BEFORE THE STORM: AN ANALYSIS OF THE FIJI GENERAL ELECTION OF 1987

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On 7 April 1987, the people of Fiji went to the polls for the fifth time since attaining independence from Great Britain in 1970. After a long three-month campaign and a week's polling, the newly formed Fiji Labour Party-National Federation Party Coalition won a convincing and historic victory over the long-reigning Alliance party, capturing twenty-eight of the fifty-two seats in the Fiji Parliament. Dr. Timoci Bavadra, the new prime minister, assumed power with quiet dignity but unmistakable firmness, and quickly set in motion a government intent on delivering early on its various election pledges. Bitterly disappointed with the unexpected results of the election, Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara, the defeated Alliance leader, conceded defeat in a terse statement and urged his party to accept the verdict of the ballot box. This surprisingly smooth, textbook transfer of power led Sir Leonard Usher, the doyen of local journalists, to write, with premature optimism as it turned out, "It had been a long--too long--campaign, and at times some unpleasant elements of bitterness had crept in. These were now set aside. Democracy, clearly, was well and alive in Fiji."[1]

The 1987 election results both reaffirmed the dominant trends in Fiji's ethnically-based electoral politics and heralded the faint beginnings of a new era that promised to break away from it. In the circumstances, it was change and the promise--as well as the fear--of further divergence from the established patterns of political behavior that

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received the most attention. For the first time in the modern history of Fiji, it was not one of the small but extremely powerful coterie of paramount maritime chiefs--a Ratu Joni Madraiwiwi, Ratu Sir Lala Sukuna or a Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara--but a western Fijian of middling chiefly rank who was at the helm of national leadership. For the first time, too, the Fijians of Indian descent were able to achieve a significant measure of national political power. The new Cabinet, young, exceptionally well educated and nominally left-leaning, promised a new direction designed to create a nonethnic state and a distributive society for Fiji, a move that sought to end the legacy of communally divisive politics bequeathed by seventeen years of Alliance rule.

Not surprisingly, then, some members of the former Mara administration and the Alliance party, their vested political and personal interests threatened and their careers in ruins, organized themselves into a militant indigenous force named the "Taukei Movement" and launched a carefully orchestrated campaign to derail the newly elected government. Within a week of the election, Fiji was rocked by a violent and terrifying campaign of arson, sabotage, roadblocks, and protest marches, climaxing with the military-led overthrow of the Bavadra government on May 14. The coup leaders attempted to reinstall the defeated Mara government back into power, but were thwarted in their efforts by determined but peaceful internal resistance and considerable external pressure. Unable to achieve their immediate goal and isolated, rebuffed, and ostracized by the international community, they then struck with a second coup on September 25 and severed Fiji's links to the British Crown. As this is being written, a search is underway for a political solution that, while maintaining the paraphernalia and appearance of parliamentary democracy, would nevertheless entrench indigenous Fijian control of the political process. Whatever the eventual outcome of the exercise, it is already abundantly clear that the coup has dealt a severe, perhaps even a mortal, blow to the country's internal multiracial cohesiveness, wrecked its economic base, and tarnished its reputation and moral authority on the international stage. The coups brought to a cataclysmic end one era in Fijian history, and, a year later, another was struggling to be born.

The traumatic sequence of events that followed the election was in marked contrast to the long and uninspiring campaign that preceded (and precipitated) it. The 1987 election--which might very well be an epitaph to Fiji's multiracial democracy--provided both the text as well as the pretext for the coup of May 14. This article examines certain important aspects of the campaign to understand its character as well as

the causes of the historic outcome. I focus, in particular, on the political parties that contested the election, the important campaign issues and strategies, and, finally, on the voting patterns that led to the Coalition's victory.

Political Parties

The 1987 election was contested by four political parties or coalitions, two of which appeared on the political scene on the eve of the campaign.[2] The Alliance party, led by Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara, had been continuously in power in Fiji from 1966 to 1987, except for a brief four days in April 1977 when it lost to the National Federation party, only to be invited into power again after the NFP was unable to form a government.[3] Its long reign in office was the result of many factors including, among others: strong, many would say autocratic, leadership; effective use of political power and patronage; solid support by its traditional constituency, the indigenous Fijians; and, not least, the absence of a credible alternative among the frequently warring opposition parties. In 1987 the Alliance, as usual, appeared financially the best equipped of all the political parties to last the distance of a long campaign. To further improve its prospects, it fielded a safe team, dropping four Cabinet members and seven backbenchers who were considered liabilities and thus potential opposition targets. Some of those discarded formed their own parties or contested the election as independents.

Since its inception in 1965, the Alliance has had a federated political structure with three distinct constituent branches: the Fijian Association, the Indian Alliance, and the General Electors Association.[4] The Fijian Association constitutes the backbone of the party, consistently capturing over 80 percent of the Fijian communal votes. Chastised by the temporary loss of power in April 1977, brought about by a split in the Fijian communal vote, the FA began to expand and consolidate its base and, turning a blind eye to the party's public proclamations on multiracialism, accepted within its ranks members of extremist and racially motivated Fijian parties, such as the Fijian Nationalist party. Thus in the 1987 campaign, the Alliance gave a blue-ribbon Fijian communal seat to Taniela Veitata, an FNP candidate in 1977, while another former FNP strategist was recruited to help diffuse the impact of Fijian splinter parties in marginal national constituencies. Fijian unity above all else, and the promotion of ethnic Fijian interests, became the overriding goal of the FA--and the Alliance party--in the 1987 campaign.

The General Electors Association, composed of Europeans, part-

Europeans, Chinese, and others of mixed descent, is the smallest though financially perhaps the strongest of the three Alliance branches. Ever since the advent of party politics in Fiji in the early 1960s, the GEA has thrown its weight solidly behind the Fijian-dominated Alliance. History, race, economic interest, and a keen sense of power all helped to forge this politically expedient bond of trust. But in the 1987 elections, for the first time, a rift appeared in the GEA ranks, with the younger as well as the working-class members of the part-European community joining the Labour party. Others deserted the Alliance complaining of stepchild-like treatment. The shift was small but significant, and it helped the Coalition in the crucial marginal constituencies such as Suva.

Of the three constituent bodies, the Indian Alliance was the weakest spoke in the Alliance wheel. Its credibility in the Indian community, always low, was seriously compromised by the defection of many of its disillusioned former leaders to the rival NFP. Unhappy with its performance and prestige, Ratu Mara ignored the Indian Alliance establishment and recruited Indian professionals and political opportunists personally loyal to and dependent upon him to boost the party's prospects in that community. In 1987, he bagged a prized catch in the person of Mrs. Irene Jai Narayan, who was not only a skillful politician--she had held her Suva communal seat continuously since 1966--but who was also a former president of the rival NFP and the deputy leader of the Opposition. Ousted from the NFP after an internal power struggle in 1985, she had briefly flirted with the Labour party, then joined the Alliance in November 1986. Political survival rather than a genuine conversion to Alliance philosophy appeared to be the main reason for her switch, as Mrs. Narayan justified her action thus: "Let's face it, whether one likes it or not, the Alliance will remain in power for a long time. It is difficult for an independent member to do much."[5] Mara selected Mrs. Narayan for the crucial Suva national seat. This was a critical tactical mistake that was to cost the Alliance dearly, for the Alliance leader had badly underestimated the Indian electorate's unwillingness to forgive Mrs. Narayan's defection to a party that she had so vehemently criticized all her political life. And Mrs. Narayan's own unexpectedly virulent attack on her former party and her erstwhile colleagues, mounted with the fanaticism of the twice converted, damaged her prospects further. The response of the Indian Alliance leadership, or what was left of it, to being ignored and bypassed was a quiet withdrawal of its support for the party and a silent move to the Coalition camp. In the end, then, the Alliance was left banking on the charisma

of a single candidate for a crucial seat, while the Coalition remorselessly exploited Mrs. Narayan's formerly vitriolic attacks against the Alliance with great effect. But these were errors that surfaced only at a later stage in the campaign. For much of the time the Alliance was confident of a victory and dismissive of its opponents.

