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The road to independence¹

Footfalls echo in the memory
Down the passage we did not take
Towards the door we never opened
Into the rose-garden.

— T.S. Eliot²

The Union Jack came down for the last time in Fiji on 10 October 1970; exactly 96 years after Fiji had become a British Crown Colony. Prince Charles, representing the Queen, was on hand to deliver Fiji's constitutional documents to the new Prime Minister, Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara. Foreign dignitaries from some 30 countries watched and applauded the new nation on its way, among them astronaut Michael Collins representing President Nixon, New Zealand's Prime Minister Sir Keith Holyoke, and the leaders of Samoa, Tonga and the Cook Islands. In Suva Harbour, warships from four navies watched the unfolding proceedings. Throughout the country, school children flew the new miniature independence flag—navy blue with the Union Jack on the left top hand corner and Fiji's coat of arms on the right.

1 A version of this paper was presented to a conference on nation building at the University Kabangsan Malaysia, Bangi, Malaysia. I have referenced it lightly, but for those needing further guide to the literature, the main works cited here should be sufficient. Originally given as a lecture in a symposium on Nation Building at Univrersiti Kabang Malaysia, Bangi, 2010 (revised).

2 T.S. Eliot, 'Burnt Norton', *Four Quartets* (London: Faber and Faber, 1958 [1943]), 1.11–14.

Independence did not mark an abrupt or angry rupture of relations between the United Kingdom and the new nation, but rather the continuation of the journey Fiji began at the time of Cession in 1874, Prime Minister Mara assured his guests and the nation. ‘We became dependent in a warm spirit of friendliness and trust and we become independent in the same warm spirit.’³ ‘Nothing that is happening today,’ he continued, ‘can change the warm feelings of our people for the Crown, the United Kingdom and its people.’ In this respect, Fiji’s experience of decolonisation resonated with the wider Pacific experience. Independence there came late, was orderly, peaceful and amicably negotiated, leaving largely intact the colonial structures and the ideological underpinnings that sustained them.⁴ The contrast with the experience of Southeast Asia and most parts of Africa could not have been greater.

The peaceful transfer of power was welcome, not least because it had seemed a distant dream just a year before, but it left the major problems facing Fiji unresolved, shelved. The consultations about independence were held in secrecy in Fiji, and the constitutional agreement reached in London was never subjected to public debate. Deeply held views about the structure of the electoral system, for instance, which had bedevilled Fiji politics throughout the 1960s, were put on hold for fear of disrupting the feel-good atmosphere accompanying independence. The fears and anxieties of the different communities, their contested understanding of what the new independent state should be about, were camouflaged under a thin veneer of contrived national unity. Fiji at independence was not so much a cohesive multiracial nation as it was a wary coalition of ethnic groups each with their own distinctive, often divergent and sometimes diametrically opposed understandings of their role and place in the national polity. Controversial issues were avoided, elided or silenced by self-censorship or threats of retribution. They would return to haunt the nation. The tragedy of Fiji at independence was that it was trapped by a failed past and unable to articulate an encompassing vision for all of its people that enlarged the common space of citizenship.

3 Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara, ‘Message from the Prime Minister’, in *Fiji Independence Souvenir Magazine*, 1970. On Mara generally, see Deryck Scarr, *Tuimacilai: A Life of Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara* (Adelaide: Crawford House Publishing, 2008).

4 J.W. Davidson, ‘Constitutional change in Fiji’, *The Journal of Pacific History* 1 (1966): 165–68, doi.org/10.1080/00223346608572086; Peter Larmour, ‘The decolonization of the Pacific Islands’, in *Foreign Forces in Pacific Politics*, ed. Ron Crocombe and Ahmed Ali (Suva: Institute of Pacific Studies, 1983), pp. 1–23. A detailed documentary study of Fiji’s decolonisation is in Brij V. Lal (ed.), *Fiji: British Documents on the End of the Empire* (London: The Stationery Office, 2006).

Fiji's colonial self-image, and its self-image at the time of independence, was of a stable three-legged stool.⁵ The three legs were the indigenous Fijian, the Indo-Fijian and the European communities. Each of them was seen as distinct and separate in their culture, history and economic position, largely homogenous in their own internal social and cultural configurations, but interlinked to the overarching national structure, making their unique contribution through their own separate channels. The indigenous Fijians provided the land for economic development; the Indo-Fijians provided the labour and Europeans the capital. Since the contribution of the three groups was deemed to be equally valid, no one group alone (except the indigenous Fijians, but more about that later) was to enjoy privileges and rights greater than others. Equality of group representation, irrespective of size, was to be the basis of political representation. And the colonial state positioned itself as the neutral, benevolent, disinterested arbiter of conflict.

This was a comforting, self-serving, metaphor for a complex, conflicted reality. None of the three ethnic groups was homogenous. Religious and cultural divisions racked the Indo-Fijian community. Europeans feared being swamped by part-Europeans (as they were called) with whom they were lumped together for voting purposes. Class and regional differences divided the Fijians, as they do today. There was no equivalence—or balance, to use the colonial vocabulary—between Indo-Fijian labour on the one hand and European capital on the other. Nor was colonial rule as benevolent as its advocates argued. The metaphor served the interests of the colonial officialdom, but did great disservice to Fiji's complex history. It is to the evolution of that complex history that I now turn.

Let us begin at the beginning to understand the origins of the problems that confronted Fiji throughout the twentieth century. The foundations of modern Fiji were laid when it became a British colony in 1874. Reluctantly acquired, Britain expected Fiji to become economically self-sustaining in the quickest possible time. But the conditions for rapid economic development were absent. European planters, numbering around 2,000 in the mid-1870s, were insolvent and despondent. Indigenous Fijians were dispirited and restless, having lost a third of the population to an

5 J.L.V. Sukuna, *Fiji: The Tree-Legged Stool: Writings of Ratu Sir Lala Sukuna*, ed. Deryck Scarr (London: Macmillan Education, 1983). For Sukuna's life, see Deryck Scarr, *Ratu Sukuna: Soldier, Statesman, Man of Two Worlds* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Education, 1980).

epidemic of measles accidentally introduced from Australia. Large parts of fertile Fijian lands were being claimed by European settlers, often for a pittance. And there were demands on Fijian labour, too.

