

## My Biggest, Lai!

by Michael R. Sakamoto

■ As always, Stan Wright and I were whipping for papio. The water was clean and shallow, and the coral heads harbored beautiful avenues and twisting highways within themselves. We were on Christmas Island and had one of the punts (which is a shallow draft barge with a canopy) all to ourselves. Everyone else had sought refuge from the tormenting sun of the Line Islands and were resting under cool, swaying palm trees and sipping on mint juleps. That really didn't sound at all unappetizing, and I contemplated discarding my 9-foot graphite rod for a "tall-cool-one" myself. But the day was still relatively young and I wanted to get to the reefs of Poland (one of the towns of Christmas Island).

Stan and I had previously stumbled on the whipping grounds of Poland and had landed a whole bunch of scrappy "hoshi" or "omilu" (also called bluefin trevally or ulua) and had a grandiose time. But that day had waned too soon and, before we were ready to, we had to pack it in and head back to London (another city on Christmas Island). At that time, Stan and I earmarked the place for future adventures, making silent vows to return to Poland to harass some of the monster ulua the area was famous for.

on the boat.

After the drift ended, we settled down to drink some well-deserved water. Perry cranked up the outboard and blasted the punt up against the wind, setting us up for another drift pattern.

His neck craned up, looking for another likely looking reef that he could put us on. He wanted to show us the monster ulua that Christmas Island was famous for.

"They're real DINOSAURS in these waters!!" he said. "Real beauties; a lot of them almost as heavy as full-grown men!" he said with a grin that seemed to be anticipating some heavy action.

The engine chugged us up into the wind. The water sloshed up against the flat bow and was neatly thrown up and over into the forward section of the punt. Water moved on the deck, wetting down the rods and reels that lay on the open deck.

The sound of the engine coupled with the slapping of the waves and the warm late evening sun lulled both Stan and I for a while. Stan stood up and leaned against the support post. We seemed a million miles away from anywhere, for all around us could be seen vast expanses of sandy flats, deep-blue pocket-lagoons and crusty



The encounters that Stan and I had with the fish of Poland's reefs are surely something out of a fishing novel. The ulua were of a size that made even cool-as-a-cucumber Stan talk in jibberish and walk around wide-eyed for days. Some of the ulua that emerged out of the reefs were in the 80-to-90-lb. range and resembled silver-gray torpedos with their sensing units on "lock." They came after plugs with only one thing on their minds. They didn't hesitate; they didn't turn away . . . all they did was hit the plugs with such force and determination that even if Stan wanted to take away the plugs, he couldn't.

So here we were, keeping our date with the reefs of Poland under the heat of the relentless sun. We busily whipped the reefs. We selected juicy-looking channels, protruding coral heads and small coral outcroppings in sandy bottoms and fired off zipping casts. The reels were engaged as soon as or just before the plugs hit the water. This made for instant retrieves and decreased the possibility of the plugs sinking down to shallow reefs and snagging onto coral heads.

The plugs that we used were of the swimming and popping type. Since the water was shallow and the fish abundant, anything that moved erratically was hit. We each chose a different type of plug to use to see which would produce more fish. Stan stuck with the surface-type chugger, and I in turn stuck to the Mirro-lure.

Stan chugged the surface with short, choppy strokes of the rod. Each stroke made his plug sink down into and grab gulping gallons of water.

"Right there!" Stan would say, talking to himself. He stood on the bow section of the punt while I stood on the stern with Perry Langston at the outboard. "Just passed that there coral outcrop is where the big uns' are!" he said, as if we were all listening to every word that he muttered. "Rut there! . . . rut there! . . . come-oonnn darlin' . . . Momma knows where you's hidin' . . . %!#@£!&\*%, MIKE! DID YOU SEE THAT?!" His voice would suddenly reach three octaves higher. "THAT ULUA MUS'A BIN CLOSE TO A HUNDRED IF IT WAS AN OUNCE!" he hollered in his Texas drawl.

The fish were everywhere. No sooner did Stan bang into one and fight the fish to a frazzle than I would have one on and driving away at neck-breaking speed. Perry kept trying to decide whose fish he should follow, or if he should throw out the anchor, or simply throw up his hands in dismay. Yells went up all over the punt, and it sounded like a New Year's party with only us two fishing

patches of reef.

After three to four miles of reef, Perry down-throttled and pushed the "stop" button on the outboard. Vast areas of brown and blue reef line emerged endlessly in waters clear as gin. Directly to the south could be seen a grove of coconut trees, just a small portion of the 50,000 that grew on the island. Like small patches against the horizon, the trees gave us a reference point from which to follow on our way home.

"Go ahead and fire away!" Perry exclaimed, in his New Zealand accent. And fire we did. Still half-dazed from the drunken drive, Stan worked his way up the bow section and started the routine.

By the time that I stepped up onto the platform, Stan already had made three casts and was whooping it up in the front.

From where I stood I could see the surface plug working its way back to the punt. It was not more than 10 to 20 feet from the boat when a huge swirl grew up around the chugging plug. Stan yelled and hauled back as if hooked up. The plug flew up from the water and over the top of the punt. He quickly retrieved the plug and snapped another cast. The fish heard where the lure landed and zeroed in on the disturbance. Stan kept the plug inert, his nerves strung to a straining tension. Rippled rings echoed away from the sitting lure. Fifteen feet away the huge ulua flicked its tail with a thundering thrash and headed for the silent lure. Stan stood slightly crouched, with his rod tip pointed at the lure.

"NOW!!!" I yelled with all my might. With his teeth tightly clenched, Stan whipped the rod to his left with a vicious stroke, digging the lure deep down into the water. Water splashed everywhere, and the ulua went crazy. The ulua missed the first pass because of the plug's sudden dive. The huge fish pivoted, throwing water as it thrashed the surface, desperately trying to find the elusive plug. Again Stan chugged the plug. All you could see now was the white water. The ulua was already half out of its mind with hatred. All it wanted to do now was find and kill the plug. Again Stan jabbed the rod to his left. The fish turned and charged the plug. From 10 feet away the ulua tore after the disoriented lure and hit it directly from the left side. Water splashed everywhere as the 60-pounder tore the plug from the surface. Stan suddenly, feeling the weight of the fish, hauled back and jabbed the hook deep into the maul of the monster.

continued





Author Mike Sakamoto caught this 5-lb. lai on a Mirro - lure with medium-light tackle while whipping the reefs of Poland, Christmas Island. "This is my biggest lai ever," he said.

"Hookup!" he yelled, his voice cracking as he strained against the fully bent rod. The fish grabbed water and thrashed away from the boat; its first flick of the tail dug deep and splashed the surface like a thunder clap. "EEEEEEEE . . . EEEE!!" the line raced from the reel. The 15-lb. test zipped from the reel's spool that was cupped neatly in Stan's left hand. The fish was smart and headed to the shallow portion of the reef. The surface was torn up as the tail of the brute tried to grab water. The trail of white water revealed the shallowness of the water. It couldn't have been more than five feet deep.

"COME ON! . . . Chase, chase . . .!" Stan yelled. But

the depth of the water restricted us from lowering the outboard to chase the ulua over the shallow reef. Perry quickly grabbed for the aluminum push pole and started to poll us into the shallow reef after the fish.

Suddenly the bottom of the boat met with the reef and lodged us tight. The stern swung around as the wind blew us tighter against the reef. We were stuck tight. Perry pushed as hard as he could and managed a few feet. But the wind blew us quickly back and set us back on the coral.

In the meantime, Stan still stood leaning against the straining rod and watching the line disappear from the reel. He knew we had beached the punt and couldn't chase his fish any farther. More than 200 yards of line had left the reel and there was not much left.

Suddenly the fish gained another breath and zipped the remaining yards of line from the heated reel. The rod arched down and then came back up with a sickly limp. The line had cut. Still muttering to himself, Stan cranked up the line. About 50 yards came back. The line was frayed to a fine point.

With shaking knees, Stan popped the old spool off the reel and quickly exchanged it for a fully-loaded one. Stringing the line through the guides along with the premade leader, he now was back in action and ready to fire more casts.

Perry eventually pushed us off the reef and started the motor to set us up for another pass on the reef. The day was getting old and this would be our last drift.

I jumped up to the casting platform wanting a chance at one of those DINOSAURS, too. Perry killed the motor, and we started the drift over some unbelievable waters.

The small Mirro-lure arched over the reef in a neatly-placed cast. I worked the rod tip as I retrieved and made the lure dodge and dart in a zigzagging lure. Straight as an arrow, the fish hit the plug from the side. Continuing on about 20 feet, the fish suddenly felt the hook as I brought it to him. The line whinned as the tension reached its maximum. Several vicious hauls of the rod and I had set the hook deep into his mouth. The rod tip vibrated and jostled up and down as the fish shook his head to and fro. Suddenly, not 50 feet from the punt a beautiful silvery gem came flying out of the water. The

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fish leaped up like a twisting acrobat, throwing water everywhere, and then came back down, still twisting and thrashing. Stan was yelling for me to set the hook again when the fish again came up and out of the water.

The fish zipped 50 feet to the left of the punt and leaped out of the water with a graceful arch. The fish took leap after leap, greyhounding across the surface with beautiful sweeping arches. At the end of the last leap, the fish came straight out of the water, shaking its head from side to side.

All kind of thoughts raced through my mind. Was it an awa-uaa or was it a barracuda? Whatever it was, it was big and a true leaper if I ever saw one. The battle raged on, with the fish now staying deep and in the sandy areas of the reef. I worked the fish, and he slowly came in. Every once in a while the rod tip shook as the fish tried to dislodge the hook from his mouth.

Back and forth the fish went. On some runs he took line with blazing speed, stripping 50 yards at a flash. But the cruel drag wore him down, and the fish now could work its way only from side to side.

With the fish 15 feet from the boat, I had a good look at it. It was about three feet long and had a silvery body and a small head. The mouth was agaped, and the hook was embedded in the left corner of the mouth.

Suddenly, not five feet from the boat, the fish tried one last time to dislodge the treble hook. Up it came half out of the water, shaking its head with a half-hearted attempt.

After that, it was fully spent. It lay on its side with mouth opening and closing. It had expelled all that it had. With a small gaff I hooked it directly behind the head and hauled it in over the side. It was the biggest lai that I had ever seen and probably would ever see. Stan stood next to me in awe. The lai flopped on the deck and lay there, beautiful and silvery. The battle had lasted about 20 minutes.

Later at the dock we weighed the fish, and it bent the scale down to a little over five pounds. It wasn't a trophy fish in the sense that it was a record holder, but it was a trophy to me and I later would have it mounted, thanks to Chuck Johnston.

To this day, it has been MY BIGGEST LAI.

... Mike



## News Briefs

in judging when to get a warrant," Shattuck said.

### Pacific Radiation

LONDON (AP) — Under pressure from doctors and widows of cancer-stricken veterans, the British government is probing allegations that more than 150 servicemen have died from cancer or are suffering diseases related to atomic tests in the South Pacific.

The Defense Ministry said it would review the health records of 12,000 soldiers and civilians who took part in tests carried out over six years in the 1950s at Maralinga in the South Australian desert and on Christmas Island and the Monte Bello Islands in the Pacific.

### To Continue Flights from Honolulu

## Kiribati Airline Gets CAB Approval

Gannett News Service

WASHINGTON — The Civil Aeronautics Board has cast aside allegations that air service from Honolulu to the Republic of Kiribati would be a conduit for mercenaries and has granted the fledgling Air Tungaru a five-year operations permit.

In affirming a tentative ruling made a year ago, the CAB said Air Tungaru may continue to use planes and crews provided by Air Nauru to make flights from Honolulu to Christmas Island and on to Tarawa.

The Tuvalu Islands Developing Co. of Los Angeles had protested the permit, complaining that Air Tungaru "may be used to transport mercenaries from Honolulu to carry out human rights violations against Kiribati citizens," according to the CAB final order.

A CAB spokesman said the board could find no corroboration for that charge. At the Interior Department, which administers U.S. territories, an official knew of no reason for mercenaries to go to Kiribati.

Air Tungaru has had a temporary so-called wet lease with Air Nauru for the past year which lets it fly passengers, cargo and mail using an Air Nauru plane and crew, a common arrangement for small carriers until they can afford their own planes and crews. The Air Tungaru flights are identified as its own.

ROGER CABLE, Hawaii manager for Air Tungaru, said his company has been flying one flight a week between Honolulu and Kiribati using an Air Nauru 727 aircraft, but currently is negotiating to buy its own 727 later this year.

The airplane used by Air Tungaru has seating for 72 passengers and cargo space. Cable said the weekly flights have been "going out pretty full."

Air Tungaru is the only service from Hawaii to the new Republic of Kiribati, the former Gilbert Islands, Phoenix Islands and part of the Line Islands.

Tuvalu Development Co., which could not be reached for comment, also raised questions about Air Tungaru's fitness to operate, charged that it used discriminatory fares and said it was improperly carrying mail because it lacked membership in the Universal Postal Union.

The CAB said the airline has consistently filed its fares properly, has authority to charge different fares, and that it doesn't have to be a member of the postal union to carry mail.



# Christmas, Palmyra also eyed

By Barbara Hastings  
Advertiser Science Writer

The Houston group that wants to put a satellite launch site at the Big Island's South Point is hedging its bets and looking at Christmas Island and Palmyra Island as potential sites, too.

Donald "Deke" Slayton, one of the original seven astronauts and now an officer of Space Services Inc., confirmed yesterday that SSI is looking elsewhere in case opposition here is too great.

He was referring to a public hearing held on the Big Island last month. About 400 people

turned out, many of them to oppose the plan to locate the launch site at South Point.

"We are looking at alternatives because obviously we can't put all our eggs in one basket," Slayton said in a telephone conversation from Houston.

"We recognize the opposition.

## as satellite launch sites

I have no way to evaluate whether that's majority opinion," he added.

Slayton said Hawaii remains the first choice of SSI, that he believes the opposition isn't the majority, "but we can't sit around and wait three or four years to find that out."

South Point is attractive from

the standpoint of "orbital geometry," Slayton said — it's supposed to be the best place in the United States for launching satellites that are tied close to the equator.

The concern is to find a place where the launch can be made so that the booster rockets that fall off after lift-off do not fall on land, but into the ocean.

However, both Christmas and Palmyra islands are even better from the orbital geometry consideration, he said.

South Point is first choice because of the support system. Virtually every bolt would have to be shipped into Palmyra or Christmas Island.

But SSI wants something "up and running" in 18 months, Slayton said.

SSI is attempting to become the first privately owned, com-

mercial satellite launching operation. Until now, the federal government has done all launching and private companies pay the government to launch their communications equipment.

Slayton said he understands the concerns of Big Island residents, but "we come up with facts and they say, 'We really don't believe what they're saying.'"

He said he is frustrated by those reactions and wishes he could take these concerned people to see the operations at Kennedy Space Center in Cape Canaveral. He says there's actually more wildlife there than there used to be.

SSI wants the South Point location once used by the Air Force for its Pacific Missile Range rocket launching facility.



# Kiribati: Isles making it on their own th

**BAIRIKI, Kiribati**—The courageous manner in which this tiny island state of some 57,000 people has attacked crushing problems could be an example for better-endowed countries of the Third World. Yet few persons outside the restricted circle of specialists in Pacific affairs know much about the two-year-old Republic of Kiribati, or even how to pronounce the name.

A peculiarity of the local language often makes "ij" come out with an "g" sound—school children sing "It's a long way to Siperary"—so conscientious reporters usually explain that Kiribati is pronounced "Kiribas."

