

6. "I shall be chief at Bau..."

Fiji experienced relative tranquillity for more than a year following the tumult of 1855. Evidence for Ma`afu's activities during the months after Tupou's departure is fragmentary, offering only occasional glimpses into the life of the man in whose hands Tongan power in Fiji now lay. He had been entrusted with the care of the Tongan lands in Fiji, with the measure of the King's confidence in his kinsman apparent in the address he made to the assembled chiefs of Tongatapu one week after his return.¹ The King's accolade suggests that he saw Ma`afu as a possible successor, both as Tu`i Kānokupolu and as King. Ma`afu, the son of Tupou's predecessor, was a generation younger than Tupou and, as governor of the Tongans in Fiji, enjoyed a power and prestige he could scarcely have foreseen when he quit Tonga nine years earlier.

The King's only surviving legitimate son, Vuna, died in January 1862 and for more than 13 years thereafter there was no designated heir. The Constitution of 1875 would provide for the succession of Tupou's eldest son, Tevita `Unga and his descendants, with the stipulation that should the King's line fail, the succession would pass to Ma`afu, who was then Roko Tui Lau in the British administration of Fiji. The King's mind at that time was revealed in an address to the Tongan Parliament. He said that he had planned for Vuna to succeed, but the latter's death had left the succession question unresolved:

For that reason, I said in my mind Ma`afu should succeed me. By our ... Tongan ideas it is his turn but I see that if I follow the rule of changing backward and forward in the Royal Succession, yourselves also will have to do so. I am however of a mind that from father to children shall be the rule of succession, both for me and for yourselves ... Ma`afu you are aware holds office in Fiji under the English government and moreover I think ... that Ma`afu will not act against my wish and he will not be so wanting in love for Tonga as to act in a way that will create a disturbance in the country which would end in its loss.²

The King would have been aware that just as he had been Aleamotu`a's chosen successor, Aleamotu`a had, according to an oral tradition, urged Ma`afu to wait for Tupou, in other words that he had wanted his son to succeed eventually.³ Now, Ma`afu's official position in Fiji was seen as an effective bar to his

1 John Thomas, Journal, 4 Jan 1856. See Ch. 5, n. 181.

2 [Translation of] extract from *Koe Boobooi*, Nov 1875, Constitution of Tonga, Constitution granted by His Majesty George Tupou, By the Grace of God, King of Tonga, on the 4th day of November 1875, Nuku`alofa 1875, FO58/164. See also Oswald Brierly, Journal on HMS *Rattlesnake* and HMS *Meander* 1850–51, 22 Jun 1850, marginal note, concerning possible consequences of Vuna's early death.

3 See Ch. 2, n. 118.

succession in Tonga. However, circumstances had been very different 18 years earlier. Although Vuna was still alive in 1856, the possibility that the position of Tu`i Kānokupolu might return to the senior branch of the family, in the person of Ma`afu, is likely to have been present in the King's mind when he addressed the *fono* of Tongatapu chiefs.

Ma`afu appears to have remained at Lakeba until the second half of 1857. In February 1856, the captains of two ships just arrived in Levuka from Sydney desired his presence, sending a boat to Lakeba to fetch him.⁴ Although it is unknown why the captains were seeking him, John Thomas in Tonga provides us with a clue about one month later. Orders from Sydney had arrived for "the ... Europeans living at Ovalau", who were required "to disperse themselves and leave the islands to be governed by the King of Feejies – and not for them to set themselves up in ... forming a party against him".⁵ Ratu Mara seems to have been a prime mover in forming the "party": in August, he was still on Ovalau, reportedly "getting up a plot against Cakobau".⁶ Whether or not Ma`afu was also on Ovalau, he was certainly back in Lakeba by 26 May, when Mary Polglase noted that he had "settled" the "disgraceful affair" of a woman named Neomai.⁷ Ma`afu's role among the Tongans on Lakeba would soon earn him uncharacteristic praise from John Polglase who, like many of his colleagues before and later, lamented the conduct of the visitors to the island:

the godly, the peaceful, the loyal subject, is often oppressed ... by those who ... are guided by no rule but their own vicious inclinations. Whatever may be the case in Tonga itself, the above is eminently true with regard to many of the Tonguese who [come] to Feejee. A whale's tooth, a root of yang-gona, or some such paltry thing presented to Tui Nayau, entitles a Tonguese chief to cut a canoe in any of the subject islands; and the Feejeeans have to feed him and his people, [and] assist in felling trees and in dragging them to the place appointed. The Tonguese in return not infrequently steal everything they can from them, and descend to all that is mean and vile if they can only accomplish their ends. The chief being so intent on getting his canoe, he thinks little of the conduct of those whom he has brought with him ... it is to be regretted that King George does not look into the conduct of those of his subjects who take up a temporary residence here.

Although little had changed in the more than two decades since Wesleyan missionaries first encountered Tongans resident on Lakeba, there now appeared a chief willing to urge at least a modicum of restraint:

4 Mrs John [Mary] Polglase, Diary, 20 Feb 1856, MOM 138.

5 Thomas, 22 Mar 1856.

6 James Royce, Journal, 24 Aug 1856, MOM 135.

7 John Polglase, 2 May 1856.

Complaints are constantly being taken to Ma`afu ... respecting [the Tongans'] mode of proceeding in the different islands they visit, and it is but just to say that he does exert himself to prevent the [misbehaviour]. There is reason to believe that his mind is being awakened to the responsibility of his position, from the fact that he manifests a desire to do good in various ways, and we [believe] too that there is a gracious work going on in his heart, still the evil does exist, and punishment is not inflicted on evildoers to the extent that it ought.⁸

Polglase appeared willing to ascribe a virtuous motive to Ma`afu's efforts to control his fellow countrymen. The missionary couple were not alone in their desire to sustain Ma`afu's quest for grace: just three days after Mrs Polglase praised Ma`afu's pastoral zeal, John Thomas, once the chief's nemesis, wrote a note from Nuku`alofa "to accompany a copy of the Scriptures to Fejees – for ... Maafu called the son of the king".⁹ Ma`afu's favour in the eyes of Tupou appeared undiminished. However, the most significant event of the year for him was the loss at sea of Vuetasau, his former companion-in-arms and nephew and heir of Tui Nayau. The two had once been confederates; now that Vuetasau was gone, the reliance of Tui Nayau on Ma`afu could only have increased.

Although the authority vested in Ma`afu by Tupou and acknowledged by the Lauan chiefs appears to have remained unchallenged during this period, Tongan power in Fiji did not exist in a vacuum. In Tonga itself, Tupou remained intent on gaining for his kingdom the British protection he had sought in vain during the late 1840s. In May he wrote to Queen Victoria seeking a treaty with Great Britain, assuring her that Tongans were now cultivating their lands and sought to "exchange [their] products for the improvements ... comforts and embellishments of Civilized Life". The British were offered trading privileges and protection for their subjects in Tonga in return for a treaty guaranteeing the islands' independence. The Colonial Office remained sceptical: "King George says one word for the independence of his people and two for himself. It is a question which I would leave to the Foreign Office".¹⁰ While the King's letter was not forwarded from Sydney for more than two years, he gained the support of Captain Stephen Fremantle, who visited Tonga in command of HMS *Juno* later in 1856. Fremantle noted the existence there of disaffected "malcontents ... abetted by the French missionaries", as well as the frequent visits of French men of war sailing between New Caledonia and Tahiti.¹¹ Although Tupou, who had once referred to French offers of friendship as "a deadly shade", favoured British protection over that of any other foreign power, he remained determined

8 [John Polglase], Lakemba Circuit Report 1856, WMMS Minutes of Mission District Meetings, MOM 5.

9 Thomas, 29 May 1856.

10 Minute, George Tupou to Queen Victoria, 12 May 1856, enclosed with Sir William Denison to CO, 5 Oct 1858, CO 201/504.

11 Stephen Fremantle to Ralph Osborn, Adm., 4 Oct 1856, FO 58/86.

not to be “subject to any other people or kingdom in this world”.¹² The most the British were prepared to do was to consider a consular appointment in Fiji. It was thought that the presence of a consul might be conducive to mitigating the “state of anarchy” there and to easing Tupou’s anxiety. In both groups, “there was said to be an opening for British trade”.¹³

None of these considerations was then of any great moment in Fiji. The “state of anarchy”, which was nothing new, did not diminish either Ma`afu’s position of strength among the resident Tongans or the threat posed by that strength to the indigenous chiefs. He made a visit home to Tonga in December:

News was brought that a canoe had arrived at Hihifo from Feejees. It is reported that some warrior chief from Feejee – who caused the late war there with King George has come to Maafu of Feejee to humble himself and ask pardon.¹⁴

It is probable that during Ma`afu’s visit, consultations took place between him, Tupou and other chiefs, but to what purpose is unknown. Ma`afu returned to Lakeba in March 1857, following a “long sail” which likely included his stay in Tonga. He quickly readjusted to life in Lau: after a conversation with John Polglase, during which “he evinced a very teachable spirit”, Ma`afu turned his attention to the missionary’s spiritual comforts. Tui Nayau, just returned from a visit to Ono, was given a feast including upwards of 80 turtles. When the Polglases did not receive the share they expected, Ma`afu remedied the situation by sending them, as his personal gift, two large turtles and some taro.¹⁵ Whether this thoughtfulness foretold a more harmonious relationship with the missionaries remained to be seen.

Social niceties were usually a diversion for Ma`afu. Soon after his return, he received a letter from Vakawaletabua, Tui Bua, a Christian and the son of a Tongan mother, “requesting help against the Heathen”, a reference to forces belonging to Ritova, Tui Macuata. Ma`afu referred the request to Cakobau who, according to Lakeban sources, replied that preparations for war should be made.¹⁶ On Polglase’s urging, Ma`afu despatched a canoe to Bau, supposedly to seek clarification before involving himself in any hostilities. He told the missionary he would proceed to Somosomo instead, explaining that he was

12 George Tupou to Walter Lawry, 25 Jun 1850, quoted in Lawry, *A second missionary visit to the Friendly and Feejee Islands*, London 1851, 71–72. See also *ibid.*, 63–64 and Ch. 3, n. 116.

13 Memorandum relative to Consular appointments in Polynesia, F.B. Alston, n.d., FO 58/96.

14 Thomas, 20 Dec 1856.

15 John Polglase, 23 and 27 Mar 1857. Missionary Richard Lyth also commented on Ma`afu’s “most excellent spirit” and his progress in the *lotu*. See Lyth, General index to journals, quarterlies and miscellaneous manuscripts, 2 and 6 Jun 1857.

16 *ibid.*, 24 Mar 1857; William Wilson, Journal, 1 Mar 1859, *WMN(A)*, No. 11, Jan 1860, 69.

intent on helping free an English ship that had run aground on a reef.¹⁷ It is likely that he made straight for Bua, if only for a short time. South of Bua lies the *vanua* of Solevu, which then owed its primary allegiance to Bau and whose people were traditional enemies of the neighbouring Buan village of Nadi. When the heathen chief of Solevu, bent on the destruction of neighbouring Christian villages, surrounded one of them with the intention of starving out the inhabitants, a Tongan local preacher borrowed a canoe from William Wilson, the resident Wesleyan missionary, and sailed to Bau, in order to request urgent help from Cakobau. The Vunivalu responded quickly, arriving with a "small fleet" and 300 men, along with "some Tonguese".¹⁸ After almost all the inhabitants of Solevu had fled into the bush or been taken prisoner, Cakobau's forces burned the town, not neglecting to protect the resident Catholic priest and his property.¹⁹ In a move revealing much of his state of mind, Cakobau had asked the Tongans who came to him from Bua not to send to Lakeba to seek assistance from Ma`afu.²⁰

This local conflict quickly assumed a sectarian aspect. Cakobau's intervention turned the tables against the heathen forces, to the discomfiture of local French priests, who threatened to send to New Caledonia for a French warship.²¹ Priests, in Fiji and elsewhere in the Pacific, would sometimes threaten the intervention of a French man-of-war "as a kind of moral suasion".²² According to Wesleyan missionary John Binner, the Vanua Levu "heathens" were calling themselves *lotu popi* or *lotu katali ka*,²³ demonstrating, not a commitment to Roman Catholic dogma, but rather a determination to confront the *lotu weseli* which bade fair to change their world forever. To the inherent instability of this *matanitu* was added a veneer of sectarian confrontation that was scarcely understood and which carried with it the faint but sinister threat of imperialist force ready to be summoned when required. That such a force existed only in the minds of those who raised its spectre scarcely mattered in the exigencies of the moment. The complexities, real and imagined, of south-western Vanua Levu provided ideal opportunities for intervention by Ma`afu.

Tui Bua was no stranger to Tongan intervention. In August 1855, no less a personage than Tungī Halatuitui`a, a Tongan chief of august rank, had visited Bua, where he successfully persuaded Tui Bua to embrace Christianity.²⁴ On this occasion, as he later revealed, Tui Bua acted against Cakobau's expressed

17 John Polglase, 2 and 21 Apr 1857.

18 William Wilson to GS, WMMS, 10 May 1857, WMMS LFF; John Binner to John Eggleston, 20 Apr 1857, MOM 165.

19 Wilson to GS, WMMS, 10 May 1857.

20 Statement of Tui Bua, LCC 586.

21 Royce, 14 May 1857.

22 *The Wesleyan Chronicle*, Second Series, Vol. 3, 19 Nov 1863, 149.

