

tained that the name change could be traditionally offensive. He implied the possibility that the name Sāmoa could have originated from another part of Sāmoa that is not part of Western Sāmoa under the current political divisions. In that case, that part of “old” Sāmoa (that is, Sāmoa before the political division of its islands by Germany and the United States in 1900) could legitimately object to the change. In such a situation, what would our government do? he asked. Furthermore, he went on, even though Eastern and Western Sāmoa have been independent of each other since 1900, they share a common culture, a set of traditions, and their peoples are related by blood (SO, 6 March 1997). Others were of the view that a referendum should be held before any motion of such a nature was tabled. Opposition members of Parliament and interested members of the public drew attention to the huge task that would have to be undertaken to remove from official documents, of which the constitution is one, the name Western and its Samoan translation. The counterargument by the government is that no such thing would ever happen because the eastern islands had always been known as American Sāmoa, a territory of the United States of America. Western Sāmoa legally became Sāmoa when Parliament passed the prime minister’s motion.

ASOFOU SO‘O

References

- Faugagana*. Apia newspaper.
 SO, *Samoa Observer*. Apia newspaper.
Savali. Government-owned newspaper.

TOKELAU

In 1994—the last time a UN mission visited Tokelau—a statement known as “The Voice of Tokelau” was presented to the mission in an effort to articulate Tokelau’s view of its long-term “dreams and hopes” as it advances steadily toward an act of self-determination (Levine 1996, 200–201). During the year under review further strides were made in developing infrastructure identified in the “Voice of Tokelau” as a necessary part of the self-government process. Perhaps the most dramatic of these was in the area of telecommunications.

On 10 April 1997 Tokelau inaugurated its direct-dial telephone and fax linkage with the outside world. In doing so Tokelau became the last country in the world to introduce a telephone service, having relied previously on shortwave radio links to Apia. The very first call made using the new system was from *Ulu-o-Tokelau* Falima Teao, to New Zealand Prime Minister Jim Bolger. Another call made by the *Ulu* that same day was to the resident representative of the United Nations Development Program in Western Sāmoa.

The introduction of a modern telecommunications system presented significant engineering, legal, and financial challenges. The total cost of the project was NZ\$3.25 million, of which the New Zealand Government contributed around \$1.6 million and Tokelau over \$1 million, with the remainder funded by the United Nations Development Program and the International Telecommunication Union. Design and construction of the

system took about eighteen months, under the oversight of a project manager appointed by the International Telecommunication Union. The Australian telecommunications corporation, Telstra, installed three satellite earth stations, while the *aumaga* (village workforce) in each of Tokelau's three villages assisted the project by laying cable ducts and building the antenna foundations. At Fakaofu, the satellite antenna links include a 3-kilometer armored cable laid on the lagoon floor, with a joint just inside the reef pass. All telephone cables have been buried under the road in polyvinyl chloride duct pipes sized to allow for individual service to every house in Tokelau.

Appropriately enough, given the importance of these links to the outside world, Tokelau's General Fono used the legislative powers conferred on it by the Tokelau Amendment Act 1996 (Levine 1997, 242–244) to establish a government-owned business entity, Telecommunication Tokelau Corporation (also known as Teletok), in November 1996. This was the first exercise of these powers, and it was used to establish a basic structure for the operation of telecommunications systems in Tokelau.

A second infrastructural development focused on Tokelau's transportation needs. Tokelau does not have an air service, and its shipping service has been irregular and infrequent. Following considerable investigation, the New Zealand Government purchased a Polish-built freighter, now renamed *MV Forum Tokelau*, which was then modified to allow for both passenger and freight service on the Apia–Toke-

lau run. The purchase and subsequent upgrading (at a cost of over NZ\$1 million) was made using funds additional to those allocated by New Zealand to Tokelau for budgetary support (NZ\$4.3 million) and for project assistance (NZ\$1.4 million). The vessel, under the management of the Pacific Forum Line, is berthed in Apia and is being regarded as an interim solution. As with the telephone service, the new shipping arrangements raise complex problems of finance and management—whether the service should be subsidized, for instance—and have led to the setting up of a further government-owned corporation, Transtok. In May 1997 the *MV Forum Tokelau* made its first voyage to Tokelau, but the long-term challenge is to find a vessel that is fully suited to this service as well as to cover freight and passage costs from the Tokelauan economy.

