1970's. The first party in the Cook Islands began to function in 1964 and had no effective, organized opposition for almost a decade.

Although Melanesian parties are active in New Caledonia, their impact seems to have been minimal, at least until recently. Political parties in Solomon Islands seemed to have evaporated with independence,

although they reappeared in the 1980 election campaign. It is too early to tell whether they will have any lasting influence, although it appears that with Prime Minister Kenilorea's new government, the parties have rapidly faded away once again. A party system may be emerging in Western Samoa; it is too recent an event for analysis here. In Tonga, Tuvalu, American Samoa, and Niue parties are no where to be found.

This paper focusses on those countries in the South Pacific where parties have become a permanent feature of the political landscape and have been significant actors in the political system-- Papua New Guinea, the New Hebrides, the Cook Islands, French Polynesia<sup>and</sup> Fiji, (New Caledonia, with Melanesians the minority demographically, politically, and economically, represents a unique political system in the region. Its party system will be discussed briefly, but it does not fit any of the generalizations made here for South Pacific party systems.)

In all five countries, political parties emerged during the colonial period. The role these political parties played provides a common framework with which to examine individual country experiences.

#### Function of Political Parties

One function of political parties in the region was mobilization of support. This support was sought nationally, regionally, or from a specific sector such as the educated elite,

the members of the national legislature, or other institutionalized groups. This political mobilization had several, often overlapping, purposes:

- to gain support so that party programs could be accepted and implemented by the governing colonial institution
- to gain support so that party programs that had already been implemented could be justified
- to gain support so that the party becomes a means to
  - develop a sense of nationalism and a national consciousness
  - stimulate the development of political programs and the political process and to initiate political change
  - communicate with the populace
- to gain support for the party to challenge the existing indigenous leadership

A second function of political parties in the South Pacific was to provide a means to communicate with the colonial power. The founders of most South Pacific political parties were educated within European political systems. This small, Western-educated elite adopted the political models they had observed and studied. Thus, the political parties provided the Europeans with a local political system they could understand--its possible irrelevance to the indigenous system notwithstanding.

The traditional operating style of politics in the South Pacific is through consensus-building. However, four of the five countries examined here (Papua New Guinea, Fiji, the New Hebrides, and the Cooks) have adopted a Westminster, or modified Westminster, system in which a majority party or coalition of parties rules, a formal, recognized opposition challenges the former, and the majority in the legislature selects the government leader who also serves as chief executive. Thus, at least formally, the traditional Pacific concept of consensus in decision-making has given way to majority rule. However, in actual practice, consensus is still the guiding principle, at least within the governing party or coalition, with great effort often exerted to bring together vastly divergent viewpoints. It is between the different parties that the Westminster voting system actually seems to apply.

### Generalizations

The evidence available, discussed in the five country sections, points to two broad generalizations describing the formation of indigenous parties in Melanesia and Polynesia.

The first generalization is that the initial indigenous-based political party to form and take hold in each country developed in reaction to the policies of the colonial administration. In some instances, this reaction to the colonial administration developed because political change was not coming quickly enough to suit a particular indigenous group (Vanuatu, Papua New Guinea, French Polynesia). In other cases, the speed of change was acceptable or too rapid, but there was disagreement with the direction the colonial administration was following toward self-government or independence (Fiji, Cook Islands).

As a counter-reaction, a second party then formed that was expatriate-based or strongly influenced by expatriates, opposed to the indigenous party, and primarily concerned with protecting the status quo. This second party, therefore, supported the colonial administration. This counter-reaction occurred in Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, and French Polynesia. It fails in the Cook Islands, probably because of the lack of a sizeable and influential expatriate community. Here the opposition to the initial party was also indigenous. Fiji, with its Indian/Fijian split, is sui generis.

Following this/ additional indigenous-based parties developed-- perhaps in opposition to the initial indigenous party, perhaps in opposition to the expatriate party, or perhaps formed for independent reasons.

The second generalization is that the initial political party to form was led in its earliest stage of foundation and development by a single outstanding individual, whose leadership might be characterized as either charismatic (according to the 1974 Webster's New World Dictionary possessing "a special quality of leadership that captures the popular imagination and inspires unswerving allegiance and devotion") or bureaucratic (which I define as that style of leadership that rules through the means of the concentration of authority in a complex structure of administrative agencies or departments). In the succeeding reaction-oriented, expatriate-influenced party, this characteristic of strong individual leadership often was not present. In the second set of indigenous-based parties to form, however, this feature might again be present, although not as frequently as in the initial set of indigenous parties.

The development of political parties in Papua New Guinea seems to fit this description almost perfectly. The Pangu Pati developed as a direct reaction to the Australian administration, seeking self-government and, ultimately, independence, from a colonial power that considered such a development desirable in theory, but only after an extensive (perhaps thirty years or more) period of preparation. Its formation was followed almost immediately by the Independent Members' Group, less a party than an assemblage, led by expatriates and dedicated to opposing the Pangu Pati at every opportunity. One party that developed from the Independent Members' Group was the United Party, expatriate-led with a policy based on a deep antipathy to everything the Pangu Pati represented. The United Party favored the maintenance of an unchanged colonial system and believed that the Pangu Pati was made up of dangerous radicals.

The People's Progress Party, an indigenous-based party that also arose out of the Independent Members' Group, consisted mainly of Papua New Guineans, although it had some expatriate support. It was a business-oriented party, stressing economic development as a precondition to considering self-government and opposing both the Pangu Pati and much of the expatriate influence in the Independent Members' Group. The National Party was generally considered to be an extension of the Pangu Pati in the Papua New Guinea Highlands, disappeared from the political scene, and later re-emerged with the same leadership but in opposition to the Pangu Pati.

Michael Somare, one of the founding members of the Pangu Pati, rapidly emerged as the party leader and the predominant political personality in the country until 1980 when he was replaced as Prime Minister. Neither the Independent Members' Group nor the United Party, the expatriate-based political groups, had such a single dominating leader. The people's Progress Party<sup>was</sup> led by Julius Chan who became Prime Minister in 1980. Iambakey Okuk abandoned the National Party, only later to lead a party with the same name although with no apparent ties to its name-sake.

Vanuatu also seems to conform to this model well. The Vanuaaku Party was formed in reaction to the policies of the Condominium administration, with the party founders hoping to protect the country's land from foreign encroachment, to obtain more control by Melanesians, and, finally, to secure early independence. The British, although inclined to depart from one of the last vestiges of the Empire, were opposed by the French who hoped to remain in Vanuatu indefinitely.



The next party to form, the Union de la Population des Nouvelles Hebrides (UPNH), followed in turn by the Union des Communautés des Nouvelles Hebrides (UCNH) and the Mouvement Autonomiste des Nouvelles Hebrides (MANH), simply followed the policies of the French Residency, calling the Vanuaaku Party a radical and communist organization and opposing it at every opportunity.

Walter Lini was the key individual in the formation of the Vanuaaku Party and remains the leader of the party today and Prime Minister of the independent state of Vanuatu. The French expatriate parties had no individual who stood out, although Gerard Leymang, Secretary of the UCNH, among others, became a principal francophone spokesman in Vanuatu.

The first party to form in the Cook Islands, the Cook Islands Party, developed in reaction to the New Zealand administration. In this case, however, the colonial power was not interested in maintaining its influence. Rather New Zealand neglected development in the Cook Islands out of an apparent disinterest. The Cook Islands Party attempted to reinvigorate what had become a stagnating society after these years of New Zealand inaction. In addition, the Cook Islands Party filled the leadership vacuum created by colonial policies. The United Cook Islanders formed to oppose Albert Henry and the Cook Islands Party but, as an institutionalized force, was short-lived. The only other party to emerge and consolidate its strength was the Democratic Party, also formed in reaction to the Cook Islands Party. In contrast to the cases of Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu, this diverges somewhat from the generalizations in that the Democratic Party was an indigenous party opposing the dominance of the Cook Islands Party. According to the Democratic Party, Albert

Henry had done little more for the people of the Cooks than had the New Zealand administration before self-government. There was no expatriate-led reaction to the Cook Islands Party because of the relatively small number of expatriates in the Cooks as compared to the other South Pacific Islands examined here.

From the foundation of the Cook Islands Party in 1964 until his removal from office in 1978, Albert Henry's personality dominated the party and the country. Dr. Tom Davis, founder of the Democratic Party and currently Prime Minister, was at the center of the opposition's activity throughout most of the 1970's. However, Dr. Davis has not dominated his party to the same degree as have many other Pacific leaders.