Unlike the Alliance party, the Coalition was launched on the eve of the election. It was a coalition of two parties drawn together into an expedient, and initially reluctant, political union to defeat the Alliance, realizing fully the disastrous consequences of "going it alone." The older partner in the Coalition was the mainly Indian-supported National Federation party, founded in the early 1960s, and the main opposition force in Fiji since 1970. The party has had an unfortunate history of bitter and ill-concealed internal squabbles since the death of A. D. Patel, its founder, in 1969. S. M. Koya's tenure as leader in the 1970s was generally marked by controversy about his dictatorial methods, which eventually led to his ouster in 1977. His successor, Jai Ram Reddy, brought about sufficient party unity to come within four seats of winning the 1982 elections, but he resigned from Parliament in 1984 over heated exchanges with the undoubtedly partisan speaker of the House, thus throwing the NFP into yet another round of disarray. Despite subsequent attempts to promote party unity, the NFP continued to suffer defeats in municipal and national by-elections and, perhaps most importantly, in public esteem as a credible alternative to the Alliance. Several of its sitting parliamentarians switched to the FLP as did many longtime party loyalists, disheartened by years of meaningless, internecine fights at the top. On the eve of the 1987 elections, the NFP was divided and drifting. Coalition with another party was the only alternative to avoid an almost certain political demise.

That prospect was provided by the emergence of the Fiji Labour party, whose nonethnic platform, multiethnic composition, and vehement opposition to the ruling Alliance made it an attractive partner. The trade union-backed Labour party was launched in July 1985, primarily in response to the Mara administration's confrontational actions and unilateral decisions to combat a host of economic problems that besieged Fiji in the mid-1980s. One such policy was the imposition of a wage freeze in 1984 to boost an economy severely damaged by hurricanes, droughts, rising foreign debts, and burgeoning civil service salary bills. The government wanted to use savings from the wage freeze--to the tune of F$36 million--to expand the primary sector and assist the employment-generating business sector. The unions criticized the freeze as unnecessary and oppressive, especially to lower income groups, and

also as a breach of the spirit of the Tripartite Forum.[6] Later, in an act designed to weaken the power of the union movement, the Mara government withdrew the exclusive recognition long granted to the Fiji Trade Union Congress as the union representative on the forum. This was a major blow since the congress was the national umbrella organization of various trade union bodies. The government wanted to encourage trade union leaders sympathetic to its policies.

Anger about the government's economic strategies was fueled further by policies of the Ministry of Education that brought it into a bitter and prolonged conflict with the teachers' unions. The Volunteer Service Scheme, devised by the government to give fresh graduate teachers employment on a cost-share basis, incurred the wrath of graduating teachers, who accused the government--rightly as the courts subsequently agreed--of reneging on an earlier binding promise of regular employment, and led to hunger strikes and massive protest marches. A large-scale and arbitrary transfer of teachers, part of a wider policy to integrate Fiji's communally oriented schools, smacked of an arrogant and confrontational attitude, especially on the part of the minister, Dr. Ahmed Ali, who was accused by both Indian as well as Fijian teachers of "adopting an anti-teacher stance designed to undermine the professional status of teachers in the country." Indeed, Ah's policies unwittingly provided the basis of a common front between the Indian-based Fiji Teachers Union and the exclusively *taukei* (indigenous) Fijian Teachers Association, both of which protested against the government's educational policies.[7]

Such actions, coming at a difficult economic time and carried out in stark contrast to the Mara administration's earlier record of consultation and dialogue, politicized the traditionally apolitical trade union movement, which in turn led to the launching of the Fiji Labour party in July 1985. New on the scene, brimming with enthusiasm and armed with progressive social and economic policies contained under the general rubric of "democratic socialism," the FLP promised, among other things, public ownership of vital industries, minimum wage legislation for the manufacturing sector, and increased local participation in such vital industries as tourism.[8] Not surprisingly, the Labour party attracted much local attention. Just four months after being launched, Labour won the Suva City municipal elections and made a strong showing in the North Central Indian national constituency by-elections. But for all the euphoria and early unexpected success, the FLP remained primarily an urban-based party, led by white-collar trade unionists. To become a national force strong enough to contend for government, the party had to broaden its base.

Initially, however, the FLP scorned the idea of a coalition. As party secretary Krishna Datt claimed in July 1986, "Both the Alliance and the NFP work within the framework of capitalism and the FLP cannot share their ideologies."[9] Yet a few months later, chastened by the hard realities of Fiji politics and realizing the folly of confronting the Alliance alone, the FLP changed its tune and initiated discussions with the NFP, which it had recently criticized as being a party of "a handful of businessmen and lawyers."[10]By October the two parties had held seven secret meetings, and by December a coalition had been arranged.

Terms of the arrangement were never made public though several features later became clear. One was a seat-sharing formula according to which the NFP agreed to give the FLP six of its twelve blue-ribbon Indian communal seats as well as half of the winnable Indian and Fijian national seats. This formula enabled the FLP to project itself into the hitherto inaccessible rural areas, while the NFP was spared the almost certain humiliation of losing its traditional iron-clad grip on the communal seats to FLP's Indian candidates. Another notable feature was the acceptance by the predominantly Indian-based NFP of an ethnic Fijian, from another party, as the leader of the coalition. This was both a tacit acknowledgement of weakness by the NFP as well as a concession to the nonethnic philosophy of the Coalition. It also represented a significant shift in Indian political opinion, which only a decade earlier had rejected a Fijian leader for the party (Ratu Julian Toganivalu). But the reality of ethnic politics in Fiji was that an Indian prime minister would not be acceptable to the majority of the *taukei,* and for the NFP to achieve any measure of political power, a coalition with another party with a Fijian leader, and a political philosophy broadly compatible to its own, was the only route to a possible victory.[11] The third outcome of the coalition arrangement was the formulation of a compromise manifesto that whittled down some of the FLP's radical-sounding economic policies, such as encouraging worker participation in the management of industry and the nationalization of selected industries, and that removed from the electoral arena such perennially contentious issues as land tenure and education. Finally, both parties agreed to present a combined, fresh slate of candidates. A start was made by endorsing only five of the twenty-two sitting Opposition parliamentarians.

