

sever the constitutional tie by reducing the level of aid.

Shortly after the election a distinguished Cook Island civil servant, Mr Tamarii Pierre, published an article in the *Cook Island News* noting the progressive decline in New Zealand aid and advocating a carefully thought out, ten-year program leading to constitutional independence. By the end of June 1989, however, there had been no public response, and politicians seemed to be concerned with more immediate priorities.

The new government increased some welfare payments, postponed acceptance of the Australian patrol boat offer, set up an education commission to rethink educational policy, and replaced the chief administrative officers on the outer islands and the membership of various statutory authorities (these have been political appointments for some years). The government was also considering making Christian education a compulsory part of the school curriculum. The opening of Parliament was deferred to the last day permitted by the constitution (90 days from the election), and major new legislation was not expected until later in 1989. Prime Minister Geoffrey Henry, in his capacity as Minister for Foreign Affairs, visited the United States, French Polynesia, China (for the Asian Development Bank meeting), New Zealand, Australia, and New Caledonia in his first three months in office. For a very small nation with limited resources, seeking aid from abroad remained a high priority.

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FRENCH POLYNESIA

Following the social unrest in Papeete in October 1987, and the subsequent defeat of Gaston Flosse's *Tahoera'a* Party, the new coalition government, led by President Alexandre Léontieff, managed to survive internal ideological divisions as well as challenges by opposition parties and the State Administrative Court. Léontieff maintained a careful balance between the often conflicting agendas of the state, the territorial assembly, the local clergy, business operators, labor unions, and the local people. The new government initially set the redressing of the social and economic issues as its first priority. But political issues preoccupied it so often during the year under review, that business, labor unions, and others were increasingly asking if it was indeed capable of dealing with these issues in the remaining years of its term.

Much of early 1988 was spent trying to achieve consensus and a unified platform. Ministers such as Jacqui Drollet, leader of *Ia Mana te Nuna'a* certainly have ideological positions quite different from others in the coalition. What really kept the group together was a willingness to set aside political differences in order to maintain stability and tackle important domestic issues. However, barely three months into the year, the government became involved in the politics of the national elections. Although most members of the coalition supported Mitterrand, Léontieff (like Flosse) backed Chirac in the presidential elections of April 1988. Not surprisingly, relations between the governments in Paris and Tahiti were not especially warm. State funding of over

a billion American dollars—almost twice the amount spent in New Caledonia—was allocated to French Polynesia, but this included a substantial amount for strictly military expenditures. Léontieff also lacked the extensive local and regional networks that Flosse had carefully built during more than a decade in power.

The first major government crisis occurred in June 1988, when Nicolas Sanquer and Enrique "Quito" Braun-Ortega resigned from their ministerial positions because of internal dissensions. Braun-Ortega created a new "Center Group," Hotu Nui, which joined the Tahoera'a in opposition to the Léontieff government. Despite these events, Léontieff and Emile Vernaudeau were elected as deputies to the French parliament, delivering a resounding defeat to Flosse, and confirming Léontieff's acceptance by the local population. His confidence boosted by victory at the polls, Léontieff appointed Emile Vernaudeau and Louis Savoie to the vacant ministerial positions and replaced minister Patrick Revault with Francis Nanai.

Following the combined city and territorial celebrations in Papeete, which lasted most of June and July, Léontieff finally began to tackle the mounting economic problems. It is widely acknowledged that many of the present difficulties arose out of the demographic and economic disruption caused by the establishment of the Centre d'Experimentation du Pacifique (CEP) in the early 1960s. This led to artificially high salaries in the government sector, the progressive abandonment of agriculture and fisheries, urban slums, and general social disruption.

As the initial construction activities were completed, unemployment mounted. Although a temporary boom resulted from state and territorial investment following the cyclones of 1982–1983, it became increasingly evident that a comprehensive economic recovery plan was needed.

In August 1988, Léontieff announced a *plan de relance* that stressed incentives for private investment, extensive public works programs, stimulating tourism, revitalizing the primary sector, innovative and aggressive marketing of local products, public housing developments, and long-term projects that included development of phosphate deposits in the Tuamotus and industrial fisheries. At the same time, an effort was made to strengthen regional ties weakened after Flosse lost his position as French undersecretary of state for the South Pacific. Partly to fill this void, Léontieff invited the Honolulu-based Pacific Islands Development Program to host its annual Standing Committee meeting in Papeete in November 1988. He also attended the twenty-ninth South Pacific Commission meeting in the Cook Islands in October 1988.

During the fall assembly session, US\$670 million were allocated to the annual territorial budget. There was serious difficulty in obtaining majority approval because of the opposition of the new center group. The budget narrowly passed, but only by a stratagem in which three ministers resigned, resumed their territorial assembly seats, and voted in favor of the government. Shortly afterward, they were reappointed to their ministerial posts.

However, Braun-Ortega soon chal-

lenged the legality of the government, since the territorial assembly had not been consulted about the November and June ministerial resignations and dismissals. The Administrative Court annulled the appointment of the five ministers involved. Braun-Ortega then asked Léontieff to resign because the remaining five ministers fell short of the minimum of six required by the 1984 statute. Fortunately for the government, the high commissioner ruled that an assembly vote on the ministers would be satisfactory. During the following session, the assembly confirmed the presidential choice of ministers, narrowly preserving the Léontieff government.

Two important issues emerged during the administrative session of the territorial assembly in June 1989. First, the statutory constraints and ambiguities that had diverted the government from implementing its economic and social initiatives, led to increasing resentment between Léontieff, the administrative court, and the high commissioner. At the same time, mounting concern was expressed over an expected invasion by foreigners once the European Community opened its borders to free movement of people and capital in 1993.

If political problems interfered with the implementation of economic programs during 1988–1989, social issues were no less problematic. Concern was mounting over urban unemployment, drug use, crime, and widening ethnic and economic divisions. Many of these issues are linked to the profound destabilization of the traditional economy during the past two decades. Consequently, the administration directed a

very serious effort at youth problems, particularly in Papeete. The programs being developed included specialized education, job training, short-term public employment programs, and cultural events.

Meanwhile, Paris continues to control international migration, defense, and other areas. French Polynesia is important to France, not only because of its role in the nuclear testing program, but also because it is a critical link in a strategic chain of departments and territories that stretches across the Caribbean, the Pacific, and the Indian Ocean, and includes potentially valuable exclusive economic zones. Despite its small size compared to the superpowers, France remembers its vulnerability in past wars, feels that its international role has been insufficiently acknowledged, and sees no reason to confine its activities to mainland Europe.

Nuclear testing has continued in both Moruroa and Fangataufa, but opposition in both Tahiti and the region has been muted by increased spending on aid projects, a successful international relations program by the new socialist government, and scientific reports that identify no short-term environmental hazards. However, budgetary constraints have resulted in a decline in the number of nuclear tests in the Tuamotus.

MOSHE RAPAPORT

NATIVE HAWAIIAN ISSUES

Although community outrage over billion-dollar Japanese investments in residential, commercial, and resort properties throughout the Hawaiian Islands