In French Polynesia, the Comité Pouvanaa developed to oppose French policies. The string of conservative groups, led by both expatriates and "demis", formed to oppose Pouvanaa and the autonomist policies of his successors. Although there was a later division in the conservative ranks between Gaullist and non-Gaullist groups, the early development of political parties in French Polynesia seems to fit the model posited here. Pouvanaa a Oopa reigned over the autonomist parties in French Polynesia for several decades, although his leadership became more symbolic than real, especially after his deportation to France in 1959. The expatriate and demi parties, as well as Pouvanaa's successor parties, have provided no similar dominating and charismatic figure around whom supporters could rally.

The origin of political parties in Fiji was quite different from that in the other states of Melanesia and Polynesia. The Alliance Party, a multi-racial coalition, developed out of a combination of

- Fijian fear of too rapid independence being forced on them by Great Britain of increasing Indian political activism
- European fear of Indian dominance in an independent Fiji
- Divisions within the Indian community.

The National Federation Party developed because of the Indian fear that the Europeans would manipulate the Fijians to the detriment of Indian interests and a deep concern over the land tenure system and its impact on economic prospects for the Indian community. The third Fijian party, the Fijian Nationalist Party, formed a decade after the other parties and half a decade after independence. Although it is discussed briefly, it is not relevant to this analysis.

Ratu Mara and A.D. Patel, the founders of the Alliance Party and the National Federation Party, respectively, exerted strong leadership as individuals.

Country profiles follow with a short conclusion and suggestions for further study at the end.

## II. PAPUA NEW GUINEA

### Pangu Pati

Of the indigenous parties extant in Papua New Guinea, the earliest to form was the Pangu Pati in June, 1967.\* Its origins were in 1964-1965 when a number of Pangu's founders were students at the Administrative College in Port Moresby and began to gather regularly for political discussions. This was the "Bully Beef Club", so named because they met over canned Australian meat. They had been the victims of a 1963 Australian Government decision to institute two separate pay systems in the public service--one for expatriates and one for Papua New Guineans--with a large salary and benefit differential between the two.

This Australian action was significant in several respects. Until 1963, there had been one pay scale for both expatriate and Papua New Guinean public servants, although their lack of training and education meant that at the time Papua New Guineans were excluded from higher level positions. This 1963 change meant that, even were a Papua New Guinean to develop the requisite skills for a top position, the salary (and hence, the status and prestige as well) would be lower than that of an expatriate performing the same job. Thus, Papua New Guineans in the Public Service had a cap put on their career expectations.

The Australians believed that by making this change they were helping prepare Papua New Guinea for self-government when nationals would assume responsibility in the Public Service but while the nation would be unable to pay Australian level salaries. The Papua New Guinean reaction was a questioning as to why Australia was not preparing the territory for self-government in other areas as well. Answers

\* Pangu is an acronym for Papua and New Guinea Union; Pati is the Pidgin word for party.



were found wanting and this administrative action was viewed as indicative of broader issues in the colonial relationship.

These young government employees were an elite with their relatively good education, high personal ambitions, and the broad perspectives developed from living and working throughout the territory. In Port Moresby, a group consciousness formed and they attempted to translate their broader concerns into concrete proposals for change.

They presented a series of submissions to the Select Committee on Constitutional Development in 1965 and 1966, demanding

- Unification of Papua and New Guinea
- Discontinuation of Special Electorates by which European candidates could dominate the legislative system.
- A decrease in the number of official members of the House of Assembly
- The establishment of a Cabinet
- The reorganization of Administrative Departments
- The appointment of senior Papuans and New Guineans as assistants to the Heads of Departments
- The replacement of the Administrator by a High Commissioner
- The Australian government immediately take steps to prepare Papua New Guinea for self-government.

They criticized Australian rule, warning of a likely breakdown in the relationship between Australia and Papua New Guinea and implying possible racial conflict between black and white.

In March, 1967, an enlarged group prepared a further submission demanding

- Immediate home rule
- A Chief Minister and Cabinet with full executive powers by 1968
- Localization of senior Public Service positions
- Transfer of Papua New Guinea from the Australian Department of Territories to the Department of External Affairs

With these demands, "the first conscious seeds of a most significant political party had been born." (Stephen 1972:65)

A Pangu Pati press release in June, 1967, and Pangu Pati statements early in the Second House of Assembly (1968-1972) further elaborated upon the party's position as follows:

- Immediate home rule followed by internal self-government after an appropriate period to gain experience
- Independence as the final step in this process; no target date to be set as yet
- Unify Papua and New Guinea; Pangu meant one man, one country, one people
- Pidgin as the national language
- Encourage economic development, including a doubling of national income in ten years and a more equitable income distribution
- Stimulate foreign investment
- Support the cooperative movement
- Land reform.

Only nine to eleven (accounts vary) of the 94 members of the Second House of Assembly that opened in June, 1968, were Pangu Pati members. Although several other members supported the party, the Pangu Pati seemed to have little popular appeal. It operated initially as a Parliamentary party, playing the role of "loyal opposition" to the colonial administration's legislative dominance and refusing to accept "ministerial" positions.\*

The perspective of Pangu Pati members seemed to be distant from the daily concerns of most people in the territory. In addition, initially the Pangu Pati was primarily a coastal-based party, seeking to gain support in the Highlands. Even though they had some success (two winning Pangu Pati candidates in the 1968 election were from the Highlands), they were viewed in the early days as geographically limited in scope.

\* Most observers contend that the Pangu Pati did not want to be coopted by the administration. However, it is equally plausible to contend that the Pangu Pati refused these so-called ministerial positions because almost no real power went with the titles. Had there been power involved, the Pangu Pati might have accepted them in order to work from within for change.

Furthermore, the very concept of a political party, unknown in the traditional system, engendered popular suspicion, especially in rural electorates. The lack of nationalist feeling in this country of over 700 languages plus white-inspired propaganda (both official and unofficial) regarding the young radicals in the Pangu Pati also constrained the development of the party. (Woolford 1976:17-18)

Pangu Pati members felt isolated in both the House of Assembly and within the national political system. Perhaps this sense of isolation helped them to develop a coherent policy and was a factor in stimulating a strong sense of solidarity behind the Pangu Pati leader, Michael Somare, who became the first Chief Minister and then Prime Minister from independence to March, 1980. (Ballard)

It is worth noting that the Pangu Pati was not opposed by all expatriates. For example, two young Australians, Tony Voutas and Barry Holloway, were instrumental in assisting the Pangu Pati and in channelling its energies in the early days of formation. Both have served as Ministers in Pangu Pati-dominated governments. In addition, there were many Australians, perhaps younger and more liberal than the average expatriate serving in the territory, who supported the Pangu Pati's aspirations. And, finally, there were many in Australia, including key political leaders as the 1960's ended, who supported early self-government and independence for Papua New Guinea. One could also argue that the colonial government was trying to move Papua New Guineans into policy-making positions at as rapid a pace as possible. There was, however, a conflict through the early 1970's within the Australian Government between the Department of External Affairs and/of Territories over the inevitability of independence for Papua New Guinea.



Michael Somare himself is a charismatic personality. In 1967, he was one of a small group deeply troubled about his country's future. By 1972, he was clearly the predominant personality in his party. He has finely developed the art of consensus-making-- both within his own party and within the broad coalition governments he led until his fall in March, 1980. His name has come to be synonymous with Papua New Guinea. One observer told this author that he estimated that eight months after the change of government, 85% of the population still believe that Michael Somare is Prime Minister.

#### Independent Members' Group

The Pangu Pati's aggressiveness in the House of Assembly and the uncertainty regarding the size of the party's support on the eve of the opening of the Second House of Assembly in 1968 stimulated a strong reaction from many expatriate members. Just before the House convened, they formed the Independent Members' Group--an extremely loose grouping that the expatriates hoped would serve as a locus for indigenous members who, it was felt, might be pressured to join with the Pangu Pati. The Independent Members' Group also served as an instrument for the expatriates to oppose the Pangu Pati's every move. The expatriate leaders were able to attract well over fifty of the 94 House of Assembly members to the Independent Members' Group, instilling among many a fear of the Pangu Pati as a force seeking to dominate the House proceedings. The expatriate leaders also played upon the fears of the early constitutional development that the Pangu Pati was encouraging.

Its flexibility and the lack of any program constraining its members were the strengths of the Independent Members' Group. They succeeded in orchestrating the defeat of the Pangu Pati's motions even when they were in accord with the desires of a majority of members. The same motion introduced later by a non-Pangu Pati member might receive the support of the Independent Members' Group. Its considerable flexibility was also its greatest weakness; a constitution for a party was drafted but never adopted, and several attempts to convert it directly into a political party failed. (Stephen 1972:136)

The leadership of the Independent Members' Group was clearly expatriate, including a number of those Australians who had first penetrated the Highlands and and later settled there. No single individual, however, emerged as a dominant force.