The Labour Coalition, however, was not the only coalition to contest the 1987 elections. There was another, which consisted of a faction of the NFP aligned with the Western United Front, NFP's 1982 election partner. The NFP-WUF coalition was the handiwork of Shardha Nand, deposed secretary of the NFP, and other politicians discarded by the

Labour Coalition's candidate selection committee, including S. M. Koya. They massaged their personal grievances into a political cause by presenting themselves as champions of Indian rights placed in danger by having a Fijian (Dr. Bavadra) as the leader of the mainly Indian-supported opposition party. Taking the logic of ethnic politics to its extreme conclusion, they argued that only an Indian could be trusted to lead the Indian community. Among other things, this faction of the NFP demanded a separate Ministry for Indian Affairs along the lines of its Fijian counterpart, ninety-nine-year leases on Crown lands, and the allocation of jobs in the public sector according to the percentage of seats occupied by each ethnic group in Fiji's parliament, that is, 42 percent each for the Fijians and the Indians and the remaining 16 percent for General Electors.[12]

The Western United Front was a reluctant and silent partner in the coalition. Its leader, Ratu Osea Gavidi, the charismatic campaigner of 1982, was quiet and generally inaccessible, spending more time battling his irate creditors in court than fighting political opponents in the election. Since 1982 WUF itself had become somewhat of a spent force. The policies for harvesting pine, the dispute about which had led to the formation of the party, was now a nonissue, and many western Fijians, outside of the Nadroga/Navosa region, had been enticed back into the Alliance fold.[13] And the WUF had lost credibility with many NFP leaders because of its withdrawal from the royal commission investigating allegations made against the original NFP-WUF coalition of receiving Russian money in the bid to defeat the Alliance in the 1982 election.[14] The NFP-WUF coalition campaign began promisingly, but its prospects vanished when Koya and some other candidates withdrew, ostensibly to avoid being tainted with the spoiler's role. In the end, most of the Indian members of the coalition, widely perceived as grasping opportunists, suffered an ignominious defeat, losing their deposits by getting less than 10 percent of the total votes cast in their constituency. Gavidi lost (42 percent of the votes) to his old Alliance rival, Apenisa Kuruisaqila (53.5 percent).

Of all the political parties, the Fijian Nationalist party maintained the lowest profile in the 1987 campaign. Founded by Sakiasi Butadroka in 1975 on a "Fiji for Fijians" platform, the party had captured 25 percent of the Fijian communal vote in the April 1977 elections, but had since lost ground to the Fijian Association. For the 1987 campaign, the FNP maintained its stridently anti-Indian stance while at the same time advocating a platform designed to promote Fijian interest.[15] The party proposed the "thinning out" of Fiji Indians through an active policy

encouraging emigration, to be funded by the British government that had introduced Indians into Fiji in the first place. The FNP made an issue of the paucity of Fijians in commercial and industrial sectors, which it saw as a direct result of a conspiracy by Indian and European business classes. It drew attention to the disparity in the numbers of Fijians and Indians employed in the public sector, blamed the Alliance for the problem, and demanded urgent remedial action. And finally it demanded an exclusively *taukei* parliament through revision of the 1970 Constitution; absolute Fijian control of the political process was seen as a precondition for Fijian economic and social progress. In the end, however, while there was personal support and sympathy for Butadroka--who won 37.9 percent of the votes, an increase of 7.3 percent over the 1982 figure--the FNP failed to recapture its old ground, though its candidates drew sufficient Fijian support in marginal national seats to help the Coalition defeat the Alliance.

The Campaign

The campaign for the general elections began early in the year, partly in anticipation of a February poll. It was long and unremarkable, lacking, for instance, the dramatic tension of the last stages of the 1982 campaign when the contents of the so-called Carroll Report were revealed in an Australian television program, or the intense and ultimately self-destructive struggle between the competing factions of the NFP in the September 1977 elections.[16] But this election had its own unique features that helped to define its character. Learning from past experiences, both the Alliance and the Coalition dispensed with the problematic public spectacle of touring the country to select candidates from a list prepared by constituency committees. Instead, each party appointed a small committee that made the selection and whose decision was final and irrevocable. This swift, if undemocratic, action gave them more time to focus on each other instead of having to contend with internal selection squabbles. It also produced an avalanche of defections as the frustrated aspirants switched parties. In the end, however, most of the defectors suffered ignominious defeat at the polls.

Another significant difference between this election and previous ones was that, for the first time since the advent of elections in Fiji, the leaders of both the ruling as well as the leading opposition parties were ethnic Fijians, Ratu Mara for the Alliance and Dr. Bavadra for the Labour Coalition. This fact diluted the importance of race and the use of racial fears for political ends in the campaign, issues that were at the

forefront in many previous campaigns. Race, however, was replaced by other emotional distinctions such as regionalism and class, for many Fijians saw in the election a contest between western--and commoner --Fijians led by Dr. Bavadra, and the traditional chiefly elite and eastern Fijians led by Ratu Mara.

As the campaign developed, the strategies of the two rival parties revealed themselves, Confident of victory, the Alliance adopted a dismissive attitude toward the opposition. Ratu Mara set the tone in November 1986 when, referring to the Labour politicians, he asked: "What have the Johnnys-come-lately done in the promotion of national unity ?"[17]He returned again and again to this theme throughout the campaign. Dr. Bavadra became the personal target of a sneering newspaper campaign. In a typical advertisement, the Alliance said: "Bavadra has never been in parliament. He has no EXPERIENCE. He has no INFLUENCE. The Council of Chiefs do NOT listen to him. The international scene where we sell our sugar has NEVER heard of him. He cannot get renewal of leases for farmers."[18] In the opening Alliance campaign address over Radio Fiji, Mosese Qionibaravi, the deputy prime minister, called Bavadra an "unqualified unknown." The Coalition was often portrayed as weak, vacillating, and not to be trusted. One typical campaign advertisement ran: "The opposition factions are fragmented and quarrelling among themselves. Their policies are confused and shift constantly as one group or would-be leader gains ascendency. Principles are proclaimed as fundamental and are then dropped when pressures are applied by vested interests, or for political expediency." The Alliance on the other hand presented itself as the very model of stability: "united in purpose, strong and fully accepted leadership, clear and consistent policies, and a political philosophy with values that have been proved by experience."[19]

Other important features of the Alliance campaign strategy were to appeal for Fijian ethnic solidarity and to instill fears among the *taukei* about the consequences of a Coalition victory. The unmistakable Alliance message was that only an Alliance government headed by paramount chiefs could guarantee the security of Fijian interests. Once again, Ratu Mara led the Alliance charge. "Fijians have the political leadership despite being outnumbered in this country," he said, and "if they failed to unite that leadership would slip away from them."[20] And Mara accused the Coalition of trying to undermine Fijian leadership by taking up Fijian causes with the intention of discrediting the Alliance, such as the Nasomo land dispute in Vatukauloa, the plight of the cocoa growers in Vanua Levu, and competing claims of ownership of Yanuca

island in which his own wife was involved. Mara's racial appeal became so blatant that he was taken to task in a *Fiji Sun* editorial, the only political leader to be so criticized in the entire campaign: "In past elections, Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara called for political parties not to indulge in politics of fear, and not to fight the election on racial lines. But now the Prime Minister himself has begun a racially oriented campaign. His call for the Fijians to unite to retain political leadership is unwarranted. If every individual race began campaigning on these lines, the country would be in trouble."[21]

