A RAND NOTE

Security Trends in the South Pacific: Vanuatu and Fiji

George K. Tanham, Eleanor S. Wainstein

May 1989

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PREFACE

This Note was sponsored by the Office of the Assistant Under Secretary of Defense for Policy under the auspices of RAND's National Defense Research Institute, a Federally Funded Research and Development Center sponsored by the Office of the Secretary of Defense. The work is part of RAND's International Security and Defense Policy program.

The study is based on research and interviews conducted by the senior author during a two-month stay in the Pacific Island area in early 1987 and a two-week return visit in September 1987, as well as on the current literature and interviews with academics, U.S. government officials, and others familiar with the area. The research covers the political situation through June 1988. The authors will report on subsequent changes in a follow-on study of the Pacific Island area.

The first section of the Note analyzes the anti-Western and anti-U.S. attitudes of the South Pacific islanders and governments and U.S. and Soviet policies in the area. It concludes with recommendations for improving U.S. relations with the islands. Section II examines in detail the background and current situation in Vanuatu; Sec. III does the same for Fiji.

SUMMARY

Although the South Pacific island nations are very small and undeveloped, their location astride routes that are strategically important to the United States magnifies their significance. In the last two decades, however, the goodwill of most islanders toward the United States and the West has declined.

Anti-Western attitudes have grown out of changing institutions and organizations, encouraged by foreign advocates and fostered by churches, labor unions, anticolonial groups, and the antinuclear movement. In many cases, advocates connected with one or more of these groups have merged their causes in an effort to spread an overall anti-Western and anti-United States gospel.

In recent years, the Soviet Union has gained goodwill in the area with little expenditure of resources. Soviet representatives visiting the area advocate peace, a nuclear-free Pacific, the reduction of all military forces in the area, and the abolition of foreign bases.

The United States and the West should take countervailing steps to retrieve the goodwill that they have lost. Ameliorative measures might include increased aid, assistance to labor unions, and aid to education. They should counter the anti-Western rhetoric with positive information about the West and above all, increase official interest and exchanges with the islanders.

Vanuatu, a Melanesian nation of approximately 132,000 people on 80 islands, gained independence in 1980. Its leaders increasingly advocate anti-Western positions. The Vanuatu-USSR fishing treaty allows the Soviets to fish in their waters and use port facilities. Receptive to Libyan overtures, Vanuatu's leaders have sent citizens for training in Libya and talk of allowing Libya to open a representational office in Vanuatu. The recent election and the illness of Prime Minister Lini indicate that a more radical leadership may take over in the near future.

Fiji's recent political turmoil stems from the rivalry between its two major ethnic groups: native Fijians and Indian descendents of immigrant laborers. The April 1987 general election ousted a Fijian-dominated regime that had held power since the country became independent in 1970. An Indian-dominated coalition—largely anti-Western in its political and foreign-policy pronouncements—took over. One month later, a military coup turned out the newly elected government, and ethnic Fijians declared that they would not

relinquish political power. After an attempted compromise, which Fijian extremists violently opposed, a second military coup in September 1987 ushered in an interim government committed to Fijian leadership, a republic outside the Commonwealth, and a new constitution that will guarantee permanent Fijian dominance.

The United States should encourage elections and the prompt adoption of a new constitution, cultivate exchanges with the island people and its government, and increase economic and educational assistance.

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I. THREATS TO U.S. AND WESTERN INTERESTS AND HOW TO DEAL WITH THEM

INTRODUCTION

While Soviet fishing treaties and Libyan Colonel Muammar Qadaffi's agitations have commanded much media attention for the new Pacific island states, the growth of anti-Western and anti-American efforts in the area presents a less noticeable but greater long-term threat to U.S. and Western interests. The goodwill and respect for the United States that most South Sea islanders have demonstrated in the past are slowly eroding.

The importance of the South Pacific island nations to the United States rests mainly on their strategic position astride the trade routes between the United States and both Australia and the Indian Ocean (see map, Fig. 1). If hostile, the region could threaten these vital trade routes. Its deep waters are ideal hiding places for hostile submarines, and the small islands could provide unfriendly naval and air bases, as they did in the early part of World War II. Moreover, in the long-term future, the mineral resources of the ocean beds will have significant commercial as well as strategic value. Finally, while these small island countries themselves have negligible importance, their voices are heard in international forums, adding to the volume of Third World calls for help and criticism of the West.

Vanuatu, an independent nation since 1980, has, in spite of its denials, adopted an increasingly anti-Western position in most of its foreign policy statements and actions. With Father Walter Hayde Lini, an Anglican priest, as its prime minister, Vanuatu readily manifests its support for revolutions abroad, except those that are anticommunist. A recent fishing agreement with the USSR allows the Soviets both to fish in Vanuatu waters and to use port facilities for crew changes and resupply.

Vanuatu and Libya appear to be developing an increasingly close—though fitful—relationship. The two discussed the opening of a Libyan "people's bureau" or other representational office in Vanuatu, but Australia dissuaded Vanuatu from allowing it. Libyans visit Vanuatu frequently, and they have trained an unknown number of ni-Vanuatu (as Vanuatu's people call themselves) in self-defense. First-hand reports from the International Conference Against Imperialism, Zionism, Racism, Reaction, and Fascism (MATHABA), which met in Tripoli in April 1987, indicated that the organization planned to establish a South Pacific branch in Vanuatu. MATHABA stresses anti-Western revolution and endorses the use of violence; if established in Vanuatu, it could cause serious trouble in the region.[1]

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[1]As of late June 1988, we have had no information indicating that MATHABA has established itself in the South Pacific area.

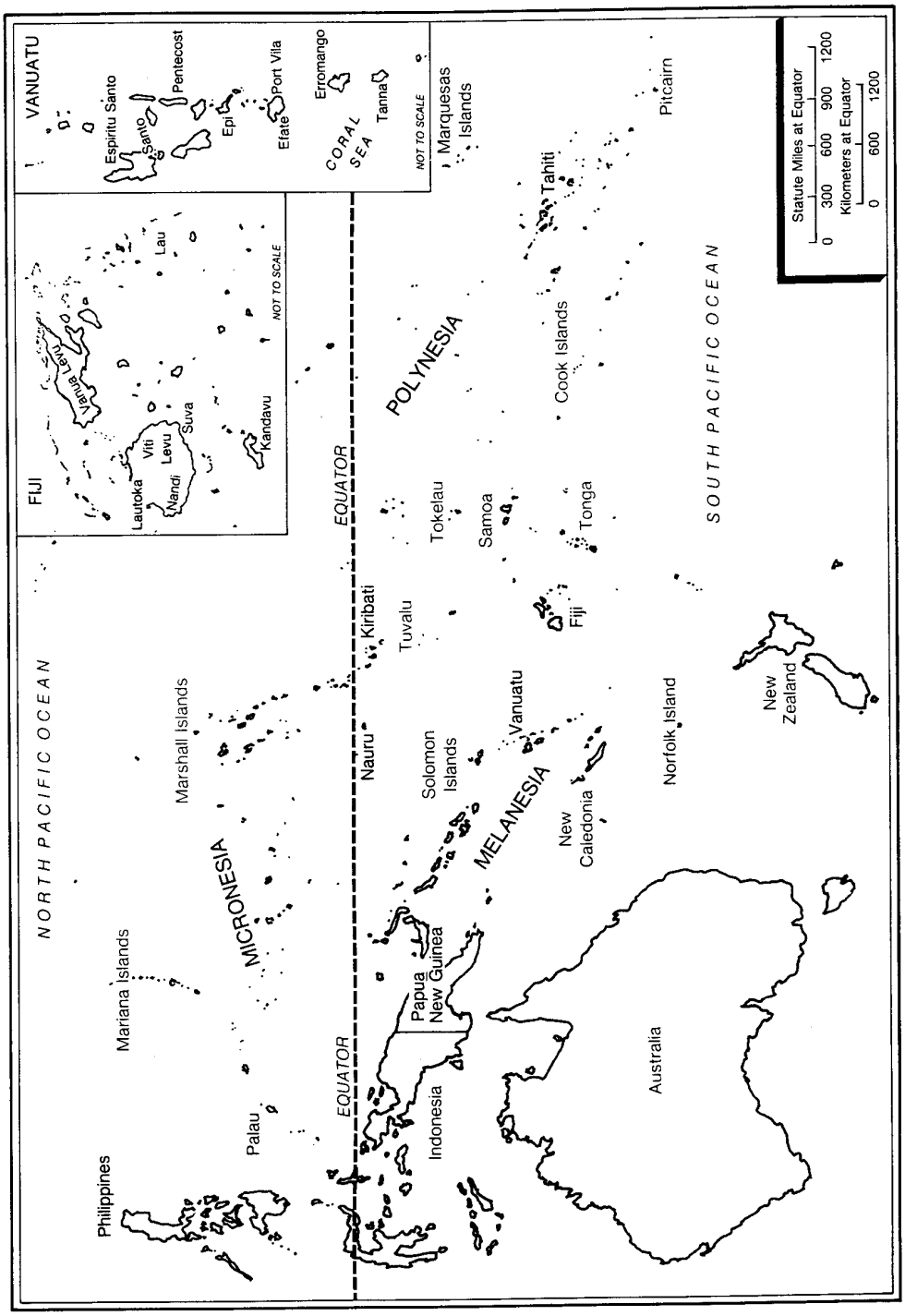

Fig. 1—Map of South Pacific

Fiji, from its independence in 1970 until 1987, was governed by a native Fijian, Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara, and his pro-Western Alliance Party. In July 1985, Fijian union leaders, aided by New Zealand and Australian leftist labor leaders, formed the Fiji Labour Party with Dr. Timoci Bavadra, a Fijian, as president of the largely Indian membership.[2] Its foreign policy moved away from the pro-Western policies of the Alliance.

In late 1986, Labour formed a coalition with the Indian opposition party, the National Federation Party (NFP); the NFP-Labour Coalition ran in the April 1987 election. The new party dropped the Fiji Labour Party's socialist planks from its election manifesto but retained the anti-Western positions in foreign policy. The Coalition won the election and took power under Bavadra on April 13, 1987. With a cabinet dominated by an Indian majority, the new government proceeded cautiously, although it did not retreat from its nonaligned, anti-Western foreign policy.

Even though the new government was elected democratically, most Fijians could not accept an Indian-dominated Fiji. Demonstrations called for a return to a Fijian-dominated government, and an organization of ethnic Fijians called the Taukei Movement emerged. It included many members of the Council of Chiefs (the tribal leaders) and prominent Alliance politicians. Threats of violence against Indians came from some of the more extreme Fijians. On May 14, 1987, Fijian troops under Lieutenant Colonel Sitiveni Rabuka arrested the new government's leaders and seized power. Rabuka's stated aim was to prevent violence and turn the government back to ethnic Fijians.

Governor General Sir Penaia Ganilau, on whom Rabuka called to run the government, sought to negotiate a compromise between the political parties. Rabuka, however, believed that it would still dilute Fijian power. On September 25, he staged a second coup and two weeks later declared a republic. The govenor general resigned, and Queen Elizabeth accepted Fiji's separation from the Commonwealth. Rabuka appointed a council to draw up a new constitution. He handed the government over to Ganilau as president, and Ganilau named Mara as prime minister. They are to lead the country through a new election, which which Mara estimates will take place by early 1990.

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[2]Fiji's population is racially split—those of native Fijian stock constitute 46 percent; descendants of Indians brought to Fiji to work in the canefields, 49 percent. We shall hereinafter refer to the former as Fijians and the latter as Indians.

ANTICOLONIALISM AND ANTINUCLEARISM

In the South Pacific, two historically understandable attitudes underlie the anti-Western and anti-U.S. efforts: anticolonialism and antinuclearism. The Western nations were, and in a few areas still are, colonial powers, and the colonial experience and the subsequent independence movements have generated anti-Western feelings.

Fiji gained independence from Britain in 1970 with minimum difficulty and ill will.[3] Vanuatu, however, underwent both a troublesome colonial period under a French-British condominium and an acrimonious struggle for independence against the French in 1980. Strong feelings against the French still exist because of this experience and because the French refuse to give up their other colonies in the region, particularly New Caledonia. Islanders also criticize the United States because it retains control of foreign and military matters in Micronesia and resent Britain because it holds tiny Pitcairn Island.[4] They view Indonesia as a colonial power because of its takeover of East Timor and Irian Jaya. The islanders feel that the colonialism still existing in the area must be terminated.

Most leaders in the Pacific island states realize that political independence was only one step toward true independence. Now they seek economic independence—a much more difficult and longer-range goal for these small nations of limited resources. They view multinational, or transnational, corporations as new modes of colonialism practiced by the same colonial powers. In other words, they see economic imperialism as the successor to political colonialism and blame the West for it.

While Pacific islanders have been concerned about nuclear testing since 1946, when the people of Bikini were moved from their homes in preparation for U.S. testing, little public outcry occurred until the late 1960s after France began testing.[5] At a public meeting in Suva in 1967, the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) and the Student Christian Association initiated Against Testing on Mururoa (ATOM). Such groups gathered support, and in 1969 members of churches, trade unions, the University of the South Pacific, and the Pacific Theological College held an antinuclear march and rally in Suva.

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[3]The Indian portion of the Fiji population has long held anti-British feelings, unlike the native Fijians, who liked the colonial administration. In Vanuatu it is the native ni-Vanuatu who hold anticolonial views.

[4]There is also criticism, and perhaps envy, that the United States has given Micronesia considerable financial aid.

[5]The United States stopped nuclear testing in the Pacific in 1962 but has continued missile testing, to which peace groups object.

In 1975, ATOM and the YWCA organized the first Nuclear Free Pacific Conference in Suva.[6] The Soviets have not tested nuclear weapons in the Pacific and, indeed, have kept a low profile there, and the islanders have refrained from criticizing them. Instead, they direct all their energies against the West's nuclear activities. Continued French testing in the Pacific and the disposal of nuclear waste there have kept the nuclear issue at a high emotional level.

THE ROLE OF THE CHURCHES

Contrary to their pre-World War II policy of generally supporting the colonial governments, in the postwar period the Western churches sent out missionaries who supported the independence movements in these small states and publicized their causes abroad. This coincided with the politicizing or radicalizing of many church groups in Australia and New Zealand, as well as in the United Kindgom and the United States. The exception was Fiji, where the churches had no major role; the transition to independence was arranged by political parties in negotiations with the British.

In 1973, the Vanuatu Presbyterian church, dominated by political activists, proclaimed itself in favor of independence. The Anglican church also supported independence, but the French Catholics did not. Churches brought in liberation theologists who raised the political awareness of the people, politicized the local churches, and strongly advocated anticolonial positions.[7] Without the churches' active financial and moral support, Vanuatu's independence movement would have faced greater difficulties than it did.

The churches have also played a leading role in the antinuclear movement. After the initial Christian student efforts in Fiji in the 1960s and early 1970s, the Pacific Conference of Churches (PCC), at its Third General Assembly in Port Moresby in 1976, passed a strong antinuclear resolution.[8] Each successive general assembly has strongly affirmed this

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[6]Similiar conferences took place in Ponape (1978), Hawaii (1980), and Sydney (1980) and continue to the present.

[7]Liberation theology grew out of concern for the poor and the belief that the church has lost the concern that Jesus had for the poor and concentrates instead on its own influence and survival. Liberation theology advocates structural change in the church and society to be brought about by such means as class conflict, liberation, and struggle against capitalism. As Philip Berrigan writes in his recent book, *Liberation Theology,* "Reformism is insufficient; the kinds of changes needed can come about only through revolution" (Pantheon Books, New York, 1987).

[8]Its executive committee in 1974 passed resolutions opposing nuclear testing as well as missile testing and favored a nuclear-free zone in the Pacific.

position . In 1982 the PCC published *A Call to a New Exodus, An Anti-Nuclear Primer for Peacefree People*, a glossy, well-written, subtly anti-Western essay against nuclear presence. It makes little mention of the Soviet Union; it is not even listed as one of the six top producers of uranium. One can barely deduce from the book that the Soviet Union is one of the two leading nuclear powers. The antinuclear theme thus becomes anti-Western and joins anticolonialism as a foundation for the churches' anti-Western drive.

THE ROLE OF UNIONS AND LABOR PARTIES

Throughout the South Pacific, the more powerful unions and labor parties, guided and aided by leftists from New Zealand, Australia, and the World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), have reinforced anti-Western, anticolonial, and antinuclear feelings of the islanders and thus assisted in undermining the U.S. position in the area.

The communist-dominated WFTU, at its ninth congress in Prague in 1978, decided to intensify union efforts in the Pacific by working not only through unions but also through labor parties. This marked the beginning of considerable involvement by outside leftist union leaders in the Pacific islands.

