

Doc for Japan?

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NATIONAL SOVEREIGNTY
and
PERSONAL FREEDOM
in the
PACIFIC ISLANDS

Develop + protect

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This paper discusses ⁴two tentative assumptions about the Pacific Islands:

1. That the more the constitutional sovereignty, the less the individual freedom; and
2. That politicians in governing parties ^{are turning increasingly outwards, using} use their ^{time &} powers increasingly to serve foreign interests, and decreasingly to serve their electors (despite rhetoric to the contrary). The main reason for the shift of emphasis is that the benefits to, and pressures on, politicians come increasingly from external sources (and from expatriates locally), and decreasingly from their electors. ^{perhaps it is not surprising, most people prefer eating on a big stage if one is available}

This seems rather reactionary, and it is contrary to what we all hoped 40 years or so ago, when independence was first seriously considered, and

- 3. THAT REGIONAL SOLUTIONS FOR PROVISION OF LARGER SCALE SERVICES HAVE BEEN OF ~~LOWER~~ LESS EFFECTIVE THAN EXPECTED
- 4. THAT NEW MECHANISMS OF LINKAGE WITH BIG SYSTEMS ARE NEEDED



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SECURITY CONCERNS
OF PACIFIC ISLANDS GOVERNMENTS AND PEOPLES

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300 word abstract.
20 minute talk = say 2,000 words.

*placation to protect interest of people w/ political issues
not diverging issues as interest of ppl can get more to get in common with outside interests*

The concept of security is getting defined more broadly all the time. Twenty years ago it was used mainly in relation to external military threats. Now environmental, cyber-crime, population explosion, etc. But here concerned with human and "physical".

(2) Now outside interests are increasingly private rather than public

(3) A high % of the outside interests in the Pacific are in the form of illegal in these countries.

The worries of governments

Leaving aside the differing interests represented within governments, and focusing on their official policies, we find some radical differences within the Pacific Islands nations.

Foreign military threats

Foreign criminal threats

Internal military threats

Internal criminal threats

+ media control & foreign protection of programmes, corporations, NGOs etc

PKB / SL / Fiji / Tonga?

The worries of peoples

Ethnic. All the security crises in the Pacific in the past 20 years have had ethnicity as a major component. So the first obvious difference is whether one is on the winning or the losing side.

Often associated with land, and widening economic disparities.

Governance issues.

What impact of media?? Take things by force?

Worries of business
✓ - churches
NGOs
Rural / urban

was assumed to correlate with freedom. ~~As I~~ drafted this paper in haste on the Isle of Man last Friday, I do not provide statistics, but I have no doubt about the general thrust.

National independence and personal freedom

It took me a long time to recognise the inverse correlation between the degree of national independence and the extent of personal freedom in the region. It can be measured on several dimensions:

1. More personal income. An essential ingredient of personal freedom is money. The more you have, the freer you are to choose, and the less you are subject to control by others. Bernard Poirine detailed this correlation for small constitutional units around the world and I present data on it for the Pacific in a forthcoming book.
2. More employment. This is partly because of more aid and investment. Investors have more confidence in large, long-established legal systems than in small ones. The contrast is illustrated in the radical differences in investment between Hawai'i, Guam, Northern Marianas, and the Federated States of Micronesia; or New Caledonia as against Vanuatu.

3. Better education, health and other services.

Having more money and access to larger systems, places ^{with stronger} linked to larger systems have generally more and better education, health and other services.

4. More personal freedom and freedom of

expression. Large governments in high income countries have less power to control people who express contrary opinions. [This is often different in large, ^{but} low income countries such as Indonesia or China.] Small governments have more ways, mostly unofficial, to "get at" their critics. Places which are integrated in varying degrees into larger, richer, more established systems, have more media and fewer controls on it than smaller, constitutionally independent ones.

5. More resources for cultural expression.

Paradoxically, more is often done about this where the people are a minority in a larger system. The large system has more money to do it with, and the majority community tends to feel guilty and is willing to pay, and the threat of being swamped is an incentive to minority groups to more actively promote their creative expression and language at least.

6. Better justice. The smaller the system, the more likely it is that judges, police, prosecutors and

others will have conflicts of interest in cases in which they are professionally involved.