## robert trumbull

*The writer was a foreign correspondent for the New York Times for 36 years, mostly in Asia and the Pacific, and now does special assignments for that newspaper from a Honolulu base. He writes this column for The Advertiser.*

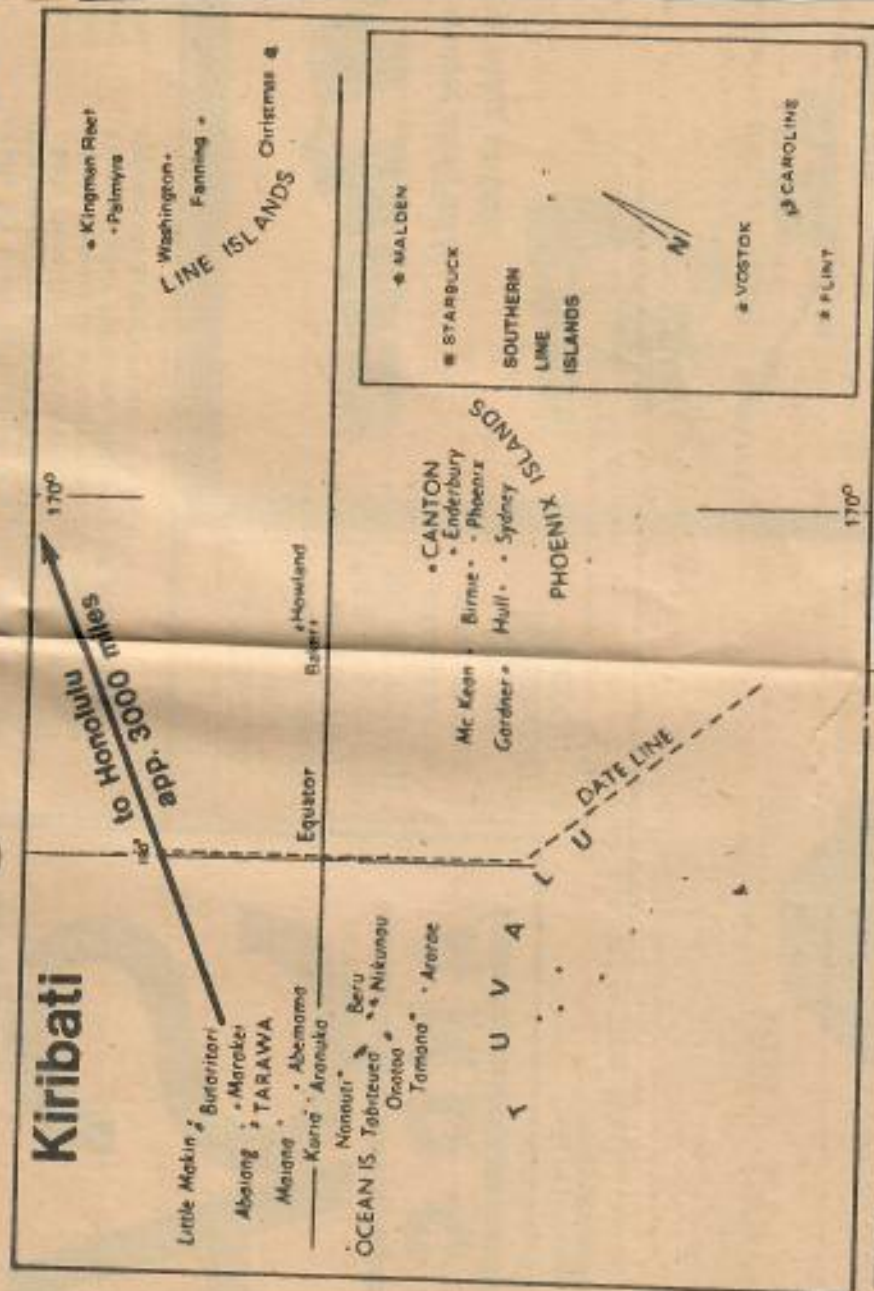
not "Kiribatty." But foreign visitors, who aren't many in this out-of-the-way place, soon learn from residents to use a very short "a," which makes the name sound like "Kiribas," or "Kiribus," or something in between, accent on the first syllable.

**ANY WAY YOU PRONOUNCE IT, Kiribati** means Gilberts in the island tongue. Before independence these were the Gilbert Islands, named after an 18th-century British discoverer. It would have been easier for outsiders if the new republic had reverted to the classic name **Tungaru**, as its airline did.

However, the authorities thought that this would affront the Line and Phoenix islands, two other components. The logic is obscure, since the people of those groups come from the Gilberts, or **Tungaru**.

Apart from the orthography, Kiribati projects an image of simplicity except when it comes to economic problems, which are complex and baffling.

The government leader, 31-year-old President Ieremia Tabai, who is probably the youngest head of state in the world, sets the tone by appearing in public barefooted, sometimes riding the public bus. He insists on using a Landrover instead of the big, shiny limousine, a gift from Australia presented personally by Prime Minister Malcolm Fraser during an official visit.



**THE YOUTHFUL, PRESIDENT** can be tough, too. He antedated our own President Reagan in firing striking government workers. And he and his cabinet have responded creatively and calmly to challenges that send other Third World leaders into paroxysms of self-pity.

Hardly another country has joined the comity of nations with less promising prospects than this collection of 33 unproductive islands and atolls, which straddle the Equator about 2,000 miles southwest of Hawaii. About the time when Princess Anne of Britain lowered the Union Jack on behalf of her mother, Queen Elizabeth II, the new state was deprived of its one big money-earner with the closing of the worked-out phosphate digs on the island of Banaba, formerly Ocean Island. The lost resource had provided half the revenue, in the form of taxes, for a strained annual budget of about \$13 million.



## ...the hard way

ernment acquired the nucleus of a fishing fleet, converted unused areas on the main atoll of Tarawa to ponds for producing bait, developed a market for fresh langouste by air-freighting the crustaceans to Hawaii by Air Tugaru, and launched a modest tourist industry.

Japan, which had captured and then lost Tarawa and other strategic locations in the Gilberts during World War II, has now returned to the islands in a big way with economic aid and a cash payment of \$600,000 a year for a license to fish in Kiribati waters.

The Japanese had already helped the budding tourism enterprise, without intending to, by building wartime fortifications on the minute island of Betio (pronounced BAY-show), a half-hour ferry ride from this toy capital. Many of the structures still stand, nearly four decades after the battle that enshrined Tarawa in the history of the U.S. Marine Corps.

Visitors, including many Japanese, find the massive concrete command blockhouse partly hidden in greenery but otherwise looking much as it did when this correspondent stood in its cooling shadow during late hours of the great battle in November 1943. Two huge coast defense guns that were put out of action by American shellfire still point to sea, rusting in the sun and salt air.

On that 347-acre sandspit, about half the size of Waikiki, more than 1,000 Americans were killed and a Japanese garrison of 5,600 men was wiped out in close-quarter action that made Betio the most dangerous place in the world for 76 hours.

The Japanese, once the hated conquerors, were welcomed back as benefactors. They funded two new fish markets on atoll shores, and planned a needed new jetty, among other air projects. Then the happy new relationship went sour, at least for the time being.

**KIRIBATI OFFICIALS** cannily compared the \$600,000 license fee with profits from the catch in Kiribati waters, and upped the ante for this year to \$1 million. Tokyo balked and withdrew the fishing fleet. "And by the way," the Japanese delegation added in effect, according to accounts here, "no fishing license, no more aid."

Loss of the Japanese economic assistance, estimated by a Kiribati official to be worth \$2 million to \$3 million, was a big price to pay for a principle. Moreover, the withdrawal meant a halt in important development plans. But the Kiribati people, confident that the Japanese will soon be back under the new terms, stood firm. That's class.

This long-foreseen catastrophe was absorbed with aplomb. Finance Minister Tiwau Awira, presenting his new budget in the House of Assembly, speculated that he must be the first finance minister anywhere to have "the doubtful honor of declaring the country's major economic asset officially dead."

**INSTEAD OF BEWAILING** the injustice of having been short-changed in the distribution of natural riches, the inexperienced government went to work on what it had. There was a pool of external financial aid, contributed mainly by Britain as a parting gift, and there was a corps of competent British and other foreign civil servants that outnumbered the expatriate staff before independence.

Faced with 30 percent unemployment—a difficult factor to assess on tropical islands where many people live off subsistence agriculture and fishing—the gov-



## Britain Signs Agreement Freedom for Gilbert Isles

LONDON (UPI) — Britain today agreed to give full independence to one of its last remaining fly-peck island colonies — the 33 coral atolls forming the Gilbert Islands in the southwest Pacific.

Under an agreement signed after two weeks of talks, the islands with their 48,000 inhabitants will become an independent republic in July 1979 under the name of Kiribati.

The Ellice Islands, which formerly constituted a single colony with the Gilbert Islands, became independent earlier this year under the name of Tuvalu.

The independence agreement was signed by Lord Goronwy-Roberts, a Foreign Office minister of state, and Chief Ieremia Tabia, the islands' chief minister.

It provide for inclusion in the new republic of Ocean Island or Banaba, whose inhabitants had demanded complete separation. The Gilbert islanders rejected this as unacceptable but pledged a "specially privileged constitutional status" for Banaba within a sovereign independent Gilbert Islands' state.

Most of the Banabans were evacuated from the island some years ago because of devastation caused by phosphate mining. They live now on Rabi, another island in the Fiji group.

The British government in May 1977 gave the Banabans a voluntary payment of \$8.8 million. It announced today it is giving them another \$2 million for development projects on Rabi island.

The Gilbert Islands, with a total land area of 264 square miles, are located near where the International Date Line cuts the equator. They have been internally self-governing since Jan. 1, 1977.

12-14-79

### Kiribati Air Service

Air Tungaru, the airline of the 5-month-old republic of Kiribati, will begin weekly service to the Line, Phoenix and Gilbert islands Jan. 9.

Kiribati, formerly the Gilbert Islands, is Hawaii's closest foreign neighbor.

Air Tungaru charges \$867 for a round trip to Tarawa, the republic's capital, and \$406 for a round trip to Christmas Island. The carrier uses a Boeing 727 leased from Air Nauru.

Flights will arrive Tuesday evenings and depart Wednesday mornings, according to Robert Cable, manager for Hawaii.



# Needy Gilbert Islands May Find a Rich Arabian Angel

A poor island nation about 1,000 miles south of Honolulu found an unlikely suitor here recently: Saudi Arabia, one of the world's wealthiest countries.

The Saudi Arabians are seeking ways to invest \$241 million, and during a recent meeting of the Saudi Arabia Pacific Asia Business Council, it was clear that the Gilbert Islands are intended as the lucky recipients of at least a portion of that money.

At first glance, the Gilbert Islands, a Pacific nation whose 57,000 residents will obtain their independence from Britain in July, hardly seem worthy of attention.

Even its top government officials acknowledge that the chain of 33 islands is rich in practically nothing and that their major resource, phosphate, is running low.

ADDS THE GILBERTS' minister of natural resource development, Taomati T. Iuta, "Anybody who has \$2,000 in his bank account is a millionaire in the Gilberts."

But this is a case where untapped wealth in the ocean might pay off for the wealthy Saudis.

According to the executive director of the Saudi Arabia Pacific Asia Business Council, Kei C. Yamato, the Gilbert Islands sit in one of the world's richest fishing grounds and manganese nodule beds.

And since the United States doesn't have its own source of manganese—needed to produce high-grade steel—Yamato believes the Gilberts are of "strategic importance" to the United

States as well.

The Gilberts' potential also is great in the area of ocean thermal energy conversion (OTEC), an area in which the Saudis already have expressed keen interest, Yamato said. Saudi Arabia has an agreement with the United States for OTEC research and development.

Emerging from the recent seminar here was this proposal:

Combine the Gilberts' resources, the Saudis' money, America's technology and Hawaii's expertise on Asia, fishing, OTEC technology and manganese nodule development.

"We need the capital, and we need the expertise," Iuta said. "We're looking for investment."







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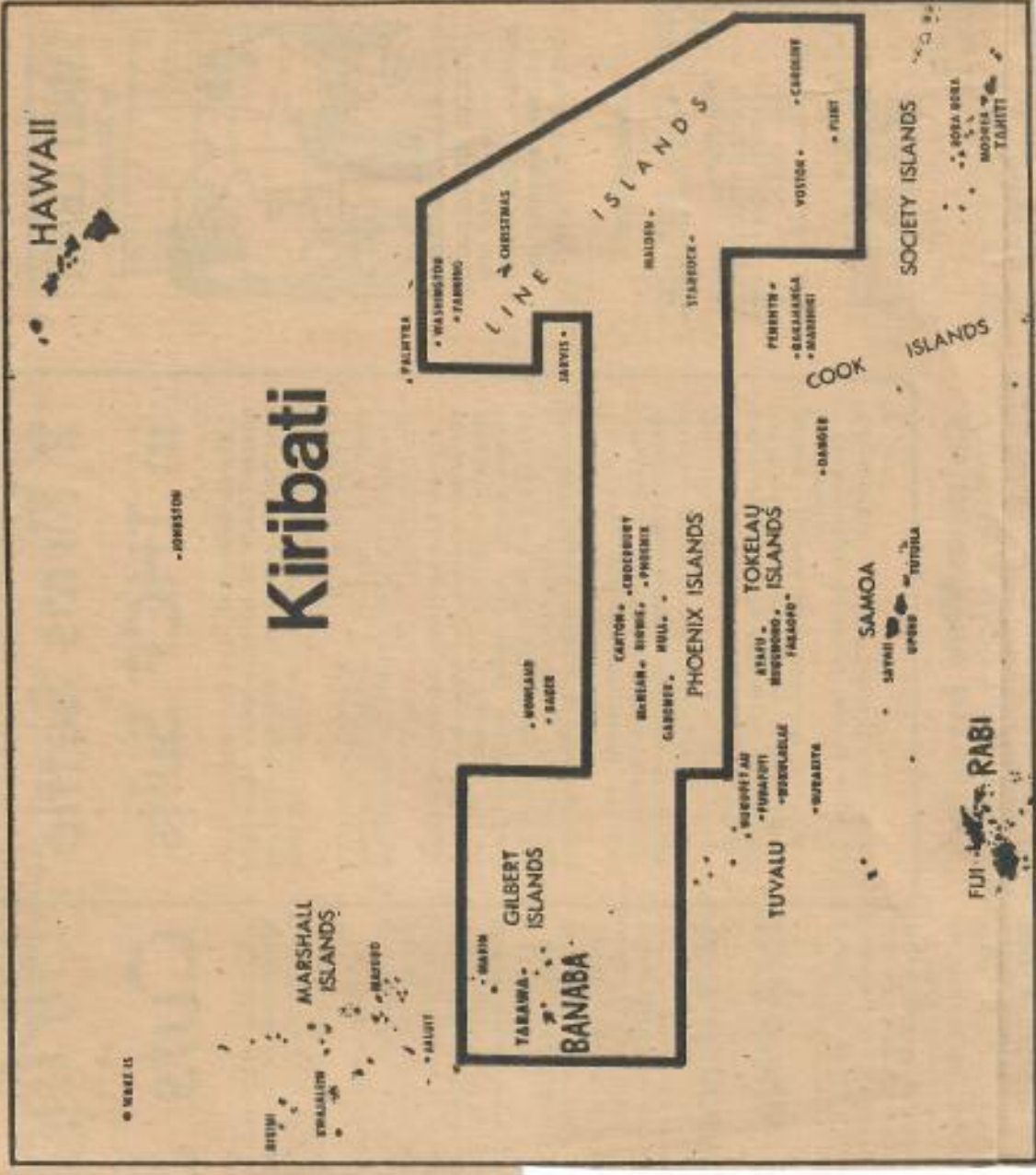
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# The Problem of Banaba

By Graham Heathcote

WHEN THE NEW nation of Kiribati gains its independence from Britain Thursday, the elation will not be unanimous.

Kiribati, lying to the southwest of Hawaii, will consist of the Gilbert, Phoenix and Line Islands. At its closest point, Washington Island, the new nation will be only 1,200 miles south of Oahu, making it the foreign nation closest to Hawaii.

But Kiribati will also include the phosphate island of Banaba, formerly called Ocean Island, from the British ship Ocean, the crew of which discovered the island in 1804. And that is the problem.

Banaba, southwest of the capital island of Tarawa, wanted to be independent, but the Gilbertese and the British government insisted it be included in Kiribati. A dispute about that has dragged on for years.

For the last 10 years the 2,500 Banabans have campaigned for separation from the Gilberts. They say they want to be associated with Fiji, 1,400 miles away, rather than with Tarawa, 240 miles distant.

The Banabans say they get along better with the Fijians after 32 years of living on the Fijian island of Rabi, and they want British aid to restore their island homeland so they can return there. A few score already have done so.

THE BRITISH, who annexed Banaba in 1900 when they found it

rich in minerals, moved the Banabans to Rabi in 1947, after phosphate quarrying made Banaba uninhabitable. Britain doesn't relish the prospect of a single island needing lots of economic aid because its terrain has been exhausted.

When the Kiribati independence bill was before the House of Lords last February, the Commonwealth minister of state, Lord Gorenwyt-Roberts, said the phosphate will be exhausted by the end of this year.

He acknowledged the Banabans' claims: that they are a different

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## *The Banabans want to be separate from Kiribati.*

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people from the Gilbertese, that until this century they had not been governed by them and had no say in their being joined to the Gilberts by Britain in 1916, and that since the Ellice Islanders were allowed to separate from the Gilberts, they should be, too. (Under colonial rule the Gilberts were linked with the Ellice Islands to the south. But the Ellice Islanders opted in 1975 for independence on their own under the name of Tuvalu.)

The minister said the Banabans, irrespective of whether they become citizens of Fiji or the new Kiribati, will retain rights of access and land ownership on Banaba

Whitehall hopes the Banabans will stay on Rabi and abandon their Banaba homeland to the seabirds.

LAST WINTER, the 25-member Banaban delegation to the London conference on a new constitution for the Gilberts walked out when the British refused their demand for separation.

British politicians of all three major parties have denounced British treatment of the Banabans, who say their minerals have enriched Britain, Australia and New Zealand by more than \$225 million.

The wealth of Banaba, although there isn't much phosphate left, remains the biggest source of income for the Gilberts. The only exports are the Banaba phosphates and copra from the coconuts grown on the other islands.

"The treatment of the Banabans by Britain is one of the most disgraceful episodes in colonial history for which any European country has responsibility," says former Liberal Party leader Jo Grimmond.

Sir Ian Gilmour, foreign affairs spokesman for the recently elected Conservative government, told the House of Commons last month that his Labor predecessors made "every effort to help the Gilbert Islands and Banabans reach agreement on the future status of Banaba. If it has not yet succeeded it is not for want of trying," he said.

Associated Press



SB 12-17-79 A2

# First Tourist to Republic of

By Helen Altonn  
Star-Bulletin Writer

Honolulu resident Dorothy Miles recently was visiting the village of Banana on Christmas Island and was startled to find that several of the children were terrified of her while others giggled.

"They had never seen white-skinned people," she said.

Miles was the first tourist to the new Republic of Kiribati when she went to Christmas Island Nov. 26 to Dec. 4.

But she didn't know that until she boarded Air Tungaru's Boeing 727 and "looked around and there wasn't anybody there."

She said members of the Audubon Society were offered an opportunity in early November to see Christmas Island, a wildlife sanctuary supported by the World Wildlife Fund in cooperation with the Kiribati government.