23 Binner to Eggleston, 20 Apr 1857.

24 Bua Circuit Report 1855, MOM 5. Tungī would have been Tu`i Ha` atakalaua, had that title still been conferred.

wish in making a direct appeal to Ma`afu.²⁵ Another Buan ally, Tui Wainunu, “a Papist and a perfect devil”,²⁶ joined forces with Ritova as well as Tui Levuka and Ratu Mara, the ubiquitous stormy petrel of mid nineteenth century Fiji. William Wilson described Tui Wainunu as “the chief employed by the town of Solevu to do its pleasure in making war”,²⁷ while Wilson’s colleague James Royce believed, with justification, that each of these chiefs was “an outlaw and a nuisance”. Yet another dimension to this conflict emerged in July when the Europeans on Ovalau expressed their “alarm” over a rumour that Tupou was returning to Fiji, supposedly bent on the destruction of Levuka.²⁸ Ma`afu had not yet intervened, since he was still on Lakeba in mid July.²⁹

Ma`afu’s involvement became increasingly likely as the situation in Bua deteriorated. In August came the news that the forces of Mara and Tui Levuka had murdered the Christian chief of Nadi village, as well as a local preacher.³⁰ Other Buan chiefs allied with Mara were sending “property” to villages on Viwa and in Rewa, villages allied with Bau, many of which “accepted the property, thereby pledging themselves to co-operate in the designs of their abettors to accomplish the downfall of Bau”.³¹ For once, rumour among the Europeans on Ovalau was factual: Cakobau, now “in apprehension of danger ... despatched two messengers to King George of Tonga ... to solicit his counsel and aid”.³² Intervention by Ma`afu came following Tui Bua’s appeal to him. Forces belonging to both chiefs “attacked Macuata as far as Udu and Cikobia” before returning to ravage Solevu, a campaign lasting three months. During the “war”, Ma`afu “sent for [Tui Wainunu] to go on board [Ma`afu’s boat] so that peace might ensue and then ... took him prisoner”.³³ Ma`afu acted at the request of Tui Bua, who sought to save Tui Wainunu’s life after the destruction of the forces of Solevu and Wainunu.³⁴ The so-called Tongan war ended when Buli Solevu *soro’d* to Tui Bua and Ma`afu with *tabua* and baskets of earth.³⁵ Twenty-eight years later, the “war” was to be remembered in Bua with

a grand feast to commemorate Tui Bua’s great victory at Solevu over twenty years ago, when Ma`afu swept Macuata, taking Ritova and Tui

25 Statement of Tui Bua. See also Evidence of George Wakawale Tabua, Tui Bua, 30 Aug 1878, LCC R929 Lovoni.

26 Royce, 14 May 1857. For a detailed account of Tui Wainunu’s participation in the war, see Evidence of [his son] Tabu Lovoni, 21 Aug 1878, LCC R929 Lovoni.

27 William Wilson to GS, WMMS, 10 May 1857.

28 Royce, 17 and 22 Jul 1857.

29 John Polglase, 21 Jul 1857.

30 Royce, 17 Aug 1857.

31 John Malvern to Eggleston, 1 Jan 1858, *WMN(A)*, No. 6, Oct 1858, 90.

32 Malvern to Eggleston, 27 Aug 1857, *WMN(A)*, No. 2, Oct 1857, 46.

33 Evidence of Tabu Lovoni, LCC R929 Lovoni.

34 Evidence of Tui Bua, LCC R929 Lovoni.

35 For a detailed account of the fighting, see Evidence of Tui Bua, LCC R929. See also Tui Bua’s evidence to the 1883 Land Claims Commission, quoted in H.B. Richenda Parham, “A brief account of a well-known chief: Ra Masima, Tui Bua”, *TPFSSI*, Vol. 2, 100–102.

Wainunu prisoners. He did not advance beyond the southern coastline and thus victory was achieved, thus Tui Bua saved his bacon, wherefore he now proposes to sacrifice the bacon of the whole province. The levy [for the feast] is one pig and one hundred yams for every man, and one mat for every woman.³⁶

For Tui Bua, the welfare of his *matanitu* involved more than the defeat of a small, though rebellious, *vanua*. Nevertheless, despite the alliance between them, born of expediency, Tui Bua appeared apprehensive of Ma`afu's wider ambitions.

While Ma`afu and his wary ally were gaining victory at Solevu, the former's ascendancy in Lau came under some scrutiny in Australia. Charles St Julian, the Sydney law reporter who had corresponded with Tupou,³⁷ published a monograph concerning the Tongan presence in Lau in the aftermath of Kaba. Tupou and his subjects living in Lau were described as "allies of Cakobau in the punishment of his rebellious subjects and foes", a description as apposite in 1857 as it would have been two years earlier.³⁸ Moreover, "by way of giving a character of permanence and solidity to this new dominion [Lau]", Tupou had appointed Ma`afu as chief judge there.³⁹ There was supposedly a twofold purpose to the appointment: to provide "an aspect of union and concentrated rule to [Tupou's] Fijian sovereignties" and also to remove "to an honourable position at a distance a chieftain who might, one day, have proved troublesome at home".⁴⁰ St Julian's suggestion that Tupou wished to keep Ma`afu "at a distance" for fear of his being "troublesome" is flatly contradicted by the King's publicly expressed wish during the previous year that Ma`afu were at home in Tonga.⁴¹ St Julian goes on to refer to Tupou's "right of conquest" in Lau and avers that only the lack of an "efficient system of government" in Tonga itself prevented the King extending his dominion over Fiji and Samoa.⁴² The use of such legal terms as "sovereignties" and "right of conquest" owed more to St Julian's legal turn of mind and vivid imagination than they did to the realities of Lau in the mid 1850s. If he is correct in his reference to Ma`afu's appointment as "chief judge", the move was further evidence of the King's confidence in his kinsman, whose power in Lau he had earlier recognised with the appointment

36 *FT*, 21 Oct 1885.

37 See Ch. 5.

38 Charles St Julian, *Official Report on Central Polynesia*, Sydney 1857, 5.

39 *ibid.*, 13.

40 *ibid.*

41 See above, n. 1, Ch. 5 n. 181.

42 St Julian, 13. See also St Julian's unsigned letter to the editor of the *SMH*, which accuses Tupou I of "clearly [having] an eye to the acquisition of sovereignty over Samoa, as well as over the Feejees", *SMH*, 9 Jan 1858, 5. The letter prompted an immediate protest to the editor from John Eggleston, who described part of its contents as "a slander upon [the King's] character". This in turn resulted in a lengthy letter from St Julian to Eggleston, seeking to justify his views. (Eggleston to the Editor of *SMH*, 11 Jan 1858; St Julian to Eggleston, 13 Jan 1858, ML As 60).

as governor.⁴³ To write in terms of “sovereignty” is to ascribe to Tonga a status as a sovereign state it did not possess. The concept was still alien to the nineteenth century Pacific, when sovereignty effectively lay in the hands of the man who wielded the greatest power. In Lau, in 1857, that man was Ma`afu.

It is unfortunate that the period of more than a year following the early hostilities on Vanua Levu is one of the most obscure of Ma`afu’s adult life. It was later stated that during this period he “divided his time between Lomaloma and Lakeba”,⁴⁴ and it seems safe to say that, if he was not living permanently at Lomaloma, he was spending considerable time there. The future United States Vice Consul, Isaac Brower, stated in evidence before the Lands Claims Commission in 1880 that he “saw” Ma`afu at Lomaloma in 1857. The Tongan was then “exercising the authority of a chief, having vessels built for him, which he said were for Tonga”. This was at a time when Vanuabalavu was supposedly suffering from “the oppression and unjust conduct of many Tonguese who resort thither”. On Lakeba, the “darkness and worldliness” of many resident Tongans was reflected in the fall from grace of five of six local preachers who had come down from Tonga during the previous four years in order to cut canoes.⁴⁵ More importantly, Ma`afu had, according to Brower, been to Levuka to consult Consul Williams. “He had spoken to Williams about the American indemnity, provided the US would recognise him as king of Fiji. I have had this from Williams’ own lips”.⁴⁶ If Brower’s claim is accurate, it reveals the full extent of Ma`afu’s ambition at a time comparatively early in his career. Nevertheless, the evidence should be treated with caution. Brower was speaking in 1880, twenty years after Williams’ death. By that time, the extent to which Ma`afu had changed the history of Fiji was apparent. It would have been all too easy, then, to ascribe to him an aspiration which he almost certainly possessed 23 years earlier, but which he would have been unlikely to articulate in so forthright a manner. It is significant that, in his lengthy and detailed despatches to the U.S. State Department at the time, Williams made no mention of any such request from Ma`afu. More pertinent are the Consul’s reports wherein he writes of the “Tonguese exotick” who control Lau and

make such laws as best suit them. [They] have been a blessing to that part of Fiji, but for them there would have been no business done ... they ... have made the Fijian work making [coconut] oil ... Beche de Mar, and Arrow root, causing a considerable commerce from that part.

43 St Julian might have been referring to Tupou’s appointment of Ma`afu as joint Governor of the Tongans in Fiji, made in 1853.

44 G.V. Maxwell, *Report on the Proceedings of the Native Lands Commission in the Lau Province*, Suva 1913, para. 14.

45 Lakemba Circuit Report 1858, WMMS Minutes of Mission District Meetings, MOM 6.

46 Evidence of Isaac Mills Brower, 6 July 1880, LCC 930.

Notwithstanding the Tonguese are not a very industrious race of men themselves, but for them the Fijians at Lau ... would have been comatose to this day.⁴⁷

While Williams is here concerned with the commercial impact of the Tongans, he is unlikely to have overlooked such naked political ambition, had it been confided to him.

During the week when the above despatch was written, Cakobau sent a request to Lakeba for assistance, following a fresh outbreak of hostilities in Vanua Levu, where 27 Christians were killed near Nadi. Cakobau was also faced with the rebellion of one of his own Bauan chiefs, his half-brother Dranibaka, who had joined the heathen forces on Vanua Levu.⁴⁸ Mara, "at his old game again", not content with fomenting trouble in Bua, sailed to Kadavu, where he "turned some of the towns" and encouraged the building of war fences against any attack by Cakobau's forces.⁴⁹ Faced with the disaffection of his brothers and other chiefs, Cakobau "several times had to seek [the] Tongans' aid".⁵⁰ In the midst of this renewal of war, 14 Lomaloma chiefs addressed a letter to the British Consul. They expressed their extreme disquiet with the news "that Cakobau had given all the Fiji Islands to England ... Cakobau don't rule all the Windward Islands of this group; is not chief to Windward – one ruler to our land Ma`afu ... We ... have given the ... land to Ma`afu to rule over".⁵¹ Although Ma`afu was not among the 14 chiefs to sign the letter, his hand might readily be seen in its conception. The immediate significance of the protest is that it constitutes the first documented reference to the question which would not be settled for 16 years: whether Great Britain could be persuaded to assume some form of control over all or part of the group and so ease the growing burdens on the shoulders of Cakobau.

This concern over cession anticipated the arrival in Fiji in September of William Pritchard, the first resident British Consul. Pritchard wasted no time in reinforcing Cakobau's belief in the benefits of cession, while advising the Governor of New South Wales, Sir William Denison, that the desire for British annexation in Fiji was increasing.⁵² Pritchard deprecated the Tongans' "veneration" for their chiefs, "inculcated in their infancy, cherished in their youth [and] matured in their manhood". For this reason, he believed, Tongan Christian teachers working in Fiji advocated the "cause of King George" as much as they did "the Cause of God and religion". While they were, "on the

47 John B. Williams to U.S. State Dept, 12 Feb 1858, USC Laucala 3.

48 Royce, 17 Feb 1858.

49 *ibid.*, 21 Feb, 19 and 30 Apr, 8 May 1858.

50 Veva Circuit Report, June 1858, WMMS Minutes of Mission District Meetings, MOM 5.

51 Protest to British Consul by Lomaloma chiefs, 19 May 1858, enc. with John B. Williams to U.S. State Dept, 30 Sep 1858, USC Laucala 3.

52 William Pritchard to Foreign Office, 15 Sep 1858, FO 58/88; Pritchard to Sir William Denison, 24 Sep 1858, CO 201/504; Denison to Pritchard 12 Oct 1858, CO 201/504.

whole, efficient teachers, many of them are [also] agents of their King, or, in Fiji particularly, of his representative Ma`afu".⁵³ Pritchard's consular colleague Williams stated that the king "is experiencing rule" over Lau in the persons of "a powerful chief ... Ma`afu, with considerable many of his people". Williams' primary interest, as always, lay in the so-called American debt. Since Tupou supposedly ruled part of Fiji, he should be held liable for part of the debt, Williams believed. He informed his State Department that according to the "treaty" made on board the USS *John Adams* in October 1855, any government taking possession of any part of Fiji must share responsibility for the debt.⁵⁴ The vexed questions of cession and the American demands for payment, along with the unresolved and deadly quarrels in Vanua Levu, meant that the pressures building on Cakobau were more difficult of resolution even than those of the closing months of the Rewan conflict. Ma`afu, not for the first time, kept a low profile, his power acknowledged by the Americans and his influence on events confined to the protest articulated by the Lomaloma chiefs. He was well aware that any form of British control over Fiji, however benign, would inevitably damage his own prospects.

