

of the few countries in the world where libel is a criminal offense, penalties for the defamation of "Their Majesties" were raised from T\$400 to T\$2,000 or two years imprisonment in default, and all other defamation conviction fines were raised. Finally, the Licenses Act was amended to give the Privy Council the power to fix the quantity of any export commodity and the minister of Labour, Commerce and Industries the authority to allot the maximum quota among licensed exporters. Aimed primarily at protecting the squash industry, the bill in effect gives the government minister absolute control over the quality and quantity of all exports and over the allocation of valuable quotas between the exporters.

The importance of squash exports to Tonga's balance of trade payments continues. Tonga's gross domestic product grew by an estimated 5.7 percent in the financial year from July 1993 to June 1994. The major contributor to growth was the successful squash harvest of 17,000 tonnes, which brought gross earnings of T\$18 million and accounted for 99 percent of the T\$1.9 million trade surplus realized in November 1993. This was the first trade surplus for the year and only the third in the kingdom's monthly foreign trade history. Tourism increased its revenue by 10 percent. Remittances continue to be the biggest earner of foreign currency at around T\$52 million, more than the profits from tourism and all cash crops combined. It is as well that some money is coming in, because the inflation rate averaging 6.4 percent is among the highest in the region.

In his opening speech to the 94th Legislative Assembly in May 1994, the

king spoke of his negotiations for the lease of farm land in both Sarawak and Papua New Guinea, the latter possibly in return for sending Tongan Defence Service personnel to help monitor proposed peace negotiations between Papua New Guinea and the secessionist island of Bougainville. Tonga requires more land, said the king, and an alternate source of food crops when natural disasters occur at home. Looking even further afield, the third Russian-built Tongan communications satellite was launched from Kazakhstan on 20 May 1994. The mostly Tongan-owned and controlled leasing agency, Tongasat, plans by the end of 1994 to put satellites into all seven orbital slots that Tonga has registered with the International Telecommunication Union. This would make it the world's second largest Intelsat commercial satellite nation. To date, the slots have earned T\$1,100,000 for Tongasat. The king noted God's blessing of Tonga, made obvious by the success of these ventures, in an address he made before leading the nation's March for Christ in Nuku'alofa on 25 June 1994. Following the example given last century by his dynasty's creator, Tupou I, he then rededicated the nation to God.

KERRY JAMES

#### WALLIS AND FUTUNA

The dominant features of the year 1993-1994 in Wallis and Futuna were two elections, a conflict between the "custom" authorities, and the continuation of the same labor grievances that have been voiced repeatedly over the last few years.

Following the partial annulment of the results of the March 1992 elections by the *Conseil d'Etat* (the highest administrative jurisdiction in France), new elections were called in the Wallis district of Hahake in October 1993 to nominate four members of the Territorial Assembly. The *Rassemblement pour la République* lost one seat in favor of the candidate of the left-wing *Mouvement des Radicaux de Gauche*, one of the parties of the presidential majority at the National Assembly, leaving the *Rassemblement* with only 8 seats in the Territorial Assembly, versus 7 for the *Mouvement* and 5 for nonaligned members. When the Assembly proceeded with the election of its executive in December 1993, the incumbent president, the nonaligned Soane Uhila, received only 4 votes out of 20. Elected as president was the leader of the *Rassemblement*, Michel Tauhavili, the *Mouvement* and the *Rassemblement* having formed an alliance. These two political groups are violently opposed in metropolitan France, suggesting a certain political instability in Wallis and Futuna. Less than two years later and after twenty-eight years of unchallenged and unshared right-wing rule over the Assembly, Tauhavili's election follows, the coalition between the *Mouvement* and nonaligned members, which had made the March 1992 election of Soane Uhila possible, and that between nonaligned members and the *Rassemblement*, which had made up the new majority in June 1993.

In June 1994, the nation as a whole voted to elect the French representatives to the European Parliament. Although a member of the *Mouvement*

*des Radicaux de Gauche*, a party that was presenting its own list of candidates to the elections, Kamilo Gata, the representative for Wallis and Futuna to the French National Assembly, ran under the banner of the Socialist Party. Appearing in the seventy-ninth position on the list, he did not have the slightest chance of being elected. This Socialist Party list, although soundly trounced at the national level, managed to gather 57.74 percent of the votes in Wallis and Futuna. Given that over 71 percent of registered voters turned out to vote, this confirms the popularity of Representative Kamilo Gata among the electorate in both islands. A few days after the vote, the executive committee of the *Mouvement* voted to expel Mr Gata from the party.