Ten seats were available for a group tour of society members on the Air Tungaru plane leased from Air Nauru.

Miles said after she signed up for

the trip she was notified that it had been canceled because of a possible airline strike.

HOWEVER, SHE told Island Rainbow Airtours, the agency handling the flight, that she was anxious to photograph the fairy terns on Christmas Island and it wouldn't matter if a strike occurred and she was stranded there.

"They arranged for me to go, but I didn't know that nobody else was going (from the society)," she said.

The only others on the airplane were some Gilbertese residents and an English land surveyor who has been on Christmas Island seven months surveying it.

"You are the first tourist to Christmas Island," the surveyor, Myra Walton, informed Miles.

Coincidentally, Miles noted that the new country of Kiribati (pronounced Kiribas) gained its independence from England on July 12, her 70th birthday.

The republic includes the Phoenix and Line Island groups and the Gilbert Islands. The capital of Tarawa is in the Gilbert group. Christmas Is-

land, about 1,334 miles south of Honolulu, is in the Line Islands.

Miles' ticket said "Kiritimati," which she later learned means Christmas in the Gilbertese language.

MILES RETIRED in 1973 as an information specialist and news editor at the University of Hawaii and has devoted her time to a study of fairy terns, keeping watch on a small ohana of terns in Kapiolani Park.

She wrote a book on her observations entitled "Manu O Ku," the Hawaiian name for the white tern.

"Anyone who loves nature would love Christmas Island because of the bird and marine life," Miles said in an interview describing her trip.

She was met by Patrick Lawrence, the development officer on the island, who told her few persons had been privileged to observe the bird-life on the isolated atoll.

Kiribati hopes to capitalize on its rare natural beauty and resources with development of a tourism industry to replace the revenue lost with the end of its phosphate indus-



**LONDON CHOIR**—Children of London Village present a concert for their Honolulu visitor.



# Kiribati Gets Royal Welcome

try on Ocean Island.

"But not the Hawaii kind of tourism," Lawrence emphasized to Miles.

ISLAND RAINBOW Airtours will begin weekly tours to Christmas Island starting Jan. 9 with a group of fishermen and wildlife enthusiasts. However, the tours will be limited to 10 persons to match the availability of transportation and wildlife guides.

"It's only a three-hour flight," Miles said, "but you go back in time to 200 years ago when Capt. James Cook discovered what he thought was a small, barren island, but reported in his log: 'There is indeed, abundance of birds and fish...'"

Cook discovered the island on Christmas Day, 1777.

Miles said the Christmas Island airport reminded her of Honolulu Airport when she first arrived here in 1963. Many of the some 1,000 Gilbertese residents turned out to greet her with colorful head garlands and entertained her throughout her trip.

"I felt like visiting royalty," she said.

SHE STAYED in the Captain Cook Hotel, which was built by the Japanese for personnel of its former satellite tracking station there. She said it is located on a desolate beach 15 miles from a village. It has 24 double rooms (costing \$30 a night for two persons) with all conveniences except telephones and televisions.

Miles said she was usually the only one in the dining room, "so I got lots of attention."

She said there are no telephones on the island. The villages have windmills to pump water, and the hotel generates its own electricity.

She said the people live in three villages — Banana, Poland and London. There is another village called Paris which is not occupied.

The entire atoll is a copra plantation and everything is government-owned, including the houses and vehicles, she said.

Christmas Island is the largest coral atoll in the Pacific — a 256-square-mile complex with hundreds of lagoons and dozens of small islets.

IT IS LARGER than all of the other islands in Kiribati combined, Miles said. "I found it to be really beautiful. There are something like 500 lagoons with crystal clear water to swim in."

"Fishing is fabulous there. All you have to do is drag a line behind a

boat and you've got fish."

And the birds described in Cook's journal are still there, "as if time had stood still," she said.

She was thrilled to see a fairy tern flying one night against a sky "so clear I could see clusters of stars I had never seen before without binoculars."

She also saw what Cook described as "a small land bird like a hedge sparrow." It is the Christmas Island warbler, the only indigenous land bird on the island.

She said the warbler and the other 33 species of birds in the atoll are so unused to humans that it is possible to get a close look at them.

"The lovely white fairy terns flew in droves to meet us when our little launch was beached on Cook Island, and followed us as we walked, hovering above our heads."

BUT SHE SAID the beautiful beaches are blighted by huge rusted machines and derelict buildings left behind by the British and Americans after nuclear tests there in the 1950s and 60s.

She said Britain and the United States should help Kiribati clean up the junk and she plans to write to congressmen to see what she can do about it.

She is also distressed by malformed birds found on the island, which she said might reflect genetic damage caused by the H-bomb tests and radiation damage.

She noted that the flash of the bombs blinded millions of birds and great colonies were exterminated because they couldn't see to eat.

However, a scientific survey in 1975 "found that there is less radioactivity there than in most major American cities, so people shouldn't be afraid to go down," she said.

Miles said there are only seven Caucasians living on Christmas Island. They manage the plantation and hotel and work in administrative positions for the Kiribati government.

THE OTHER residents are all Gilbertese. And there are only two old people on the island, she said. About half of the residents are children. English is taught in the three schools, which go up to the eighth grade.

Fish and coconuts are the only available local foods. Other items are flown in now, but Miles said the people survived in the past without



**FIRST TOURIST**—Dorothy Miles received royal treatment as the first tourist to the new Republic of Kiribati.

fresh fruit and vegetables by drinking a toddy known throughout the Gilbert chain as moimolito.

They attach coconut bowls or bottles to coconut trees to gather the juice which is rich in Vitamin C.

She said it is fed to newborn babies and is used instead of yeast for baking bread. It is also boiled down to a sugary syrup used in drinks. And when it becomes fermented, it is their source of alcohol.

Miles tried to do her Christmas shopping there. "I bought three fans — all there was on the whole island." She also brought back some Gilbertese swords, placemats and baskets, but she said few tourism items are available.

She said the people hope to develop textile design as a new craft and she plans to send them paints and designs to assist with the industry.

For those interested in the new round-trip excursions to Christmas Island from Honolulu, she noted that a passport is required and Australian money is used there.







# Embraces Independence...

The British also included the Phoenix Islands and the easterly Line Islands in the colony, although a friendly dispute existed formally between the United Kingdom and the United States over Canton Island.

The most controversial part of the new nation is Ocean Island, known as Banaba. The only high island in the island chain, Banaba is situated 300 miles west of Tarawa and has been under British administration since 1888. It consists of mostly high-grade phosphate and commercial

grade ore which is expected to be mined out by the end of this year.

THE REPUBLIC OF Kiribati, however, is interested in the island more for strategic and ocean fishing rights than for a nearly depleted phosphate supply. The Banabans themselves, scattered by the British before World War II and largely massacred by the Japanese in 1945, are demanding self-government.

They took no part in the independence talks with the British or with

the new Kiribati government, and were conspicuously absent from the celebrations in Tarawa.

Strung across the Pacific, north and south of the equator, the islands of Kiribati comprise only 280 square miles — a large nation compared to Niue, Nauru, Tuvalu and some other Pacific countries.

More important, however, is the 2 million square miles of the Pacific

Turn to Page E-9, Col.1



# ...Faces Problems

Continued from Page E-8

which comprise the waters surrounding Kiribati, making it by far the largest nation in the Pacific. It is also Hawaii's closest neighbor, with Christmas Island being 1,000 miles nearer than any point in North America. The islands are all low-lying coral islands, usually in the shape of a ring (atoll); but Christmas Island's 222 square miles make it unusually large for a Pacific Island (only slightly smaller than Molokai).

IT IS CHRISTMAS Island that provides some potentially close ties between Hawaii and the new nation. The fortnightly flight by Air Tuarua, the national airline, between Tarawa-Christmas and Honolulu arrives fully-loaded with milkfish and lobster for the Honolulu markets. It returns immediately via Christmas

with staples such as rice and flour which are cheaper to purchase in Honolulu and ship to Tarawa than from Australia.

The new government has expressed hopes that the United States soon will approve the charter for this to become a regular weekly run, including passenger service.

The 1,600 Christmas islanders are hoping for visitors from the north to come fish or just relax, and they have completed a small hotel in anticipation of tourism.

Meanwhile, the Christmas islanders, and the handful of U.S. technicians associated with the tracking station there, listen to Honolulu radio stations exclusively since they cannot pick up radio Tarawa from that distance.

INDEPENDENCE DAY, held a day after the full moon, found the newly completed air terminal ready



**HIGH CEREMONY**—Jeremia Tabai, center, president of Kiribati, stands at attention during playing of his country's new national anthem at Independence Day ceremonies. Other dignitaries shown are Princess Anne of Britain and her husband, Capt. Mark Phillips. —Photo by Willis Henry Moore.



# of Self-Government

to greet Britain's Princess Anne, Hawaii's Governor George R. Ariyoshi, New Zealand's Prime Minister Rob Muldoon, and a host of other dignitaries. Some stayed at the new, first-class Otintai Hotel; the royal party stayed in Government House with the British governor.

His responsibilities as governor ended on independence day when Princess Anne formally presented the Instruments of Independence to President Ieremia Tabai, 29, who now heads the government.

Kiribati children and adults alike jammed the streets to catch a glimpse of the princess. The pomp, pageantry and color were achieved as only the British can — basically without a noticeable hitch. The threatened Banaban islanders' interruptions did not occur; and the especially imported Jaguar sedan for the princess' use ran without a sputter in the high humidity and temperatures.

All along the single-lane paved road, which runs from Bonriki Airport to Bairiki, center for most government bureaus, a week-long cele-

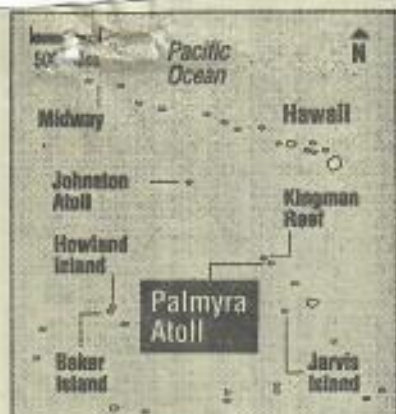
bration of singing, dancing, martial arts and canoe racing took place.

MANY LONGTIME residents spoke in glowing terms about the cultural renaissance that independence had brought. A history of Kiribati, written by a committee of 20 islanders, was published and circulated during the festivities.

As the dust of celebration settled and the off-island visitors departed, Kiribati began to settle into routines long familiar.

The government is a unique island-style blending of parliamentary and presidential democracy; and it must face the realities of raising the annual budget of \$13 million — made more difficult with the dwindling phosphate reserves. Aside from interim foreign aid from the British and from Australia, the government's main hopes for the future are the sale of fish and lobster; the harvesting, processing, and sale of copra; a small handicraft industry, and, perhaps, tourism.





## Tangled web of claims on Palmyra

Presumed buyer now keeps silent

By Thomas Kaser  
Advertiser Staff Writer

Last week's announced sale of tiny Palmyra Atoll to a New York-based investment firm is raising a number of questions about the sale itself and about the ownership of — and access to — the ring of islets, 1,000 miles south-southwest of here.

Since the announcement, these points have come to light:

■ A spokesman for the investment firm, KVR Inc., declined this week to answer Advertiser questions about the company and its purchase of Palmyra. At one point, he questioned whether the company is even buying it.

■ Heirs of the former owner of Palmyra say a small part of the atoll belongs to them and is not for sale.

■ The three Hawaii brothers who say they own the entire atoll claim they control not only its dry land but also its lagoons and reefs — and thus no one may enter those areas without permission. Yacht sailors say they have been intimidated and threatened at gunpoint by a French "caretaker" who lives on Palmyra.

■ The U.S. Department of the Interior and the Coast Guard say the three brothers have no control over the areas beyond the atoll's line of mean high tide.

■ A San Diego treasure hunter claims ownership of what he believes to be the remains of a treasure-laden Spanish ship that was wrecked on a Palmyra reef in 1816. A representative of the three brothers, saying they own "underwater property" at the atoll, threatens to take legal action against the treasure hunter if he comes onto that property.

The principal players in this tangled web are: KVR Inc., said to be a Nevada-registered, New York City-headquartered investment firm involved in scientific ventures and land development; brothers Ainsley, Dudley and Leslie Fullard-Leo, who say their parents acquired all of Palmyra in 1922 from Hawaii Territorial Judge Henry Cooper; heirs of Judge Cooper; Hawaii real estate broker Peter Savio, who disclosed the impending sale, represents the Fullard-Leos, and intended to develop the atoll himself before KVR expressed an interest in it; and San Diego treasure hunter Bill Warren.

The heirs of Judge Cooper, led by Henry E. Cooper III of Marblehead, Mass., say they have proof that when the Fullard-Leos' parents acquired most of Palmyra Atoll in 1922,

See Palmyra, Page B3



# Palmyra: Tangled web of claims on atoll

FROM PAGE B1

Judge Cooper kept two small islets — together called Home Island — for himself.

Home Island, which at one time totaled 6 acres, has since passed to Cooper's approximately 20 current heirs here and on the Mainland, says Mary Cooper Smith of Honolulu, a granddaughter of the judge.

Savio and Ainsley Fullard-Leo say Cooper's ownership of Home Island was valid only through his lifetime, not beyond.

"His heirs say they have a deed from him," says Savio. "In fact, all they have is a life estate, which gives someone the right to walk Palmyra's reefs and sail its lagoons as long as they are accompanied by Judge Cooper.

"Obviously, that time has passed. In any event, Home Island has since virtually disappeared through erosion. There's nothing left to own."

The Cooper heirs and treasure hunter Warren say they also dispute the Fullard-Leos' claim of owning not only the atoll's land but also its reef and lagoons.

They say yacht crews, some of whom the Cooper heirs have

On the reef/lagoon issue, Warren produces a Nov. 14, 1995, letter written to Savio by Allen Stayman, director of insular affairs for the Interior Department, saying: "In our view, the (federal government) holds unquestioned title to the lands and waters up to but not above the line of mean high tide and seaward to a line three geographical miles distant from (that)."

Warren also produces a July 1992 letter to Mary Cooper Smith from Capt. J.H. Donahue, Coast Guard chief of staff here, saying any vessel "may freely enter the (Palmyra) channel and anchor in the lagoons without prior permission from (Savio's) Palmyra Development Co. No permission is needed."

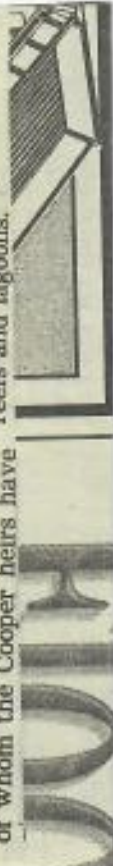
The matter may end up in court. Savio and an attorney familiar with the conflict say the Interior Department and the Coast Guard have overlooked the fact that Palmyra was part of the Kingdom of Hawaii, the Republic of Hawaii, and the Territory of Hawaii (but did not become a part of the state of Hawaii), and all of those former jurisdictions recognized that the Fullard-Leo family owns the reefs and lagoons.

Leos and me from liability," Savio said. "If they go ashore, they must sign the release."

"Roger is there to enforce that. Thousands of yachties have been to Palmyra, and all but a handful are pleased with the way they were treated. A few refused to sign the release, went ashore anyway, therefore broke the rules, and were asked to leave. They threatened Roger and there was an argument."

Meanwhile, Warren has filed a suit in federal court here seeking 100 percent of any treasure he finds from the Spanish galleon Esperanza, which he says was laden with gold and silver bars and Spanish coins when it was wrecked on the Palmyra reef in 1816 while en route from Acapulco to Manila.

Earlier, Warren filed a three-page document in federal court claiming something like a citizen's arrest on the wreck, if he finds it. He says U.S. admiralty law allows finders and salvagers of shipwrecks to keep whatever they find in U.S. territorial waters.





# Here's an island to visit on some Christmas day

**O**N Dec. 24, 1777, HMS Resolution dropped anchor in clear water off an uncharted tropical island. The sea "broke in a dreadful surf all along the shore," so Captain James Cook decided to wait until the next day to make a landing.

At noon the next day the Master of the Resolution, William Bligh, found a channel into a protected lagoon. Captain Cook went ashore and, because it was Dec. 25, named it Christmas Island.

For the men of the Resolution, this probably wasn't the best Christmas of their lives. Cook wrote: "There were not the smallest traces of any human being having ever been here before us; and, indeed, should anyone be so unfortunate as to be accidentally driven upon the island, or left there, it is hard to say that he should be able to prolong existence."

Christmas Island, about half way between Hawaii and Tahiti, averages about 30 inches of rain per year, but sometimes severe and prolonged droughts make life difficult here. This lack of fresh water may be why no permanent settlers lived on the island. And, given what happened to a couple of his seamen, it's also why Cook had such a dismal impression of the place.

Cook sent men ashore to collect sea turtles, a common source of food for seafarers in those days. During the chore of carrying the turtles to shore boats, two men got lost. When they couldn't agree which way to go, they separated.

One took off his clothes, sat in a shallow pool of seawater and drank sea turtle blood to stay alive. Cook described him as "being in great distress" when they found him 24 hours later.

The other man didn't do as well but survived. He suffered in the heat for 48 hours and got so thirsty that first he tried to drink the blood of seabirds, then his own urine. He was in such bad shape that he couldn't swallow either. Cook's men finally found him next to a brine pool, his body and clothes so stiff from soaking in the super-salty water that he could barely crawl.