Lack of direct evidence during these months means that little can be said concerning Ma`afu's activities and future plans at a time when Fiji moved rapidly into the spotlight of two foreign powers. Pritchard drafted an offer of cession in October 1858 in response to a plea for help from Cakobau, following a renewal of the American claims. An American warship, USS *Vandalia*, under Commander Arthur Sinclair, had arrived in Fiji to investigate the "debt". When Sinclair fixed the sum owing at \$45,000 and gave Cakobau one year to pay, the Vunivalu realised that desperate and unprecedented measures were needed.⁵⁵ The result, a formal offer of cession signed by Cakobau on 12 October, was a document equally remarkable for its candour and for its falsehoods. The candour lay in the ready acknowledgement of Cakobau's American "debt", of his inability to pay within the specified period, and of the evils then likely to ensue. The document's falsehoods included Cakobau's claim to enjoy "full and exclusive sovereignty" over all the islands of Fiji and to be recognised in that position by the governments of Great Britain, France and the United States. Pritchard believed that the pretence of sovereignty and recognition were essential if the offer were to have any chance of acceptance. Cakobau,

53 William Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, London 1866, 294–295. See also n. 139, below.

54 John B. Williams to U.S. State Dept, 17 Sep 1858, USC Laucala 3. For details of the 1855 agreement, see Williams to William Marcy [U.S. Secretary of State], 17 Sep 1855, with enclosures, and Williams to Marcy, 16 Oct 1855, with enclosures, USC Laucala 3; Pritchard to Lord John Russell, FO, 15 Jul 1859, CO 83/1. For the history of the American debt, see David Routledge, "American influence on the politics of Fiji 1849–1874", *Journal of Pacific Studies*, Vol. 4, 1978, 66–88; *The Wesleyan Chronicle*, 19 Nov 1863, 149–150; Sir Arthur Gordon to Lord Carnarvon, 16 Mar 1876, FO 58/153.

55 James Calvert to Eggleston, 18 Oct 1858, WMMS LFF. See also Bau Circuit Report for the year ending June 1859, WMMS Minutes of District Meetings 1858–1860, MOM 6.

understanding little and fearing much, had no choice but to comply. In return, the British government was to pay \$45,000 to the United States in full settlement of the "debt", while Cakobau was to convey to the British 200,000 acres "in fee simple", a requirement which, given the true nature of his "sovereignty", it would be impossible to fulfil.⁵⁶

Although Cakobau had recently signed a "Convention" with France, the nature of Fiji's polity meant that he was always destined to be on the back foot when dealing with any foreign power seeking to meddle in the islands.⁵⁷ The divisions entailed by the importance of the *mataqali* and their determination to preserve ancestral lands meant that Fiji could not hope to progress beyond a collection of *matanitu* whose relationships were bedevilled by the ever-changing fortunes of marriage alliances, *vasu* rights and military prowess. The structure of Fijian society militated against the kind of unity Tupou had achieved in Tonga. Cakobau held greater prestige than any other Fijian chief, but was far from enjoying any kind of paramountcy. Such power as he did possess was seriously weakened by the American claim that, as he knew for certain by 1858, would not go away. After his conversion to Christianity, with disputes still rife even within his own family, he could only be swept along by the *lotu*, rather than use it to his advantage. In his request to the Tongans in Bua not to seek assistance from Ma'afu, Cakobau had demonstrated his distrust of the chief. We may suppose that fear of Tongan ambition now weighed as heavily in the Vunivalu's mind as did his despair over the unjust claims of his American tormentors.

The situation in Fiji in 1858, with Cakobau ready to place his precarious ascendancy in British hands, meant that foreign involvement in, and domination of, Fijian affairs could only increase. That likelihood did not mean, however, that the British government would be inclined to accept the offer of cession. Denison, seeking to influence Whitehall on the matter, expressed his belief that any danger posed by the French to British interests in the Pacific to be "trifling".⁵⁸ The British government concurred; the Colonial Office, while aware of growing pressure from British missionaries and residents in the Pacific for some form of protection, felt that French activities in the area were "wholly unimportant to Great Britain in a political point of view".⁵⁹ Pritchard, who

56 For the text of the offer of cession, see G.C. Henderson, ed., *The Evolution of Government in Fiji*, Sydney 1935, 1–4. See also *SMH*, 3 Dec 1858, 4; John B. Williams to Sir William Denison, 7 Dec 1858, FO58/91.

57 The text of the Convention, apparently signed on 8 Jul 1858, is found in Edward March, Report on the State of Affairs in Fiji, enc. in March to Lord Clarendon, 31 Mar 1870, FO58/118. The French described Cakobau as "Tui Viti (Roi de Bau)".

58 Sir William Denison to Sir Edward Bulwer-Lytton, 5 and 12 Oct 1858, CO201/504. For earlier views urging British annexation of Fiji and neighbouring groups, see W. Oliver to Lord Clarendon, 26 Dec 1854; Sir Charles Fitzroy to Duke of Newcastle, 26 Aug 1854; Charles St Julian, Suggestions as to the Policy of Her Britannic Majesty's Government with reference to the various groups of Central, Western and North-Western Polynesia, dated at Sydney 31 July 1854, enc. in St Julian to Fitzroy, 5 Aug 1854, FO 58/82.

59 Minute by Herbert Merivale, Denison to Bulwer-Lytton, 12 Oct 1858.

Ma`afu, prince of Tonga, chief of Fiji

possessed no authority to negotiate with Fiji's chiefs on the matter of cession, accepted Whitehall's reluctance to annex the islands as a challenge. It was later said of the Consul that he

was an enthusiastic advocate of annexation. He believed that the looms of Lancashire were to be kept going with Fijian cotton, and that the dearth of rags in [Britain's] paper mills was to be made good by large importations of the bark of Fijian trees. Like all pioneers of a new idea, he did not meet with the success he merited, and in one quarter ... he was ... denounced as a Russian agent.⁶⁰

Whether or not he was motivated by altruism in 1858, as this tribute might suggest, he later claimed not to have realised the very limited scope of Cakobau's authority, saying that when the Deed of Cession was signed, "my impression was ... that Cakobau was the actual as well as the recognised King of Fiji".⁶¹ All these considerations lend, in retrospect, a surreal quality to a ceremony at which a bewildered Fijian chief signed away a sovereignty he did not possess to the representative of a foreign government that had no desire to accept it.

Ma`afu's influence was paramount among those chiefs who signed. Initially, both Cakobau and Tui Cakau refused to make their marks on the document, despite threats from Pritchard to unseat them and appoint others in their place if they refused. When Pritchard went on to threaten the deposition of Tui Nayau as well, Ma`afu became "afraid". He said to witness Joeli Bulu, "tell Tui Bau and Tui Cakau to give up their lands; if we were asked to give, and might please ourselves, it would have been well, but this is compulsion". Bulu, himself "afraid", quit the meeting, leaving Ma`afu to urge the reluctant chiefs to sign.⁶² In the event, all the chiefs present did so except Tui Nayau. Pritchard renewed his threat:

'I will appoint another, and you, Tui Nayau, shall be put down.' Tui Nayau said, 'It is well. A Chief from Tonga is made Chief of Lakeba; a Chief from Lakeba goes to Tonga and is made Chief there'. The Consul said that Ma`afu should be appointed in his place; and Tui Nayau said, that would be well. Tui Nayau was then silent, refusing to give up his land.⁶³

Tui Nayau, who had earlier observed that one end of his land joined to Tonga while the other pointed towards Fiji,⁶⁴ was likely emboldened to resist the Consul's threats because he felt himself to be under the protection, and to some

60 F.W. Chesson, *The Past and Present of Fiji*, London 1875, 5.

61 Pritchard to Col. William Smythe, 14 Jan 1861, enc. in Pritchard to Russell, 6 Jan 1863, FO 58/98.

62 Evidence of Joeli Bulu, *Report of the Commission Appointed to Inquire into the Conduct of Her Majesty's Consul at Fiji, with Minutes of Evidence*, Sydney 1862, 51, FO58/108.

63 Evidence of Ratu Ilaisa Nuicikacika, *Report of the Commission...*

64 *ibid.*

extent the authority, of Ma`afu. The latter's influence also counted with his ally, Tui Bua, who stated that he would "follow" Ma`afu, who had aided him in his troubles after Cakobau had four times refused to do so. Tui Bua signed on the following day, following Ma`afu's specific request.⁶⁵

Ma`afu urged the principal Fijian chiefs to sign the deed of cession because he felt it was the most sensible course of action to take. The insistent Pritchard carried with him the threat, however vague, of some kind of retribution if the chiefs did not comply. Any retribution would involve the British even further in Fijian affairs, thus thwarting whatever plans Ma`afu had further to enhance his power in the islands. On the other hand, if the chiefs did sign, Pritchard would sail away to attempt to convince his government. During the Consul's inevitably long absence, Ma`afu could exploit the situation on the ground to his advantage and so place himself in a position of greater strength when Pritchard returned.

Ma`afu, Pritchard and the leading chiefs were not the only players on the field. Mara, supported by some dissident Europeans, supposedly including Brower, remained ready to foment trouble whenever opportunity arose.⁶⁶ John Polglase described Mara as "at present one of the most active in the service of the devil".⁶⁷ For the moment though, Ma`afu dominated play. Following Pritchard's departure for London in November, the ink barely dry on the deed of cession, Ma`afu appears to have begun an attempt "to make peace between Bau and his enemies", although Mary Polglase entertained doubts about his intentions.⁶⁸ If the report were true, his efforts were not directed towards Bua. In mid December, five young Christian men were murdered near the Wesleyan mission at Tiliva in Cakaudrove, apparently on the orders of Ritova. Three days later, although not in response to the murders, five Tongan canoes arrived at Tiliva from Lakeba, bringing a new *drua* for Tui Bua. William Wilson noted that "the Tonguese have been very busy presenting and receiving property, and preparing for a voyage to Bau". It is unlikely that the proposed voyage formed part of any plans for peace by Ma`afu, since only a week later, the "whole neighbourhood" of Tiliva was "in an uproar", preparing for the expected arrival of Cakobau, escorted by a large Tongan fleet. The Vunivalu's purpose was "to make enquiry of the heathen chiefs why they will not cease for war, being often warned and entreated". Wilson warned that "if they do not apologise it is probable there will be a battle".⁶⁹

65 Evidence of Tui Bua, *Report of the Commission...*

66 John Binner to GS, WMMS, 29 Oct 1858, WMMS LFF.

67 Lakemba Circuit Report 1858, WMMS Minutes of District Meetings 1858–1860, MOM 6.

68 John Polglase, 21 Dec 1858.

69 William Wilson, Journal, 17, 20 and 27 Dec 1858, quoted in Wilson to John Eggleston, Feb 1859, WMN(A), No. 11, Jan 1860, 169.

Despite appearances in Bua, Ma`afu did engage in peacemaking efforts at Bau during the following month. In January he arrived there with a force variously reported to be between 500 and 1,000 men, "to assist in subduing the rebellion of the Bau dominions".⁷⁰ The "rebellion" involved a family dispute between six chiefs who were relatives of Cakobau. Ma`afu, whose men had arrived armed with muskets,⁷¹ joined Cakobau in examining and passing sentence on the "rebel" chiefs who were brought before them. On 14 January, "[Ratu] Mara and Naulivou ... were examined in the presence of Ma`afu, the Vunivalu and many Tongan and Fijian chiefs. They had no excuse to offer for their conduct". Other chiefs were similarly examined, since

Ma`afu and the Vunivalu [were] determined to settle all at once. The Vunivalu is clear: the rebels are without excuse. A general meeting of the Chiefs and people from all places near Bau is to take place. All will be made to declare for or against the Vunivalu and then if there must be fighting they will fight.⁷²

Binner was confident that the strident efforts of Cakobau to deal with his recalcitrant relatives and other "rebel" chiefs would succeed, although there remained danger from "some bad whites who are leaving no stone unturned to accomplish the destruction of the Bau chief".⁷³ Here, for once, we have unequivocal evidence that Ma`afu was using his influence in the interests, not merely of peace in general, but also of Cakobau and central Fiji. Was he preparing the ground for the expected British administration, or was he taking advantage of an opportunity to draw the fangs of Mara, while simultaneously weakening the position of other rebel chiefs and of dissident Europeans? It was not only Cakobau who stood in the way of Ma`afu's ambitions.

The apparently successful negotiations during January appear not to have settled matters in the immediate vicinity of Bau. In March a "rebel" chief, accompanied by one of Ma`afu's men, called on Consul Williams at Levuka and requested him to mediate between his forces and Cakobau. Williams cautiously agreed, "if Ma`afu would be responsible for everything that might occur". Three days later, Ma`afu arrived off Totogo in his schooner but did not land, owing to the simultaneous arrival of a large *drua* crowded with about 200 men. When large numbers of local people flocked to the beach to defend themselves

70 John Smith Fordham to Eggleston, 25 Feb 1859, *WMN(A)*, No. 9, Jul 1859, 144. See also Fordham to GS, *WMMS*, 25 Feb 1859, *WMN*, Third Series, No. 72, Nov 1859, 220; William Moore to GS, *WMMS*, 8 Jul 1859, *WMM*, Fifth Series, Vol. 6, 1860, 374.

71 John B. Williams to Lewis Cass [U.S. Secretary of State], 31 Mar 1859, USC Laucala 3. Williams estimated the number of men accompanying Ma`afu as "about 500", while Fordham, Wesleyan missionary stationed at Bau, estimated there were "about 1,000 including the women and children".

72 Fordham to Binner, 15 Jan 1859, quoted in Binner to Eggleston, 24 Jan 1859, MOM 98. Naulivou was another brother of Cakobau.