Out of the Independent Members' Group, however, emerged Compass, an acronym for Combined Political Associations. Members included expatriates and Highlanders, with the former dominating Compass policy, including

- Opposition to the minority that was pushing for early self-government
  - The view that economic development depended on foreign investment which required political stability (meaning no change)
  - Demands for improved educational opportunities
  - A desire for an efficient and non-political Public Service.
- (Stephen 1972:158)

### United Party

In March, 1971, Compass changed its name to the United Party. Despite this alteration which the leadership hoped would overcome the appearance of domination by Highlanders and expatriates (Loveday and Wolfers 1976:21), the United Party's platform, issued in August, 1971,

still reflected the attitudes and the interests of the strong white planter influence. It articulated the Highlanders' fear of being overwhelmed and ruled in an independent Papua New Guinea by those from the New Guinea coast and the islands.

The United Party platform included a call for ultimate self-government and independence, but only following the development of a strong economy, the broad expansion of educational opportunities, and a clear indication that the people of Papua New Guinea wanted this new status. There was a great emphasis on private ownership of the means of production, the need for foreign investment, and the advantages of a multiracial society. As one would expect given these elements in the party platform, the United Party received strong support from the colonial administration. (Ballard)

The United Party, however, suffered from several weaknesses. Its policy was based on an anti-Pangu, pro-status quo position rather than taking a positive, forward-thinking approach. Furthermore, party unity and party commitment were somewhat illusory, many members having joined for the same reasons they originally joined the amorphous and policy-less Independent Members' Group--fear of the Pangu Pati, fear of the concept of political parties themselves, fear of early self-government and independence, fear of being overwhelmed by people from other parts of the country. (Woolford 1976:116)

Finally, the United Party initially was expatriate-dominated, and this provided another limitation on its appeal to Papua New Guineans.

### People's Progress Party

The People's Progress Party was formed in November, 1970, by Julius Chan, a wealthy part-Chinese businessman from Rabaul, and Warren Dutton, an expatriate and former kiap. The People's Progress Party was established after disillusionment and personal and policy differences set in with the Independent Members' Group. The People's Progress Party was a business-oriented party, maintaining close links with the white, urban business community and favoring a moderate economic nationalism with controlled foreign investment. It stressed that the timing of self-government was not as important as assuring that Papua New Guinea had the best possible government with a strong economic base as it became an independent nation. Its policy positions were non-doctrinaire; its objectives were broad. Ultimately, the People's Progress Party participated in Michael Somare's Coalition Governments with Chan serving as Deputy Prime Minister in control of the economic portfolios. Throughout the party's development, Chan has remained the leader. A non-charismatic personality, Chan is considered to be an excellent technician and manager.

### National Party

The National Party was organized in November, 1970, by Iambakey Okuk and Thomas Kavali. It formed partly out of the reaction of university students to expatriate control of Highlands' national politics through the United Party. The National Party was originally

viewed in Papua New Guinea as the Highlands' version of the Pangu Pati, its platform following closely that of Pangu. The National Party suffered from early internal divisions and defections, virtually disappearing several years after its foundation. Okuk, however, after leaving the National Party to create another party--the short-lived People's United Front--organized a new party, also called the National Party, based in the Highlands in 1978. Unlike the earlier version of the National Party, this time it opposed the Pangu Pati, mainly because of the personal bitterness between Somare and Okuk after the former's 1976 sacking of Okuk from the Cabinet.

#### Other Political Parties

There are several other active political parties, most with limited geographical appeal. Papua Besena, organized by Josephine Abaijah in June, 1973, originally demanded independence for Papua. This gradually changed to a call for Papuan autonomy and respect for Papuan culture. Within the confines of Port Moresby and the Central Province, Papua Besena has had considerable electoral success, although its input into policy-making has not been great.

The Mataungan Association, led originally by Oscar Tammur and later by John Kaputin, was formed in May, 1969, on the Gazelle Peninsula of New Britain in order to oppose the establishment of a multi-racial governing council. It was purely regionally-focussed and encouraged the Tolai people to take control of economic and political affairs in the Gazelle.

The new Melanesian Alliance formed in 1980 by John Kaputin and Father John Momis is in the process of preparing the party's platform.

National in orientation, it might succeed in institutionalizing itself beyond the key role it played in March, 1980, in constructing the Chan-Okuk coalition that toppled the Somare Government.

### Summary

Papua New Guinea has never been a single country; rather it was a "collection of societies and a stateless collection at that." (Loveday 1975:2) This has changed since self-government in 1973 and even more dramatically since independence in 1975. But the roots of the development of any national consciousness lay, to a significant degree, in the 1960's when the Pangu Pati's founders began to mature politically. They were the first to form a lasting political party in the territory. The concept of political parties was unknown to the populace and engendered, if anything, feelings of suspicion, mistrust, and fear. In the 1968 elections for the House of Assembly, many Pangu candidates felt the need to hide their party affiliation from the voters--although some commentators argue that party affiliation was not a political liability. (Woolford 1976:21)

Although the Pangu Pati had some expatriate support, most expatriates reacted negatively to this new element in Papua New Guinea politics, forming the Independent Members' Group to oppose the Pangu Pati to provide a home within the House of Assembly for non-Pangu Pati members and to demonstrate that Pangu had, in reality, little support. Parties continued to form and develop during the Second House of Assembly and, by the opening of the Third House in 1972, almost all members were affiliated with parties. Many (accounts

vary from 150 to well over 300) of the 600 candidates had been endorsed, helped, and/or claimed by one or more parties during the 1972 election. Yet in spite of this increased activity, no party seemed able to develop an effective countrywide, or even regional, organization. A key challenge remaining for the parties was to build links into the villages.

There are indications that the Pangu Pati leadership consciously took actions to stimulate the formation of other political parties and, thus, to encourage the development of a party system in Papua New Guinea. After the 1968 elections, Tony Voutas said that political development in Papua New Guinea required more than one party and that he would welcome another. (Stephen 1972:90) Donald Woolford argues that the initial aggressive style of the Pangu Pati might have been designed to push the uncommitted members of the House of Assembly into a group from which another party and, hence, ultimately a party system, would emerge. (Woolford 1976:116) This, of course, was what happened. The early Pangu Pati policy of establishing itself as a "loyal oppositon" might also be seen as a maneuver to encourage a party system. The Pangu Pati, thus, used the evolving Westminster system to encourage further the development and institutionalization of that system.

### III. VANUATU

#### Vanuaaku Party

The Vanuaaku Party, the first country-wide political party in Vanuatu, had its origins in the issue of land ownership and land alienation. In the late 1960's and the 1970's, some Western-educated ni-Vanuatu became increasingly alarmed about new large land purchases by foreigners, especially Americans, on the islands of Efate and Santo. By mid-1971, a group of ni-Vanuatu had begun discussions of how to organize to control this land alienation, and in June, 1971, they established the New Hebridean Culture Association under the leadership, among others, of Father Walter Lini, an Anglican priest. In addition to its concerns over land, this group's goals included the promotion and preservation of Vanuatu culture and the advancement of ni-Vanuatu socially, educationally, economically, and politically within a multi-cultural society. The discussion of these issues quickly evolved into politically-oriented questions, and in August, 1971, the Association became the New Hebrides National Party. It changed its name once again to the Vanuaaku (Our Land) Party in January, 1977. (Kele-Kele 1977)

The party was originally, as it still is today, principally anglophone in membership. Most of the early leaders were civil service employees of the British Administration, presenting a problem for the party leaders who, at the same time, worked for and opposed the British. The first National Party Congress, held in early 1974,

- Proposed a tightening of the immigration laws
  - Re-examined the elitist education system
  - Offered a plan for the nationalization of all expatriate-owned land
  - Encouraged the development of cooperative societies as a base for economic development
  - Discussed political progress toward a unified government.
- (Sope 1974:36)



TABLE 2  
NEW HEBRIDES--POLITICAL PARTIES

1962...1971    1972    1973    1974    1975    1976    1977

Négriamel (formed 1962)

Vanuaaku Party

New Hebrides Cultural Association (formed June, 1971)

Renamed New Hebrides National Party (August, 1971)

Renamed Vanuaaku Party (January, 1977)

UPNH (formed December, 1971)

UCNH

ACNH (formed Dec., 1973)

Changed to UCNH (Feb., 1974)

MANH (formed January, 1974)



Shortly thereafter, the Vanuáku Party raised the issue of independence.