The crew of the Resolution didn't have much fun on Christmas Island but they did get a traditional pork dinner on Christmas Day from meat they had on board. On January 2nd, they sailed away, living on fish and turtles until, 18 days later, they found the Hawaiian Islands.

Like most of the islands Cook visited, Christmas Island has grad-



## OCEAN WATCH

By Susan Scott

ually changed over the years. In the early 1800s whaling vessels used Christmas Island as a source of turtles, fish and coconuts.

Turtles are scarce there today as a result of this harvesting, but the fishing is still good.

In 1836, the English whaling ship Briton became the first known victim of the treacherous Bay of Wrecks on the east side of the island.

The low-lying island and the strong inshore set of the currents led to several wrecks there. Survivors often had to wait long months for rescue from a passing ship.

England annexed Christmas Island to the Gilbert and Ellis Islands Colony in 1919. During this colonial era, some Gilbertese went to Christmas Island as laborers in the copra business.

The first of the current residents came to the island in the 1960s when it was a base for British and American nuclear tests. These people set up the first permanent society on Christmas Island. The population is now about 1,600.

In 1979, the Gilbert Islands became the independent Republic of Kiribati (pronounced Kiri-BASS). Christmas was included in the deal.

With 250 square miles of white sand and lagoons, Christmas Island is the largest coral atoll on earth and the largest of the 33 islands of Kiribati.

Even though Gilbertese is the official language of Kiribati, people use English in government and children learn English in school.

Traditional life on Christmas Island has been subsistence living, but that is slowly changing with the introduction of tourism.

Aloha Airlines arranges a 3-hour flight from Honolulu every Wednesday. A round-trip ticket costs \$525.00.

The plane carries fresh food, supplies and visitors interested in good fishing, seabird colonies and snorkeling.

It sounds like a good getaway for next Christmas.

*Susan Scott is a marine science writer and author of Oceanwatcher, a guide to Hawaii's marine animals. Her Oceanwatch column appears Monday in the Star-Bulletin.*

A-2 HSB  
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# Sunday Travel

The Sunday Star-Bulletin & Advertiser

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## Christmas Island: c



Photos by Captain Rick Gaffney

An aerial view of Christmas Island taken from the window of an Air Tugaru plane.

By Captain Rick Gaffney

Special to the Advertiser

"There is always something so wonderful about a new fishing adventure trip. For a single day, or for a week, or for months! The enchantment never palls. Years on end I have been trying to tell why, but that has been futile.

"The most humble fisherman has this in common with fishermen of all degrees. Whatever it is that haunts and enchants surely grows with experience."

Zane Grey wrote those lines upon his departure for virgin fishing waters in the antipodes, in late 1925, but they are fitting today and still

offshore, ono (wahoo), sailfish and ahi (yellowfin tuna) in profusion circulated through the fishing community. Amongst fishermen who regularly travel, the destination became legendary.

Then the world records started being pulled from the Christmas Island lagoon. There was Maui resident Ian Bowman's 82 pound ulua on 20 pound test line in 1980, and other records later. The word began to spread.

And it wasn't just fishermen that were attracted to the massive coral ring that is all that remains of a once proud high island. Nesting seabirds which range across the Pacific call Christmas Island their only home and naturalists and bird lovers discovered that



Honolulu resident Yoon Cho C near Korean wreck



# dream fishing spot



Christmas Island is flat and covered with vegetation familiar to island fishermen and women. Ponds are abundant.



chung casts at the reef edge

Most fishermen find that the ocean is easily accessible and wet a line within minutes of arrival at the hotel. The fact that a table reef is a mere 20 yards from most of the rooms means immediate access to fishing on all but the roughest days.

For those anxious to get out onto the lagoon, boats with guides can be arranged for through the hotel and departure from London wharf can be taken for either half day or full day forays into the main lagoon.

The three day trip is probably best fished by taking a launch on Sunday, the only full day, and fishing the areas accessible by car the afternoon of the first day and the morn-

Unfortunately are inedible due to the presence of ciguatoxins.

If waters around the Korean wreck are unfishable due to high tides or particularly rough seas and violent wave action, there are numerous other spots as well as lee shores which can be selected.

On Sunday—the only full day—perhaps the best choice is to hire a boat with a guide (\$120/day) and head out into the lagoon. There protected sand flats, alive with schools of tailing oio and well stocked with bulldog ulua as well, can be fished throughout the day. Whether from the bow and stern of the punt, or from coral cays and beaches, the choices are varied and the options are many. One particu-



roundly describe any fisherman setting out for some distant horizon, full of hope and expectation. And so it is with a growing number of Hawaiian fishermen who set their sights on Christmas Island.

The attraction is simple, virgin water teeming with some of Hawaii's most popular gamefish, the ulua (trevally) and the oio (bonefish). Christmas Island is the world's largest atoll (140 sq miles) and it lies some 1300 miles south of Hawaii, very near the equator. It is but a 2½ hour hop from Honolulu International Airport via an Air Tungaru 727 jet.

But the lure is more than fish rich waters, easily accessible, for there is value in the Christmas Island adventure. Fishermen travel south on Saturday morning and return Monday evening and enjoy comfortable accommodations at the Captain Cook Hotel, round trip air fare and all meals and transfers for less than \$800. In the world of fishing that is a bargain.

Long before Christmas Island was known as a great fishing bargain it already had a reputation as a great place to catch fish. Tales of swarms of ulua, sand flats teeming with oio, reef areas covered with large spiny lobster and

good roads. Well maintained launches and easy access from Honolulu put them in direct contact with seabirds they only observed in flight in Hawaii.

Christmas Island has a maximum height above the surrounding Pacific of only 12 feet (give or take a few thousand palm trees and a couple of satellite tracking antennas), and a resident population of a little less than 1600 people. It has a well maintained system of bitumin sealed roadways that promise access to virtually every point on the island. From London wharf, one can hire a punt to obtain access to any other point.

The system of well built roads is the legacy of the British engineers who not only paved broad two lane road ways, they installed landing fields, brought in generators, warehouses, hangar buildings and thousands of sheets of ubiquitous corrugated roofing. Their purpose in this largesse was not to assist the Gilbertese people but to develop a testing platform for nuclear weapons.

British atomic weapons testing, like that of the Americans who followed them onto the island, was atmospheric. The British used balloons moored

to giant concrete tethers that allowed detonation at 30,000 feet. The Americans chose aircraft and released their test weapons high and well downwind of the island.

Today the consequences of those tests are unnoticeable save for the beautiful runways and sound roads. Recent testing by a team from New Zealand has indicated that there is less background radiation at Christmas Island than there is in downtown Auckland.

Christmas Island is part of the Republic of Kiribati (pronounced Ki-di-bhas) and is administered by the Ministry of the Line and Phoenix Groups. Resource conservation is a major goal of the fledgling bureaucracy, as is the well being of the tourist population. Copra, once the mainstay of many islands in the Pacific now brings only \$35/ton on the world market and is no longer a practical economic commodity.

Today it is the fishery resource which sustains Kiribati (Christmas), either through its attraction to tourists or as a commodity with a ready market in Honolulu. Regular shipments of ono, yellowfin tuna and live lobster from Christmas Island accompany traveling fishermen back



Air Tungaru unloads passengers at the Christmas Island airfield.



to Hawaii. Nature is the attraction to these fishermen is an important asset and one that is being protected through bag limits. All visitors are required to purchase a Visitor Pleasure Fishing Permit (\$7.50) and to abide by regulations which require that no more than five fish of any specie be killed in any day.

Travel to Christmas Island has attracted a number of travel agencies and tour packagers making the how-to-travel a lot simpler than it was in the early days. Individuals can contact Globe Travel Agency (949-1221) in Honolulu or Kona Kai Travel (239-8837) in Kona and be put in touch with expert tour leaders who have made the trip themselves. Carol Farrow, who has put the Honolulu end of the Air Tungaru (839-4561) connection in order, can answer most questions about travel to Christmas island as well, and book reservations and accommodation bookings.

There is presently one Christmas Island tour package—4 nights and 5 days. The traveler departs Honolulu International Airport at 11:00 AM Thursday morning and either returns the following Monday evening (7:15PM) or waits a full week and takes the plane home the following Monday.

Accommodations are at the 24 room Captain Cook Hotel, just minutes from the airport. The hotel features 12 air conditioned and 12 naturally ventilated (windward side) rooms with private shower and toilet facilities, tea and coffee making appliances and refrigerators in every room. The hotel has a bar and dining room and serves simple but complete meals which feature the seafood of the island.

On Sunday evening a traditional Gilbertese dance troupe comes to the hotel and following a steak and lobster barbeque on the beach entertains visitors with dances of the island group. The Gilbertese dances mimic the movements of the seabirds which nest on the island and are backed by pounding rhythm and a mesmerizing chorus of male and female voices. Well fed anglers quickly get into the mood as they are presented with woven head leis and greeted by these amiable people.

ing of the last day, Perry Langston the resident International Game Fish Association representative and guide can suggest numerous easy to find spots and Tekiera the tourist liaison officer can assign you a guide if you so desire.

One popular spot with fishermen in the know is the Korean wreck a reef bound Korean long line vessel which marks a particularly productive fishing area. Access to the edge of the reef can be obtained on a low tide and it is probably most productive on the out going and early incoming tides thanks to numerous cuts in the reef which seem to feed ulua onto the reef through obvious passages. A well placed plug or spoon, or perhaps even better, a well cut strip of aku belly, will assure immediate action by papio, ulua and omilu as well as occasional snappers which

early productive area is known as Paris, and it's guarantee of bonefish activity has led some top American fly fishermen to consider regular forays in pursuit of world record bones.

The beauty of being aboard a boat is the ability to move on should the bite slacken, or one area be non-productive. While cruising through the lagoon your sharp-eyed guide may well spot an offshore flock of birds signalling a working tuna school and suggest a change of direction and tackle in order to pursue big yellowfin or skipjack tuna. Some may even opt for offshore trolling for a good part of the day in hopes of going up against a large ono or perhaps even a Pacific sailfish, in the waters just off the outer edge of the island.

On Monday most anglers will be up at the crack of dawn

Continued on page 2



Rugged rod cases and well-filled tackle boxes are the most important luggage for many Christmas Island visitors.



# Christmas means fishing

Continued from page 1

—even if they have fished all night—to face the prospect of the last day of fishing. Depending on what they have done in the previous two days they will still have a large number of options and a good deal of time. Considering that the flight doesn't leave until just before 4 PM, the better part of the day is available for the pursuit of gamefish—or that last couple of pounds to take home to Momma.

Anglers traveling to Christmas Island should probably consider their tackle more than anything else when they pack for the trip. As Carol Barrow points out, you don't have to dress like you're going to meet the queen. Three changes of casual clothes will suffice for the 3 day trip. With a year round warm climate, shorts and cool cotton shirts are always appropriate. Swim trunks are probably the most appropriate fishing attire as most anglers manage to get wet while wading sometime during the day.

The presence of Christmas so close to the equator means travelers are closer to the sun than they are in Hawaii. Regardless of one's ability to like the Hawaiian sun, some form of protection—sun block, long sleeves, sun hats—should be considered. Most people could do with all of the above. Fishermen should be prepared to wade on reef flats and coral rubble regularly during their trip and for that purpose nothing is better for the feet than Japanese fishing tabi. Athletic shoes, whether they were designed for running, tennis or basketball will serve the purpose, but zori are definitely not appropriate, al-

though they are fine for general wear around the hotel.

Wading for hours on end also makes a backpack or shoulder bag a utilitarian addition to any fisherman's wardrobe. Backpacks like the Ice 'n Brine work particularly well as they provide pockets for spare lures, leaders, swivels and reel spools and also an easily cleaned pouch for fish storage. Canvas over the shoulder bags can be stitched up to serve the same purpose. It is nice to be able to continue to fish even after a fish is taken or a lure is lost, without trudging back across the reef or down the beach in pursuit of a cooler or replacement tackle.

The complete Christmas Island fisherman will travel prepared to do three kinds of fishing—trolling, dunking and whipping. With three different rigs and terminal tackle for all three kinds, the angler will be prepared for everything that Christmas has to offer. A short stiff rod for lagoon trolling, a long heavy surf rod for casting and a light or ultra-light spinning rod for nearshore and small fish makes for a well rounded collection.

Very little tackle can be purchased at Christmas although thanks to the duty free stature of the hotel shop—some items are occasionally cheaper than they are in Honolulu. In any event the angler should carry all the lures, weights, swivels, hooks, leader, line and accessories he or she feels the need for, in three days of active fishing.

For light tackle whippers a broad selection of lures including Kastmaster (silver/blue) spoons, Scrounger and Boone soft plastic lures, and wooden plugs should be included.

Small plastic squid also produce well on light tackle.

Medium to heavy lure chuckers should stock up on the Honolulu produced Pili lures as they are well proven producers. Larger Kastmasters or Hopkins No-eql spoons, heavy Scroungers and Pflueger ballerina and other surface plugs will all land fish.

For dunkers and slide bait fishermen the rigors of fishing off the edge of a coral reef demand an extra consideration for tackle. Considering that action is regular, and the reefs are steeply dropping, more than the normal number of leads, hook rigs and lengths of line can be lost on a Christmas island excursion. It'll make your luggage heavy, but it's worth the extra weight to be prepared.

Many local fishermen like to take their catch back to Hawaii to feed families, neighbors and friends, and if you are so inclined plan to take a cooler and a number of fish cleaning and storage accessories such as garbage and Zip-loc type bags, filet knives, fish scalers, sharpening stones and a roll of duct tape. And don't make the mistake of carrying a massive cooler with you—you may find that some baggage handler or even your tired old back is not up to moving it after you get back to Honolulu International. The 86 quart size is a maximum—and even that is a beast when it is full.

Rod cases can be constructed out of pvc tubing for transportation of fishing rods. The best choice is electrical conduit for it is thinner walled and lighter in weight than pvc water pipe. End caps or screw in clean out fittings make a long tube into a servicable rod

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Passengers climb aboard the Air Tungaru 727 jet for the trip home.

Photo by Captain Rick Gaffney

case at half the cost of ready made ones. And you won't find them ready made for 12 foot long surf rods either.

Whatever it is that haunts the fisherman is an all consuming passion. For more and more island fishermen the gratification of that passion comes from traveling to Christmas Island. Reef structures supporting populations of gamefish inconceivable to most local anglers is the attraction—to say nothing of the bargain.

Rick Gaffney is a Maui-based charter boat captain who specializes in sportfishing.

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action, there are numerous other spots as well as lee shores which can be selected.



## What To Take To Christmas

■ For those who have decided to go to Christmas, here are a few points to consider, some suggestions about what to take along, some hints on what to use and some thoughts on what to expect.

To start with, spend most of your time packing your tackle and fishing equipment and not worrying about what clothes to take. You won't need to dress to meet the queen. Casual attire is all that's called for, and you can fit all you need — a couple of T-shirts, a couple of pairs of shorts, one pair of long pants, and whatever you usually fish in — into a very small bag. Four changes of clothing are plenty for the four-day trip.

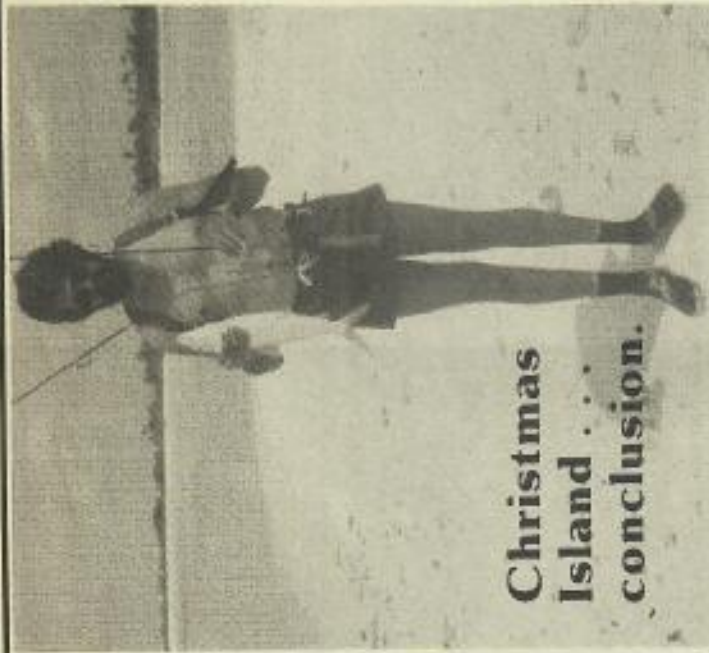
Travel with gear for a variety of fishing styles: dunking, trolling, slide-baiting whipping and jigging. You will likely troll the lagoon at least on your way to and from the flats. One short stout rod and a number of trolling lures (with wire leader), your favorite light-tackle whipping rod and your heavy beach stuff should all be carried because you'll have a chance to use them all.

Your rods should be well protected for travel. PVC pipe seems like the best solution. Electrical conduit (PVC) has the thinnest wall and is the lightest choice for a traveling rod case.

Reels should be wrapped in cloth or put in cloth bags and then carried in a suitcase. They will be best protected if packed with clothing all around.

Successful lures for Christmas include the Pili (which is currently the top-producing surface plug in Christmas waters — take plenty and a variety as well); the always productive Kastmaster spoons; soft plastics like the Scrounger and the Boone's Trout (especially in the black and clear sparkle varieties); Boone surface popping plugs; Rapalas; BUZZ-BOMBS; other kinds of spoons (like the Hopkins No-eql); and tiny plastic ika squids. Take your own ika, tako or aku belly bait as well.