Jim Knox from New Zealand and Bill Richardson, John Halfpenny, and Pat Clancy from Australia, all of whom attended the Prague congress, and other union leaders began to play a key role in both Fiji and Vanuatu.[9] In 1980, at the third Nuclear Free Pacific Conference in Hawaii, they held talks with island trade unionists which led to the foundation of the Pacific Trade Union Forum (PTUF). While most South Pacific unions are affiliated with the noncommunist and Western-oriented International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), the New Zealand and Australian labor leaders active in the PTUF are associated with the WFTU and have increasingly tried to inject its procommunist influence into the PTUF and to spread anti-Western themes. Soviet trade union representatives have

[9]Jim Knox, past President of the New Zealand Federation of Labour, while not a member of the Communist Party, has been WFTU coordinator for the Pacific and a frequent visitor to the Soviet Union, where TASS has quoted his anti-U.S. statements. He is a vociferous supporter of the left-wing movements at labor meetings in the Pacific. Bill Richardson, first convenor of the Pacific Trade Union Forum (PTUF), broke ground for leftist union leaders in the islands. Pat Clancy (now deceased) was secretary of the Building Workers Industrial Union of Australia, a WFTU affiliate union, and president of the Australian Socialist Party. He became convenor of the Committee for International Trade Union Unity, the WFTU's organization for the Pacific area. Halfpenny, of the Amalgamated Metalworkers and Shipwrights Union, was for over 25 years a member of the Communist Party, which he left without recriminations to join the Labour Party. He was the driving force behind the formation of the PTUF and its convenor, and he is active in the Independent and Nuclear Free Pacific Movement.

been present at every PTUF congress, from the first in Vanuatu in 1981 to the fourth in Auckland in 1986.[10]

At the 1986 PTUF meeting in Auckland, anti-U.S. feelings were encouraged by articles in the New Zealand newspapers (originally in the Sydney *Morning Herald*). They contended that the Asian-American Free Labor Institute (AAFLI), backed by the U.S. government and the American Federation of Labor—Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) and then headquartered in Suva, was requesting funds for union educational activity that would counter the antinuclear, anticolonial union activities in the Pacific. The articles were circulated among the PTUF delegates, who strongly criticized the AAFLI.

Despite the anti-U.S. press, some PTUF members at the Auckland meeting did not want to follow their leaders blindly in bashing the United States. Delegates from Vanuatu, Western Somoa, Kiribati, and Tonga complained about excessive emphasis on the "left's struggle issues" and the ignoring of bread-and-butter union issues. James Raman (Fiji) and Moana So-onalole (Western Somoa) quietly told Knox to forget about condemning U.S. aid to the unions. When a draft resolution criticizing American "interference" found little support, the New Zealanders who drafted it decided not to put it to a vote.

At the February 1987 meeting of directors of the renamed Pacific Trade Union Community (PTUC) in Fiji, a new leadership took over. Halfpenny and Richardson bowed out, and Ian Ross, a young moderate from the Australian Council of Trade Unions, was elected convenor.

Meanwhile, in Fiji, the Fiji Trade Union Congress (FTUC), angered by the government's unilateral wage freeze in 1984 and urged on by Halfpenny and Knox, set up the Fiji Labour Party in July 1985. The party's platform at that time advocated nationalization, a nonaligned foreign policy, and support for the anti-Western rubric of the Independent and Nuclear Free Pacific Movement. The party initially planned to take power in 1997, but after forming the NFP-Labour Coalition, it won the national elections in 1987—ten years ahead of schedule.

Vanuatu's unions and labor party lag far behind those in Fiji. However, the same Australian and New Zealand labor leaders are active in Vanuatu. The present Vanuatu government has an anti-Western line similar to that of Halfpenny and his colleagues, so it is not entirely clear whether or how the government and the labor organization will differ on foreign policy. Despite outside pressure, the labor movement so far has remained moderate in its political outlook.

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[10]In 1986, representatives from Fretilin (Timor independence group) and May First (Philippine communist labor front) were present. At this meeting, the PTUF was renamed the Pacific Trade Union Community (PTUC).

ANTI-WESTERN THEMES COMMON TO LABOR, CHURCH, AND THE PEACE MOVEMENT

The Pacific peace movement constitutes another vehicle for anti-Western sentiments. Church officials, trade unionists, and adacemics are members of this movement, which has ties to European peace activities. By no means all members are anti-Western, but the vocal minority who are capture the media and public attention. Although many islanders are still pro-American, they are subject to a constant barrage of anti-Western sentiments.

The Fiji Anti-Nuclear Group (FANG), though small, is a good example of this coalition of anti-Western forces. FANG members come from the YWCA, the University of the South Pacific (USP), the Pacific Theological College (PTC), labor unions, and churches. FANG now has contacts with similar groups in Vanuatu.

The resolutions or concluding statements of conferences held by the PTUF-PTUC, the PCC, and groups promoting the Independent and Nuclear Free Pacific Movement regularly repeated anti-Western and anti-American themes.[11] In the mid-1970s, the World Council of Churches (WCC) gave financial support to the PCC for the first and second Nuclear Free Pacific conferences, and by the third conference in 1980, the Australian Railways Union (a labor union) began to do so. The fourth conference, held in Australia in 1986, received support from both churches and unions. The PCC and the PTUF-PTUC, for example, take remarkably similar positions on the issues. Table 1 lists the positions taken by the two organizations in the 1980s.

The comparison in Table 1, based on reports of these conferences, does not fully portray the one-sided, anti-Western manner in which the themes are presented. For example, the statements of these organizations:

- Support the mistreated aborigines of Australia, New Zealand, and Hawaii, but not the mistreated Soviet minorities or the Chans, whom the Vietnamese have almost wiped out.
- Constantly criticize capitalism, but not Marxism or communism.
- Oppose increases of conventional weapons in the Pacific (directed toward the RimPac naval exercises by Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, and the United States), but not the Soviet buildup in the Pacific over the last decade, nor the increase in the size of the Vietnamese army.

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[11]France is a favorite target of this group, as it still tests nuclear devices in Mururoa and holds New Caledonia as a colony. Its behavior further strains regional relations with the West.

Table 1

SIMILARITY OF THEMES ESPOUSED BY SOUTH PACIFIC LABOR AND CHURCH

Pacific Trade Union Forum	Pacific Conference of Churches
Trade union solidarity	Opposition to transnational corporations[a]
Independence movements; cooperation with peace movement	Independence movement
Palau's antinuclear stand	Opposition to nuclear industry
Pacific zone of peace	Pacific zone of peace
Dissolution of military alliances (ANZUS)	Opposition to RimPac military exercises and mutual defense treaties (ANZUS)[b]
Removal of foreign bases (U.S. bases in Australia & Philippines)	Opposition to U.S. bases in Australia

[a]The PCC sponsored and underwrote a book, *Losing Control: Towards an Understanding of Transnational Corporations in the Pacific Island Context*, which emphasized the evils and shortcomings of transnational corporations but admitted no benefits from them.

[b]The RimPac exercise participants included Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, and the United States. See *Quadrant*, November 1983, p. 71.

- Call for the removal of all foreign bases from the area, specifically American bases in the Philippines and Australia, but not of Soviet bases in Vietnam.
- Criticize U.S. aggression in Nicaragua, but not the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan.
- Attack Western colonialism, but not the expansion of Soviet influence.
- Take strong antinuclear position against the West, France especially, for nuclear testing and for operating nuclear-powered ships in the Pacific, but make no mention of the Soviet nuclear ships or weapons in its Pacific fleet.
- Support liberation movements, but not the Afghan and Cambodian insurgents, nor UNITA in Angola and RENAMO in Mozambique.

THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOUTH PACIFIC

After withdrawing its forces from the South Pacific at the end of World War II, the United States relied on Australia and New Zealand, the two Western powers in the area, to support the emerging new states in their political and economic development.[12] In essence, Australia and New Zealand have been U.S. surrogates in the region. This informal arrangement has suited the islanders, enhanced the regional role of Australia and New Zealand, and minimized big power presence. However, the islanders have increasingly felt ignored and misunderstood by the United States. Now that the island states are coming into their own in the modern world, they look to the major powers for assistance and count on the United States to understand their problems and to promote their economic development.

Recent actions by the United States have not helped its image in the South Pacific, and indeed, have pointed up its insensitivity to area issues. The long-delayed tuna fishing agreement signed in April 1987 offered little and was barely acceptable to many island states. Washington's rejection of the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty (SPNFZ) incensed all South Pacific Forum members except Tonga.[13] Even the pro-Western Alliance government in Fiji objected. Moreover, American labor efforts in the area are minimal. The Asian-American Free Labor Institute, for reasons of economy, transferred its headquarters from Fiji to Hawaii recently, giving up its location in the island country with most developed labor unions. However, AAFLI continues to support union programs in Fiji and other countries in the region.

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[12]Until the South Pacific island countries became independent, colonial powers administered to their needs. After independence, Australia and New Zealand, the primary Western-orientned powers in the area, gave them both economic and military assistance. Until recently, the United States did not help them directly, but channeled aid through private outlets; Australia and New Zealand have supporoted major aid efforts.

[13]The SPNFZ Treaty was drafted by Australia and sponsored by the 13-nation South Pacific Forum. The Forum is a conference of the heads of government of the now 15 independent and self-governing states of the South Pacific. They meet annually and arrive at decisions by consensus. The treaty nations asked the major nuclear powers to sign protocols of association with the treaty. The USSR signed; the United States, Britain, and France did not. State Department spokesmen said that U.S. practices and activities in the Pacific were not consistent with the treaty and that the refusal to sign was related to U.S. global security interests and responsibilities. The United States government disapproves of the spread of "nuclear-free zones" because they inhibit U.S. military activities to a greater extent than they inhibit those of the USSR and because they tend to undermine the policy of deterrence. U.S. relations with France also influenced the U.S. decision, as the treaty was directed mainly at French nuclear activities. Congressional and other critics of the U.S. action cite U.S. insensitivity to the concerns of friendly nations sponsoring the protocols and the loss of an opportunity to reap a propaganda coup in the area.

Many Pacific islanders accuse the United States of injecting great power rivalry into the area. They perceive U.S. attention and aid to the South Pacific as a reaction to Soviet moves, rather than a genuine desire to help the peoples of the area. At the same time, many islanders claim that the United States does not pay sufficient attention to their needs.

THE SOVIET UNION AND THE SOUTH PACIFIC

Although most South Pacific islanders neither know nor admire the Soviet Union, that country has recently gained some goodwill in the area. The Soviets are making a concerted effort to project a peaceful image and to associate themselves with causes about which South Pacific islanders feel strongly. For example, Gorbachev, in his July 1986 speech in Vladivostok, supported anti-Western positions similar to those taken by Pacific labor and church groups (see Table 1, above). He advocated:

- Nonuse of force in the area.
- Reduction of conventional forces and weapons, and of naval forces, particularly nuclear-armed ships.
- Removal of foreign bases, particularly U.S. bases in the Philippines.
- Condemnation of all nuclear activities and approval of the SPNFZ treaty.
- Support for the Nonaligned Movement.
- Opposition to military groupings in the area.

At the same time that the Soviets are putting the West on the defensive on South Pacific issues they are carrying out a low-cost campaign to ingratiate themselves. Soviet diplomats and visiting officials are now better informed than in the past, and sensitive to Pacific issues and customs. Some Fijian and foreign unions sponsor students for study in Moscow, and a Tongan delegation headed by the crown prince attended meetings and conferences in Moscow, as have delegations from other South Pacific countries. The Soviet cruise ship *Alexander Pushkin* regularly plies South Pacific waters, calls at Fiji and Vanuatu, entertains local dignitaries, and in general spreads goodwill. This attention flatters the remote island people.

On the commercial front, the Soviets are eager to develop trade and joint business ventures. A delegation from the Soviet embassy in Canberra visited Fiji in late 1986 to survey such possibilities. The Canberra-based Soviet ambassador visited Papua New Guinea in March 1988 and was followed by a trade mission in April. Although the Soviets

failed to renew their fishing agreement with Kiribati because of the high cost, they have negotiated a more desirable arrangement with Vanuatu and requested agreements with several other nations in the area. They will probably seek a multistate fishing agreement, such as the United States has negotiated.

In contrast to the United States, the Soviet Union quickly signed the SPNFZ treaty, albeit with caveats. Within three days after the SPNFZ treaty came into effect in December 1986, the Soviet ambassador to Australia and Fiji telephoned the South Pacific Forum staff and requested to sign the protocols. Two days later, with fanfare and publicity, he flew to Fiji for the signing. He hailed this "step toward peace" in the area, endorsed the so-called national liberation movement, and applauded anticolonial and nonaligned political stances—all standard Soviet positions with which many Pacific nations identify.

When Soviet Foreign Minister Eduard A. Shevardnadze visited the region in early 1987, he reiterated the Soviet desire for closer relations and for a nuclear-free South Pacific. He articulated once more the Soviet Union's desire for peace in the area and for discussions about trade and commerce. Although some island governments were skeptical, the visit projected a positive Soviet image.

We can only speculate on the long-term effectiveness of Soviet policies and activities in the islands. These states, having come only recently to world politics, continue to show more interest in practical matters directly affecting their well-being than in anticolonial, antinuclear stands and other international issues. Meanwhile, leftists identify their groups and the Soviet Union with these themes, while the United States by default has allowed itself to be seen as favoring colonialism and the spread of nuclear weapons.

LIBYA AND THE SOUTH PACIFIC

Under Qaddafi, Libya has also attempted to undermine Western influence in the South Pacific, but instead of peaceful methods, such as the Soviets use, the Libyans focus on revolutionary means. Libya made its first efforts in Australia and New Zealand, where it approached groups with propositions to underwrite revolutionary activities.

In May 1987, after reports of Libyan activity in the islands and after Libya hosted an Australian aborigine at a conference and offered him financial aid for a revolution in Australia, the Australian government closed down the Libyan people's bureau. Libyan activity, the prime minister announced, was destabilizing and divisive. Australia also exerted firm pressure to dissuade the Vanuatu government from allowing Libya to set up a people's bureau, and Vanuatu heeded the advice.

Although governments shunned them, the Libyans found recruits for MATHABA among the Kanaks in New Caledonia, the Organisasi Papua Merdeka in Irian Jaya, a group fighting against Indonesians, and the Vanuaaku Pati(VP), Vanuatu's ruling political party. By 1987, two representatives from Tonga had joined the MATHABA meeting in Libya. MATHABA conferences in 1986 and 1987 gathered representatives of revolutionary groups throughout the world in Libya, where they received support for their causes and were encouraged to look to Libya for leadership and to oppose the United States, France, and Israel. Libya has hosted small groups of islanders for training sessions, has given them weapons, and reportedly has funneled money to the Kanaks to support their revolutionary activities. Nevertheless, the island governments have failed to recognize Libya.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

A visitor to the Pacific Islands can sense that anti-Western ideas are slowly spreading despite the basic goodwill that still exists toward the West. If no countervailing steps are taken, the anti-West campaign may have long-term adverse effects. Below are general conclusions and recommendations for steps the United States and the West can take to counter these unfriendly trends.

Labor Union Activity

While left-wing labor leaders in New Zealand and Australia are concentrating on undermining the favorable opinion the South Pacific holds toward America and the West, their political rhetoric shows little concern for labor problems and the welfare of the rank-and-file members. Such labor matters present serious challenges for which there are no easy solutions. Foreign policy rhetoric is easier, risk-free, and more suited to their political objectives.

The failure of these leftist labor leaders to deal with vital labor matters provides an important opportunity for American and other Western unions to play a constructive role in the new nations. While the AAFLI has done good work, it is, in some eyes at least, in disrepute because of its move from Fiji to Hawaii; additional channels should be developed for American and Western labor to help. Further aid and union cooperation would gain goodwill without major expenditures.

Education

Education is of critical importance in the area, and at all scholastic levels quality education is wanting. More teachers should be trained for primary and secondary schools. The United States should encourage added summer training courses and teachers' colleges. Because the small number of American and Australian scholars currently teaching at the USP openly espouse anti-Western views, the United States should balance them by encouraging a more representative group to teach for at least one-year periods. More fellowships at U.S. universities would help to meet an urgent need.

The Agency for International Development (AID) has increased its educational programming in the islands during the past few years, and should encourage further cooperation by U.S. educational institutions to further the effort. Vocational and management training are also needed. The Peace Corps has programs in Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Tonga, Solomon Islands, and others. Encouragement of island governments to host additional Peace Corps projects might accrue further long-term benefits.

Information

A stepped-up effort is needed to counter the anti-Western rhetoric and provide truthful and balanced information to the people of the islands. The United States should emphasize the positive aspects of the islands' relationship with the West. For example, the United States should publicize the fact that it provides the Pacific basin countries with satellite weather forecasting of typhoons and storms, resulting in the saving of life and property.

Video tapes are popular in the islands, and increased provision of educational tapes produced specifically for this audience could enhance approval of the West.

Economic Aid

The majority of the inhabitants of the South Pacific islands are poor by world standards and live in isolated areas. They desperately want to catch up with the rest of the world and need assistance in most fields to do so. Economic assistance programs need not be large, but should be well-designed, tailored to the needs of the people, and, above all, visible. Such programs should demonstrate U.S. sincere interest in the people and the ability to provide help quickly and effectively.

Visits

Like the Soviets, the West has cruise ships in the Pacific. However, Western governments have not used these assets, as have the Soviets, to gain access to island leaders by hosting social affairs and lectures. Entertaining local dignitaries would incur little expense and might gain goodwill toward the West.

During the last several years, The U.S. Commander in Chief Pacific (CINCPAC) has dispatched a Seabee team to the Solomons, and more recently to Vanuatu. Both have performed useful construction work, and more important, they have gained the respect and admiration of the islanders. A recent Navy ship visit to Papua New Guinea also spread goodwill. These should be repeated as appropriate.