As with many of the political parties in the South Pacific, the operating style was one of consensus-building, a long process in Vanuatu with its 100 languages and widely separated islands. Walter Lini has been the Vanuáku Party's leader since its formation, was selected Chief Minister in November, 1979, and became the first Prime Minister of the newly independent state of Vanuatu in July, 1980. Although there have apparently been challenges to his leadership, they have not amounted to much.

#### UPNH

The Union de la Population des Nouvelles Hebrides (UPNH) was formed in December, 1971, by Frenchmen living in Vanuatu who reacted strongly and sharply to the sudden activism of the anglophone ni-Vanuatu/<sup>through th</sup> Vanuaaku Party. The French fear of these neophyte political activists was heightened by a Vanuaaku Party-sponsored march in Vila in August, 1971, to demonstrate their support for newly instituted Condominium regulations controlling land speculation. This march was significant as the first time an indigenous group had demonstrated against foreign interests in Vanuatu, even if it was in support of a colonial government decision. (Kele-Kele 1977:24)

The driving force behind the UPNH were French settlers and businessmen who had earlier joined together in a Citizens' Committee to protect their interests by opposing the new regulations on the sub-division of land. The UPNH was more broadly-based than the Citizens' Committee, although the three components of the UPNH did not remain united for long. The first group consisted of wealthy French

businessmen and plantation owners along with some francophone civil servants in the Condominium Administration--"the ultra-conservatives, the guardians of the Condominium status quo." (Kele-Kele 1977:26)

The second group consisted of more moderate Frenchmen, fewer in number than the former group. The third group was made up of some 150 ni-Vanuatu taxi drivers who were dissatisfied because the government was licensing foreigners as taxi drivers. The participation of this last group solved the UPNH's initial dilemma of how to make it more than a purely European (and overwhelmingly French) political organization.

The UPNH had three principal stated aims,

- Maintain the Condominium system until evolution allowed a new rational and realistic orientation
  - Create a Secretary-General for the Condominium Administration
  - Eliminate property litigation and improve the possibilities for individual ownership of land (i.e., protection by the colonial administration of European land transactions)
- (Kele-Kele 1977:26-27)

By the end of 1972, the UPNH appeared to be a party in name only, unable to accommodate the different views of the ultra-conservative and the moderate French factions and losing the ni-Vanuatu taxi drivers who quickly and correctly concluded that the UPNH had little interest in their grievances.

The UPNH was particularly unsuccessful in mobilizing French-educated ni-Vanuatu, generally being viewed as the party of French settlers and businessmen. A common perception was that UPNH policy coincided with that of the French residency and, in particular, that the UPNH was an instrument to restrain increasing ni-Vanuatu activism and to delay independence. (Sope 1974:38)

ACNH/UCNH

A second French party, the Association des Nouvelles Hebrides (ACNH) developed out of the Citizens' Committee in December, 1973, to oppose concessions that the Condominium Administration made to the Vanuaaku Party as a result of the Rarua Brothers case.\* In February, 1974, the ACNH became the Union des Communautés des Nouvelles Hebrides (UCNH). This new party drew its base from among those more conservative elements of the UPNH. The UCNH championed the settlers' cause although it also claimed to be looking toward an "authentic strong union between the European and Melanesian population." (Kele-Kele 1977:29) The UCNH accused the Vanuaaku Party

\* The Rarua Brothers case began with an assault on a policeman and quickly escalated into a highly contentious political dispute. The Rarua family owned a successful combination dance hall and bar in the town of Santo. One of the five Rarua brothers, Shem, was arrested by a white French gendarme in November, 1973, for assaulting a policeman on duty. A second brother, Lindsey, was also arrested for trying to prevent the arrest of Shem. The gendarme was accused, and apparently guilty, of brutality. The arrest centered around a dispute involving two families and the first policeman's marrying a ni-Vanuatu woman from the island of Tongoa.

Because of the French police brutality and a perception of bias on the part of the French magistrate who heard the case, the Vanuaaku Party became involved, making a series of demands:

- The immediate and unconditional release of the two brothers
- Establishment of a "peoples' court" to try the French gendarme with the Vanuaaku Party represented at the trial
- Legal reform so that people could bring charges against police officers
- Right of appeal by ni-Vanuatu from Native Courts to a higher court.

The French and British agreed to the release of the Rarua Brothers pending an appeal and accepted the other demands in principle. This set off a reaction among the French and mixed-race francophones in Santo. The fact that the Rarua Brothers were not from Santo but, nevertheless, were successful in business there, seems to have further excited the emotions surrounding these events.

of racism because it lacked expatriate members. Despite the UCNH claim that all races should become involved in politics and in the party, it seemed that

The authenticity of this concern for Melanesian involvement in politics, though sincere, was limited to the "affairs of the Association" as distinct from the affairs of the archipelago. (Kele-Kele 1977:29)

To demonstrate this multi-racial quality of the UPNH, the first President of the party was a European, Remy Belaveuve, mayor of Vila, with ni-Vanuatu in the positions of Vice President (Jean-Marie Leye) and Secretary (Gerard Loymang).

In addition to the multi-racial aspect, the UCNH's policy included the following features:

- To bring to the attention of the administration its past failures
- To press for law reform to the general benefit of all ni-Vanuatu
- To assure the maintenance of respect for the law.

(Kele-Kele 1977:29)

#### MANH

The third expatriate-based party, the Mouvement Autonomiste des Nouvelles Hebrides (MANH), was created in January, 1974, in Santo by French settlers as a direct reaction to Condominium concessions to the Vanuaaku Party in the Rarua Brothers' case. The MANH was openly hostile to the Vanuaaku Party and to ni-Vanuatu in general, making no pretense about the desirability of multi-racial political forces. (Kele-Kele 1977:31) The more formal goals of the MANH were set out in 1974 and included

- Steady evolution of the territory toward an autonomous status
- Establishment of municipal councils as the basis of political awareness and management
- Progress to attain a Territorial Assembly-type of government

(Kele-Kele 1977:31)

The 1977 MANH Congress expressed concern that the ni-Vanuatu would not be ready for independence before 1984 or 1985 at the earliest. The Congress claimed that orderly development required first economic independence, followed by self-government and, ultimately, political independence. At an early stage, MANH entered into a cooperative relationship with Nagriamel (see below), and at the 1977 Congress, this became a <sup>more formal, although still</sup> loose alliance.

### Nagriamel

Nagriamel, formed in 1962 around the charismatic leadership of Jimmy Stevens, was a rural movement originally based on the northern island of Santo (although Nagriamel's influence has since spread to a number of other islands), dedicated to the return of alienated land that had been neither cleared nor developed by foreigners. Nagriamel's reaction to continued European encroachment on Santo was intensified by a frustration in dealing with the Condominium Administration and the land laws. Nagriamel wanted independence from both France and Britain (or, at least, autonomy from any Vila-based government, perhaps in a loose confederation) and has often been called a "custom" movement because of its desire to return to a system based on tradition for the regulation of society. Although until 1974 Nagriamel might be considered a movement with the aim of maintaining traditional culture, since then it has been an active participant in the Vanuatu political system--including contesting elections.

Although Nagriamel and the Vanuaaku Party held quite similar views on land and on the role of Europeans in Vanuatu, suspicion developed between the leaders of the two groups. The Vanuaaku Party

leaders saw Stevens as a cultist, and he, in turn, saw these civil servants in the British Residence and anglophone churchmen being used as tools of the British. Another possible cause of the antagonism between the two and perhaps a contributing factor in the formation of the Vanuaaku Party was the fear of the anglophone leadership that Stevens, as a "cargo cult" leader, would become the principal national spokesman for a self-governing or independent Vanuatu.

Stevens believed that cooperation with the French would benefit him, in particular in protecting him from the British under whose jurisdiction he normally would fall. (Kele-Kele 1977:33) He began to move toward a rapprochement with the French in 1974 through the MANH, and his disaffection toward the British and the anglophone Vanuaaku Party deepened. The 1977 alliance with the MANH seems to have been based on mutual convenience.

Another foreign influence on Nagriamel is American--the self-styled libertarian Phoenix Foundation of Michael Oliver. Details of this relationship are quite murky and little known, although it seems to include at least financial assistance and political advice.

Stevens declared Santo independence from the rest of Vanuatu several times, most recently in the abortive rebellion of 1980. Despite Stevens' defeat and jailing, Nagriamel will probably continue to be significant as a political and social force in Vanuatu.

#### Other Political Movements

In addition to these parties, there are a number of more localized movements in Vanuatu, including Jon Frum, Kapiel, Tabwemasana, Friend Melanesia Party, and Natatok Efate. These are all of limited scope or participate minimally in the national political system.