The March 1993 earthquake in Futuna, coming in the wake of several major hurricanes and tidal waves in recent years, deeply affected the island's residents. Reflecting on the possibility of divine retribution, they wondered what their collective sins might have been. Many considered that recent relaxation of the strict observance of the Sabbath, particularly the practice of going fishing on the Lord's day, might be at the root of their troubles. Accordingly, and in agreement with the state's representatives on the island, the high chiefs of Futuna decided in May 1993 to forbid all fishing activities on Sundays to their subjects and to other residents. In Wallis, however, the higher authorities refused to endorse the ban, which they considered an infringement on individual freedoms, and, as a sanction, decided to withhold the chiefs' gratuities start-

ing in June 1993. These gratuities are considered by the traditional high chiefs not as salaries but as a symbol of the ties between the French state and Futuna's ancient kingship, and their withholding was perceived as a great slight. The resulting tension culminated in violent confrontations, which shook the whole island throughout one weekend. The state representative was attacked, and government premises and vehicles were severely damaged. Law enforcement officers were fired on. Order was eventually restored, with the arrival on the scene of *Gendarmerie* units flown in from Noumea, and the two "kings" of Futuna agreed to lift the ban on Sunday fishing. In early November, at the request of the minister for Overseas Territories, the high commissioner for New Caledonia, who is also government delegate for Wallis and Futuna, paid a visit to the territory in order to put an end to the confrontation. The conflict is a good example of the uneasy cohabitation of the traditional chiefly structure, the locally elected people's representatives, and the central government authorities.

The February visit to the island group by Minister of Overseas Territories Dominique Perben took place in an atmosphere of social tension, following a call for a general strike issued by the *Force Ouvrière* labor union. The union was rehashing grievances that had been voiced over the past several years and had never been resolved: the application of metropolitan French labor legislation to Wallis and Futuna, the lowering of air and sea fares to the islands, and the gradual increase of the minimum wage to 100,000 Pacific

francs. A draft agreement signed before the minister's departure, between *Force Ouvrière*, the territory's higher authorities, and representatives of the Ministry for Overseas Territories, put an end to the strike and set up work groups whose task would be to study the disputed points, together with a calendar for meetings between the various parties involved.

The canceling of these negotiations was at the root of the disturbances that shook Wallis in the middle of June, at a time when the territory was getting ready to play host to Fiji President Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara. On 13 June 1994, schoolteachers belonging to *Force Ouvrière*, who had been clamoring for years for the creation of a public system of primary education in Wallis and Futuna and had been on strike for a week, joined forces with the strike action initiated by the local chapter of the labor union. The strikers went on to trash the government buildings and threw Molotov cocktails in the office of the president of the Territorial Assembly. Alain Christnacht, the high commissioner for New Caledonia, who had gone to Wallis to welcome the Fijian president, chaired meetings between the various protagonists of the conflict and was able to restore order.

In February 1994, one segment of the Wallisian and Futunan community in New Caledonia stated its unequivocal support for the Caledonian independence movement. In 1992 the *Union Océanienne* had split into two factions, and in February 1994 the faction led by Alosio Sako formed a new party under the name *Rassemblement Démocratique Océanien*. Implicitly

acknowledging that the islands of Wallis could never again accommodate the whole of the Wallisian population living in New Caledonia, the new party considers that the future of the Wallisian and Futunan community in New Caledonia can only be associated with that of the Kanak people, and has announced its support for the independence movement.

FRANÇOIS SODTER

### WESTERN SAMOA

During the year under review, the Lona village execution, antigovernment march, allegation of national bankruptcy, charges of nepotism, and mismanagement in government departments captured the local headlines. The Lona execution bared Samoa's social conscience and the anti-goods and services tax demonstration tested the relevance of indigenous political institutions. The underlying theme is the double moral standards engendered in the constitutionally sanctioned dual system of authority. In a nation of over three hundred villages, 87 percent of Samoans live wholly or partly under the rule of a *matai*-cleric alliance and the remainder, mostly mixed-race Samoans, are classified as Individual voters who live wholly or partly under the rule of law. In reality the ambiguous milieu of custom and law is everyone's lot.

Since independence, several constitutional court cases have exposed the dilemma of balancing custom with western concepts of authority. An increasing number of cases demonstrate that the Village Fono regard

their customary powers—under the *fa'alupega*, not the constitution, as ultimate *pule* 'authority'. In 1992, a villager was trussed up and paraded through Neiafu before being laid beside an ominously burning *umu* as the Fono pondered his fate (SO, 29 Sept 1993). Manono villagers extracted higher fees from tourist operators for village visitation, and in Lona, a villager was shot to death and his property torched for challenging the village *fono* (PIM, Nov 1993, 17). When his wife, Italia, testified at a subsequent trial hearing, the main reason she gave for their withdrawal from *fono*-controlled activities was that the *fono* had earlier banished the senior *matai* of their *aiga*. Twenty-eight Lona villagers appeared before the Magistrate Court, all pleading guilty for their part in Nu'utai's death (PIM, Dec 1993). But their defense lawyers argued that they acted within their rights, as prescribed by the Village Fono Act. The Act reads like a rushed piece of legislation, in eleven brief sections (4 pages in English and 5 in Samoan); cloaked in Victorian and Christian prudishness, customs, and usages, it was widely criticized as a principal threat to human rights (Maiava 1991, 210).

Another clash between custom and law was played out when an antigovernment demonstration was held on 2 March 1994 against the unpopular goods and services tax. Matters were compounded when the new 10 percent tax and a 15 percent general price order were introduced simultaneously on 1 January 1994, increasing the cost of living by as much as 40 percent. By the end of the first week of 1994, Trade, Commerce and Industry Secre-