A third infrastructural requirement, Tokelau's energy needs, has also begun to attract further interest. The current system relies on diesel generators, but an essential element of the telecommunications project is the need for reliable power generation. The use of photovoltaic cells as an additional energy source is being investigated.

As Tokelau's integration into the international community continues to unfold, deepening in stages, efforts continue to be made by Tokelauans themselves to interpret and expound upon Tokelau's changing circumstances. On 25 July 1996, the then *Ulu*, Pio Tuia, the *Faipule* of Nukunonu, spoke to the UN Special Committee—only the second time that a *Faipule* had spoken to the Special Committee (this had previously

occurred in 1987, the year after the third UN Visiting Mission to Tokelau).

Speaking of the infrastructural developments, the *Ulu* sought to put these into a Tokelauan perspective. "We are part of the world village and do not exist in a vacuum. More importantly, our fragile environment cannot support a large population, and we therefore have no option but to rely on the goodwill of the Government of New Zealand to allow our citizens free access into that country. That open doorway, however, becomes the horns of a dilemma for us. If the level of services and the quality of life on the atolls can no longer attract our people, the inevitable decline in our numbers could depopulate Tokelau to the extent that we can no longer provide a viable future for anyone wishing to remain."

Such comments emphasized Tokelau's economic dependence, a key element as it considers further steps toward self-government: "The reality is . . . that despite our efforts to be self-reliant to the greatest extent possible, Tokelau cannot totally sustain itself economically now or post self-determination. This is one of the most important issues in the minds of our people as Tokelau makes this journey. This is why Tokelau seeks assurances from the international community, through the United Nations, and New Zealand as administering power, that it will not be cast off to fend for itself."

The *Ulu*'s statement also referred to the work being done on a Tokelauan constitution, noting that (in the words of the General Fono's Special Constitution Committee) "a first glimpse" of a draft document had now been submitted to the General Fono. This consti-

tution-in-the-making emphasizes "institutional pillars that have withstood the test of time," but also recognizes "the need where appropriate to cover changing times and circumstances through the adoption of typically pragmatic Tokelau solutions."

In describing Tokelauan developments, the *Ulu* noted Tokelau's "historic aversion to change," reflecting "our situation of villages managing their own affairs with little interference from the outside world, let alone their kin in the next atoll just over the horizon." As a result, it was "thus a notable achievement that our people have shown a willingness to embark on this constitutional journey." Characteristically, the speech used maritime imagery: "The reality is that the Tokelau canoe is in uncharted waters. At all times, the capacity of our paddlers to stay the course is being tested."

Notwithstanding New Zealand's administrative powers with respect to Tokelau and the United Nations' interest in developments there, Tokelauans not surprisingly seek to maintain control over the pace and direction of change. As the *Ulu* observed, "We are taking on new responsibilities that require careful and considered thinking. For we wish to find solutions that suit our own circumstances. In other words this must be a Tokelau-driven process."

Tokelau's administrator, Lindsay Watt, also spoke to the UN Special Committee, likewise envisaging a Tokelauan journey as he described its progress toward self-government. "No journey from Tokelau is undertaken lightly. Traditional journeys

could only be accomplished by canoe. Commonly two hulls were lashed together. . . . Tokelau is embarked on a political journey that is as brave as the ocean journeys by canoe of old. For the first time ever its three atolls—physically separated by vast expanses of high seas and each enjoying substantial autonomy—seek to come together as one family, people and nation. This is the realization of what has long been sung and dreamt about. Quite literally this is a story of nation building. It's a human drama too in which a whole people are drawing upon the strengths in their own tradition and culture as they shape their new national governing arrangements."

Looking ahead to an eventual act of self-determination, note was taken of concerns in Tokelau that it might be "cut adrift in a post self-determination future"—an apprehension that has consistently served as a cautionary brake on too-rapid progress toward change. The administrator emphasized these concerns in his summing up: "I underline again Tokelau's bottom line: its need for reassurance. Local resources simply cannot cover adequately the material side of self-determination and self-government. This will be acknowledged in the free association formula which is under development. . . . for territories as small and precariously situated as Tokelau, self-determination is not an end in itself. It is a step—and a very significant step—in an ongoing process."