### Summary

Land issues were at the center of political activity in Vanuatu in the early and middle 1970's when political parties were born. Kele-Kele argues that for both the Vanuaaku Party and Nagriamel--the two major indigenous parties--the land issue was the motivation for their formation and subsequent early actions. (Kele-Kele 1977:34) The Melanesians' dilemma centered around land alienation and the colonial administration's land policy, and the two colonial powers, through the Condominium Administration, came to be viewed by the indigenous parties as the source of the problem. For the Vanuaaku Party, early independence seemed the only answer; its policy was driven in this direction from its inception.

The conduct and, in fact, the very existence, of the expatriate-influenced parties were based on a reaction to the activism of the Vanuaaku Party. The land policy of these colon parties was quite clear even if never explicitly stated: the colons would retain control over the land they had managed to alienate under (old as well as modern) colonial rule, and this control was to be retained at any cost. An instrument to achieve this goal was postponement of independence, delay of self-government, and protection of the status quo. Another instrument was to form an alliance with New Hebrideans--be they taxi drivers or Jimmy Stevens--where mutual convenience was served.

There were several other historical divisions in addition to the indigenous/expatriate cleavage over land. One, of course, was the anglophone/francophone language split among the Melanesians which meant that the two groups were subject to differing modern pressures.



Another was the religious split--the Protestant (mainly Presbyterian) anglophones versus the Catholic francophones. These splits were also reflected in party divisions.

Another division was geographical. On the widely separated islands of Vanuatu, some 100 languages are spoken, each language group possessing a separate identity. (National languages are English, French, and Bislama--a pidgin language.) This fragmentation was not reflected directly in party divisions, although it represented a keen challenge to the development of political parties.

#### IV. COOK ISLANDS

##### Cook Islands Party

Since its foundation in 1964, the Cook Islands Party, the first political party to form in the Cooks, has been an instrument of the late Albert Henry. He was a charismatic leader who filled a political vacuum that existed at the time the New Zealand Government began trying to extricate itself from direct rule of the Cooks.

Albert Henry tried to stimulate change in the Cooks in the mid-1940's through the Cook Islands Progressive Association (CIPA) branches in Auckland and Rarotonga. The CIPA was formed in 1944 because of discontent with some of the economic policies of the New Zealand administration, especially those relating to producing and marketing agricultural goods. The lack of reliable shipping services for the export of locally-produced agricultural products meant that food often would rot on the docks forcing many Cook Islanders to abandon cash cropping. The CIPA wanted to secure a ship with which to export cash crops and hoped to establish a cooperative store in Rarotonga.

Concerned with economic matters, as were other leading Cook Islanders, Albert Henry also had a strong interest in political reform as a result of his experience in New Zealand labor politics. In 1945, his political thoughts included some vaguely conceived ideas about elected councils in the Cooks, possible input by Cook Islanders into the appointment of the New Zealand Resident Commissioner, and representation of the Cooks in the New Zealand Parliament. (Hancock 1979:67)

Albert Henry failed initially to effect significant change or to find an appropriate role for himself in Rarotonga. He returned to

New Zealand where he spent fifteen years, remaining active in the affairs of Cook Island migrants.

In 1963, the Rarotonga branch of the CIPA invited Henry to return to help them develop a popular Maori-centered movement. The colonial administration's failure to provide a meaningful role for the traditional leadership and their lack of effort to develop a modern political sector resulted in a leadership vacuum in the Cooks. Many of those Cook Islanders who had the capacity to play a leadership role had left, mainly for New Zealand, where there were better economic prospects. Henry quickly mobilized support upon his return to Rarotonga and gained control of the emerging indigenous political system, drawing on the techniques he had learned in New Zealand. He maintained strong control over the government for almost fifteen years.

Albert Henry's campaign in 1965 for the Legislative Assembly (established under the new Constitution passed by the New Zealand Parliament in November, 1964) emphasized changes for the future, drew on links with the past, and committed him to self-government for the Cooks. He demonstrated his expertise as a leader and an orator, and generally espoused a welfare-state philosophy. (Stone 1966:173) Oddly enough, despite his leadership in the campaign, Henry was not permitted to run for office because of restrictive residency requirements established by the New Zealand administration. After the overwhelming victory of his supporters, including his sister as his surrogate, the regulations were changed and he won handily in a by-election.

### Early Opposition Parties

There had been opposition to Albert Henry as far back as the 1940's. The intensity of the opposition was strong and included both the better-educated and the economically better off as well as elements of traditional society, especially ~~was~~ living beyond the limits of Rarotonga. (Stone 1971:55ff) According to Stone, these individuals'

...common hostility (to Henry) was offset by the diversity of his opponents, socially and geographically which...would make attempts at unified organization difficult. (Stone 1971:58)

Several parties formed to contest the April, 1965, election. The Labor Party, never really a party, won four seats. The United Political Party under D.C. Brown also won four seats. However, the Cook Islands Party's 14 seats plus Henry's overwhelming victory over Brown in the subsequent by-election helped contribute to the early demise of the United Political Party.

In 1968, Henry's opposition formed a loosely structured organization called the United Cook Islanders to contest that year's election. They objected to Henry's rule of the Cook Islands as what they considered his personal domain and their perception of ignorance and complacency on the part of his colleagues and his party. Despite winning six of the 22 legislative seats, the United Cook Islanders was unable to transform itself into a more formal, lasting party. Reasons for this included the superior organizational ability of Henry and, perhaps more important, the distaste of many individual members of the United Cook Islanders for the very concept of a political party. Even the six United Cook Islanders in the Assembly were unable to act as a cohesive group. (Stone 1971:397) Later, many of the United Cook Islanders supporters joined the Democratic Party.

### Democratic Party

The Democratic Party, the second durable political party in the Cooks, was formed in 1971. Sir Tom Davis, a physician who had spent twenty years performing medical research in the United States, was asked by a number of people to return to the Cooks to lead the opposition to Albert Henry in the 1972 elections. The Democratic Party hoped to end what its supporters saw as the abuses of Albert Henry and the economic, social, and political stagnation of the Cook Islands. Davis and his followers planned to stimulate growth in the private sector and to broaden participation in the political system, providing, for the first time, an institution to mobilize the opposition to Albert Henry.

### Summary

Ron Crocombe believes that early New Zealand policies resulted in the replacement of traditional authoritarian control of chiefs by similar authoritarian control of the colonial government. This resulted in a situation in the Cooks where

The public are used to accepting that whoever holds the power does largely what he likes; they have had no other experience.  
(Crocombe 1979:1)

Thus, the cultural heritage combined with the early colonial experience led, especially in the political sphere, to a passivity, dependence, and lack of confidence and experience. (Crocombe 1979:2) This, plus New Zealand's later ambivalent attitude, may explain why Henry's Cook Islands Party was able for so long to maintain such a dominant position in the country. Another part of the explanation lies with Albert Henry's success in institutionalizing his charismatic control over the government bureaucracy.

In 1978, the Democratic Party defeated Albert Henry, although it was done through judicial action whereby the New Zealand Chief Justice of the Cook Islands removed Henry from office for electoral irregularities. The Democratic Party today seems to be confronting serious economic problems in the Cooks as well as internal leadership challenges.

## V. FRENCH POLYNESIA

### Autonomists

Two main sets of locally-based political parties have been active in French Polynesia over the past three decades--the autonomists and the conservatives. The autonomists made their first appearance in 1947 as the Comité Pouvanaa. Led by Pouvanaa a Oopa, they hoped to restore a Polynesian identity to French Polynesia. Pouvanaa had been a carpenter brought up in rural Tahiti and a World War I veteran. He was a founding member of the Comité France Libre that supported Free France and DeGaulle in the territory. He initially hoped that through the development of a political party with representatives on all the islands of French Polynesia he could secure a constitution for Tahiti within the French Union.

The earliest platform of the Comité Pouvanaa, enunciated in the 1949 electoral campaign, was anything but radical, demanding

- A new and liberal constitution for Tahiti
  - Localization of the civil service
  - Return to public custody of certain alienated land
  - Establishment of commercial and agricultural cooperatives to provide easier credit to Tahitians
  - Establish laws regarding minimum wage and working conditions
  - Establish local control of the foreign exchange system as a means to lessen the tight economic ties with Metropolitan France.
- (Tagupa 1976:4-5)

By the mid-1950's, the Comité Pouvanaa, renamed the Rassemblement Democratique des Peuple Tahitiennes (RDPT), had begun to oppose more strongly the policies of the French administration and French commercial influence. Pouvanaa at that time talked about autonomy for French Polynesia, social reform, Tahitian as the official language, and localization of government jobs.