Sensitivity

Many island leaders believe that the United States is interested in them only in the context of the East-West conflict. American officials should counter their doubts by visiting the area to discuss divisive issues and to show an interest in the islanders and their problems. To make the visits productive, visiting AID officials should also be prepared to offer financial assistance. Congratulations on national days, invitations to island officials to visit the United States, and other such gestures are low cost but highly effective. Above all, the United States must display sensitivity to the South Pacific's colonial past, its current pride in political independence, and its real needs.

II. VANUATU

BACKGROUND

The Republic of Vanuatu, called New Hebrides until its independence on July 30, 1980, consists of a chain of some 80 islands in Melanesia with 4,707 square miles of land. Most of its 132,000 (as of 1984) inhabitants live on the nine largest islands, speak over a hundred languages and dialects, and have an average per capita income of $500, among the lowest in the area. Over 90 percent are Melanesian; the remaining 10 percent are French, English, Chinese, Vietnamese, and other South Pacific islanders. Father Walter Lini, the first Prime Minister, has described the divisions confronting Vanuatu as a nation:

> A combination of geographic, social and political factors has made the emergence of the New Hebrides as a nation state a particularly difficult process; on top of the existing variety of Melanesian languages and customs have been added the divisive influences of competing French and English cultures and languages and the frequently competitive activities of churches and missions. Disunity and polarization are negative aspects of our frequently praised dual heritage.[1]

Vanuatu started national life with few resources in almost every sphere of life and has progressed slowly. While the economy is primarily a subsistence one, copra, fish, and beef are produced for export. Timber and tourism promise further development, and recent exploration indicates gold and other minerals may exist on the islands. Education is limited, with approximately a dozen secondary schools and no tertiary education except a branch of the USP, which gives extension courses aided by satellite transmissions. Whether Vanuatu can become an economically viable state on its own remains doubtful; it appears now that it will need outside aid for the forseeable future.

Vanuatu was ruled for approximately 75 years by a French-British condominium, which the ni-Vanuatu (as the citizens call themselves) refer to as the "pandemonium." Even though it had a joint administration, the French and the British each followed separate policies, had separate schools, hospitals, etc. In effect, with the ni-Vanuatu there were three jurisdictions. In the early 1970s, the British began to encourage the independence

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[1]Walter H. Lini, *Beyond Pandemonium—From the New Hebrides to Vanuatu*, 1980, Wellington, New Zealand. The book purports to be an autobiography, but much of it was written by the editors.

movement, offering advice and aid; the French, however, opposed the drive for independence. Thus the condominium not only had two identities at the same time, but harbored a basic inner contradiction over the independence issue.

When ni-Vanuatu claim that they are the only people in the South Pacific who had to fight for independence, they are referring to the fight not only against French foot-dragging over independence but, more important, against French and private American support for rebellions on Tanna and Espiritu Santo (usually called Santo) islands launched against the Vanuatu government just before and after independence. The situation on Santo was particularly troublesome, as the new government lacked the forces to handle it, and the French and the British had no interest in helping. The new government in Port Vila, the capital, called on the government of Papua New Guinea (PNG) for troops, and PNG troops, air-lifted by the Australians, quickly squelched the rebellion. The Vanuatu government was highly gratified by this show of Melanesian solidarity, which it has continued to champion. However, the scars left by these revolts against the central government remain to plague the new nation.

Although extremely proud of winning the political independence struggle, most of Vanuatu's leaders believe strongly that economic independence must follow if true independence is to be attained. This belief has intensified anticolonial and antiwhite feelings. The powerful desire to be free of all outside interference and not rely on just one or two nations is one cause of the government's frequently anti-Western attitude and policies.

The founding fathers of Vanuatu are primarily English-speaking, young (in their 30s and 40s) Protestants. They have received more formal education than most in the New Hebrides, and some have studied in Australia and New Zealand. While the British administration and Anglican and Presbyterian churches supported independence, most of the French-speaking Catholics, largely following France's lead, did not. This division has continued in the new nation—the Anglophiles dominate the government and the Francophiles remain in opposition.

THE VANUAAKU PATI AND INDEPENDENCE

Walter Lini, while in school in New Zealand, felt the stirrings of Melanesian nationalism. In 1968, at the age of 26, he helped organize the Western Pacific Students' Association in New Zealand and founded and edited a journal, *Onetalk*, which means conversation between family and friends. Despite ordination as an Anglican deacon in 1969, he continued his Melanesian nationalist activities. In 1971, at the Queen's birthday reception on Santo, his chance meeting with two other supporters of independence, Donald

Kalpokas and Father John Bani, led to the formation of the New Hebrides Cultural Association. Within a few weeks it became the New Hebrides National Party, the driving force for independence.[2]

Because of his experience with *Onetalk*, Father Lini became editor of the official party newspaper, *New Hebrides Viewpoints*. The party grew not only in the towns, but throughout the islands, gaining about 4000 members by the mid 1970s. In January 1974, a party congress in Port Vila took steps to put it on a more secure basis. Father Lini, having been given leave by the Anglican church, was elected president, and Fred Timakata, a Presbyterian, vice president. The party set up a main office in Port Vila and paid salaries to several leaders so that they could devote full time to the party.

In May 1974, Barak Sope, later secretary general of the party, and Bani attended a conference of African states in Tanzania.[3] At this meeting, Tanzania and Jamaica invited the New Hebrides party to attend meetings of the Committee of Twenty-Four for Decolonization at the United Nations. Later Cuba supported this invitation, and it was accepted. In 1976, Father Lini told the committee that New Hebrides wanted independence in 1977. This event gave the party international prestige. Party leaders now ascribe Vanuatu's close relations with Cuba and other radical countries to this early help in the independence struggle.

In 1977, the New Hebrides National Party became the Vanuaaku Pati (VP) and intensified its struggle for independence, especially against France. It had not only able leadership but a grass roots organization based to a large extent on the Presbyterian church's organization. Women's and youth organizations were formed to support the party. When local committees with local leaders appeared to stray from the party line, commissars were sent out to ensure discipline and loyalty. Sope, having gained experience in the islands while working for the cooperative movement, was the leading organizer. The party's primary themes were independence, land for the indigenous, and Melanesian socialism—a rather vague concept. Admitting that this concept had some parallels with communism, Lini insisted that Vanuatu would develop its own brand of socialism.

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[2]Aiden Garae and Bani became the first president and vice president, respectively, but had faded from the political scene by the late 1970s. Lini wrote in *Beyond Pandemonium* (p.24) that he, Bani, and Kalpokas founded the party. Frank Din says in *Yumi Stanap* (p. 58), that the founders were Kalpokas, Peter Taurokoto, and George Worek, who asked Lini to help them because of his editorial experience with *Onetalk* (Institute of Pacific Studies, USP, Fiji, 1981, p.58).

[3]Sope is said to have joined the party in 1976, but written records conflict on the date. In 1974, he may have been with the Cooperative Association and also a member of the party. In 1976, he began to devote full time to the party. He was secretary general until suspended from the party in 1988.

After boycotting the condominium-sponsored elections in 1977, early the next year, the Vanuaaku Pati established the People's Provisional Government, which ruled on several islands.[4] It collected taxes, ran businesses, and carried out many governmental functions, illustrating the strength of the party organization. However, in late 1978, it joined a Government of National Unity led by a Francophile, Father Leymeng. The VP won the November 1979 elections handily, formed a government, and prepared for independence in 1980.

THE CHURCHES AND INDEPENDENCE[5]

The churches of Vanuatu, as well as outside churches and church organizations, played a pivotal role in the VP's independence struggle.[6] The *New Hebrides Viewpoint* constantly stressed the close relationship of the party and the churches. According to Lini's book, *Beyond Pandemonium* (p.22), "There must be few places in the modern world where the churches have played such an important and constructive role in an independence story."

After World War II, the churches sent out missionaries who supported independence rather than the colonial governments as they had done before the war. The churches not only provided most of the education for the ni-Vanuatu in Vanuatu and abroad, but also were the only institutions where the islanders could gain experience in organizational work and develop leadership. They also imparted status to those who belonged. Ambitious and able people joined a church, and many emerged as national leaders.

In Vanuatu, the Presbyterian church, which claims 40 percent of the population, played an early and dominant role in the independence campaign. The Presbyterian churches of Australia and New Zealand, after consultation with the New Hebrides Missionary Church, gave the latter its independence in 1948, thus taking an early, conscious

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[4]In Vanuatu, the senior author was told that it was mere coincidence that the terms "commissars" and "People's Provisional Government" were also used in communist countries.

[5]This section relies heavily on two unpublished dissertations: Jeremy Valentine MacClancy, "Vanuatu and Kostom: A Study of Cultural Symbols on the Inception of a Nation State with South Pacific," a doctoral dissertation at Wolfson College, Oxford, UK, 1983, and especially Michael David Myers, "Independence Long Vanuatu: The Churches and Politics in a Melanesian Nation," doctoral dissertation, University of Auckland, Auckland, NZ, 1984. It also draws on conversations of the senior author with ni-Vanuatu.

[6]At the Third Assembly of the Pacific Conference of Churches in 1976, it was agreed that churches could not avoid political involvement.

step to encourage political independence in the islands. Presbyterians also were the first to push Bislama (pidgin) as the national language. The church in Vanuatu, however, was split between political activists who later became national political leaders and the more conservative and nonpolitical churchmen.

The Anglican church, the second largest in Vanuatu, also supported independence and the VP, though less so as the party became more militant. It set up an independent Melanesian diocese in 1975. The French-dominated Catholic church, the third largest, followed the lead of France and opposed both the VP and independence.

The World Council of Churches provided outside leadership and moral support to the party.[7] It also organized and financed several conferences aimed at galvanizing church support for independence and the VP. One of the first was the South Pacific Action for Development and Economic Strategies (SPADES) conference, held in January 1973 in Port Vila, which greatly boosted the VP at home and abroad.[8] SPADES, in fact, illustrates the important and often radical input of the churches. The conference was presented as strictly a church affair, despite its title, and the British allowed it to be held on British-owned property and gave some of their key Vanuatu employees leave to attend. These included George Kalkoa, now called Adi (Chief) George Sokomanu, an early leader of the party and the first and current president of Vanuatu.

The real purpose of the conference, however, was political—to develop a strategy for greater involvement of the churches in cultural, economic, and political affairs. Among the key foreign guests was Apolonarius Macha, a Tanzanian rural affairs officer who offered his brand of socialism and ideas on land nationalization, many of which Father Lini is reported to have adopted. Liberation theologists also attended.

The political and extremist positions of the conference upset not only the French and the British government officials but many indigenous churchmen who did not approve of church involvement in politics, especially radical politics.[9] Some protested that the WCC was more interested in politics than religion and complained to its headquarters in Geneva, but the WCC did not cease its political action.

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[7]The WCC, a worldwide ecumenical organization, is headquartered in Geneva. At least some of its staff are leftist and liberation theologists and hold anti-Western views.

[8]The French had kept out a UN and other fact-finding groups, so SPADES became a vehicle for telling the world about the New Hebrides independence effort.

[9]Numerous sources suggest that there were militant and extremist speeches, racist remarks, and even talk of violence.

Overseas churches and the WCC played a major role in financing the VP's independence campaign. They gave funds to the local churches, which, in turn, often used the funds to develop political awareness in rural areas and to finance "community development," a phrase often meaning political activity.[10] Early in the 1970s, Reverend Rex Davis, a WCC staff member committed financial aid to the VP. The New Zealand Council of Churches gave over $19,000 in 1977-1978, and nearly $90,000 in 1978-1979. Christian Aid, an arm of the British Council of Churches, provided a £20,000 grant for a women's program (VP was the only organization in the country with a women's component).

The Presbyterian Church of Australia gave $103,000 in 1976 in the name of religion but, in fact, for political activity.[11] After considerable criticism, the VP set up a community development fund in order that it not be directly involved in rural (political) projects sponsored by churches; nevertheless, the money continued to move from foreign churches to political activities.

These same church organizations sponsored ni-Vanuatu attendance at various South Pacific independence conferences and WCC-sponsored conferences, as well as other visits abroad.[12] Tanzania appears to have been a favorite visiting spot for party and government leaders. In addition to Barak Sope's and John Bani's attendance at a May 1974 conference there, Peter Taurokoto attended one on "The Family 1974," and Fred Timakata in 1975 represented the Presbyterian Church at the Fifth Assembly of the WCC and then went on to Tanzania. Party and government leaders have continued to visit Tanzania.

Father Lini's appearance before the United Nations in 1976 was supported by the churches, and his 1978 world tour with Sope was at least partially church-supported, even though it was a political tour that publicized Vanuatu's independence efforts. Many also visited the WCC headquarters in Geneva, including Sethy Regenvanu, the former deputy prime minister, who carried the complaints of some of the Vanuatu churchmen about the council's political activity.[13] These trips, as well as the visits of foreign churchmen to Vanuatu, often put the VP leadership in touch with activist factions in the churches.

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[10]The WCC and overseas churches also provided funds for training, office supplies, and support activities.

[11]See Myers, op. cit., pp. 177-178.

[12]The WCC sponsored and ecumenical conference on "Society, Development, and Peace" in Papua New Guinea in 1970; the SPADES conference mentioned above; "Education for Liberation and Community," held in Suva in 1974; and "Pacifica '77," held in the Solomons in 1977.

[13]Some sources consider Sethy Regenvanu a radical; others have a high regard for him and believe he is no longer a radical.

The churches, and the WCC in particular, took the initiative in selecting and inviting foreign churchmen to work in Vanuatu and to attend area conferences on independence. Many of these foreigners were liberation theologists who took activist positions, and they made a considerable impact on the Vanuatu leaders. The United Presbyterian Church of the United States sent the Reverend Bill Coop, a devotee of Brazilian liberation theologist Paolo Freire, to work in Vanuatu for two years from 1972 to 1974, a crucial time for the budding independence movement. With a generous travel budget, he worked in all the islands to arouse the people's "political awareness." In 1974, Freire, who at the time was working for the WCC, was the featured guest at a Suva conference on independence which followed SPADES. The WCC financed both conferences.

In 1975, the VP, probably with church funds, invited Roosevelt Brown—also known as Dr. Paolo Brown, a prominent leader of the black movement in the West Indies—to visit New Hebrides as a community educator. The British, concerned about his visit, confronted Father Lini with evidence of Brown's radical political beliefs, but Lini pleaded ignorance. Brown gave racist speeches, claimed Jesus was a black, and aroused strong anticolonial emotions. During Brown's visit Lini assured the British that Brown would stop his propagation of black power and other agitation, but he continued to do so until he was arrested and forced to leave. The British told the VP leaders that Brown's racist doctrines and trouble-making abilities could damage the party's image. The party moderates accepted this explanation, but Barak Sope and Kalkot Matas-Kele Kele did not, and the latter organized a demonstration in sympathy for Brown on his departure.

The Vanuaaku Pati seldom refers to financial aid from the WCC or outside churches and, when asked, downplays such assistance. One party official, who did not want to be identified, denied to the senior author that the VP had ever received any financial assistance from the WCC. In an interview with the senior author, President Sokomanu discussed at some length how the VP had raised money for its independence campaign, but he made no mention of outside help. When asked about such assistance, the president replied, "Oh, yes, we received a little."

While stressing the total independence and self-sufficiency of the party, the VP accuses the opposition, largely Francophile Catholics, of having received considerable outside aid. In fact, the French-supported Catholic church received little outside support; Australian and New Zealand Catholic churches supported the VP. However, the myth that the VP received no outside financial help persists and reinforces the views that the party is independent.

Vanuatu churches and other churches in the South Pacific are now seeking to develop their own Pacific theology, which will almost certainly be based on liberation theology with its anti-Western thrust. Thus, the churches have attempted to reinforce the ideas of rebellion, struggle, and an evil West but have offered no corresponding criticism of the East.

THE GOVERNMENT AND THE VANUAAKU PATI

The Vanuatu government and the Vanuaaku Pati were essentially one until the November 1987 election. It is widely believed that a smaller inner core (five or six people) of the executive committee of the VP, composed of 15 to 20 top leaders, ran the country. One ni-Vanuatu, on being asked about the party-government relationship, told the senior author in 1987 that the executive committee met on Wednesdays and decided the agenda and the cabinet met on Thursdays and endorsed it.

As a rule, cabinet members are members of the executive committee. The permanent secretaries of the ministries are politically trusted members of the party and ensure that the bureaucracy toes the line, just as the commissars do in the rural party committees. The government/party controls the media. It reviews the only newspaper in the country, the *Vanuatu Weekly*, before publication, and carefully monitors the country's only radio station, Radio Vanuatu.[14]

The party has ruled with an iron hand and brooks little opposition. If expatriates or other foreigners, including advisers to the government, do or say the wrong thing, they quickly receive the "green letter," which tells them to leave the country in so many days. In spring 1987, when a British adviser tried to stop illegal logging on Efate in which a top party official was involved, he was dismissed and asked to leave the country immediately. The following day, the Vanuatu government blandly asked the British for a replacement.

Many of the party's early leaders have left government or been forced out, but a hard core continues in power. Of the four founders, Lini is now prime minister, Bani is believed to be abroad, George Worek has left the government, and Donald Kalpokas is minister of foreign affairs and trade. Lini, Sope, Kalpokas, and Fred Timakata, remain the most active.

