

SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM : ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION

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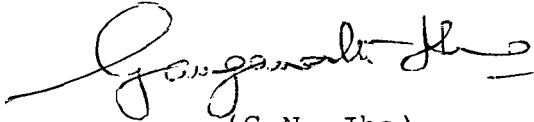
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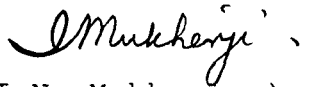
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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled
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be placed before the examiners for consideration of
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Preface

Regional organisations have been a prominent feature of the Post World War II international relations. One of the main reasons behind regional co-operation is the need for political and economic security and the belief that regionalism will lessen the likelihood of neighbourly conflict and maximise national development by extending economic boundaries. In case of the South Pacific practically all the micro-states face severe economic problems. Lack of finances and viable technology, prohibits them from exploiting the marine resources of their Exclusive Economic Zone. Lack of political identity and vulnerability towards growing activities of the nuclear powers in the region are common features. In these circumstances need for a strong regional body is obvious.

Presently South Pacific Forum is the most important regional organisation comprising all the independent countries of the South Pacific Region. This study is aimed at analysing the origin and evolution of the South Pacific Forum. It is divided into five chapters. The first chapter is the introduction of the South Pacific Forum and analyses the role of its various

organs. The second chapter is an analysis of the economic potentials of the region. The third chapter examines the ways and means for fishing and shipping co-operation. The fourth chapter deals with the declaration of Nuclear Weapon Free Zone (NWFZ) in the South Pacific and the attitudes of the great powers towards it. In the fifth chapter, there are some concluding observations. Finally it can be said that like ASEAN the South Pacific Forum too has a gradual evolution and is destined to play a major role in the development and modernization of various island states of the region.

In the completion of this work I received great help from my supervisor Dr. Ganga Nath Jha, who provided me with the basic understanding and a systematic framework. I express my gratitude to him.

I am thankful to Anoop Kumar, Sanjay Jain and others.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

INTRODUCTION

There has been a request for regional co-operation and integration in the South Pacific region in recent past. The first step towards giving an institutional basis to this feeling was the establishment of South Pacific Commission (SPC) in 1947. In 1950 the creation of South Pacific Conference which was an auxiliary body of the SPC and which comprised of membership of South Pacific states only, created a regional identity for the Pacific islanders. Still not satisfied, the island countries wanted further indigenisation of the region and so in 1971 South Pacific Forum came into existence to strengthen their bond of friendship and co-operation. The South Pacific Forum worked for economic development and towards fulfilling the endeavour of 'pacific way of life'.¹ In this study an attempt is made to study the origin, evolution, structure, function... and importance of the South Pacific Forum and its effort to foster regional co-operation and solidarity. It also analyses the problems and potentials of the region as well as the success and failure of the South Pacific Forum.

1. Bhagwan Singh; "The South Pacific: A New Regional Entity", India Quarterly (New India), vol 34, No. 3, July-Sep 1978. pp 365-66.

Situated between Tropic Cancer and Tropic of capricorn, the South Pacific covers 25 million square miles of the southern part of the Pacific ocean. Of this only 3% is landed territory, that is around 1000 inhabited islands.² There are presently 13 independent countries in the region namely Australia, Newzealand, Papua New Guinea, Solomon islands, Cook Islands, Fiji, Kirbati, (Gilbert Islands), Vanuatu (New Herbrides), Tonga, Tuvalu, (Ellice Islands), Nauru, Nive and Western Samoa. France is now the only colonial power yet to transfer sovereignty to New Caledonia and other dependencies. On the other hand, the Trust Territories of Micronesia is the only administrative unit yet to get self-government. Such a plethora of insular microstates did not spring up un-expectedly or unannounced overnight. They were created by a process which began almost three decades ago and which continues even today. The decolonization of the region started in 1962 with the independence of Western Samoa from Newzealand. After that several islands became independent, i.e., Nauru in 1968, Tonga in 1970, Fiji in 1970, Paupa New Guinea in 1975, Kiribati in 1979, the Solomon Islands in 1978, Tuvalu in 1978 and Vanuatu in 1980.

2. Ganganath Jha, "Politics and Society in the South Pacific", Foreign Affiars Report vol. 36, No. 11 and 12, Nov-Dec 1987, pp 240.

The words of Karl Marx written more than hundred years ago about the importance of Pacific region are turning out to be prophetic. He stated that the Pacific would be the ocean of future around which human life would concentrate, as was the case with the Mediterranean in ancient times and the Atlantic during Industrial Revolution. In the Southern Pacific Region the main interest revolves round the following

- Security of transport lanes;
- Sea bed mining and accessibility to Antarctic resources; and
- Fisheries Resources.³

Culturally South Pacific is diverse, containing three distinct cultural groupings - Melanesia, Polynesia and Micronesia. The major distinguishing characteristics of these groups are the nature of their leadership and the structure of their societies.⁴

I) Melanesians are spread into the Southwest Pacific, mainly in Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, New Caledonea, Fiji and Vanuvatu. They do not possess

3. K.P. Mishra, "South Pacific: Emerging Trends, World Focus, vol. 10, No.2, Feb 1989 pp 7-9.

4. David W. Hegarty, "Small State Security in the South Pacific", Security of Small States, vol. 13, No. 6-7, pp 159, Dec 86/Jan 1987.

any written literature but have strong oral traditions⁵
 They are adherents of village based communal values
 and have fostered a unique sense of fraternity and
 solidarity

- II) The second cultural group is polynesians spread into
 Hawaii, Cook Islands, Tahiti, both parts of Samoa,
 Tonga, Society Islands, Marques Islands etc. Their
 society is hirarchichaly structured and more conserva-
 tive. But they are by nature more cheerful, courageous
 gentle and dignified. They possess a keen artistic
 sense and a high poetical imagination.⁶
- III) The third important cultural component are
 Micronesians. Their societies are more diverse. con-
 taining elements of egalitarianism.

There is also considerable diversity in the
 political system adopted by the new states, reflecting
 their colonial heritage but also accomodating local power
 structure and traditions. In the main the independent
 states have adopted Westminster type Parliamentary

5. The Guardian Weekly (Manchester) 10th Feb 1985.

6. Ian Edmund Osmanczkw, Encyclopaedia of the United
 Nations and International Agreements (Philadelphia,
 1985).

liberal democratic form of government, and the respect for constitutionalism remains high.⁷

In spite of these minimal diversities, the Island states of the South Pacific possess certain common characteristics which are their sources of strength as well as weakness. Except Australia, the region is composed entirely of small states. This smallness is their chief unifying factor and at the same time it is their main source of problems. It robs them of ability to change to new circumstances. Insularity is a common factor: The islands might be easily cut off and isolated in times of disasters; transportation is difficult. But viewed from the strategic perspective it is also true that the 'domino effect' tends to be absent or of lower magnitude where land borders are absent. The islands are remote from the world centers of trade and production. Transportation and shipping costs are high. This aggravates their economic problems, yet it is equally true that the remoteness has spared them in large measures of the rivalries of the great powers⁸

These islands also share certain characteristics

7. David, W. Hegarty, n. 4, p 160.

8. Robert. C. Kiste and Richard A. Herr, "The Potential for Soviet Penetration in the South Pacific Islands" An ssesment," Study Prepared for the State Department of the U.S., Dec 1984, pp. 3-5.

common to third world today. All of them are heavily dependent on foreign aid for their economic development and most have only one or few crops and commodities to export. The terms of trade continue to move against these essentially agricultural countries and external indebtedness and reliance on concessionary loan is increasing. Food imports, a significant indicator of underdevelopment, is in some cases as high as 20% of the total value of imports.⁹ But the islands are rich in natural resources. They contain the richest deposits of minerals.¹⁰ The Cook Islands and Vanuatu have great manganese resources; New Caledonia has large nickel and chromium deposits; Fiji has gold mines.¹¹ Apart from these, the availability of fish is in abundance, most important of which is Tuna fish. All Pacific countries are affected by the Tuna industry. But the lack of finances and technological knowhow has deprived these states from making the full use of these resources. Not only this, the Pacific Island countries also suffer from the shortage of defence capabilities which is generally

9. David W. Hegarty, no. 4, p. 160.

10. The Far East and Australia Yearbook, 1988. pp 710.

11. G.N. Jha, "Politics and Society in the South Pacific", Foreign Affairs Report, Vol 36, No 11&12, Nov-Dec, 87, pp 224.

very low to non-existent. Only few states are capable of facing domestic security problems. Amena Mohsin has rightly pointed out that as inmost other states of the third world, a combination of small size, limited ability to defend territory, open and new political systems, plus a debilitating economic fragility produce a situation of inherent weakness and vulnerability.¹²

✓Coming to South Pacific geopolitics, the region is significant from practically all the points. However, before the independence of South Pacific states, the region was economically, politically, diplomatically and militarily, relevant only to some western colonial powers, but now the circumstances have changed considerably. The major powers, in the region and outside, for various reasons, have begun to take a new interest in the region. The security and shipping lanes that transit it are considered vital for the US and most of the industrialized western powers. Any threat to their trade may have disturbing effect on their economic development. However, of late, the United States finds that

12. Amena Mohsin, "Regionalism and Security in the South Pacific", Security of Small States, pp. 141 - 155.

its warships are not welcome in New Zealand ports unless they are accompanied by a declaration that they are not nuclear armed. France is criticized because of her continuous use of nuclear testing facilities at Mururoa Atoll and also because of the continuing unrest in the New Caledonia, as pro-liberation natives 'Kanak' attempt to gain independence.¹³ Japan and Britain were the two important powers in the matters pertaining to South Pacific in the past, but today their involvement is limited. China's entry in the region is new and also of Soviet Union whose fishing deal with Kiribati in 1985 had caused much concern both within and outside the region despite its purely economic character. The fact that presently Soviet Union does not have a viable presence in the region does not however rule out the possibility of such a presence in the future. Such a scenario might emerge due to the willingness of an island state itself. Given the extent of their aid dependency and the personalized nature of foreign policies in these societies, one cannot rule out such a possibility.¹⁴

Thus there is a situation of growing tension and

13. Rolfe James, "Strategic Changes in South West Pacific," Rusi Ji, Vol B1, No 4, Dec 1986, pp 41-50.

14. Richard A. Herr, "South Pacific Security: Perspective from Liliput to Brobdingnag" Pacific Affairs.

conflict (inbuilt and otherwise). So the newly independent island states of South Pacific felt that they needed an organisation to voice their collective political views, to promote their economic well being, to pacify their internal dissensions and to promote regional co-operation. This led to the creation of the South Pacific Forum (SPF) in 1971. It is the major political grouping in the region. The Forum first met in Wellington in August 1971. The countries represented at the first Forum were the Cook Islands, Fiji, Nauru, Tonga, Western Samoa, Australia and New Zealand. These have since been joined by Nive, Papua New Guinea, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu, the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and Republic of the Marshall Islands, etc. The Forum has operated since its inception with no written constitution or international agreement governing its activities and no formal rules relating to its purpose, membership or conduct of meeting. Decisions have always been reached through consensus.¹⁵ They take decisions on matters of regional trade, shipping civil aviation, telecommunications, education, law of the sea, fishing, disaster relief, nuclear testing and

15. "The South Pacific Forum", Information Bulletin No.26, July 1989, Ministry of External Relations and Trade, New Zealand.

decolonization.