Fear was an important aspect of the Alliance campaign strategy, fear not only of the *taukei's* losing control over their land but also of being forced to embrace an ideology alien to their cultural values. The Alliance told the Fijian electorate, especially in the rural areas outside the purview of modern influences, about the evils of democratic socialism, the Coalition's creed borrowed from the Anglo-Australasian tradition. It was a system, the Alliance claimed, "in which LAND, FACTORIES, MINES, SHOPS, etc. are ALL OWNED by the STATE and the COMMUNITY. This is opposed to the present system in Fiji where ownership of Fijian land rests exclusively with Fijian *mataqali,* and businesses belong to individuals or shareholders in a public company."[22] The fact that some of the trade union leaders had visited Moscow (as indeed had some government ministers) was presented as proof enough of the Coalition's sinister designs.

In contrast to the Alliance, the Coalition entered the campaign as a distinct underdog. It was new and inexperienced, underfunded and comparatively disorganized, unable to match the Alliance in the media war. Its candidates, therefore, ran their largely self-financed campaigns in pocket meetings in their own constituencies. But the Coalition message was clear: it charged the Mara administration with abuse of power and reminded the electorate of the mounting economic difficulties for lower-income families. Bavadra, in his concluding campaign speech, said, "Wage and salary earners remember the wage and job freeze; farmers remember their extreme hardships and insecurities; rural dwellers remember the high prices; parents remember the increased bus fares; squatters remember physical removal and neglect; teachers remember Dr. Ahmed Ali's reign of terror in the Ministry of Education; students remember the pain of their hunger strike; the *taukei* remember that most of Fijian development money goes to a few provinces."[23] The Coalition, for its part, promised a new direction and a clean and compassionate government. Its election theme, "time for a change," caught the mood of the electorate as the campaign concluded. It was, by all

accounts, a remarkable transformation, brought about as much by the Coalition's own effort as by the voters' deepening disenchantment with the Alliance's negative campaigning.

Issues

Leadership

Leadership was an important issue in the campaign. The Alliance projected an image of unity and purpose and of experience in the complexities of government. The Coalition, on the other hand, was portrayed as a bunch of professional critics whose view of the real world was "so flawed that it would not pass as seconds." Ratu Mara was once again the trump card of the party, and he vowed to fight to the end: "I have not yet finished the job I started and until I can ensure that unshakeable foundations have been firmly laid and cornerstones are set in place, I will not yield to the vaulting ambitions of a power crazy gang of amateurs, none of whom has run anything, not even a bingo party."[24] He assured the nation that "as long as the people of this blessed land need me, I will answer their call. I will keep the faith. Fear not, Ratu Mara will stay." According to Mara, the future of Fiji and the Alliance party were inextricably linked; one could not--nor would be allowed to--exist without the other. Without his and his party's leadership, Mara said, Fiji would go down the path of "rack and ruin"; it would become another of those countries "torn apart by racial strife and drowning in debt, where basic freedoms are curtailed, universities closed down, the media throttled and dissenters put into jail and camps."[25]

Ratu Mara's long incumbency was Dr. Bavadra's main problem for, unlike Mara, Bavadra was a newcomer to national politics, and virtually unknown outside Fiji. By profession a medical doctor, Bavadra had held a number of senior positions in the civil service before retiring in 1985 to head the newly formed FLP. Bavadra came from a chiefly background, though he was not himself a paramount chief,[26] was a sportsman, and had attended the Queen Victoria School, but his credentials with the Fijian establishment were tenuous and suspect. His cause was not helped by the Alliance's concerted effort to paint him as a tool of Indian politicians and therefore an untrustworthy guardian of Fijian interests. Thus Bavadra was forced frequently to defend his own "Fijianness" as well as his party's platform.

By the end of the campaign, however, Bavadra had managed to turn public opinion in his favor. His unassuming character, his common

touch, an accessibility and openness, all contrasted with Ratu Mara's characteristic aloofness throughout the campaign, and projected an image of a compassionate man who could be trusted. His style of leadership received praise from his colleagues. Commenting on Bavadra's "first among equals" approach to leadership, Satendra Nandan wrote: "It is a type of leadership which a democracy requires in the modern world, by the command of the people rather than by an accident of birth. It is a leadership which encourages growth in a team, rather than the banyan tree leadership under which everything else dies for lack of light. It is the leadership by a man who is known nationally as a leader, not identified with one particular province of a country; by a man chosen by a genuinely multiracial party; a leader who is easily approachable, not held in awe but in affection; a leadership which sincerely believes in collective responsibility for collective decision for the collective good."[27] Never before in Fiji had the contrast between two competing styles of leadership been presented so starkly to the public.

Conduct of government

The Alliance campaigned on its record of experience and stability, while the Coalition drew support by launching a concerted attack against it. "We have all become accustomed to the arrogance of power, abuse of privileges, and insolence of office," said Dr. Bavadra.[28] The Alliance had "reneged on the fundamental principles of democratic responsibility and accountability. It pretends to be democratic but in fact puts all the major decisions in the hands of a very few. This brand of democracy has benefitted a few at the expense of the vast majority." This theme was pursued throughout the campaign. The Coalition accused the Alliance of practicing the politics of racial separation, similar, in effect if not in name, to the apartheid regime of South Africa. The difference between the two was "one of degree, not one of substance." In rebuttal, the Alliance affirmed its commitment to opposing "any suggestion of constitutional change that would weaken or destroy the principle of guaranteed representation of Fiji's major racial groups in the House of Representatives."[29]

To check what it saw as abuse of power caused by complacency and corruption, the Coalition proposed an anticorruption bill, a code of conduct for parliamentarians, and the abolition of legislation that allowed certain secrecy in government, specifically the Official Secrets Act. The Alliance, for the most part, chose to dismiss the issues raised by the Coalition. As Mara declared: "Allow me simply to say that there is

no country in the world today in which similar concerns do not emblazon the headlines. The fact is that these problems are a by-product of modernization. Fiji neither has a monopoly on these problems nor are they extensive and corrosive here."[30] His point was valid, of course, but the Alliance's complacent acceptance of the reality contrasted sharply when viewed alongside the Coalition's strong promise to tackle these problems with vigor. The above attitude seemed to symbolize the Alliance's apathy and aloofness to many in the electorate and certainly hurt the Alliance in the urban and peri-urban areas where violence and crime had increased dramatically in the last five years.

The Economy

The economy was another important campaign issue. Predictably, the Alliance trumpeted its record: inflation remained around 2 percent, the balance of payment figures were sound with foreign reserves at record levels, and the country was assured of guaranteed prices for its basic export item, sugar, through long-term international agreements. The Alliance reaffirmed its commitment to the promotion of individual enterprise within a capitalist framework. In short, the Alliance promised "business as usual" along an assured and well-trodden path.

