winner of a seat in the assembly. Another initiative came to nothing, however, when the sole recommendation of the constitution review committee was rejected by the assembly. Ironically, the proposal was designed to make it easier to amend the constitution.

Preparations for the next election include a change of leadership for the Niue People's Party. The party's president is Young Vivian, while Sani Lakatani has become parliamentary leader (replacing Robert Rex, Junior, now treasurer). A more significant influence on Niue's elections may be its decline in population and economic resilience. The possibility of a reduction in the size of the Niue Assembly from twenty—already small for a legislative body—has been raised. If negative trends are not reversed, a restructuring of the political institutions of the world's smallest self-governing mini-state may not be too long in coming.

STEPHEN LEVINE

Tokelau

The political scene in Tokelau has been reviewed for this journal by Professor Stephen Levine for the past decade. His analyses were based on the official view from Wellington and, in particular, the yearly reports presented to the New Zealand Parliament by the New Zealand–based administrator of Tokelau, an official in the Ministry of Foreign Relations and Trade. Professor Levine should be commended for his thorough and insightful analyses of the political situation in Tokelau from afar. I have found them very valuable. However, my perspective will necessarily be quite different. It is a view from Tokelau, based primarily on observations and discussions there during the past year (1997–98) that I first place in recent historical context.

Political development in Tokelau is part of a wider "development" initiative in operation in Tokelau since the 1970s, relating to the "Question of Tokelau." The "question" refers to the "special relationship" between Tokelau and New Zealand, the future of that relationship, and Tokelau's future status. The "blueprint" for such development was set in motion when Foreign Affairs took over the administration of Tokelau from the former Māori and Island Affairs Department in 1975. From then onward, New Zealand was committed to putting Tokelau on a path toward self-government because, as a former administrator of Tokelau reasoned, New Zealand was committed to the United Nations Charter and the principle of self-determination (Corner 1984). This reasoning has been repeatedly quoted by subsequent administrators as evidenced by the 1996 Administrator's Report: "New Zealand, as the state responsible for the administration of Tokelau, has an obligation, by virtue of New Zealand's membership of the United Nations, to develop self-government in Tokelau" (1996, 5). Tokelau's response from the start has consistently been the same: that both Tokelau and New Zealand take a slower approach. New Zealand officials continued to assure Tokelau that New Zealand would always respect the wishes of the people of Tokelau. Former New Zealand Prime Minister David Lange echoed this respect by

visiting Tokelau and declared that it was not New Zealand's role to run Tokelau society and that the future, the pace, and the direction of political development would be decided in Tokelau by the people of Tokelau (Lange 1985, 3).

Since the 1970s, Foreign Affairs officials' aim has been to transform Tokelau's three semi-autonomous traditional village polities to "modernity"—to a national government. In 1979, these officials reasoned that to achieve such a goal they needed to resolve three interrelated problems. First, men spoke like children who needed New Zealand as their father to provide for them; therefore, there was a need to create political self-confidence. Second, Tokelau people needed to gain experience of a Tokelau-wide government as Tokelau has always been "atoll-centric" throughout history. Finally, it was considered important to remove the elders' suspicion of Tokelau public servants, whose authority was considered a threat to traditional authority (Corner 1984).The main way to resolve these problems for the Foreign Affairs officials was for the General Fono to become increasingly involved in the budget process. This led to the formation of a Budgetary Advisory Committee, hailed by a former official secretary as a transformation in which a group of "miscellaneous representatives making ill-defined requests to the administrator" would become a "broadly based selection of representatives debating Tokelau's central issues" (Corner 1984).

By 1982, the then official secretary thought that the stage was set for another initiative, the conferring of legislative powers on the General Fono. However, the administrator of the time deferred this action as he was promoting the idea of an executive council. So, in 1993, it was reported: "The General Fono asked the Faipule of Atafu, Fakaofo and Nukunonu to form a Council of Faipule and Ulu o Tokelau (Head of Tokelau) on a rotating basis" (Office for Tokelau Affairs 1993, 4). This development was aimed at creating a new Tokelau in which the General Fono, with the future status of a federal parliament, would bridge modern and traditional life. From this, other rhetorical ideas ensued and were repeatedly quoted in national statements and official reports. First, the "newness" idea was expressed in the *Voice of Tokelau:* "Tokelau's Voice New Wind, New Waters, New Sail—The Emerging State of Tokelau." Second, the "oneness" idea dated from 1983, when the then official secretary commented on "the continued reluctance of delegates to think in terms of Tokelau as a nation" (Browne 1983, 7), and was reiterated ten years later when the administrator wondered whether the new arrangements "would build Tokelau's destiny," including the capacity to "think one" instead of "thinking three" (General Fono 1993, 3). Third, the phrase "Tokelau's unique solution" referred to the "rotating Ulu of Tokelau" and a "rotating capital" where the office of Head of Tokelau alternates among the three atolls annually and is a "coral up" approach, reputed to have been homegrown, not based on any external model, nor borrowing sets of constitutional clothing (Administrator of Tokelau 1995,