Budget: The governments of Australia and New Zealand each contribute one third of the annual budget of the Forum and the remaining is equally shared by other member governments.¹⁶

The Forum has also established agencies to coordinate and promote its programmes and policies. The associated and affiliated organisations are:

I. SOUTH PACIFIC BUREAU FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION (SPEC)

The Bureau was setup in 1973 at the third meeting of the South Pacific Forum as a result of proposals for establishing a 'Trade Bureau' which were put forward at the second meeting. It meets twice a year. In 1975 the Bureau became the official secretariat of the South Pacific Forum. In 1974 the Bureau absorbed the functions of the Pacific Islands Producers' Association (PIPA).¹⁷

Functions:¹⁸

- to identify opportunities for the modification of trade patterns, bearing in mind the objectives of regional trade expansion.
- to investigate ways in which industrial and other development could be rationalised using the concept of regional enterprise;

16. Far East and Australia Yearbook, 1983-84. pp 141.

17. New Zealand Official Yearbook, 1986-87. pp 78-79.

18. South Pacific Information Bulletin, n. 15

- to look into the scope of free trade among the island member countries;
- to help co-ordinate action on regional transport.

The SPEC has a Committee, comprising of representatives and senior officials from all member countries, and a Secretariat, headed by a director with an executive staff of 11.¹⁹ The overall purpose of SPEC, as can be seen, is to facilitate continuing co-operation and consultation among members on trade, economic development, transport, tourism and other related matters.²⁰

II. SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM FISHERIES AGENCY: .

It was established in 1978 by South Pacific Forum to facilitate, promote and co-ordinate the co-operation and mutual assistance among coastal states in the region in matters of fisheries and on the subject of an Exclusive Economic Zone within 200 mile of the coastline of member states.²¹

III. ASSOCIATION FOR SOUTH PACIFIC AIRLINES:

It was established in 1979 at a meeting of airlines of the South Pacific convened by SPEC to promote the

19. New Zealand Official Yearbook , 1983-84.

20. Current International Treaties, ed T.B. Miller, Australian National Univ. Canberra.

21. Far East and Australia Yearbook, 1988, p. 141.

co-operation among the member airlines.²²

IV. PACIFIC FORUM LINE:

It came into existence in 1977 as a joint venture by the South Pacific Countries, to promote shipping services to meet the special requirements of the region.²³

V. SOUTH PACIFIC TRADE COMMISSION: .

It was opened in 1979 to identify and develop markets in Australia for exports from the Pacific Islands. It was founded by Australian Government.²⁴

Regarding different issues prominent in the South Pacific Region, the South Pacific Forum in its different meetings has passed certain resolutions and has taken firm stand on these issues. An issue wise analysis of the activities South Pacific Forum has been given below.

NEW CALEDONIA:-

New Caledonia which comprises an area of 7300 sq. miles was discovered by Captain Cook in 1774 and was occupied by France in 1853. However it suffered from neglect. During the 1960's and 70's French Government deliberately pursued a policy of migrants colonisation.

22. Ibid.

23. Ibid.

24. Ibid.

It had a direct consequence on demographic composition of New Caledonia, as the indigenous Melanesian known as Kanaks have been reduced to minority in their own country. Out of the whole population Kanaks account for 43% while the remaining 57% is composed of foreign settlers. Among them the French settlers known as Caldoches account for 37% while remaining 20% are made Asian migrants of all races. The latter two groups which wish to remain part of the French republic constitute a majority of the population. Gino Naldi says ", The fact that jointly the two non-Kanki groups are capable of rejecting the option of independence in a referendum has seemed to aggravate the crisis.²⁵ Moreover French have remained most reluctant colonial power to cope up with growing decolonization demand. On the other hand, the struggle to gain independence has been accelerated by the 'Front de Liberation Nationale Kanak et Socialistes' (FLNKS), at first under the leadership of late Mr. M. Jean Marie Tjipaeu and presently under Francois Burck.²⁶ As a result since the beginning of the 1980s the relative calm in the territory has given way to a fierce freedom struggle by Kanaks.

25. Gino J. Naldi, "Self determination in the South Pacific: The Case of New Caledonia," World Today, vol. 41, no. 8-9, Aug/Sep 1985, pp.

26. G.N. Jha, n. 2 , p. 246.

South Pacific Forum has expressed its firm support for an early and peaceful transition to an independent New Caledonia in accordance with the innate and active rights and interests of all the indigenous people and in a manner which guarantees the rights and interests of all the inhabitants of this multiracial society.²⁷ This issue was first on the agenda of the 1981 Forum and it sent a delegation under Fijian Prime Minister, Ratu Mara to Paris for discussions with French President Satisfied with the result in 1983 the Forum called for precise time-table for independence of New Caledonia and asked the French Government to consider inviting a Forum mission to New Caledonia to observe developments and assess progress on decolonization but the French Government did not give any direct response. However in the same year the Forum for the first time considered the desirability of reinscription of New Caledonia on the UN list of non-self governing countries. It was eventually done in Dec 1986. New Caledonia's inclusion on this list means, UN regularly reviews the territory's progress towards self-government and independence. This was a major development and in subsequent meetings this

27. "South Pacific Forum : Comminique," Australian Foreign Affairs Report, vol. 36, no. 11 and 12, Nov/Dec 1987, pp. 245

issue continued to dominate the scene. Later in 1988 the Forum members apart from other things decided to urge all parties involved in the independence movement, in the interest of all the people of the country, to continue their dialogue and refrain from violence. It also expressed its willingness to assist in the training process that the French Government has announced for the Kanaks in a leadup to the act of self-determination.^{28/8}

FIJI:-

Fiji, one of the most prosperous countries situated in the middle of the South Pacific, is composed of more than 322 islands of which only 106 are inhabited. These islands have a multiracial population of 618,979, out of which 300,762 people are of Indian origin.²⁹ The Indian settlers were taken there as indentured labour to work on the sugar plantations, by the British. These Indians played an equally important role in the development of the country. They have been accepted to be dominated by the native Malenesians in the political sphere, but the growing politicization has compelled them to take part in national politics as well.³⁰

29. G.N. Jha, n.2, p. 242.

30. Ramesh Thakur, "India and Over Seas Indians: The Case of Fiji", Asian Survey (Berkeley C.A.), vol. 25, no. 3, March 1985, pp. 356-70.

After the April 1987 elections, the National Federation Party under the leadership of Dr. Timoci Bavadra, was voted to power who was a supporter of interests of native Indians. The recent military coup d'etat of Lt. Col. Sitiveni Rabuka on 14th May 1987 is an exercise to assert Malanesian political supremacy in Fiji.³¹

In the 18th South Pacific Forum meeting which was held in Apia, Western Samoa, 29-30 May 1987, the Forum expressed grave concern over the military coup which had taken place in Fiji and it was agreed to convey to the Governer-General of Fiji, the Forum's willingness to help and to request him to indicate to the Forum the forms of assistance he considered most appropriate.

- should the Governer General agree the Forum would send a mission to Fiji, which would be led by the Prime Minister of Australia and hold discussions with all parties in Fiji with a view of attempting to facilitate processes leading to a resolution of current problems.
- should the Governer-General of Fiji respond with a request for assistance additional to that contingently provided by the Forum or different

31. G.N. Jha, n.2, p 242.

therefrom, the Chairman shall have the responsibility to communicate that request to Heads of Government and the director will co-ordinate the response.³²

THE NUCLEAR ISSUE:

Not long after the dawn of the nuclear age the South Pacific has been turned into one of the most nuclearized regions in the world by the way of testing and dumping of nuclear wastes and transit of nuclear weapons and missiles. There is a widespread recognition of the fact that the great power rivalry would be disastrous for the region. In part the concern and opposition is generated by the recently concluded US nuclear tests at Bikini and Envetak atolls and the continued French nuclear testing on Mururoa atoll. Apart from testing other form of nuclear activities by the nuclear powers also threaten South Pacific security.³³ There are therefore three major nuclear issues on the agenda in the South Pacific at the movement

- I. Newzealand's ban on visits by nuclear powered or armed warships into her territorial limits.

32. "South Pacific: Information Bulletin, n. 15. 6-8.

33. "South Pacific are not so Nuclear Free Zone," Peace Studies, Melbourne, Oct. 1985, pp 6-8.

II. French Nuclear testing at Mururoa atoll

III. The third issue relates to the declaration of a Nuclear Weapon Free Zone.³⁴

The Forum first gave formal consideration to a nuclear weapon free zone in the South Pacific in 1975 at its fifth meeting, a further proposal was examined in 1983, on 6th Aug. 1985 it adopted the 'South Pacific Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty' in Rarotonga (also known as the treaty of Rarotonga). The declaration of the SPNWFZ affirms the South Pacific Forum's continued stand against nuclear testing and the dumping of radioactive waste in the sea within the region. It is a measure of support for the nuclear non-proliferation regime.³⁵ As Fran Wilde, Associate Minister of foreign affairs describes "The Treaty of Rarotonga represents in my view a major regional security commitment and arms control initiative for the South Pacific"³⁶

34. Rolfe James, "Strategic Changes in the South West Pacific," Rusi Ji, vol. B(1), no. 4, Dec 1986, pp. 41-50.

35. South Pacific Information Bulletin, n.15.

36. Speech by Hon. Fran Wilde, Associate Minister for foreign affairs, Newzealand at the 'Disarming the Pacific Seminar, at Victoria Univ. Wellington on 12 Feb, 1988.

In addition to the treaty there are 3 protocols. The USSR and China signed the protocols and the U.S. and U.K. have given an assurance that they are not currently acting inconsistently with the terms of the treaty.³⁷

FISHING AGREEMENT CONTROVERSIES AND OTHER RELATED ISSUES:-

The living marine resources of the South Pacific are a real opportunity for the developing island states of the region to gain some measure of economic independence. Fishing has played a major role in the culture and traditions of these states. The known off shore resources of the South Pacific are dominated by highly migratory species, predominantly Tuna.³⁸ Due to this most of the extra-regional powers and super powers appear to be motivated to the region. During the past two and half years Soviet overtures have received a much warmer reception. First Kiribati and then Vanuatu signed fisheries agreement with the Soviet Union.³⁹ This sparked off a great controversy in the region.

37. Rolfe James, n.34, pp.41-50

38. Anthony Bergin, "Fisheries and the South Pacific", Asia Pacific Community, no. 22, Fall 1983, pp. 21.

39. Paul. F. Gardner, "Tuna Poaching and Nuclear Testing in the South Pacific", Orbis, vol. 32, no. 2, Spring 1988, pp. 249.

In fact the background of this situation was created by US's illegal fishing and poaching in the region.

Regional co-operation in the South Pacific Fisheries has its origin in the South Pacific Forum Meeting of July 1976 in Nauru.⁴⁰ In the next meeting it

- declared its intention to establish 200 mile Exclusive Economic Zone,
- decided to harmonize fisheries policies in the region and
- decided to establish South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency.⁴¹

Finally in 1979 in the meeting of SPF at Honiara the South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) was successfully negotiated. Its membership was restricted to the Forum members. It reflects member's common interest in drawing maximum benefit from their marine resources and also its conservation and utilization.