Fiji's first substantive governor, Sir Arthur Gordon, promulgated a set of policies that settled Fiji's future for more than a century. He began a system of 'indirect rule' designed, he said:

to seize the spirit in which native institutions had been framed, and develop to the utmost extent the capacities of the people for the management of their own affairs, without exciting their suspicions or destroying their self-respect.⁶

To that end, he formalised a Council of Chiefs to advise him on Fijian matters. The Council, constitutionally entrenched in the 1997 Constitution, but disestablished in 2009 by Fiji's coup leader Commodore Frank Bainimarama, was the supreme advisory body to government on matters affecting the Fijian community. Under various constitutional arrangements following the military coup of 1987, it nominated the president and vice-president of the Republic, and its nominees in the Senate enjoyed the power of veto over all legislation affecting Fijian land, customs and customary rights.

Second, Gordon's policies ensured that 83 per cent of all land remained in Fijian hands in inalienable right. Without a secure ownership of land, Fijian society would eventually disintegrate, Gordon believed. Today, as Crown land has come under the jurisdiction of the Native Land Trust Board (created in 1940), more than 90 per cent of all land in Fiji is owned by the indigenous community. Gordon decreed that the Fijian people should be freed from the pressures of commercial employment and allowed to progress at their own pace in their own traditional surroundings, paying tax in kind rather than cash, and tending to their lifestyle in their age-old fashion. For nearly a century, the Fijians had their own separate court system, their own provincial administration, native regulations and strictly observed schedule of work in the villages. Their isolation from the mainstream of colonial society was almost complete.

⁶ Arthur Hamilton Gordon, *Paper on the System of Taxation in Force in Fiji. Read before the Colonial Institute* (London: Harrison, 1879), p. 178; see also J.K. Chapman, *The Career of Sir Arthur Hamilton Gordon: First Lord Stanmore, 1829–1912* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1964), doi.org/10.3138/9781442652699; J.D. Legge, *Britain in Fiji, 1858–1880* (London: Macmillan, 1958). See also David Routledge, *Matanitu: Struggle for Power in Early Fiji* (Suva: Institute of Pacific Studies, 1985).

Gordon's policies were well-intentioned, but over time they became encrusted in orthodoxy.⁷ A once fluid situation, represented by dynastic wars and warring chiefdoms, was frozen by fiat, uniform codes and practices imposed on a diverse and complex society where none had existed before, and certain collaborating regions privileged in leadership and social status over others. Chiefly hierarchy and privileges were entrenched and enforced at law. Gordon had intended his policies to be reviewed after 25 years; enough time, he felt, for a distressed community to achieve some stability. But when the moment came, officials baulked and the opportunity for review and reform was missed. Sadly, Fijians watched, cocooned in their subsistence sector, as the world around them changed and moved on.

From the very beginning, Fijians were led to believe that in the colony their interests would be 'paramount', and the phrase 'paramountcy of Fijian interests', mistakenly attributed to the Deed of Cession, was often invoked both by the Fijians themselves and by European settlers to block change not determined by themselves. But the phrase was intended to be used in a protective sense. That is, in the management of Fijian affairs, the government would give 'paramount' importance to the views of the Fijian people and their leaders. Over the course of the twentieth century, though, the phrase came to acquire another, more assertive, meaning—that in the broader scheme of things, Fijians would enjoy rights and privileges over and above those of their fellow citizens.

To solve the problem of capital, Gordon turned overseas. Having seen the success of plantation economies in the Caribbean and Mauritius—he had been Governor of Trinidad and Mauritius before coming to Fiji—he chose the plantation economy as his preferred mode of economic development, and sugar cane as the plantation crop. He invited the Australian Colonial Sugar Refining Company (CSR) to extend its operations in Fiji, which it did in 1882, and remained there until 1973.⁸ In time, the CSR became the monopoly producer of sugar in Fiji, with considerable political influence in the affairs of the colony. To work the plantations, Gordon imported Indian indentured labour. Between 1879, when emigration began, and 1916, when it ended, more than 60,000 men and women and

7 Peter France, *Charter of the Land: Custom and Colonization in Fiji* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1969).

8 Michael Moynagh, *Brown or White? A History of the Fiji Sugar Industry, 1873–1973* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1981).

children arrived in the colony.⁹ When their five-year contracts expired, the government encouraged them to stay on. Most did. From the experience of indenture emerged a new society, more egalitarian, enterprising and driven by desperation, and seeking, as anthropologist W.E.H. Stanner put it, 'peaceful seepage into every opening left unclosed and a tenacious defence of every position once occupied'.¹⁰ Isolated, struggling, self-absorbed and vulnerable, the Indo-Fijian community was just as caught up in its own internal affairs, changing and adjusting to the requirements of their new adopted homeland, and just as myopic about its long-term interests as the Fijian community.

Indentured emigration was sanctioned by the Government of India on the broad understanding that the indentured labourers who decided to settle in the colonies would enjoy rights equal to the other British subjects there. This assurance was periodically reinstated, as in 1910:

The whole tenor of the correspondence between India and the colony shows that it was on this condition that indentured immigration in Fiji has been allowed in the past, and any measures leading towards lowering the political status of the immigrants or reducing their economic freedom would, in our opinion, involve a breach of faith with those affected.¹¹

Throughout their political struggle in the twentieth century, Indo-Fijian leaders would continue to cite the principle of parity in support of their cause.

After the end of their indentures, the freed Indians settled on leased land, and continued to work mainly in the sugar industry as growers and mill workers, as their descendants did for several generations. The community diversified and grew; outnumbering the indigenous Fijians in the total population in the mid-1940s and spawning publicly aired and politically charged fears about 'Indian domination'.¹² But while remaining on the land, the Indo-Fijians established schools, often without state assistance,

9 K.L. Gillion, *Fiji's Indian Migrants: A History to the End of Indenture in 1920* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1962); Brij V. Lal, *Chalo Jahaji: On a Journey of Indenture in Fiji* (Suva: Fiji Museum, 2000; Canberra: ANU E Press, 2012), doi.org/10.22459/CJ.12.2012.

10 W.E.H. Stanner, *South Seas in Transition: A Study of Post-War Rehabilitation and Reconstruction in Three British Pacific Dependencies* (Sydney: Australasian Publishing Company, 1953), p. 179.

11 Brij V. Lal, *A Vision for Change: A.D. Patel and the Politics of Fiji* (Canberra: ANU E Press, 2011), p. 6, doi.org/10.22459/VC.11.2011.

