

Page 4

ter, the *Vola ni kawa bula*. And, as judicial commentators have noted, the constitution fails ultimately in protecting the inalienable political rights of the individual. It vests most power in an unelected president, an unaccountable chiefly class, and the military.

The greatest paradox of this new constitution is that it cannot guarantee the outcomes desired by its supporters. A strong, united opposition could overcome a fractious, divided Fijian community with the result being precisely that which the coup sought to revoke. The question What then? requires little imagination to work through. The new constitution may have a rather short life-span.

SANDRA TARTE

## NEW CALEDONIA

The transfer of power to the provinces was the main focus of attention during 1990 in New Caledonia. The process of "provincialization" was supposed to have been completed by July 1989, but the last administrative capacities were not transferred from Noumea to the three provinces until January 1990. Nine months later, the North Province was still not completely set up and was operating with only 70 percent of its appointed staff, some of whom had previously been based in Noumea.

In April, news broke of the impending sale of a mining company by Jacques Lafleur, leader of the *Rassemblement Pour la Calédonie dans la République* (RPCR), to the North Province, which is controlled by the *Front de Libération Nationale Kanak et Socialiste* (FLNKS). By the time the

sale of *Société minière du sud Pacifique* was completed in October—partly through metropolitan government funding—the North Province had set up an investment corporation, the *Société de financement et de participation du Nord* (SOFINOR). The province subsequently helped finance a hotel project in the Islands Province through a subsidiary of its newly acquired mining company. It also created a development agency to identify and assess development projects in the province.

The first *Conseil coutumier de Province* (Provincial Custom Council) was set up in May, and the first *aire coutumière* (custom area) in October. These institutions are concerned with matters of Kanak custom and tradition, and are represented within the territorial congress by the *Conseil consultatif coutumier* (Custom Consultative Council). They soon became active, especially in respect to land questions. Traditional representatives were included in an *Agence de développement et d'aménagement foncier* (ADRAF) mission to Fiji to investigate land regulations. By the end of the year, the decentralization law designed to strengthen municipalities in New Caledonia was still before the French Parliament.

ADRAF, which is responsible for buying and helping develop land, redistributed some forty-two thousand hectares between April 1989 and July 1990. Over 76 percent of the total went to Melanesians and 21 percent to Europeans. These transactions were channeled through provincial land commissions and custom councils, as well as through the appropriate municipal land commissions. The municipal com-

Fonds Documentaire IRD



010024348

Fonds Documentaire IRD

Cote : B\*24348 Ex : 1

missions, set up during the first half of the year, are composed of representatives from the municipality and from various occupational groups, including Caldoche farmers as well as traditional leaders. Noumea has been kept out of the process.

The difficult relations between the component parts of the FLNKS were reflected in problems with selecting a replacement for assassinated president Jean-Marie Tjibaou and restructuring the movement. In January, a party congress failed to confront these two issues but managed to reestablish internal working relations. A second congress in March resulted in the election of Paul Néaoutyne, from the *Parti de libération kanak* (PALIKA), as president, and Rock Wamytan, from the *Union calédonienne* (UC), as vice-president with responsibility for international relations.

Paul Néaoutyne was born in 1951, holds a DEA degree in economics, is a former professor, and has been an important member of PALIKA. After serving as Tjibaou's political director in the northern region from 1985 to 1988, he was elected mayor of Poindimié in 1989 and later became a member of the provincial council. Rock Wamytan also was born in 1951 and holds an economics degree. A former assistant to parliament member Rock Pidjot, he became chief civil servant in 1979, then director of such rural development services as FADIL in 1979 and ODIL in 1983. In 1987 he was appointed to the Central Region. In 1989, he was elected to both the South Province Council and the Mont Dore Municipal Council. He has been a member of the executive commission of the UC since

1988 and has frequently acted as the FLNKS representative in international forums.

The election of Paul Néaoutyne as FLNKS president caused some uneasiness among UC militants, who had decided that the president should be a member of their party. But during the second congress, in the face of charges of hegemony, UC leaders were willing to compromise in the interests of unity. Throughout the year, there was conflict among *indépendantistes* in municipalities such as Ponérihouen, Yaté, Poum, Houaïlou, Ouvea, Ile des Pins, and Hienghène. On the island of Lifou a dispute between the high chieftainship of Gaica and the Islands Province resulted in the provincial staff being locked out for a whole week in October.