40. W.M. Sutherland, "South Pacific Forum Fisheries, Agency", Ocean Development and International Law, vol. 18, no. 6, 1987. pp. 614.

41. R.E. Kearney, "The Law of the Sea and Regional Fishing Policies", Ocean Development and International Law, no. 5, 1978, pp. 250.

REGIONALISM AND SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM

Regionalism has played a major role in the affair of the South Pacific. It has been adopted as a priority in the foreign policy of the South Pacific States.⁴² The establishment of South Pacific Forum led to a collective action on a range of political and economic issues. In its first four years Forum's attention centered on the promotion of regional trade, the setting up of a regional shipping line and airlines, the the formation of common approach towards French Nuclear testing in the region, association with the European Economic Community and the Law of the sea.⁴³ Along with this, to enhance the political and economic self-determination of the island states, the Forum took the task of 'pooling of resources' and multilateral diplomacy' at the global level. This gives a better political environment to the region. Through the annual meetings of the South Pacific Forum the island states are able to share their views on many political and sensitive issues. The small states are also saved from the maintenance of a fulfilled diplomatic mission to each of the countries. The extra-regional powers also find their

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42. Amena Mahin, n.12.

43. Sandra Tarte, "Regionalism and Globalism in the South Pacific." Development and Change, vol. 20, no. 2, April 1989, pp. 185.

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diplomatic relations with these small states more manageable through South Pacific Forum.

The growth of a 'Pan - Pacific Ideology or the "Pacific way movement" also received an impetus through South Pacific Forum. It emphasizes anti-colonialism, assertion of regional cultural identity, & creation of a mythical past of affinity in the region. This is a very useful myth, it fosters unity and fellow feeling among the islanders and creates a sense of regional identity among them.⁴⁴ Richard Herr is of the opinion that by the year 2000 the region would witness greater organisational sophistication and growth of regionalism.⁴⁵

So the states of South Pacific, through the common body of South Pacific Forum get an opportunity to voice their joint political views, to discuss common problems, exchange views and consider priorities. The Forum's administrative arm SPEC, which also renders economic and legal services; & the Forum Fishery Agency which renders region wide service for fishing management, have provided the microstates of the region with the range of channels through which to come to terms with each others, foster regional identity and manage the region.

44. Sandra Tarte, n.43, pp.85

45. Richard Herr, "The Future of South Pacific Regionalism," The Pacific Islands in the year 2000, CAPS, Univ. of Hawaii and PIDP, East-West Center, Honolulu, Hawaii, 1985.

CHAPTER II

POTENTIALS FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION .

An appraisal of the natural resources in the South Pacific is fascinating indeed. Besides oceanic wealth available to all the countries, they have other items as well. The Cook Islands and Vanuatu have great manganese reserves. New Caledonia has large nickel and chromium deposits, Fiji has the world's largest copper mines. But, as the small islanders are not yet industrialized, they are exporting their raw materials to the developed countries'. Their major exports are unprocessed products: minerals, cocoa, coffee, fish and seafoods, copra, coconut oil etc. Till recently these islanders were engaged mostly in fishing and agriculture, producing sugar, coffee, copra, cocoa, coconut, banana, palm and tobacco. This area also has the potential to produce oil on a large scale, it is believed that the area will turn into a paradise for adventures entrepreneurs in the hypersonic age.²

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1. Ganganath Jha, "Politics and Society in the South Pacific", Foreign Affairs Report, vol. 36, no. 11-12, Nov/Dec. 1987, pp. 242.
 2. T.M. King Paul, "Asia Pacific Strategy for the 21st Century", 11th Commerce of Asia Pacific, chambers of Commerce and Industry Retoura, 9-13 Nov 1986, pp. 3-4, Also see Stuart Kiry, "Towards Economic Co-operation in the South Basin", Asian Affair (New York), vol. 16, no.1 Feb 85, pp. 36-45.

Apart from the above mentioned resources, one which is most important is the availability of the fish in abundance. Tuna, a highly migratory species, is found throughout the Pacific waters with Micronesia considered one of the most fertile breeding grounds. All Pacific countries are affected by the Tuna industry either by operation of distant water fishing fleets or by domestic fishing and processing industry.³

A detailed picture of economic potentials of different island countries of South Pacific can be seen as follows.

COOK ISLANDS:

Economic development of Cook Islands has always been hindered by isolation and limited scale of activity. Every form of export, in particular that of fresh fruit, oranges, bananas, tomatoes and pineapples has been restricted by lack of shipping and inadequate marketing in Newzealand metropolitan centers. However, the islands receive a large proportion of their revenue in the form of aid and from the Newzealand.⁴

3. Bangladesh Times, (Decca), 12th Dec 1986.

4. The Far East and Australia Year Book, 1988
Europa Publications Ltd., London, pp. 715-16.

FIJI:-

The economy is basically agricultural, with sugar-cane as the main crop. Some domestic industries such as cement, timber, cigaretts and Tuna-canning are being encouraged. In Oct. 1986 Fiji signed a 5 year fishing agreement with U.S.A. Tourism is also a developed industry. However, following the coup in 1987, the country's economic prospects worsened. Mining industries are Gold, Silver and crushed metals.⁵

KIRIBATI:-

The ending of Phosphate mining Banaba in 1979, had a devastating effect on the economy of the country. The quality of soil is poor, most of it covered with coconut palm which forms the only agricultural export in the form of copra. Fishing is an important local activity and considerable hopes are placed in its development, particularly of Shipjack Tuna. However the islands rely heavily on foreign aid.⁶

5. Ibid. pp 719-25.

6. Ibid and Melisa Roberts, "Economies of the Pacific" Pacific Islands Monthly, vol. 10, no. 11, Nov. 1989, pp; 33-41.

NAURU:-

The islands economy is based on the extraction of phosphate rock from Guano which constitute about 4/5th of the area. However deposits are expected to be exhausted by 1995, by which time it is hoped, that Nauru will be able to derive economic security from its shipping and civil aviation services and from its proposed role as a tax heaven for international business.

PAPUA NEW GUINEA:-

The Papua New Guinea economy comprises five major components:- the non-market or subsistence sector; primary agricultural exports; secondary and tertiary industries; Bougainville Copper Ltd. and the government sector.

The government finance is derived from 3 main sources; Internal revenue, loans and overseas aid (specially Australian and mining industries (copper, silver and gold). Telecommunications and production of hydro-electricity is highly developed.⁷

SOLOMON ISLAND:-

About 90% of the population of Solomon Islands

7. Ibid. pp. 754-64.

depend on subsistence agriculture, the main crop being coconut, sweet potato, taro, yams, casava and garden vegetable and fruits. The principal commercial agricultural product is copra which along with the fisheries is the major export. Among the minerals gold, silver, copper and phosphate deposits have been investigated. But the inadequate transport facilities hamper the agricultural and economic growth. Foreign aid comes from Australia, U.K., Newzealand and U.S.A..⁸

TONGA:-

The islands have fertile soil and the economy is mainly based on agriculture. The two principal crops Coconut and Banana form bulk of the export. Fishing industry was improved by establishing two dockyard complexes at Ha'apal group and at Muku'alofa⁹

TUVALU:-

The quality of soil is poor. Most of the land is covered with Palm and Copra is the major export. There is subsistence farming of coconut, pigs and poultry. Fishing is carried on a small scale but has prospect

8. Ibid. pp 766-770.

9. Ibid. pp. 773-776

for development. In 1986 Tuvalu signed a fishing agreement with USA. Foreign exchange is also earned from remittances sent by Tuvaluans working abroad. In 1986 Tuvalu was placed at its government's request, on the UN list of least developed countries, a status that attracts concessionary loans from World Bank and aid from countries like Australia, Newzealand, U.K. etc.¹⁰

VANUATU:-

Much of the land is mountaneous and covered with natural forests. 80% of the population lives in rural areas and practices subsistence gardening, the main crops being coconut, yams, taro, cassava, breadfruit and vegetables, copra, fish and beef are major exports. Cattle farming is expanding rapidly. Principal trading parterns are Australia, Japan and France. Tourism is also an important sector and a major source foreign exchange earning.¹¹

WESTERN SAMOA:-

The economy is based on agriculture which constitute 1/2 of the GDP of the country and also provides 90% of the export earning. Principal crops are taro, coconut,

10. Ibid. pp. 773-781.

11. Ibid. pp. 784-88

cocoa, and bananas. Newzealand is the major trading partner. Fish industry is also developing fast, other trade partners are US, UK, Japan, Australia and Germany. Several small industrial enterprices have been established in recent year, concerned with processing of food-stuffs and timber industry. Hydro-electricity production is also developing. External debt remains a serious problem.¹²

AUSTRALIA:-

Australia has a very open economy with export receipts amounting 16% and import 19% of GNP. For a country of its size Australia has a fairly small population. Mining Industries are coal, bauxite, Iron Ore, Lead, Zinc, Copper, tin, crude petroleum. etc.

Industries are steel, electric motors, clay bricks, motor vehicles, cotton yarn, cotton cloth, cement etc. But the agricultural produce is the major source of export earning which goes upto 37% of the total export earning. The export of wool, beef, lamb and mutton also form important portions. Tourism is also an important foreign exchange earning industry.¹³

12. Ibid., 791-99

13. Ibid. 174-210.

NEWZEALAND:-

Newzealand's isolation and its relatively small population together with the fairly rugged terrain are important influences on economy. Major industries are agriculture , forestry, fishing and mining (hard coal, lignite, gold, crude patroleum etc.). Secondary industries are flour, refined sugar, buiscuits, jam, wool, canned vegetables, chemical fertilizers etc. The major exports are farm products chiefly wool, dairy products, mutton etc. Export and import of goods and services have averaged about 30% of the GDP in recent years. However since the mid 1970s the Newzealand economy has been characterized by a persistent deficit in the balance of payments and by rising rate of unemployment and inflation.¹⁴

There has been a scramble to secure control of the resources of the Pacific Ocean among the Western Powers, which has wide implication for the future wealth and power of nations of the region. The Pacific has become "the new economic dynamo". Unprecedented attention has been brought to the Pacific rim, politically as well economically.¹⁵

14. Ibid. pp. 680-705

15. Korea Herald (Seoul), 12th Dec. 1986.

The South Pacific, which is also described as a cluster of dream islands, is no longer isolated. While still preserving their dignity, traditional values and way of life, the island states of the South Pacific have become increasingly exposed to the exacerbating realities of international politics and economics from which they can no longer remain aloof or opt to remain isolated.¹⁶ With the exception of few countries like Papua New Guinea and Australia, most of the island states of South Pacific are small in size and are dispersed over a large area. For these islands development is relatively a new phenomena and their economy is largely dominated by the non-cash subsistence sector. International trade is the major source of finances for the much needed development programmes. The world market environment places these island territories in a dis-advantageous position both in matters of imports and exports. The reliance on imports of a wide range of goods from foodstuff to heavy machinery places a heavy burden on financial resources of these countries. Being small buyers, they have little ability to influence the prices of imported goods.¹⁷

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16. C.S. Anantham, Pacific-Co-Operation and Development (New Yor, USA) 1988, pp. 1.
17. Rasheed A. Ali, Pacific Co-Operation and Development, (New York, USA) 1988, pp. 59.