Fred Timakata, an early leader, the first deputy prime minister, and later speaker of the House, refused the speakership after the November 1987 election; he is now minister of health. Thomas Reuben, the first minister of primary industry, is out.[15] John Naupa, first minister for transport, communications, and public works, now heads the opposition

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[14]An independent paper, *Voice of Vanuatu*, was shut down in 1983 and its editor deported because she criticized the government.

[15]Worek and Reuben were dismissed as ministers in 1982 and formed a Santo-based party, the Vanuatu Independent Alliance Party, which has only a small following.

National Democratic Party. Peter Taurokoto's whereabouts are unknown to the authors. Willie Korisa, the first minister for social affairs and minister of health from 1981 until he was fired for "personal reasons" (drunkenness) in January 1987, was the highly paid Chairman of the Board of Air Vanuatu until the 1987 election.

Adi George Sokomanu is president of the republic. Kalpokor Kalsakau, formerly finance minister, although he joined the party only late in 1980, was elected its vice president in June 1987. Sela Molisa, at first active in the cooperative movement, joined in 1982 and is now finance minister. His wife, Grace, has long been Father Lini's secretary and has influence in her own right.

The party is beset by rivalries. Since the party was formed, there has been tension between those from the north, especially Santo, and the power base on the southern island of Efate. The northerners wanted more decentralization, while the southerners, who with Father Lini (a northerner) largely ran the party until the 1987 election, favored a high degree of centralization.

Many outer island politicians fear and dislike the Efate group, which has been powerful throughout the party's existence. Mostly Presbyterian, with many members from the tiny island of Ifira in Port Vila harbor, it includes Barak Sope, Kalpokor Kalsakau, Donald Kalpokas, and President Adi George Sokomanu. Willie Korisa, originally from Tanna though schooled in Efate, is close to Sope and part of the group. The election of November 1987 appears to have shifted power, probably only temporarily, from the Efate group to the northerners, partly because of the party's poor showing in Efate and partly because of Sope's open challenge to Lini for the prime minister's job.

Personal rivalries have existed and continue. Sope and Kalkot Matas-Kele Kele disagreed with Regenvanu and Timakata over how to deal with the colonial powers in 1978. Most observers agree that Kalsakau and Sope, both from Ifira, have been bitter rivals on the island and in government, but since his defeat in the election, Kalsakau has gone into business. In the past, sources disagreed on whether Lini and Sope got along, but since the election, a tense rivalry has emerged between the two. Sope has quietly built a political power base in addition to his support among the chiefs and reportedly receives money from Libya, as well as from his numerous businesses.

In February 1987, Father Lini suffered a stroke while in Washington, and his continued illness and limited capacity to function have caused disarray in the party and intensified rivalries and friction among party leaders. When Lini stopped off in Fiji on his way home from the United States after his stroke, one newspaperman asked him who would succeed him if he retired. He replied, "Well, we [the party] will meet for a few days and the

new leader will emerge from that meeting." In the spring, President Sokomanu appeared to some to be trying to take over from Lini and ease him out of politics "in order to save Father Lini's life." "He was working too hard," Sokomanu told the senior author. According to one rumor, Regenvanu, the acting prime minister and deputy prime minister, was scheming for the position. According to another, Sope was pushing Kalpokas for the job. One knowledgeable expatriate caustically remarked that Kalpokas was "just putty in Sope's hands." As the elections approached, some reports suggested that Sope was running for the position himself against Kalsakau—a new role for him, as he has always stayed in the background.[16]

In June 1987, the VP convened on Malo island to elect officers and decide strategy for the November elections. Most reports indicate that the congress was poorly organized and lacked control, reflecting the condition of the party itself. Until 1987 the VP had been well organized and ably led. Lini, Sope, and other leaders were reelected. Regenvanu was dropped as vice president and replaced by Kalsakau. Kalkot Matas-Kele Kele, who did not attend and had not recently been active in the party, was elected assistant vice president. Some reshuffling of the executive board occurred, but no major changes were made.

Ni-Vanuatu complain, largely in private, that the government does not do enough to improve their welfare and or share with them the aid they hear about. Some on Efate disapprove of the high living of top government officials, which is more visible to them than to the outer islanders. When the senior author was in Vanuatu in March 1987, the government had just decided to grant all ministers a fully paid, one-month vacation with their families, anywhere in the world. Some have Mercedes cars and are accumulating considerable personal wealth, and quite a few participate in the nightlife of Port Vila. Furthermore, not all wealth has been legally acquired. None of this pleased people whose average income is about $500 a year and many of whom are devout Christians.

An expatriate under contract to the government sadly remarked to the senior author that he had taken a job in Vanuatu three years ago partly because it was free of corruption. He reported that today (1987) corruption is prevalent and spreading throughout government and society. Much of the talk about corruption centers on Barak Sope, who according to several observers, is an activist in a passive society.[17] His activities, which have aroused

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[16]When Father Lini's sister, Hazel Lini, was asked by an expatriate in Septemper 1987 who would take over as prime minister if Lini retired, she said Kalsakau or Sope. Upon being pressed further as to which one, she replied, "Well, Kalsakau joined the party only recently, didn't he?" a hint that Sope would get the nod.

[17]Sope reportedly is involved in corruption, but the authors have seen no evidence.

controversy and envy, have included his taking the lead in relations with Libya and his aggressive involvement in many private business enterprises. Sope's increasing attention to his personal wealth could reduce efforts to improve the welfare of the people. However, his considerable abilities make him one of the few real leaders of Vanuatu.

Vanuatu has launched two five-year plans and received a high per capita level of foreign aid but has not made significant progress in developing the country. A visitor does not read about development in the press or feel any sense of government urgency to help the people. Government officials appear to believe that development will just happen. Their approach resembles that of the "cargo cults," whose members believe that some person or group will arrive one day, provide for all their material needs, and solve all their problems, while all they have to do is wait.[18]

In defense of the government, it must be stated that Vanuatu started from a limited economic base, most of which was controlled by expatriates. The government, after independence, reclaimed the land held by expatriates and returned it to the indigenous people, while the expatriates left with their skills and money.[19] The shortage of skilled people has handicapped Vanuatu's progress, and the efforts to deal with it are inadequate.

In addition to their passive philosophy about development, the ni-Vanuatu have had bad luck. In the early years of independence, commodity prices, including copra, were low and tourism down because of the weak Australian dollar. In early 1987, Lini suffered a stroke and a second cyclone hit. Although the West gave some aid to rebuild, government leaders, perhaps because of their pride and anti-Western feelings, refused much American and Western aid.[20] However, not a few people in Port Vila questioned the lack of aid from their new friends, the Soviets and the Libyans. The ni-Vanuatu themselves did a great job of cleaning up and repairing damaged buildings.

When the senior author visited Vanuatu in March 1987, some church leaders and other observers told of unrest and dissatisfaction with the government. An expatriate churchman predicted that if national elections had been held in March, the VP's chance of

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[18]Cargo cults are prevalent in all Melanesia. One in Vanuatu calls itself the Duke of Edinburgh. Its members believe that the Duke was born on Tanna island, went to England for experience, and will return to Tanna to bring riches and solutions to all their problems.

[19]Land plays probably the central role in most Melanesian lives. It is the basis of their identity, even more than tribe or family, and is received from previous generations and held in trust for future generations. It is not bought and sold daily as in the West. Hence land is a major cause of cultural conflict. The concept is changing, but slowly.

[20]In early 1988, as noted above, U.S. Seabees were allowed for a short time to do reconstruction work and gained the respect of the people and some government leaders.

winning would have been only 50-50. In fact, dissatisfaction with the party surfaced in the regional council elections in August 1987, when the VP lost control of the regional council in Santo. Santo has felt slighted by the Port Vila government, which, for its part, has not forgotten the 1980 Santo rebellion.[21] The VP lost votes, though no seats, in the Pentecost council (Lini's home island), but lost two seats in the Efate council—one to the National Democratic Party and one to the Labour Pati. These losses may explain the government's subsequent redrawing of many parliamentary constituency boundaries and creating seven new seats in preparation for the November 1987 national elections.

The Vanuaaku Pati has completely dominated the government. In the early days, the Francophile Union of Moderate Parties (UMP) was the main opposition, but it has been divided and weak.[22] It is also badgered by the government. For example, the former opposition leader, Vincent Boulekone, was expelled from the parliament because he missed three sessions, which the constitution states is a basis for expulsion. Since he had been seriously ill, he took his case to the courts, which so far have supported him, but he was not admitted to parliament. The issue now has been overtaken by Boulekone's reelection in November 1987. The UMP put forward 33 candidates for the November election and announced that it would cooperate with any party that gains at least one seat; this is a change from its past policy of no cooperation with any other party.

Two new English-speaking parties have recently been formed. In 1986, John Naupa, formerly of the VP, founded the National Democratic Party; he is its president and David Edson is secretary general. Somewhat conservative, it is composed of a few expatriates and their employees. It attacks government corruption and emphasizes internal problems, such as lack of schools, inadequate health facilities, and insufficent economic development. It opposes much of the government's foreign policy. The party has stong links with the

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[21]In 1986, the government closed a number of schools in Santo, citing a shortage of funds. Some viewed this as just another slap at Santo.

[22]The Union of Moderate Parties includes the Union de la Population des Nouvelles Hebrides (UPNH), founded in 1971 mainly by the French and a few Melanesians who favored moderate political reform; the Union des Communautes des Nouvelles Hebrides, established in 1974 by French dissatisfied with the UPNH and its Melanesians and a few Americans and Australians who favored political reforms but not independence; and the Mouvement Autonomiste des Nouvelle Hebrides also created in 1974, solely by French planters. Another party, Nagriamel, founded in the 1960s, was originally a land reform and independence movement and led until 1980 by Jimmy Stevens. It is now a political group with cargo cult overtones. Today it is generally strongest in the north, particularly in Santo, and still participates in elections. The John Frum group, more or less a cargo cult organization on the island of Tanna in the south, also garners some votes in elections. Other parties are too small to be mentioned.

Presbyterian Church and the Church of Christ, many of whose members are now critical of the VP and its leaders. However, the party has limited funds, has not attracted wide support, and won no seats in the election.

Another new party, the New Peoples Party, is composed largely of junior civil servants who are angry at the incompetence and corruption of the government. They chide the government for its neglect of pressing domestic problems. Most of them accept the fishing treaty with the Soviet Union but disapprove of Vanuatu's links with Libya. Neither party has the strength to challenge the VP successfully.

UNIONS AND THE VANUATU LABOUR PATI

As noted earlier, the 1978 Prague meeting of the World Federation of Trade Unions decided to make an intensive union effort in the South Pacific. Since that time, leftist leaders, notably John Halfpenny from Australia and Jim Knox and Ken Douglas from New Zealand, have worked hard to influence and mold the unions in the Pacific, including those in Vanuatu. At the expense of strictly union matters, they have stressed such international political issues as a nuclear-free zone, anticolonialism, and aid for the Kanaks in New Caledonia.[23] In fact, some Vanuatu labor leaders complain that the "downunder" leaders have not done enough to develop the unions themselves or to gain better wages and benefits for the workers.

Given the state of economic development in Vanuatu, the unions are small and weak. Union leaders complain that the government opposes them. The teachers union, led by Job Tahi and one of the best organized, struck in August 1985. It asked the government for time on the radio and space in the *Vanuatu Weekly* to present its side of the case. The government refused, saying that its media organs were not going to be used to criticize it. The strike was finally settled after the government threatened to hire all new teachers and the union capitulated.

At the 1986 meeting of the Vanuatu Trade Union Congress, formed in 1974, union leaders accused the government and private industry of trying to suppress trade union activities and treating strikers harshly. Father Lini, addressing the congress, said that Vanuatu's unions were young and must move slowly. He said that they should not try to imitate unions in industrialized countries. Both he and then deputy prime minister Sethy Regenvanu, who was also the home minister responsible for labor matters, warned the labor union leaders against the bad influence of unions in developed countries. Regenvanu did not

[23]The churches have also adopted and spread these international themes (see Sec. I).

name the countries, but Lini suggested Australia as one. They may have been concerned about the possible competition from union political power, which dominates both Australian and New Zealand politics and has emerged as a political force in Fiji.

In 1986, Kenneth Santungi, general secretary of the Vanuatu Trade Union Congress, visited moderate union leaders in Australia for two weeks, and Knox and Douglas in New Zealand for another two weeks. These two and John Halfpenny of Australia, all pro-Soviet in their views, helped create the Fiji Labour Party in 1985. On his return to Vanuatu, Santungi resigned from the Congress in order to establish the Labour Pati in Vanuatu. Its constitution is the same as that of the Fiji Labour Party, which had largely been suggested by the New Zealanders. The Labour Pati's first election victory came when it won a seat in the regional council of Efate in August 1987, but elsewhere in the country its progress has been slow. It did not do well in the November 1987 elections.

Given the Australian and New Zealand union leaders' emphasis on international issues over narrow union matters, one questions their attempts at politicization of labor against the government of Vanuatu, which already espouses their favorite themes. Perhaps these Soviet-oriented labor leaders fear that: (1) the present government is unreliable, despite its present favorable stances; (2) Vanuatu leaders are showing themselves too independent for their steady friends of Moscow; (3) the present government leaders, wanting to retain power, will oppose any opposition, even if it reflects their own viewpoints and policies. Considering these possibilities, the labor leaders downunder may have decided that the best course for the long run would be to build a political apparatus in Vanuatu that would be under their control and steadfast in its allegiance.

However, the Vanuatu unions have generally remained moderate in their views. Being weak, they are more interested in building their internal strength and gaining member benefits than in debating international issues. Halfpenny, who apparently is moderating his image in Australia, has become less active in Vanuatu, while the New Zealanders have been busy with Fiji and their own national affairs. Union leaders know they must also get along with the powerful Vanuaaku Pati, even if they do not share all of its radical views on foreign policy and differ with it in the domestic arena. Given the slow economic development in Vanuatu, it will likely be some time before its unions become as powerful as Fiji's unions and play a major role in Vanuatu politics.

FOREIGN POLICY

The senior author facetiously suggested to some expatriates during his 1987 visit to Vanuatu that its government leaders seem to care more for posturing on the international scene than concentrating on difficult domestic issues. All but one agreed.[24] Indeed, for the West, this government's foreign policy has proved to be its most disturbing characteristic. Most of its policies and positions are decidedly anti-Western:

- It is the most vocal supporter of liberation movements in the region.
- It has offered aid and a home for a government in exile to the Kanaks in New Caledonia.
- It supports the Free Papua Organization in Irian Jaya and the Fretilin in East Timor and is believed to have passed on Libyan funds to these groups.
- It exhibits great empathy with and sympathy and support for revolutionary movements throughout the world.
- It has negotiated and signed a fishing treaty with the Soviet Union.
- It has courted Cuba and Libya.
- It has recognized a large number of radical movements, including the Polisarios in West Africa.
- It openly approves of most of the anti-Western propositions advocated by the Independent and Nuclear Free South Pacific movement (see Section I).[25]

Vanuatu is the one of the few South Pacific members of the Nonaligned Movement. It tries to be the aggressive leader of the so-called Melanesian "spearhead" group, which favors a more independent and neutral stance for South Pacific states. The spearhead group was formalized at a meeting of the heads of government of Papua New Guiena (PNG), Vanuatu, and the Solomons held in mid-March 1988 in Port Vila, Vanuatu.[26] Vanuatu has little use for the South Pacific Commission because members include colonial powers

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[24]Although he did not discuss this specific point with ni-Vanuatu, the author suspects that more than a few on Efate might agree also.

[25]Sope seems to be among the left, although he appears to be an opportunist. Lini is probably a moderate, though this is not entirely clear in foreign policy.

[26]Despite its membership, Papua New Guinea has held defense talks with the United States, hosted a U.S. Special Forces military training team in December 1987, and received U.S. Navy ship visits.

(Australia, France, Britain, New Zealand, and the United States); it would prefer a South Pacific Forum composed of just island states but without Australia and New Zealand. It is unabashedly nationalistic and pro-South Pacific islanders.

To view Vanuatu leaders as posturing on the world stage and making their foreign policy decisions in an East-West context may be simplistic and unfair. Two aspects of the Melanesian culture of Vanuatu have affected its conduct of foreign policy. First, Melanesian society is passive in many ways, a trait that contributes, as noted earlier, to the development of cargo cults. These cults ignore active achievement but emphasize that riches and solutions will come to cult adherents. Second, the Melanesian concept of wealth is that wealth is demonstrated by giving it away. A Melanesian "big man" becomes a big man and rises in esteem as he gives wealth away. Thus, Vanuatu waits for the big powers to demonstrate their wealth by giving at least some of it to Vanuatu. Admittedly, this is an over-simplified summary of two complex ideas, but they mesh with the attitudes that the rich West must help the poor Third World. Vanuatu needs both self-help and aid, but it has too often delayed the former while waiting to receive the latter.

The churches also played an important role in shaping the foreign policy of the new nation. The Pacific Conference of Churches, founded by the WCC in the early 1960s, took the lead in the Independent and Nuclear Free South Pacific movement. The movement has a decidedly anti-Western bias, and its various conferences, while supporting independence, also take anti-Western positions.[27] The issues of nuclear weapons, military bases, and militarization are directed against the Western nations and imply almost no criticism of the Soviets. Many religious leaders in Vanuatu, some of whom are now the political leaders, were exposed to these ideas during their early years of fighting for independence.

