

will bring to countries like the Cook Islands. Other countries also have minerals in their exclusive economic zones (but the Cook Islands concentrations are particularly promising), and investors will look first at possibilities outside the exclusive economic zones.

In international relations, the Cook Islands continued to maintain a high profile, and the prime minister to play a prominent role, relative to the size and bargaining power of the nation. Relations with France improved, with French navy jets helping to patrol the Cook Islands exclusive economic zone in cooperation with the Cook Islands patrol vessel *Te Kukupa*. In addition, patrols by Australian and New Zealand aircraft continued. The real cost of patrolling is far beyond the income the nation earns from fisheries licenses. The viability of patrols is hampered by internal political influences on the location of fuel depots. A draft treaty with France will include such patrols, as well as economic and cultural cooperation. French navy jets continue to fly mercy missions from the Cook Islands to Tahiti—which has the closest major hospital.

Of the many international meetings held in Rarotonga during the year, the one that could have the greatest long-term impact was the United Nations meeting for the Pacific region on the Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women. Women have advanced tremendously in business, the professions, education, and land matters. But in religion and politics they remain “in their place,” with the leaders in both fields constantly reminding them that God gave these two fields for men alone. If it was His

will, Cook Islands women may now be ready to help Him rethink His position! This meeting, attended by women ministers, senior executives, academics, community leaders, and a senior judge, led many Cook Islands women to review their positions, and could affect national politics from the next election.

Transport, always a difficult area for a nation so small and scattered, continued to present obstacles to service and development. Government ship charters remained expensive and unreliable. Private shipping also had many problems—the new *Marthalina*, on its delivery voyage from Europe, was confiscated in Sri Lanka for carrying a cargo of rocket motors; the *Edna* was wrecked on the Atiu reef—uninsured; and the *Intrepid* sank off Rarotonga. In 1990 Hawaiian Airlines, which had earlier withdrawn from the Auckland-Rarotonga service, withdrew also from the Honolulu-Rarotonga route. It was persuaded to continue for a time. In June 1991 Air New Zealand decided to withdraw from internal services in the Cook Islands (it owned 90 percent of Cook Islands Air).

Overall it was a year of economic growth and political stability, but with some seeds sown that could create more difficult social and economic conditions in the future.

RON CROCOMBE

MARJORIE TUAINEKORE CROCOMBE

## FRENCH POLYNESIA

There was much speculation in the latter half of 1990 regarding likely alliances in the territorial assembly after

the 1991 elections. The Léontieff government had lost much electoral ground when Emil Vernaudon was dropped from the coalition, and Gaston Flosse's Tahoeraa party was expected to make a major comeback. The key question was who its partners would be. Speculation concentrated on the middle-of-the-road Ai'a Api party, lead by Emil Vernaudon, and Oscar Temaru's independentist Havini Huiraatira party.

Tahoeraa won 18 of the 41 seats in the Territorial Assembly in the elections held on 17 March. Léontieff's Union Polynesian coalition emerged with 14, Ai'a Api received 5, while Havini Huiraatira captured the remaining 4 seats. Many of the small parties, including those led by the quite capable Jacqui Drollet, Quito Braum Ortega, and Jean-Marius Raapoto, disappeared completely. The most surprising result was the decline of Drollet's Ia Mana party, which held three seats in the previous assembly. Local observers agreed that Ia Mana's loss was primarily due to the shift in Drollet's political position while he was in the Léontieff government.

Drollet's loss was Temaru's gain, with the number of seats controlled by Havini Huiraatira increasing from two to four, a considerable achievement for a radical fringe party. Temaru was increasingly being perceived locally as one of the few politicians with long-standing ideological integrity. Observers also credited Temaru's remarkable gain to the increasing number of Polynesians who have completed higher education, and to rising dissatisfaction with the economic and social situation.

In the face of an apparent post-elec-

tion rapprochement between Emil Vernaudon and the Léontieff coalition, Flosse made some unsuccessful overtures to Oscar Temaru, who refused to alter his position on independence. Fortunately for Flosse, however, Vernaudon had second thoughts about rejoining the Léontieff coalition, and accepted a partnership with Tahoeraa. This gave them the majority of the assembly seats (23 out of 41) and the opportunity to form a government.

The program of the new Tahoeraa-Ai'a Api coalition was based on proposed reforms in the territorial statute, including an enlargement of local competences; continuation of French economic aid and the (associated) nuclear testing program; support of local industries and private enterprise; creation of new growth poles in Tahiti and revitalization of the outer archipelagoes; and rigor in the management of public affairs, including an audit of public expenditures and budget cuts.

After he was elected president of the Territorial Assembly, Vernaudon made reference to an anticipated evolution in the relationship between France and the territorial government. He stressed the need for a "territorial patriotism," in which the Polynesian culture is regarded as a fundamental long-term vision rather than in terms of "local particularities." He urged solidarity with the many other branches of the Polynesian tree in the Pacific. Concerning relations with the metropolitan government, he suggested that the age of paternalism was over.