But the Alliance's optimism about the state of the economy was based on shaky foundations. A number of experts pointed out that the Fijian economy was in serious trouble from overplanning and overreliance on the public sector to generate employment and investment. As Table 1, based on figures from a World Bank report of 1986, illustrates the Fijian economy had begun to show signs of serious problems in the mid-1970s. Professor Helen Hughes, director of the National Centre for Development Studies at the Australian National University, described the performance of the Fijian economy during the last five years as "miserable by comparison with other developing countries."[31]

The Coalition criticized the Alliance's management of the economy, but in general its economic strategy and philosophy differed from the Alliance's mainly in degree, not in substance. The Coalition went to great lengths to assure the business community that it was not antibusiness. Its election manifesto stated that "employment creation through an expanding private sector will form a major thrust of our economic policies." To generate private-sector growth, the Coalition promised to facilitate "easy access to long-term loan finances at low interest rates." And in his closing campaign address, Bavadra left no doubt of his support for the private sector: "I reaffirm the Coalition's recognition and

TABLE 1. **Performance of the Fijian Economy, 1970-1985**

Indices	1970-75	1975-80	1980-84	1985
GDP Growth Rate (%)	5.8	4.1	1.2	-1.5
Gross Domestic Investment (as % of GNP)	20.4	26.1	22.7	18.0
Gross National Savings (as % of GNP)	17.1	21.3	16.3	14.5
Overall Budget Deficit (as % of GNP)	1.1	6.5	5.1	3.0

Source: S. Yusuf et al., *Fiji: A Transition to Manufacturing* (Washington, D.C.: International Bank for Reconstruction and Development, 1986), 2.

acceptance of the vital role of the private sector in the development of the nation. There is no threat. The private sector must remain. It will remain."[32] This was a politically sensible stance that prevented the otherwise almost certain large-scale defection of the Indian business community to the Alliance fold. Their support in the marginal Suva seat proved crucial for the Coalition.

While the two parties agreed on broad issues of economic philosophy, however, they differed on both the performance as well as the management of the economy. The Coalition made an issue of unequal regional development in Fiji, pointing out that certain areas had been developed at the expense of others. A campaign attack alleged that Lau, Ratu Mara's own province, had received a disproportionate share of development aid, scholarships, and hurricane relief money.[33] Mara naturally denied the charge of favoring Lau, but statistics confirmed the Coalition allegations. For example, between 1984 and 1986, Lau, one of the smallest of the Fijian provinces, received $528,099.05 in scholarships, 21 percent of all the money allocated for Fijian scholarships. On the other hand, much larger provinces received far lesser sums: Ba, $156,085.25 (6.2 percent); Tailevu, $364,244.44 (14.5 percent); and Rewa, $221,638.93 (8.3 percent).[34] Bavadra said, "It is important to remind ourselves that the government resources poured into Lakeba are derived from wealth produced by others elsewhere in the country. It is time that the government stopped viewing the rest of Fiji as serving the interest of a few centres in the east. The people of Lakeba are entitled to a share in the national interest, but just a share. It is time we had a government that is more truly national in outlook."[35]

The Coalition also highlighted the deteriorating plight of the disadvantaged sectors of Fiji society that had missed out on the Alliance's

"economic parade": the grossly underpaid garment factory workers, squatters, and other poor families. Indeed, the Coalition alleged collusion between big business and the Alliance government in keeping wages down, and made the still-unrefuted charge that Indian garment manufacturers had contributed about F$51,000 to the Alliance campaign fund to prevent the legislation of a minimum-wage policy for the industry. Pointing to the Alliance's record of high foreign reserves, Bavadra asked: "But what use is that when there is so much unemployment? What use is that if people can't afford bus fares? What use is that if business confidence is lacking?"[36]Bavadra's logic appealed to those who felt marginalized and left out of the economic picture portrayed by the Alliance.

Another difference between the Alliance's and the Coalition's economic policies was the latter's emphasis on the need to promote greater local participation in Fiji's economic development. This was in direct response to the increasing feeling that the Mara government had become less concerned over the years to the plight of local entrepreneurs and to local sensitivities, The difference between the two parties was aptly captured in their respective approaches to the promotion of the tourist industry. Both parties supported the promotion of tourism in Fiji, but the Coalition went further. It proposed to develop hotel-linked farms owned by neighboring villages, facilitate greater equity participation of local people in the hotel and allied transport industries, and provide special incentive allowances to those reinvesting tourist dollars within Fiji. The Coalition presented itself as a friend of local business and local entrepreneurs, which helped it to allay their fears and win their much-need financial support. The Alliance, in contrast, appeared to be a part of--and for--big business.

Taukei *Affairs and National Development*

The Alliance and the Coalition differed sharply in their policies and visions for the nation and for the *taukei.* Both parties accepted the provisions of the Constitution that entrenched certain vested ethnic political and other interests. Not surprisingly, however, while the Alliance championed its long-held view that "race is a fact of life" and pledged itself to ensuring its continuation in the Fijian body politic, the Coalition was committed to the philosophy of a nonethnic state in which race by itself played a negligible role. It pressed for a common, unifying national name and identity to forge a genuine multiracial nation out of its component ethnic parts. The Alliance, on the other hand, rejected

the notion of a common designation for all Fiji citizens, arguing that it would pose a serious threat to specific *taukei* rights, particularly land. The Alliance similarly rejected out of hand the Coalition's proposal to reform the Native Lands Trust Board (NLTB) to make it more efficient and responsive to both landowners' needs and tenants' concerns. As Bavadra noted in July 1986, "My concern is that the NLTB has become too much the tool of certain vested interests in this country and that all too often steps taken by the NLTB are not in the best interests of the majority of the landowners themselves."[37] To improve the situation, the Coalition proposed to establish a National Lands and Resources Council, composed of tenants' and landowners' representatives, that would oversee the NLTB and work to provide a fair return to the owners as well as ensure greater security of tenure to the tenant community. But the Coalition made it clear that it would not "attempt to change the existing land laws without the full consultation and approval of the Great Council of Chiefs."[38] The Alliance opposed any reform to the NLTB whatsoever,[39] and Mara called the FLP's thinking on the subject extremely dangerous: "Fijians should be wary of it because it could lead to the slipping away of native land."[40] Precisely how that was possible when Fijian land rights are deeply entrenched in the Constitution, the Alliance party left unexplained, but the effect of the Alliance's strong public opposition was to plant fears in *taukei* minds about the possible loss of their cherished rights under a Bavadra government.