The annual congress of the *Union progressiste mélanésienne*, held in October, and those of PALIKA and UC in November, revealed uncertainties and disagreements about the functioning of the FLNKS, as well as the implementation of the Matignon Accord. François Burck was reelected president of the UC. Verbal skirmishes during the year between the *Union océanienne* (UO) and the RPCR, resulted from the efforts of the UO to attract Wallisian voters away from the RPCR. The UO claims that Wallisian interests are bypassed by the terms of the Matignon Accord, but is portrayed by the RPCR as just another part of the "third force" being encouraged by the socialist government.

On the international front, Australian Prime Minister Bob Hawke made his first official visit to New Caledonia in July and met with Louis Le Pensec,

French minister for the *Départements et territoires d'outre-mer* (DOM-TOM). In the same month, the FLNKS attended the South Pacific Forum meeting in Vanuatu, after earlier participating in the Melanesian Spearhead group meeting in March. In November, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted a resolution on decolonization that included New Caledonia.

A dramatic increase in industrial strife during 1990 at times forcibly demonstrated the differences between the *Union syndicale des ouvriers et des employés de Nouvelle-Calédonie* (USOENC) and the *Union syndicale des travailleurs kanak et exploités* (USTKE). As a result, a local Code of Work Regulations should be promulgated soon.

Economic growth, fueled by the exceptional performance of the mining sector in 1989, slowed to a more normal level during the first half of the year. But the economy remained buoyant, as witnessed by the gross profit of 21.7 billion CFP reported by the *Société le Nickel* (SLN) for the first half of 1990. In spite of a thirty-six-day strike and a slump in the value of the US dollar, the results for the second half of the year were expected to be as good. With the DOM-TOM still a budget priority of the central government for 1991, the prospects for funding from metropolitan France were good. In November, the DOM-TOM budget was increased by 5.4 percent to 2.17 billion French francs. Of this, 588.39 million was allocated to New Caledonia, an increase of 15.3 percent. This caused some discomfort among representatives from other DOM-TOM, notably Emile Vernaudeon, an independent deputy from French Polynesia, who decided to change his

established pattern and vote against the socialists. He and Jacques Lafleur supported a motion of censure against the Rocard government in November. The RPCR deputy for New Caledonia, Maurice Nenou, voted against the motion, which was narrowly defeated by five votes.

PATRICK PILLON

#### PAPUA NEW GUINEA

The secessionist crisis in Bougainville continued to dominate events in Papua New Guinea during 1990. It put unprecedented strain on the constitutional order and precipitated an economic downturn that forced some fundamental changes in development policy. The crisis also exposed Papua New Guinea to intense international scrutiny from aid donors, investors, human rights groups, and neighboring countries. Despite the gravity of the situation, national politics remained as volatile as ever. Prime Minister Rabbie Namaliu faced several attempts to unseat him during the year and survived only by some skillful, but highly controversial, maneuvering.

By the end of 1989 it was abundantly clear that the national government's Bougainville peace initiative had failed to win the support of Francis Ona and the leaders of the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA). They had declined to take part in the peace ceremony of October 1989, ignored the 10 November deadline to sign the Bougainville Development Package Agreement, and continued to demand the withdrawal of the security forces as a prerequisite for negotiations. The



THE CONTEMPORARY PACIFIC  
A JOURNAL OF ISLAND AFFAIRS



VOLUME 3 · NUMBER 2  
FALL · 1991

*In the Next Issue*

---

Academic Freedom in the Third World

Specters of Inauthenticity in "Traditional" Cultures

Cargo Cult Culture in Melanesia

The Discourse of Chiefs in Santa Isabel

Contributors include Geoffrey Caston, Kathryn Creely, Margaret Jolly, Lamont Lindstrom, Caroline Ralston, Geoffrey M. White

Dialogue: The Study of Women in the Pacific

Political Reviews: Micronesia and Polynesia, July 1991 to June 1992

Resources: Melanesian Studies at the University of California, San Diego

Book Reviews



ISSN: 1043-898X

Handwritten note: *Populär Föreläsning*  
MEN → St. Ingvar. Trossi de handskrivna