On 25 July 1996, the UN Special Committee adopted a resolution on the "Question of Tokelau," noting the

intention of Tokelau to adopt a free-association relationship with New Zealand in the expectation that New Zealand would continue to help "in promoting the well-being of its people." At the same time, the committee saw wider importance in the Tokelau experience, noting that "as a small island Territory, Tokelau exemplifies the situation of most remaining Non-Self-Governing Territories," so that "as a case-study pointing to successful decolonization, Tokelau has wider significance for the United Nations as it seeks to complete its work in decolonization." In broadly endorsing recent developments in Tokelau, specifically the provision of legislative and executive powers to Tokelau's national government, the special committee also acknowledged "Tokelau's need for reassurance, given that local resources cannot adequately cover the material side of self-determination."

The January 1997 message to the General Fono from the administrator characterized 1996 as "a year of consolidation," reflecting the end of the term of the first Council of Faipule (in 1995) and the complete change in its composition in the January 1996 elections. The years ahead, 1997 and 1998, were seen as "years of acceptance and implementation," as the system of government and administration, and developments in telecommunications and shipping, become more established.

The nation-building momentum has also been evident in progress toward a written constitution. Significantly, the document taking shape has been drafted in Tokelauan, not English. The

Special Constitution Committee reported to the January 1997 General Fono, providing a draft document for further discussion. It is possible that some ideas in the draft document with broad support in the villages may be implemented, with a full constitution being elaborated in a step-by-step approach. In language, style, and substance, Tokelauans appear to be developing an approach to governance distinct from the experience of other entities in which decolonization has taken place.

The return to Tokelau of its previously Apia-based public service has made possible a strengthening of village leadership and institutions. Reductions in the size of the public service at the national level are now regarded as part of a process of “re-empowerment” for local leadership. This involves village elders learning new management skills, while village work forces acquire new skills and knowledge. The intent is to have a small number of public servants at the national level, providing services only where individual villages are unable to do so. Tokelau’s new national government is to be small, active only where required.

The idea of public service functions being delivered in and by the village is not without its complexities. Is it possible for a person to be working for the village in the morning and for the nation in the afternoon? With schools, hospitals, and public works run by the villages, themselves subject to national standards and with some national funding, it may be possible to dispense with such departments at the national level, a further step in the erosion of

the size and influence of the Tokelau public service. A competing power center when it was located outside Tokelau, its future seems to be linked to the success of the program for “re-empowering the villages.” This depends on the capacity of villages to undertake tasks currently carried out by the public service, including various financial and organizational activities: running a budget; managing funds; providing jobs; having the skills to provide the necessary services.

It is emphasized that “re-empowering” does not mean simply going back to the past (although elders will have more power); “re-empowering” now requires up-to-date skills and the involvement of all those living in the villages. At present, village government employs just one official—the secretary to the village council (the *tau-pulega*); strengthening the villages represents a major step in the return to Tokelauans of a capacity to govern themselves. Accordingly, meetings held in Tokelau in May 1997 were devoted to working toward a smaller national public service and an enhanced village service. These meetings were attended by the three *Faipule*, village representatives, the administrator, and the two Tokelau public service commissioners. A new catch-phrase—“capacity building” (or needing to be done) to strengthen the human and organizational skills in the villages, as preparations are made to transfer responsibilities to them.

The theme of a distinctive Tokelauan approach to governance emerged at the Caribbean Regional Seminar to Review the Political, Economic and Social Conditions in the

Small Island Non-Self-Governing Territories, held at Antigua and Barbuda on 21–23 May 1997. Tokelau was represented by Kelihiano Kalolo, a Tokelau teacher recently involved in a curriculum review in Tokelau and a doctoral candidate in anthropology at the University of Auckland (he will be Tokelau's first PhD when he receives his degree). His participation at the seminar reflects the importance of links between Tokelauans in Tokelau and those living outside the islands.