The colonial experience of Vanuatu also has influenced Vanuatu's leaders. Vanuatu had a longer and more unpleasant struggle for independence than most South Pacific nations. This has made the earlier colonial years look worse than they perhaps were. It also explains the leaders' strong support for the Kanaks in New Caledonia—fellow Melanesians struggling against the French. Vanuatu's anticolonialism also extends to Indonesia because of its control of East Timor and Irian Jaya.

The West and some members of the Pacific Forum have shown considerable concern over Libya's activities in the South Pacific and especially its relationship with Vanuatu. Libyans have been visiting Vanuatu since 1985, and many ni-Vanuatu, including Barak Sope, have visited Libya or attended meetings, conferences, and training sessions there.

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[27]Leftist teachers at the USP also supported these views and influenced such leaders as Barak Sope.

In March 1986, VP officials attended the MATHABA meeting in Tripoli, sponsored by Qaddafi.[28] The following month, Prime Minister Lini condemned the United States for its air strike at Libya and shortly thereafter announced the establishment of diplomatic relations. In April 1987, Qaddafi held another meeting of MATHABA in Libya attended by three members of the VP. Its purpose was to consolidate Libya's position as supporter and mediator among revolutionary groups throughout the world and to foster cooperation among the groups. At the conference, the decision was made to establish a MATHABA office in Vanuatu.[29] The Vanuatu government and VP were divided over this matter, and the other Melanesian states made known their objections. As of June 1988, however, the office has not been established.

Seven ni-Vanuatu sent for training in Libya in late 1986 by Sope, over the protest of the foreign ministry, now serve as guards for VP leaders. They were at the airport on March 7, 1987, to welcome back and guard Prime Minister Lini. Reports from Vanuatu at that time indicated that Father Lini had agreed to send his bodyguard of approximately 35 men to train in Libya, but nothing further has been reported on the matter.

Although Vanuatu police resent the bodyguards trained in Libya, sometimes referring to them as "the Libyan bullies," Sope is urging the police and its leaders to participate in the training. The nature of the training is purposely made vague, sometimes even referred to as journalistic training, but the returnees have demonstrated that it includes considerable paramilitary training. Reportedly the Special Branch still opposes the Libyan connection.

Libyans have also visited Vanuatu. Libyans openly appeared in Port Vila in March 1987, when the author was there, but the government denied their presence. A minor crisis developed in spring 1987 when two Libyans arrived in Vanuatu to establish diplomatic connections by setting up a people's bureau.[30] After some days, Father Lini announced that they had not arrived in the proper manner and would not be allowed to open an office at that time, though he held out the future possibility. They remained in Port Vila for some weeks and then quietly departed.

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[28]MATHABA was apparently formed in 1986 with Musa Kusa, a radical ideologue and nephew of Qaddafi, as its director. It sponsors revolutionary movements around the globe.

[29]The decision to set up a MATHABA office was reported on New Zealand TV on April 24, 1987 by Richard Jones, an Australian who attended the Tripoli meeting.

[30]Australia took a strong position against Vanuatu's increasingly close relations with Libya and offended the Vanuatu leadership. However, Australia's position contributeud to the Vanuatu decision not to establish a Libyan bureau. Since the Australian defense minister Kim Beasley visited Port Vila in late 1987, Vanuatu-Australian relations have improved.

In March 1987, a Libyan trade mission visited Vanuatu but, according to a reliable source, reported back to Tripoli that Vanuatu was "too unstable" for Libyan investment. This rather surprising report reinforces the comments of some ni-Vanuatu that there has been much talk of Libyan money, but they have not seen any so far. On the other hand, numerous reports indicate that Libyan money is passing through Vanuatu for the Kanaks and perhaps for other liberation movements in the area. The relationship with Libya and Libyan activities are kept secret. They have divided the Vanuaaku Pati and are opposed by many in Vanuatu, as the November 1987 election demonstrated.

The leading advocate of the Libyan connection, Barak Sope, lost out in the initial struggle for the prime minister's post after the November election, and officials around Prime Minister Lini say that Libyan relations will now be on a government-to-government, not party-to-party, basis.[31] This suggests an attempt to bring this connection under the ministry of foreign affairs. However, Sope has operated independently in the past and may do so again.[32]

Notwithstanding the anti-Western foreign policy of most government leaders, a reservoir of pro-Western goodwill remains among the ni-Vanuatu. Many oppose Vanuatu's Libyan connection and its liaison with the Soviet Union. The results of the 1987 election suggest that support for the West remains strong, but pro-Western sympathies are subject to considerable anti-Western propaganda from the government.

THE NOVEMBER 1987 ELECTION AND THE FUTURE

The national election of the new 46-seat parliament was held as planned in November 1987. The Vanuaaku Pati retained a parliamentary majority—the balance is now 26 to 20—but lost seats and votes to the UMP, including three of the five seats on Efate.[33] The VP share

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[31]Sope's defenders claim he was told initially by the government or the party to make the Libyan connection.

[32]A source in Vanuatu has reported that Sope had abandoned the idea of establishing a people's bureau in Port Vila because of the opposition of the right wing of the VP but instead would set up a private house for Libyan Ali Marvin, reportedly a close friend to Qaddafi and MATHABA and allegedly the channel for funds to the Kanaks. As of June 1988, this had not happened.

[33]Hazel Lini, Walter Lini's sister, insisted on running as a women's candidate. She won, but her victory further divided the VP vote. The VP had too many candidates, which led to Kalsakau's running against Sope. Sope won by four votes, and Kalsakau says that he has gone into business.

of the popular vote fell from 56 percent in 1983 to 47 percent in 1987, while the opposition party's rose from 33 percent to 42 percent. Vincent Boulekone remains the president of the UMP, but Maxime Carlot will lead the opposition. The new English-speaking parties won no seats, as those opposing the VP made their protest vote more effective by supporting the UMP. The VP did well in the north.

A few days before the election, Father Lini broke his silence and announced that he would form a new government if the party won. Just after the election, Sope announced that because of pressure from certain sources, not identified, he would vie for the prime ministership. At the party congress a week after the election, Lini beat Sope 57 to 29 in a head-on confrontation unusual for Melanesian politics. Lini is not only prime minister but also minister for justice, public services, and education.

Lini's new cabinet includes holdovers Donald Kalpokas, minister of foreign affairs and trade; Sethy Regenvanu, minister for education; and Sela Molisa, who moved from foreign affairs to finance and housing minister. Jack Hopa retained agriculture and fisheries. Edward Natapei, an able former official of the ministry of defense and briefly minister of health, was named to the new position of minister of economic development, commerce, and industry. After considerable discussion, Barak Sope took a ministerial position which included responsibility for transport, tourism, public works and water supply and also responsibility for meterology, ports, the marine department, labour affairs, and immigration matters. Other cabinet members are Harold Qualao, civil aviation and telecommunications, forestry and energy; Fred Kalo Timakata, health; and William Mahit, lands.

The November election confirmed some of the problems apparent in the election campaign. The north-south rivalry was probably intensified by Sope's challenge to Lini and the party's poor showing on Efate. The makeup of the cabinet clearly revealed Lini's policy of favoring northerners, whom he felt he must rely on.

In May 1988, Sope's supporters demonstrated over the future of communal lands and caused some damage in Port Vila. After a special VP meeting which supported the Prime Minister, Lini dismissed Sope from the cabinet and suspended him as secretary general of the VP. Several legal cases resulted from these actions. Lini's supporters contend that a 1983 law states that if a minister is dismissed he also loses his seat in parliament. Sope contested this ruling.

The election results confirm the considerable dissatisfaction with economic development in Vanuatu. Lini, at the time of independence, argued that rural development was essential to the growth of the nation but did not pursue that goal with diligence. Indeed, the VP's poor record on economic development may account in part for the party's steady

decline in popular support in the last few years. Lini has taken account of this by creating the new ministry of economic development.

Lini himself is a question mark. As yet not recovered from his stroke, he maintains that he is capable of running the government, but many observers are dubious.[34] That Lini has been able to retain his position, given his limited recent participation in party and government affairs in 1987, is testimony to the unique and respected position he holds as father of the country and leader of the party. However, the machinations of various leaders during 1988 and the disarray of the party at its various meetings in 1987 do not bode well for Lini's future, despite his election victory. Coming from the northern island of Pentecost, far from the real power base of the party on Efate, Lini has never had a strong personal political base. The Efate group is also business-oriented and aggressive in a Melanesian context, all of which suggests that it will not passively accept the present political arrangement. Even if well, Lini would face serious problems.

A stronger parliamentary opposition, led by a seasoned politician, Maxime Carlot, may make Lini's task difficult. On the other hand, a constructive opposition could help him govern and also help him deal with an obstreperous group in his own party. The opposition is largely pro-Western and critical of the Libyan and Soviet ties. More important for Vanuatu, the opposition has been critical of the VP's failure to improve the people's welfare, and, theoretically, it might not take a totally negative position on Lini's efforts for internal economic development. Moreover, it might even force Lini to moderate his foreign policy.

In fact, the Sope-Lini feud has led to a different turn of events. Sope and several others VP members of parliament negotiated with the opposition for a vote of no confidence in Lini, and in June 1988 such a vote failed to carry. The fact that Sope continues to negotiaite with the opposition, although still a few votes short, means that he is still trying to oust Lini.

It is doubtful that any new government will make significant changes in foreign policy since the factors molding Vanuatu's foreign policy have not changed, and the VP has consistently supported it. Lini or Sope will pursue nonaligned policies in world affairs and remain critical of the colonial powers, particularly France. They will almost certainly try to negotiate an extension of the Soviet fishing treaty and maintain cordial relations with the Soviet Union. They will seek aid wherever they can, while trying to accelerate development. While Lini will likely handle relations with Libya more carefully than in the

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[34]In early 1988, Lini went to New Zealand for treatment. He judged that it helped him, but others do not agree. In April, he visited the Solomons for a church occasion, and he talks of going to Australia on an official visit in the near future.

past, he will not drop them, and Sope will certainly push on with them. At the same time, both will appeal to the capitalist West by continuing to provide a tax haven for banks and corporations and an attractive tourist resort. Whether they will be more conscious of the dilemmas posed by some of these conflicting policies remains a question.

U.S. OPTIONS

What can and should the United States do to help these people and to improve relations? In the first place, it must provide aid with no strings; this does not mean no oversight. The aid must primarily help the indigenous people and secondarily boost the U.S. position in the East-West conflict. Aid will be difficult, given the present state of suspicion and the anti-Western bias of many Vanuatu leaders. They view U.S. aid as a means to bolster the U.S. position; they saw the hated colonial help in the same light. They will not accept aid with strings; such offerings would further alienate them. In some areas, however, the United States could genuinely help and at the same time gain some goodwill.

Education is in a poor state in Vanuatu and needs help at all levels. For the long-run, primary and secondary education must be made available to all ni-Vanuatu. The country suffers from a drastic shortage of trained teachers, as well as schools and operating funds. In-country teacher training on an intensified basis would perhaps be the best contribution that the United States could make. While the schools are being built, churches and public buildings could be used. Vanuatu's weather is mild enough that buildings, although desirable, are not necessary; school is where the teachers are.

More tertiary education is also needed. Thirty or forty fellowships at U.S. colleges would significantly help Vanuatu. Former foreign minister Molisa mentioned the need for American higher education for ni-Vanuatu when he visited Washington in 1987.

Vocational and beginning management training is desperately needed, and the United States should seize the opportunity to conduct such training. Another area for human development possibilities concerns labor unions. Australian and New Zealand union leaders have shown more interest in politics and international affairs than in building viable unions. The Vanuatu government is sensitive to any challenge to its political power, and it fears the "downunder" union leaders for that reason. Despite the AAFLI's bad press, the United States should continue training union members for union, not political, jobs.

Education and training could be the best U.S. contribution to Vanuatu. Trained Peace Corps volunteers would meet some of the needs, but none are assigned to Vanuatu. Since the Peace Corps must be invited by a host country and volunteer jobs negotiated and provided for by both countries, we recommend that U.S. diplomatic respresentatives advise

the Vanuatu government of the help that Peace Corps volunteers could offer to education and economic development.

As already mentioned, the construction work of the U.S. Navy's Seabees in early 1988 was well received. In times of disaster, such help would be welcome, useful, and valuable, and the United States should send it whenever possible.

The relevant officials of the United States government must also try harder to understand the ni-Vanuatu, who are just emerging into the twentieth century and understandably have negative attitudes toward the West. Working with them and developing an understanding will present frustrations, given the current environment in Vanuatu, but may be the only way to gain respect and goodwill.

III. FIJI

BACKGROUND

Fiji, a country of approximately 330 islands at the border of Melanesia and Polynesia, has a land area of 7,055 square miles and a population of 680,000 in 1984. It is the richest of the South Pacific island countries, with a per capita income of approximately $1800, almost four times that of Vanuatu.[1] A former British colony, Fiji became an independent nation and a member of the Commonwealth in 1970. Following the overthrow of the elected government in 1987, Fiji left the Commonwealth and declared itself a republic.

Fiji's current governmental crisis and recurring political and social problems stem from the friction between its two major ethnic groups—native Fijians and Indians. Fijians constitute 46 percent of the total population and Indians 49 percent, with the remainder Europeans, Chinese, other islanders, and mixed races. Fijians have maintained primacy in politics since independence, while Indians have dominated economic and business activities.

In May 1987, one month after an Indian-dominated coalition won the national election, a Fijian military coup led by Lieutenant Colonel Sitiveni Rabuka ousted the government in the first such takeover in the South Pacific island area. In June 1988, now Brigadier Rabuka appointed former Governor General Ratu Sir Penaia Ganilau president. Ganilau in turn chose former Prime Minister Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara as prime minister.[2] Rabuka remains in control of Fiji's security as commander of the military and home affairs minister. A new constitution ensuring Fijian control over the government is being drawn up and will be voted upon within the next two years.

The two main ethnic groups have lived separately and have been treated differently both by Fiji's British colonial government and by Fijian governments since independence. British favoritism toward the Fijians and prejudicial treatment of the Indians in social affairs as well as in politics embittered the Indians. Even after independence, Indians continued to face a political system which failed to give them power commensurate with their numbers and prohibited them from owning land for their farms and businesses. This unequal treatment led to anticolonial and anti-British feelings that later became leftist, antinuclear, anti-Western political views.

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[1]Papua New Guinea is the region's richest in natural resources, but it lags behind Fiji in development.

[2]Ratu is a male honorific.

THE COLONIAL PERIOD

Native Fijians are basically a relaxed people who until recent decades lived a subsistence, rural life under their chiefs. They are a homogeneous group and speak their own Fiji language. Physically a strong race, they take pride in being good athletes and good soldiers. Their basic economic needs have been met by a communal system secured by traditional chiefs and a community land ownership system.

The first European settlers arrived in Fiji in the early 1800s, where they discovered sandalwood and exploited the precious wood until its depletion. The Christian missionaries who followed successfully converted the Fijians. Businessmen, planters, adventurers, and traders seasoned by the colonial spirit of the times also arrived, seeing Fiji as fertile ground for agricultural enterprises. Because the Fijian chiefs had no strong central authority, they sold land, traded, became indebted, and clashed with each other and with the foreigners.

As the Fijian economy became dependent on foreign markets, it reflected their fluctuations. Thus, when the cotton market boomed in the 1860s, so did Fijian cotton production. By the early 1870s, however, the Fiji market collapsed with America's post-Civil War revival.

To cope with the many problems caused by foreign involvement, a Fiji-wide government—a kingdom under King Cakobau—was created in June 1871. It was approved by the Europeans, who saw the need for strong central authority, but problems immediately tested the new government, and it foundered.

In 1874 the Fijian chiefs, at odds among themselves on many policy issues and suffering from the economic consequences of the cotton collapse, asked Queen Victoria to accept Fiji as a crown colony. Fijians embraced the British crown as willingly as they had embraced Christianity and considered the Queen a superchief. In the Deed of Cession signed by the chiefs in 1974, they ceded Fijian land to the Queen and became a colony, and the British promised that Fijians would be governed in accordance with their ancient customs and traditions.

The Deed of Cession remains the basis for Fijian land ownership rights. It stated that the Queen was "absolute proprietor" of all land in Fiji, with the exception of:

1. Lands bought by or given to Europeans and other foreigners before Cession
2. Lands in actual use and occupation by a Fijian chief or tribe, or land acquired for "probable support or maintenance" of a chief or tribe.

Thus, Fijian family units, *mataqali*, established by custom, would continue to own the lands they were occupying and lands they planned to use.[3]

The Importation of Indians

To revive the economy in the 1870s, foreign businessmen began sugar production. Although labor intensive, sugar cane growing and processing were well suited to Fiji. The British, however, abiding by their pledge that Fijians would be allowed to retain their traditional way of life, prohibited the employment of Fijians on commercial plantations. Such a practice would have transplanted them from their villages and disrupted families, traditions, and social structure—something the British government had experienced in other colonies and sought to avoid.