Throughout its thirty-plus years of existence, the Pouvanaa movement was represented by a series of parties led at times by different individuals. Yet the movement and the parties reflecting the movement were manifestations of an unarticulated dissatisfaction with the status quo. Pouvanaa was the personification of those forces hoping to resist the increasing francization of Tahiti. He himself was the spiritual leader, the first Polynesian leader since 1842 when the French first ruled Tahiti. He offered hope for restoration of a Polynesian identity while still providing Tahitians with the security of the French community. His support in the 1940's and early 1950's came from rural Polynesians in the Protestant Church, the unions, and veterans organizations rather than from the traditional Polynesian aristocracy. (Thompson and Adloff 1971:35)

Despite the symbol of resistance Pouvanaa embodied to the colonial administration and to foreign commercial interests, his leadership was weak and he proved unable to unify his party behind pragmatic ends. (Thompson and Adloff 1971:38) The more practical role of political combat had to be left to others. The RDPT became the first well-established grass-roots party in French Polynesia. Although it, or its successors, received the most votes in the majority of the elections throughout the 1970's, the unwillingness of the French Government to yield power plus the lack of trained Polynesians and a general disinterest all probably contributed to the length of time it took for the autonomists to attain their goals.



### Conservative Parties

A similar succession of conservative parties developed in French Polynesia in reaction to Pouvanaa and his autonomist compatriots and <sup>was</sup> supported, at least in the initial stages, by the colonial administration. The names changed frequently, as did the leadership, although Alfred Poroi, a demi and long-time mayor of Papeete, was most often in the key leadership position. In the very early years, the parties such as Poroi's Union de Défense des Intérêts Tahitiens in 1947 and his Union Populaire Océanienne (UPO) in 1949, expressed concerns similar to those of Pouvanaa about the need for greater local control. The UPO was itself formed in anticipation of Pouvanaa's organizing a political movement. As events unfolded, the successors to these parties such as Poroi's Union pour la Defense de l'Océanie (UDO) in 1953 and his Union Tahitienne (UT) in 1957 took on more of an anti-RDPT character. One reason for this constant change of party name and composition was the continuing attempt to draw together the disparate conservative forces against the autonomists.

## VI. FIJI

The two major political parties in Fiji, the Alliance Party and the National Federation Party, both emerged in the 1960's. The source of their origins and the influences on their development have been quite different than elsewhere in the Pacific, mainly as a result of the unique multi-racial character of Fiji.

### Alliance Party

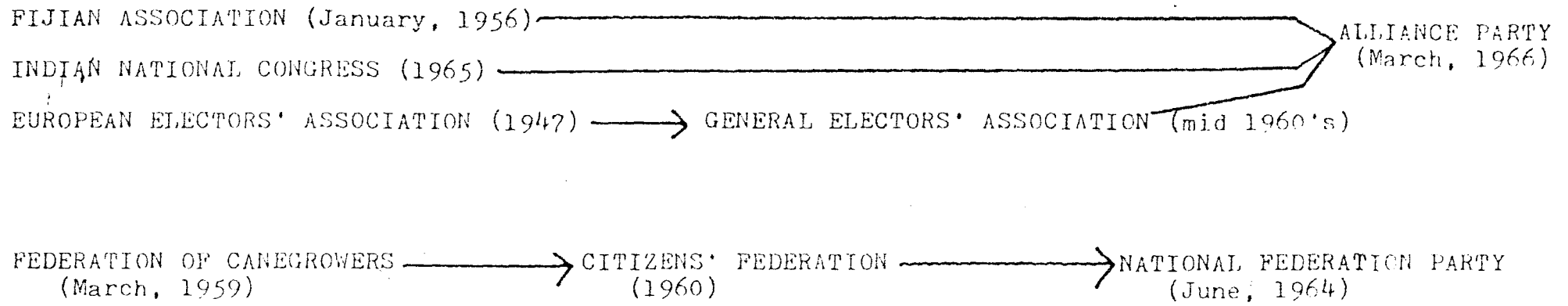
The Alliance Party, a multi-racial coalition, was formed in March, 1966, immediately after the 1966 general elections. The three major coalition partners were the Fijian Association, Indian National Congress, and the General Electors' Association. The minor members in the Alliance Party included the All-Fiji Muslim Political Front, Fiji Minority Party (Muslim), Rotuman Convention, Rotuman Association, and the Tongan Association.

The Fijian Association, the largest and most powerful component of the Alliance Party, formed in January, 1956, to protect Fijians against the feared results of a threatened strike by Indians in the sugar cane fields. It was the first significant effort to organize the Fijian community on a national level outside of the institutions established under the British colonial administration (i.e., the Great Council of Chiefs and the Fijian Affairs Board). After the 1956 sugar strike threat receded, the Fijian Association continued with the general goal of encouraging Fijian solidarity under Fijian leadership to protect Fijian political rights. (Ali 1973:173)

During the next few years, the Fijian Association was not very active. However, in the early 1960's, several factors contributed

TABLE 3

FIJI--EVOLUTION OF POLITICAL PARTIES



to an increased political consciousness on the part of many Fijians. First, some Fijians began to question whether the Fijian Affairs Board and the Great Council of Chiefs were adequately protecting Fijian interests. Second, the election in 1963 of four members of the (Indian) National Federation Party to the Legislative Council led some Fijians to realize that political parties could become an important element of the political system and that they would have to mobilize to participate and compete in that system. Third, Fijians realized that a well-organized political institution would help protect the Fijian community's interests in the upcoming Constitutional negotiations with the British. This was especially important in light of increasing United Nations pressure on Great Britain to grant early independence to Fiji--against the Fijians' will.

Although the leadership of the Fijian Association included some who hoped to use it as a means to establish Fijian dominance nationally, a larger and more powerful group, including current Prime Minister Ratu Mara, believed that Fijians could best secure a leadership role in the Constitutional Conference and in the country, in general, as well as guarantee a long-term stability, through a multiracial alliance.<sup>(Norton 1977:86)</sup> (Later on in Fiji's history, Ratu Mara was to work very closely with his Indian opposition and, at several stages, most recently in late 1980, he questioned publicly whether Fiji might not be better off with a single, multi-racial party.) The first annual convention of the Fijian Association in June, 1965, in a close vote, authorized Ratu Mara to enter into negotiations with the Indian National Congress.

The second major actor in the Alliance Party was the General Electors' Association which evolved out of the moribund European Electors' Association, itself in existence since 1947. Shortly after the formation of the Alliance Party, the Chinese Association, a community organization based in Suva, joined the General Electors' Association--a logical step<sup>because</sup> one result of the Constitutional talks was that the Chinese were included with Europeans in the General Communal roll.

Although the number of individuals covered by the General Electors' Association was relatively small, their influence was not. Europeans played a decisive role in the formulation of Alliance policy. They also played a key part in negotiating with the British to assure that the structure of the political system in an independent Fiji would secure Fijian/European dominance over the larger Indian population.

Cooperation between Europeans and Fijians in the Constitutional talks resulted in their obtaining a greater proportional representation in the new Legislature than each would have received based on its percentage of the population. In addition, the Fijians, by now outnumbered in the country by Indians, were able to obtain virtually permanent protection against unwanted Constitutional changes.

The final major actor in the Alliance Party was the Indian National Congress, formed in early 1965 as a moderate Indian Party. It opposed the National Federation Party because of policy differences and personality conflicts between the respective leaders. The Indian National Congress hoped that cooperation with the Fijian Association within the Alliance Party would help resolve the serious land tenure problems of the Indian population.

The Alliance Party was formed as "an umbrella of electoral convenience." (Alley 1973:97) It was a means to demonstrate to the British that all ethnic groups in Fiji supported a communal electoral system despite the Indian claim, through the National Federation Party and other voices, that only a common roll was acceptable. Under a communal electoral system, members of one community or ethnic group vote for candidates of their group only. Each community is allotted a certain number of seats. Under a common roll system, members of all races vote together. Fiji's 1970 Constitution allotted 12 Fijian, 12 Indian, and 3 general members elected from communal rolls and 10 Fijian, 10 Indians, and 6 general members elected from national (common) rolls.