1996). This rhetoric can be summarized by the administrator's encouragement to the three councils of each atoll that they were in a unique position to become "founding fathers" of Tokelau (Levine 1996).

Levine (1996, 1998) made references to the *Voice of Tokelau*, a statement presented to the world via the United Nations Committee of Twenty-Four in 1994, expressing Tokelau's "dreams and hopes" for the future as it progresses toward an act of self-determination. There were "qualitative aspects" of Tokelau's future that it wished to resolve "before any act of self-determination" (*Voice of Tokelau* 1994).These aspects included the establishment of an infrastructure, particularly in the areas of transport and communication. This requirement was reported to have been taking "further strides" with the inauguration of a modern telephone system, the acquisition of a freighter, and the introduction of photovoltaic energy.

In addition, nation-building was reported as progressing with the drafting of the constitution in the Tokelau language (Levine 1998). The General Fono declared 1995 as the "Year of the Constitution." True, in 1996 there were numerous constitutional workshops organized by subcommittees in each village. However, by 1997, all constitution-related activities had been discontinued. In informal talks with constitutional committee members, village officials, and the general public, I received mixed messages. Many committee members commented on the usefulness of these workshops in clarifying the various constitution-related issues when they were first initiated. One person summed this up: "The subcommittee used to run workshops to help the *taupulega* (village council) and the whole community but now it's not happening any more." There were setbacks as well. One committee member complained about the subcommittee on one atoll not supporting the proposals put forward by his atoll's subcommittee. The proposals referred to included the use of old Tokelau words as equivalents of those used for officials in the proposed government setup.

One *faipule* (village leader) gave three reasons for putting constitution-related activity on hold: the lack of funds, activities should be redirected to improve the welfare of the people, and the constitution was simply not the highest priority. The "lack of funds" rationale was supported by a senior public servant: "This issue [halting all constitution work] should send a message to New Zealand. How can Tokelau continue to work on the constitution when there is a decrease in budgetary aid?"

The constitution is indeed widely regarded as "not a priority" and "improving the welfare of the people" first underpins all aspects of development under the impetus for "village empowerment and development." This theme was evident in the welcoming speech to the New Zealand governor general when he visited Tokelau in 1997. The Nukunonu *pulenuku* (literally, village authority, but officially translated as village mayor) informed the governor general that constitutional work has disregarded the elders, who are seen as "the most important sectors of the Tokelau identity" and

the "pillars" on which new governmental structures must be based. He stressed that village institutions needed to be reinforced, and therefore Tokelau would take a slower approach to the constitutional issue.

Some views of the Nukunonu *pulenuku* may be debatable, but there is wide support for the "return to the village" strategy, which was conveyed to the Committee of Twenty-Four, meeting on 21 May 1997 in Antigua, by Tokelau's special representative. In theory, it calls for a return to the center of Tokelau culture—the village—and for strengthening village institutions (Kalolo 1997). This idea is not new; it can be traced back to the 1980s and the concept of *"Atiakega o na Nuku"* (developing the villages). These are umbrella concepts under which all village development projects are incorporated, whether political, social, economic, or infrastructural. These projects were referred to by one *faipule* as the priorities that would improve the welfare of the people. The "village" in reality consists of three distinct autonomous entities, not a unit, nor "thinking one" to borrow the administrator of Tokelau's term (General Fono 1993). Despite many similarities, each atoll is autonomous in terms of organization, regulation, and administration, including the setting of priorities.