12 K.L. Gillion, *The Fiji Indians: Challenge to European Dominance, 1920–1946* (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1977).

seeing education as the way out of the vagaries of life on leased land. In time, most settlements had a primary and even a secondary school whose students filled the junior ranks of the civil service, and from the 1950s onwards, the professions as lawyers, doctors, nurses and accountants. Fijians, too, had their own schools but their educational success was limited. Cultural factors, emphasising group solidarity and the virtue of subordinating individual interests to communal interests, rural isolation and poor educational facilities played a part. Moreover, Fijian leaders actively discouraged 'academic' education for ordinary Fijians. The few opportunities for higher education were reserved for people of chiefly rank. As the starkest example of this, the Great Council of Chiefs (GCC) declined to offer a university scholarship to Rusiate Nayacakalou, a commoner who later emerged as the most brilliant Fiji-born social scientist of the twentieth century.¹³

If the disparity in educational opportunities for the two communities was one problem that would haunt Fiji in future, another was the mono-racial character of its schools. The Queen Victoria School was exclusively Fijian while most schools in the sugarcane belt were predominantly Indo-Fijian. Multiracial schools were mostly Christian and in urban areas. The children of the two communities, then, attending their own racially oriented schools, and firmly tethered to their own cultural ethos and values, had no opportunity to acquire a knowledge of each other's culture and language, and of any understanding of the deeper impulses that drove them. And yet, students from these schools would be called upon later to play a vital role on the national stage; a task for which, by virtue of their cross-culturally limited education, they were spectacularly ill-suited. It is no wonder that Fiji has faltered in its postindependence journey. The tragedy is that little is being done even now to rectify the situation

The tiny European population occupied the apex of the colonial, social and economic pinnacle. They dominated the retail and wholesale commerce of the colony, owned copra plantations and shipping companies and occupied pride of place in the colonial administration. They had their own racially segregated clubs and exclusive voluntary associations and schools. In the twentieth century, they began to move to urban towns

13 Stewart Firth and Daryl Tarte (eds), *20th Century Fiji: People who Shaped the Nation* (Suva: USP Solutions, 2001), pp. 131–32. The GCC is an entirely indigenous Fijian body, traditionally of hereditary chiefs, whose role has been to advise governments on matters pertaining to the Fijians. It appoints the president, the vice-president as well as 14 of the 32 members of the Senate (Upper House).

and centres. The community was not homogenous, though, with fine lines of demarcation differentiating the various nationalities that comprised it. Europeans of all hues saw themselves as superior to part-Europeans who, for political purposes, were grouped with them. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, some prominent Europeans, dissatisfied with the policies of the local government, tried to have Fiji annexed to New Zealand, but when that alternative vanished, they agitated for a privileged place in colonial politics. Paramountcy for Fijians, Parity for Indo-Fijians and Privilege for Europeans: these three conflicting ideas informed the political discourse in colonial Fiji.

Political representation

From the very beginning, the electoral system in Fiji was race based.¹⁴ The colonial government saw this as natural and desirable. In part, it reflected its own interests; with the three communities locked in their own separate compartments, the colonial government could play the role of an impartial referee. Certainly, the government did little to encourage the communities to forge common, multiracial links among themselves. Europeans were given the right of elected representation in 1904, Indo-Fijians in 1929 and indigenous Fijians in 1963. Before then, Fijian representatives in the Legislative Council were nominated by the GCC. Each group had equal representation irrespective of population size. Under the Letters Patent of 1937, which remained in force until 1963, the three communities had five representatives each. Three of the five Indo-Fijians and Europeans were elected by their group and two nominated by the governor, while all five Fijians were nominated by the chiefs.

This arrangement was frequently questioned after World War II to make the political structure reflect more accurately the demographic, social and economic changes sweeping Fiji, as well as Whitehall's commitment to gradual self-government for the colonies. Specifically, advocates of constitutional change wanted elected representatives to be more directly involved in policy formulation. This agitation for constitutional change was led, not by Indo-Fijians, but by a group of Europeans. Their goal was not to remove racial representation; they wanted that maintained.

14 Brij V. Lal, *Broken Waves: A History of the Fiji Islands in the Twentieth Century* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1992); Ahmed Ali, *Fiji: From Colony to Independence, 1874–1970* (Suva: School of Social and Economic Development, University of the South Pacific, 1977).

The Europeans wanted the system of nomination abolished for everyone, including the Fijians. Fijians were opposed to the extension of election. Why change the system of government when that system was working satisfactorily, they asked? A democratic system of government did not suit the Fijian people.¹⁵ A universal franchise would be open to abuse and corruption and manipulation by selfish individuals. Chiefs were the natural leaders of their people and it was un-Fijian to trust critical decisions to commoners. Fijian fears about the security of their rights were exacerbated by the rapid increase in the Indo-Fijian population, which exceeded the indigenous population for the first time, with the Fijian Affairs Board asking Whitehall to take a firmer line with Indo-Fijian politicians and others agitating for constitutional reform. Colonial rule had been good for the indigenous community. It had preserved their social and cultural institutions, their way of life. They therefore saw no need for change.

Indo-Fijian leaders disagreed. They accepted that the rights and privileges of the indigenous community should not be questioned. Minority rights should be protected, but, as A.D. Patel, the leading Indo-Fijian member of the Legislative Council, put it in 1946, minority communities had 'also to appreciate and realise the fact that you cannot expect or hope for privileges and rights in excess of those enjoyed by the majority'. He continued to argue for a nonracial common roll form of voting. He had pursued this idea since the late 1920s, and would continue to do so throughout his political life. A common roll, he believed, was the only way forward for a racially divided society, the only way 'a common denominator of a political outlook will be developed'.¹⁶ But he agreed that a common roll could not be introduced unless everyone accepted the idea. His plea fell on deaf, indeed hostile, ears. Forty years after his death, a common roll became a reality in Fiji, though he would have never approved of the manner of its introduction—through a military coup and a decreed constitution. Its introduction was facilitated by the fundamental demographic change in Fiji in the late twentieth century, which saw the indigenous community become the outright majority of the population, putting paid to fears of Indian dominance for good.

15 Brij V. Lal, 'The decolonisation of Fiji: Debate on constitutional change, 1943–1963', in *Emerging from Empire? Decolonisation in the Pacific*, ed. Donald Denoon (Canberra: Division of Pacific and Asian History, The Australian National University, 1997), pp. 26–39.