Take all the gear you'll need as most items are in short supply at Christmas. Be sure to consider that



### Christmas Island . . . conclusion.

Rick Gaffney with his 3 1/2-lb 'o'io caught on 2-lb test line.

We traveled to Paris in a large, broad bowed punt with Perry and a Gilbertese guide named Alani (Alan) Tai discussing the best probability for the day's outing. We had barely departed London wharf when Bob Farrow, trolling a feathered jig, hooked the first fish of the day. There was no doubt that the day was going to be a good one.

Trolling action continued to be good as we traversed the lagoon with lai, papio, snapper and barracuda taking hooks. Unprepared for the 'cuda, we lost it to some sharp teeth. Passing small islands, we became aware that Christmas plays an extremely important part in the ecology of the Pacific as literally millions of seabirds nest in the protection of this coral atoll — all that remains of a once proud island. Offshore massive flocks of birds beat the surface to a frenzy while yellowfin tuna (ahi) pushed up from underneath. No Hawai'i fisherman has ever seen a "pile of birds" like those that gather offshore at Christmas!

one was a keeper as, for one thing, I love fishcake from four-day-old 'o'io and, for another, I was definitely going to have my picture taken with this one!

Having taken the 'o'io of my dreams, I then set out after that papio I wanted so badly. Switching over to 4-pound test, as a result of seeing what others in the same area were catching, and tying on a Boone's "Castana" lure, I quickly hooked, fought and landed the fish I had been so anxious to take on 2-pound. It was a white ulua, not an 'omilu. It fought like an enraged pit bull, but unfortunately I took it on 4-pound. You were lucky this time Stan!

The remainder of the day was taken up in the continued capture of papio and bonefish and the observance of others in the same pleasure. We later took to the high seas in pursuit of a massive yellowfin school. We had 150-pounders broaching all around the boat while seabirds teemed overhead. We broke off two big fish on the only appropriate lures on board. I got so excited I actually cast a Mirr-O-Lure on 8-pound line into a frenzy of sheering tuna. Surprisingly it went untouched, although it would have been quite a thrill, while it lasted.

Dinner at the Captain Cook Hotel included a recounting of the day. It had been a good one for everyone. Ulua of up to 28 pounds were landed, coolers were packed with fish, anglers described hookup after hookup. It was clear that everyone was satiated.

The evening entertainment Sunday night included traditional Gilbertese dances which portray the movements of the seabirds to a rhythmic beat backed by a chorus of male and female voices that is mesmerizing. After a day of superb fishing, a barbecue dinner of steak and lobster, and presentation of traditional island floral headbands, everyone enjoyed the relaxed evening.

On the last day we were in the water early and I had hooked and released four 'omilu in the 5-pound range within 20 minutes of casting my first lure. It was simply too much to believe. Working a reef flat on the outer edge of the atoll and dropping a variety of spoons and soft plastic lures into cuts in the reef, we found continued action. Often the fish are tiny po'o-pa'a, but just as often the bites come from game fish of enough



you'll probably lose more tackle than you usually do, thanks to the regular action you will find at Christmas Island. For dunking take plenty of weights, hooks, swivels and leader material. Extra reel spools and line are also appropriate.

Your tackle box should be well secured to assure it doesn't pop open during handling or the flight. Some travelers even tape their tackle boxes shut with "duct tape" to assure no horror occurs in flight.

You'll be in the tropical sun. That means bring a hat, some good sunscreen lotion, perhaps a long-sleeve light cotton shirt and, for some, even an umbrella. Don't think you are tougher than the equatorial sun; you aren't!

For fishing while wading the reefs, most anglers find it handy to have an over-the-shoulder bag or a backpack to carry spare lures, swivels and reel spools as well as fish.

For reef walking, a good pair of tabi is a must although any kind of canvas or nylon sport shoe (tennis, jogging, etc.) will do.

And don't forget your camera. If you don't already have one, consider some of the simple, inexpensive, water resistant cameras on the market today. You can wade onto the reef with one around your neck without worrying about getting it wet.

If you are going to Christmas for meat, plan for that as well. The Captain Cook Hotel has great fish cleaning tables with lots of running water, but you will need your own fillet knife, fish scaler, sharpening stone and other cutlery. Bring plenty of plastic garbage bags as you can freeze your cleaned fish in the hotel freezer until you are ready to leave.

You might also consider carrying rubber bands (for reel spools, rod binding, bag sealing), electrician's nylon tie-wraps (same uses and more), Zip-loc bags, marker tags (for your fish bags in the freezer and your gear), and a folding chair (for the back of a pickup truck or beachside fishing).

Don't make the mistake of taking the biggest Igloo money can buy. Many fishermen have found that the baggage handlers just can't deal with those monsters full of fish — nor can the average fisherman on his return to Honolulu International Airport. An 86-quart cooler is the most appropriate size.

If you travel prepared and take everything you'll need, your Christmas Island trip will be a fish-catching experience of a lifetime.

... Rick

Paris turned out to be the classic flats. A coral cay protected a shallow sand-bottomed area from the surface chop of the surrounding waters. That sandy area was alive with tailing bonefish! But the best fishing, Perry explained, was not at the flats but in the area right off the coral mound that protected them. There, he pointed out, we'd catch some ulua. Virtually the first lure presented proved his pronouncement correct. Within an hour of arriving at Paris all of us had done battle with more fish than we could hope for in a week of fishing most places in Hawaii, and soon quality (the big fish) began to show up where there was just quantity before.

One sight I'll never forget at Christmas was Alani returning down the cay with the rod he had borrowed from Bob in one hand and a forked stick in the other on which he had strung five ulua ranging in size from over 20 pounds on down to about 8. He had taken them all on a single Pili lure and had only come back to the boat because a beast of an ulua had finally taken the lure.

In the meantime I was working the flats with my 2-pound rig (Fenwick GFS 64 graphite stick with a Shimano X-1000 Quickfire spinning reel spooled with Amilon-T line) in pursuit of big bones, and, I hoped, a shot at Stan Wright's 2-pound test papio world record as well.

Another thing I'll never forget about Christmas Island is that 3½-lb o'io I scored on 2-pound test. To start with, it took a Hopkins No-eel spoon on a fast retrieve — something I never expected. Secondly, I was able to stop that incredible run — something neither I nor any of my compatriots would have believed had they not seen it happen. By combining everything I've ever read by Ernie Theodore, Jim Rizzuto, Mike Sakamoto and Lefty Kreh with the experience I have had with big o'io at La'ie when I was a kid, I finally turned the beast and got a little of my very small spool of line back and a chance to catch my breath.

Naturally the buggah ran again, but this time I was more certain of how to react. Despite a gut feeling that I should slack the drag slightly to assure that I wouldn't be cut off by any line chafe or drag grabbing as a result of the first run, I left it where I had pre-set it. The tactic worked. Before long — and I'd never be able to recall how long as the action remains frozen with no hint of time — I led the big bone to my feet and, with the rod tip lifted high, coaxed it onto the sand, where I lost control of it one last time before finally subduing it. This

size to make them formidable opponents.

We all returned late for lunch — insatiable in our interest in catching just one more fish. For those who had come to Christmas for the "meat," there were hours of fish cleaning and cooler packing to be done before departure at 3:50 for the flight back to Honolulu. Rods had to be broken down and packed, reels put away, tackle boxes sealed, gear readied for shipment — but it was amazing how few people seemed concerned.



The scene at Christmas airport as anglers prepare for their return to Honolulu.

The flight home mirrored the one down with new friends babbling about the catch. Bob Farrow, who had been sent down by the family (Kojima family, that is) to catch the fish for his 50th birthday celebration, was smug in the knowledge that he had not only completed his mission but had a hell of a good time to boot. Ken and Kelvin Spicer had a cooler full of fish to spread across Kane'one, and the tour leader from Globe Travel Agency moved up and down the aisles happy with the success of yet another group. The guys from the Neal Blaisdell Center had to report back to work, but the memory of fish after fish after fish would be enough to sustain them until they could again return to Christmas Island.

And return we all will. There is just no fishing like the fishing at Christmas Island. And the price . . . well, the trip's worth every penny of it!

... Rick



## HAWAII FISHING NEWS

He could pump the fish now, timing his heaves to coincide with the surge of the waves. "Just a little bit more!" someone yelled. He cranked down on the reel and hauled back with all of his might. On the next crash of the waves, the ulua slid onto the shore. Mr. Moribe's nephew, Joel Suzuki, pounced on the fish and wrapped his T-shirt around its tail. With the help of two others, they dragged the ulua up the beach and away from the water. The big fight was over. It had taken 1 hour and 10 minutes.

The moment that the ulua was on dry sand, the waiting crowd burst into applause and cheers. Mr. Moribe took a deep breath and looked around. The earlier crowd was now a multitude. There were over 300 people massed on the beach, each trying to get a better look at the ulua. For Mr. Moribe, age 69, this was his most exhilarating moment in his 40 years of fishing!

Murmurs ran through the excited crowd as everyone hazarded their guess as to how heavy the ulua was. They soon got an inkling of its size. A stout piece of driftwood was run through the mouth and gills of the ulua so that it could be carried safari-style to the car. The volunteer carriers got only a few feet with their burden when the driftwood broke in two and the ulua crashed to the sand. Joel Suzuki, Alvin Yoshida and a bystander finally wrestled the ulua to the car with a nylon rope.

The fish was taken to Nakamura Market in Kapa'a where its length, girth and weight were measured. The final statistics were impressive. The length was 56 inches; the girth was 41 inches; and the weight was 118 pounds. Mr. Moribe, himself, weighs only 119 pounds. Hobie Goodale, the local IGFA representative, was contacted, and all the necessary forms and applications were filled out to have the fish recognized as a world record in the 50-lb line class. The ulua was also entered in the Annual IGFA Fishing Contest.



After mulling it over for a week, Mr. Moribe decided that it would be too expensive to have the fish mounted. So the fish was brought home (on a shopping cart!) and ignominiously butchered and distributed to friends and relatives.



As for Mr. Moribe, the great catch never even bothered him. He kept right on fishing as he usually did. In fact, the following week he caught a 20-lb kawakawa from the same beach. He says that he'll be fishing that same spot for another 40 years. Here's hoping that the second 40 years are just as successful as the first!

... Glenn



also in

**B**

- Entertainment: B5-7
- TV log: B8
- More news: B8

# So what do you do in

By **PETER ROSEGG**  
Advertiser Staff Writer

The National Science Foundation has at last recognized Dr. Martin J. Vitousek of the Institute of Geophysics at the University of Hawaii for what he is. They sent him a Superman T-shirt.

Vitousek is not faster than a speeding bullet, can not leap tall buildings in a single bound and though his office is crowded with books, papers and scientific equipment, he never ducks into phone booths to change clothes. So why the Superman T-shirt?

It all started when an NSF official in Washington, D.C., wrote Vitousek a letter complaining that taxpayers are being cheated by the research project of which he is in charge.

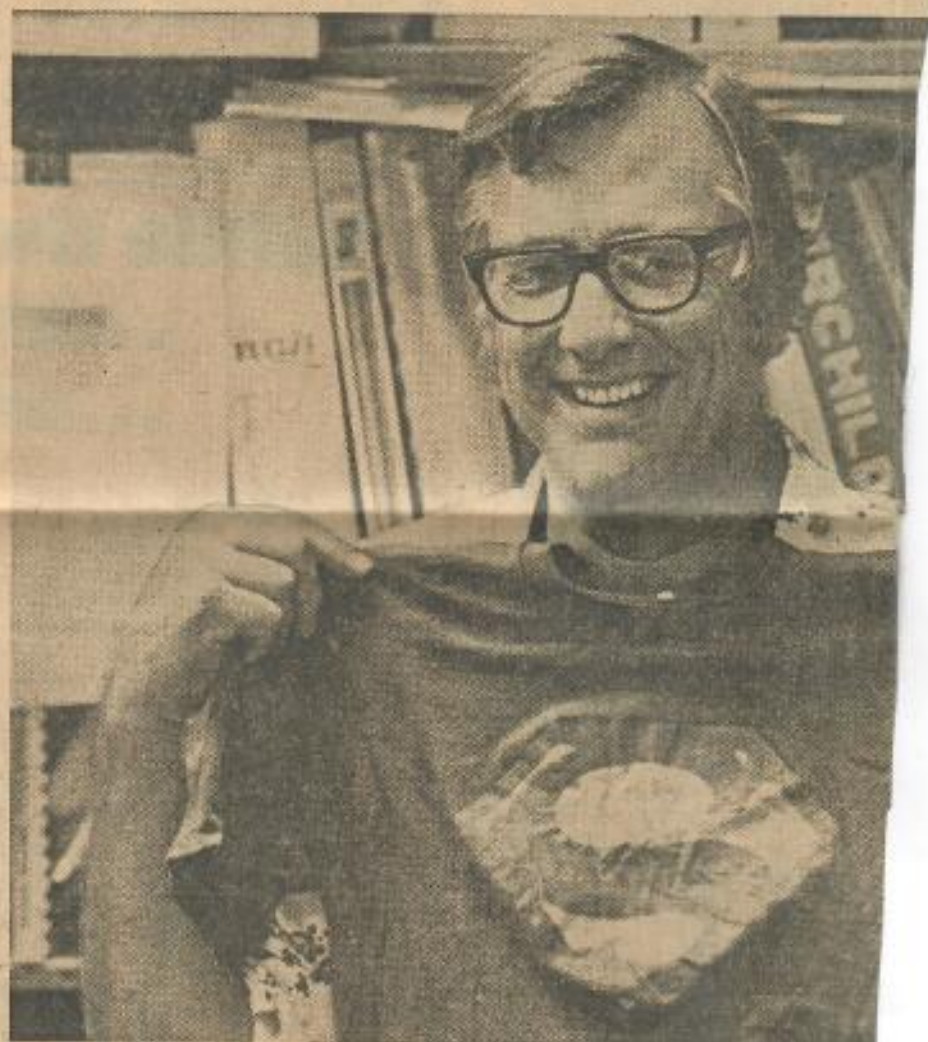
Vitousek's project, called the Northern Pacific Experiment, or NORPAX, part of the International Decade of Ocean Exploration, is designed to record weather and ocean data to be used in forecasting climate changes a year or more in advance.

Some defective electrical parts had caused a breakdown of the machinery and disruption of the data collection that had angered the Washington program monitor, so Vitousek wrote back to explain "what we had accomplished and what I am contributing."

"I felt the taxpayers were getting their money's worth," he said, especially since Vitousek's entire salary is paid by the State, as opposed to the grant which comes from the Federal government.

In the long letter Vitousek explained that he is not only manager of the research station on Fanning Island and director of researchers here in Honolulu, but he is designer of complicated research equipment; an amateur bird specialist; chief repairman of everything at the station from jeeps to radio beacons; pilot of his own plane that is the only transport down there; captain, engineer and navigator of the station tug; medical advisor and family counselor to the 10 Gilbertese employees and their families who operate the station.

In response to Vitousek's letter, the program monitor, a personal acquaintance of Vitousek's and obvi-



Vitousek and his Superman T-shirt. It's nice to

ously a person with a sense of humor, sent him the Superman T-shirt and word that the program's \$110,000 grant has been extended for another year.

Fanning Island has been the site of numerous research projects by a variety of departments since about ten years ago when the University acquired rights to an abandoned wireless and cable station there.

Vitousek's own twin-engine Piper Aztec was the first plane to land there on a specially cleared airstrip in 1966 and now he flies himself and up to three passengers on the seven-hour, 20-minute flight to Fanning every five or six weeks for a two week stay. A twice yearly Australian

freighter is the only other regular transport there.

Fanning is a 13-square mile coral atoll shaped like a footprint about 1,200 miles south of Hawaii and three degrees north of the equator.

Part of the Northern Line Islands in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands group, the British crown colony has a pleasant climate, a large lagoon and an Australian copra plantation that offers work to most of the 350 people who live there.

As part of Vitousek's project which has been under way since 1972, researchers have set up four automated weather stations and will have three more going by the end of this year. Three of the stations are on uninhabited islets.



# Report



Thursday, February 17, 1977

## your spare time?

daily weather information and transmits it daily to Honolulu.

Among the Gilbertese who work at the station are a carpenter and a plumber but the mechanical and electronic repairs Vitousek does single-handedly.

Human repairs are his responsibility as well. When there are medical problems among the Gilbertese staff and their families Vitousek gets advice on the radio from medical school staff, especially Dr. Frank L. Tabrah, professor of family practice and community health.

Tuberculosis has been the most frequent serious ailment, Vitousek said, along with stomach cancer, kidney stones and strangely enough for a Pacific Island paradise, ulcers.

The medical problems Vitousek has to deal with, however, may be easy compared to the cultural ones. "The Gilbertese are just moving into civilization," he said, "and there are some inevitable clashes between the young and the old due to the speed with which they have moved into the present."

The Gilbertese are "sort of Victorian-age Christians with a very, very strict moral code," Vitousek said.

But some of the young people now go to movies and a few have travelled, bringing back the experiences of a larger world.

"But if a young person does something that an older person doesn't agree with, the older person may refuse to work in the same place as the young one.

"In fact, the older person can banish the younger person — tell him to go to live in another part of the island — and under the old ways the young person has to go."

Such disagreements do not make for a smooth running station, however, so Vitousek must step in to smooth things out, usually by convincing the older workers that the times are a-changing and young people no longer believe in their strict codes.

The research is about at the midway point, Vitousek said. Much of the North American continent's weather originates in the Pacific and the equatorial region, which receives



the majority of the heat from the sun, is very significant.