Their distance from the major markets of the world, nothing but adds to the cost of commodities. Though most of these countries are trying hard to achieve self-sufficiency in food items, the goal appears to be difficult one and they still have to depend largely on imports and exports.

As a result of western contact, a money economy has gradually supplemented the traditional economy. This substitution is nearly complete in these islands. The colonial administration to varying degrees facilitated this shift to modern economy. Since achieving independence or self rule the island governments have faced increasing demand for education, medical care, transportation, communication and in short an ever widening sphere of governmental involvement. But they have limited capacity to respond,¹⁸ inspite of the fact that these islands are endowed with natural resources.¹⁹

18. Normen Meller, "The Pacific Island Microstates," Journal for International Affairs, vol. 41, no.1, Summer/Fall 1987, pp. 123.

19. G.T. Harris, "Food Imports and Macro-Economic Policy in the South Pacific," Developing Economics. (Tokyo) vol. 22, no. 1, March 1984, pp. 1271-80.

Many developed countries are trying to forge closer relations with the countries in the South Pacific. The United States is the most influential country in that region. The U.S. has followed a policy to forge intimate relations with the countries of that region.

The U.S. policy was well-defined by Casper Weinberger, the American Secretary of Defence, at a Press Conference in Australian capital Canberra on 5th Nov. 1982 in the following words:

"Five of the seven agreements to which US is a signatory are located in the Asian Pacific region. Free world economics depend increasingly upon essential raw materials and trade which travels the vital Pacific sea lanes. Thus the security of US has become increasingly interdependent with the security of each of its Pacific allies."²⁰

The present US policy in the region can be summed-up in two expressions: 1) Strategic denial i.e. denying the Soviet Union's strategic position in the region sets the policy goal and 2) Burden sharing i.e. leaving the development and defence of the region largely in the

20. John. C. Dorrence, "US Security Interests in the Pacific Islands", World Review, (Queens Land), vol. 23, no. 1, April 1984, p.8.

hands of Australia, Newzealand, UK and France.²¹ But in recent times disputes have arisen between the US and Pacific Island countries over the question of illigal Tuna fishing by the US, the suspicion about its involvement in the Fijian coup and deployment of American Nuclear Weapons in the region. As a result many islanders think that Americans disregarded their interests and undervalued their friendship and this led to a eastward tilt i.e. the Soviet overtures have received a much warmer reception.

Increased Soviet activities in the South Pacific can be seen as a part of broader undertaking. In what might be called the Garbachev doctrine, the Soviet leader clearly setforth Moscow's Policy towards Asia Pacific region in his well known speech at Vladivostok on July, 28, 1986.²² The first Soviet Foreign Minister to visit Australia, Eduard Shevardnadze, said in Canberra in March 1987 that Moscow had no intention of penetration of the region, no bad aims and no hidden intentions. It was only interested in commercial and diplomatic

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21. Paul F. Gardner, "Tuna Poaching and Nuclear Testing in the South Pacific". *Orbis*, vol. 32, no. 2, Spring 1988, pp. 249-62.
22. Frank.C. Langdon, "Challenges to United States the South Pacific," vol. 61, no. 1, Spring, 1988, pp 7-26.

relations.²³

When Kiribati signed an agreement with the Soviet Union, a hue and cry was made by the US, Australia, Newzealand also have fishing and grain agreements with the Soviet Union. These were interpreted as the Soviet presence, threat etc. but contrary to the expectation, the Soviets did not renew the agreement with Kiribati after one year as it was economically not viable.²⁴ Apart from the US-Soviet Rivalry the Sino-Soviet relations have also influenced the region.

China has taken an interest in the region which had as its highlights the visits in 1985 of the Yaobang, then Secretary General of Communist Party, to New Guinea, Australia, Newzealand, Fiji and Western Samoa. Chinese aid to Wester Samoa was to be used to extend the international airport and to turn taro into an export product²⁵

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23. Hamish Mcdonald, "Mascow is a 'Nice Guy", 'Sheverdnadze shows a hayden and glimps of Glanost', Far Eastern Economic Review, vol. 135, no.11, March 12, 1987, p. 15.
24. "Strategic Development in the South Pacific and Australias Role", International Conference on "Co-Operation for Peace Security and Development in Southern Asia and the Pacific Region on Jan 17,18,19, 1988, New Delhi.
25. "Aid will Check Soviet Presence Samoa PM Says," Sydney Morning Herald, April 24, 1985. p. 7.

It has placed its ambassadors in many of the South Pacific countries and not only in Australia and Newzealand like US and Soviet Union. So it can be seen that China, though to a modest extent, has competed with other aid doners.

Probably, the greatest threat appears Japan's new interest in the region. Being the world's largest creditor it can use its economic power rather than military power. Although the then Japanese foreign minister referred only to preserving the political stability of the South Pacific region, and not supporting the introduction of new tension, in a speech in Fiji in Jan. 1987, one aim of the offer of greater economic assistance to the region was clearly to check the Soviet Union there.²⁶ As part of Japan's new plans the South Pacific countries were approached with financial aid. Although agreeing to the need for development in the region, the South Pacific states are nevertheless suspicious of the new interest of Japan and Soviet Union and at the same time dissatisfied with the activities of US and France .

26. Japan Unveils Pacific Island Policy, Kuranari Doctrine Emphases Political Stability, Economic Assistance Japan Times, Jan 15, 1987, p.1.

An examination of official development assistance flow to the governments of South west Pacific, suggests that along with nations from outside the region, these countries have significantly different interest of their own especially with respect to relations with Australia and Newzealand.²⁷ There has been a large amount of aid and assistance coming from Australia and Newzealand in the fields of trade, Telecommunications, Education etc. One of the most important development in recent past is the signing of The South Pacific Regional Trade and Economic Co-Operation Agreement (SPARTECA) between the member countries of South Pacific Forum and Australia and Newzealand. It aims to provide these countries with more dependable markets, facilitating investment planning. Since SPARTECA came into existence, New Zealand's imports from the region have increased in several trading items. Since 1st July 1988, all goods of Forum Island country origin have had free of duties and quotas access into New Zealand. Australia still maintains quotas on certain import items, such as textile, clothing and footwear but these are to be lifted in 1996.²⁸ This agreement

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27. Edward P Wolfers, "Papua New Guinea and South West Pacific: The Experience, Place, and Prospects of Regional Co-Operation", pp. 181.
28. "South Pacific Forum", Information Bultin, no. 26, July 1989, Ministry of External Relations and trade, Newzealand.

indicates the willingness of Australia and Newzealand to assist in the economic development of microstates of South Pacific.

The role of the regional organisation such as South Pacific Forum has also been significant in the economic activities of the region. There has been a great deal of discussion in the Forum meetings on promotion of economic co-operation and exploitation of economic potentials. This attitude is represented by the Suva based 'South Pacific Bureau for Economic Co-Operation (SPEC renamed as Forum Secretariat). It has been given the task of acting on a report on regional economic issues adopted by Pacific Nations. It spells out a strategy in trade investments, small business development and the enhancement of economic capacity.²⁹

In sum the Island states of South Pacific are rich in natural resources. Expanses of their open seas contain Tuna of immense commercial value the ocean bed is believed to be rich in minerals³⁰ and the potentials

29. Decean Herald, 27 Dec. 1988.

30. Amana Mohsin, "Regionalism and Security in the South Pacific". Security of Small States

for economic co-operation are large. Lack of finances and technology appear to be major hindrance. But after a long neglect and indifference, the great powers have started showing new interest in the region. One can only hope that the increased interest of the big powers, both western and communist, should materialize in a form where they compete to develop the islands. It would be a change for the better if the Soviets and the Americans put more effort into constructive economic activities instead of military activities.³¹

31. Frank C. Langdon, n. 22, pp. 23.

CHAPTER III

FISHERIES AND SHIPPING CO-OPERATION

The South Pacific Forum has given high priority to co-ordinate the activities of the member countries towards fishing and shipping. These are the two issues which are of great concern to all the 13 member countries of the Forum. As the disputes over the fishing rights and arrangements have been topical it will be discussed in the beginning.

Separated from each other and rest of the world by huge expanses of ocean, these island countries range from Papua New Guinea (with the size of California and 3.3 million people) to, as tiny as Nive and Nauru¹. These island countries are characterized by their small size, limited land resources and economic dependence on larger states. For most of these countries the main problem is that the resources from which their political, social and economic needs, have to be met are inadequate to maintain the levels of income to which they aspire, or even these to which they have become accustomed.²

Most of these independent island states being

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1. Paul. F. Gardner, "Tuna Paching and Nuclear Testing in South Pacific", Orbis, vol 32 , No.2 , Spring 1988.
 2. E.K. Fisk, "Development and Acid to South Pacific 1980s" Australian Outlook, No.22, Fall 1983, pp. 21.

archipelagic countries have sovereignty over very large areas of the ocean, so large in fact that taken collectively they claim control over most of the South Pacific region. Their living marine resources represent a real opportunity for these developing states to gain some measure of economic independence. Fishing has played a major role in the cultures and traditions of the Pacific Islands. The known offshore resources of the Pacific are dominated by highly migratory species, predominantly, Tuna and Mackerel.³ Tuna is a highly migratory species caught in the Exclusive Economic Zones of New Zealand, Australia, Vanuatu, , Kiribati etc. Already it represents the biggest industry in the Solomon Islands, the second biggest in Fiji and third biggest in Papua New Guinea⁴. Tuna is an extremely valuable species which fetches very high price, but is under great stress due to over fishing. Of a total fishing catch of 300,000 tons from the 200 mile zones of the island states, Tuna account for more than 88% of the catch. However greater part

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3. ✓ Anthony Bergin, "Fisheries and the South Pacific", Asia Pacific Community, no. 22, Fall 1983, pp.21.
4. This was pointed out in an address by Dr. Robert Kearny at the Law of the Sea Institute's, 15th Annual Conference, Univ of Hawaii, Oct 1981.

the total catch (about 87%) is taken by the foreign vessels, fishing independently of the coastal states.

Most of the extra regional powers and super-powers, for example Soviet Union and Japan appear to be motivated in the region, primarily by the desire to facilitate the continued operation of their large fishing fleets in the area. The increasing attractiveness of the South Pacific as a fishing ground has made it advisable to distant water fishing nations to develop clear relations with new states of South Pacific Region. This has rendered the Pacific States more important than their small size would normally dictate. The major bases for the foreign vessels have been in Samoa, Vanuatu, Fiji and French Polynesia. The Soviet union has been particularly desirous to establish a base for its fishing fleets in the region. For nearly two decades Soviet Union has been strengthening its Pacific fleets, though its strength is far behind the Americans. Since mid 1970s, it has mooted the idea of fishing facilities with several island countries. In 1979 it proposed to undertake a survey in the neighbourhood of Cook Islands and Papua New Guinea. In 1985 there were Soviet negotiations with Solomon Islands and Tuvalu but they refused to grant Soviet Union fishing rights in their Exclusive Economic Zones. Notwithstanding several rejections

of the Soviet overtures by the island countries which was obviously done at the behest of western powers, there was a degree of success with Kiribati and Vanuatu.