16 See Lal, 'The decolonisation of Fiji', p. 29.

Murmurings of change

Lack of a consensus about the pace and direction of constitutional change suited the colonial government, placing it in the happy position of not having to take a stand or propose initiatives on a controversial issue. Privately, though, its views were deeply divided. Among many there was instinctive sympathy for the Fijian position and a marked lack of it for Indo-Fijians. There was an understanding of the Fijian predicament leavened with a good deal of romanticism about the Fijian way of life.¹⁷ The fact that Fijian leaders looked to Britain for guidance, after having reposed complete trust in her institutions and policies, increased the sense of obligation and responsibility correspondingly. The government had little understanding of the impulses that drove the Indo-Fijians, for whom colonial rule was not the solution but the cause of Fiji's problems. Remembering the hardship of indenture and acts of petty discrimination, they saw little of value but much to criticise in colonial rule. And they were not averse to airing their grievances outside the colony, much to the irritation of colonial officials.

There was an Indian problem, many agreed, but it could just as easily have been labelled a 'Fijian problem'. As Governor Grantham told London in 1946:

Apart from the relative growth in population, it might be better termed the Fijian problem, since it is rather a question of raising the Fijian so that he [*sic*] is able to hold his own with the Indian in the modern world, than holding back the Indian so that he does not outstrip the more easy-going Fijian.¹⁸

Fijian interests should be protected, the Commissioner of Labour told the Legislative Council in 1946, but the Fijians had 'reciprocal obligations to the other races in this colony to recognise their economic and political aspirations and facilitate their attainment'. The Europeans and Indo-Fijians had made their contribution to the colony 'and they are entitled to be admitted into full membership of the Colonial family'. To be sure, there were divisions and distinctions, but the:

17 G.K. Roth, *Fijian Way of Life* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1953).

18 Governor Grantham to Colonial Office (CO), 28 August 1946, Despatch 104, CO series 83/252.

interests of the three races are not as so many independent threads, but strands which are interwoven into one economic fabric which are interwoven into one economic fabric; and each strand is essential to the strength of the whole.¹⁹

To those who invoked real or imagined promises to the Fijian people, he replied:

The obligation of the Government to the Fijians can be stated comprehensively in a few sentences; we must preserve all that is good of their culture, but not outworn customs and ways of life; we must give them the opportunities and the means to expand that culture; we must protect them from exploitation and disease; and otherwise so govern and lead these people as ultimately to achieve their full integration into the political and economic life of a composite society comprising all the races of the Colony.²⁰

In the 1950s, official sluggishness began to yield with the appointment of Sir Ronald Garvey (1903–1991) as governor. Garvey, an old Pacific hand, was independent-minded, self-confident and acutely aware of the local realities. Garvey wanted to move the constitutional train along because he was convinced:

fairly steady, progress is being made [towards common citizenship]. Both colour and social barriers are being broken down and the desirability and, indeed, inevitability of unity is taking shape. It is a policy which I constantly preach myself and it is having its imperceptible effect throughout the whole community.²¹

In 1954, Garvey asked the GCC to consider directly electing three of their five representatives to the Legislative Council to give the Fijians an experience of electoral politics. He told the chiefs that the ‘chiefly system on which so much depends should march with the times and should not ignore—for too long—the modern trend of democracy’.²² To those who invoked the Deed of Cession in support of gradualism and permanent paramountcy of Fijian interests, Garvey responded with characteristic but unprecedented bluntness. He said in 1957:

19 Commissioner of Labour, in *Fiji Legislative Council Debates*, 1946.

20 *ibid.*

21 Ronald Garvey to CO, 4 October 1956, CO series 83 1036/9.

22 Ronald Garvey to GCC, 10 October 1954.

Surely the intention of this Deed, acknowledged and accepted by chiefs who were parties to it, was that Fiji should be developed so as to take a significant place in the affairs of the world but that, in the process, the rights and interests of the Fijian people should be respected. To read into the Deed more than that, to suggest, for instance, that the rights and interests of the Fijians should predominate over everything else, does no service either to the Fijian people or to their country. The view, for the Fijians, would mean complete protection and no self-respecting individual race wants that because, ultimately, it means that those subject to it will end up as museum pieces. The Indians are equally eligible to have their interests respected. By their work and enterprise, the Indians in Fiji have made a great contribution to the development and prosperity of their country, and to the welfare of its people. They are an essential part of the community and it is unrealistic to suppose that they are not or to imagine that the position of Fijians in the world today would benefit by their absence.²³

Lull before the storm

Governor Garvey approached the Colonial Office in 1956 with fresh constitutional proposals. His ultimate goal was common Fijian citizenship, he said. Perhaps his most radical proposal was a 'Multi-Racial Bench' of four members, one each from the three main racial groups and one to represent 'other races' such as Chinese and other Pacific Islanders, all of them elected from a colony-wide constituency. This was the first time that such a proposal had been made. But Garvey was not supported by his more cautious, conservative officers. The opponents argued that the concept of a multiracial bench would be opposed by the Europeans and Fijians who would see the proposal as 'the thin edge of the wedge' driving towards a common roll, paving the way for reforms far too radical for the colony to bear. And would not members not elected by their own group be seen as puppets of the group whose votes elected them? Garvey was undaunted, saying that 'if we are aiming at a growth of a consciousness of Fijian citizenship overbidding differences of race and religion, I think it has considerable merit'.²⁴ Maintaining the status quo was no solution to Fiji's political problems.