The study of ocean and air temperatures, winds and rainfall may enable researchers to predict climate changes on the Mainland a year in advance.

"Farmers will know whether to expect a dry year or a wet year. Fuel suppliers will know whether to expect a cold winter or a mild one," Vitousek said.

There are direct benefits from the research for Hawaii as well, according to Vitousek.

For example, while Hawaii is experiencing a dry winter like the present one, Fanning is getting a lot of rainfall, and vice versa.

Fanning's rainfall can usually be predicted from the fluctuations in the ocean temperatures around the Line Islands.

In the past research done at Fanning has led to surf and tsunami predictions for the Hawaiian Islands and in the future Fanning may provide long-range weather forecasts as well.

The results of the experiment are not in yet, Vitousek said, "but we are closing in on it."

The new grant insures that research will go on for another year, he said, and Vitousek is grateful for the compliment paid his work by the blue-yellow-and-red Superman T-shirt.

Only one problem though, if he ever tries to put it on. The T-shirt is about four sizes too small.



Advertiser photo by Roy He

keep busy.

Vitousek visits each station at least once every six months. The farthest from Fanning is on Maulden Island, 500 miles or three days by tug, and another is on Palmyra Island, 200 miles from Fanning in the opposite direction. The trip is made in an old Navy tug with a native crew.

Vitousek has had a hand in designing the complicated research equipment which is located on windward beaches and must withstand not only the wind and sea water, but the attentions of the thousands of birds that live on the "uninhabited" islets.

On Fanning, Vitousek has to keep the whole station in operation, including equipment that records the



# Atoll Pioneer

No 4 15 February, 1979

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## KIRIBATI: A New Name, A New Nation

### CONSTITUTIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE GILBERTS HAS BEEN SLOW-CM

The Chief Minister, the Hon. Ieremia Tabai in his opening address during the Constitutional Conference at Marlborough House late last year, declared that our Constitutional development was slower than other British dependencies. He said:

My Lord Chairman, Your Lordship, Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,  
On behalf of the Gilbert Islands delegation, I thank you for your very warm welcome. We are

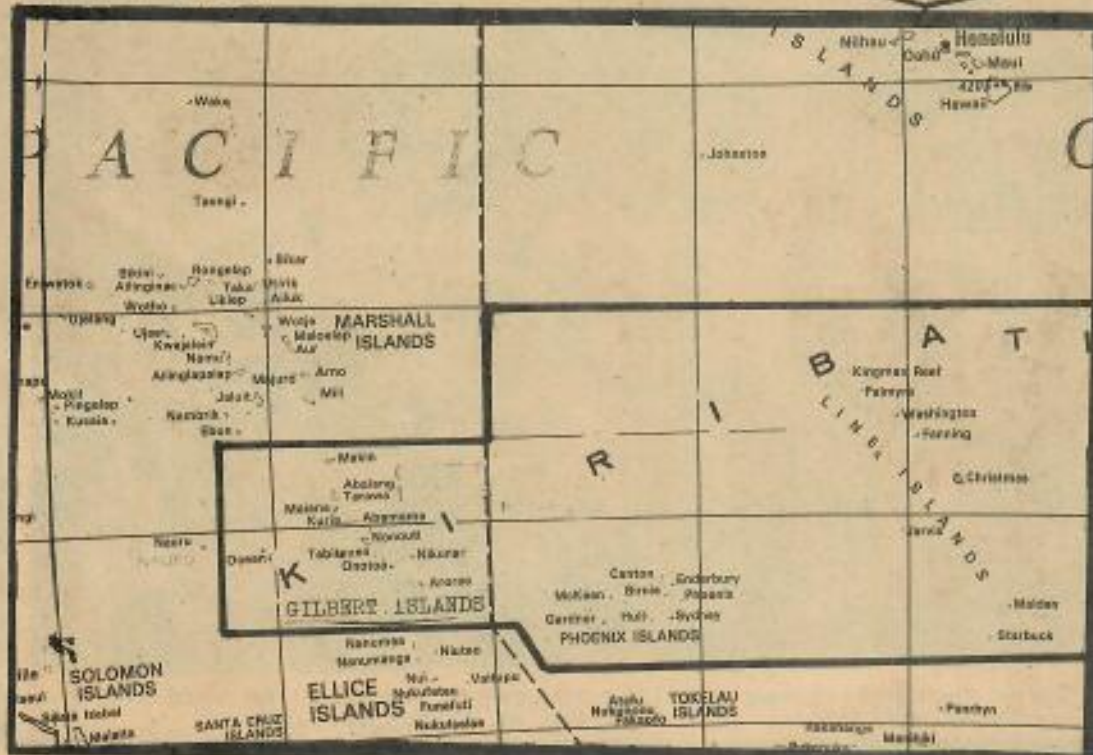
pleased to be here and look forward to this conference which we hope and indeed expected to pave the way for the independence of our country.

cont'd on p2

THE WORLD is about to give birth to the newest nation with a new name: KIRIBATI (Pron: KIRI-BAS) It is not an original name, in fact it is a Gilbertese word derived from its original English version - GILBERT.

The new nation, Kiribati, comprising of the Gilbert Islands including Banaba, the Phoenix Islands and the Line Islands, will become independent from Britain to be a sovereign republic on Thursday 12 July 1979.

The Map of KIRIBATI in relation to other Pacific Islands. Kiribati consists of the Gilbert Islands, the Phoenix Islands and the Line Islands.



### Cabinet Up to 11 Members

The Independence Constitution provides for a Cabinet comprising of up to eleven members.

The executive authority of Kiribati shall be vested in this Cabinet which shall be collectively responsible to the Maneaba ni Maungatabu (House of Assembly) for the direction and control of the executive government.

The Cabinet shall consist of the Beretitenti (Pro: Beretitence) (President), who shall preside over the meetings of Cabinet, the Kamoman-ni-Beretitenti (Vice-President), not more than eight other Ministers and the Attorney-General.

#### THE LEGISLATURE

There shall be a legislature for Kiribati called Maneaba ni Maungatabu. The Maneaba shall consist of a single chamber.

Subject to the provisions for a Banabans Representative, the Maneaba shall be composed initially of 35 elected members elected from 23 electoral districts provided that if the Beretitenti represents a single member electoral district there shall be 36 elected members. The Attorney-General, if he is not already an elected member shall be a member ex-officio.



# Constitutional Development in the Gilberts has been Slow

(Cont'd From P1)

Mr Chairman, constitutional development in the Gilbert Islands has been slow in comparison with many other British dependencies. It was not until 1967 that Gilbertese were elected, rather than appointed, to a House of Representatives and only in 1974, when ministerial government was introduced, did the people, through their democratically elected representatives, have any real say in the Government of their country. This I hasten to add is no reflection on the British Government who has shown in recent years a ready willingness to grant independence to its colonies. Rather was it that in a country of scattered islands and poor communications political awareness and aspirations were slower to develop. But our aspirations did develop and with the election of a Government of people in 1974 our thoughts inevitably began to turn to the eventual achievement of independence.

Even since 1974 progress to independence has been slower than many people expected. There were a number of reasons for this.

Firstly, there was the wish of the Ellice Islanders to separate and form their own country. We were sorry to see our

friends of long standing leave us but recognising that they are a different people with a different language, culture and tradition we freely gave our consent to their separating from us. However the arrangements for separation took time and it was not until the formal creation of Tuvalu in October 1975 that we were again able to devote our attention to our own constitutional progress.

Secondly in our society the wishes of the people are paramount. Thus it is essential that the people be fully consulted before constitutional changes are made, to

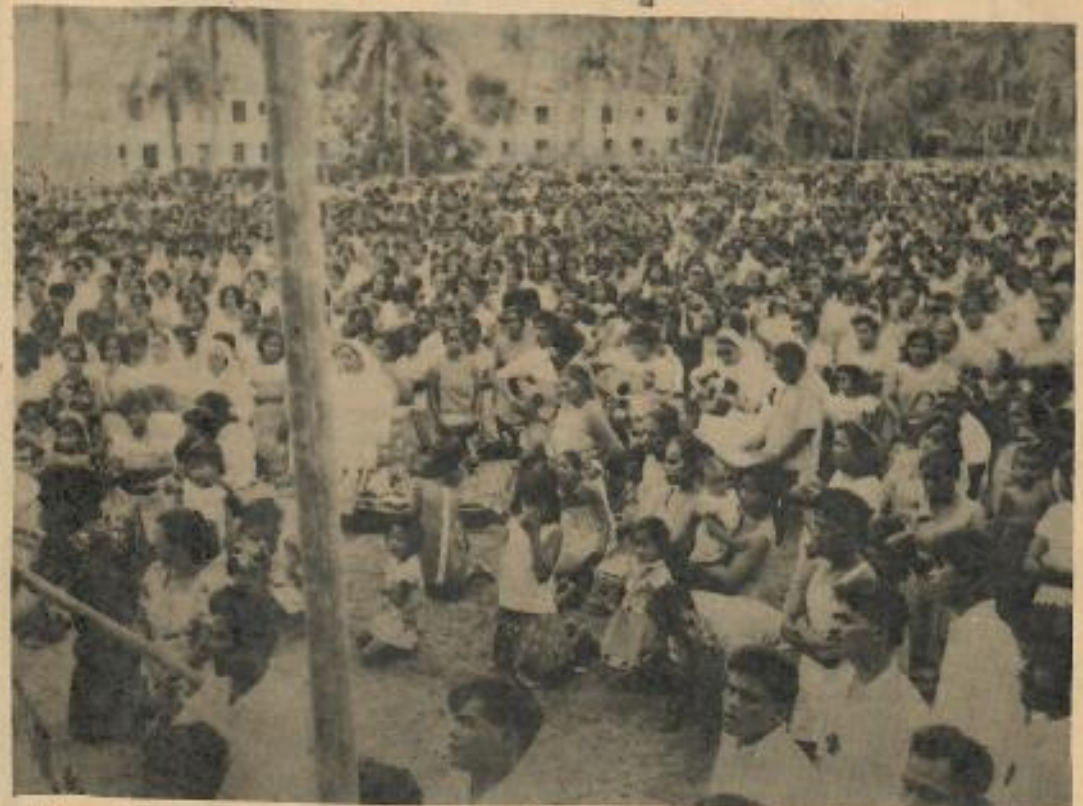
ensure that those changes have their support. It was therefore not until April 1976 following the publication of a White Paper setting out the Government's proposals that the House of Assembly was in a position to resolve that the British Government be asked to convene a constitutional conference to arrange for the next step in the Gilbert Islands constitutional progress.

This was the move to full internal self-government. The conference was held in June 1976 and full internal self-government was achieved on 1 January 1977.

It was made clear at the internal self-government constitution conference that the grant of internal self-government was a prelude to independence. The need to consult the people therefore became even more important. In April 1977 a constitutional convention was held on Tarawa and was attended by representatives from all the Gilbert Islands and from all walks of life. This convention not only confirmed the wish of the people to move forward to independence but also provided their views on the form of consti-

(Cont'd on P4)

## All in One Spirit



Three thousand strong kneeling in prayer thanking the Lord for a wonderful new leader in the person of Bishop Paul Mea.



A SPOKESMAN from the Ministry of Natural Resources Development said that a sixty-ton freezer has now been installed at Betio by the Japanese engineers. The freezer will be ready to store all the catch from Nei Manganibuka.

OVERSEAS quests Clergymen to the ordination of Bishop Meea left Tarawa this morning by Air Tunga-ru to Abemama. A spokesman from the Catholic Headquarters at Teoraereke said this morning the clergymen would be touring the Catechist Training Headquarters at Manoku Abemama. They returned to Tarawa this afternoon.

A COUNCIL election was held at Absiang on Wednesday February 7 for Tanimaiaki/Tebanga/Tabontebike ward, Tabwiroa/Tuarabu and Takarano Ubanteman wards. Mr. Kai-ua Namaunga was re-elected for the Tanimaiaki Tebanga and Tabontebike ward with 59 votes, Riatae Kaei won the Tabwiroa Tuarabu ward with 20 votes and Birirake Taie won the Takarano Ubanteman ward with 38 votes.

AN AGRICULTURAL Officer, Mr. Bruce Ratieta is expected to leave Tarawa on Friday 16th February to the United Kingdom. Mr. Ratieta is to undertake a 6

month Course in Nutrient Film Technique of growing vegetable. Mr. Ratieta's Course is being sponsored by the United Kingdom Government.

A YOUTH, Nei Teretia Ioane appeared in the Magistrate Court at Betio on Wednesday charged with careless driving, driving an unlicensed motorcycle, driving without a driving licence and giving a false information to a police constable.

She was found guilty of all these charges and was fined sum of \$62.

Nei Teretia was told to pay her fine within two months time and in default three months imprisonment.

THE MINISTER for Works and Public Utilities, the Hon. Ieremia Tata left Tarawa today by Air Nauru to Manila in the Phillipines. The Minister will attend the Seminar on International Federation of Consulting Engineers which will be started from 19th to 21st February.

The Minister will also have the opportunity to meet representatives from the Wilton and Bell and the Asian Development Bank on matters relating to the Betio/Bairiki Causeway. Mr. Ian Greinger, the Civil Engineer in the Ministry will accompany the Minister to the Seminar.

# BATTLE OF THE STRINGS

Sorry I was not here last week

RADIO TARAWA WILL ORGANISE A MUSICAL COMPETITION ON TARAWA FOR ALL STRING BANDS

## 3 Prizes to win!!

1st- \$100

2nd- \$75

3rd- - \$50

## Three categories

- Instrumental: 2 numbers - all new
- Musical (Vocal accompanied by instruments): 2 numbers - all new
- Popularisation of old local numbers. May or may not be accompanied by instruments. 6 numbers.

All songs must be in Gilbertese

ENTER NOW, RING 356 OR 268

## Ten numbers to play!!



# Australia Turns to Solar Powered Communications System

MELBOURNE, AUSTRALIA  
A major telecommunications system, powered entirely by solar energy, began in Australia this month.

Electricity generated by the sun is powering 13 repeater stations in the arid zones of central Australia, bringing television, telephones and telex facilities to the inland population centres.

Shortly before the opening of the solar system, Australia announced plans to build a second solar-powered communications hook-up -- this one in the remote Australian islands of the Torres Strait which separates Australia from Papua New Guinea.

Telecom Australia, the Government statutory organisation which runs Australia's telephone and communications system, says that it is now possible for people living in small cattle and tourist centre of Alice Springs--- almost exactly in the geographical centre of the 7 682 300 km<sup>2</sup> (300,000 square miles) Australian continent -

to dial direct to any nation with which Australia has direct dial arrangements.

The opening of the solar-powered link follows three years' research and development on the concept, plus two years work in placing the 13 repeater stations on location in the hot, arid and sparsely populated region.

The system operates between Alice Springs and Tennant Creek 500 km (300 miles) to the north and follows the exact route of the original Overland Telegraph line. This single-wire telegraph line which traversed 3200 km (2000 miles) of Australia from north to south and provided the first cable link between Europe and Australia, was completed in 1872.

Each of the new solar repeating stations comprises three parts, a 76-m (250-foot) high radio mast supporting the antenna, a small building housing radio equipment, and the solar module.

The solar module is a standard 6 x

(Continued on P7)

# Constitutional Development in the Gilbert has been Slow

(Cont'd From P2)

Constitutional Convention were referred to a Select Committee of the House Assembly for further consideration. The Select Committee in turn made recommendations for translating the wishes of the convention into an acceptable form and their report was again adopted by the House of Assembly. Not content with this, my Government, following its election to office early in 1978, ensured that the recommendations of the Constitutional Convention and of the Select Committee, and our own expanded proposals were again given the widest possible publicity and my Ministers and I visited as many islands as practicable to explain them to the people. We found that there was overwhelming support for independence and that our proposals for the independence constitution were generally acceptable. In August this year, the proposals, subject to minor amendment, were unanimously adopted by the House of Assembly and a resolution was passed to request the British Government to convene a constitutional conference with a view to granting indepen-

dence to the Gilbert Islands.

So, Mr Chairman, we are here today to implement the wishes of our people. We have a clear mandate to seek independence for the Gilbert Islands within its present boundaries, and within the framework of the constitutional proposals, of which you are aware. We appreciate that there are still issues to be decided, but we are sure that given the will and understanding, these can be satisfactorily resolved. We also know that we have a difficult task ahead of us in building a nation from our scattered islands, but we intend to pursue this task with vigour and determination, and with Britain's help and co-operation, we are confident we shall succeed.

Finally, may I say that we do not see independence for the Gilbert Islands as severing our close ties with Britain. The people of the Gilbert Islands have been friends of Britain for many years and we hope that this friendship will continue and strengthen in the years to come.



# Letters

## "Interesting Facts"

Dear Sir,

I should be grateful if you will allow me to correct the "interesting facts" concerning this firm contained in the letter from Andrew Buretaka and published in your issue of 25th January.

The branch office was opened in January, 1978 and has operated throughout from the same office/house on Betio. In addition to myself, five UK staff were employed by the branch for periods of up to eight months during 1978.

This firm did not act as receiver to a "defunct" GIDA. I was requested by Government to act as liquidator (quite a different role from that of a receiver) after Mr. P.W. Reardon left the Gilbert Islands last August. At that stage GIDA was not defunct and had been trading through it's Marine Division (now Shipping Corporation) and the Mobil Agency.