73 Binner to Eggleston, 24 Jan 1859.

against the intruders, Ma`afu sent a message to Williams saying that he was afraid to come on shore. Despite Williams' reassurances, Ma`afu remained on board his schooner. Believing that the presence of so many armed men was more appropriate for warfare than for peace negotiations, Williams decided against proceeding to Bau as a mediator. Decrying Fijian "treachery" in the presence of such an armed force, Williams was also critical of the "retinue of attendants" accompanying Ma`afu. He thought that had they not come, peace negotiations would have ensued. Ma`afu and his "attendants" sailed to neighbouring Moturiki, apparently regretting the persistence of family quarrels among the chiefs and a lost opportunity for peace.⁷⁴

Insofar as Fiji possessed a seat of power in 1859, Ma`afu was present at its core, acting in concert with the Vunivalu in dealing with the most troublesome "rebel" chiefs. His apparent roles as peacemaker and as an associate of Cakobau in the latter's attempts to set at least part of his house in order, did not deceive many of the more influential European residents of the group, to say nothing of the indigenous chiefs, whose thoughts were never committed to paper. In April, an illuminating exchange took place between Consul Williams and Robert Swanston, acting British Consul in Pritchard's absence. Swanston informed Williams that following what he could "glean" from Ma`afu, the latter's actions in Bau had resulted from "[a desire] on the part of Ma`afu to aggrandise himself. The latter individual will go on until he is ordered out of the group by one of us. What business has he, acting the firebrand in this way?"⁷⁵ An interesting appraisal, coming as it did from a man who would act as Ma`afu's secretary eight years later. In reply, Williams was remarkably prescient in placing the Tongan upstart in context:

sovereignty gives the right to the soil – proprietary and territorial. The usual ... custom in Fiji ... is that ... the principal chief chose[n] ... had absolute power to convey or transfer any land in his territory, whether belonging to himself, or any of his subjects ... A change of rulers is effected by war – and a powerful chief of great influence, for instance the Tongan chief of the Windward Isles.⁷⁶

Williams used his intimate knowledge of Fiji to place Ma`afu's actions in a context few other Europeans would have recognised at the time. History would bear out the Consul's judgment.

⁷⁴ Williams to Cass, 31 Mar 1859.

⁷⁵ Robert Sherson Swanston to Williams, 9 Apr 1859, enc. in Williams to U.S. State Dept, 1 May 1859, USC Laucala 3.

⁷⁶ Williams to Swanston, 21 Apr 1859, copy enc. in Williams to State Dept, 1 May 1859.

Ma`afu, prince of Tonga, chief of Fiji

War, meanwhile, continued in Vanua Levu in the form of further Buan raids against Macuata.⁷⁷ Cakobau, apprehensive that Ma`afu might become involved, wrote to him from Bua in May:

I don't understand Ratu Mara going to [Macuata], I have not sent him, I don't like his work – Don't pay attention to what he may say to you. Don't pay attention also to the advices the foreigners give you at this time. One of my messengers is gone, speak together, you will know from him what is my will.⁷⁸

Ma`afu informed Williams and Swanston in September that the above letter, written for Cakobau by missionary John Smith Fordham, was delivered to him by the Vunivalu in person.⁷⁹ Although both missionary and chief appeared united in their determination to distance Ma`afu from the renewed hostilities, another missionary, James Royce, reported Bua to be quiet “through the interference of Ma`afu”.⁸⁰

In Macuata, as in many Fijian *matanitu*, divisions existed within the ruling family. In early 1859, the faction controlled by Ritova was in the ascendancy, although Ritova's main rival, his kinsman Bete, could not be discounted, since the two had long been contending for supremacy. With the situation further complicated by Ritova's rivalry with Tui Bua, firm ally of Ma`afu, the politics of Bua and Macuata remained inextricably linked. Swanston, who was to state that even in 1859 he “wished to see Ma`afu head chief in the Fijis”, believed that the origin of the war in Macuata was Ma`afu's “ambition ... to advance the interests of the Tongans in Fiji”. This was certainly an oversimplification, in view of the endemic disputes both within Macuata and between Ritova and Tui Bua, the last having begun more than a decade earlier. Although speaking in 1862, Swanston indicates that the nature and extent of Ma`afu's motives had been understood three years earlier.⁸¹

With the renewal of hostilities, Tui Bua quickly applied for help to Raivalita, Tui Cakau and to Cakobau, in both cases without success. He then wrote both to Ma`afu and to Wainiqolo, Ma`afu's principal lieutenant and Tui Bua's kinsman through his Tongan mother. Four separate messages were sent to Ma`afu, who repaired to Lakeba and set out from there in a fleet of *drua*, himself sailing in the *Ra Marama*. The fleet proceeded to Wairiki, where yet another message awaited him. Ma`afu sent Wainiqolo to Bua with instructions to make enquiry into the state of affairs there before rejoining him at Bau. In the meantime,

77 Wilson to Eggleston, 12 Jun 1859, MOM 165.

78 Cakobau to Ma`afu, 21 May 1859, enc. in Williams to State Dept, 30 Sep 1859, USC Laucala 3.

79 Williams to State Dept, 30 Sep 1859.

80 Royce, 2 Sep 1859.

81 Evidence of Robert Swanston, *Report of the Commission...*

Ma`afu continued to Levuka, where he was joined by the Lakeba *vasu*, evidence that his campaign had been carefully planned. From there, the force proceeded to the Dreketi River in Macuata, where hostilities were quickly joined.⁸² While, according to Pritchard's later account, Ma`afu had also promised his support to Ritova, there is some near-contemporary, if anonymous, evidence that he had also made friendly overtures to Bete.⁸³ The subsequent fighting was notable for the savagery of Wainiqolo and his second in command Semisi Fifita. When Wainiqolo, who was accompanied by about 80 warriors, requested reinforcements, Ma`afu sent two *drua*. Two years later, the same anonymous hand described Tongan depredations in Macuata:

The Tonguese did not content themselves with merely taking a place; they plundered and set fire to the dwellings, cut down the fruit trees, filled up the wells, violated the women, and put down as many of the fighting men as their ferocity prompted them. When Ma`afu and his hordes had been at a place, it was as if a cloud of locusts had descended. Not only had every vestige of provisions, pigs, fowls, yams and taros, disappeared, but the plantations themselves had been destroyed, forcing the poor natives to seek such wild roots as would enable them to eke out their miserable existence. Yet, after all their provisions, tools, native cloth, canoes and whatever movables they were possessed of had been carried off or destroyed, they were compelled to make cocoa-nut oil, sailmasts and other articles for their conquerors.⁸⁴

Persistent rumours of missionary support for the violence led John Eggleston, secretary of the Australasian Wesleyan Missionary Society in Sydney, to protest to Ma`afu against a number of outrages and urging him to reveal himself as the true inspiration of his lieutenants' work.⁸⁵ That Ma`afu, for so long a proclaimed patron of the *lotu*, should attract missionary ire says much about the unrelenting ferocity that the Tongan forces wreaked on the unconverted Macuatans. Not for the first time, Ma`afu's absence from the action permitted him some degree of dissociation from events that, in these cases, owed as much to the settlement of old scores as it did to the planned augmentation of Tongan power. Again not for the first time, he would benefit in the aftermath.

82 Charles R. Swayne, Memorandum, Lomaloma, 5 Apr 1884, G.K. Roth, Papers, AJCP M2792. This source offers the most detailed account of the subsequent campaigns in Macuata and Bua.

83 "W" to the editor, *The Athenaeum*, No. 1791, 22 Feb 1862, 261, dated at Levuka 9 Aug 1861. The writer was probably George Winter, a settler in Ovalau. See also his views concerning missionary involvement in Fijian politics: Winter to the late Chief Secretary [of Victoria], 12 Aug 1863, *TA*, 15 Oct 1863.

84 *ibid.*

85 Eggleston to Ma`afu, 30 Jul 1859, quoted in Berthold Seemann, *Viti; an Account of a Government Mission to the Vitian or Fijian Islands*, London 1862, 254. There is no trace of the letter among Eggleston's outward correspondence in MOM records.

After protracted fighting, Ritova had surrendered by October to the combined forces of Cakobau, Tui Cakau, Tui Nayau, Tui Macuata, Tui Dreketi and Ma`afu.⁸⁶ He was conveyed as a prisoner to Taveuni and placed under Tui Cakau's authority.⁸⁷ Tui Bua retained his office, while Macuata was divided into two, with Bete being made chief of the western district, while the eastern district was placed under the authority of his half-brother Bonaveidogo. Both brothers were to pay tribute to Ma`afu, as was his long-standing ally, Tui Bua. Finally, the *vanua* of Solevu, hitherto a foothold of Bauan influence between the *matanitu* of Bua and Cakaudrove, came under the suzerainty of Tui Bua. Once final submissions to them had taken place, the bulk of the Tongan forces was expected to return to Tonga.⁸⁸ As if to stamp his authority on all the lands of northern Fiji, Ma`afu appointed Tui Cakau as "King of all Vanua Levu and the Windward Islands including Lakeba, Lomaloma etc. Bete is made Tui Macuata but all recognised Tui Cakau as master". Joseph Waterhouse believed that Ma`afu's action was "partially the result of our [i.e. the missionaries'] coming here",⁸⁹ a view that probably arose from Ma`afu's claimed identification with the mission cause. Since Raivalita was *lotu*, his appointment as "king" while his "heathen" fellow chief cooled his heels at Somosomo might be seen as an attempt by Ma`afu to legitimise his augmented power in the missionaries' eyes. A Christian chief of such a large part of Fiji could not but please them and, by implication, the British government, under whose authority Ma`afu and Tui Cakau had both agreed to place themselves.

All of Vanua Levu and Taveuni was now subject either to Ma`afu's direct authority, as in Bua and Macuata, or to his strong influence, as in Cakaudrove. The loss to Bau of Solevu symbolised the diminution of Cakobau's power and prestige throughout the region, a change rendered more significant by the fact that there had never been open hostility between him and Ma`afu. The two were ostensible allies, both professedly Christian, and Ma`afu had voyaged to Bau for consultations before and during the Macuata troubles. Nevertheless, the Vunivalu could scarcely have witnessed a plainer demonstration of Ma`afu's ultimate aims. Pritchard would later claim that Ma`afu's objectives during this period were to attach himself to the Wesleyan influence, to "purchase" the goodwill of the resident Europeans and to "quieten" the suspicions of Cakobau. To these ends, he proclaimed his intention to remove all obstacles to the missionaries' teaching, purchased arms and ammunition from the whites,

86 For details of the fighting, see Swayne; Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, 226–230; Seemann, 246–249.

87 Evidence of Jesse Carey, *Report of the Commission*...

88 Joseph Waterhouse to Thomas Williams, 4 Oct 1859, Letters to Thomas Williams. See also Malvern to Eggleston, 12 Jun 1859, MOM 165; Royce, 25 May and 10 Aug 1859; Evidence of George Vakawale Tabua, Tui Bua, 30 Aug 1878, LCC R929 Lovoni; Statements of Tui Bua and Buli Wainunu, LCC R586. The latter statement of Tui Bua includes the most detailed account of events in Vanua Levu, which Tui Bua described as "the Tongan war".

89 Waterhouse to Thomas Williams, 4 Oct 1859 and postscript 19 Oct 1859.

paying with coconut oil, and visited Cakobau, supposedly seeking his approval for aid to Tui Bua and Bete.⁹⁰ While Pritchard's intimate involvement in Fijian politics over several years merits a serious assessment of his views, his account by no means tells the whole story.

The interpretation Ma`afu sought the world to place on his actions is revealed in his exchanges with Swanston. The Acting Consul had received complaints from Williams concerning Tongan actions in Macuata, while Père Jean-Baptiste Bréheret, head of the Catholic mission, believed that Ma`afu was carrying on a religious war. Swanston was so concerned about the potential political implications of these complaints that he travelled to Solevu, then under siege from Ma`afu. He alerted Ma`afu to the seriousness of the charges against him and urged him to come to Levuka to meet Williams and Bréheret. Ma`afu denied any interference with the Catholic mission, although he acknowledged receiving letters of complaint from Williams.⁹¹ He repudiated Williams' complaints, declaring that he was "fighting for the chief of Bau and for the mission". Ma`afu showed Swanston the letter from Cakobau, which he said was really from a missionary. On examining the letter, Swanston told Ma`afu that it was in fact from Cakobau. When Ma`afu objected that Cakobau had given him the letter personally, stating it was from a missionary, Swanston pointed out to Ma`afu that the letter bore Cakobau's signature. Ma`afu professed his astonishment, declaring that since the letter was in the missionary's handwriting, he had assumed the signature to be the missionary's.⁹² It says something of Cakobau's fear of Ma`afu that he should assert the authority of a missionary, rather than his own, in seeking to keep Ma`afu out of the Macuata wars.

Ma`afu was prevailed upon to accompany Swanston back to Levuka, where he succeeded in mollifying Williams and Bréheret. The former was in any case chiefly concerned with the deleterious affect the Macuata war had on American trading activities in Vanua Levu, while Bréheret sought to prevent any further encroachment on the few Catholic converts in the area.⁹³ Once again Ma`afu was able to head off his critics. His achievements in Fiji up to this time, properly described as "breathhtaking",⁹⁴ meant that the road to Bau now lay open before him. Of Ma`afu's ambition there can be no doubt, while any suggestion that Tupou encouraged him cannot be sustained, although there might well have been tacit support from the King. At the time, Joseph Waterhouse wrote that

90 Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, 226.

91 One such letter is John B. Williams to Ma`afu, 1 Aug 1859, USC Laucala 3. The Consul complained of threats made by Ma`afu's men against an American citizen named George Trask "to destroy him and [his] schooner 'Paul Jones'". Williams also referred to an "act of piracy" whereby some Tongan men had commandeered a whaleboat belonging to Trask and another American named Christopher Carr.

92 The letter in dispute was almost certainly that dated 21 May 1859 and signed by Cakobau (see above, n. 76). It was penned by John Smith Fordham.

93 Evidence of Swanston, *Report of the Commission...*

94 A.C. Reid, *Tovata I and II*, Suva 1990, 32.

“Ma`afu was either implementing Tupou’s wishes or this was the first version of his own ideas on the future, featuring a united eastern and northern Fiji”.⁹⁵ The dilemma is scarcely easier of resolution today than it was then.