Four ongoing village amenities projects have been considered priorities: a housing scheme, a flush-toilet scheme, a water-catchment scheme, and a sea-wall project. The housing scheme was first mooted in the early 1970s and has been in operation for more than twenty years. To date it is still the top priority in all three atolls, and its completion is nowhere in sight according to those involved in the allocation and implementation phases. Under the scheme as originally proposed, more durable roofing iron would replace the local thatch roofs and would mean that the people would be able to collect and store more water. So important was this proposal that it was included in the remits discussed by the *Fono Fakamua* (Tokelau Parliament) and New Zealand officials while the United Nations Committee of Twenty-Four was present in 1976 (General Fono 1976). The aim was to build a home for each household from imported materials paid for by the New Zealand government. When the scheme was finally implemented, individual families were required to come up with 25 percent of the total costs of their houses, while the rest was subsidized by New Zealand aid money. This arrangement was changed when the General Fono in 1992 decided to put an end to the "housing loan" and underwrite the whole cost of materials. (Office for Tokelau Affairs 1993, 9).

The implementation of the scheme was not without problems—some common to all, and some specific to each atoll. From its early years of operation, families have complained about favoritism by giving precedence to certain families and bypassing others, and in the allocation of building materials. Some people have left their former households and set up new ones with the housing scheme in mind, and as a result some of those who remain in older houses continue to wait their turn. Some of the first houses built in the scheme have now deteriorated, and

their owners are reapplying for renewal, while those who missed out in the beginning are still awaiting their turn. Some houses have not been completed, but their allotted budgets have been exhausted, and this could cause delays as people apply for funds reserved for other projects. A persistent problem is the continual short supply of building materials because of inadequate shipping.

The improvement of water-catchment facilities has been ongoing throughout Tokelau's recent history. The current aid-sponsored water-catchment scheme was established to provide concrete water tanks built into the foundations of new houses. Following this important development, Tokelau decided to add another aid-paid-for project: the provision of flush toilets for each household. The decision was influenced by both the Health Department and the drive toward "modernization." Flush toilets may gradually phase out the sea latrines currently in use. Each atoll approaches each project differently, according to its own priorities. In 1997, for example, Nukunonu suspended construction of its sea wall to build a village pigsty funded from the Tokelau budget.

All the ongoing schemes described here are likely to continue into the future. It is difficult to predict a time frame for their completion, and they are only a few of the village amenities regarded as prerequisites to any act of self-determination. With the relocation of the Office for Tokelau Affairs, the *taupulega* were given new responsibilities when they were authorized to take over the management of some sectors of the public service. As a result, public works are now the responsibility of the village workforce under the supervision of *taupulega*. Each atoll has adopted similar but distinct strategies in the operation of these services. In all the atolls the *taupulega* acts as the employer, making decisions about wages and other workforce-related issues. Leaders of each workforce are appointed and responsible to the *pulenuku* who in turn is responsible to the *taupulega*.

The *Voice of Tokelau* mentioned the need to have well-established infrastructural systems for Tokelau. This led to improvements in the telecommunication system. Levine referred to the inauguration of modern direct-dial telephone and fax systems in 1997 (1998). Several developments ensued: the creation of Teletok as a government-owned business, and the separation of the former Department of Transport and Communications into two separate entities. In this restructuring, the then director of transport and telecommunication was reappointed as Teletok manager, while a former director of health was given responsibility for management of transport. Communication between Tokelau and the outside world improved tremendously with the inauguration of the modern direct-dial system. People in the homeland are now able to converse easily with their relatives abroad. However, informal discussions indicate that the general public does so at a price; the phone bills testify to the expensive nature of such enterprises.

Transport to and from Tokelau has always been problematic, as the first colonial officials discovered to their

dissatisfaction. In the early 1910s, for example, it took more than a month for resident commissioners to travel to Tokelau from Kiribati. Present-day visitors have had similar experiences; the 1994 Committee of Twenty-Four abruptly departed from Tokelau to connect with outgoing international flights from Sāmoa, and visiting team members of the 1998 Ministry of External Relations and Trade consultancy were anxious about being stranded in Tokelau.