23 Ronald Garvey, quoted in the *Fiji Times*, 15 October 1957.

24 Garvey to CO, 4 October 1956.

Garvey's proposal was discussed by the old colonial hands in London—the 'back room boys', Garvey called them derisively—who raised all the tired old arguments about the need for Whitehall to keep a firm grip of the initiative and act just in advance of pressure, but only just. The racial factor had to be considered. 'It is true that constitutional advance does not wait upon a country's demand, but the circumstances of Fiji are rather special and to go too fast would ... play into the hands of the Indians.'²⁵ 'If there is no pressure for a change, we should be the last to stimulate it', was the advice of one Colonial Office hand. Garvey's motive was questioned. Was he actuated by the desire to end his term of office by 'some significant advance'? The Secretary of State replied to Garvey's proposals on 20 March 1956:

It seems very unwise to do anything to encourage it [constitutional reform] to grow more quickly unless we have some fairly clear idea where we are going. In some respects Fiji is a very difficult proposition from the point of view of constitutional advance. We are all, very naturally, inclined to think of such advance in terms of British institutions, leading in the direction of an elected assembly, universal adult suffrage, the party system, the vesting of executive power in unofficial Ministers and so forth. Yet we are learning by experience elsewhere that the traditional British pattern, however suitable for places of a certain size, is difficult to work out in small territories, even where there is a homogenous and relatively well advanced population; it is still more difficult to apply in such a place as Fiji, where race means more than party, and where a dilemma is created by the numerical preponderance of the Indians on the one hand and our obligations to the Fijians on the other. It may well be that what we ought to aim at in Fiji is some form of constitution which differs from the traditional pattern. In this connection you may like to look at the enclosed document about another of our problem areas—Mauritius—not because the ideas which are being tried out there are necessarily all applicable ... but as an illustration of the fact that new ways are being sought to establish forms of democracy and of representative institutions in places where the conditions favourable to the 'Westminster model' do not exist.²⁶

25 *ibid.*

26 Secretary of State to Sir Ronald Garvey, 20 March 1956, CO series 83 1036/10.

Garvey was disappointed, but not surprised. The fears of the floodgates were, in truth, groundless, he said. In taking the initiative, he reminded the Colonial Office, he was ‘not playing with a scorpion’s tale’. His modest proposals would have resulted in ‘some quickening of interest in a direction where we are failing to make progress even though we are far better equipped than many who have raced ahead of us’.²⁷ If Fiji were to wait for integration to take place at the local government level, before proceeding to any constitutional change, ‘we shall have to wait a long time for progress in that direction’. When recommending the appointment of a commissioner to advise on constitutional matters, Garvey said, he was not thinking of anyone entirely unfamiliar with Fiji. He had in mind Sir Arthur Richards, now Lord Milverton, a widely respected former governor, who had engineered the creation of the Native Land Trust Board.

By the late 1950s, Fiji was a very different place to what it had been at the beginning of the decade. The working class had begun to organise. A series of lightning strikes in the 1950s, culminated in the December 1959 riots that shook Fiji. A crippling strike in the sugar industry was in prospect, after a peaceful interlude of nearly two decades. The population was increasing rapidly and becoming better informed about events in Fiji and overseas, thanks to a thriving print media and the advent of the radio. Fijian soldiers were returning to Fiji after four years of service in the Malayan jungles. Two major commissions of enquiry were under way, one by geographer O.H.K. Spate into the economic and social problems facing the Fijian people²⁸ and another, by Sir Alan Burns, into the natural resources and population trends in the colony, both recommending a fundamental change of direction.²⁹

The government could no longer afford to stall or stonewall. In his budget address to the Legislative Council in 1960, the new governor, Sir Kenneth Maddocks (1907–2001), tested the waters by suggesting the need for constitutional reform, hoping that the next election (in 1963) might be held under a new Letters Patent. The aim was to give more responsibility to unofficial members and pave the way for a ministerial system of government—called the Member System—under which unofficial members of the Legislative Council would be invited to

27 Garvey to CO, 4 October 1956.

28 O.H.K. Spate, *The Fijian People: Economic Problems and Prospects* (Suva: Government of Fiji Legislative Council Paper 13, 1959).

29 Sir Alan Burns et al., *Report of the Commission of Enquiry into the Natural Resources and Population Trends of the Colony of Fiji* (Suva: Government of Fiji Legislative Council Paper 8 of 1961).

undertake a supervisory role for a collection of government departments, contribute to policy formulation and oversee its implementation, all under the principle of collective, cabinet-type responsibility.

The government's constitutional proposals were debated in the April 1961 sitting of the Legislative Council, with the motion being introduced by the acting colonial secretary. His tone is almost pleading, begging European and Fijian members to have an open mind on reform. For the first time, the government was taking the lead, somewhat along the lines that Garvey had envisaged in the 1950s. He asked the members to 'try and establish for ourselves a long-term objective'. The winds of decolonisation were moving closer to the Pacific. Samoa was on the verge of independence and Fiji could not afford to be indifferent. 'I know it would be nice to consider Fiji in a vacuum and isolated and do as we wish, but unfortunately we cannot.' He continued:

We are part of the world and there are forces moving which, whether we like it or not—and I know many of us do not like it—are going to have a profound influence on us and on our future. We need to consider these forces; what they are and what steps are necessary to meet and mould them to our ends. We want to do it in our own unhurried time. We do not want to wait till the forces are built up against us and we have to do things as a matter of urgency. Let us think ahead, see what is coming, be ready for it and do all that we have to do in our own time, and by our own choosing ... do not let us forget the forces outside. It is no good forgetting them; they are there and they are real.³⁰

By 'forces out there', the government meant the pressure from the United Nations' Committee on Decolonisation, which watched developments in Fiji closely, to the irritation of the colonial government as well as Fijians and Europeans.

Then the colonial secretary turned to those who always tried to clinch the no-change argument by saying that the advocates of change were a minority, and that the majority of the people were satisfied with the status quo. He is worth quoting at length:

[A]most everything starts with a minority. Minorities have a way of growing, and when minorities have a popular idea, any Government which ignores such a minority does so at its peril. A minority can be likened to a small stream. It is there, something

30 *Fiji Legislative Council Debate*, April 1961.

quite small and water is soft. It can be used for many purposes. If you dam the stream the waters build up behind the dam so you build a bigger dam, but one day you cannot go on and the burst comes. We do not want a burst here. What we want is to look together into the future and be sure that this stream of ideas, this minority perhaps, this thing called democracy is not dammed up or held back but is guided to our purpose. We want no burst dam.³¹

Unsurprisingly, the Indo-Fijian members supported the motion while Europeans opposed it. But what mattered more now than ever before was the reaction of the Fijian leaders. Fijian opinion was not as solidly against change as in the past. Although the majority opposed the motion, they did so for quite different reasons. Among those who remained unconvinced of the government's policy was Ratu Kamisese Mara, the ascendant Fijian political leader and Fiji's first prime minister. The government's policy was ill-conceived and ill-timed, he said, because it ignored the spirit and implications of the Deed of Cession and the special place of the Fijian people in their own country. The chiefs had ceded Fiji 'to be part and partial of the United Kingdom', in the same way that the Channel Islands and the Isle of Man were integral parts of the UK. That special relationship was recognised in the title Fijians used to refer to the Queen: *Radi ni Viti kei Peretania*, the Queen of Fiji and of Great Britain. Ratu Mara urged caution and gradualism. Constitutional development should follow, not precede, social and economic integration. Ratu Penaia (1918–1993), another high chief and future Governor-General and President of Fiji, agreed: no constitution, no matter how good, would work unless there was a common background of accepted principles.