Cakobau meanwhile was able to rid himself of one thorn in his flesh. On 6 August, while hostilities were continuing in Vanua Levu, Ratu Mara and his associate Koroilatikau were hanged at Bau. Mara, who acknowledged the justice of his fate,⁹⁶ had long been a dangerous rival to Cakobau and indeed a continuing threat to whomever held the reins of power in Fiji. His unbending opposition to the *lotu* had also earned him the enmity of the missionaries.⁹⁷ For Ma`afu, the end of Mara, in whose company he had voyaged to Fiji twelve years earlier, was welcome. Missionary James Royce saw Mara’s death as part of an attempt by Ma`afu to “drive ... the rebels to one corner, where he intends to take them and bring the fighting to an issue”.⁹⁸ Mara’s daughter, Adi Mere Hennings, was later to provide anecdotal evidence of Ma`afu’s role in her father’s downfall. She spoke of the days when she and her German trader husband William Hennings were neighbours of Ma`afu at Lomaloma. Speaking inside her house, she said:

that big mirror over there was noticed by Ma`afu when he called in to see my husband one day, years after my father’s death, and he said to me with a sigh, ‘It was Mara who gave me my first big mirror (glass of shadows).’ So I answered him, ‘Yes, and it was you who caused his shadow to depart’. Whereupon he gave a guilty start and left the house, never to return again.⁹⁹

Ma`afu’s chagrin, feigned or otherwise, supposedly arose from his devious actions in pushing Mara in the direction of the gallows. According to Mara’s grandson Gustav Mara Hennings, son of Adi Mere, Ma`afu had offered his services as an intermediary between Mara and Cakobau, but purposefully declined to act in that capacity once Mara had arrived at Bau. After Mara, tired of waiting, had quitted Bau in anger, Ma`afu claimed to Cakobau that he (Ma`afu) had been let down and suggested that the Vunivalu pursue Mara and return him to Bau.¹⁰⁰ The duplicity supposedly achieved its purpose, since Mara had always posed a threat to Bau and his permanent removal could only help smooth Ma`afu’s path to power. However, these accounts from Mara’s daughter and grandson must seriously be called into question. Contemporary evidence from Joseph Waterhouse at Somosomo suggests that Mara and his extensive entourage reached Bau only after Cakobau had seen Mara at Ovalau and promised him a

95 Waterhouse to Thomas Williams, 4 Oct 1859.

96 [Thomas Baker], Journal kept in Fiji, 1859–1863, Aug 1859, MOM 324.

97 William Collis to Arthur J. Small, n.d., quoted in Mary Collis, “Ratu Mara”, *TFS*, 1911, unpaginated.

98 Royce, 10 Aug 1859.

99 T.R. St Johnston, *South Seas Reminiscences*, London 1928, 128.

100 Gustav Mara Hennings, “Ratu Mara”, *TFS*, 1911, unpaginated.

pardon if he would present himself at Bau. Fellow missionary Thomas Baker, who visited Bau in early May, found "that the King was not at home, having gone to Ovalau in order to capture the principal rebel chief Mara".¹⁰¹ Upon Mara's arrival at Bau three months later, he was bound, and hanged within 24 hours. Waterhouse called on his colleague Thomas Williams to "watch the results of this unfortunate affair. The day is passing in Fiji when might makes right".¹⁰² So it was, but if Ma`afu was aware, he kept his own counsel.

Although Ma`afu's presence in Levuka in September followed Swanston's urging, he told Williams that he had come in response to the Consul's letter, written more than six weeks earlier.¹⁰³ He reassured Williams concerning specific grievances raised in the letter and, more importantly, expressed unqualified support for the free flow of commerce. He also stated his determination that no Christian sect should suffer interference. Ma`afu showed Williams the earlier letter he had received from Cakobau,¹⁰⁴ drawing the Consul's attention to the writer's admonition not to pay attention to "advices" from foreigners, except for English Wesleyan missionaries. Williams commended Ma`afu for the way he had concluded peace with Solevu, in contrast with the Fijian habit of feasting on the bodies of slain enemies. He also reminded Ma`afu that in commercial matters, it was his responsibility to consult the resident Consuls, himself and Swanston. Ma`afu readily agreed, calling on Williams again five days later to assure him that he wished for peace on Ovalau. He was urged not to make war against Bau and to remember the dictum "peace and commerce". In reporting these meetings to his State Department, Williams appeared confident that Ma`afu would follow his advice.¹⁰⁵ Ma`afu was able to smooth the Consul's ruffled feathers as well as he could those of any Wesleyan missionary.

Pritchard returned to Levuka on 1 November, bringing with him the news that the British government was still considering cession. One missionary expressed "sore" disappointment, believing that only cession would put an end to wars such as the recent one in Macuata.¹⁰⁶ Cakobau quickly appealed to Pritchard to help "check the intrigues of Ma`afu" on the ground that since Fiji was already ceded to the Queen, Ma`afu was upsetting the *status quo*.¹⁰⁷ From his position of greater strength, Ma`afu was ready to meet Pritchard on his own terms. Foreseeing an eventual British administration, he appeared anxious to throw in his lot with the eventual victors. The Consul reported Ma`afu's words:

101 Thomas Baker, Journal, 6 May 1859. See also *ibid.*, 10 May 1859.

102 Waterhouse to Thomas Williams, 4 Oct 1859.

103 Possibly that dated 1 Aug 1859.

104 The letter was dated 21 May 1859. See above, n. 76.

105 John B. Williams to State Dept, 5 Nov 1859, USC Laucala 3.

106 William Wilson to George Osborn, 3 Nov 1859, WMMS LFF.

107 Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, 232.

Thakobau is an old savage. He has grown old in the customs of Fiji. He does not love the white man. I have been brought up with the white man. I have sailed the sea in their ships and lived in their houses on shore. I am the white man's friend. If you will not support Thakobau, I shall soon be the only chief in Fiji, and then I shall give the whole group to you ... I shall rule Fiji for England, under any chief the Queen may send ... Let me become the Chief of Fiji, and I shall give it all up to England ... Let us be friends and work together.¹⁰⁸

Despite his gains in Vanua Levu during Pritchard's absence, Ma`afu's longer-term plans received a profound check with Pritchard's appointment and, more particularly, the Consul's unmitigated desire for cession. As always, Ma`afu knew well how to make the most of the situation. If the British were destined to come, Ma`afu would be their ally and friend, and govern Fiji for them. He would not be absolute master of Fiji, but he would be supreme over his great rivals, the indigenous chiefs. The "old savage" would be marginalised and Fiji would enter the brave new world of the European Pacific with Ma`afu firmly at the helm.

Following Pritchard's return, Ma`afu did not cease attempts to extend his influence whenever opportunity arose. On 25 November two Tongan canoes reached Kadavu "sent by Ma`afu to secure Kadavu for his rule". James Royce, the resident missionary, at first believed that the Tongans' purpose was to promote the *lotu* in unconverted Kadavu villages, but quickly acknowledged his error. Pritchard arrived on board HMS *Elk*, a visiting British warship, only one day after the Tongans, intent on convincing local chiefs of the benefits of cession, in readiness for a council of chiefs to be held at Levuka on 12 December. The consequence of these visits was that within a few days, Kadavu was *lotu* and under the authority of chiefs appointed by the Tongans. The chiefs, "of one accord", had also expressed their support for cession.¹⁰⁹ Pritchard later wrote that the missionaries on Kadavu were so wary of Ma`afu that they instructed their teachers to ignore all instructions from him. Only one had the courage to do so.¹¹⁰

Ma`afu also despatched a *folau* to Beqa, an island indirectly subject to Bau through Rewa. When Williams heard reports that the Beqan chiefs, faced with a superior force, had ceded their island to Ma`afu, he wrote immediately to Cakobau, seeking clarification.¹¹¹ In reply, John Fordham, stationed at Bau, advised Williams that Cakobau had heard the same reports. Furthermore, the Vunivalu believed "that Ma`afu has accepted the offer and now claims the Sovereignty of that island inasmuch as he has twice sent canoes there for property

108 *ibid.*

109 Royce, 26 and 30 Nov, 1 Dec 1859.

110 Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, 295.

111 John B. Williams to Tui Viti, 1 Dec 1859, enc. with Williams to State Dept, 31 Dec 1859, USC Laucala 3.

without a messenger from either Bau or Rewa". Cakobau proceeded to state, through Fordham, that neither Ma`afu nor the Beqa chiefs had consulted him and that he strongly deprecated the cession of the island to the Tongans.¹¹² The Beqa chiefs were later reported to have been "overmatched and surprised".¹¹³ About the same time, another party of Tongans, under orders from Tui Bua, was despatched to Rakiraki on the north coast of Viti Levu. Rakiraki was also indirectly subject to Bau, in this case through Viwa.¹¹⁴ Pritchard later accused Ma`afu of seeking "to foment quarrels" in Rewa and Rakiraki in order to provide himself with an excuse for intervention.¹¹⁵ While Ma`afu's motives might not have been as direct as Pritchard would have them, the greatly enhanced danger to Bau could not be denied. In early December 1859, Ma`afu's power in Fiji was at its zenith, since he now controlled Lau, Bua, Macuata, Beqa, Kadavu and Rakiraki, while the large *matanitu* of Cakaudrove was his firm ally. These were the realities confronting Pritchard and the indigenous chiefs at their meeting in December.

Before the meeting took place, Pritchard engaged in intense lobbying of several important chiefs. Visiting Wairiki, he interviewed Tui Cakau in the presence of Joseph Waterhouse, who acted as interpreter. Tui Cakau expressed his reluctance to cede his domains, saying that his "trifling" portion of Fiji was independent of both Bau and Tonga and "did not wish to be connected with England". Pritchard responded with an aside to Waterhouse: "Might makes right", whereupon the missionary diplomatically advised Tui Cakau that he would be acting wisely if he accepted the Consul's proposal. After Tui Cakau duly agreed to attend the forthcoming meeting at Levuka, Pritchard advised Waterhouse similarly to use his influence with Ritova, Bete and Tui Nayau. The missionary sought the aid of Ma`afu who, after expressing his hesitation, was advised "that further objection would be quite useless". Ma`afu was urged to help Pritchard "either by leaving Fiji entirely, or settling down quietly as a private Chief, or accepting office under the Administration of Government". Ma`afu appeared convinced and urged the chiefs of Bau, Macuata and Lakeba to attend the meeting. When Tui Nayau proved especially obdurate, Waterhouse called in Ma`afu again "and told him that if the Lakeba Chief did not go to Ovalau it would be laid at his door, and the consul would have no further confidence in him. In consequence ... Ma`afu insisted on the Lakeba chief accompanying him". Ma`afu was at least prepared to talk to the Consul, although to what end remained unclear.¹¹⁶

112 John Fordham to John B. Williams, 6 Dec 1859, enc. with Williams to State Dept, 31 Dec 1859, USC Laucala 3.

113 Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, 231.

114 *ibid.*

115 *ibid.*

116 Evidence of Joseph Waterhouse, *Report of the Commission*.... See also Waterhouse to J.A. Manton, 7 Jul 1860, Waterhouse family papers, box 2.

Three days before the meeting's scheduled start, Ma`afu again called on Williams. He informed the Consul that he had conferred with Cakobau at Bau and that both men had agreed "to go earnestly to work and pay off the American claims". Cakobau had supposedly admitted having told "a great many lies" in the past concerning the debt, but was now prepared to seek a proper settlement. This apparent change of heart, astonishing if true, was reported to the State Department.¹¹⁷ The details of Williams' interview with Ma`afu, set out in his despatch to Washington, may be contrasted with the hearsay account of Isaac Brower, referred to above, concerning Ma`afu's alleged overtures to the Consul.¹¹⁸ In view of the manifest injustice of the American "debt" as it then stood, and of Cakobau's acknowledged inability to pay, it seems most unlikely that he would have accepted the American demands so readily, especially in conversation with Ma`afu. It is more likely that Ma`afu deliberately deceived Williams in order to mitigate the Consul's anxiety concerning payment. With Williams placated, Ma`afu was better placed to deal with Pritchard and the Fijian chiefs over the question of cession.

Despite his strengthened negotiating position, Ma`afu attempted to head off the meeting by urging Pritchard to agree to a division of Fiji, even offering to pay the American "debt" himself, one of the principal conditions of the proposed cession. He then proposed to Pritchard "that Feejee be divided, for himself to have one half; subject to, or rather acknowledging the Vunivalu as his superior, and the Vunivalu the other". Pritchard, apparently wise to Ma`afu's schemes, "kept [him] in a state of uncertainty" until the meeting.¹¹⁹ Williams was apparently convinced "that the British intended" to divide Fiji in the manner suggested by Ma`afu.¹²⁰ He need not have worried, since Pritchard was determined both to maintain the existing balance of power and, as far as possible, to stop the Tongans in their tracks.¹²¹

Even though Ma`afu could speak to both Consuls from an unprecedented position of strength, he realised that his power would be significantly weakened once he was faced with an assembly, not only of Fiji's principal chiefs, but more especially Pritchard and Commander Hubert Campion of HMS *Elk*. If he could placate the American Consul and then persuade Pritchard to agree to a division of the islands, he would not only steal the meeting's thunder, but also reduce the possibility of cession. His fears about the meeting proved well founded. On the first day of the gathering, held in the mission schoolroom at Levuka, Ma`afu was asked to withdraw. All the remaining chiefs, from Rewa, Viwa, Bau, Ra and

117 John B. Williams to State Dept, 2 Jan 1860, USC Laucala 4.

118 See above, n. 46.

119 Collis to John Polglase, n.d. [Dec 1859], quoted in Polglase to James Royce, 27 Dec 1859, George Brown Correspondence and Papers. See also John B. Williams to State Dept, 7 Feb 1860, USC Laucala 4.

120 Williams to State Dept, 7 Feb 1860.

121 Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, 232–233.

Nadroga, then acknowledged Cakobau as supreme. All of these men, including Tui Levuka, also in attendance, then readily agreed to the proposal for cession. Ma`afu was summoned and asked if he were a Fijian chief and possessed any authority in Fiji. He replied that he was a Tongan chief and claimed no authority in Fiji. He stated that he was acting as a "deputy" for Tupou, who had appointed him "to look after the Tonguese in these islands".