Unity among the three main participating organizations was, to a significant extent, a product of fear of, and opposition to, the National Federation Party, and was based on three common views:

- Opposition to the concept of common electoral rolls
- Opposition to the immediate granting of independence
- Support for the 1966 Constitution. (Ali 1973:174)

The structure of the Alliance Party allowed the coalition members to maintain their distinct identities. Participation in the political system was through the constituent organizations to which individual loyalties were attached rather than through direct individual participation as/members of the Alliance Party. (Alley 1973:174)

#### National Federation Party

The other major political party in Fiji, the National Federation Party, also had its origins in the sugar cane fields. After several unsuccessful attempts to organize Indian canegrowers in the 1940's and

1950's, the Federation of Canegrowers was established in March, 1959, to negotiate a new contract with the Colonial Sugar Refining Company (CSR) to replace the one expiring in 1960. Indian concerns included many old grievances which resulted in great distrust of the company, a general dissatisfaction with colonial rule, and a deep unhappiness with the land tenure system that virtually excluded Indians from land ownership. (Alley 1973:135)

The Federation of Canegrowers became the Citizens' Federation and actively contested the 1963 Legislative Council elections. This new group appealed to Indian unity and concentrated on Indian demands for a solution to the land issue and for better conditions in the sugar industry.

The National Federation Party emerged in June, 1964, under A.D.Patel, a charismatic ideologue who had been the lawyer for, and a leader of, Indian canegrowers. In addition to this core group, active supporters included the predominantly Indian Fiji Teachers' Union based in Suva and most Indian civil servants. The National Federation Party extended its influence by propagandizing against the power and influence of the Europeans and strongly opposing the communal election system, demanding a common roll. (Norton 1977:79) Under the flamboyant and militant Patel, many Indians joined and supported the party.

### Issues

Fear was a common element in the formation of both the Alliance Party and the National Federation Party. The Fijians and the Europeans feared the prospect of an Indian majority controlling an independent Fiji. The Indians feared that the Europeans, using the Fijians as tools, would dominate the system. Land tenure issues and communal

voting rolls were the two most significant elements nourishing this mutual mistrust. In addition, the British pressure for early independence, encouraged by the United Nations, was overhanging the situation in the early and middle 1960's.

Land ownership had been virtually the exclusive right of the Fijians since the late 1800's with Indians farming the land only as lease-holders. The purpose of the Native Land Trust Board, created in 1940, was to protect Fijian land interests. At that time, some Fijian land was placed into a native reserve while other Fijian land was designated for lease (mainly to Indians). As these Indian leases expired, the Native Land Trust Board returned much of the leased land to the native reserves to accommodate future Fijian land requirements. This loss of land available for lease plus shorter periods for new leases intensified the Indian concern that their very livelihood was endangered. This resulted in an increased politicization of the Indian community.

The second significant factor involved the nature of the electoral roll. Since the 1920's, the Indians had been demanding a common roll, and it remained the most sensitive political issue in Fiji for decades. The communal roll meant that the Indians were never properly represented in the territory, especially after 1945 when the Indian community surpassed the Fijian in size.

The Fijians equated the communal roll with the maintenance of their ethnic identity and control of what they perceived as their own country. Without this electoral system, many Fijians believed they would inevitably become second-class citizens, dominated by the more modern, more aggressive, and better educated Indians. The 1965



Constitutional talks produced a system of communal voting whereby the Fijian/European grouping could dominate. In constitutional matters, Fijians, through the mechanism of the Upper House, had an effective veto.\*

Thus, these developments that put constraints on the growth of Indian economic and political power encouraged the Indian population to establish a political party to fight for its interests.

Meanwhile, the British, under pressure from the United Nations, were moving more rapidly than the Fijians wanted in encouraging an independent Fiji. A political party seemed to be vital to protect Fijian interests in the Constitutional talks and subsequently.

It was perhaps inevitable that the system of communal voting, with its communal constituencies, would lead to the development of political parties structured along ethnic, rather than national, lines. Although the Alliance Party tried to construct a multi-racial coalition appealing to all ethnic groups, actual membership of individuals is in the component organization of Alliance. Thus, individuals' loyalty goes to the appropriate ethnic entity. The National Federation Party's efforts in developing a cross-ethnic appeal seems to have been virtually insignificant.

One major weakness of such a political system is that its communal nature leads to a lack of competition for the votes of the various ethnic groups, which means that parties can sometimes ignore the demands of their own constituent communities. (Alley 1973:407) Another weakness of the Fijian system was that parties were "themselves insufficiently institutionalized to effectively orchestrate more than

\*The British had hoped that some sort of a cross-ethnic voting system would break down communal barriers. The Fijians made some concessions in this direction at the London talks but not enough to change the nature of the system.

a few major themes." (Alley 1973:407) Most observers agree with Ralph Premdas that in Fiji "the fundamental issue in the maintenance of racial harmony is the concept of balance." (Premdas 1979:207) In the years since their formation in the early 1960's, the Alliance Party and the National Federation Party have accepted this concept, although the future direction may bring a change as frustrations rise in both the Indian and the Fijian communities.

### Fijian Nationalist Party

Although not formed until after the end of colonial rule, the Fijian Nationalist Party merits at least a mention here. This party is overtly anti-Indian. The Fijian Nationalist Party has deliberately stimulated racial antagonisms; the party's founder, Sakiasi Butadroka, has proposed that all Fijian citizens of Indian parentage be repatriated to India. (The vast majority of Indians were born in Fiji and have no links to India; migration from Fiji is simply unrealistic.) Butadroka contended that at independence, Fijians capitulated and lost control of the nation. (Ali 1977:190) He contended that a European-dominated Alliance Party is using the rural Fijian masses for its own electoral ends and the Fijians gain nothing from this. (Premdas 1979:200)

The Fijian Nationalist Party played a "spoiler" role in the 1977 elections. One observer attributes the party's success, albeit limited, to the economic problems engendered by the world recession in the mid-1970's, the breakdown in communication between the Fijian Parliament and the electorate, and the weakening of the Fijian Association and the complacency of the Alliance Party after its 1966 and 1972 electoral victories. (Ali 1977:193)

After 1977, the Fijian Nationalist Party fell on hard times with some of its key leaders in jail. It has been attempting to make a comeback and recently approached the Soviet Union for funding.

## VII. NEW CALEDONIA

New Caledonia is unique in this analysis in that Melanesians have played a small role in the political system since World War II. There has been some increased participation of late, but locally-born Frenchmen have continued to dominate the system.

Political parties began to emerge after World War II. Melanesians first won the right to vote in 1946, although the franchise was limited at that time to about 1,000--including those with posts in the administration, chiefs, or those who had served in the war.

Europeans formed and led the early parties, although these were, for the most part, born in New Caledonia. The Union Calédonienne (UC), the first major political party, was formed under Maurice Lenormand, a Metropolitan Frenchman, in 1951. The UC was a genuine multi-racial party bringing together Melanesians with, initially, lower income Europeans. (McTaggart:192) The UC slogan was "two races, one nation", and it was the first group to draw Melanesians into New Caledonia's political life. The UC attacked big business, banks, and big agriculture, opposed communal voting, and supported universal suffrage and greater self-government. (Mellor) Later, this commitment to internal self-government would become a call for independence. Until 1972, the UC either controlled, or was the largest party in the majority coalition controlling, the Territorial Assembly. It declined thereafter although <sup>it</sup> has recently experienced a resurgence. (Ward 1980:196)

Despite the electoral successes between 1953 and the early 1970's, the UC's support was based on opposition to external forces-- e.g., the French Administration, the Société le Nickel--rather than

on unification of different sectors of the society towards common goals.

Thompson and Adloff contend that the UC's inability to mobilize Melanesians was in part due to Lenormand's failure to deal with the two questions that most concerned them--isolation in land reservations that continued to decrease in size and the decline in the power of customary chiefs. (Thompson and Adloff 1971:322)

The greatest constraint on the forces demanding autonomy was probably the lack of willingness of the French government even to consider seriously such an alternative. One observer concluded recently that in New Caledonia

The electoral process has achieved what it is always capable of achieving--a majority for those in favor of autonomy. But it cannot give them the power to implement any such policy.  
(McTaggart:195)

Throughout this period, Lenormand's opposition came from a group of parties led by colon businessmen and mine owners in Noumea who hoped for a closer relationship with France. (Ward 1980:194) With the French Administration and Paris on their side, plus their total dominance of New Caledonia's economy, they have been able to block UC hopes.

In the late 1960's, a challenge to the ruling system arose with the return from France of some young, educated Melanesians. This group was interested in reasserting Melanesian identity, addressing problems of land and of maintenance of Melanesian culture. The Front Uni pour le Liberation de Kanaks (FULK) emerged after several transformations under Yann Celene Uregei, espousing first autonomy and later independence. Along with several other smaller Melanesian parties, their concept of "Indépendance Kanak" meant that Melanesians, as the original population of New Caledonia, were the rightful rulers of an independent New Caledonia. (Ward 1980:195)

### VIII. CONCLUSION

In examining the five states in Melanesia and Polynesia (plus New Caledonia) with functioning political party systems, there are two generalizations that appear to echo reality. One was that the first political party to develop did so in reaction to the policies of the colonial administration, whether those policies discouraged or encouraged self-government or independence. As a counter-reaction, one or more expatriate-led parties then formed to oppose the anti-colonial policies generally espoused by the indigenous party. Following this, other indigenous parties formed, usually in opposition to either the original indigenous party or the expatriate party.