On Fijian leadership and politics, the Alliance position was markedly at variance with the Coalition's. The Alliance preached the need to maintain Fijian *ethnic* unity under *chiefly* rule. "The chiefs represent the people, the land, and the custom. Without a chief there is no Fijian society," said Senator Inoke Tabua, a close Mara associate.[41] But in recent years, both the role of the chiefs as well as the formerly cohesive nature of traditional Fijian society were being threatened by modern influences in a multiracial context (education, urbanization, mass media). To stem the tide, and to reinforce chiefly rule, the Mara administration attempted to reintroduce selected aspects of the old Fijian Administration that had been abolished in 1967 in response to pressures for change in the 1960s. A specially commissioned report, prepared by the Pacific Islands Development Program of the Honolulu-based East-West Center under the leadership of ex-Fiji colonial official Rodney Cole, provided the blueprint for reforms in the system.[42] Among its specific recommendations were the retention of many hitherto discarded customary laws, official recognition of village leaders, and so forth. These recommendations, formally implemented in March 1987, would,

so the Mara administration hoped, buttress chiefly rule and protect the traditional structure of Fijian society by insulating it from the corrosive influences in the larger society. Withdrawal into the shell of communal isolation rather than the initiation of a national dialogue was the Alliance's response to a host of serious social and economic problems facing the *taukei.* This approach received much support in many rural areas and in the islands where the *taukei* were practicing subsistence agriculture and had minimal contact with other ethnic groups; but it had little relevance and meaning in urban areas where individual struggle for existence took precedence over communal solidarity.

The Coalition's markedly different attitude on Fijian leadership drew a clear line between modern political and traditional roles for Fijian chiefs. The Coalition promised to educate the *taukei* on their constitutional rights as opposed to their traditional and customary obligations. As Bavadra said, "The FLP will continue to educate and inform the indigenous Fijian people so that they can grasp the difference between what can properly be deemed to be indigenous Fijian obligations demanded by tradition and his *[sic]* fundamental rights guaranteed in the Fiji constitution[. S]o long as the Fiji constitution specifically guarantees individual political freedoms and associations, no individual irrespective of his color, creed or sex is obligated to be subservient to a master, whether it be a chief or a political party, other than what his conscience dictates."[43]

Neither was the FLP supportive of further insulation of Fijian society from the mainstream of Fiji society, as the Alliance promised to do. Bavadra told a meeting in Suva, "By restricting the Fijian people to their communal lifestyle in the face of a rapidly developing cash economy, the average Fijian has become more and more economically backward. This is particularly invidious when the leaders themselves have amassed huge personal wealth by making use of their traditional and political powers."[44] Needless to say, this attitude presented a direct and unprecedented threat to the chiefs, such as Ratu Mara, who had acquired considerable wealth and influence by juxtaposing their modern political and traditional roles. They naturally reacted with unremarkable indignation, and predicted a dire future for the *taukei* under a Coalition government.

Foreign Policy

Foreign policy was not a significant campaign issue in Fiji but received considerable attention externally. A large part of the reason for outside

concern was the widely, if inaccurately, held view that the Coalition consisted of leftist radicals bent on wrecking Fiji's traditionally pro-Western policies. In fact, the Coalition's foreign policies were almost identical to those of the NFP-WUF coalition's 1982 platform. In 1982, the NFP-WUF had promised to "maintain an active policy of non-alignment"; to "keep the Pacific region free of big power rivalries, and in co-operation with countries in the region, oppose all forms of nuclear testing or nuclear waste disposal in the Pacific"; and to "support, by all peaceful means, the struggle of peoples of remaining colonies in the Pacific for independence and self government."[45] The Coalition promised to pursue these same policies, with one curious exception. Whereas the 1982 coalition had sought to "establish and strengthen Fiji's relationship with all nations without prejudice to their political ideologies," the 1987 Coalition said it would not allow the Soviet Union to open an embassy in Fiji. The 1982 coalition, it appears, was even more left-leaning than its 1987 counterpart, though of course, its views had not received as much scrutiny or publicity.

For its part, the Alliance, too, committed itself to a nonaligned policy for Fiji, a nuclear-free Pacific, and independence for New Caledonia. But it added, significantly, that it would pursue its policies "bearing in mind that it [Fiji] is a small nation and needs friends for its security."[46] One friend that the Mara administration courted assiduously, and with good result, was the United States, which had begun to view Fiji as the key player in regional politics. Fiji's strategic importance to the U.S. was enhanced by New Zealand's firm antinuclear stance and the consequent problems with the ANZUS alliance. In the final analysis, however, as on many other issues, the difference between the Coalition and the Alliance on important matters of foreign policy was more one of degree than of substance. Once in government, the Coalition was intent on pursuing a prudent and moderate foreign policy course, seeing as its most important challenge the need to consolidate its power within Fiji first.[47]

As the campaign ended, the two parties painted contrasting visions of Fiji under their respective rules. Dr. Bavadra's Fiji would be a progressive, nonethnic state, committed to social justice and economic equality for all. The Alliance, on the other hand, promised to keep Fiji on the accustomed path of communal politics under Fijian chiefly leadership, firmly ensconced within a capitalist framework; without the Alliance, the electorate was told, Fiji had no democratic future. In his last election message to the nation Mara said, "I firmly believe that these elec-

tions will be crucial to the future of our homeland. Let there be no doubt in your mind: Fiji is not so much at a turning point, as it is at the crossroads. If we take the wrong direction, we will finish up in blind alleys, from which there is no return and no way out."[48]

Voting

Voting in Fiji is a complex affair determined by a complicated electoral system. The compromise constitution adopted at independence in 1970 provides that election to the House of Representatives be based on the principles of ethnicity.[49] Accordingly, each major ethnic group has an allotted number of seats in a fifty-two-seat parliament: Fijians and Indians each with twelve communal seats and the General Electors three. The candidates as well as voters for these seats have to be members of their respective ethnic categories. The remaining twenty-five seats are designated national seats with ethnic reservations: ten each for Fijians and Indians and five for the General Electors. The candidates must be ethnically Fijian or Indian or General, but the electorate is multiracial. It is a contrived formula that attempts to maintain a balance between communal and national interests.

Given the communal electoral system, it is not surprising that voting follows an ethnic pattern. As Table 2 shows, Fijians have always voted overwhelmingly for the Fijian-dominated Alliance and the Indians have rallied behind the NFP. The General Electors have been consistent in their support for the Alliance, 90 percent in 1982 and 85 percent in 1987. Political success in Fiji is thus contingent upon maintaining solidarity in one's own ethnic community while actively promoting disunity among the opposition's. The Alliance has played the game with much skill, preserving Fijian unity while capitalizing on dormant factionalism and disunity in the Indian community. The NFP, as the figures show, has not encountered much success in splitting the Fijian communal vote in its favor.

The 1987 election confirmed the historic trend of predominantly ethnic patterns of voting, but the figures also belie the emergence of some new trends. Although Indian support for the Alliance remained constant around 15 percent, it is important to note that support was not as broadly based as it had been in the past. In recent years, the Indian business class and a significant section of the Muslim community constituted the base of the Indian Alliance; the party's support among the South Indian community, or among the reformist Arya Samaj religious group, important in the past, declined significantly in 1987. And while true that the majority of Fijians supported the Alliance, it is also signifi-

TABLE 2. **Voting Patterns in Fiji, 1972-1987**

Party	1972	Apr. 1977	Sept. 1977	1982	1987
Fijian Communal Vote					
% Alliance	83.1	64.7	80.5	83.7	76.6
% NFP (Labour Coalition)	2.4	- -	0.1	0.8	9.6
% FNP	- -	24.4	11.6	7.7	5.4
% WUF	- -	- -	- -	7.0	3.4
Total no. of votes cast	76,462	82,651	94,038	121,366	120,701
Indian Communal Vote					
% Alliance	24.1	15.6	14.4	15.3	15.1
% NFP (Labour Coalition)	74.3	73.2	84.9	84.1	82.9
Total no. of votes cast	84,753	103,644	103,537	110,830	122,906

Sources: Figures for previous elections derived from my own research (see my "Politics since Independence, 1970-1982," in *Politics in Fiji: Studies in Contemporary History*, ed. Brij V. Lal [Laie, Hawaii: Institute for Polynesian Studies, 1986], 90); figures for 1987 obtained from the Office of the Supervisor of Elections in Fiji.