To work on the sugar plantations, the British therefore imported indentured workers from India from 1879 to 1916. After five years the Indians could return home at their own expense, or after ten years, they could go back at government expense. The Indians now in Fiji are largely descendants of indentured workers, though some immigrated in search of opportunity. Coming from many regions of India, they brought varied cultural traits and languages, with a majority speaking Hindustani. Approximately 85 percent are Hindu and the remaining Muslim. In contrast to the Fijians, the Indians on the whole are individualistic and motivated to improve their personal, political, and economic status.

After they gained freedom from indenture, approximately 60 percent of the Indians remained in Fiji. In time they made demands that brought on clashes with both Europeans and Fijians. They wanted land, but to the Fijians land was, and is, their right. For their part, the Indians claimed that as members of the British Empire, they had equal rights as stated by Lord Salisbury, the Secretary of State for India in 1975.[4] Thus, the land issue—use of land, terms of leases, and fees—became the major source of friction between the two racial groups. The Fijians claim rights on the basis of the Deed of Cession and the Indians claim them with reference to the "Salisbury Despatch."

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[3]*Mataqali*—a patrilineal kin group—constitutes a primary division of the village.

[4]Lord Salisbury wrote in 1875 that Indians who had completed their terms of service would have rights and privileges equal to those of any other class of British subjects resident in the colonies. Although never enacted into law, this "Salisbury Despatch" was taken by the Indians who migrated to Fiji as their right.

The Fijian *mataqali* held lands for its members as guaranteed by the Deed of Cession. All other lands, such as that on which towns or public facilities stood, or other unclaimed land, became crown property, except for that land already purchased by or given to Europeans or other foreigners. Surveys by the Native Lands Commission in the 1890s and again after 1910 established land titles. Further sales were prohibited, except for the period from 1905 to 1908, when pressure from foreign settlers caused the government to allow sales of freehold land. Since 1909, no Fijian communally held land has been sold.[5]

Fijians still hold 83 percent of the land, much of which is not arable. Approximately 116,000 hectares (about 8 percent) of Fijian land is leased, principally to Indians for farming under the direction of the Native Land Trust Board. Land owned by the government can be leased to tenants and the income used for the benefit of the Fijian people as a whole.

Racial Separation

The British colonial system allowed, and indeed encouraged the native Fijians to maintain their separateness by guaranteeing Fijians their subsistence land and by giving them a part in governing themselves in accordance with their established customs. The Fijian Administration was established in the 1870s as a department of the colonial government; below it, the Fijian Affairs Board directed and regulated Fijian society down to the village level.

The villages had three principal leaders: the village chief, the headman or agent of the government whose job was to carry out the law, and the village pastor. The chief, who was chosen by consensus based on primogeniture, political dominance, and other factors, had the real authority both among the villagers and as village representative to higher authority.

The Council of Chiefs became the voice of the Fijian people and the symbol of the Fijian way of life. All the way up the administrative structure through village, district, province, and finally with the Council of Chiefs, the influence of the traditional chiefs was considerable. Other members of the heirarchy, such as the headmen or the medical or agricultural officials, had their say, but the influence of the chiefs usually prevailed.

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[5]Freehold land amounts to 8.15 percent of Fiji land and includes much good agricultural land, as well as land in and near the city of Suva. Freehold land originally was held largely by Europeans, but three-quarters of it is now owned by Indians or Indian corporations. See Sir Leonard Usher, "Land Ownership in Fiji," unpublished manuscript, 1982.

The structure of early twentieth century village life under the rule of the chiefs protected its members and at the same time discouraged their participation in any economic activity outside the villages, such as jobs in urban areas. Educated Fijians who returned to their villages found no opportunities for suitable work: They were obliged to participate in community agricultural projects and to maintain the land and communal property. They could not travel for more than 60 days without the consent of the village chief, nor could they open stores as the Indians could when they were free of their indentures. According to one source, "a Fijian storekeeper would be called back to weed his village."[6] The policy of preserving the Fijian way of life thus isolated the Fijians and kept them separate from the increasing population of Indians and from the growing modern economy and society.

Pressure for more freedom brought about a relaxation of regulations on absenteeism from villages in 1912, after which villagers could move to urban areas or become part of the migrant labor force. Throughout the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, more Fijians moved to urban areas. Many retained their ties to the village and even, for example in Suva, lived within village groups and formed Fijian associations there, resisting integration with the city's larger Indian population.

The European sector further contributed to the divisiveness of the Fijian populace. As property owners and businessmen, the Europeans continued to favor keeping Fijians in their traditional environment and the Indians in the role for which they had been brought to the islands. Any move to diminish the Europeans' special position brought their objections.

As the Indian population grew and prospered, the Fijians felt threatened. In 1933, the Council of Chiefs demonstrated Fijian fears by resolving that "the immigrant Indian population should neither directly nor indirectly have any part in the control or direction of matters affecting the control of the Fijian race."[7] With such encouragement by their official governing body, the feelings between the two groups grew more bitter. By 1936, Indians outnumbered the native Fijians.

In the 1940s and 1950s, some Fijians who had gone to the cities began to look for opportunities that would allow them to keep pace with social and economic developments in the modern world. This small minority saw that the policy of retaining the traditional way of life would make Fijians a backward and poor society forever, and some even began to side

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[6]Deryck Scarr, *Fiji: A Short History*, The Institute for Polynesian Studies, Hawaii, 1984, p. 109.

[7]Ibid., p. 139.

with the Indians to bring about changes. In December 1959, their discontent led to rioting in Suva during a bus strike. Indians and Fijians participated together in the sudden outburst of violence aimed mainly at European businesses. They wanted fair pay and jobs; the urban population was growing, but employment opportunities were not keeping pace.

Indians developed in marked contrast under the colonial administration. The Indian Fijians kept their language, their religion, their Indian diet and dress, and their family and marriage customs, all of which differed markedly from those of the Fijians, thus making assimilation in Fiji all but impossible. They worked hard and lived frugally so that they could save from their meager earnings and invest in the local economy. They became free farmers, shopkeepers, and entrepreneurs, and many prospered.

Unlike the Fijians, many Indians sought education, formed trade unions and became the moving force of the Fiji economy. In the process, the Indians became competitive with the British in financial matters. Also contributing to strained relations with the British was the fact that the British government treated them as inferior to other citizens of Fiji. Many Indians, for their part, adopted the anti-British attitudes of their mother country. Because the Fijians favored the British, who protected them, and in general were proud to be part of the empire, they sided with the British against the Indians in politics.

With increasing education and personal success, the Indians sought political rights. As early as 1911, they demanded the vote. The importation of indentured workers ceased in 1916, and in 1921 all indentures were cancelled. The Indians who stayed on wanted equality, claiming that if they were to pay taxes, they expected to be treated like the other citizens. In their first overt labor action, in 1920, Indian laborers struck over the high cost of living, and police shot three strikers, killing one.

Indians made some progress in politics beginning in 1916, when the colonial government allowed one Indian to represent the Indian constituency in the colonial Legislative Council. In 1929, their representation was raised to three, but this increase still underrepresented the Indian constituency. Also in 1929, the Indian members moved for election by a common roll instead of by racial group; the motion's defeat by the combined European and Fijian members precipitated a walk-out by Indian members. "Common roll" became a persistent Indian demand, alienating both British and Fijians, who wanted to retain separate voting rolls.

The Indians gained more seats in the Legislative Council in 1937, when a change in the constitution made representation for the three ethnic groups equal. The Indians would have five, three of which were elected seats, but a common voting roll for all the legislators would elude them even after independence.

The Indians and Fijians took different paths in World War II. Fijians volunteered to fight with the British; nearly 6000 out of a male population of 55,000 joined up. Indians, however, balked at the British policy of differentials in service pay and other benefits in favor of the Europeans, and refused to enlist. In December 1943, the Indian cane growers' union struck against the Colonial Sugar Refining Company for higher wages. The strike was bitter and prolonged, and in the end the strikers got minor benefits but a tarnished image for their unpatriotic conduct in wartime. Fijian and British disdain for the Indians grew as a result.

Preparations for Independence

The decade of the 1960s saw preparation for independence. While the Fijians remained skeptical, the Indians, along with the British, the United Nations, and the churches, encouraged it. The British actively assisted the Fijians in developing the political mechanisms by which they could govern themselves. In 1963, the colonial government expanded the membership of the legislature and instituted direct elections for Fijian members. Pressured by the Indian electorate for a common roll, a constitutional conference in London in 1965 compromised by introducing a system of cross-voting for the legislature, called the "national roll," whereby nine seats of an enlarged legislature would be elected by all voters on separate ballots.

The Fijians, seeing themselves outnumbered, resisted independence and democratization. They continued to fear Indian domination. The Indians, in contrast, clamored for independence as a means of gaining equality. Indians had made great strides in the professions, in business, and in the civil service, but they wanted political power. The Fijians excelled in few areas, and they wanted to keep British protection. In the government, their only successes were in the Fijian Administration and the army; the latter is over 90 percent Fijian. They had no major role in business and commerce, usually holding the unskilled jobs.

Neither group, Indians or Fijians, has been homogeneous or united. During the indenture period, the Indians, struggling under miserable conditions, were united in their aims; once free, however, they became divided by differences that existed in India as well as by clashes between individual leaders. The divisiveness has grown rather than diminished within the last few decades: Muslim-Hindu antipathy, differences between Indians from the north of India and those from the south, the aggressive Gujarati businessmen antagonizing other Indians, as well as Fijians.

The Fijians, for their part, have strong loyalties to tribes and chiefs, who are often in conflict with one another. Regional differences have also played a role. For example, Fijian chiefs from the eastern part of the main island, Viti Levu, have traditionally dominated the politics of the country, and those from the west resent it. To protect their rights in the face of Indian demands for reform, the Fijians in 1956 formed a political and cultural organization, the Fijian Association. The association advocated reform only by constitutional means, retention of the bonds with Britain, and the preservation of Fijian culture and lands. This pleased all but the Indians.

In 1965, Indian members of the cane growers association formed the Federation Party, which later became the National Federation Party (NFP). A. D. Patel, founder and president, was a strong and intransigent leader who made the NFP into a cohesive and forceful party for the 1966 election.

Fiji's other major political party, the Alliance, was formed in 1966 by members of the Fijian Association, European groups, and some prominent Indians. Although its membership has always been overwhelmingly Fijian, it has attracted many Indian businessmen and Muslims, and it has fostered a multiracial image. Since the formation of political parties, the Muslims have usually voted with the Alliance, and the Hindus with the NFP.

The two new parties bitterly fought the 1966 election for the enlarged legislature. The Alliance emerged victorious with a clear majority. The NFP won only its nine Indian communal seats and lost all the seats on the national roll for which Indians and Fijians both could vote, an outcome indicating that many Indians voted for Alliance candidates on the new cross-over national roll. Bitter over their opposition status and over the Alliance's failure to appoint NFP members to key slots, namely, in the council of ministers, the NFP members boycotted the Legislative Council in 1967. This led to the forfeiture of their seats and by-elections for the nine Indian seats in 1968. The NFP succeeded in winning back all nine seats.

Despite tense racial feelings fanned by the events leading up to the by-elections, subsequent developments led to circumstances favorable to negotiation for independence. Patel's death brought S. M. Koya to the leadership of the NFP. More open to compromise than his predecessor, Koya, a Muslim, dropped his insistence on immediate introduction of the common roll, and the Alliance also gave way. These developments facilitated talks on a constitution.

In 1970, party and government leaders met privately with British officials in London and worked out a constitution. On October 10, 96 years to the day after it had become a colony, Fiji became independent. Fiji's political and government leaders, without benefit of the electorate, accepted a complex constitution which gave Fiji dominion status with a governor general to represent the Queen, membership in the Commonwealth, a bicameral legislature, and an independent judiciary on the British model. The Council of Chiefs retained its power over Fijian matters.

Despite some concerns about the constitution, the Indians were sanguine at independence and had high expectations for the future. The hated British no longer ruled, and the Indians would be equal at last. The Indians had found their treatment by the British as social inferiors almost as galling as their treatment as political inferiors. Independence, they thought, would rectify this, and Indians would take their rightful place in society and in the political process of the new nation. They also believed that their relationship with the Fijians would improve, once there were no British intermediaries to breed mistrust and suspicion. The cooperation at the London Conference between the two ethnic groups, led by Ratu Mara and Koya, was a hopeful sign.

The Fijians had not wanted independence as eagerly as the Indians had, and indeed, their Alliance party had only reluctantly accepted it in 1969, when they realized that the British were going to give Fiji independence and that if they did not participate in the process the Indians would take the lead. The Fijians feared that the Indians would take their land and gain political dominance over them. Them Fijians had viewed the British as protectors and part of their chieftain hierarchy; the Indians considered the British oppressors. The Fijians tried to assure Fijian paramountcy in the new state and were assisted in this by the British, who generally disliked the Indians and feared their aggressiveness and economic dominance. The new status was bound to create uncertainty for a people long protected by the British.

POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT AFTER INDEPENDENCE

As its price for acceding to independence, the Alliance received the NFP's acquiescence to the paramountcy of Fijian interests in the new nation. The new, complex constitution made few basic changes in the former colonial system. The 52-seat House of Representatives was to be elected on a balanced racial basis with each citizen having four votes. The Fijians and the Indians were each allocated 12 seats, and the "general electors"—i.e., the other, predominantly European groups—3 seats. On these communal rolls,

only ethnic representatives could be nominated, and each ethnic group voted for candidates on its communal roll. On separate national rolls, the Fijians had 10 seats, the Indians 10, and the general electors 5. Each citizen voted for one candidate on his/her communal roll plus a candidate in his/her constituency on each of the three national rolls, giving the citizen a total of 4 votes in each election.

Ethnic parity, long an Indian demand, prevailed between the Fijians and the Indians in the House, and the general electors held the balance. In practice, the general electors in their communal roll always supported the Alliance and thus reflected the old European-Fijian cooperation against the Indians.

Protection of Fijian Rights

The protection of Fijian interests was provided for in the Senate, which the governor general appointed; eight members were nominated by the Council of Chiefs, seven by the prime minister, six by the leader of the opposition, and one by the Council of Rotuma (a small island to the north of the Fiji Islands proper). The constitution stated that legislation regarding "Fijian land, customs, and customary rights" could not be passed by the Senate unless supported in the House by no less than six of the Council of Chiefs nominees. Other specific Fijian rights and institutions were protected by the stipulation that they could be changed only by a three-quarters vote in both houses; the Chiefs' eight nominees in the Senate could therefore block any legislation that they opposed.

The Indians were not totally satisfied with the voting arrangements in the House, as they still favored one common roll. Mara, head of the Alliance, and Koya, leader of the NFP, therefore agreed in London in April 1970 that after the first election in 1972 they would appoint a royal commission to review the electoral process. The Indians agreed under the impression that Mara had also promised to accept the commission's recommendations.

The royal commission's future recommendations or any changes in the voting system, however, raised a constitutional issue that continues to plague Fijian politics. No matter what elector reforms the commission proposed (it finally made its recommendations in 1976), any significant change affecting the Fijian vote would require a constitutional amendment and therefore a three-quarters vote in each house. If the commission's recommendations were seen to threaten Fijian voting rights, nominees of the Council of Chiefs in the Senate would likely reject it.

Generally good spirits and a cooperative approach characterized the first few years of independent Fiji. Mara and Koya remained good friends, worked together in politics, traveled together, and even talked of a coalition. This environment prevailed during the first election campaign in the independent state in 1972, but even then voting patterns followed a distinctly racial pattern. The Fijian-dominated Alliance won comfortably with 33 seats to 19 for the Indian NFP. It received 83 percent of the Fijian vote and 24 percent of the Indian vote, the largest percentage of the latter it was ever to win.

After 1972, the racial issue began to assume a greater role in politics. In that year, Idi Amin expelled all the Indians from Uganda, and the Fiji government would not accept any in Fiji. This rejection shook the Indian community and pointed up its insecure position should racial relations worsen in Fiji. In October 1975, a Fijian member of parliament, Sakiasi Butadroka, made a motion in the House that all Indians be sent back to India at government expense. While Mara opposed this motion, he did so without the fervor the Indians would have appreciated. The incident led to a rupture in the Mara-Koya relationship and a general increase in racial tensions.

A new bill submitted to the Legislature after review of the Agricultural Landlord and Tenant Ordinance proposed that the minimum guaranteed lease tenure for farmers be increased to 30 years, with a provision for automatic 20-year renewal. Indian farmers produce 90 percent of Fiji's sugar, largely on leased Fijian land. For some Indians, this bill represented a small step forward, but for many it was inadequate. Some NFP legislators sided with the Alliance to pass the bill and thereby antagonized the rest of the NFP leadership. At about the same time, an Alliance Indian minister, M. T. Khan, was accused of corruption and dismissed. He won acquittal in court but not reinstatement. Also, in its primary election, the Alliance rejected Sir Vijay Singh, an able Indian politician and member of the Alliance Party. Both incidents, the Indians felt, reflected ethnic prejudice.

In 1976, the Alliance faced the electoral reform recommendations of the royal commission that Mara and Koya had agreed to set up at the time of the London agreements. By then, the Mara government knew that Fijians would accept no change that would diminish their favored status. The commission recommended that the House communal voting rolls be kept, but that racial restrictions be lifted for the other 25 representatives—the same number as then on the three national rolls—and that they be elected in five districts by all the people. The recommendation came close to backing the Indian position for a common voting roll for the country, but it kept the communal rolls as a compromise. The Alliance rejected the recommendation, saying that it would cause bloodshed, and denied ever having

committed itself to accepting the commission's recommendations. The issue never reached a vote, but if it had, the Alliance majority would have voted it down. The Indians felt betrayed.