Ma`afu had been out-manoeuvred. By first excluding him and then causing him to acknowledge his lack of authority as a Fijian chief, Pritchard effectively precluded his participation in the debate over cession. It was as if his gains in war and intrigue during the Consul's absence counted for nothing. With the rug pulled from under his feet, Ma`afu was presented with a prepared document and asked to sign it, if it met with his approval. During the ensuing hour and a half, Ma`afu prevaricated. "He would have evaded if he could ... as though it were something he could not comprehend". When he was "compelled" to understand it, he declined to sign saying "I cannot agree ... If the Tonguese come to Feejee there will be no place to which they can go and get what they want". Pritchard responded by saying that the only alternative was to send the *Elk* to Tonga to request Tupou to withdraw all the Tongans from Fiji. They would then have to visit the islands "as other foreigners and pay for what they get", including canoes. After further consideration Ma`afu signed, albeit with great reluctance.¹²²

The document was witnessed by Pritchard and Campion, with interpreters William Collis and Edward Martin certifying that Ma`afu had understood its content.¹²³ If the instrument is accepted at face value, it represents an astonishing reversal for Ma`afu, especially given the ascendancy he had achieved in Fiji during Pritchard's absence. His apparent withdrawal from his position of strength was not solely the consequence of the Consul's intimidation, however. Ma`afu had all his life been exposed to European modes of thought and, more especially, European military strength. He harboured no illusions about the power represented by Pritchard, a power manifested in part by the bulk of HMS *Elk*, at anchor off Levuka. The most significant of the instrument's six clauses is number five, wherein all the Tongan lands in Fiji were declared to be "wholly and solely Fijian". If that clause were ever implemented, the Tongans living in and visiting Fiji would be reduced to the condition of unwanted visitors subject to the authority and whim of the local chiefs. In the end, Ma`afu signed the instrument because he realised he had no choice. His acquiescence at this

122 This account is based on Collis to John Polglase (see above, n. 119). Collis acted as an interpreter at the meeting. See also the evidence of the other interpreter, Edward Martin, in *Report of the Commission...*, 15.

123 Quoted in J.H. de Ricci, *Fiji, our new Province in the South Seas*, London 1875, 228–229. See also Seemann, 250–251; Letter to the Editor, dated 16 Nov 1860, in Richard Lyth, *Newspaper Cuttings and Fijian Vocabulary*. For the full text of the Instrument, see Appendix A.

early stage gave him a breathing space while the question of cession was under consideration by the British government. In any case, an agreement on paper did not alter the *status quo*. For the present, Tongan power in Fiji remained intact.

A separate agreement between Pritchard and the chiefs ceded the islands to Great Britain, thereby ratifying the so-called Act of Cession of 14 October 1858. The Consul advised the Colonial Office that the chiefs had agreed because “they [could not] resist the encroachments of the white race”. They viewed the Act of Cession “as a choice of the least of many evils”.¹²⁴ In later auxiliary agreements, the Consul secured the chiefs’ compliance in matters including trade, protection of Christian teachers and prohibition of practices such as cannibalism, human sacrifice and infanticide. More importantly, British subjects resident in Fiji were accorded certain legal and commercial privileges as well as the right to hold land. The Consul granted himself unrestricted rights to enact any “laws, regulations and measures he may deem necessary, proper and expedient”.¹²⁵ When Williams, not present at the meeting, reported its outcome to the State Department, he noted that Ma`afu’s renunciation of the Tongan lands in Fiji had gained the ready approbation of Cakobau. He also noted a subsequent visit from Ma`afu, who told him that had the chiefs not ceded, “the French government would [have] come ... in six months and taken the islands”. Ma`afu also advised Williams that the chiefs signed the instrument of cession “some seemingly compulsory [sic], others voluntarily, and the residue [were] frightened into it”. Ma`afu’s assertions were later supported by Edward Martin, who recalled Pritchard’s use of “strong language [to the chiefs which] would hardly be called persuasion, but overbearing”. The same “overbearing” attitude was directed to Ma`afu himself with Pritchard’s insistence that the Tongans could remain in Fiji only on the same footing as other “foreigners”, no longer able to compel Fijians to make oil or collect *bêche de mer* or sandalwood.¹²⁶

Pritchard’s peremptory manner towards the chiefs was later to attract adverse comment from Whitehall.¹²⁷ Nevertheless, following receipt of the chiefs’ offer, extensive lobbying commenced in London, with deputations from the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society calling on the Prime Minister and the Colonial and Foreign Secretaries.¹²⁸ Although Whitehall expressed some interest

124 Pritchard to CO, 31 Dec 1859, CO83/1. For the text of the agreement dated 15 Dec 1859, see G.C. Henderson, ed., *The Evolution of Government in Fiji*, Sydney 1935, 5–8.

125 Pritchard to FO, 31 Dec 1859, CO83/1.

126 Williams to State Dept, 2 Jan 1860, USC Laucala 4; Evidence of Edward Martin, *Report of the Commission...*

127 See, for example, Lord John Russell to Pritchard, 20 Aug 1860, FO58/92. For a discussion of CO attitudes to cession in 1859 and to the evolution of those attitudes to 1874, when cession was finally agreed, see Ethel Drus, “The Colonial Office and the Annexation of Fiji”, *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Fourth Series, Vol. XXXII, 87–90. See also David Routledge, “The failure of Cakobau, Chief of Bau, to become King of Fiji” in G.A. Wood and P.S. O’Connor, eds, *W.P. Morrell: a Tribute*, Dunedin 1973, 125–139.

128 WMMS Committee Minutes 1861–1862, 411–430.

in Fiji's strategic position and in the islands' potential for cotton cultivation, the government continued to view further colonial expansion with disfavour. A Commission of Enquiry, headed by Colonel William Smythe, was appointed, with the task of determining the views of as many leading chiefs as possible and submitting a report to the Colonial Office, before a final decision were made.¹²⁹ In Fiji itself, with the renewed offer of cession and Ma`afu's apparent capitulation, Cakobau's prestige received a welcome boost. He had secured at least grudging support from all the principal chiefs, thus endowing his "title" of Tui Viti with greater authority than hitherto. Berthold Seemann, a naturalist who accompanied Smythe during his tour, was later to write that the chiefs had fallen in with the Vunivalu and the Consul "to escape the unsupportable exactions and tyrannies of the Tonguese", a view which echoed Pritchard's reference to cession as the least of many evils from the Fijians' standpoint.¹³⁰ As soon as John Binner heard the news of Ma`afu's agreement with the Consul, he wrote from Levuka:

We shall get rid of a lot of marauders who have been for some time past a perfect pest to the Fijian natives, slaying some, dishonouring women and plundering and tyrannising over the whole, gratifying their own wicked propensities, in the name of religion.¹³¹

Despite the missionary's optimism, Tongan power on the ground was unaffected by the various agreements, which were inoperative pending a favourable decision from Whitehall. Lau remained subject to Ma`afu and, in that sense at least, a Tongan dependency. Ma`afu's armed followers, wherever they were, continued to be a source of "uneasiness" to the Fijians.¹³² What had changed were the powers of the British Consul: if Pritchard could put into practice the concessions wrought from the chiefs and the authority he had assumed for himself, he would possess an ascendancy in Fiji previously denied anyone else.

Ma`afu appears to have carried on life as usual. Early in 1860 Williams sought to prevent his sailing his schooner *Elenoa* to Tonga, where he apparently intended presenting it to the King. The Consul urged Ma`afu to liquidate his debt of two years' standing to Brower, who had spent \$300 on copper, canvas and rigging for the *Elenoa* and had never been reimbursed.¹³³ Ma`afu already regretted his actions of December, since in January he was reported to be "galled" and

129 For the detailed instructions to Colonel Smythe, see Henderson, ed., *The Evolution of Government in Fiji*, 9–15; Mrs Smythe, *Ten Months in the Fiji Islands*, Oxford and London 1864, Appendix, 191–196.

130 Seemann, 226. See also above, n. 123. Seemann was in Fiji from May to November, 1860. See his "Remarks on a Government Mission to the Fiji Islands", *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*, Vol. 32, 1862, 51–61.

131 Binner to Eggleston, 14 Dec 1859, MOM 165.

132 Seemann, *Viti...*, 255.

133 John B. Williams to Ma`afu, 2 Jan 1860 and Brower to Williams, 2 Jan 1860, both enclosed with Williams to State Dept, 21 Feb 1860, USC Laucala 4.

anxious to fight Bau, claiming that Cakobau had deceived him.¹³⁴ He was also indirectly fomenting trouble in Rakiraki, where a rebel chief, Mulasi, had erected a defensive fortification supposedly on orders from Tui Bua “in the interests of Ma`afu”. Rakiraki was directly subject to Ratu Isikeli, the chief of Viwa, who assured Pritchard that Tui Bua was “abetting the revolt of Mulasi in the interests of Ma`afu”. The Consul disbelieved the assurances of Ma`afu’s envoy, Semisi Fifita, that Ma`afu was not involved.¹³⁵ On 15 January, Ma`afu arrived off Levuka aboard the *Elenoa*, accompanied by six *drua* and a force of about 1,200 men. He brought with him Tui Nayau, Tui Macuata, Tui Bua, Ritova and the chief of Lomaloma, for a further meeting with Pritchard. In an attempt to lessen the impact of the agreement he had signed a month earlier, Ma`afu called initially on Williams and stated that if he were made chief of eastern Fiji, including Vanua Levu, “he was willing to take office under the English Government and not as chief. Otherwise the British Consul could send him to Tonga”. Williams thought that Pritchard would be unlikely “to send him away”. Before the formal meeting began the next day, Pritchard asked Williams which chief would be the best to rule in Lau and Vanuabalavu, especially in view of the “hatred” felt all over Fiji for Cakobau, among both Fijians and Tongans. Williams believed that Pritchard intended to divide Fiji along the lines suggested earlier by Ma`afu.¹³⁶ But it was not to be, with Pritchard confining himself to negotiating the supplementary agreements referred to above. As the weeks went by, missionary William Moore in Rewa noted a more “cheerful” aspect for Fiji, since Europeans from Australia were beginning land purchases and commercial activities.¹³⁷ His colleague James Royce was less sanguine, noting that Ma`afu’s wars in Vanua Levu the previous year had resulted in the “conquered heathen” there acknowledging him, rather than Cakobau, as their ruler. As a consequence, some eastern chiefs at first rejected the idea of cession, saying, “Oh, we belong to Tonga”. Royce repudiated the Tongans’ belief that they had “as much right and as much power to govern Fiji as the British”.¹³⁸ The consequences of Ma`afu’s renunciation of power were yet to be felt.

Despite Ma`afu’s apparent inactivity during much of 1860, the Tongans’ impact on eastern Fiji did not diminish in the aftermath of the offer of cession. The missionaries continued to regret that “the constant presence and great influence of Tonguese residents and visitors [has] an injurious affect on Lakeba”.¹³⁹ Ma`afu’s absence from the record during these months suggests that he might

134 Royce, Journal, 15 Jan 1860.

135 Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, 333–334.

136 Williams to State Dept, 7 Feb 1860.

137 William Moore to Elijah Hoole, 28 Feb 1860, WMMS LFF.

138 Royce to GS, WMMS, 27 Mar 1860, WMMS LFF. See also William Wilson to GS, WMMS, 9 Apr 1860, WMMS LFF.

139 Lakeba Circuit Report, p. xxvii; *The Report of the Australasian Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society for the year ending April 1860*, Sydney 1860.

have visited Tonga in the wake of the agreement of December 1859. In eastern Fiji, one of the first land sales that would cause so much debate in the future occurred on 30 May. Kuli Kavaci, owner of Adavaci, a small island inside the Vanuabalavu reef, sold it to George Henry, the Tahitian-born son of a missionary, for \$100.¹⁴⁰ It is probable that the sale was approved by Tui Cakau, within whose customary domains Vanuabalavu lay. One month later Consul Williams died of dysentery, having the same day appointed Brower as Vice Consul. In Britain meanwhile, the Foreign Office was urging the Colonial Secretary, the Duke of Newcastle, to make a decision concerning cession.¹⁴¹ Colonel Smythe, armed with his instructions weighted against the proposal, reached Levuka on 5 July to begin his investigations.¹⁴² A few days later, Smythe and his wife met Ma`afu there, although there is no record of what was discussed. Sarah Smythe, who of course did not know Fiji well, believed Ma`afu's influence in the group to be "generally for good" because of his support for Tongan teachers. The "good deal of mischief" done by the Tongans in Fiji occurred, she believed, out of Ma`afu's sight.¹⁴³ Berthold Seemann thought differently, later writing of the Tongan teachers:

They were spread over the whole country and ... became in Ma`afu's hand, ready instruments for the execution of his plans. They supplied him with reliable information about the quarrels, weaknesses and resources of the different territories, were never tired of praising their great chief, and ever ready to prompt the Fijian rulers to apply to him in cases of dispute and war.¹⁴⁴

In view of Ma`afu's record in extending his influence in Fiji, and in the light of current apprehension concerning his plans should annexation not proceed, Seemann's appraisal appears more accurate than that of Mrs Smythe.