Note: I have not included percentages for independents and minor parties.

cant that 21.8 percent voted for other parties and independents, thus indicating that among many Fijians, the Alliance was not regarded as the sole representative voice of the Fijian community. On the other hand, the Coalition was able to make significant inroads into the Fijian constituency, enough to cause the Alliance's defeat in marginal seats.

An important feature of the 1987 election was a record-low voter turnout, the lowest since independence. Indian turnout declined from 85 percent in 1982 to 69 percent in 1987, while in the same period the Fijian turnout dropped from 85 percent to 70 percent.[50] The decline affected the outcome in the marginal constituencies. The reasons for the drop are not clear, though several are plausible. One, undoubtedly, was the confusion caused by the omissions of names from the hastily prepared and improperly checked electoral rolls, or inadvertent transfer of voters names from one polling station to another, thereby causing unsuspecting voters to miss the deadline for casting their votes at a specified time and place. Another reason could have been the widespread feeling of the election's being a foregone conclusion in the Alliance's favor, thus causing some supporters to stay away. Among some Fijians, especially in urban areas, absence from the polling booth was a protest against the Alliance. Unable to bring themselves to tick against the Alliance wheel, they refrained from voting altogether.

The Alliance suffered from a decline in Fijian voter turnout in all

except four of its twelve communal constituencies, the largest decline being in areas where it was already particularly vulnerable. In Lomaiviti/Muanikau the Fijian turnout dropped by 23 percent, in Rewa/Serua/Namosi by 17 percent, in Kadavu/Tamavua by 16 percent, and in Ra/Samabula by 13.4 percent. Tamavua, Samabula, and Muanikau all are a part of the greater Suva area and within the Suva Fijian national constituency where a voter turnout drop and a swing to the Coalition caused the Alliance's defeat. This was a constituency that the Alliance had always won with the slightest of margins and, in the 1987 elections, it was widely viewed as the seat most likely to tip the balance of the election. It had a total of 41,179 voters (16,962 Fijians; 20,778 Indians; and 3,439 General Electors). The Alliance's candidates were Ratu David Toganivalu, the deputy prime minister, and Mrs. Irene Jai Narayan. Pitted against these two seasoned politicians were the Coalition newcomers, Dr. Tupeni Baba, a Fijian academic at the University of the South Pacific, and Navin Maharaj, former Suva (and Alliance) mayor and businessman. The Alliance counted on the experience and popularity of its candidates to carry the constituency. But that was not to be. Maharaj, a veteran of municipal politics, mounted an effective, door-to-door campaign, and Baba developed with the campaign to become an articulate and accomplished spokesman for his party, especially with the city's younger voters, both Indian and Fijian. Business community support for Toganivalu was neutralized among the powerful Gujerati community by Harilal Patel, who contested the Suva Indian communal seat. And Mrs. Narayan, instead of being an asset, became a liability. Her previous record of solid opposition to the Alliance was used against her; many of her former supporters refused to overlook her defection from the NFP to the Alliance; and the Indian Alliance, feeling discarded and discredited, refused to campaign for the party. Making matters worse for themselves, leading Alliance party functionaries, including Mara, devoted an inordinate amount of time in the west hoping, at long last, to win an Indian communal seat. A low voter turnout--60 percent in the Suva national constituency--hurt the Alliance, and was a major factor in its defeat.

Another marginal seat was the Southeastern national (Naitasiri/Nasinu area), which the Alliance also lost to the Coalition. Here, there were 22,228 Fijian registered-voters, 19,974 Indians, and 761 General Electors. Several factors helped to defeat the Alliance. One was the low voter turnout: 67 percent compared to 83 percent in 1982. But perhaps more important was the effect of the Fijian Nationalist Party, which collected 8.5 percent of the Fijian communal votes that otherwise, it

can reasonably be supposed, would have gone to the Alliance. The Coalition candidate, Joeli Kalou, a teacher and a trade unionist, was an accomplished campaigner while his Alliance rival, Ratu George Tu'uakitau Cokanauto, youngest son of the late Ratu Sir Edward Cakobau, remained uncomfortable on the hustings, relying more on traditional political connections than on active campaigning. For its Indian candidate, the Coalition astutely chose a Muslim, Fida Hussein, in an area of large Muslim population. His presence on the ticket helped to blunt the effect of the Alliance's assiduous courting of the Muslim voter. Once again, then, the Alliance downfall in this constituency, as elsewhere, was caused both by astute Coalition strategy as well as by the Alliance's own complacency and ineffectiveness.

An election campaign that began with a whimper ended with an unexpected bang, in the process surprising both the victors as well as the vanquished. But while the new government set about its work, its opponents--defeated after almost two decades of untrammeled rule--organized to oppose and eventually overthrow it, climaxing with a military-led and Alliance-condoned coup of May 14.[51]

At his first news conference after being sworn into office on April 12, Dr. Bavadra had briefly reflected on the momentous events of the previous week. He viewed the "the peaceful and honorable change of government" as the reaffirmation of the "deep democratic roots of our society and the profound unity of our people." He saw in his triumph the dawn of a new era, full of new potentials and opportunities. "Together," he said, "let us write a new chapter, which, God willing, will be one which we and our children will be proud of."[52] Unfortunately for him and his supporters, neither the gods nor his opponents were willing or prepared for change.

NOTES

Many people have contributed to the completion of this brief study of the Fiji elections. I am grateful to Shiu Singh and Va Pickering of the Fiji Broadcasting Commission and to many other people in Fiji who shared their thoughts and perceptions. I should add that this article was completed a few months after the general election of 1987. Since then, as we know, many momentous changes have taken place on Fiji's political scene. I have analyzed them in my book, *Power and Prejudice: The Making of the Fiji Crisis* (Wellington: New Zealand Institute for International Affairs, currently in press). This article is offered as a contemporary on-the-scene account of an important event overtaken by dramatic changes. I have resisted the temptation to revise it in the light of subsequent developments in Fiji.

1. Sir Leonard Usher, *Mainly About Fiji: A Collection of Writings, Broadcasts, and Speeches* (Suva: Fiji Times, 1987), 146. This book was published a week after the elections.

2. In addition to the four political parties discussed here, there were four others that vanished either on the eve of or during the campaign: Social Democratic party (opposed to the chiefly system), Christian Democratic party (make Fiji a Christian state), Fijian Democratic party (led by a former dropped Alliance backbencher), and the National Labour party (disenchanted with the Fiji Labour party). None of them made any impression on the electorate.

