

began to reactivate local government to improve its image and communications with village people. The police minister continued to speak against the prodemocracy supporters in his weekly column in the government-run newspaper the *Tonga Chronicle*, and has even threatened them with violence. After the election he wrote "The continual sly hints of corruption and dishonesty against His Majesty's Government without proof is going to rebound with multiple traumatic consequences on those concerned" (*Tonga Chronicle*, 11 Feb 1993, 3).

In addition, not all members of the churches are behind their leaders' call for political reform. People have asked that church newspapers omit political comment and concentrate only on the teachings of the gospel and church news. An advisor is to be appointed to counsel Free Wesleyan Church members regarding the denomination's official stands on political and social issues (*Tonga Chronicle*, 20 May 1993, 5). The Mormon Church has never supported the prodemocratic position. The government also points to the fact that the Tonga National Council of Churches did not officially participate in the constitutional convention, because one of its four member churches (Roman Catholic, Free Wesleyan, Anglican, and Free Constitutional Church of Tonga) did not wish to do so. Members of all these churches attended as individuals, but the council as an entity was not represented. Other letters to the press indicate a country very much divided on whether to move towards reform or to fight, literally, to retain the present system. Many Tongans feel that moves towards

democracy are disrespectful to the monarch and nobles, and threaten Tonga's heritage. The prodemocracy supporters are equally convinced that steps forward can be made peacefully by a gradual education of the electorate. The increasing number of non-government controlled newsheets, papers, and magazines launched in Tonga play an important role in increasing people's awareness of significant issues. Several popular leaders have emerged. But the cabinet together with the nobles' representatives still controls the majority in Parliament, and the king retains the power to create ministers of state who will support the oligarchy. It is difficult, therefore, to see how democratic change might occur in the foreseeable future, except by royal fiat which would imply an emphatic change of royal heart. The present situation, which is one of stalemate, shows that the prodemocracy movement still has a lot of educating to do.

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#### WALLIS AND FUTUNA

The major event of the period under review was the earthquake that shook the island of Futuna during the night of 12 March 1993. The quake, which registered 6.5 on the Richter scale, caused the death of three people and substantial damage to the island. Land and rock slides blocked off some of the roads, complicating the task of the relief operations launched from Wallis and New Caledonia. Public utilities were heavily disrupted. Power and telephone lines were restored quickly, but

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the water distribution network took much longer to repair. By the end of June, Futuna was still without running water. Buildings were also severely damaged. While traditional *fale*-style houses, which still represent a sizable percentage of the total, withstood the shock rather well, western-style buildings fared worse. Concrete structures fractured, and dressed stone buildings (primarily churches, chapels, and mission buildings dating back to the last century) collapsed partially or completely. Many contemporary dwellings are raised on short stilts, and some of these suffered a similar fate. The initial quake was followed by a series of secondary tremors, registering up to 4.5 on the Richter scale, which completed the destruction of some of the already damaged structures. The total damage has been estimated at over US\$14 million. During his visit to the territory in June 1993, Minister for Overseas Territories Dominique Perben announced a government grant of approximately US\$4 million for the rebuilding of Futuna. The government had already allocated an initial US\$40,000 for emergency measures immediately after the quake. One of the consequences of the earthquake will be felt for a long time to come: the extensive reef flats which line the south and south west coasts were raised by about half a meter. At high tide, the sea no longer reaches what used to be the shoreline.

On the political front, the period was marked by two national elections. On 20 September 1992, voters in Wallis and Futuna cast their ballots in the national referendum on the ratification of the Maastricht Treaty on European unity. Representative Kamilo Gata

campaigning for a yes vote, in line with the policy of his political allies in metropolitan France, *Mouvement des Radicaux de Gauche* (the MRG, which regrouped the left under the banner of President François Mitterrand, and at the time represented the majority in the national assembly). The yes vote was also supported by the nonaligned president of the Territorial Assembly, Soane Uhila, and by the assembly's economic and social advisor, Gaston Lutui. The representatives of the two major parties in the then opposition in metropolitan France, Senator Papilio Makape (of the *Rassemblement pour la République*, or RPR) and Basile Tui, the local leader of the *Union des Français* (UDF), campaigned in favour of the no vote, even though on the national scene the UDF had endorsed the yes vote and the RPR had given out mixed signals. Basile Tui was concerned about the effect for the territory of the clause in the treaty concerning the freedom of movement of peoples and goods, while Senator Makape was more anxious to denounce the government's actions, which he judged negative for Wallis and Futuna. The yes vote won the day, with 76.54 percent of the ballots cast. Vote participation was low—54.4 percent—yet significantly higher than that for New Caledonia, and much higher than for French Polynesia.

Elections for the representative to the French National Assembly were held in March 1993. There were three candidates in the first round of voting on 21 March. Previous President of the Territorial Assembly Clovis Logologofalau had been endorsed by the *Union pour la France* party, an election coalition between RPR and UDF. Also run-

ning were the incumbent Kamilo Gata, MRG party, and the nonaligned Soane Uhila, president of the Territorial Assembly. Kamilo Gata carried the first round with 45.64 percent of the vote. Clovis Logologofalau received 37.8 percent, and Soane Uhila 16.54 percent. For the second round, Soane Uhila withdrew and endorsed Logologofalau, who also received support from political allies in New Caledonia, and a special campaign visit by a metropolitan RPR senator. Nevertheless, Kamilo Gata was able to keep his lead and won the day with 52.41 percent of the vote. The voters of Wallis and Futuna apparently broke with established tradition, whereby they consistently voted for dominant political groupings in metropolitan France, and cast their ballots—with an unusually high participation rate of 88.8 percent of voters—on the basis of purely local issues.

The majority coalition between MRG and nonaligned members of the territorial assembly, which had made possible the 1992 election of the nonaligned Soane Uhila as president, quickly showed signs of breaking apart. In the very first extraordinary session of the assembly MRG representatives joined forces with members of the RPR for the vote on a bill concerning child welfare. By the end of June 1993, the nine RPR representatives had formed a coalition with Soane Uhila's five nonaligned members to command a majority. Representative Kamilo Gata, who had waged a serious battle against his former ally Soane Uhila during the national legislative election campaign, proposed that the presidency of the assembly be given to the RPR group,

but met with little support. The new president will be elected during the budget session, scheduled for the fourth quarter of 1993.

The labor unrest of the previous year continued with a series of similar strike actions. Most of these occurred during the second half of 1992, and affected the offices of weather and civil aviation, and departments of health and education. The main complaint continued to concern the recognition of local career employees in the various departments as full-fledged members of the national French civil service.

The Catholic mission and the traditional chiefly hierarchy, the twin pillars of Wallisian and Futunan society, came under strong criticism from the secretary-general of the major labor union in the territory, the local chapter of the *Force Ouvrière*. At the fourth convention of *Force Ouvrière* in Noumea, he blamed them for the economic stagnation affecting the territory, and called for the liberation of the population from their authority.

The gradual increase in the number of wage earners in the population continued to alter the face of society. Salaried employment grew slower overall than in the two previous years, but remained high (22.8 percent) in the private sector. The shift from public to private sectors continued. In 1992, the private sector accounted for 42 percent of wage earners, compared to 17 percent in 1986 and 37.7 percent in 1991. Of the 1066 public servants in the territory in 1992, 837 were locally recruited and 229 were sent from metropolitan France.

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