



Francis Sanford

Francis Sanford (11 May 1912 – 21 December 1996) was a member of the Papeete Colony¹, is a Polynesian politician.

Biography

A teacher by profession, he held junior administrative positions during the war (liaison with the American base in Bora Bora) and then from 1959 (interpreter for the governorate). In 1963, he became head of Tahitian Affairs in the governorate.

He was elected mayor of Faa'a in 1965, on the occasion of the creation of this municipality and shortly afterwards founded the E'a Api party², of which Jean Millaud is the president and of which he becomes the vice-president³.

In 1967, supported in the second round by Georges Pompidou, Valéry Giscard d'Estaing and by the metropolitan leaders of the UNR, he defeated the autonomist deputy John Teariki, while the UT-UNR candidate Nedo Salmon withdrew under duress; he joined the Independent Republicans group, which he left quite quickly given the low support he found there for a change in the status of the territory. He then joined the Progress and Modern Democracy (PDM) group of Jacques Duhamel, and later the Reformers group (Jean-Jacques Servan-Schreiber).

Allied with John Teariki and the *Pupu Here Aia* from 1967, he was re-elected as a deputy in 1968, crushing Nedo Salmon in the first round (an exceptional case when the metropolis had voted massively for the Gaullists) and in 1973. In November 1968, he succeeded in obtaining the lifting of the ban on staying in Polynesia that still affected the old autonomist leader Pouvanaa Oopa.

Francis Sanford

Functions

French Member of Parliament

April 3, 1967 – June 23, 1976
(9 years, 2 months and 20 days)

Election	<u>March 12, 1967</u>
Re-election	<u>June 23, 1968</u> <u>March 11, 1973</u> <u>September 13, 1976</u>
Constituency	<u>French Polynesia</u>
Legislature	<u>III</u> , <u>IV</u> and <u>V</u> (<u>Fifth Republic</u>)
Political Group	<u>RI</u> (1967-1968) <u>PDM</u> (1968-1973) <u>RDS</u> (1973-1974) <u>RCDS</u> (1974-1976)
Predecessor	<u>John Teariki</u>
Successor	<i>Electoral district abolished</i>

Mayor of Faaa

1965 – 1977
(12 years)

Successor	<u>Alfred Helme</u>
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Biography

Birth Name	<u>Francis Ariioehau Sanford</u>
Date of birth	<u>May 11, 1912</u>
Place of Birth	<u>Papeete</u>
Date of death	<u>December 21, 1996</u> (at age 84)
Place of death	<u>Faaa</u>
Nationality	<u>English</u>
Political Party	<u>E'a Api</u> (1965-1988) <u>RI</u>
Profession	<u>Teacher</u>

He was a delegate of François Mitterrand, candidate for the presidential election in 1974. In 1975, as part of discussions on a new status, the "United Front for Internal Autonomy" (Sanford-Teariki-Vanizette) was formed against Gaston Flosse's Tahitian Union. In June 1976, he resigned from his mandate as a deputy to obtain the dissolution of the Territorial Assembly, whose premises were occupied by supporters of the United Front⁴. He was re-elected against Gaston Flosse in September 1976. After the implementation of the new statute (July 1977), he resigned in order to take up the post of Vice-President of the Council of Government and was replaced by his deputy, John Teariki. He was a candidate for the last time in 1978, replacing Maco Tevane, without success.

In 1982, E'a Api suffered the split of its secretary general, Émile Vernaudon, who founded the Ai'a Api party. Weakened and after several electoral setbacks, Sanford tried to refound his party in 1985, under the name of Te Ea no Maohi Nui and with Daniel Millaud as president, without success^{3,5}.

He died on 21 December 1996 at his home in Faa'a and was buried the next day in the Uranie cemetery in Papeete¹.

Decorations

-  Commemorative Medal for Voluntary Services in Free France (1940-1943)
-  Medal of Freedom (United States) (United States)

Bibliography

- Yacine Benhalima, *Free France and Free French in the French Establishments of Oceania (1940-1947). A History of Margin Resistance in the Pacific Space*, Doctoral Thesis in Contemporary History, 2025

- Yves Hauptert, *Francis Sanford with an open heart. Les mémoires du dernier metua, père de l'autonomie Polynésienne*, Pirae, Au Vent des Îles, 1998 (ISBN 2-909790-64-9)

Notes and references

1. Yves Hauptert, *Francis Sanford à cœur ouvert: Les mémoires du dernier metua, père de l'autonomie polynésienne*, Polynésie française, Au vent des îles, 1998, 376 p. (ISBN 978-2909790640, read online (<http://www.youscribe.com/catalogue/livres/actualite-et-debat-de-societe/politique/francis-sanford-a-coeur-ouvert-2311374>))
2. Source on Francis Sanford: Bengt Danielsson, *Moruroa, notre bombe coloniale*, L'Harmattan, 1993.
3. Laurent de Boissieu, "Te Ea no Maohi Nui (https://www.france-politique.fr/wiki/Te_Ea_no_Maohi_Nui)", on France Politique, 25 September 2021 (accessed).
4. See the [History of French Polynesia](#) page for details
5. Christian Gleizal and Jean Marc Regnault, "David Millaud (<http://www.assemblee.pf/histoire?id=698#personnalitesModal>)", on *Histoire de l'Assemblée de la Polynésie française*, [Assemblée de la Polynésie française](#) (accessed on 5 July 2022).

Liens externes

- Ressources relatives à la vie publique : [Archives électorales de Sciences Po](https://archives.sciencespo.fr/archive/catalogue/persname/sanford-francis) (<https://archives.sciencespo.fr/archive/catalogue/persname/sanford-francis>) · [Base Sycomore](http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/sycomore/fiche.asp?num_dept=6270) (http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/sycomore/fiche.asp?num_dept=6270)
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