Indian Dissatisfaction

As the 1977 election approached, other issues, such as education and taxation, further disturbed the Indians. The government required that Indian candidates have higher grades than Fijian candidates to qualify for admission to the University of the South Pacific, the only university in the area. To many Indians, education represents the means of getting ahead in Fiji; it has been to them what land is to the Fijians—a source of security and hope. Already a quota provided that 50 percent of university scholarship funds go to Fijians, of whom fewer than 50 percent were qualified. Indians objected also when the Alliance government levied a new tax on cane workers. Taxes on the middle class, largely Indian, had already antagonized the Indians and brought forth cries of favoritism toward the Fijians.

A regional election issue developed concerning a government-sponsored tree-planting project. Indian sugar workers in western Viti Levu believed that the government was pushing too hard for the planting of pine trees and development of a timber industry. They saw no role for themselves in the government timber industry and feared that it could supplant the cane-growing industry.

The campaign was complicated by the establishment in December 1976 of the Fijian Nationalist Party (FNP), led by Sakiasi Butadroka, a member of parliament. An unabashed Fijian chauvinist, he had earlier proposed the explusion of all the Indians and the return of Fiji to the Fijians. He was a skillful politician who also entwined his main theme with local issues. The Alliance was therefore caught in the middle between the FNP and the NFP. For the 1977 election, the NFP did not even contest the communal Fijian and general elector lists but concentrated solely on the Indians and the national seats. The Alliance was somewhat complacent, justifying all the things that it had done and urging people to vote for continuity. Most of the issues were argued along racial lines.

The Alliance lost nine seats in the April 1977 election and thus lost control of the government. Its portion of the Indian vote dropped from 24 percent to 16 percent, while the third party, Butadroka's FNP, gathered approximately 25 percent of the Fijian vote, thus ensuring the defeat of the Alliance. The NFP won, but Koya seemed paralyzed, even when Mara conceded defeat. Two days after the election, Koya told the governor general that he could form a government, but then delayed doing so. The governor general then asked Ratu Mara to form a government. Mara formed a minority government, but on April 31 a vote of

no confidence carried, the parliament was dissolved, and a new election was called for in September. The Alliance handily won back most of the voters the FNP had won away in April, and Mara formed a government.

Why the governor general asked Mara to form the government is unclear. He may have done so because of Koya's procrastination, or he may have done so for reasons of security. The Indian leaders were said to have been intimidated by suggestions that any action that they took wold lead to violence. In any case, the Indians did not form a government at a time when they could legally have done so.

Increased Fijian-Indian Tension

The April 1977 election and its aftermath brought to the forefront the basic insecurities and fears of both the Fijians and the Indians, as well as the old unresolved conflict of Fijian paramountcy versus equality for all races. Many interpreted the election as proof that Butadroka was right: The constitution did not really protect Fijians and their rights. This interpretation ignored the fact that 20,000 out of 80,000 Fijian voters had deserted the Alliance to vote for the FNP and thus assured the Alliance's defeat.[8]

The strong Fijian reaction to their victory surprised the Indians. They had worked hard in the campaign to unite the divided factions behind Koya. Despite their economic success, the Indians had good reason to be concerned about their position in Fiji. They felt that their opportunities for education were being threatened by government policies concerning university admissions and scholarships. The Fijians controlled the army and, to a lesser extent, the police force. Thus, Indian concerns for their physical security were not eased by the nature of the forces responsible for order and stability. Also, the Indians perceived that the much disliked Europeans still threatened them, even after independence. Europeans dominated the sugar refining industry, for example, and since European Christian missionaries still had responsibility for rural education, the government did little for rural Indian schools.

As the 1982 election approached, tensions between Indians and Fijians intensified. Racial antagonism at election time had become a way of life. In 1982, however, violence was avoided, and the Alliance won the election. It defeated the NFP by only four seats with a plurality of 2000, or 0.2 percent, out of 1,003,000 votes. Since each voter had four votes, this meant a total of approximately 250,000 voters.

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[8]The FNP and the NFP were reported to have secretly worked together against the Alliance, but observers do not agree on this point.

A tense situation arose in western Viti Levu immediately after the election. Fijian landowners believed that their Indian tenants had agreed to vote for the Alliance, but the tenants reneged and voted for the NFP. Vehement emotional outbursts against the Indians by Fijian senators, chiefs, and other leaders revealed the depth of anti-Indian feelings. The Council of Chiefs passed a resolution specifying that two-thirds of the seats in the House should be Fijian and that both the prime minister and governor general should be Fijian. Mara, holding a very slim plurality, could not openly oppose these expressions of Fijian chauvinism. The NFP condemned the outbursts but could do little more.

UNIONS AND THE FIJI LABOUR PARTY

Fiji has the strongest and most developed labor union movement in the South Pacific, with the exception of Australia and New Zealand. A significant political force, it began among Indian laborers in the canefields after they became free of indenture. The colonial government encouraged trade union growth and by the early 1940s had set up the Labour Department and introduced legislation to protect unions. Having organized in the 1920s and 1930s, by July 1943 the cane workers' unions were strong enough to strike for higher wages against the giant Colonial Sugar Refining Company.

In 1952, union leaders formed the Fiji Trade Union Congress (FTUC) which gradually became institutionalized as labor's voice in government and society. By 1984, out of a total of 46 registered unions, the FTUC had 36 affiliated unions with a membership of approximately 45,000. Fiji's total labor force was 209,700. When in the early 1970s the FTUC rejected government moves to restrict pay increases for an affiliate union and planned for a general strike, the government pulled back and engaged in a dialogue with the FTUC that resulted in the formation of a Tripartite Forum made up of the FTUC, government, and the Fiji Employers' Consultative Association. The Forum, although it had no statutory authority, worked well and arrived at agreements that bound the three sectors.

In late 1984, however, without prior notification or consultation with the FTUC, the Alliance government decreed a unilateral wage freeze, thus flouting the Tripartite Forum. By this action, the Alliance alienated the moderate FTUC leaders and gave the activists of the labor movement an opportunity to plunge directly into the political arena. At its May 1985 convention, the FTUC, urged on by Australian and New Zealand leftist labor leaders and activists from the Pacific Trade Union Forum, mandated the organization of a Fiji labor political party. The Fiji Labour Party (FLP) was founded that July, and its leaders launched their political action campaign.

The FLP platform included commitment to "democratic socialism," some nationalization of industry, and improvements in health care, education, and welfare. It also advocated an "active policy of nonalignment," along with support for the oppressed peoples of the world and for the Independent and Nuclear Free Pacific Movement. The platform indicated that in addition to representing labor, the party was advocating a major switch in Fijian foreign policy. Moreover, despite the fact that labor unions' membership was largely Indian, the FLP reached out to all races.

Dr. Timoci Bavadra, a Fijian and president of the powerful Fiji Public Services Union, was elected president of the Labour Party. The real power lay with the Indian union leaders, including Mahendra Chaudhry, Krishna Datt, Robert Kumar, and James Raman. Dr. Tupeni Baba and Simione Durutalo, both Fijian academics, became active members and provided intellectual leadership.

Labour Party leaders have extensive ties among anti-Western groups; such as the Fiji Anti-Nuclear Group and the academic community (see Section I). Chaudhry was one of the five FANG executive committee members. Datt, general secretary of the FLP, held antinuclear, nonaligned positions, and in 1986 he visited Moscow, where he sought Soviet aid for the FLP. Kumar, treasurer of the FLP, was a founding member of FANG. Baba and Durutalo were members of the faculty of the University of the South Pacific. Durutalo, vice president of FLP, was a founding member of FANG.[9]

Much credit for the formation of the FLP goes to foreign labor leaders. At its 1978 conference in Prague, the Communist-dominated World Federation of Trade Unions decided to intensify efforts in the Pacific. This marked the beginning of considerable involvement of Australian and New Zealand leftist union leaders with Fiji's unions and labor leaders. While most of Fiji's unions are affiliated with the noncommunist and Western-oriented International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), most New Zealand and Australian labor leaders active in the region are associated with the WFTU. Well-known pro-Moscow union leaders—including John Knox and Ken Douglas from New Zealand and Bill Richardson, John Halfpenny, and Pat Clancy from Australia, all of whom attended the Prague conference—began to take an active, even key, role in influencing Fiji unions.

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[9]Other examples of these ties, although not connected with the FLP, involve Vijay Naidu, FANG president and staff member of the USP, and Mrs. Taufavakatele, active member of FANG and president of the Suva YWCA.

The Pacific Trade Union Forum (PTUF) was founded in 1980, largely as a result of initiatives by the Australian union leaders who took the lead from the Prague conference. Its ideological basis was antinuclear and anticolonial. Subsequent conferences, which representatives of the Soviet Union always attended, were dominated by the Australian and New Zealand leaders, who hewed to the anti-U.S., anti-Western line of the WFTU.

After the formation of the FLP, relations between labor and the government deteriorated rapidly. The declining economy began the trend, and the subsequent politicization of labor exacerbated relations.

In its first electoral test in late 1985, the FLP won the Suva Council election, and Bob Kumar, one of its most active members, became mayor of the city. Its leaders at first denied that the FLP would ever work with another party and accused the NFP of being a group of businessmen; in late 1986, however, the FLP joined with the NFP to form the NFP-Labour Coalition party. The Coalition Manifesto, adopted at the merger, dropped the nationalization plank of the FLP but retained the nonaligned foreign policy positions. These would reverse the pro-Western posture of the Mara government. The merger was engineered chiefly by Jai Ram Reddy, a former leader of the NFP who had worked out a temporary coalition with the regional Fijian party, the Western Union Front, in 1982.

Although at its founding the FLP leaders looked ahead to 1997 as the year in which the party could win a national election, once they founded the NFP-Labour Coalition, they decided to try in 1987. The Coalition gained considerable following as the 1987 national election approached. It claimed to have a multiracial approach to politics and tried to appeal to the young of both ethnic groups.

THE APRIL 1987 ELECTION

A close election in April 1987 turned out the Mara government. The NFP-Labour Coalition won with a four-seat majority. Fijian communal seats went to the Alliance and Indian seats to the Coalition, according to traditional racial patterns, but the outcome of the election hinged on the four national seats in Suva and in the southeast, which previously had been won by the Alliance. This time they went to the Coalition by a small margin, tipping the balance in favor of the Coalition.

Analysis of the votes shows that the Alliance received 49 percent of total votes cast, while the Coalition received only 47 percent but won the election. The Alliance piled up a high percentage in the national constituencies that it won, but it lost by small margins in the

16 national constituencies taken by the Coalition.[10] The Fijian Nationalist Party—the party that contributed to the 1977 Alliance defeat—took away almost 2500 votes that might have gone to the Alliance.

Of the four national seats that turned to the Coalition, the two in the southeast failed to go to the Alliance because of a third party on the ballot. The fight for the other two national seats featured two formidable Alliance candidates in Suva, the popular Ratu David Toganivalu and Irene Jai Narayan, a noted Indian and former NFP member. However, the two Coalition candidates, Baba, and an Indian businessman, benefited from an all-out Coalition election effort and FNP votes. The Alliance, on the other hand, failed to concentrate efforts in Suva, where the important seats were in jeopardy. Voter turnout was low for both parties. Labor unions put pressure on members to vote for the Coalition, reminding them that the wage freeze occurred under the Alliance and suggesting that a victorious Alliance might again freeze wages.

Dr. Bavadra did not hesitate, as Koya had in 1977, but took office on April 13 and proceeded to form a government. On April 14, he announced his cabinet of seven Indians, six Fijians, and one part-European. Bavadra kept public service, Fijian affairs and home affairs, while Mahendra Chaudhry got finance and economic planning. Krishna Datt took over foreign affairs and civil aviation; Baba, education, youth, and sports. Jai Ram Reddy, the ex-NFP boss who directed the successful election campaign, was made a senator and named minister of justice and attorney general. Once in office, the new government appeared to move slowly and responsibly.

Some Fijians, however, could not accept an Indian-dominated government. Agitation against the new government began as soon as it took office. Meetings in Suva and elsewhere called for constitutional changes that would guarantee Fijian control. In some areas, disgruntled Fijians set up roadblocks and demonstrated. On April 24, approximately 5000 Fijians marched in Suva and presented the governor general with a petition signed by 23,000 calling for guaranteed Fijian control of the government. FNP leader Butadroka urged Fijians to fight for the right to rule their country.

Governor General Ganilau, the Queen's representative, called on the people to respect the government and warned of repression and violence. In early May demonstrations took a violent turn when Molotov cocktails caused fires at Reddy's law office and at some Indian shops in Lautoka, Fiji's second city. An Alliance senator was later charged with arson for these incidents.

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[10]*Fiji Times*, April 18, 1987, p. 7.

The political success of the Indian-backed party soon led to the emergence of an ethnic Fijian group, the Taukei Movement (*taukei* meaning a native of Fiji, or man of the soil) formed to protect Fijian interests, which members believed to be endangered by the new government. Not allied with either the Alliance or the FNP, the Taukei Movement attracted members of both parties, as well as members of the Council of Chiefs. It also attracted Fijians who advocated violent means to return power to a Fijian-dominated government, but its members are split on the question of violence.

According to one of the founders, Taniela Vietata, the Taukei had plans for an escalating program beginning with the April 24 demonstration and moving on to setting fires in Suva and killing Indians.[11] The Taukei believe Fijians should not hand over power to an alien group or they would go the way of the Maoris or other aborigines in the Pacific area.

The Taukei movement cannot be dismissed as a temporary aberration or an outlet for extremist violence. Members include such prominent politicians as Apisai Tora, Filipe Bole, a former foreign minister; Ratu Meli Vesikula, later the Fijian affairs minister in the military government; several senators; academics, including Dr. Asesela Ravuvu and Malakai Tawake of the USP; Ratu Inoke Kubuabola of the Bible Society of the Pacific; and Viliane Saukekolea, president of the Fiji Teachers Association.[12]

THE COUPS

On May 14, one month after installation of the new government, Lieutenant Colonel Sitiveni Rabuka led 12 armed troops wearing gas masks into the parliament without notice, arrested leading members of the new government, and assumed power. He declared that he did this to prevent bloodshed, both Indian and Fijian. Indeed, upon execution of the coup, the Taukei called off its plans for mounting violence.

Rabuka called on Governor General Ganilau to take the reins of government. Ganilau, seeking to uphold law, order, the constitution, and ties with the British Crown, refused to commission the coup perpetrators as government leaders. He invoked his executive powers under the constitution and five days after the coup set up an 18-man council of ministers to govern the country. He also gave orders to dissolve parliament, to send the troops back to the barracks, to release the imprisoned government officials, and to lift press censorship. His aim was to restore a legal government and retain Fiji's ties with

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[11]*Fiji Sun*, July 19, 1987, p. 1.

[12]*Fiji Sun*, July 12, 1987, p. 1., and *Pacific Islands Monthly*, January 1988, p. 11.

the Crown and Commonwealth. After winning support from the Council of Chiefs, he appointed a committee of 11 Fijians, four Indians, and two Europeans to conduct a constitutional review.

The deposed Bavadra initially refused to cooperate with Ganilau's administration and the Alliance in working out a solution. He went abroad seeking support but failed to find it in England, the United States, Australia, and other island countries. India and New Zealand, however, gave him a sympathetic hearing. In July, Bavadra modified his stand and, with his key advisers, announced their intention to support the governor general in his efforts to restore democracy and to join with the committee working out plans to do so.

By July a committee of the Council of Chiefs had drawn up a plan for a new government and presented it to the constitutional review committee. According to the plan, a House of 70 members would have 40 Fijian members, and 50 percent of all top civil service posts and leading cabinet posts would go to Fijians. Rabuka, the Taukei Movement, and even the Muslim League leadership supported the plan, while the NFL-Labour Coalition and radical groups within the Taukei objected. The latter believed that the plan had not gone far enough, insisting that all political power in the country go to the Fijian population. In early August, Rabuka, while endorsing the Chiefs' plan, warned that Fijian rights had to be guarded and written into the new constitution to make the Fijians secure. If not, he said, "The violence, the demonstrations could start all over again."[13]

By early September, Rabuka's predictions were materializing. On September 3, Richard Naidu, Bavadra's press secretary and a former *Fiji Times* newsman, was beaten by Taukei members in the Travelodge Hotel in Suva. The following week, fire bombs hit Suva buildings. The rioting was attributed to a radical, breakaway group of Taukeis calling themselves the Taukei Liberation Movement. Youth gangs looted and set fire to Indian shops. Troops had to be called in to seal off the area, and businesses closed down. Threats continued to keep Indian shops closed unless security forces were in evidence.

On September 23, after the governor general met with leaders of the two main political parties, a statement was issued announcing agreement on the formation of a council of state. The agreement promised equitable power-sharing initially in an interim, bipartisan caretaker government, which would provide for a review of the constitution and prepare for new elections. A panel of three Alliance members and three Coalition members of the caretaker government, chaired by an independent foreigner, would conduct the review. The governor general was to explain the agreement on the radio at 6 p.m., September 25.