Levine reported that the government of New Zealand had "purchased" a freighter and named it MV *Forum Tokelau* (1998). This "purchase" may have been misunderstood in Tokelau. Some elders believed, or may have been led to believe, that the *Forum Tokelau* was "purchased" for Tokelau, rather than being a subsidized venture. The question of its ownership came up in many discussions when the handling of the cargo and acceptance of passengers, formerly a responsibility of the Tokelau Office in Apia, were handed over to the officers of the Pacific Forum Line. Tokelau travelers were dissatisfied and complained about the new arrangements. People slowly realized that the *Forum Tokelau,* in reality, did not belong to Tokelau as they earlier had thought. The *Forum Tokelau,* termed an "interim solution," will continue to be a drain on Tokelau's resources. The vessel is not capable of delivering the essential goods demanded by Tokelau. Its problematic operation has caused delays or cancellations of charters. It is no coincidence that at the time of writing this review, the *Forum Tokelau* has canceled its May charter owing to engine trouble and returned to Auckland for further repair work.

The interisland ferry, *Tutolu,* is now seen by some as "too expensive," a "drain," and a "disaster" that should never have been considered in the first place. Plans are being made for the *Tutolu* to be dry-docked for major repair works, including a reduction of its existing double hull to a single one. The unreliability of the interisland ferry is demonstrated by just one example: When the 1997 curriculum review was held in Atafu, the teachers from Nukunonu did not arrive. On their way from Nukunonu to Atafu, the engine died, and they drifted toward Fakaofo. The captain managed to restart the engine, and they began their journey again, but again the engine broke down, so the workshop went on without the Nukunonu teachers. On arrival in Apia the following week, the captain bolted, leaving the *Tutolu* stranded there while Tokelau officials sought a replacement. In addition to funds allocated for repairs, general maintenance, and daily operation of the *Tutolu,* its captain is reputed to be the highest-paid person on Tokelau's payroll. In 1997 the captain of the *Tutolu* was reported to have informed the New Zealand Maritime Safety Authority that the ferry was unsafe for further travels (General Fono 1997, 4).

Each atoll—Atafu, Fakaofo, and Nukunonu—has one *taupulega* and, although their functions and structures are similar in many respects, they are quite distinct from each other. The elected officials include the *pulenuku* and the *faipule.* These officials are elected every three years. The office of

pulenuku is restricted to *taupulega* members, but anyone, male or female of twenty-one years and above, is eligible for *faipule* candidacy.

The Atafu and Fakaofo *taupulega* each has a new meetinghouse with modern facilities: electric lights, electric fans, white-boards, and direct-dial telephone systems. Nukunonu is in the process of building its own. Each either owns a computer or has access to the modern telecommunication facilities of the local government departments. In the past, the elders were seated on floor mats in circular arrangement. Current representatives are seated on chairs at tables or desks in a U-shaped arrangement. In Atafu and Fakaofo, the "chair," consisting of the *pulenuku* and the *faipule,* is seated at the head, directly opposite the bottom of the U. The *failautuhi* (village clerk) in Atafu sits next to the *pulenuku;* in Fakaofo the *failautuhi* sits apart from the "chair." In these two settings the *pulenuku* chairs the meetings with the help of the *faipule.* Nukunonu differs from the other two atolls by electing a chairperson whose role is equivalent to that of a speaker. The chairperson alternates every meeting and is flanked by the *pulenuku* and the *faipule* during each session.

Within each *taupulega* is a group known locally as the *taumatua* (senior elders), *uluhina* (white haired), or *toeaina* (elders). Usually regarded as the most revered members of each *taupulega,* they make opening and closing speeches and in many respects are regarded as the "voice" of the village. In Atafu and Nukunonu, *taupulega* members are selected as family representatives, among whom are senior members of the Public Service. Fakaofo differs from the other two atolls in that the *taupulega* is not composed of representatives of families but is a self-appointed group of elders. Atafu and Fakaofo *taupulega* are all-male institutions, but the Nukunonu *taupulega* has women representatives: one is the head of her family, and two are *fatupaepae* (women's association) observers.

The "modern" *taupulega* have acquired added responsibilities as a result of recent developments. The wide range of issues for discussion has led to another development, the formation of committees at the *taupulega* level, for example, the Working Committee that deals with the planning and implementation of village amenities, and a number of smaller subcommittees. In this respect, each *taupulega* acts as an "employer" in the sense that it controls the village budget, decides on the number and eligibility of men and women for inclusion in the village workforce, and their appropriate monetary rewards. These added responsibilities will continue into the next millennium. As one elder put it, "we (the elders) are undergoing a learning process" and part of that process is learning from repeated mistakes.