The increased Soviet interest to a relatively distant and isolated area is a part of broader undertaking. It accords with the emphasis Moscow is placing on its role as an Asian and Pacific Power (signalled in the Gorbachev's Vladivostok speech of July 1986).⁵ In addition, anti-west developments in the Pacific has crealy cought the Soviet attention. Economic interests enter the picture as well. Finally the Soviet Government may see a political opportunity in the South Pacific, a chance to end the loosing streak in the third world. For all these reasons Moscow has exploited opportunities in the Pacific Islands with energy and finesse, while denying any desire to extend great power rivalry in the region.⁶ But this action of Soviet Union sparked off a great controversy in the region. In fact the background of this situation was created by United States's illigal fishing and poaching activities in the region.

5. Soviet Review, vol. 23, no. 31, 7 Aug. 1986, see Passim

6. Paul F Gardner, n.1, p.22.

American poaching of Tuna fishes or illegal fishing activities had been a sensitive political issue in the region. As late as in 1979, only a few US Tuna boats visited the area on an experimental basis. By 1984, over 50 American vessels patrolled in the area in each season. The large American boats many equipped with helicopters and other modern instruments have surpassed the other fishing vessels. Understandably some South Pacific island states saw such thing as a threat to local Tuna resources. Most intriguing thing which disturbed the microstates of the region was American fishing without licence in their Exclusive Economic Zones. As Paul. F. Gardner says, a situation was created in which the Tuna fishermen were committing an offence under local law but not under the American law.⁷

The Solomon Island's confiscation of an American fishing boat, seized in its waters in June 1984, brought fishery differences to a climax. American law required an embargo on imports of the Solomon Island's fish products which provided 20% of that country's foreign exchange earnings. Other Pacific Island states were enraged by this development and boycott of regional

7. Ibid.

fishery negotiation by these states seemed inevitable. However it was averted after U.S. lifted the embargo when a newly elected Solomon Island Government agreed to resume talks with the American Tuna Boat Association on a licensing agreement. Two difficult years of negotiations produced a Regional Fisheries agreement signed in April 2 1987.

Meanwhile Japan has expressed its interest in the region by being involved in joint ventures with some Pacific States by giving assistance to their fishing industries through the provisions of training. Thus the geopolitical strategic complexion in South Pacific had begun to alter very rapidly. Super Power rivalry has started to encroach upon the region.

Keeping in view the above mentioned situation a common action front was required for the island states of South Pacific to face the growing power rivalry. Regional co-operation in the South Pacific in the field of fisheries has its origin in the South Pacific Forum Meeting of July 1976 in Nauru, where two important papers were tabled for discussion, by Papua New Guinea and Fiji. The first was Papua New Guinea's paper entitled "Environmental conservation in the South Pacific", is significant in several important respects. It linked the question of fisheries to the wider question of

conservation. While the work of South Pacific Commission (SPC) was acknowledged in the paper, it also emphasized the role of island states as independent countries and pointed out the need for co-operation and co-ordination among them.⁸ These themes were also echoed in Fijian paper entitled "The Law of the Sea". It raised various points of interest emerging out of the four sessions of UNCLOS III Negotiations which had by then been completed. Among them were the 12 mile territorial sea, the special regime for archipelagic states, the 200 mile Exclusive Economic Zone and the regime of islands. The paper then proposed the creation of 'South Pacific Regional Fisheries Organisation.' It also suggested the need for further meeting to examine the proposal in a greater detail and consider ways of enhancing regional co-operation and surveillance and policing of the activities and movements of foreign fishing fleets in the region⁹.

In this meeting it was announced that another

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8. W.M. Sutherland, "South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency", Ocean Development and International Law, vol. 18, no. 6, 1987, pp. 614.
 9. Summary of Proceedings of the 7th Meeting of the South Pacific Forum, (1976) 17 pp. 4,6.

meeting, at government level would shortly be held to consider: the timing and the terms for the creation of 200 mile Exclusive Economic Zone; the problems and opportunities associated with them; conservation of marine resources; the possible creation of a South Pacific Fisheries Agency; and the prospect for joint action and regional co-operation in matters such as surveillance policing.¹⁰ The meeting which subsequently took place declared

- Their intention to establish 200 mile Exclusive Economic Zones and appropriate times and after consultation with one another
- Decided to harmonize fishery policies in the region and to adopt a co-ordinated approach in their negotiations with distant water fishing nations.
- Decided in principle to establish a South Pacific Fisheries Agency to promote Fisheries Agency to promote conservation and rational utilization of such stocks in the region."

In Aug. 1979, it was decided in the meeting of

10. Nauru Declaration, Appendix 4 SPF (76) 17.

11. R.E. Kearney, "The Law of the Sea and Regional Fisheries Policy", Ocean Development and International Law, no. 5, 1978, pp. 250.

South Pacific Forum members, held at Port Moresby, to convene a meeting with a view to setting up a Regional Fisheries Agency. At the signing of the "Port Moresby declaration", the Forum envisaged that the new agency would join together the island countries so that they would have co-ordinated policies with which to face the 'distant water fishing nations'. As it turned out, however, this notion became confused because the meeting was also attended by the United States of America, United Kingdom and France which led to emergence of several problems.¹² The disagreement was also on the question of membership of the association.

In the next session of the Forum the most important issue which was raised was whether or not the highly migratory species, mainly Tuna should be recognised as being included within the 200 miles Exclusive Economic Zone of national jurisdiction. The United States of America refused to recognise national assertion of sovereignty over tuna. However it was agreed that because the highly migratory species are

12. George Kent, "South Pacific Fisheries Diplomacy," The New Pacific, vol. , no. , January/February 1980, pp. 22-27.

the major resource within 200 mile Exclusive Economic Zone of the Forum countries must be controlled by coastal states. The Forum member states agreed to declare 200 mile Exclusive Economic Zone in 1978 at a meeting held in Port Moresby (Papua New Guinea). According to the principles outlined in the United Nations Law of the Sea Text, one accepted principle of the sea negotiation is that the zone of jurisdiction will extend to a distance of 200 nautical miles from which the breadth of the territorial sea is measured (artical 45, part III of the Revised Single Negotiating Text, RSNT 1976). The rights and duties of a coastal state in this Exclusive Economic Zone is defined in chpater III.¹³ Along with this four main themes have been stressed.

- I. The rights of coastal states to increase their control over the harvesting of the living resources within their respective Exclusive Economic Zones (article 44)
- II. The obligation of coastal states to promote optimum resource utilization from these areas (article 51)
- III. The obligation of nations in an Exclusive Economic Zone other than their own

13. R.E Kearey, n. 11, p. 250.

IV. The need to conserve the fishery resource base (article 50.3).¹⁴

These four points clearly indicate the rights of coastal states, and their responsibility to protect the resource for the benefit of mankind and to actively promote attainment of maximum sustainable yields. It was also decided in the same meeting to setup a South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency (based at the Institute of Oceanographic Research at Cronella, Sydney), to police the zones which would encompass about 3,000,000 sq. miles of South Pacific Ocean.¹⁵

✓ Finally in the next Forum held in Honiara, Solomon Islands, in 1979. "The South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency" (FFA) was successfully negotiated the membership of this agency was restricted to the Forum members. Forum leaders generally expressed the view that the role of the agency should essentially be confined to providing advice to Forum governments on requests as envisaged in the relevant section of the Port Moresby Declaration.

14. Ibid :

15. Keesings Contemporary Archives, 1978. Keynoham (Briestal).

The Forum Fisheries Agency reflects member's common interest in drawing maximum benefit from their marine resources and also in conservation and utilization of all the living marine resources in the region. It also highlights particular concerns about the highly migratory species, in effect Tuna, which are the main commercial species and the focus of deep water fishing nations. Infact its work programme has concentrated heavily on the Tuna resource. It also stresses the severe development difficulties of the island states of South Pacific because of their small size, lack of land based resurces and distance from major markets. It's main functions are

- collecting, analysing, evaluating and disiminating statistical and biological information.
- collecting and dissiminating information on management procedures, legislation and agreement adopted by other countries within and outside the region.
- collecting and dissiminating relevant information on prices, shipping, processing and marketing of fish and fish product.
- providing technical assistance in the development of fishery policies and in negotiation of fees

or on matters pertaining to surveillance.¹⁶

In the 11th Forum held in Feb. 1980 in Suva, Fiji, which was a meeting of officials, it was decided that Forum fisheries Agency in consultation with member governments and in close co-operation with South Pacific Commission, should seek to convene a meeting on appropriate research and development programme for the region. The meeting also considered, as the proposed programme developed Forum members would be better placed to determine appropriate follow up action including the need, if any, for a broadly based fisheries organisation. At the next Forum meeting held later that year in Tawara, Kiribati, the recommendation was accepted.¹⁷

An important example of Forum Fisheries Agency's response to developments affecting the region's fisheries has been its reaction to Drift Gill Net fishing by Taiwanese, Japanese and South Korean fishing fleets.¹⁸ The above mentioned fishing method has recently become

16. "The South Pacific Forum", Information Bulletin no. 26, July 1989, Ministry of External Relations and Trade, Newzealand.

17. W.M. Sutherland, n. 8.

18. South Pacific Forum Information Bulletin, n. 16

water fishing nations with greater unity.¹⁹

However there has been a great deal of criticism and dissatisfaction over the organisation and working of the Forum Fisheries Agency such as

- Kentt's view, who sees Forum Fisheries Agency as a "Weak Service Agency" rather than "anything approaching a management agency".²⁰ Following him Dalmon says that the agency turned out to be a much weaker body than the one envisaged three years earlier.²¹ But according to W.M. Sutherland both of these criticisms are misguided because the agency was never intended to be a management body²²
- Another criticism comes from Van Dyke and Hefte who say that the organisation does not fulfill the mandate of article 64 of the law of the sea convention for a broad-based fisheries agency²³

19. David Anderson, "Developing Islands States Move to Protect Tuna", Papua New Guinea Foreign Affairs Review, vol. 2, no.1, April 1982, pp. 13-17.

20. George Kent, n . 12, pp. 22-27.

21. A.T. Dalmon, "The Performance and Prospects of small Island Developing Countries", The Hague: Institute of Social Studies, Advisory Service 1989, pp. 28.

22. W.M. Sutherland, n. 8, p. 615.

23. Jan Van Dyke and Serioan Hefte, "Tuna Management in the Pacific : Analysis of South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency", Univ. of Hawaii Law Review 3 (1981), 48.

very popular among the deep water fishing nations in the South Pacific. Though the fleets operate in high seas areas between 30° to 40° , their prime objective is to catch juvenile Albacore, which after being mature forms an important resource of the Exclusive Economic Zones of many island countries.

With the help of FAO and SPC the Forum Fisheries Agency has held many scientific meetings on the effects of the Gill Net fishing on the Albacore stock and island countries have agreed on transshipment and cannery facilities for Gill Net fishing. Not only this, in June 1988 a treaty was concluded between Forum Fisheries Agency and United States, according to which US has to pay access fee for right to pursue the netting of highly migratory Tuna specie in the exclusive Economic Zone of member countries of Forum Fisheries Agency. The Forum Fisheries Agency manages this payout. Moreover with the assistance of Forum Fisheries Agency, a number of island states have taken a small step towards establishing a co-ordinated fisheries management regime. The Nauru Agreement signed in 1982 contemplates the early implementation of uniform fees and conditions with respect to licencing the vessels, observer programmes and other activities. Through this they will be able to deal with distant

W.H. Sutherland gives several argument against this, that there was necessity for the agency to have had an organisational form of the type provided for in article 64; moreover the kind of regional co-operation which the island states intended, should not necessarily have complied with the requirements of article 64; Apart from this article 64 offers no detail about how "appropriate international organisations", are to be created nor does it spell out how such bodies are to function in practice, it extends only to conservation.²⁴ So it can be seen that the South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency does not confirm to the requirements of emerging international law, still its importance can not be underestimated.