3. For a brief survey of postindependence politics, see my "Fiji: Politics since Independence, 1970-1982," in *Politics in Fiji: Studies in Contemporary History,* ed. Brij V. Lal (Laie, Hawaii: Institute for Polynesian Studies, 1986), ch. 4.

4. I write in the present tense here to describe the situation as it existed before May 14. The coup has destroyed multiracial party politics in Fiji.

5. *Fiji Times,* 8 Nov. 1986. Three other former NFP officials were given Alliance seats, underlining the diminishing ideological differences between the two old rivals.

6. The Tripartite Forum--composed of the Fiji Trade Union Congress, Fiji Employers Consultative Association, and the government--was formed in 1976 to reach "common understanding [on issues] which affect national interest such as industrial relations, job creation, greater flow of investment and general social and economic development of the country."

7. *Fiji Times,* 24 Sept. 1985; the 1985/1986 issues of the *Fiji Teachers Journal.*

8. See my "Postscript: The Emergence of the Fiji Labour Party," in *Politics in Fiji,* 148-155, for the launching manifesto of the party.

9. *Fiji Times,* 20 July 1986.

10. Lal, "Postcript," 149.

11. This certainly was the major theme in Jai Ram Reddy's speeches throughout the campaign, which helped to some extent to diffuse and eventually destroy any support for the Koya faction of the NFP.

12. See "National Federation Party-Western United Front Coalition Manifesto," typescript (4 pages).

13. Origins of the Western United Front are discussed at length in my article, "The Fiji General Election of 1982: The Tidal Wave That Never Came," *Journal of Pacific History* 18, no. 2 (April 1983): 139-141. The danger of the WUF's being 'coopted by a wing of the Fijian Association" is discussed in my "Fiji: Politics since Independence, 1970-1982," 95-101.

14. See my article, "The 1982 General Election and Its Aftermath," *University of the South Pacific Sociological Society Newsletter,* no. 5 (July 1983): 3-17. The report on the investigation by Sir John White is found in *Fiji Parliamentary Paper* 74/83, Government of Fiji, 1983.

15. This is based on my conversation with FNP officials and on the "FNP Radio Broadcast." Typescript of this election eve address is in my possession. For an account of the origins of the FNP, see Ralph R. Premdas, "Constitutional Challenge: The Rise of Fijian Nationalism," *Pacific Perspectives* 9, no. 2 (1980): 30-44.

16. For a study of the 1982 Fiji elections, see my "Fiji General Election of 1982," cited above; for the 1977 elections, see Ahmed Ali, "The Fiji General Elections of 1977," *Journal of Pacific History* 12, nos. 3-4 (1977): 189-201.

17. *Fiji Times,* 28 Nov. 1986.

18. *Fiji Times,* 15 Mar. 1987.

19. Advertisements in the two Fiji dailies; *Alliance Party Election Manifesto 1987,* 2.

20. Reported in the *Fiji Times,* 24 Sept. 1986. Apisai Tora, a senior cabinet minister in the Alliance government, made a similar statement: "It is the considered strategy of the Fiji Labour Party to divide the Fijian people so that their political influence in Fiji is lessened. It is a political party whose real goal is to reduce the Fijian race in their own land" (*Fiji Sun,* 25 Oct. 1986). Following the elections Tora would become one of the chief engineers of the Taukei Movement.

21. Editorial, *Fiji Sun,* 24 Sept. 1986.

22. *Alliance Party Newsletter,* Nov. 1986; see also *Fiji Times,* 11 Mar. 1987.

23. Dr. Timoci Bavadra, "Closing Election Address on Radio Fiji," 4-5.

24. Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara, "Alliance Party Political Broadcast," 4-6. Typescripts of both Bavadra's and Mara's addresses were made available to me by Radio Fiji, which had invited me to chair its election panel discussions.

25. Ibid., 2.

26. Bavadra came from the chiefly Veseisei village, was the traditional head of *i tokatoka* Werecakaca of the chiefly *yavusa* of Sabutoyatoya, Vuda, and was a member of both the Ba Provincial Council as well as the Great Council of Chiefs. His wife, Adi Kuini Teimumu Vuikaba, was from the chiefly family in Naikoro / Navusa and related through her paternal grandmother to Ratu Sir Lala Sukuna.

27. *Fiji Times,* 24 Mar. 1987. Nandan became the minister of health in the Bavadra government.

28. *Fiji Times,* 24 Feb. 1987.

29. *Alliance Party Election Manifesto 1987,* 2. Since the coup of May 14, the Alliance has in fact endorsed changes to the Fiji Constitution to give ethnic Fijians numerical dominance in the Parliament.

30. Mara, "Alliance Party Political Broadcast," 4.

31. Helen Hughes, "Towards Economic Upturn: Identifying the Opportunities," a paper presented to the Annual Congress of the Fiji Institute of Accountants, Sigatoka, Mar. 1987, 1.

32. Bavadra, "Closing Election Address," 14.

33. See Coalition candidate Dr. Tupeni Baba's allegations in the *Fiji Sun,* 30 Mar. 1987.

34. These figures are derived from a report prepared by the Fijian Affairs Board and presented to the Great Council of Chiefs at their 1986 Somosomo meeting.

35. Comments made at the First Annual Convention of the Fiji Labour party at Lautoka, 19 July 1986. I have a copy of the speech.

36. Ibid.

37. Ibid. Similar sentiments about the NLTB were expressed throughout the campaign.

38. Bavadra, 'Closing Election Address," 7.

39. *Alliance Party Election Manifesto 1987,* 7.

40. Ratu Mara spoke these words during the Fijian Association Convention at the Girmit Centre in Lautoka. See *Fiji Times,* 17 Aug. 1986.

41. *Fiji Sun,* 2 Oct. 1985. The same senator predicted violence if Mara was defeated. He later became one of the leading lights of the Taukei Movement.

42. R. V. Cole, S. I. Levine, and A. Matahu, *The Fijian Provincial Administration: A Review* (Honolulu: Pacific Islands Development Program of the East-West Center, 1984). For a discussion of the problems of the Fijian Administration in the 1960s, see I. Q. Lasaqa, *The Fijian People: Before and After Independence* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1984).

43. From Bavadra's address to the First Annual Convention of the Fiji Labour party, 19 July 1986.

44. Bavadra's speech at the Kshattriya Hall, reported in *Fiji Times,* 17 Nov. 1986.

45. *National Federation Party and Western United Front Coalition Manifesto, 1982 General Elections,* 78.

46. *Alliance Party Election Manifesto 1987,* 10.

47. This conclusion is derived from my conversation with leading Coalition officials. Labour Foreign Minister Krishna Datt himself told General Vernon Walters, U.S. ambassador to the United Nations, soon after the election that his government was reexamining its position on nuclear issues.

48. Ratu Mara, "Alliance Party Political Broadcast," 1.

49. For more discussion, see my "Fiji: Politics since Independence," 76-81.

50. For 1982 figures, see my "Fiji General Election of 1982," 152. The 1987 figures were obtained from the Office of the Supervisor of Elections.

51. This is argued at full length in my *Power and Prejudice.*

52. Reported in the *Fiji Times,* 13 Apr. 1987.