Within each village, there are a number of men's and women's organizations in the form of associations, clubs, and competing sides with overlapping membership. The women's organizations include the Women's Committee on each atoll, established in the 1920s to work closely with the local doctor, nurses, and *pulenuku.* Its main role was to promote hygiene in

the villages. This organization is gradually phasing out, probably because of the *fatupaepae,* a national association that has introduced commercial activities for women. Apart from these organizations, all women belong to various other groups, both secular and religious.

The *taulelea* (men's organizations) include the *aumaga* (group of men not in the *taupulega*), a Samoan derivation that exists only in Atafu and Fakaofo. In Nukunonu, all *taulelea* work under the elders under the supervision of the *pulenuku*. Subdivisions and subgroups are established for competition in sport, fishing, dancing, or roof-thatching. The *kau-talavou* (youth organization) has been introduced by the church and also featured in governmental discourses, but has not been fully developed.

Together with the children, the institutions described thus far consititute "the village"; their members are the main actors involved in the various activities of "developing the village." Those making up the work-gangs for the housing, flush toilet, and water-catchment schemes are mainly men. There is a *vaega fakapitoa* (special group) made up of *taupulega* members and senior *aumaga* men who deal with less-strenuous activities. A new group has been added, called *tino fakaalofa* (literally, pitied people), made up of women whose households have few or no male members and therefore do not receive as much money from wages as do the majority of households. This group works as cleaners. In Fakaofo and Nukunonu in 1997, it was compulsory for elders and *taulelea* to work in ongoing schemes. The wages, number of hours, number of work-gang members, annual leaves, and statutory holidays have been authorized by the General Fono and implemented by the *taupulega*.

The creation of the *tino fakaalofa* reflects the equity principle embodied in the Tokelau way of sharing resources, the *malae* institution. The *malae* is the site for the redistribution of village resources: fish, plantation produce, or modern goods. In the discussions of salaries and wages at any political level, from the national General Fono to the local *taupulega* meeting, the term *totogi* (salary, wages, reward) is synonymous with the term *fakamanuiaga* (blessings, reward, achievement). One receives *fakamanuiaga* when one receives "things" (in abundance) from a sacred or secular source: children, food, rainy and sunny days, higher educational achievement, or employment to name a few. In reality therefore, the majority working on the development of the villages are being paid from New Zealand's annual grant and other aid. In *taupulega* deliberations on the allocation of salaries and wages, equity is a major determining factor and, hence, the use of *fakamanuiaga*.

The three *faipule* form the Council of Faipule, one of whom acts as the *Ulu-o-Tokelau* (Head of Tokelau) on a rotational basis. The Council of Faipule acts on matters of national interest when the General Fono is not in session. The legal authority currently exercised by the Council of Faipule has been derived from the New Zealand–based administrator of Tokelau, including their roles as ministers of government, equivalent to those in a

Westminster model of parliament. Ministers are responsible for government departments on a Tokelau-wide basis, covering the three atolls. This arrangement, according to the *faipule,* is inefficient as it is near impossible to "administer from a distance." Although it is not officially reported, the new thinking is that a minister must be responsible for the departments within each atoll. This line of thinking supports the "return to the village" approach. Returning to the village is a reversal of earlier thinking, particularly in the 1970s when the public service sector was perceived as "the state." This approach alone can be an important factor in deciding the future direction of political development in Tokelau.

KELIHIANO KALOLO

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Kingdom of Tonga

If the previous year was marked by the application of the law against commoner politicians, the year 1997–98 was notable for its attentions toward members of the nobility. Minister of Police the Honorable Clive Edwards, a commoner, imprisoned a noble fellow cabinet member, the Honorable Fakafanua, minister of lands, for, among other illegalities, bribery and extortion. Fakafanua was soon released, but the event caused considerable comment. Fakafanua resigned both his ministerial office and the post of governor of Ha'apai. The king, who has now turned eighty, quickly appointed nobles to take Fakafanua's place in the two senior government positions.

Another surprise move that is also likely to affect widespread attitudes to the nobility occurred in May 1998. The day after his fiftieth birthday, Crown Prince Tupouto'a renounced all ministerial duties in the Departments of Foreign Affairs and Defence in order to concentrate on his numerous and lucrative business interests. Among his pressing concerns must be his law suit against his sister, HRH