In the end we can say that, as at present individual nations are being 'played off by distant water fishing nations'²⁵, there is a great need for a broad based management body to implement a common regional licencing policy, to solve the problem of surveillance and to enforce the 200 mile Exclusive Economic Zone

24. W.M. Sutherland, n. 8, p.615.

25. Rousena M. Lawlon, "Problems of Exploitation of Fisheries in the Indo-Pacific", Center for Resource and Environment Studies, Working Paper R/W p 36, Australian National Univ. Canberra 1979, pp. 18 - 19.

in the region. As the leaders of the Pacific Islands have a strong commitment towards regionalism and regional activities continue to grow. , it is hoped that the South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency assumes a more positive and effective role in future.²⁶

Besides the endeavour to co-ordinate their activities in fishing, the South Pacific Forum has done another commendable job in improving the system of communication in South Pacific, through shipping.

In modern age, Nations have come to appreciate more than ever the economic and strategic need for a fully developed merchant marine and for maritime countries with long coast lines and sizable foreign trade, shipping becomes the life line of economy and trade.²⁷ For the island states of South Pacific which are surrounded by water from every side developing a proper shipping facility is a necessity. But the transport problem is one of the main problems from which these island states are suffering. The island territories, generally speaking, have to contend with internal transport problem in bringing produce from the outline

26. G.E. Fry, "Regionalism and International Politics of the South Pacific", Pacific Affairs, vol. 54, no. 3, Fall 1981, pp. 455-484.

27. T.S. Sarnjéeva, Rao, A Short History of Modern Indian Shipping, Popular Press, Bombay (India) Aug. 1985, pp. VII

islands to the main centers for export. The irregularity and type of shipping services available, act as a serious constraint. In addition to the scattered locations, the long distances over which the produce has to be transported, and the small produce volume increase the unit cost of the product.²⁸

Newzealand provides major assistance to shipping services in the South Pacific. It supports a number of projects in the transport sector under bilateral programme in recognition of the vital importance this sector to the island countries. Examples of these activities are the development of Avatiu Harbour in the Cook Islands and funding the programme controlled of the Forum's maritime Development.²⁹

As far as the activities of South Pacific Forum are concerned, regional transport forms an important part of the Forum activities. A Regional Shipping Council was setup by the Forum in 1974, and a Regional Civil Aviation Council and Advisory Committee in 1976. In 1984 these bodies undertook a regional transport survey

28. Raseed. A. Ali, , Pacific Co-operation and Development. New York, USA, 1988.

29. The South Pacific Forum", Information Bulletin no. 26, July 1989, ministry of External Relations and Trade, Newzealand

to compile a comprehensive data base on transport in the region.³⁰ This a need was felt for a separate body to govern the shipping activities in the region. It led to the emergence of Pacific Forum Line.

The Pacific Forum Line: It was a regional shipping venture established in June 1977 under the auspices of the South Pacific Forum.³¹ It was to operate among 10 South Pacific countries (the Forum members minus, Australia, Nive, Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands and Vanuatu) to improve shipping links with in the region. The Pacific Forum Line has two principle objectives: to operate a viable shipping line and to provide shipping services to meet the special requirements of the region. The line is a tangible forum of regional co-operation in the South Pacific. Transport Ministers from the Forum countries decided to meet annually to discuss the broad objectives of the line. The daily operation of the company is the responsibility of the Pacific Forum Lines Board of Directors and Management.³²

30. The Far East & Australia YearBook, 1987, pp. 145.

31. Newzealand Official Yearbook 1986-87, pp. 577.

32. South Pacific Forum Information Bulletin, n.16.

It operates three container vessels and one general cargo vessel linking ports of Newzealand, Fiji, Tonga, Western Samoa, American Samoa, Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, New Caledonia, and Australia. A feeder service for Tuvalu and Kiribati was established in 1982-. In 1983 Australia, claiming that the line was proving non-viable, refused to provide further financial assistance, but the European Community agreed to provide a grant of \$A 1m, and a loan of \$A 5m, so that the line could buy its own containers instead of hiring them.³³ Newzealand has sustained a commitment to the PLF since 1977 through the contribution of a vessel. The original vessel was replaced in 1986 by the "Weka", which was owned by the Shipping Corporation of Newzealand and time chartered to PFL. In March 1989, following an industrial dispute, the vessel was sold to PFL and now operates under the earlier name, "Forum Newzealand II".

To conclude it can be said that Pacific Forum Line has done a commendable job in improving the transport and communication among the scattered island states of the region, which gave a boost to regional trade and communication.

33. T.S. Sanjeev Rao, n. 27, p. 7

CHAPTER IV

NUCLEAR WEAPON FREE ZONE

The concept of Nuclear Weapon free zone arose from the desire of non-nuclear countries to disengage on their own terms from the nuclear madness of the major powers. The three essential characteristic of nuclear weapon free zone are non-possession, non-deployment and non-use of nuclear weapons.¹ This concept is by no way a new concept, it has been demanded for several regions of the world such as Africa, the Balkans, Central Europe, Latin America, South Asia etc. It is a useful device in strengthening the possibilities of peace. Uptill now the only regions which have been accepted as the nuclear free zones are the uninhabited regions of the Antarctica, outer space and the seabeds. (The only inhabited area which has been declared as nuclear free is the Latin America through the treaty of Tlatelolco,

(With the dawn of the nuclear age, the South Pacific has been turned into one of the most nuclearised regions of the world, by way of testing and dumping of nuclear waste materials and transit of weapons and missiles. Many of the lush green islands of the South Pacific have

1. Ramesh Thakur "A Nuclear Weapon Free South Pacific :A Newzealand Perspective, Pacific Affiars, vol. 58, no. 2, Summer 1985, pp. 217.

been used by one nuclear power or another for weapon testing and perfecting of its nuclear war fighting capabilities. The microisland nations realized that this nuclear arms race is leading to contamination of their waters, unnumerable health hazards to their citizens and future generations and increasing their security problems.

Before the shock of Hiroshima bombing subsided U.S.A. started the atmospheric testing over the Bikini atoll at Marshall islands of Micronesia in 1946. In 1948 U.S. began testing at Eniwetak atoll of the same island group, where they exploded first hydrogen bomb 'Bravo' in 1952, the consequences were disastrous. The islanders were forced to leave their home land. It led to the spread of many diseases. T.V. Paul has rightly observed that much of the anti-nuclear sentiments of the South Pacific People are result of painful experience of the Marshall islanders and the intangible radiation of atmospheric testing at other Pacific sites.² This memory was strengthened by the powerful Australian film, 'Half Life', widely circulated in 1986, suggesting that U.S. allowed Marshall islanders to die as a scientific

2. T.V. Paul, "Nuclear Free Zone in the South Pacific", Round Table, July, 1986, pp. 256-262.

test of radiation. The allegation that the test site was chosen out of disdain for inhabitants produces an emotionalism that impedes a rational discussion of all nuclear issues.³

(Along with U.S., Great Britain also started using Pacific Possessions and also some Australian sites for nuclear weapon testing. These tests were conducted until 1957 and resulted in serious health hazards.

(Then followed the French Nuclear testings at Mururoa atoll and became the reason which sparked off the dissatisfaction and discontentment among the people of the South Pacific against the nuclear tests in the region. It has been argued that the Soviet Union does not operate any nuclear bases in the South Pacific. It's nearest military base in the South Pacific is at Cam Ranh Bay in Vietnam and its warships and submarines have rarely been detected in the South Pacific waters.⁴

(Apart from testing, other forms of nuclear activities by the nuclear powers also threaten the South Pacific environment. The U.S.A. has started deploying Trident

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3. Paul. F. Gardner, "Tuna Poaching and Nuclear Testing in South Pacific", Orbis, vol.32, no.2. Spring 88, pp. 257.
 4. South Pacific :A not so Nuclear Free Zone," Peace Studies, Melbourne, Oct 1985, pp 6-8.

submarines each equipped with 24 Trident and IInd multiple warheaded missiles in the Indian and Pacific Oceans. The U.S.A. has also reportedly been equipping its Pacific surface ship with different missiles,

{ Along with this another major long term threat that island people are confronting is dumping of nuclear wastes. The Japanese are also included in this and are planning to dump large amount of radio-active waste in the region. These fears of radioactive contamination seque into nuclear concerns other than testing. (Newzealand's decision to ban port visits by nuclear armed vessels stimulated similar efforts by anti-nuclear forces in the South Pacific⁵, Soloman Island and Vanuatu also implemented such rules.

✓ There are therefore three major nuclear issues on the agenda in the South Pacific at the moment

- 1) Newzealand's ban on visits by nuclear powered or armed warship into her territorial limit,
- 2) French nuclear testing at Mururoo atoll
- 3) The third issue relates to the declaration of the nuclear free zone in the South Pacific.⁶

5: Paul Gardner, n. 3, pp. 257.

6. James Rolfe,, "Strategic Changes in the South West Pacific", Rusi Ji, vol. B1, no. 4, Dec. 1986, pp. 41-50.

FRENCH NUCLEAR TESTING IN SOUTH PACIFIC

Today the prime concern in the area is the French nuclear testing at Mururoa atoll.⁷ (France began its explosions at Mururoa atoll in 1966 and has conducted more than 100 explosions of which 41 were atmospheric. The continuing French nuclear testing in the region has been challenged by Australia and Newzealand in International Court of Justice, at diplomatic levels in the UN and other world forums and through industrial and commerical and trade actions aimed at curbing the movement of the French goods throughout the South Pacific,

(France in turn sought to justify the testing by saying that the tests are completely innocuous and do not pose any radiation or health hazards to the region. Subsequently it even started terrorist kind of activities when French agents sabotaged the Green Peace Protest Ship, 'Rainbow Warrior' in Auckland harbour. Rainbow Warrior episode is a watershed in the nuclear geopolitical scene in the South Pacific.

On 10th July 1985, the ship 'Rainbow Warrior' belonging to international environmental group 'Green Peace' was sunk by bombs while resting peacefully in

7. T.V. Paul, n.2, pp. 252-265.

Auckland harbour.⁸ It caused international furore and diplomatic embarrassment for France. This incident is directly related to the French nuclear testing in South Pacific, which is a step taken by France to establish itself as a World Power. After the warrier was blown on 10th^c July 1985, the French Government denied its involvement in the affair. However after a detailed investigation it was discovered that the two people arrested in relation to the episode were serving officers of the French security agencies. Later on 7th Aug. 1985 President Mitterand condemned the incident and gave orders to bring to justice "those responsible, at whatever level they may be found". On the same day Bernard Tricots a senior civil servant was appointed to conduct an inquiry into possible French involvement in the affair.