The second general tendency was that the earliest indigenous party formed around a single individual. Some of these individuals were charismatic personalities; others were not. In the expatriate-led reaction parties, however, there was usually no such individual. The next indigenous parties to form often centered around a particular individual; although in some cases this individual did not exhibit as strong leadership characteristics as in the earlier parties.

Papua New Guinea's experience as described above followed this general model quite closely. Vanuatu also matched this model closely. The unity among anglophone indigenes and the apparent inability of the francophone Melanesians to organize apart from the French expatriates discouraged the establishment of a second set of indigenous political parties.

The history of French Polynesia seems to coincide with this model as well. The indigenous party opposed the colonial administration under

a charismatic leadership while the expatriate reaction parties, working closely with the Metropolitan power, opposed it. In the Cook Islands, politics diverges from these generalizations. The first party formed as a result of neglect of the colonial power and was led by a highly charismatic individual. No expatriate reaction party formed, however, probably because of the small number of resident expatriates.

Fiji diverged much more from the model than did the others. Both the Alliance Party and the National Federation Party were established for reasons related more to the ethnic make-up of Fiji and the major ethnic groups' prospects and fears in an independent Fiji. The administration's policies regarding land, the timing of independence, and the planned post-independence political structure all contributed to the felt need to establish parties. Strong personal leadership was present in both parties.

Thus, the two generalizations made to explain political party development in Melanesia and Polynesia seem to hold. One question remaining is why political parties did not form and continue to operate elsewhere in the region--in Tonga, Western Samoa, American Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Niue. As discussed on page three, two central functions of political parties in Melanesia and Polynesia were to mobilize support and to communicate with the colonial power. Perhaps in these other areas, traditional means were sufficient to mobilize support and adequate mechanisms existed to allow for communication with the colonial power.

A second question is why was there not a stronger individual leader in the expatriate parties. The answer may lie with the need

for such a reactive party to attract disparate expatriates and nationals into an opposition structure. Perhaps a more collective leadership served the needs better.

Another question that arises out of this study is whether there are common elements in organizing parties with multi-ethnic appeal. This would include Fiji, Vanuatu, and New Caledonia.

A fourth question deals with the problems of parties in areas where there are many groups with separate identities. In Papua New Guinea (with 750 languages) and Vanuatu (with 100 languages), parties seemed to have regional, rather than national, appeal.

A fifth question involves why in New Caledonia and French Polynesia similar colonial institutional structures led to quite different results. The answers probably lie in differing French national interests in the two territories and in cultural differences between them.



SOURCES

- Ali, Ahmed, "The Fiji General Elections of 1972", Journal of Pacific History, 8:171-180, 1973.
- Ali, Ahmed, "The Fiji General Election of 1977", Journal of Pacific History, 12(4):189-201, 1977.
- Alley, R.M., The Development of Political Parties in Fiji, Ph.D. Dissertation, Victoria University, Wellington, 1973.
- Ballard, J.A., "Political Parties in Papua New Guinea" in Haruhiro Fukui, ed., Political Parties of Asia and the Pacific, Greenwood Press, in draft.
- Brookfield, Harold C., Colonialism, Development and Independence: The Case of the Melanesian Islands in the South Pacific, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1972.
- Crocombe, Ron, "Forces Shaping the Arena" in Cook Islands Politics: The Inside Story, Polynesian Press, Auckland, 1979.
- Danielsson, Bengt and Marie-Theresa, Moruroa Mon Amour: The French Nuclear Tests in the Pacific, Penguin Books, New York, 1977.
- Davidson, J.W., "The Decolonization of Oceania", Journal of Pacific History, 6:133-148, 1971.
- Davis, Tom, "The Democratic Party" in Cook Islands Politics: The Inside Story, Polynesian Press, Auckland, 1979.
- Griffin, James, "Papua Besena", World Review, 14(3):3-15, October, 1975.
- Haas, Anthony, "Three Years After Internal Self-Government: The Cook Islands General Election--1968", Journal of Pacific History, 4:136-145, 1969.
- Hancock, Kathleen, Sir Albert Henry: His Life and Times, Methuen Publications, Auckland, 1979.
- Hodgkin, T., African Political Parties, Penguin African Series, London, 1961.
- Jupp, James and Marian Sawyer, "New Hebrides, 1978-79: Self-Government--By Whom and For Whom?", Journal of Pacific History, 14(4):208-220, 1979.
- Kele-Kele, Kalkot Matas, "The Emergence of Political Parties" in Kalkot Matas Kele-Kele, et.al., New Hebrides: The Road to Independence, University of the South Pacific, 1977.
- Kiki, Albert Maori, Kiki: Ten Thousand Years in a Lifetime, Frederick C. Praeger, New York, 1968.

Loveday, Peter and Edward P. Wolfers, Parties and Parliament in Papua New Guinea, 1964-1975, Institute of Applied Social and Economic Research, Port Moresby, 1976.

Loveday, Peter, "Parties in Papua New Guinea, 1972-1974", Institute of Development Studies Discussion Paper No. 82, University of Sussex, Brighton, September, 1975.

MacDonald, Barrie, "Imperial Remnants: Decolonization and Political Change in the British Pacific Islands" in F.P. King, ed., Oceania and Beyond: Essays on the Pacific Since 1945, Greenwood Press, Westport, Conn., 1976.

McTaggart, W. Donald, "New Caledonia and the French Connection" in F.P. King, ed., Oceania and Beyond...

Meller, Norman and James Anthony, Fiji Goes to the Polls: The Crucial Legislative Council Elections of 1963, East West Center Press, Honolulu, 1968.

Meller, Norman, unpublished material.

Norton, Robert, Race and Politics in Fiji, St. Martin's Press, New York, 1977.

Parker, R.S., "Papua New Guinea" in Gordon Greenwood and Norman Harper, ed., Australia in World Affairs, 1966-1970, University of British Columbia Press, Vancouver, 1974.

Plant, Christopher, "New Hebrides 1977: Year of Crisis", Journal of Pacific History, 13(4):194-204, 1978.

Premdas, Ralph R., "Elections in Fiji: Restoration of the Balance", Journal of Pacific History, 14(4):194-207, 1979.

Premdas, Ralph R., "Papua New Guinea: The First General Elections after Independence", Journal of Pacific History, 13(2):77-90, 1978.

Premdas, Ralph R., "Secession and Political Change in Papua New Guinea", Pacific Affairs, 50(1):64-85, Spring, 1977.

Somare, Michael, Sana: An Autobiography of Michael Somare, Niugini Press, Port Moresby, 1975.

Sope, Barak, Land and Politics in the New Hebrides, South Pacific Social Science Association, Suva, 1974 (?).

Stephen, David, A History of Political Parties in Papua New Guinea, Landsdowne Press, Melbourne, 1972.

Stone, David, "Self-Government in the Cook Islands, 1965", Journal of Pacific History, 1:168-178, 1966.

- Stone, David J., Self-Rule in the Cook Islands, The Government and Politics of a new Micro-State, Ph.D. Dissertation, Australian National University, Canberra, January, 1971.
- Stone, David J., "The Rise of the Cook Islands Party", Journal of the Polynesian Society, 74(1):80-110, 1965.
- Tagupa, William, Politics in French Polynesia, 1945-1975, New Zealand Institute of International Affairs, Wellington, 1976.
- Tagupa, William, "Some Aspects of Modern Politics and Personality in French Polynesia", Journal of Pacific History; 9:135-145. 1974.
- Thompson, Virginia and Richard Adloff, The French Pacific Islands: French Polynesia and New Caledonia, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1971.
- Ward, Alan, "The Independence Movement and the Plan Dijoud in New Caledonia", Journal of Pacific History, 15(3):193-199, July, 1980.
- Wolfers, Edward P., "A Short History of Political Party Activity in Papua New Guinea", Fourth Waigani Seminar, Port Moresby, 1970.
- Wolfers, Edward P., Race Relations and Colonial Rule in Papua New Guinea, Australia and New Zealand Co., Sydney, 1975.
- Woolford, Donald, Papua New Guinea: Initiation and Independence, University of Queensland Press, Australia, 1976.