The government listened politely, knowing that it had no alternative but to take the lead, though without embarrassing the Fijian members. It sought to allay their fears without compromising the principle of constitutional reform. Ratu Mara's contention about the Isle of Man was rejected. The two island groups had completely different histories and unique relationships with the United Kingdom. The government denied that its proposals detracted from the promises of the Deed of Cession, and assured the Fijian leaders that it would entrench provisions regarding the native ownership of land as well as others that touched upon customary matters. To the argument that social and economic integration should

31 *ibid.*

precede political reform, the government argued that ‘unity does not have to grow from the bottom. In fact, when there are present communities speaking different languages, having different religions, living mostly in a different economy and having different customs’, unity ‘can spread downwards’. Suva was not doing anything that London itself had not adopted as official policy. The colonial secretary reminded the Legislative Council that as early as 1943 the United Kingdom had pledged itself to ‘guide Colonial people along the road to self-government within the British Empire,’ adding that ‘it is no part of our policy to confer political advances which are unjustified by circumstances or to grant self-government to those who are not yet trained in its use’.³² For Whitehall, though, the latter qualification had reached the end of its life.

In 1963, Fiji got new Letters Patent that provided for an enlarged Legislative Council, consisting of 19 official and 18 unofficial members,³³ the three main communities had six members each—the principle of parity was preserved—four elected from racial rolls and two nominated by the governor. Property qualification for voters was abolished and, for the first time, a universal franchise was extended to the Fijians. The issue after 1963 was not if self-government and independence would come to Fiji, but rather the terms and conditions upon which they would be acceptable to its various ethnic communities.

The road to independence

By the mid-1960s, the political landscape of Fiji had altered dramatically. Fijian fears, alluded to above, intensified. The industrial disputes of 1959 in Suva and in the sugar industry in 1960, aroused or, rather, reinforced the threat of Indo-Fijian domination. The calls for reform in the Fijian system of administration—for traditional structures to be loosened to enable greater personal enterprise among those Fijians who wanted it, for the natural resources of the country to be used in an economic way for the benefit of the country as a whole, for the system of Fijian administration, which had kept the indigenous community isolated from the mainstream, to be overhauled—startled a people used to gentle counselling, flattery and effusive praise for their traditional way of life. Their leaders expressed their

32 *Fiji Legislative Council Debates*, July 1961.

33 Norman Mellor and James Anthony, *Fiji Goes to the Polls, The Crucial Legislative Council Elections of 1963* (Honolulu: East-West Center Press, 1968).

anger, and London listened. 'I see no future in the Burns recommendation that the Fijian administration should be wound up as soon as possible,' wrote Julian Amery, Undersecretary of State for the Colonies in 1960.

The Fijians are determined to resist any move in this direction. They realise that whatever its defects the tribal system does provide a leadership capable of defending the Fijian communal interest against what they regard as the Indian threat. Without their chiefs they would be leaderless.³⁴

Still, Fijian leaders realised that they could not go on resisting whatever constitutional proposals the government presented. And so the Fijian Affairs Board, the executive arm of the GCC, presented their views in a document that subsequently came to be known as the Wakaya Letter.³⁵ In it, they stated their preconditions for constitutional reform. Addressed to Nigel Fisher, the Parliamentary Undersecretary of State for the Colonies, the letter reminded the Crown of the special significance of the Deed of Cession for the Fijians. It was the Fijian view that 'the possibility of severance of this link with the Crown—a link forged in a spirit of mutual trust and goodwill—should never be contemplated'.³⁶ Before any further constitutional changes were considered, the letter stated, the terms of the relationship, which they mistakenly likened to the relationship between Britain and the Channel Islands, should be clarified and codified. The letter went on:

There would have to be a precise restatement of the guarantee on Fijian land ownership. We visualise that the Native Land Trust Legislation should not be changed or added to without the prior consent of the Sovereign and the agreement of the Council of Chiefs. We also stand by the expressed desire of the High Chiefs in the preamble to the Deed of Cession that Fiji should be a Christian state and that therefore no constitutional or administrative changes should take place that would deviate from that intention. The provision of the Fijian Affairs Ordinance that all legislation affecting Fijian rights and interests should be referred to the Fijian Affairs Board or, on the recommendation of the Board, to the Council of Chiefs, should be retained and likewise the Governor's direction to the Public Service Commission to work towards a balance of the races in the Civil Service.³⁷

34 Julian Amery, Undersecretary of State for the Colonies in 1960, CO series 83 1036/612.

35 A copy of the Wakaya Letter is reproduced in Lal, *Broken Waves*, p. 189.

36 *ibid.*

37 *ibid.*

If these concerns were addressed, the letter concluded, the Fijian chiefs would consider contemplating further constitutional changes.

The letter was a negotiating document, designed to extract the maximum concession from the governments in Suva and in London. The Colonial Office was sympathetic to Fijian concerns but firm about the need not to ignore the interests and concerns of the nonindigenous communities. The government in Suva privately assured the Fijian leaders that the special position of the indigenous community would be safeguarded, and not placed under ‘the heels of an immigrant community’, to use the words of Governor Derek Jakeway (1915–93) who was himself active behind the scenes helping the Fijians to organise politically.

Europeans used to a privileged position in the colony’s affairs felt insecure about their place in any future constitutional arrangement. The 1959 Suva riots, multiracial in character and overtly anti-European in intent, had shaken them as never before. Alone, they knew they stood little chance of maintaining their disproportionate representation in the Legislative Council; and they had few friends in places where it really mattered, such as Whitehall. Hence, they sought closer alignment with the Fijian leadership. Understandably, it was an alliance of mutual convenience. The Europeans needed the political protection the Fijians could provide, and the Fijians, appreciating the Europeans’ vulnerability, knew they could always count on European support against the Indo-Fijians. This alliance of interest against the threat of a perceived common enemy would last the rest of the decade and, indeed, well into independent Fiji. It was formally institutionalised by the Alliance Party, which emerged in 1965, and was backed by the Fijian Association.