7. More mobility. All Polynesians in the Cook Islands, Niue and Tokelau have free access to New Zealand and Australia, and most use it (94% from Niue, 84% from the Cook Islands). All Micronesians north of the equator have access to USA. All people of the French "countries" and territories in the Pacific have free entry to France and to all of Europe; all Easter Islanders have free access to Chile. A high proportion of people exercise those freedoms and move. In today's world, not many people want to be confined to a small place all their lives. For example, Tuvalu's prime ministers have regularly implored their Australian and New Zealand counterparts to allow more of their citizens to emigrate, despite Tuvaluans having higher incomes than the average independent nation in the region. Higher incomes are only part of the reason. There is work for everyone who wants it in the Cook Islands, at payrates four times higher than the average in the independent Pacific Islands. But young people still go. This is a world-wide phenomenon of course - more ^{people} humans from small places want to go to big places than vice versa. Expatriate numbers, on the other hand, are increasing.

As with individuals, we want "freedom" in principle
but in practice we buy insurance, pay taxes, want
govt schools & social services

One could go through various other criteria on which Pacific people who have access to large systems are generally better off than those who don't. On the other hand, people generally want to run their own affairs - at least in principle.

Why want to belong to a small independent system in principle, but to a large independent one in practice? There are advantages in both, but when the chips are down, the large one wins for most.

One important feature is that the opinions of political leaders are assumed to reflect those of their electors, but in fact their interests diverge more all the time. Leaders benefit most from higher degrees of independence, but ordinary people benefit more from participation in larger systems. The leaders too want to participate in larger systems, but often in ways that enable them to use their leverage to derive more for themselves and their interest group, often at the expense of the wider public. For example, as a proportion of per capita income, Cook Islanders have to spend over 50 times more per person to pay their politicians salaries and costs, than do New Zealanders. When I left home last week, 5 of our 7 cabinet ministers were travelling in Europe, Asia and elsewhere, enjoying luxuries they could

never afford at home. This is common. The people have to pay, directly or indirectly.

This is part of the growing phenomenon of "politicians turning outward", renting out the sovereignty they control for Internet domain names, international sex telephone lines, money havens, flags of convenience, military testing sites, strategic denial, votes in international forums, and other purposes.

time spent.

The old notion of sovereignty was of one man, the sovereign, having supreme power within his kingdom. Of course, power is never absolute, but that was the implication. As kings went out of business throughout the world, or were retained as symbolic heads of state, the concept of sovereignty was transferred to governments, whether elected or not.

As governments took on more powers and activities, the sovereign powers expanded, ostensibly for public benefit. In practice, however, they were often used to serve the interests of ruling politicians, their financial backers and parties, contrary to the public interest.

At the end of the colonial era, most former colonies became constitutionally independent governments. Ideally they were democratically elected, and in the early years in practice also. More recently, however, some have been decided by military coup, electoral fraud, distortion of the electoral and governing process by local and/or foreign vested interests, or other non-democratic processes.

National boundaries have become more porous due to developments in transport and communications, international treaties, membership in international organizations, international trade and investment (including international crime), and greatly increased international movement of people – whether as tourists, workers, or otherwise.

Sovereignty protecting & sovereignty eroding effects of international organizations

International organizations aim to increase linkages between nations, while "preserving their sovereignty" - which is often a contradiction in terms. All Pacific Islands governments value joining international organizations, and some join more than they use effectively.

However, since Kofi Annan took over as Secretary-General of the United Nations, he has been promoting a new policy for intergovernment organizations - that sovereignty should not be used to protect a government against human rights abuses within its borders. This makes political involvement more acceptable at the world level. The big questions then are who decides when to interfere, how, who should do it, and who should pay?

The South Pacific Forum of heads of governments worked on the principle that no member country interferes in the internal affairs of any other (though they spent lots of time trying to interfere in the affairs of non-members - but without much effect).

→ In practice, however, Australia and New Zealand have increasingly assumed a paternal "responsibility" to interfere, through their aid programmes or otherwise. Most foreign aid donors give for specific projects and on specified conditions. Australia and New Zealand, however, in the early years of independence of their former territories, gave the aid mainly in untied grants. Following some glaring instances of aid funds being used ineffectively and improperly, and sometimes corruptly, the untied grants were

shifted to tied aid. This gives donors more say in what it is used for, and it can enable more political leverage. But overt political involvement was still at least officially taboo.