In his report Tricot said that the Green Peace antinuclear campaign in the South Pacific had been kept under surveillance by two DGSE teams. Their mission was to undergo navigational training in the South Pacific, to keep French secret service informed on the Green Peace flotilla assemblage and to study the possibility of

8. Ramesh Thakur, "A Dispute of Many Colours: France, Newzealand and the Rainbow Warrier Affair", World Today, vol. 42, no. 12, Dec. 1986, pp. 209.

joining a Green Peace boat in future protest campaigns.⁹ However, he said there is no evidence to suggest that any French agent had strayed from his mission and planted the bomb in the 'Warrier', Tricot's report was much criticized. The French Newspaper 'Liberation' carried the headline 'Tricot La Plus Blanc' (Tricot washes white). However after much controversy on 22nd sep., the French Prime Minister Fabius finally admitted that 'agent of DGSE sank this boat, and they acted on orders.'¹⁰

(Even after this embarrassing situation which the French faced, they refused to stop the nuclear tests at Mururoa. In 1976 at a meeting held in Rarotonga on March 9th, the South Pacific Forum adopted a resolution condemning the under ground testing of nuclear weapons in French Polynesia. The resolution also endorsed the concept of Nuclear weapon free zone in the South Pacific. However it did not attempt to restrict the movement of nuclear warships and submarines in the region, and its thus expressed respect for the principle of freedom of navigation on the high seas.¹¹"The 14th Forum held in Aug. 1983 in Canberra, Australia, reaffirmed the total

9. Ibid :

10. Otago Daily Times. 24th Sept. 1985.

11. Keesing's Contemporary Archives 1976. Keysham (Bristol), vol. XIV, No. 72, pp. 27591A

opposition of member states on the French underground nuclear testing at Mururoa atoll in French Polynesia, but failed to reach a Common Position in response to a French invitation for Forum members to send scientific observers to inspect the Mururoa site. Both Australia and Newzealand had responded positively to the French invitation. But the other member states could not reach on a common position because many of them felt that the acceptance would be seen as the moderation of the Forum's condemnation of the Mururoa tests.¹²

The anti-French feelings in the region was intensified by the series of nuclear tests done by the French at Mururoa atoll in the same year. The Australian Prime Minister Mr. Hawke took a strong stand against it. After a meeting with the French President Mitterand, he declared the suspension of Australian uranium shipments to France, to exert pressure on France, though this move did not produce the desirable impact on France. Thus it can be seen that the South Pacific Forum is not able to take a firm stand against the French nuclear testing at Mururoa atoll and therefore it has failed to exert a strong pressure on France to stop its nuclear activities in the region.

12. Keesing's contemporary Archives 1983, Keynsham (Bristol) vol. 29, no. 1, pp. 32571A.

(A series of efforts by the South Pacific Forum have been taken for the establishment of Nuclear Free Zone in the region. It was initiated by Newzealand in 1975 at the South Pacific Forum meeting and subsequently at U.N. General Assembly. On 15th Aug. 1975 both Newzealand and Fiji wrote to the U.N General Assembly asking for their proposal to be included on the agenda of the forthcoming 30th session of the General Assembly. At the time of the presentation of the resolution, Papua New Guinea joined hands with Newzealand and Fiji. The resolution was adopted in the first committee on 28th Nov. The only nuclear power which voted in favour was China, .U.S., France, Britain and U.S.S.R abstained from the voting though they expressed general sympathy.¹³

Though the hold of the Labour Party on the office proved short lived, Newzealand "took the French to International Court of Justice over their atmospheric testing in the Pacific and Won", and "promoted the nuclear weapon free zone for the ^{South}~~Set~~ Pacific in the United Nations inspite of U.S. hostility to the propositions.¹⁴

13. Ramesh Thakur, n.1, p. 217.

14. Former P.M of Newzealand Sir Wallace Roueling in the address to the Dundin Branch of Newzealand Institute of International Affairs, 22 March 1984.

The ~~General Assembly resolution~~ initiated by Newzealand, Papua New Guinea was adopted by a vote of 110, with 20 abstentions and no negative vote.¹⁵ The resolution after mentioning the threat of nuclear proliferation and arms race in in the region to world peace, endorsed the proposal of the South Pacific Forum countries for the establishment of the Nuclear Free Zone in the region. Along with this it also appeared for the co-operation of the nuclear powered states in achieving the aim of the resolution. The resolution also attracted the world attention to this issue and thus intensified the movement.

In the 1975 annual meeting of the Forum, the Newzealand's proposal for a Nuclear Weapon free Zone got unanimous support despite its vagueness regarding difinition and geographical extent. (In the 1976 annual meeting of the South Pacific Forum held at Rarotonga, Newzealand, on March 9th, a resolution was adopted which endorsed the concept of Nuclear Weapon Free Zone. In its final form however, the resolution was confined to a call for the exclusion from the region of land based

15. U.N. General Assembly Resolution Number 3477 (XXX), 30th Session, 11th Dec.

nuclear weapons with particular regard to the underground testing of nuclear weapons in the French Polynesia. The resolution did not attempt to restrict the movement of nuclear warships and submarines through the region and it thus expressed respect for the freedom of navigation and ensured that it was compatible with the existing security arrangements, specially with the 1951 ANZUS defence alliance. But this resolution differed from the U.N. General Assembly resolution and the resolution adopted by South Pacific Forum itself in 1975 at the initiation of Newzealand with the support of Australia.¹⁶

However the initial euphoria regarding the resolution subsided due to the change of governments in Australia and Newzealand in 1975. (The subsequent South Pacific Forum meeting dropped the idea from their agenda and their programmes after 1976 did not mention the issue, until in 1983 when it re-emerged under Australian leadership. The meeting of South Pacific Forum held in Canberra, Australia on Aug. 28-29, 1983, was Chaired by Robert Hawke, the Australian Prime Minister. In presenting its concept of the Pacific Nuclear Free Zone, the Australian Government sought a specific

16. Ibid page 10. Keesing contemporary Archives, 1986. pp. 34592.

declaration of support from the Canberra session of the Forum, with a view to the proposal being submitted to the annual conference of broader South Pacific Commission (whose non-Forum members include France, U.S and U.K) and also the United Nations. In the event the proposal was referred back to the Australian Government, to allow time for further consultation.¹⁷ (The South Pacific Forum meeting of 1984 held in Tuvalu endorsed the Australian proposal and commissioned a group of experts to draw up a treaty for establishing a Nuclear Free Zone, to be presented at the next year's meeting.¹⁸ ✓

The conclusion of Rorotonga treaty owes much to the Australian Labour Party and its policies for strengthening the regional security system. (The 'Nuclear Weapon Free Zone' was one of the most important considerations of its foreign policy. It condemned the dumping of nuclear waste materials as it contaminated the environment of the region. It supported the micro-states of South Pacific in their stand against the testing of the nuclear weapon in the region. It also played a major role in the conclusion of the treaty of Rarotonga,

17. Ibid

18. Newzealand Official Yearbook 1986-87. pp.577.

which after a series of discussions in different meetings of SPF, was finally adopted on 6th Aug. 1985 at the Forum Conference held at Rarotonga (Newzealand). ✓

THE TREATY AND ITS PROVISIONS:

On 6th August 1985 which was the 40th anniversary of Hiroshima bombing the treaty was concluded by the 13 South Pacific Forum members, thereby declaring the region free of nuclear proliferation. Eight of the South Pacific Forum members signed the treaty on the same day while the others were expected to follow suit in due course. ✓ It became the world's second treaty denuclearising an inhibited area after the treaty of Tlalelolco. Under the treaty the parties undertake:-

- I) Not to manufacture or other wise acquire, possess or have control over any nuclear explosive by any means anywhere inside or outside the region, nor to seek or receive any assistance for such purposes, nor to assist or encourage any state to engage in such activities (Article 3).
- II) To prevent in its territory the stationing of any nuclear explosive device (Article 5)
- III) To prevent in its territory the testing of any nucler explosive device, and not to assist or encourage such testing by any state (Article 6)

- IV) Not to dump or assist or encourage any one to dump, radio active waste and other radio active matter at sea any where within the SPNFZ, and to prevent such dumping by anyone in its territorial sea. (Article 7).¹⁹

Three protocols were added to the treaty

- I) Under protocol 1, three expected signatories - France, the U.K and U.S - undertake to apply a number of key treaty provisions to their territories in the region.
- II) Protocol 2, is open for signature by all five nuclear weapon states and ask them to observe the treaty and refrain from using or threatening to use any nuclear explosive device against the parties to the treaty or such territories as are incorporated in the treaty
- III) Protocol 3, also addressed to all five, requests a promise not to conduct any test of nuclear explosive device.²⁰

The projected free Zone in the treaty of Rarotonga

19. Toshiki Mogami, "The South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone: A Fettered Leap Forward, Journal of Peace Research, vol. 25, no. 4, Dec. 1988, pp. 41.

20. Ibid.

covers a vast area. The zonal perimeters are - on the east, the western boundary of Latin American Free Zone (the meridian of longitude 115° west); on the South, the northern boundary of the demilitarised Antarctic are (the parallel of latitude 60° South); and on the west, a north south extention of the western coast of Australia (the meridian of longitude 115° east); The northern boundary is the equator except for certain areas north of it.²¹

Among other things, a consultative committee has been created by the Rarotonga Treaty to hear any complaints if made and provid^e for bilateral and multi-lateral consultations to clarify questions' about the Treaty implementation. In case of the violation of the Treaty the complaints could go to the South Pacific Forum and in case of any infraction, it could be taken to the United Nations, or dealt with on an adhoc bilateral or collective basis. (However these provisions of the treaty along with the provisions relating to the withdrawal from the treaty by any member (article 13) are less than clear and does not give South Pacific Forum an authority

21. Paul F. Power, "The South Pacific Nuclear Weapon Free Zone", Pacific Affairs, vol. 59, no 3, Fall 1986, pp. 456.

to implement them effectively. ✓

- I. the treaty of Rarotonga has many similarities with the Treaty of Tlatelolco such as in both the treaties there is a provision for each zonal party to conclude a safeguard's agreement with the International Atomic Energy Agency.
- II. both the Treaties have a consultative committee to hear complains and solve disputes among the memebbers. But the zone of the application of the Rarotonga Treaty is narrower than the Treaty of Tlatelolco as the former one mentions the 'Partie's Territory' as the territory of its application, whereas the latter also covers the high seas. Moreover the Treaty of Tlatelolco posses more political and bureaucratic powers over its members than does the Treaty of Rarotonga. On the other hand the latter includes in itself the non-use of any nuclear explosive device, in contrast to the former which is limited only to nuclear weapons.
- III. The third point is that the latter is more technical in the sense that it uses specific terms and its definition to make its point clear, such as 'nuclear explosive device'. This is absent

in the case of Treaty of Tlatelelco.