The Indo-Fijian scene was energised by the return to the Legislative Council, after the absence of more than a decade, of A.D. Patel. Patel, Indian-born but a Fiji resident since 1928, was a leader of unequalled intellectual brilliance; a Gandhian at heart, a fierce and fearless critic of colonial rule and an untiring advocate of a common roll.³⁸ He united the usually fractious Indo-Fijian community and formed Fiji’s first political party, the Federation, in 1963. Two ideas lay at the heart of Patel’s political vision. One was independence, or at least a large measure of internal self-government eventually leading to independence. If Samoa and the Cook

38 *ibid.*

Islands, small, vulnerable and resource-poor, could become independent, why not Fiji, he argued? Independence was a matter of time, Patel believed, not if but when it came, and he wanted Fiji to be prepared for it.

The other idea was a common roll. He had been its advocate from the beginning. A communal roll, which Fijians and Europeans wanted, would be ruinous for the country.

Of all the people, Indians are bitterly opposed to communal representation because they have seen its painful result in the course of time. It may not be very serious now, but as time goes on, once people get used to the idea of racial separation, racial attitudes harden and people start thinking in racial terms and racial interests which leads not to one nation but, in the course of political developments, it leads to claims of several nations.³⁹

A ‘communal roll’, he continued:

symbolises divided loyalties, and inhibits the formation of secular parties, with success in politics depending on reflecting communal interests and prejudices. Compromise will be rendered difficult and relative party strength may be frozen for long periods because a party can grow only with an increase in the size of the community upon which it is based.⁴⁰

On the other hand, a common roll would ‘encourage the citizens to organise political parties along national lines and in the long run compel everyone else to think in terms of his country rather than a particular race, community or religion’. It was ‘only through making one nation out of Fiji that we can achieve the sort of future we want for everybody’.⁴¹

The passion with which Patel pursued the idea was reciprocated by the passion with which its opponents—which included all Fijian and European leaders—rejected it. The system of communal representation was well established in Fiji; it had worked well, they argued; a system of guaranteed racial representation produced no fears of any one group dominating others; it realistically accepted the differences of culture, language, custom and religion. These two positions illustrate the two contrasting, even diametrically opposed, visions of Fiji; and they have continued to haunt Fiji’s subsequent political history.

39 Lal, *A Vision for Change*, p. 189ff.

40 *ibid.*

41 *ibid.*

The final phase

In July 1965, the Colonial Office convened a constitutional conference, and invited the elected representatives of the three communities to London.⁴² All the established positions were expressed, with Europeans and Fijians agreeing only to limited internal self-government and the Indo-Fijian delegation hoping for a final blow to colonial rule in Fiji. Important advances were made. The Legislative Council was expanded to include 36 members: 14 Fijians (nine elected on communal roll, three on multiracial cross-voting and two nominated by the GCC); 12 Indo-Fijians (nine communal and three cross-voting); and 10 Europeans (seven communal and three cross-voting). The system of cross-voting was seen as a limited concession to a common roll in which multiracial electorates voted for seats reserved for candidates of different races. The Fijian and the European delegations were delighted with the outcome, and for good reason: the Europeans' privileged position was maintained, and the Fijians had, for the first time, got two additional seats. Fijian–European solidarity was consolidated.

The Indo-Fijians were disappointed with the outcome of the conference. They had lost parity with the indigenous Fijians.⁴³ The communal roll had been maintained, their plea for at least partial introduction of common roll had fallen on deaf ears. And the Indo-Fijian community was now more isolated than ever, electorally segregated from the other communities. The Fijian roll, for instance, was expanded to include all the other Pacific Islanders and the European roll enlarged to accommodate the Chinese. Why should the Chinese be on the European roll when they had culturally less in common with Europeans than the Indo-Fijians? Patel asked. But to no avail.

He accused the Colonial Office of not playing a fair mediating role at the conference (preoccupied as it was at the time with the crisis in Aden), by not persuading the Fijians and Europeans sufficiently to accept at least a partial common roll and by effectively capitulating to combined European and Fijian pressure. I am presently investigating the thinking of the Colonial Office, so can only provide a tentative assessment of the subject. But my overwhelming impression is that London had a deep

42 Davidson, 'Constitutional change in Fiji', pp. 165–68.

43 Lal, *Broken Waves*, pp. 195–200.

sympathy for the Fijian people and was concerned not to let them end up in a secondary position in any future political arrangement. Their rhetorical advocacy of Westminster democracy was secondary to their concern for Fijian feelings. London also had a prudent appreciation of its dependence on Fijian security forces to maintain law and order.⁴⁴

Nor did London share the vision of Fiji as a cohesive multiracial nation. Julian Amery reported confidentially to the Colonial Office in 1960 that 'the Fijians and Indians are more distinct as communities than Jews and Arabs in Palestine, Greeks and Turks in Cyprus or even Europeans and Bantu in South and Central Africa'.⁴⁵ Understandably he did not add that London itself was partly responsible for this unfortunate state of affairs. It was 'impracticable to think in terms of a single Fijian nation or of a common roll at any rate for the foreseeable future', he advised. The concept of a 'single multiracial community as the goal towards which Fijians and Indians alike should strive' was illusory, he added. 'The Fijians will no longer accept this; and the more we lay the emphasis on multi-racialism, the more suspicious they will become that we plan to sell them out to the Indians.' Indeed, Amery recommended setting up a separate system of administration for Indo-Fijians, as a counterpart to the separate administration for the Fijians. In view of this, Patel's vision for Fiji was doomed from the start.

In September 1966, 15 months after the constitutional conference, Fiji went through another election, for the first time on party lines: the Indo-Fijian-based Federation Party and the Fijian Association-backed, nominally multiracial Alliance Party. Both parties won handily in their constituencies, the Alliance winning two-thirds of the Fijian communal votes and the Federation a similar percentage among the Indo-Fijians. Ratu Mara became the chief minister. The 1965 constitution had produced the result both Suva and London wanted, and neither saw any reason to review the constitution that the Federation Party had accepted under protest. The new government jettisoned the bipartisan approach of the past. Patel feared that unless the constitution was reviewed, the entire Indo-Fijian community would be consigned to 'the wilderness

44 Robert Norton, 'Accommodating indigenous privilege: Britain's dilemma in decolonizing Fiji', *The Journal of Pacific History* 37(2) (2002): 133–56, at pp. 153–54, doi.org/10.1080/002233402200006574.