There is nothing extraordinary in the fact that, at GIDA's request, we assisted in the recruitment of chartered accountants for them, as any large firm of accountants do, including the two firms he mentions. After all, who better to interview accountants than a firm of chartered accountants, who know not only the local conditions

cont'd on p6

## SPOT VIEWS

This week's question:

# Should motorcyclists be compelled to use Safety helmets



"It should be made compulsory... regardless of the price involved." (mechanic)



"It is vital to wear helmets at all times in order to avoid the increasing number of road deaths in the Gilberts." (electrician)



"Wearing a helmet is a wise thing to do, but it should not be made compulsory unless there is subsidy provided towards the cost." (Accounts clerk)



"Strict usage of helmets will certainly reduce unexpected accidents." (clerical officer)



"I have had several motorcycle accidents in the past. The injuries I received were mostly around the head. If I had used a helmet, I wouldn't have suffered head injuries. The idea should be enforced." (draftsman)



"I think it should be an optional matter. The people should not be compelled to use helmets. They have their own rights to choose between life and death." (typist, Personnel Division)



# "Nothing We can do to stop Excessive Beer Drinking"

ALCOHOLISM has been growing in African states. In Kenya, food stores, butcheries, playgrounds, even churches have been converted into what is known in business parlance as "bar boarding and lodging".

A church leader recently said in despair: "There is nothing we can do to stop excessive beer drinking. The Government gives out licences without consulting people whether they want those bars and beer-halls or not."

Kenya is a free enterprise country. So you can choose what business line you want to follow and the business that has attracted large numbers of entrepreneurs, small or big, is the beer trade.

In a small market place in any remote corner of Kenya with, say, at least ten building, half could be selling beer and at the same time running short-time love-making rooms at the back of a grocery business.

But the heads of government in East Africa have shown they are determined to lead a sober people and reduce, if not eliminate, alcoholism from the system.

The latest campaign has been launched by Kenya's new President Daniel arap Moi, who is a devout Christian and a teetotaler.

Moi has ordered liquor licensing courts to ask local people whether they think licensing an extra beer hall business will retard development and encourage prostitution.

It is the first time since independence 15 years ago that officials have been told to consult the people about business licences.

Policy on alcoholism has never been clear-cut, though Moi and other individuals persistently campaigned against it when he was No.2 to President Kenyatta.

Moi's campaign now seems to be working well. The administration has so far turned down more than 1,000 applications for liquor trading and a beer hall has had to be turned into a classroom.

Beer prices in Kenya are still the cheapest in the world, but consumption is nothing compared with many other countries such as Zambia, which leads in beer drinking on

(Cont'd P7)

## Letters

cont'd from p5

here but the exact requirements for the job and the type of personality the job requires?

We do not "impose" fees. Fees are based purely and simply, on the amount of time required to complete a particular assignment, related to the rate for the staff members concerned. The amount of fees we have rendered for particular jobs, where our appointment has been by the Director of Audit, are fully disclosed by him to the members of the House of Assembly

There was an agreement in broad terms between Government and this firm but only covering the mechanics of opening a branch here and the sort of work we would be required to perform.

The reputation of a firm of accountants depends on the professional services performed satisfactorily that it affords its clients and is not measured by size. Indeed, both the firms he compares us with would be highly amused to hear that they were in some way "more reputable" than Hays Allan.

Had Andrew Buretake approached us before he committed himself to paper he would have learnt that, after our first year's experience here, we are now able to look very closely at the question of recruiting and training Gilbert-

ese staff here and that we are looking forward to our involvement in teaching Gilbertese on the forthcoming Accounting Technicians course.

Yours faithfully,

G.A.C. Vaughan  
Branch Manager.

## "Dropouts"

Dear Sir,

We must not let go anything that we read unchallenged. On behalf of my colleagues who really put an effort in their studies apart from confusions that may have occurred due to isolations of customs and traditions.

I feel that I should clarify the word "dropouts" that appeared in your last issues.

The word "dropout" applies to the student who somehow during the course simply dropped out. He no longer attends lectures, do assignments, etc. or show indications of giving up because he can not cope with the course.

If you still can continue and managed to pass the "course works" then the word does not apply in this case.

Consequently on behalf of my colleagues who have now remained behind I urge you not to be discouraged but to strive. I know that some of you have done their best. The same applies to those who find the social environment not suitable.

It sometimes takes alot to adapt - realising that we are all from different backgrounds.

Good luck to your immediate future and mine of course.

Yours sincerely,  
KAUNTA TETOA.



# ANGRY DEBATE LURKS IN HOUSE OF COMMONS OVER GILBERT ISLANDS INDEPENDENCE BILL

By Barry Wilson in London

AN ANGRY debate is threatened in the British House of Commons over the Bill to grant independence to one of Britain's last and smallest colonies - the Gilbert Islands, a group of 16 Atolls in the Pacific with a popu-

lation of 55,000.

The row centres on a tiny island near the group, Banaba or Ocean Island. The Banabans do not want to be part of the Gilberts.

Ocean Island, which has an area of  
cont; on page 9

## Solar Powered Communications System.

(CONT'D FROM P4)

2.4 x 2.6m (20 x 8 x 8½ feet) shipping container with three solar panels, two measuring 3 x 1.4m (10 x 4½ feet) and one measuring 1.5 x 0.7m (5 x 2½ feet) mounted on the roof.

Power generated by the three panels is stored in 33 lead acid batteries having a total capacity of 1500 ampere/hours.

Telecom believes the combination of solar power with low energy-use equipment

makes a significant contribution to the extension of communications facilities in the outback of Australia.

Telecom has pursued development of solar power system for more than six year, starting with the design and installation of solar power supplies for less than a 20-watt load. There are now more than 40 of those powering small capacity telephone services in isolated outback areas.

(AIS)

## 'Nothing We can do to stop Excessive Bear Drinking'

(Cont'd From P6)

the African continent.

Kenya Breweries Limited say each Eenyān adult consumes at least 100 bottles of beer a year - 175 million litres. A litre costs one US dollar.

Few can afford a beer daily at the quoted market price; they would rather go for non-hygienically tested prepared drinks like Busaa and Muratina and illicit gin, popularly known in Kenya as Changaa.

Consumption is high for these brews because they are cheap. For half a dollar a group of three could well go singing...

Licences are given for Busaa and Muratina but most dealers prefer to deal in it illegally. Dealers were often victims of police raids until recently when the harsh Attorney-General Charles Njonjo ruled that consumption of the "gin" is not an offence but distilling it is.

Changaa is maize-meal and sorghum, fermented and mixed with brown sugar to taste, cooked in tightly covered drums and steam trapped through a tube into a jar. It rivals imported spirits in the local market.

Changaa is mostly processed and distilled by socially and economically down-trodden families in the rural and urban

areas of Kenya.

The adults supervising the distillery are too clever for the police traps. Children under ten years man the drums on the fire while the owners watch from a distance. Juveniles cannot be arrested for distilling changaa.

Moi's campaign against alcoholism is in line with another campaign he launched against corruption. Some crimes are plotted in drinking places.

Corrupt public servants are suspected of obtaining kick-backs in bars to award tenders and poor performance in examinations have also been blamed on teachers who leave coats hanging in classrooms to help themselves to glasses of all kinds of brews in the neighbourhood.

Moi is not alone in his campaign against alcoholism in East Africa. President Nyerere of Tanzania and President Kaunda of Zambia have also shown that they are determined to rid their systems of drunks.

Nyerere has persistently warned that he will not tolerate drunk public servants and some caught drunk in their offices have lost their jobs. Musicians have made records against alcoholism in support of Nyerere's call.



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2000 Deluxe with optional door mirrors, radio antenna and vent windows.



SR-5 with optional body stripes, guard frame, chrome wheel covers, rear step bumper, and vent windows.

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- Many luxurious options to personalize your Hi-Lux!
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# ANGRY DEBATE OVER GILBERTS

cont; from page 7

only 2.3 square miles, has now been rendered almost uninhabitable by years of phosphate mining.

It used to be home for the Banabans who were reckoned to number close to 3,000 when first contacts were made by Europeans early last century. Today there are about 2,500 of them but almost all of them live 1,400 miles away on their own island in the Fijian group.

But now the Banabans want full independence for their spiritual home on Ocean Island, and they have plenty of money and apparently lots of allies in the British Parliament.

By general consent the Banabans, at least in the early years, had a very raw deal from the British, in what amounts to one of Britain's nastier little colonial episodes. They now want justice, more money, and full independence.

The "final" British constitutional proposals for the Gilbert Islands, published recently, reject the Banaban claim for independence but offer them special constitutional rights and guarantees within the new independent territory of the Gilbert Islands (due for independence in July).

The Banabans have already made it clear that such an arrangement is unacceptable to them. This acrimonious fight will reach a climax in the next few weeks.

Ocean Island was discovered by Britain

in 1804. The island was incorporated as a British protectorate, for administrative convenience, as part of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands in 1892. At this time the population had delined to less than 500 - mainly due to "blackbirding" (slavery). Defenders of Britain's role on the island say that the island was acquired, at least in part, to protect the islanders from further deprivations by the slave shippers. The Banabans believe the British interest was mainly in the massive phosphate deposit.

This island, like nearby Nauru, is (or rather was) almost entirely covered with guano, phosphate-rich bird droppings accumulated over centuries. In 1900 the Pacific Islands Company persuaded two Banaban leaders to place their marks on a document ceding to the company sole rights to Banaba phosphates for no less than 999 years for the payment of £50 per annum.

Cheap supplies of phosphate from the guano islands has played a major part in the transformation of agriculture in the Antipodes. At its peak in the 1960s Banaba was supplying over half a million tons of phosphate a year to Australia and New Zealand.

It was in the 1930s that full exploitation of Banaba phosphate started, following the appointment of the British Phosphate

# INDEPENDENCE BILL

Commissioners by the Governments of Britain, Australia and New Zealand.

The Resident Commissioner of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony (at the time), Arthur Grimble, was delegated by the Phosphate Commissioners to negotiate acquisition of the land on Ocean Island for the mining company.

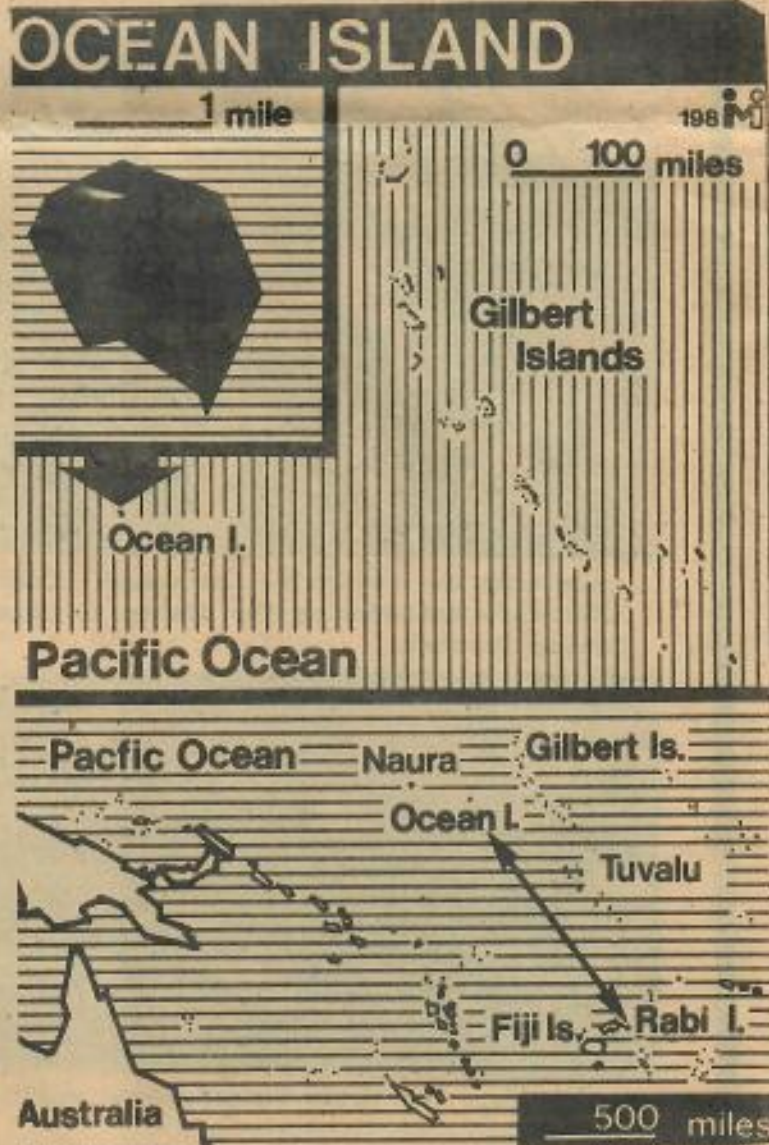
Then the unthinkable happened: the Banabans said "no".

This resulted in what has now become known as the the notorious "Buskonikai letter" which Grimble

wrote to the Banaban villagers. In the letter he threatened the villagers of "this frightening day which is pressing upon you when you must choose LIFE or DEATH". He said that if agreement was not reached, the land would be compulsorily acquired "for the Empire".....

He went on: "If everyone signs the agreement no one will be punished for shaming the Important Chief. If the agree-

cont; on page 12





# MOMENT OF TRUTH



Lining up before the procession to the dais where the new Bishop will be ordained.



Ascending the stairs to the stage. Cardinal Pio Taufinu'u followed by the Bishop of Tarawa, Bishop Guichet.



Seated are the Archbishops, Bishops at the ordination ceremony.



Knees down. The whole congregation knelt down when the scriptures were read.



Ordained Bishop Mea taking his new office.



THOUSANDS of people flocked and filled to capacity an area of only a few hundred acres of land at Teoraereke to witness the most historical event of Gilbert Islands. It was the ordination of the 1st Gilbertese priest to become Bishop.

People came from all over the Gilbert Islands, including Nauru and other nearby islands in the Pacific.

Saturday was the day set aside for the important occasion.

And people began pouring in to Tarawa weeks ahead of time. Hundreds travel by the normal and special chartered flights of Air Nauru, and the domestic air service of Air Tungaru.

Thousands came by bus and on foot. And others arrived by boat.

At 3 in the afternoon the sports-field at Teoraereke and areas around it was packed with people and vehicles.

The ceremony commenced at half past 3 with band music provided by the Butaritari Brass Band.

Invited Archbishops, Bishops and a Cardinal from overseas then marched on to a Stage specially built for the occasion.

The ordination mass followed and then the full procession in which invited guests from overseas participated.

The whole ceremony was broadcast live by Radio Tarawa.

The afternoon programme was mainly entertainments which continued till Sunday afternoon.



Cardinal Pio Taufinu'u, Diocese of Samoa, addressing the multitude gathered on the day giving his praises to God and congratulating the people for all their efforts.



"Here I am, Lord, your new shepherd to lead your flock," said the new bishop, Bishop Paul Mea.



Cardinal during



the oath of his



# ANGRY DEBATE OVER GILBERTS INDEPENDENCE

cont. from page 9

ment is not signed consideration will have to be given to punishing the Banabans. The destruction of Buakonikai village must also be considered .....

The Banabans persisted in their resistance to the terms (10½d per ton royalty and £150 an acre), and thereby reinforced the British view of them as trouble-making nuisances who should, ideally, be removed from the islands as soon as possible. The BPC compulsorily purchased the land in 1931.

As mining proceeded so the island became increasingly uninhabitable. In 1940 the Banabans themselves proposed moving to a new hope with the purchase of Wakayo Island in the Fiji group, but the plan never came to anything.

In March 1942 the Island of Rabi (pronounced "Rambi"), near the second biggest Fijian Island of Vanua Levu, was bought for £22,000. Rabi is 10 times the area of Ocean Island. In August 1942 the British abandoned the island to the Japanese who quickly transported most of the islanders as slave labour to other parts of the Pacific

area.

In 1945 all but one of the remaining 150 Banabans on the island were shot by the Japanese. Later that year the 1,000 surviving Banabans were gathered in the Gilbert Islands group, when the British told them that because of war damage it was impossible for them to return to Banaba.

They were advised to go to Rabi on the understanding that their full sovereign rights on Banaba would be protected and that within two years they would have the option of returning to Ocean Island.

The Banabans claim they were forced to go to Rabi to get them out of the way and that within weeks of their "enforced transportation" the BPC were recruiting hundreds of Gilbertese to work in the mines.

Be that as it may, it cannot be denied that two years later, in 1947, the British organised a secret ballot of the Banabans on Rabi which resulted in a vote of 270-48 against returning to Ocean Island.

Since then, apart from an organised token presence on Banaba, the Banabans have more or less ignored the offer to return to their homeland.

tering controversy finally came to court when the Banabans sued the British Government and the Phosphate Commissioners for political recognition and financial compensation.

The cases were heard in the High Court in London, and judgement was given in December 1976.

The case against the BPC was won, but a paltry £9,000 was awarded. The case against the British Government was lost, but the judge Sir Robert Megarry, made some scathing remarks which reverberated still.

He said: "There is no difficulty in appreciating the deep-seated feelings of grivance that the Banabans have." However, he added, "I am powerless to give the plaintiffs any relief in these matters. .... But I think a judge ought to direct attention to what he considers to be a wrong that he cannot right, and leave it to the Crown to do what is considered proper."

On the very same day that this crucial judgment was being given, the Foreign Office was briefing journalists about the "impressive degree and attention" given by the British to the Banabans over the years.

There is no doubt that the "severance" compensation later offered by the British, Australian and New Zealand Governments was vastly increased after the "embarrassing" remarks by the judge. In all, the Banabans have now been offered (Australian) \$10 million as an ex-gratia payment plus

\$1.25 million from the BPC plus interest on the \$10 million, now amounting to about \$1 million plus £1 million from the British Government for development of Rabi - amounting altogether to about £8.2 million, a sum which the Banabans, after some arguments, have now more or less accepted.