IV. Unlike the Treaty of Tlatelolco the Treaty of Rarotonga also includes in itself provisions for the prevention of the dumping of nuclear wastes. In 1985. It was in protest by SPF that Japan had to delay its test-dumping nuclear waste in the North Pacific. So, as Toshiki Mogami points out "on few points the Treaty of Rarotonga goes beyond the Treaty of Tlatelolco."²²

¶ The South Pacific Nuclear Weapon Free Zone treaty evoked different reactions after coming into existence. On the one hand it was hailed as the second most effective nuclear free zone in an inhabited region in the world and on the other hand it faced severe criticism. Some of them describe it as a "Not so nuclear free zone". The reasons for this criticism are the following

Firstly the incompleteness of the Treaty is evident from the fact that it does not fit into the widely acceptable definition of a Nuclear Free Zone as defined in 1975 by a group of experts commissioned by the United Nation's General Assembly, (UN 1976, Paras 82 and 148). It leaves each member to decide on transit of foreign ships and

22. Toshiki Mogani, n. 19, p. 42.

overcraft into its territory but no mention is made about the time duration of the transit. This could result in stationing also.

The second point is that the Treaty only prohibits the use of Nuclear explosive device but the parties of the protocols are not bound by it so it becomes, in the words of Mogami 'a Psudo zonal approach"²³

Thirdly according to the protocols of the treaty the nuclear weapon states only guarantee not to use or threat to use nuclear power against the parties to the treaty but it did not prohibit them to use it from within the zones.²⁴

Fourthly as Prof. Ramesh Thakur puts it, the most troublesome issue is the insistence that NWFZ should not disturb the existing security arrangements. American security interest in the AMZUS alliance and the SPNFZ may conflict.²⁵

Fifthly the Treaty does not ban the missile tests

23. Ibid page 18

24. Ibid

25. Ramesh Thakur, n.8.

as the missiles without warheads are not nuclear in themselves but they are indispensable to nuclear weapon production and perfection. So the missile tests should be banned in the same way.²⁶

Sixthly it can be said that there is no meaning of a nuclear free zone unless it is not endorsed by the nuclear powers.

The above mentioned points are enough to explain why actually the South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone Treaty has been considered not a very successful one but this by no way means that this treaty is meaningless. In the words of Goldblast, "The treaty is a modest but significant contribution to the cause of nuclear non-proliferation."²⁷ At least the eight members involved in the treaty have opted out of the nuclear proliferation. As Clarke puts it "It is a (possible) contribution to the global security."²⁸ Paul F. Power also evaluated the Treaty in similar terms. He says "genuineness of

26. Toshiki Moqami, n.20.

27. Jozel Goldblast, "The Treaty of Rarotonga: A Modest but Significant Contribution to the Cause of Nuclear non-Proliferation", Transitional Perspective, vol. 13, no.2, pp. 25-27.

28. Clark Helen, "Establishing A Nuclear Free Zone in the South Pacific", Gold, 1985, pp. 121-126

the nuclear free zone is not the sole criterion by which to judge the value of such enterprise ---- the fact that the prohibition of the stationing of the nuclear weapons, even if partial, has been upgraded to a de jure status, should be taken into account."²⁹

THE SUPER POWER'S RESPONSE AND ITS IMPACT ON THE REGION:-

(In view of the fact that South Pacific region has become an arena of growing interest of great powers, it is important to discuss their responses on the South Pacific Nuclear Weapon Free Zone.

As far as the US is concerned, certain developments have occurred in the recent past because of which US is expected to acquire a positive attitude towards the treaty. Among them are the increasing opposition to nuclear proliferation, the US response to the treaty of Tlatelolco and the fact that the treaty of Rarotonga does not disturb the existing security arrangements. So there is a possibility that US will ratify the treaty protocols. Which will also be in its favour as US relations with Australia also need to be cultivated and timely response will serve to minimise China's impact

29. Paul F, Power, n. 21, p. 456.

on the region,³⁰

(On the other hand France, the main culprit, chose to neglect it for the time-being. Shortly before the signing of the Rarotonga Treaty the French Government re-committed itself to continue its nuclear tests at Mururoa atoll and after the treaty was concluded it gave the indication that it will not ratify the three protocols of the treaty. Mitterand government thought that yielding to regional pressures would be a defeatist step from him, which had already been disputed because of the growing anti-nuclear movement in the region. (The only condition which can compell France to ratify the treaty protocols is the desire to have harmoneous relations with the South Pacific countries.)

(Again the Soviet response to SP~~W~~WFZ has been most positive. Moscow was also interested to sea an end to the transit of US nuclear ships and submarines, following the lead taken by Newzealand in this context. (Both of these steps are part of a wider ambition to end US security links with Australia and Newzealand, and to wreck ANZUS, and hopefully thereby injure other political

30. R. Sean Randolph, "Pacific Overtures", Foreign Policy, vol. 57, Winter 1984-84, pp. 128-42.

and military ties between US and its allies.³¹ (Soviet Union is also looking forward to improve its relations with the South Pacific countries as it wants to secure more fishing rights in the region.)

(China also has given a positive response to the Treaty of Rarotonga. It can claim its support for the nuclear free zone as early as 1975 when this resolution was adopted in the UN General Assembly on which the other nuclear weapon states abstained from voting.)

(Finally, it may be concluded from the above discussion that SPNWFZ possesses certain loopholes but it can not be totally condemned as meaning less.) It cannot be concluded either that SPNWFZ was a fiasco. The value of the SPNWFZ with its breaking mechanism for arm's control should not be denied.³² (Though its effect should be understood within a limited framework but the hope is that each step forward, such as creating a NWFZ will create a better environment for peaceful co-existence of different island nations in the region.)

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31. Paul Dibb, "Soviet Strategy Towards Australia, Newzealand and the South West Pacific," Australian Outlook, vol. 29, Aug. 1985, pp. 69-76.
32. Greg Fry, "The South Pacific Nuclear Free Zone: Significance and Implications," Bulletin of Concerned Asian Scholars, vol. 81, no. 2, 1986, pp. 61

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

Conclusion

To conclude it can be said that the South Pacific Forum is developing as an effective regional body. A look at the functioning of the organisation shows its success in the field of economic and political co-operation.

Investigations conducted by the Forum reveal that the region is endowed with rich resources. Of all the countries Papua New Guinea has been found to be extremely rich in gold and copper mines. Solomon Islands too have gold mines. Vanuatu and Cook Islands have great manganese deposits. Nauru has phosphate and New Caledonia is rich in nickel and chromium. Tonga has copra and Kiribati has manganese. Besides these there are indications of oil deposits in the sea around Papua New Guinea, Tonga and Fiji. In addition to these resources this area is richest in fish and oceanic wealth. Tuna Fishing Industry established in 1987 has grown steadily. The United States of America heads the list of customers for Tuna, Mackrel and frozen fish. Copra, cocoa, rice, palm oil spices like turmeric and ginger are the other products. The cattle industry is also steadily growing and there are plans to sell them in the worldmarket. There is a quest for self-sufficiency in the region and the Forum is

trying to help the member countries in that endeavour. South Pacific Bureau for Economic Co-operation (SPEC) is trying explore the potentials and the ways of co-operation for the development of the region.

Another objective of the Forum has been to strengthen co-operation in fishing and shipping. The establishment of Pacific Forum Line (PFL) in 1977 to promote shipping services in the region and of South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) in 1978 to co-ordinate the activities of the members in fishing have been major steps in this direction. The Pacific Forum Line has done a commendable job in improving the transport and communication among the scattered island states of the region, thus giving a boost to regional trade.

Through the South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency the member states have been able to share their individual experiences and expertise and co-ordinate their activities. The Forum Fisheries Agency has also taken steps to regulate the fishing activities of the extra-regional states. Some of the significant achievements are: the steps taken by it against Draft Gill Net fishing, establishment of 200 mile Exclusive Economic Zone and the treaty with United States in 1988. Moreover under Forum Fisheries Agency a beginning towards establishing

a co-ordinated fisheries management regime has been made (e.g. Nauru Agreement of 1982). However the organisation still falls short of being a full fledged fisheries management body which can effectively deal with all the problems and explore all the possibilities and potentials of regional fishing.

Yet another endeavour has been to co-operate in denuclearising the region. This aspect of Forum activity has international significance and hence it has attracted world wide attention. The activities of the nuclear states are a great threat to the region. It brought nuclear arms race to an otherwise peaceful area. After fully grasping the disastrous effect of these activities, a region wide opposition has been generated. The conclusion of the South Pacific Nuclear Weapon Free Zone Treaty at Rarotonga in 1985 was a major step in this direction. It prohibited nuclear testing and dumping of radio active waste in the region. Later on three protocols were added which enumerated the responsibilities and duties of the nuclear weapon states in implementing the provisions of the treaty. The USSR and China have signed the protocols on the otherhand USA and France have not signed it.

The treaty is a land-mark in the international movement against nuclear proliferation. Of all the countries in the South Pacific Newzealand is the greatest supporter of South Pacific Nuclear Weapon Free Zone. There is an anti-nuclear sentiment in theminds of the people of Newzealand and since 1984 they have vociferously opposed the activities of the French Nuclear programme at Mururoa Atoll. Green Peace Mov. sent a protest ship 'Rainbow Warriier' against French nuclear programme in 1984 and this act infuriated France so much so that they bombed the ship. In 1985 Newzealand refused permission to the visit of US destroyer named Buchanan into its waters. This action infuriated the United States and jeopardised the ANZUS but New Zealand went further and called for a closure of American Airforce Base at Christ Church. There are anti-nuclear sentiments even is Polynesia, Fiji, Tonga and Cook Islands. The region as a whole is voicing its concern against France and United States for nuclear dumping and testing programme in the region. The Forum has made a laudable effort to check the growing nuclear activities of the great powers in the region and an antinuclear environment is emerging.

Great powers are interested to develop closer contacts with the countries of the South Pacific Forum

through multilateral and bilateral arrangements. United States is the largest donor of aid in economic and strategic spheres but recently Japan has shown great interest in developing the potentials of the region and forging closer links with it. In January 1986 the Japanese foreign minister, Kuranari visited Fiji and announced the establishment of a \$ 2 million Special Development Fund for the South Pacific. He invited various leaders of the South Pacific countries to visit Japan for economic aid and co-operation in developing industrial and economic infrastructure. Subsequently in 1987 ten South Pacific nations sent their representatives to Tokyo, Japan in that year gave \$ 68 million to the various countries of the region. Japan's relations with the South Pacific countries are developing very fast. On the other hand, China has established national committee for Pacific Economic Co-operation to Co-ordinate its relationship with the countries of the Forum. France, Soviet Union and India have also evinced interest to forge closer links. Australia and Newzealand are trying their best to aid and assist the South Pacific countries and contribute to their modernization.

As far as co-operation in political matters is concerned, the Forum is evolving a common

perspective. On the issue of New Caledonia it passed a resolution to support the claim of independence. South Pacific Forum in its meeting of August 1986 voted unanimously to support the reinscription of New Caledonia on the United Nations list of non-self-governing-territories. It was subsequently accepted by the United Nations. Though independence is yet to come, an environment has been created in which France may decolonize New Caledonia. Again on the question of military coup d'état in Fiji in May 1987 the Forum evolved a common approach. Though majority of the South Pacific Nations did not approve the imposition of racist military dictatorship in Fiji yet they decided not to interfere in the politics of Fiji.

In the end it can be said that the South Pacific Forum has succeeded in creating a climate conducive to regional co-operation. Though there are several social groupings (Malenesians, Polynesians and Micronesians), yet they are evolving a concensus on major regional issues. They have taken initiative to establish non-nuclear and 'Pacific Way of Life', and this has been possible due to efforts of the South Pacific Forum.

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