A radical change took place in August 2000. To oversimplify a complex issue, Australia and New Zealand supported the elected but now toppled government of Mahendra Chaudhry and proclaimed equal rights for Indian citizens of Fiji, while the Pacific Islands countries supported the claims of ethnic Fijians who feared being marginalized in their own country. Cross-currents and under-currents of other interests were inevitably involved. The split in interpretations of what to do about the crisis strained regional relations, so a special meeting of Forum Foreign Ministers was called, the first ever.

That meeting broke the "sacred rule" of the Forum - for the first time ever they discussed the internal problems of two member nations, Fiji and Solomon Islands, and reached a consensus on how to deal with these issues and with such issues in the future. The hymen of sovereignty was broken.

The European Union and the Commonwealth took actions in concert with those of Australia and New Zealand. Asian countries

except for India
 involved in the region, like the Pacific Islands nations, remained silent and either tacitly supported indigenous interests against those of immigrants, or remained aloof from internal affairs of others as a matter of policy.

Treaties as forces for protection and erosion of sovereignty

Treaties bind their members. Some countries want to belong because of benefits to the nation and/or perquisites to the elite, but create only token mechanisms of conformity to the ^{terms} ~~terms~~ of the treaties to protect favoured non-conformists. In the Pacific, some legislation relating to money laundering, copyright ~~provisions~~, human rights ~~protection~~, etc. illustrates this pattern. But where conformity is practiced, it reduces sovereign discretion.

International Non-Government Organizations as levellers of sovereignty

Greenpeace, Amnesty International, Pacific Concerns Resources Centre, and more than 100 international NGOs that operate in the Pacific also have a levelling effect. Most have a greater or lesser political agenda, supporting this or that policy on a world-wide basis. For example, Bread for The World subsidizes the Tonga Pro-Democracy Movement; Pacific Concerns

Resources Centre supports certain ethnic movements; and so on.

Investment and sovereignty

Despite apparently objective policies, the practices of many Pacific Islands governments mean that the acceptance or rejection, and conditions, of many foreign investments are based on personalized deals with politicians rather than objective assessments based on official policies. The more personalized the deal, the more it is subject to the whims of individual politicians, therefore the more the investor will feel the need to participate in the political process, most commonly by "contributing" finance or favours to politicians and/or parties.

Foreign investors, and particularly speculative investors (who are in a disturbing number of cases criminals), increasingly determine who is elected. The extent of this in both the North and the South Pacific, seems not to be widely recognised.

Investment is in some cases a by-product of governmental leverage. The most spectacular process is the on-going "loyalty" auction between China and Taiwan, investing capital and funding parties and governments in return for diplomatic

recognition, support for policies, and votes in international forums.

The effects of Islanders abroad on sovereignty at home

The Tonga Pro Democracy Movement is helped by Tongans abroad who have money and often feel freer to express political ideas than they would at home. Expatriate Indians world-wide recently met in Copenhagen and resolved to give political support to Indians in Fiji; and Fiji Indians in New Zealand last month formed a new association to assist their people in Fiji materially and politically. Many politicians standing for election in Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia, the Marshall Islands, Samoa and the Cook Islands and several other countries, travel internationally to collect votes and money from their people abroad. External sources often determine who wins elections.

Johnatan + David

Security and sovereignty

No country in the world can handle its security alone and the more so the smaller it is in population, money and technology. The more vulnerable, more more sovereignty is compromised. Who takes ultimate responsibility for military protection? Colonies and territories are handled by the colonial power. FSM,

Marshall Islands and Palau contract their security to USA in return for cash and access privileges. A number of countries in the region have defence arrangements with Australia, New Zealand, USA and/or France. How effective any of these would be in the event of major conflict we do not know.

But the major conflicts so far are internal. All parts of Melanesia (except the Torres Straits Islands), have experienced violent conflict in the past decade. A congeries of land disputes, stagnant economies, and other factors have usually coalesced around latent ethnic tensions and erupted in violence. These too reduce both the effective sovereignty of the nation and the freedom of its citizens.

A Major questions for the Pacific in the coming generation include how to integrate the advantages of big, rich systems with maximum freedom of small communities, ethnic categories and other interest groups.