45 Julian Amery to CO, 8 November 1960, CO series 83 1036/612, in Lal (ed.), *Fiji: British Documents on the End of Empire*, pp. 37–39.

of frustrated and possibly endless opposition'. And so, on 1 September 1967, the Federation Party walked out of the Legislative Council when its motion for constitutional change was defeated.

The ensuing by-election was fought in an intense atmosphere of great bitterness and tension.⁴⁶ When the Federation Party won all the Indo-Fijian communal seats (and with increased majorities, too) many hard-line Fijians threatened violence, bringing the country to the edge of a potentially dangerous crisis. But cooler heads prevailed and emotions subsided, but the message was clear: the 1965 racially unbalanced constitution would have to be reexamined, and the wishes of the Federation Party could not be ignored. Nor, on the other hand, could Fijian views be discounted. Apprehending the gravity of the situation, Governor Jakeway urged Mara and Patel to resume dialogue. In August 1969, representatives of the two parties met in Suva for a series of confidential discussions. There, each party stated its views about the constitution and possible ways out of the current impasse. But Patel died in October, to the relief of both the government and many in the Alliance party.⁴⁷ His successor, Siddiq Koya, had neither the intellectual depth nor the commitment to the vision of Fiji as a genuinely nonracial society.

In the confidential discussions, common ground was reached on many issues. To allay Fijian fears about their rights, the Federation Party proposed an upper house, the Senate, where the nominees of the GCC would have the power to veto any legislation that could, even remotely, affect Fijian interests. The Federation Party also proposed to go into independence without an election to avoid acrimony that an election campaign would inevitably entail, because it felt that Ratu Mara, then widely popular, was the best leader to be at the helm to effect a smooth transition to independence, and because the Federation Party itself was diffident about the broad acceptability of its own leadership.⁴⁸ In truth, they acknowledged that all the power was on the other side, and that they would have to accept the role of opposition for a long time into the future.

46 James Anthony, 'The 1968 Fiji By-Elections', *The Journal of Pacific History* 4(1) (1969): 135–38, doi.org/10.1080/00223346908572151.

47 Ratu Kamisese Mara, *The Pacific Way: A Memoir* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1997), p. 97.

48 See Lal, *Broken Waves*, pp. 200–06; and Confidential British Documents in Lal (ed.), *Fiji: British Documents on the End of Empire*, Ch. 6, Documents 141–66.

On one issue, though—the composition of the legislature and the method of election—the two parties disagreed. The Federation Party presented its case for a common roll, though without the conviction or authority of the past. Predictably, the Alliance opposed the idea, while promising an open mind on a common roll as a long-term objective. Both parties decided to defer the issue until the impending constitutional conference in London, with the Federation agreeing that, in the event of an impasse, it would accept a formula ‘approved and settled by the British Government’. Lord Shepherd, Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, who was in Fiji to witness firsthand the progress of the local negotiations, was clearly delighted by the Federation’s concessions—as, of course, was the Alliance Party. He insisted that the consensus be formally recorded. The consensus was that:

if no agreement was reached and circumstances remained as at present, it would be necessary that the constitutional instruments for independence should reflect, subject to any formal changes arising from independence, the provisions of the existing Constitution.⁴⁹

That is, the same constitution that the Federation Party had rejected in 1965 as ‘undemocratic, unjust and iniquitous’! In their quest for an orderly transition to independence, the party leaders had sacrificed their long-held principles for political expediency.

The penultimate conference paving the way for Fiji’s independence was held in London in April 1970. The result was a compromise—if not compromised—constitution. Fiji was to have a bicameral legislature with an appointed Upper House (Senate) and a fully elected Lower House (House of Representatives) of 52 seats, with 22 each reserved for Fijians and Indo-Fijians and eight for the general electors (Europeans, part-Europeans, Chinese and Others). Of the 22 seats reserved for the Fijians and Indo-Fijians, 12 were to be contested on communal (racial) rolls and the remaining 10 on national (cross-voting) seats (which meant that candidates themselves were required to be Fijians, Indo-Fijians and general electors, but they were elected by all registered voters). In the House of Representatives, then, Fijians and Indo-Fijians had parity. The Europeans’ privileged position was also preserved: with only 4 per cent of the population, they had 15.4 per cent of the seats, whereas Fijians

49 Lord Shepherd, ‘Fiji Constitutional Conference’, 22 April 1970, Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) 32/572, no. 112, in Lal (ed.), *Fiji: British Documents on the End of Empire*, pp. 486–89.

and Indo-Fijians had 42.3 per cent of the seats each. European over-representation was accepted, indeed advocated, by the Fijian leaders who knew from experience that Europeans would always support them, as they had invariably done in the past. In the 22-member Senate, the principle of Fijian paramountcy was explicitly recognised by giving the eight nominees of the GCC the power of veto over all legislation affecting Fijian interests and privileges.

The independence constitution, then, represented a continuity with Fiji's racially divided past. It assumed that 'race' or ethnicity, was, and would long remain, the most important determinant of political behaviour of the people and that Fijians would control political power if they remained united and voted solidly as a racial group. And there was a tacit assumption among many leaders that, for their own physical safety, Indo-Fijians would not aspire to political leadership.

The tragedy of independent Fiji was that the assumptions upon which the constitution was based proved untenable. New forces of change came with urbanisation, a modern cash economy, internal and external migration, multiracial education and a media that questioned the primacy of race in the political system.⁵⁰ The idea of ethnic solidarity that Fijian leaders had taken for granted at the time of independence began to fray as internal debates about the structure of power within the indigenous community spilled over into the public arena. A new generation was emerging for whom race had little to do with the vagaries of daily life. Old, exhausted orthodoxies privileged in the new constitution had long outlived their usefulness. Hobbled by a fractured history, Fiji failed to come to terms with the rapidly changing realities of the postcolonial era. An ill-fated past had come home to roost. It was not until 30 years later when the umbilical cord with the structures and assumptions of the twentieth-century political culture of Fiji would finally be severed—through a military coup.

50 Michael Taylor (ed.), *Fiji: Future Imperfect* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1987).

This text is taken from *Levelling Wind: Remembering Fiji*, by Brij V. Lal,
published 2019 by ANU Press, The Australian National University,
Canberra, Australia.