Since the 1920 agreement the Banabans have received a total of about £11 million in royalties.

Total revenue from the phosphate mining on Ocean Island since 1900 is now estimated at about £62 million. On top of this the Banabans claim an extra £18 million as the value of subsidy between 1920 and 1968 during which period phosphate from the island was sold to Australia and New Zealand at well below world prices.

Taking inflation into account the Banabans claim that the phosphate mined from Ocean Island has been worth, at present prices, about £170 million.

British conciliators have been impressed with the sincere feeling the Banabans do not seem interested even in investigating the possibility of going back to live there in numbers after the mining company has departed.

The main difficulty now is that the Gilbertese have made it clear that Ocean Island must be part of the new independent state of the Gilbert Islands. A referendum in the Gilberts over the fate of Banaba has been proposed by Britain; but as the voting was to include all the inhabitants of the Gilbert Islands it was, not surprisingly, rejected by the Banabans.

Now the British have said enough is enough: the argument must come to an end. Ocean Island must be part of the Gilberts, with special constitutional and land rights on Ocean Island to be given to the Banabans. So the Banabans are now preparing for their last ditch fight - and the setting will be the British House of Commons.



ATOLL AUTO STORES



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# A moral Duty towards the Poor

IT IS FIVE years since Norwegian Erik Dammann wrote a book, "The Future in Our Hands", that inspired a movement which today has 23,000 members.

In the Book Dammann criticised developed nations for their historical exploitation of developing countries and asserted that the rich nations had a moral duty towards the poor.

He emphasised that the soft way of life in richer countries could not provide happiness and that the panic-stricken growth of today can only be checked when everyone accepts a drop in the material standard of living.

Says Dammann: "Something must happen when more and more people in the affluent West question the sort of life they lead.

"People are tired of the waste society, of the vicious circle in which they buy more food than they need then buy slimming aids to lose weight, or buy new clothes to keep up with fashion and simultaneously pay for more advertising for newer fashions.

"They desire a change of attitude towards the developing countries, something encompassing tolerance and responsibility with a global, and not just a selfish local, perspective."

Dammann, 47, an ex-advertising man, once moved his family from prosperous Norway to a palm hut in Samoa. His book was praised by people like Thor Heyerdahl, of Kon Tiki and Ra fame; George Borgstrom, professor in economic geography at Michigan (US) University, and Gunnar Myrdal, Nobel Prize-winner in economics.

The movement "The Future in Our Hands" (FIVH) - it takes its title from Dammann's book - now employs 11 people in its information centre in Oslo. It publishes a monthly newspaper, New Life Style, prepares lecture material, organises study groups and courses, and keeps contact with the news media, education authorities, and politicians in the Storting (Parliament).

FIVH has developed into 90 small

and independent groups in Norway, with diverse activities like running second-hand shops, holding forums on ecology, or investigating the possibilities of low-cost mussel farming.

The basis of all this action is to transform the insame "progress" of today into something meaningful, to persuade people to live within their means, and to create a fair distribution of the world's resources.

FIVH has inspired many people to alter their life style and is responsible for practical deeds in the Third World. And this is just the beginning.

Its Development Fund is backed by around 300 members who contribute about £10 each monthly. So far this money has financed a dam project in Djinguina in Mali. Initially this will irrigate 12,000 acres of cultivated land in an area often cursed by drought and famine. "Later" explains Olay Benestad of FIVH, "this will supply water for a date-palm project near Timbuku."

Supported by funds from the Norwegian Directorate of Aid Development, and co-operating with other international relief projects, FIVH is planning help elsewhere.

"This includes building better food storehouses

and establishing handicraft centres in Tanzania, organising schools in Pakistan, a trade school in Benin, Nigeria, and an agricultural programme in Sri Lanka."

The Norwegian Travelling Folk High School has also started operating after an initiative by FIVH members. (Folk High Schools in Norway have no entrance conditions or examinations, and generally cater for students aged from 18 to 25.)

Ten Travelling Folk buses, each a teacher and ten pupils, are on a four-month trip to Africa or Asia. One bus after traversing the Sahara, is now in East Africa. The passengers have split up to experience life in different villages.

Back in Norway they will spread information on the way of life and problems in developing lands.

(Cont'd on P15)

## News in Brief

TWO GOVERNMENT Officers from the Ministry of Works and Public Utilities, Messrs. Iuta Tanielu and Ruben Tamare are expected to return to Tarawa by Air Nauru today, from Christmas Island. A spokesman from the Ministry said that the officers have been introducing the new Government Account System on the island.



# A moral Duty towards the Poor

(Cont'd From P14)

of distant peoples and will start collections to buy clothes, fish-meal protein biscuits or machinery for communities they will meet on the next bus journey.

At present the information centre is organising the sale of 20,000 jute bags made by 155 young Bangladeshi seamstresses. "Action Bag", as the campaign is called, aims to keep these girls in work.

Dammann's arguments for self-denial are often attacked. Sceptics assume that a new life style means vegetarianism or teetotalism, and add that only those who can afford luxury boats or mink-coats can just as readily reject them.

A newspaper editor even demanded that "if Dammann wants to exist in a cave, let him share it with himself."

One Oslo couple, however, explained how they effortlessly adapted to a "new life style". "It didn't mean that we drank only carrot juice and went around in a toga and sandals. Rather, we became more conscious of things.

"We planned our domestic budget better and bought only necessities, seeking out used articles, and always the durable before the fashionable.

"We cut down our television viewing and spent more time reading, listening to music, visiting friends ... or simply day-dreaming.

"We took more interest in political economic and social developments, trying to see the relationship between those at home and their consequences for Third World nations."

FIVH members say there is no patent formula for a new life style: each person must shape it himself.

Meanwhile, an English version of "The Future in Our Hands" will be published in June. Norway's FIVH already has sister-organisations in Denmark, Sweden, the US and Australia. It anticipates a wider international response to its aims when the book is available

## Pick of the Week

The Loveliest girls are  
always in  
the Pioneer

Pioneer Photo: Iarua Tabureka



Kiribati Girls, beautiful aren't they? Left is Miss Riarawa while standing right is Miss Mereta. Both these lovely chicks are from the Census Office.

MAKE IT  
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HABIT  
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TO READ  
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THE  
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**PROMISING JOBS  
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IN THE 1960s Clerical and Typist jobs were almost ABC easy to get.

Today almost 20 years later, knowledge has considerably surged to a higher level in the Gilbert Islands, menacing the two classes of jobs.

Regardless of these, the up-and-coming Broadcasting and Publications Authority has enough room to accommodate Clerks and Typists. Other statutory bodies may require Form 6s drop-outs and U.S.P. drop-outs, but WE require the Form IIIs as specified below, but remember, it is a challenging job and we need you for your services you can offer to the Nation.

We have vacancies in the Authority for 2 Clerical Officers and a Typist. The minimum qualification for our clerical posts is Form III and for our typist is TTI stage II.

Applicants should be able to speak and write both Gilbertese and English languages.

Please apply immediately to the Manager, Broadcasting and Publication Authority, P.O. Box 78 Bairiki Tarawa.

Applications received after 23rd of February would not be considered.

Serving officers can apply through their heads of Division, copied to the Secretary of the Public Service Commission, P.O. Box 65 Bairiki Tarawa.

Like anybody else, we are offering a uniform starting salary of Level - 18-15 in the National Scale.

A young and ever growing, ever ready organisation like US offer promotions and opportunities to young people like YOU

## Public Notice

### MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND MAN POWER

It is notified for general information that

MR. A.R. TAYLOR,  
Secretary to the Ministry will assume the duties of Principal Immigration Officer and Commissioner of Labour with effect from the 13th February, 1979.

## Public Notice

<u>DESCRIPTION OF GOODS</u>	<u>CONSIGNEE</u>
20 bags x 25kg Rice	Matariti Store
50 bags x 25kg Rice	Tangiraki Trading Centre.
42 bags x 30kg Sugar	Matariti Store
8 bags x 30kg Sugar	Matariti Store

Any claims for the above goods received after 0900 hour on the day of the auction will not be accepted.

The owner of any goods sold under the above provisions may claim the proceeds of their sale after the deduction of all charges specified in Section 83(3) of the Ordinance and provided application is made within one year from the date of sale. Such application is required to be made on the prescribed form obtainable from the Customs Office on request.

<u>DESCRIPTION OF GOODS</u>	<u>CONSIGNEE</u>
1 Suitcase	Unknown
1 ctn Unknown	Tekanu T.
1 ctn Books	Tooma Boata
1 ctn Timetables	O/Hotel
1 bundle mats	E. Tavita
1 pr. Walking Stick	unknown
1 ctn Unkown	E.N. Sheroma
1 bag unkown	unknown
1 ctn Dried Seaweed	Schrafft
1 ctn Unknown	Otintai Hotel
1 Thermos	Unknown

Any claims for the above goods received after 0900 hours on the day of the auction will not be accepted.

The owner of any goods sold under the above provisions may claim the 83(3) of the Ordinance and provided application is made within one year from the date of sale. Such application is required to be made on the prescribed form obtainable from the Customs Office on request.

## FOREIGNSHIPPING

<u>Vessel</u>	<u>Voy.</u>	<u>ETA Tarawa.</u>
M/V Roybank	-	14th February.
Pacific Princess	1 0/6	18 - 19/2/79
Hupeh	1	14th - 15/3/79.
Fiji Maru	7	17 - 18/3/79.
Tauloto II	6	26 - 27/3/79
Pacific Princess	3	7 - 8/4/79.



## Vacant Post SPC STENOGRAPHER

**QUALIFICATIONS AND EXPERIENCE:** Experienced Stenographer with speed at least of 50 words per minute typing and 100 words per minute shorthand in English which should be the applicant's mother tongue. A knowledge of French is desirable but not essential.

**DUTIES:** Shorthand, typing and any other related duties as may be assigned by the Supervisor (Typing Pool). To serve as Meeting Secretary as and when required at Headquarters and elsewhere as directed.

**SALARY AND ALLOWANCES:** Salary will be within the range of CFP 79,299 to 95,029 per month depending on qualifications and experience. In addition a settling-in grant of 5% of basic salary of post will be payable.

**TAXATION:** No income tax is payable on SPC emoluments in New Caledonia.

**TENURE:** The appointment will be for a period of two years in the first instance commencing on or about mid-March 1979.

**DUTY STATION:** SPC Headquarters, Noumea, New Caledonia.

**ACCOMMODATION:** SPC quarters with basic furniture will be provided at a rental of 10% of basic salary.

**LEAVE:** Thirty working days for a 12 calendar month of service. Home leave fares are payable in respect of each two year period of service.

**SICK LEAVE:** Thirty working days per annum.

**MEDICAL BENEFITS:** The Commission's Staff Medical Benefits Scheme to which the appointee would contribute 1.5% of basic salary reimburses doctors' fees, cost of prescribed medicines, surgical and hospital costs, etc.

**GENERAL:** Fares at economy class air rates for the appointee and reasonable removal expenses by sea of personal and household effects will be met by the Commission on appointment and termination.

**NOTE:** Preference will be given to single applicants.

Applications should be addressed to the Secretary-General, South Pacific Commission, P.O. Box D5, Noumea Cedex, New Caledonia and reach him no later than 28 February 1979. To avoid delay, applicants should give full personal details, qualifications, experience and relevant previous appoint-

ments, present position and salary, and the names and addresses of three referees together with an indication as to how soon they would be available.

## FOR SALE

TRINON 300 MM. Screw in telephoto lens (with hood) absolutely new - one hundred dollars. Four aluminum camping chairs which need recovering - 12 dollars the lot.

Wynne-Jones  
B.27 U Bik.

ONE SET macgregor Golf Clubs (almost new).

- 3 Woods.
- 1 Putter.
- 1 Bag.
- 1 Trolley.

Only six weeks old nearest \$250 secures. Available mid - March. Tel. 332.

**SERVICE IN ENGLISH**  
Sunday 18th February  
Tangintebu College Chapel.  
9.15 am Morning Service and Junior Church.  
Transport from east Bikenibeu 8.45 am.

GIPC

## SALE

Hilux Utility  
three years old. Body  
badly rusted  
Engine good. \$750.  
Apply S.D.A. Mission  
Korobu or ring 303

## Public Notice

In exercise of the powers conferred upon me by Section 83A (1) of the Constitution I have today appointed The Right Reverend Bishop P. Men as Member of the Public Service Commission for one year with effect from 1 January 1979.

R.J. Wallace  
GOVERNOR

# For Quick Results Advertise in AP

## SALE

TOYOTA HI-LUX Pickup low mileage excellent condition only \$3,000.

TARAWA MOTORS  
ANTENON.



# A.T. BROS. ENTERPRISES

Sole distributors, Gilbert Islands,  
for fully certified reconditioned  
vehicles of various makes, and also  
reconditioned motor cycles of all  
makes **PLACE YOUR ORDER NOW**



FOR FURTHER  
INFORMATION  
CONTACT



**A.T. BROS.,  
TABORIO**

OR  
TELEPHONE 536  
BIK.





## TARAWA TIDE TABLE

		HIGH TIDE	LOW TIDE
Tue 15 Feb	0608	1.5	0006 0.4
	1817	1.6	1212 0.4
Fri 16 "	0635	1.4	0032 0.4
	1846	1.4	1241 0.5
Sat 17 "	0707	1.4	0059 0.5
	1920	1.4	1317 0.6
Sun 18 "	0750	1.4	0134 0.6
	2011	1.3	1403 0.6
Mon 19 "	0845	1.3	0223 0.6
	2129	1.2	1512 0.7
Tue 20 "	1008	1.3	0338 0.7
	2301	1.2	1655 0.7
Wed 21 "	1146	1.4	0518 0.7
			1828 0.4

### LUNAR DATA

Last Quarter: 1317 20th Feb.

### DUTY SEARCHMASTER

14-20 FEB CAPT. HOERNICKE.

## GOLF NEWS

### QANTAS CUP.

This week saw the opening matches of the Qantas Cup, which is an 18 hole, matchplay knockout. Some of the results:-

Tom Davies v Wood.  
Tom won this match on the seventeenth hole, but was never in any real danger. Neither player excelled and Tom deserved his victory.

Ieuan Batten v Terry Davies. This was a good, well played match. Ieuan produced better golf than he has for some time and although Terry played well, Ieuan managed a victory, 2 & 1. Of the other matches played, Mike Burgess was unlucky to lose, having been 2 up with three to play. A bunker shot on the last hole cost Mike the match. Brian Heeley goes into the next round after Gordon Clarke conceded.

### COMING EVENTS:

Saturday 17th  
February, Qantas Cup  
& Stableford.



## TANINGA NI KAUONGO

I am from Audience Research, Radio Tarawa, and would like to ask you a few questions.

A.R: What is your favourite programme?  
Listener: Programme?  
A.R: Such as, "My Word," "It's YOUR Co-op."

Listener: It's certainly not MY Co-op....its the shopkeepers's They get all the benefit, I don't.

A: That's the Bank of New South Wales.  
B: Where's the Bank of Old North?  
A: In Sydney.

Overheard at the Otintaa Hotel:

He: We must come back on Thursday 12 July.

She: Why?

He: To re-establish our having been here.

She: How do you mean?

He: Well, this Hotel won't be in the Gilbert Islands then.

She: Where are they moving it to?

He: Kiribati.

Guide to Visitors:

This half-moon building used to be the Post Office, its now a temporary Immigration Office. We were ambitious and wanted a better and more presentable Post Office--this was it...this magnificent building here. You see, our ambitious does not only look ahead. It looks backward too and we wanted to have a museum. This is it depicting different ways of weaving in brass.

I am not sure where the Post Office is now.

## TARAWA MOTORS

### Stylish, Sporty Hatchback Featuring Multi-purpose Utility

What makes the Corolla Lift Back exceptional is its large rear door. Plus its big functionally designed luggage space. Giving you a utility area you can use with maximum efficiency. And the separate fold-down type rear seats (optional on 1200 Deluxe) make the car even more practical because you can arrange the space efficiently according to your needs without wasting any of it. Helping to make this car a real standout, along with its exciting sporty styling.



1600 GSL



1600 Deluxe



# KIRIBATI LIFE-STYLE!



WEAVING MATS IS WOMEN'S WORK



CUTTING IS VERY MORNING AND EVENING IS THE MKN'S RESPONSIBILITY.

## News in Brief

THE MINISTER for Finance, the Hon. Tiwau Awira, and the Minister for Natural Resource Development, the Hon. Taomati Iuta, are now on Banaba on the first leg of their Ministerial tour.

A spokesman from the Chief Minister's Office said the Ministers would be explaining to the people there the new constitution during independence.

The second leg of the Ministerial tour will be made next to the Northern Gilberts, but the date is yet to be finalised.

The Ministers are due back in Tarawa tomorrow.

SHORTAGE of flour, rice and sugar has been experienced on Tamana Is. according to Pioneer Reporter, Mr. Batiri T. Bataua, who is at present on the island.

He said on the phone yesterday that the M.V. Temauri brought in some cargo of rice, flour and rice last week, but flour ran out again the same day.

A WORK-BOAT belonging to M.V. Temauri capsized off Tamana Is. while it was trying to get to the shore. Aboard the work-boat were several private belongings, and other things including boxes containing stationeries for the Community High School on the island.

Everything aboard was lost at sea.

The incident occurred on February 8 this month, and reports said this was due to very rough seas near the island. There was no report of casualties.