Flosse became the president of a new, leaner, government. As promised, he reduced the number of ministers from twelve in the previous govern-

ment to nine. In response to a comment by Temaru in the territorial assembly administrative session, Flosse suggested that the pro-independence advocates visit other Pacific islands that have achieved independence. In French Polynesia, said Flosse, at least one has the freedom of public expression; this is not the case in the other systems, from which "God should preserve us." Flosse's discourse stressed loyalty, credibility, economic initiative, and careful management.

Flosse and Vernaudeau made a trip to Paris toward the end of April 1991. Although they were not able to meet with President Mitterrand, they did meet with Prime Minister Michel Rocard and Minister of the DOM-TOM (overseas departments and territories) Louis Le Pen. Their discussions concerned funding for government salaries, expanded territorial competences, and the demographic implications for Tahiti of the evolving European Community. Their inability to meet with Mitterrand was viewed locally as a snub (Flosse is a Chirac supporter) and as an indication of problems in obtaining future aid.

Soon after the elections, Flosse rapidly conducted his promised fiscal audit and disclosed that there was a deficit of seven billion Pacific francs (about US\$70 million). To make up a deficit of this size, he announced a series of new taxes, increased budgetary slashing, and sales of government lands and enterprises. The new taxes, particularly taxes on fuel, were quickly criticized by Oscar Temaru. He cautioned that they would lead to an inflationary cost spiral that would be particularly difficult for low income

households. Instead, he suggested taxes on banks and overseas capital transfers.

In protest of both the fuel tax and a new lotto, Temaru organized a road barricade in Faaa, completely blocking the major commuter route to Pape'ete. Soon afterward, Temaru was joined by a united group of local labor unions, demanding immediate cancellation of the fuel tax. The continued blockade brought work in Pape'ete to a standstill. Flosse attempted to negotiate with the unions, but he charged that their aim was more political than economic. Flosse was forced to repeal the fuel taxes. To avoid further problems, aid was promised by the high commissioner. The barricade was called off, but the unions insisted on further revisions of the government program.

Flosse had promised in a pre-election speech that earlier mistakes would not be repeated. He promised that he would be less autocratic in his new government—more willing to deal with his party members as well as the opposition. But postelection events are leading Tahitians to wonder whether future political decisions will be accomplished by careful forethought and political compromise, or rushed through under pressure from strikers.

France continued its atomic testing program in Moruroa in spite of international concern. Greenpeace announced in December 1990 that a team on board the *Rainbow Warrior* had found traces of radioactive cesium and cobalt in the plankton near Moruroa, which they credited to the underground nuclear testing. In response, French military spokesmen said that plankton cannot fix cesium, as sug-

gested by Greenpeace; that eighteen months of similar analysis by French military scientists had failed to confirm these findings; and that the Greenpeace announcements included more polemic than reason. They invited the *Rainbow Warrior* team to visit Moruroa itself. However, this offer was refused on the grounds that a several-day guided visit would accomplish no useful purpose.

MOSHE RAPAPORT

### NATIVE HAWAIIAN ISSUES

In my last summary of Hawaiian news in these columns, the massive theft of Hawaiian trust lands called the ceded land deal between the state of Hawai'i and the Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) was exposed. Although Hawaiians are beneficiaries of half of the ceded lands in Hawai'i (nearly 750,000 acres), they were being dispossessed of their claims by a deal that would give OHA (a state agency) a flat monetary settlement in lieu of returning land to Hawaiians. Such an arrangement allows the state of Hawai'i continued use of our trust lands while transferring monies to OHA trustees for individual OHA projects. At this writing, the expected monetary settlement to OHA is a single payment of more than \$100 million, with \$8.5 million annually thereafter.

In the latter half of 1990 a private development group called Uhaele began working with the chair of the Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Moses Keale, to obtain an exclusive development agreement from OHA. It seems Uhaele linked up with American financiers in Nevada and elsewhere to secure

seed funding so that the group would be fully functioning and able to receive monies from the ceded lands settlement. On 14 December 1990 a contract was signed between OHA and Uhaele, including the signature of OHA Chair Moses Keale. The contract gives all decision-making and investment power to Uhaele for eight years, plus 20 percent of the profits from development.

By February 1991 the American financiers of Uhaele began to suspect fraudulent behavior by the Hawai'i members of the group. The full OHA Board of Trustees was eventually informed by one of these financiers that OHA had been misrepresented by Uhaele, including Keale. The OHA board confirmed they had not authorized any contract with Uhaele, while Keale began saying publicly that his signature was forged. By early May, vigilant members of the Hawaiian community began demanding Keale's resignation as OHA chair as well as a full investigation and accounting of OHA involvement in the affair. The day after the story hit the Honolulu dailies, Keale resigned. Eventually, the state's attorney general, the US attorney general, and the State Ethics Commission began separate investigations into criminal misconduct.

While OHA continued to bungle its way through the first half of 1991, reeling from the public humiliation of their chairman's dealings and confirming the worst fears of the Hawaiian community that OHA was determined to spend native monies on development rather than on Hawaiian needs, the "Hawaiian" governor, John Waihee, planned his "Hawaiian Package" for the 1991 legislature. Included in the package is