Colonel Smythe himself observed that Ma`afu had no desire to return to Tonga and was waiting anxiously for the decision from London. If that decision were negative, "the conquest of the whole group by Tonguese arms might become a reality". Ma`afu had meanwhile urged his followers to remain quiet and to refrain from fomenting discord.¹⁴⁵ He certainly remained quiet himself, because his July meeting with the Smythes resulted in the first documented reference to him for six months. Shortly after the conference, Smythe, Seemann and their entourage left Levuka aboard HMS *Pegasus* to commence their tour of Fiji. There was then "no slight excitement" among many Fijians, who now realised that

140 Deed 192, CRD 1858–1872, BCFP. George Henry was a brother of Samuel Henry (see Ch. 3).

141 FO to Sir Frederic Rogers, 20 Jul 1860, with encs CO83/1.

142 Newcastle to Sir William Smythe, 23 Dec 1859, PP 1862, xxxvi [2995], 24–27.

143 Mrs Smythe, 126–127.

144 Seemann, *Viti...*, 253.

145 *ibid.*, 256.

even though their commitments to the British Consul had been made in writing, Pritchard's promises to them were merely verbal.¹⁴⁶ Smythe began his round of consultations at Bau, where several meetings with Cakobau and other chiefs occurred. Cakobau declared that he still favoured cession and that "he was afraid only of America and France". He stressed Fiji's weakness, owing to endemic "enmity" between the *matanitu*, which he blamed for the disproportionate power enjoyed by the Tongans. Cakobau saw the offer of cession as a relief from another external threat: he told Smythe that "King George ... was dead with crying ... on hearing of the cession. He saw that his chance of getting Fiji was gone".¹⁴⁷ Whether or not Cakobau's fears about Tupou's ambitions were justified, they remained real in the Vunivalu's mind.

After meeting Cakobau, Smythe advised the Colonial Office that his instructions were "inexact" on one important point: "Cakobau ... although probably the most influential chief in the group, has no claim to the title of Tui Viti ... nor would the other chiefs submit to his authority except through foreign compulsion".¹⁴⁸ At Rewa, his next call, the chiefs favoured cession, although they appeared confused about the matter of land sales. At Kadavu, the Commission heard that a "circular letter" had been received from Ma`afu, "advising his countrymen how to act, so that the policy of England with regard to the cession of Fiji might be frustrated, and the country ultimately fall into the hands of Tonga". A similar letter had been sent to Beqa.¹⁴⁹ When the visitors called at Beqa early in September, they met an Englishman who claimed to have purchased some land. "The natives, under pressure from the Tonguese, wished to compel him to [return] ... the land ... as they had given ... Beqa to the Tonguese". Pritchard, accompanying Smythe's party, told the principal chief that any gift to the Tongans was invalid, since Ma`afu had publicly renounced all claims in Fiji.¹⁵⁰ If Kadavu and Beqa are any indication, Ma`afu was manoeuvring to reverse the agreements of the previous December. What he could not achieve by war, he sought to gain by intrigue.

Pritchard, too, was active during the Commissioners' visit. Ritova, the former Tui Macuata whom Ma`afu had deposed, appeared off the Macuata coast in early September, "announcing that he was authorized by the Consul to declare war".¹⁵¹ When the Commissioners and Pritchard reached neighbouring Bua later in the month, Tui Bua asked Joseph Waterhouse, acting as an interpreter, where was the "British uprightness" of which the missionary had spoken? Tui

146 Waterhouse to Manton, 7 Jul 1860.

147 William Smythe, Notes of Meetings, Bau, 27 July 1860, in Mrs Smythe, Appendix, 213–218.

148 Smythe to CO, 9 Aug 1860, CO 83/1 and FO58/93. See also GB PP [C.3584], Correspondence relative to the Fiji Islands.

149 Seemann, *Viti...*, 139.

150 *ibid.*, 210.

151 Waterhouse, Journal (extract), 11 Sep 1860, in letter to his mother, 25 Sep 1860, Waterhouse Papers 1826–1876.

Bua faced a dilemma, since he announced to Smythe that he now placed all his trust in the British and no longer in the Tongans. Waterhouse tried to reassure the chief that Pritchard would deal with Ritova. When the visitors later arrived off Naduri, the chiefly village of Macuata, Bete came on board the *Pegasus* and complained to Smythe that Ritova "was using the name of the Consul". Smythe offered the same advice as Waterhouse had done: not to act against Ritova, but to wait for the Consul to deal with him.¹⁵²

Having by now held eleven public meetings, Smythe informed the Colonial Office that Fiji was "composed of a great number of independent Kingdoms, the rulers of which are moved not less by jealousy of one another, than by fear of foreign aggression, to solicit the domination of England".¹⁵³ Proceeding with his enquiry, Smythe reached Lakeba on 5 October. At the meeting with chiefs there four days later, Smythe and his party felt the Tongan presence as never before. Wishing to determine Tui Nayau's "real sentiments" concerning cession, Smythe rather tactlessly asked the chief to ensure that only Fijians were present at their meeting. When he found many Tongans in attendance he expelled them, with consequent loss to their prestige. During a difficult conference, Tui Nayau, "entirely under the influence of the Tongans",¹⁵⁴ appeared at a loss without their support and would only vouchsafe his approval of cession. The following year, a resident missionary would describe Tui Nayau as "in many respects the tool of others, who with fair and crafty words lead him astray.... The old King ... is careless, ignorant and misled".¹⁵⁵ In discussions with the Smythe delegation, however, Tui Nayau did assure his visitors that Lakeba and its subject islands formed an independent state, as did the Yasayasa Moala. Vanuabalavu, Tui Nayau declared, belonged to Cakaudrove. Tui Nayau appeared not to accept as customary the control Ma`afu had exercised among those islands for several years.¹⁵⁶

One of Smythe's most important meetings was the last, at Fawn Harbour in Cakaudrove on 22 October. Present were Tui Cakau, Bonaveidogo, Ritova and other chiefs, as well as Consul Pritchard, Seemann and missionaries Jesse Carey, Thomas Baker and Joeli Bulu.¹⁵⁷ Enquiring first into Ritova's recent depredations along the Macuata coast, Smythe was assured by Pritchard that he had not condoned the chief's actions, as Ritova had claimed. Smythe resolved to do nothing to aid Ritova and advised that Bete, installed as Tui Macuata in the presence of Ma`afu and Cakobau, should retain that dignity.¹⁵⁸ Tui Cakau,

152 Evidence of Waterhouse, *Report of the Commission*.... See also Parham, 98–99; Seemann, *Viti*..., 226–227.

153 Smythe to CO, 25 Sep 1869, CO 83/1.

154 Mrs Smythe, Appendix, 228.

155 Lakemba Circuit Report 1861, WMMS Minutes of District Meeting Meetings 1861–1862, MOM 7.

156 Mrs Smythe, 126–129 and Appendix, 228 et seq.

157 Mrs Smythe, 230.

158 Mrs Smythe, Appendix: Thakaudrove, Waikava ... October 22, 1860, 230–232.

echoing his claim to Pritchard of the previous year, asserted that Cakaudrove was an independent state.¹⁵⁹ After the meeting, Pritchard informed Carey and Baker that he wished to return Ritova to Macuata.¹⁶⁰ The Consul later claimed to have been approached by Ritova and asked to help him regain his position by force of arms, which Pritchard declined to do. Ma`afu supposedly had plans to send Ritova, still living at Matei in northern Taveuni, as a prisoner to Tonga. He also wanted to consign all Ritova's lands to Bonaveidogo, the chief to whom he had given eastern Macuata. On 27 October, an "arrangement" between the parties restored Ritova's lands, including his home island of Nukubati, while Bete was to remain as Tui Macuata. Both chiefs agreed to keep the peace and to "disavow all dependence on Ma`afu".¹⁶¹ Pritchard conveyed Ritova on board his schooner to Matei, where his followers were joyful at the news of their imminent return to Nukubati. Ma`afu, remaining at Lomaloma, was formally advised of what was to happen and warned not to interfere.

A few days later, Ritova, still on board Pritchard's schooner, reached Naduri, Bete's home. Seeming to accept that Ritova and his people were to return to Nukubati, Bete shook hands with his rival for the first time. When the parties reached Nukubati, they found that the Tongans had destroyed all the houses and gardens, "with the exception of one [house], the residence of Ma`afu during the night".¹⁶² Within a few weeks, seven Macuata villages belonging to Wesleyan converts had also been destroyed, with more than 40 people killed. The atrocities occurred because of Ritova's supposed sympathy for the Catholic cause.¹⁶³ Pritchard was willing to blame Bete and the other Tongan "agent" at Naduri, a teacher named Filimoni. On Wainiqolo's suggestion, Ritova invited Bete to a *solevu*, a large ceremonial feast. Bete declined to attend, sending instead his brother Rataqa and two other chiefs, who were made prisoners and sent to Ma`afu at Waisasa. Further atrocities committed by raiding parties under Wainiqolo's command finally provoked Ritova's people into action. They resisted a second Tongan force, while Ritova begged Pritchard's permission to attack Bete.

Seeing Ma`afu's hand behind these hostilities, Pritchard wrote to remind him, firstly, of the powers "granted" to him (the Consul) by the chiefs and secondly that the Tongans enjoyed no political status in Fiji. Faced with Pritchard's demand that Wainiqolo be withdrawn and Rataqa and his fellow chiefs be released, Ma`afu complied. Pritchard wrote of "positive evidence that all these disorders

159 Mrs Smythe, 232. Included in Cakaudrove, according to its paramount chief, were Taveuni, Laucala, Qamea, Yacata, Naitauba, Kanacea, Mago, Vanuabalavu, Cikobia-i-Lau, Munia, Tuvuca, Rabe and Kioa.

160 Evidence of Thomas Baker and Jesse Carey, *Report of the Commission*...

161 Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, 339–342; Seemann, *Viti...*, 263–264; Pritchard to FO, 12 Nov 1860, FO 58/98.

162 Seemann, *Viti...*, 264.

163 Binner to Eggleston, 31 Dec 1860, MOM 165.

on the Mathuata coast are the results of plans deliberately conceived and matured by Tonguese leaders in concert with Henry [Ma`afu]".¹⁶⁴ He lamented that owing to the hierarchical nature of Tongan society, no Tongan teacher in Fiji could ignore the orders of a chief. One such was Filimoni, an "active and subtle agent". So long as any Tongans remained in Macuata, Pritchard believed, there would be "intrigue and conspiracy".¹⁶⁵

At the end of 1860, Pritchard squarely blamed Ma`afu for the renewed violence in Macuata. The Consul's own conduct had aroused complaint from missionaries, most particularly Waterhouse, who accused him of lying.¹⁶⁶ While the case against Pritchard does not concern us here, it is important to note the Consul's reasoned defence of his position, submitted to Smythe in January 1861. Prompted by Smythe's recognition that Cakobau had no claim to be Tui Viti, Pritchard referred to several precedents where various officials of the British, American and French governments had acknowledged the Vunivalu in that role.¹⁶⁷ He made no mention of the Tongans, but while he was defending himself to Smythe, a letter arrived for Cakobau from Tupou. It demanded "the payment of \$60,000 (£12,000) worth of Fijian produce as the price of the assistance he rendered to the Vunivalu in the war of 1855". Cakobau was given 17 months "to collect his property" and was to take it to Tonga during the eighteenth month. Ma`afu, as "George's representative in Fiji",¹⁶⁸ had caused the letter to be written.

It seems incredible that Tupou could have been serious, since the amount requested was greater than the so-called American debt that, as he must have known, Cakobau could never pay. Tupou might have been preparing the ground for future intervention, fixing an 18-month period so as to allow Whitehall time to make a decision. When James Calvert reached Nuku`alofa on 19 May, on his way back to Fiji, he reported that Pritchard and Smythe had asked Wesleyan missionaries John Whewell and Shirley Baker, who were working on Tongatapu, whether Tupou desired British protection for Tonga. Pritchard also requested the King to prevent Ma`afu "from taking lands and engaging in Fijian wars". The Consul had reportedly seized from Ma`afu lands "ceded to him by persons for whom he and his people have fought".¹⁶⁹

Ma`afu was in Vava`u in May 1861 to attend Tonga's third annual Parliament. Following its close, the King remained there awaiting the return of the *Elenoa*, which was probably conveying Ma`afu back to Fiji. Attention in Fiji was then

164 Pritchard to Smythe, 31 Dec 1860, CO83/1.

165 *ibid.*

166 Waterhouse to GS, WMMS, 13 Oct 1860, WMMS LFF. See also Smythe to CO, 9 Nov 1860, CO 83/1; Lord John Russell to Pritchard, 20 Aug 1860, CO 83/1.

167 Pritchard to Smythe, 14 Jan 1861, FO 58/98. See also Waterhouse to Smythe, 23 Jan 1861, in Mrs Smythe, Appendix, 233; Pritchard to FO, 25 Feb 1861, FO 58/98.

168 Fordham to Eggleston, 2 Feb 1861, MOM 165.

169 James Calvert, Journal, 19 May 1861.

focused on Smythe and his official Report, submitted to the Colonial Office on 1 May. In his accompanying despatch, Smythe noted Cakobau's "ambitious disposition" and his "great apprehension" of danger from the United States and France. In the Report itself, he laid emphasis on the fact that Cakobau could not justly be called Tui Viti, owing to the divisions entailed by 40 "independent tribes", the real seats of power.¹⁷⁰ Smythe made particular reference to the Tongans' taking "an active part in Fijian wars ... invariably with success" and to their "ready obedience" to Ma`afu. He noted how Ma`afu had extended his influence through his interference as the "protector" of Tongan teachers who were ill treated by "heathen natives". The Tongans in general were castigated for conduct "in direct contradiction to their profession of Christianity" and it was finally noted "that they could easily make themselves master of Fiji, an enterprise which George, King of Tonga, has been said to meditate".¹⁷¹

Smythe recommended against cession, stating his belief that "the influence of a great power in the Pacific is dependent entirely on its naval force" rather than on territory. He also deprecated the great expense which annexation would entail.¹⁷² Smythe favoured a minimal British presence in Fiji, consistent with the development of cotton cultivation and the continued Christian evangelisation of the "natives".¹⁷³ There is also evidence that some missionaries in Fiji influenced Smythe against the notion of cession, believing that they should have the responsibility of "civilising" Fiji.¹⁷⁴ Whitehall's later decision not to annex came as no surprise, given its predisposition before Smythe began his enquiry. It was some time, however, before that decision became known in Fiji and in the meantime hostilities recommenced in Macuata.¹⁷⁵ Following a raid on Nukubati by Wainiqolo's forces, Pritchard, whose intervention had been requested by both Bete and Ritova, sailed from Levuka to the coast off Naduri. After Bete, through Pritchard, invited Ritova to a "feast" to discuss peace, Wainiqolo again appeared with four canoes, supposedly to dissuade Bete, Ma`afu's firm ally, from his peace efforts. Pritchard, sailing aboard his schooner, managed to secure Ritova from Wainiqolo's clutches. After a lull in hostilities of some weeks, Bete again invited Ritova for a feast, intending that his followers would ambush and kill the visiting chief. Unaware of the plot, Ritova and his son Vunivalu

170 The twelve "tribes" nominated by Smythe as constituting the effective government of Fiji were Bau, Rewa, Navua, Nadroga, Vuda, Ba, Rakiraki, Viwa, Bua, Macuata, Cakaudrove and Lakeba. Mrs Smythe, Appendix, Col. Smythe's Report, 202.