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[13]*The Bulletin*, Sydney, August 4, 1987, p. 22.

This agreement evoked immediate response. The compromise with the Indian sector was unacceptable to all the chauvinist Fijians: the Taukei Movement, the Council of Chiefs, the military establishment, and the Fijian Nationalist Party. On September 25, before the governor general could go on the air, Rabuka staged a second coup. Political leaders, journalists, judges, and other prominent citizens were arrested—and most released in a few days. Newspapers were shut down, radio broadcasts controlled, and an 8 p.m. to 5 a.m. curfew strictly enforced. The agreement for an interim government, Rabuka said, threatened the purpose of the May coup, which was to put political power in the hands of the Fijians.

On October 8, presenting army demands for restoring executive authority to the governor general and finding compromise impossible, Rabuka declared Fiji a republic with himself as head of the Fiji military government. On October 16, Ganilau resigned as governor general, ending Fiji's allegiance to the Crown. With that the Commonwealth, meeting in Vancouver, declared Fiji's Commonwealth membership to have lapsed.

On December 6, after two and a half months of military government rule, Rabuka, by then a brigadier general, returned the country to civilian rule under the leadership of President (formerly Governor General) Ganilau. The president in turn appointed Mara, the former Alliance prime minister, as prime minister. Mara named a 21-member cabinet with himself as foreign minister and Rabuka as minister of home affairs. Three other military men received appointments, as well as two Indians and two members of Taukei. Not included were supporters of Bavadra's NFP-Labour Coalition government.

The Taukei Movement split on Rabuka's move. A faction led by Ratu Meli Vesikula denounced Rabuka for not consulting with the Council of Chiefs about the changeover to a republic. Another faction lead by Rev. Tomasi Raikivi, a member of the military government cabinet, backed Rabuka and pledged to support the new civilian government.[14] The new constitution is being written, and the prime minister promises democratic elections within two years.

THE ECONOMY AND LABOR

The May coup sent the Fiji economy into a serious decline. Sugar, the number-one income-producing industry and the main export, suffered not only from the political instability brought on by the coup but from a serious drought. In protest against the coup, Indian cane farmers, who constitute more than 70 percent of the cane growers, refused to

[14]*Pacific Islands Monthly*, January 1988, p. 11.

harvest their crops. After appeals by the governor general and the Sugar Cane Growers Council, some cane was harvested and processed, and the final sugar output for the year was about 400,000 tons—below the target but well above expectations of a few months earlier. Although the drought was broken by rains in late November, its effects and reduced planting will reduce next year's crop to an estimated 350,000 tons.

Fiji's second industry, tourism, has been hard hit. Hotel occupancy rates, usually averaging 70 percent in September, were down to some 10 percent.[15] The situation was due both to tourist reluctance to experience political instability and to bans imposed by labor unions in Australia and New Zealand. However, the unions eventually lifted their bans, and tourism has improved. The new government has focused considerable effort on tourism and in April 1988 announced several new development projects, including new hotels and resorts and an improved air terminal.

With the principal industries hit, the inflation rate rose, and foreign exchange reserves dwindled from U.S. $128 million in May 1987 to $80 to $85 million in early November. In June 1987, the government devalued the Fijian dollar by 17.75 percent and in October by a further 15.25 percent. In July, Rabuka cut all military pay by 25 percent and later reduced government salaries and wages by 15 percent. By April 1988, Prime Minister Mara could claim that the public operating expenditures had been cut by 30 percent.[16]

Despite these heavy blows to Fiji's economy, latest reports appear optimistic. The government has started up new capital works projects which will bolster employment, and recently negotiated foreign aid commitments of some $34 million should help the public sector. While many businesses will take at least a few years to recover from the effects of the coups, Fiji's main industries—sugar, gold mining, tuna canning, and forestry—have picked up since the second coup and are doing unexpectedly well.

The Labour Party ouster was understandably a blow to the Fiji labor movement. Restrictions on union activity were imposed after the May coup, causing the Australian and New Zealand unions to halt both sea and air tourist traffic to Fiji. The air and ship lines continued to operate, but ground crews prohibited the passage of tourists. FTUC leaders, meeting in Suva, could not agree on whether to call for a lifting of the ban. Both the Australian and New Zealand governments, after weighing the consequences of punishing Fiji workers further by their bans, took an active part in persuading the new Fiji government to lift restrictions on labor activity. Once this was accomplished, the unions in Australia and New Zealand lifted their bans.

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[15]*The Age*, Melbourne, October 13, 1987, p. 8.
[16]*Pacific Islands Monthly*, May 1988, p. 35.

After the September coup, Rabuka came down even harder on the labor movement by arresting some leaders, ordering the FTUC headquarters closed, shutting down the Teachers Union, the Public Service Association, and the Bank Employees Union, curbing the right to hold meetings, making strikes illegal, and harassing some Labour Party leaders. In response, both the New Zealand and Australian Trade Union Congresses voted to ban air and sea traffic as of November 1, 1987. The FTUC, although opposing the new government, asked that the air links remain open. The two governments disagreed with the union recommendations and made clear to Rabuka that unless his government lifted the restrictions on Fiji union activity, the bans would be imposed. The Fiji government complied by lifting its restrictions. Fijian officials accused the Australian and New Zealand unions of trade union colonialism, declaring that it was their intention to wreck the Fiji economy and isolate the people of Fiji.

The Fiji Labour Party remains active, according to its leaders, though regaining its strength will be a long, hard struggle. Indian trade union leaders have indicated that despite government efforts to weaken them, they are continuing their work. Bavadra, for example, has resumed his union duties. James Raman is reported to have resigned his position as president of the Pacific Trade Union Community and Mahendra Chaudhry, the more activist Fijian labor leader, to have taken over.

INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

Before the 1987 coups, Fiji was a leader among the island states and the locus of much regional activity. The University of the South Pacific and the South Pacific Bureau for Economic Cooperation which serves as the executive arm of the South Pacific Forum, are both located in Suva. Since the two turnovers in government, Fiji's role has diminished, but recent activity on the part of its leaders may serve to renew it. On the world scene, Fiji received recognition for the participation of its military forces in United Nations peacekeeping teams in Sinai and Lebanon.

The overthrow of an elected government in the Pacific's first military coup brought varied reactions abroad. Neighboring island states in Melanesia supported the aims of keeping the reins of government in the hands of indigenous Fijians, but they disapproved of Rabuka's methods.

At the meeting of the South Pacific Forum in Western Samoa shortly after the April coup, Australia and New Zealand favored sending a mission to Fiji, but the other members opposed interference. They sided with the ethnic Fijians by snubbing the Bavadra

representatives. After the second coup, leaders from the three other independent Melanesian states, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, and the Solomon Islands, announced that they considered the Fiji crisis an internal matter. Prime Minister Wingti of Papua New Guinea and Father Lini issued a joint communique that foreign intervention in Fiji would not be condoned.

New Zealand and Australia expressed their disapproval of the ousting of the elected government, but they found themselves powerless to take effective action, as the trade union moves mentioned above illustrate. Large capital investments in Fiji by both these countries added to their caution. After the second coup, New Zealand's foreign minister announced trade sanctions, and the following week Prime Minister Lange cancelled them, saying that the imposition of sanctions might "procure the opposite result from what we seek."[17] He deplored the Rabuka government's policy that makes its Indian majority second-class citizens. New Zealand did, however, cut some aid and trade links, suspend military cooperation, and call off negotiations to renew the sugar agreement. Neither Australia nor New Zealand recognized the Rabuka military government, but neither formally broke relations.

With the new civilian government in place, foreign ministers of both Australia and New Zealand lauded the turnover as a step toward democratic rule. Australia adopted a new policy of recognizing the government but not the regime, and sent its first ambassador instead of the high commissioner previously assigned to Fiji.

Australia and New Zealand realize that further sanctions or interference will incur the wrath of Melanesian neighbors. They have been reminded of the sad fate of their indigenous populations who became outnumbered by later arrivals and of the inconsistency of their anti-Fijian stand with their policy of favoring the indigenous New Caledonians.

When Fiji was excluded from the Commonwealth upon Governor General Ganilau's resignation, the Queen accepted Fiji's decision with reluctance and implied criticism. "Her Majesty is sad to think that the ending of the Fijian allegiance to the Crown should have been brought about without the people of Fiji being given an opportunity to express their opinion on the proposal."[18] Fiji, for its part, severed relations reluctantly also and may apply for readmission after it becomes a republic. Admission requires unanimous acceptance by Commonwealth members, and Gandhi of India and Lange of New Zealand indicated that they might veto Fiji's membership.

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[17]U.S. Foreign Broadcast Information Service, FBIS-EAS Daily Report, October 6, 1987, p. 56.

[18]*The Daily Telegraph*, London, October 16, 1987, p. 1.

Prime Minister Mara traveled to London in March 1988 to mend fences and received approval of Fiji's efforts to restore the economy. Prime Minister Thatcher promised resumption of military training for Fijian army personnel and assistance in framing an acceptable constitution, a requirement for readmission to the Commonwealth.

Fiji has recently tapped some new sources of aid for her ailing economy, both in the Pacific area and in the West. Before going to London, Mara spent ten days in Japan and South Korea and obtained promises of support. France, anxious for an improved image in the area, sent a special mission to Suva in December. Mara signed an economic cooperation agreement in Paris in April 1988 for $18 million. Although Rabuka expressed interest in military aid, France offered only developmental assistance. By February, New Zealand had relaxed its freeze on aid and Australia sent a team to Suva to negotiate a new aid package. A high-level trade delegation from the Soviet Union visited Fiji in April and expressed interest in joint business ventures and in the area of fisheries. Indonesia sent a trade mission, and Malaysia's foreign minister visited to discuss development of trade with Fiji. Since Malaysian government officials have expressed a bond with Fiji because of similar communal problems, further links between the two countries can be expected.

The United States has taken the cautious approach to Fiji's turmoil. It did not break relations but condemned the military coup and the racism of the new government and, in accordance with U.S. law, suspended aid programs. In March, after the Ganilau-Mara civilian government was established, a new U.S. ambassador took residence in Suva, and relations between the two countries have remained satisfactory.

OBSERVATIONS ON FIJI'S CURRENT AND FUTURE PROBLEMS

The Fiji coups did not surprise seasoned observers of the island state. Fijians are accustomed to authority such as that associated with the hereditary chiefs, so they went along with overturning the democratically elected government and installing an authoritative structure. Fijians have long resented Indians and indicated that they would never allow Indians to take power because the Indians would then take their land. Both Rabuka's takeovers came as a relief to many, marking the end of violence and threats by the militants.

The initial shock of the military takeover has been eased by Rabuka's action in turning the government over to civilian leaders and by his willingness to have Ganilau and Mara run the country. To his own people, he appears to be a patriotic Fijian who wanted to save the Fijian way of life, rather than a military man hungry for political power. In his present capacity in Mara's cabinet, he has control of Fiji's military forces and of the police,

so he still stands as the power behind the scene. Rabuka will likely retain his control of Fiji's security forces and thus serve as a deterrent to Indian ambitions to usurp power and to possible waverings on Mara's part.

Rivalries have divided the Fijian leaders in the past, and many feel that Mara had let them down by not being assertive enough toward the Indian opposition and toward leaders of the Taukei Movement who hold positions that conflict with those of the government. In our opinion, however, the present leaders are experienced and have sufficiently strong backing to see the country through any crises that might occur in the next few years.

If the Indians attempt any overt acts to gain power, the Fijians will be quick to squelch them. Physical violence has always been a threat from the Fijians, and the Indians know that the Fijians will carry through, as they demonstrated this in May and September when they went on rampages in Suva. The Indians have the upper hand in economic power, and the Fijians are not likely to challenge them. Any harm done to the economy would hurt the Indians more than Fijians, as the Indians control and profit from that sector. The Fijians, on the other hand, depend to a large extent on a subsistence economy and therefore are not as vulnerable to economic disruption.

The Indians have fought hard for the common roll since the turn of the century, and after independence they fought for control of the political process. They have strong, able leaders, such as Mahendra Chaudhry, Krishna Datt, and James Raman, who have a considerable following and who are capable of leading an active opposition and taking the reins of government.

The Indians have four possible courses of action under the Fijian dominated regime:

- Submission.

They can accept the inferior status and live with it under the new government. Our opinion is that the Indians will accept the Fijian upper hand for the next four or five years at least and moderate their political ambitions. They have the economic power, which the Fijians cannot quickly usurp, and they can continue to improve their status, except at the top of the political ladder.

- Opposition.

An effective Indian opposition will benefit the country by keeping the ruling party in line. Organized Indian opposition groups will continue to serve as agents for change and for foreign influence in Fiji. Labor is the best organized opposition even though Fiji's unions are not as strong as those in the West. The able Indian union leaders may concentrate on their unions and work through the Fiji Labour Party. As an example, Bavadra, head of the NFP-Labour coalition, has been named president of Progressive Parties of the South Pacific, established in Melbourne in March 1988. The peace movement will also maintain its position as a vehicle for opposition. The intelligentsia will continue to speak out on the nuclear freeze, SPNFZ, etc. Peace movement followers, many of whom are Indian, leftist, and articulate, will undoubtedly be a thorn in the side of those in power in the new republic.

- Emigration.

Thousands of Indians have already taken the alternative of emigration, mainly to Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the United States. Many professionals are being allowed permanent residence in Australia, as they are needed there. Other Indians have migrated to Canada as tourists and are staying on, requesting refugee status. Although the Indians now outnumber the Fijians, a higher Fijian birthrate and Indian emigration trends foretell a future plurality, if not majority, for the ethnic Fijians. Thus, the Indians may see the prospect of minority status as a further deterrent to overt political action.

- Violence.

The possibility of resorting to violence in situations like the one in Fiji cannot be ruled out, but there is very inconclusive evidence that this might be tried. In Sydney in late May, Australian customs officials uncovered a 16-ton container of arms destined for Fiji and labeled as machinery. Authorities charged a Fijian Indian with shipping the arms, which originated in North Yemen and were destined for an Indian businessman in Lautoka, Fiji. Two other Fijian Indians were also charged in Sydney. Australian customs officials uncovered records of a similar shipment in April which went unimpeded to Fiji. In Fiji, the police and the army turned up approximately 10 tons of firearms, questioned many suspects, and charged 22 people with the shipment, all but one of them Indians. Rumors identify the intended final users as the Indian opposition, Taukei militants, the Fiji military, radical Indians, and the Free Papua Movement in Irian Jaya, but evidence at hand points to the Indian connection.

What is the future for Fiji? Prevailing opinion is that the present government under Ganilau and Mara will continue. The constitution now being drawn up will be submitted for a vote in 1989. The constitution will entrench the Fijians in power, and the Indians will accept it. Violent opposition is not likely, and the Fijians will not only dominate politics and retain their way of life but also try to improve their economic position.

The Fijian government, which has already negotiated with a sympathetic Malaysia for aid, might emulate the Malays. In the early 1970s, the Malaysian government adopted a new economic policy which gives aid and preference to ethnic Malays over the Chinese and Indians in education and business opportunities. The aim was that the Malays would achieve a predominant role in the economy in 1990. The program has had mixed results thus far, both socially and economically, but it is an appealing approach for a people trying to catch up with the modern world. We expect that the Fijian government may well try a similar approach.

The United States has the opportunity in the immediate and long-term future to lend a helping hand to Fiji and demonstrate its goodwill toward the Fijians. Although the United States objects to the military takeover and a government that discriminates on the basis of race, some aspects of the coup work to U.S. advantage. Bavadra's nonaligned policy would have banned U.S. nuclear-powered warships in the nuclear-free Pacific as New Zealand has done. Repudiation of the Coalition's left-leaning "peace" policies by a strong and accepted Fijian government may curb the anti-U.S. drift of the Pacific island governments.

Fijians have traditionally sought good relations with America and the West, and the West is well advised to cement these relations. The prospect that the new republic of Fiji could seek the aid and protection of the Soviet Union or China precludes outright rejection by the United States. Building on its advantages with the Fijians, the United States should resume its aid program, encourage elections and the adoption of a constitution, albeit one which will favor the ethnic Fijians, and assist with education and economic development that will help bring Fiji into the modern era.

ACRONYMS

AAFLI	Asian-American Free Labor Institute
AID	Agency for International Development [U.S.]
ATOM	Against Testing on Mururoa
CINCPAC	Commander in Chief Pacific [U.S. Navy]
FANG	Fiji Anti-Nuclear Group
FLP	Fiji Labour Party
FNP	Fijian Nationalist Party
FTUC	Fiji Trade Union Congress
ICFTU	International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
MATHABA	International Conference Against Imperialism, Zionism, Racism, Reaction, and Fascism [Libya]
NFP	National Federation Party [Fiji]
PCC	Pacific Conference of Churches
PNG	Papua New Guinea
PTC	Pacific Theological College
PTUC	Pacific Trade Union Community
PTUF	Pacific Trade Union Forum
SPADES	South Pacific Action for Development and Economic Strategies
SPNFZ	South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty
UMP	Union of Moderate Parties [Vanuatu]
USP	University of the South Pacific [Suva, Fiji]
VP	Vanuaaka Pati
WCC	World Council of Churches
WFTU	World Federation of Trade Unions
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association