In emphasizing that Tokelau was “avoiding” independence “as a future option,” Mr Kalolo described Tokelau as striving for “new, unique and innovative solutions” in its effort to be as self-reliant as possible (in economic, social, political, and constitutional terms). Tokelau's nation-building effort was described in this way: “We are enjoying a freedom to come up with our model of government based on our old and current way of life with a view to the needs of generations who will choose to live on these small islands. We are carving a canoe from freshly felled logs, not fashioning from old steel in the dockyards of London.”

Reflecting on his own experience, Mr Kalolo described Tokelau as a “cultural reservoir” for all Tokelauans, noting that Tokelau can “continue to call on the pool of its qualified and educated people who live permanently in New Zealand.” He told the conference that Tokelau's agenda for the future seems clear: as Tokelau changes, and forms itself into a nation, it is stressing continuity as well. “We must ensure that these activities in the formation of a nation are firmly based if they are to have any meaning and rele-

vance. This is why we are returning to the village—the center of all things in our culture. To re-empower the villages. To make them strong. To give them strength in order to support and give birth to a nation.”

A further opportunity for an elaboration of the Tokelauan approach took place when, on 12 June 1997, New Zealand's Deputy Permanent Representative Peter Rider spoke before the UN Special Committee. He referred to the two “expressions of Tokelau's voice” referred to earlier—the Ulu's appearance before the special committee in June 1996, and the address at the regional seminar by Tokelau's special representative.

Mr Kalolo's “vivid expression” was interpreted as a rejection of the Westminster system (“old steel”) for a fresh approach (“a new canoe from freshly felled logs”) to the problem of government design. The entire Tokelau approach to the character of its own institutions of government reflects the unique circumstances of the New Zealand–Tokelau relationship. As Mr Rider stressed, “the Administering Power has never been physically resident, the style of administration has been notably light handed, each village has remained largely autonomous, and there has been no pattern of settlement from outside.” By contrast, “had self-government in Tokelau been developing within a more traditional colonial pattern, Tokelau would not have had its present freedom—the opportunity to set the conditions and the goals. Past decolonisation practice in territories such as this has been to export the known governmental model (commonly Westminster based), assume

that it could be transplanted, maybe allow a certain local input into its evolution, but never really to start from scratch." It is this freedom to start anew (notwithstanding a reliance on Tokelauan values and traditions) that lends fascination to Tokelau's current and recent experience. As Mr Rider observed, "Tokelau necessarily has to throw this familiar approach on its head. It has to find an alternative—charting its own course, drawing upon its own tradition, developing its ideas in its own language."

There is a link between all these developments—between Tokelau's capacity to govern itself and the provision of basic infrastructure; between the ability to run basic services in the villages at an acceptable level and the ability (for instance) to communicate quickly and easily with suppliers in Apia and administrators in Wellington.

STEPHEN LEVINE

References

- Levine, Stephen. 1996. Political Review: Tokelau. *The Contemporary Pacific* 8:197–202.
- . 1997. Political Review: Tokelau. *The Contemporary Pacific* 9:242–247.

TONGA

During the last year, the seemingly violent abuse of legal power in Tonga attracted widespread international media attention. The most sensational event was the Legislative Assembly's imprisonment of three men in September 1996 for contempt of parliamentary procedure. The negative publicity that such events attract tends to mask the quiet, steady application of the law by commoners which, upheld by members of the judiciary, defends their rights of citizenship. The three men, two journalists, Kalafi Moala and Filo 'Akau'ola, the editor and deputy editor of the newspaper *Taimi 'o Tonga*, together with the Number One People's Representative for Tongatapu, the controversial 'Akilisi Pohiva, were sentenced to imprisonment for thirty days from 20 September 1996, because they reported that the Legislative Assembly was to impeach the minister of justice. The information, prematurely published in the newspaper, was leaked from privileged parliamentary papers before the motion had been tabled in Parliament, let alone discussed. For this, the three were imprisoned.

Soon afterward, on 24 September, the Legislative Assembly did vote 11–10 in favor of a writ of impeachment against Minister of Justice and Attorney-General the Honourable Tevita Tupou. He had taken leave of absence, without the permission of the Speaker, to travel to Atlanta, Georgia, as the head of Tonga's Olympic team. It is alleged that he neglected his parliamentary duties while in receipt of salary. The newspaper was at fault