171 *ibid.*, 203.

172 For the text of the report, see Mrs Smythe, Appendix, 201–210; Seemann, *Viti...*, Appendix, 421–431.

173 For discussions of the Report's recommendations, see W.P. Morrell, *Britain in the Pacific Islands*, Oxford 1960, 136–139; Drus, 87–90; Jean I. Brookes, *International Rivalry in the Pacific 1800–1875*, Berkeley and Los Angeles 1941, 340–341; David Routledge, *Pre-Cession Government in Fiji*, unpublished PhD thesis, ANU 1965, 34–35; Thomas West, *Ten Years in South-Central Polynesia*, London 1865, 421–424; Chesson, 6–8.

174 Report of the Australasian Wesleyan Missionary Society 1862–63, 45–46.

175 For conflicting opinions of the causes of the renewed hostilities, see Evidence of Vunivalu and Evidence of Wainiqolo, *Report of the Commission...*

landed at Naduri on 10 June. One inconclusive meeting was held between the two rivals and, after the plot was exposed the following day, Vunivalu shot Bete dead.¹⁷⁶ Acting at Pritchard's orders, Ritova forbore from exacting revenge killings among Bete's followers. After this, in the Consul's words, "all went on quiet until Ma`afu despatched his lieutenant, Wainiqolo, to Macuata, and troubles at once recommenced".¹⁷⁷

Ma`afu had once again been absent at the commencement of hostilities. He had troubles elsewhere, in fact; during the same month as Bete's death, George Henry of Lomaloma preferred a complaint of assault against him.¹⁷⁸ Then, early in July, Ma`afu agreed to settle a debt of \$300 owed to a Levuka firm, Hicks and Company.¹⁷⁹ During a lengthy interview with him, Pritchard proposed that they proceed to Macuata together, "to try and settle the troubles and jealousies on that coast". Ma`afu was not enthusiastic. When the Consul read him a letter of complaint from some Europeans on Ovalau, Ma`afu denied the unspecified charges it contained. Concerning his alleged assault on Henry, he admitted having "hustled" him to the ground at Lomaloma, but denied having kicked him down. In reporting the interview, Pritchard referred to a matter of personal enmity, apparently of long standing, between Ma`afu and Henry. He cautioned Ma`afu "to be very careful not to originate disputes between whites and Tonguese".¹⁸⁰ On the same day Calvert, now returned to Fiji, "had [a] talk with Ma`afu – who went to Bau".¹⁸¹

Ma`afu was not to remain long in Cakobau's den. On 15 July, HMS *Pelorus*, commanded by Commodore J. Beauchamp Seymour, arrived at Levuka. Pritchard quickly informed Seymour that the trade in sandalwood and *beche-de-mer* along the Macuata coast had "entirely stopped", owing to the hostilities between the two rival chiefs, "one of whom was supported by a body of Tongans whose residence is in Lakeba". Seymour asked Pritchard to propose to both Cakobau and Ma`afu that they accompany the Commodore to Macuata, which "after a little diplomatic shuffling they agreed to do".¹⁸² Before he left Levuka, Ma`afu had been quietly admonished by Calvert, who reminded him of the "unsatisfactory end" of the Tongan chiefs who preceded him in Fiji. Ma`afu was urged, in the interests of Fiji, to ensure that "his own heart [was] in a proper

176 For accounts of events leading to the murder, see Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, 335–338; "W" to the editor, *The Athenaeum*, 9 Aug 1861, published in No. 1791, 22 Feb 1862, 261–262; Evidence of Jesse Carey, Bonaveidogo, Katonivere, Vunivalu and Wainiqolo, *Report of the Commission*.... According to Bonaveidogo, Tui Cakau was involved in the conspiracy to kill Bete.

177 Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, 338.

178 Notes of daily Proceedings, 25 Jun 1861, BCFP, FO 58/94.

179 *ibid.*, 10 Jul 1861.

180 *ibid.*

181 Calvert, *Journal*, 11 Jul 1861.

182 Cdre Beauchamp Seymour to Adm., 2 Sep 1861, CO83/1.

Ma`afu, prince of Tonga, chief of Fiji

state".¹⁸³ Calvert was also to express the hope that the claim for \$60,000 sent by Tupou would be "commuted and settled ... The Tongans ought to have something, and it is a Fijian practice to pay ... liberally what is called *de ni valu* – doing of war".¹⁸⁴

When the *Pelorus* anchored off Naduri on 19 July, Seymour learned that Wainiqolo's Tongan force and their Fijian allies had forced Ritova and his party to take refuge on Kia, an island 16 kilometres offshore. The Tongans had wrought destruction on the plantations and *drua* belonging to Ritova's followers, several of whom were murdered. Seymour sent for Ritova who conversed on the quarterdeck with Cakobau and Ma`afu for an hour before they were joined by Wainiqolo and two Fijian chiefs. Before leaving the chiefs to settle their differences, Seymour reminded them that European trade interests had been severely disrupted by the renewed hostilities. He noted that Ma`afu "throughout the entire business was less manageable than either his associates or his enemies".

The following day, the chiefs concluded two agreements. The first, between Ritova and Bonaveidogo, provided that their past grievances should be forgotten, Christian teachers should be protected, trade and commerce be encouraged and contact with the Tongans should be confined to "legitimate and friendly intercourse" free of "political connexion". The second agreement, between Ritova and other Fijian chiefs on the one hand and Ma`afu on the other, was of greater importance. It provided:

1st. That Wai-ni-golo shall, within 14 hours, retire for ever from ... Macuata.

2nd. That no Tongans shall visit ... Macuata ...

3rd. That Tongans in the service of Wesleyan or other missions are exempted from the above restrictions.

4th. That if any of the above articles are infringed, Ma`afu agrees that Wai-ni-golo shall be sent from Fiji to [Tonga].

Seymour had recommended the inclusion of the last three clauses, since he knew that the agreements' beneficial effects would be lost "if the Tongans were allowed to remain in Vanua Levu". Accordingly, at dawn on 22 July, Wainiqolo and his followers departed in two large *drua* "with a ... fair wind for Lakeba ... beating their drums and cheering most lustily".¹⁸⁵

183 Calvert to Eggleston, 20 Jul 1861, *WMN(A)*, Jan 1862, 301. See also Calvert to GS, WMMS, 20 Jul 1861, WMMS LFF; Calvert to George Stringer Rowe, 20 Jul 1861, Personal Papers.

184 Calvert to Rowe, 6 Jul 1861, Personal Papers.

185 Seymour to Adm., 2 Sep 1861. See also de Ricci, 230–233; Seemann, *Viti...*, 270–273; Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, 339; Evidence of Wainiqolo and Bonaveidogo, *Report of a Commission...*; Adolphe Brewster, *King of the Cannibal Isles*, London 1937, 267–269; GB PP 1862 xxxvi [2995], 22.

The agreement was meant to reduce, as far as practicable, Ma`afu's influence in Macuata. Nevertheless, at the meeting on board ship, Ma`afu neither acknowledged Wainiqolo's responsibility for the renewed hostilities nor commented on his banishment. According to Wainiqolo himself, Ma`afu disagreed with the first two clauses of the agreement he signed.¹⁸⁶ Yet, in circumstances similar to those prevailing at Levuka seven months earlier, Ma`afu had no choice. On this occasion, it was not necessary for Pritchard to out-manoeuvre the Tongan. Seated with Wainiqolo, Cakobau and the other chiefs on the quarterdeck of the *Pelorus*, Ma`afu needed no further reminder of British power. He could only sign, thereby giving Pritchard and Seymour what they wanted, and bide his time.

Jesse Carey believed that the visit of the *Pelorus* had "quelled ... by pacific means, the civil war".¹⁸⁷ Nevertheless, ten days after the warship's departure, Ritova's forces recommenced hostilities against many villages whose inhabitants had been allies of the Tongans. With one of his chiefs successfully seeking help from Tui Cakau and his brother Ratu Golea at Somosomo, many atrocities followed, part of a "reign of terror" which had not ceased one year later.¹⁸⁸ Ma`afu, who apparently accompanied Cakobau to Bau after the meeting on board *Pelorus*, called at Rewa in August, on his way back to Beqa and Kadavu.¹⁸⁹ During this period Tongan forces, denied further intervention in Macuata, wrought destruction in the Yasawas, a group of islands in north-western Fiji that was subject to Bua. One of the Yasawas had reportedly been ceded to the Tongans. During a visit there by Tui Bua and Semisi Fifita, six men were flogged, supposedly for plotting against their chief. Shortly afterwards, a French corvette, the *Cornélie*, Captain Lévêque, arrived in Levuka. Father Bréheret quickly sought out Lévêque, preferring a complaint against Fifita on the grounds that the men flogged were professing Catholics. The captain called both Ma`afu and Cakobau on board, requesting the latter to summon Fifita from Kadavu. Cakobau, failing to comply with alacrity, was detained on board as a hostage until such time as Fifita appeared.

Pritchard told Lévêque that he believed Fifita's action had been an attempt to prevent the cession of the Yasawas to Queen Victoria and to promote instead their cession to Tupou.¹⁹⁰ The Consul later recorded a statement by Togitogi, one of the men flogged, to the effect that during the flogging Fifita had urged him to adopt the *lotu weseli* and to give the Yasawas to Tonga. Fifita apparently enjoyed the full support of Tui Bua. When a Levuka trader named Hicks, who happened to be visiting, intervened, Fifita threatened to ask Ma`afu to send Wainiqolo

186 Evidence of Wainiqolo and Bonaveidogo, *Report of the Commission...* See also Figure 25.

187 Carey to Eggleston, 16 Nov 1861, *WMN(A)*, Apr 1862, 319.

188 Evidence of Jesse Carey, Filimone Taufa and Katonivere, *Report of the Commission...*

189 Calvert, *Journal*, 21 Aug 1861.

190 Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, 301.

down. Further floggings were circumvented only by Hicks' intervention, while the local chief escaped being deposed because he was half-Tongan. Pritchard wrote of a "common system" whereby Ma`afu and Fifita replaced an unfriendly local chief with another prepared to be "a ready tool of the Tongans", in order to "retain any place where they once obtained a foothold".¹⁹¹ Such a "system" had been Ma`afu's favoured means of securing his interests since the early days of the *valu ni lotu*.

Following Cakobau's detention, Fifita duly arrived, to be placed in irons and "tried" on board the *Cornélie* in the presence of both Cakobau and Ma`afu. The latter acknowledged that Fifita had flogged the men, but not because of their religion. Bréheret thought otherwise, and his view prevailed. On 10 October the *Cornélie* sailed for New Caledonia, with Fifita confined on board, supposedly "to be employed for two years on the public roads".¹⁹² While Fifita's movements for the next few months are unknown, he had returned to Tonga by September 1862 and was present with Ma`afu in Fiji two months later.¹⁹³ Pressure was also exerted on Tupou with the despatch of a French warship to Tonga to "punish" him.¹⁹⁴

The events on board the *Cornélie* were not the only drama unfolding in Fiji during October 1861. A serious rift developed between Pritchard and Cakobau following a meeting at the British Consulate in Levuka on 30 September. The Vunivalu refused Pritchard's request to sign a deed of sale for the island of Wakaya, in Lomaiviti, part of his domains. The next day, Cakobau was detained by the French commander. Calvert, present at the meeting, later asserted that Cakobau "was not detained until after he had refused to abandon his claim to ... [Wakaya] which another chief had sold ... to the American Consul, which Mr Pritchard much desires".¹⁹⁵ A week later a British warship, HMS *Harrier*, Commander Sir Malcolm MacGregor, anchored in Laucala Bay in south-eastern Viti Levu. It had been sent from Sydney by Commodore Seymour following complaints by Pritchard of mistreatment of Europeans in Vanua Levu and Kadavu.¹⁹⁶ MacGregor's intervention was instrumental in securing Cakobau's release from the *Cornélie*. Then, on 17 October, Pritchard again broached the subject of Wakaya with Cakobau on board the *Harrier*. Cakobau refused to discuss the matter, since he was not then in his own domains. Greatly annoyed, Pritchard told Roko Tui Dreketi: "I have shielded Cakobau, but to-day I abandon

191 *ibid.*, p. 311. For Togitogi's statement, see *ibid.*, 304–309.

192 Adm. to E. Hammond, Feb 1862 [extract from Seymour to Adm., 27 Nov 1861], FO 58/97.

193 George Lee, *Journal*, 11 Sep 1862.

194 Binner to Eggleston, 19 Sep 1861, MOM 165. For accounts of the Yasawas incident and the proceedings on board the *Cornélie*, see Calvert to Eggleston, 3 and 18 Oct 1861, MOM 199; Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, 300–311; Calvert to Rowe, 4 Oct 1861, Personal Papers; Calvert to GS, WMMS, 4 and 18 Oct 1861, WMMS ILTF; Calvert to William Arthur, 15 Nov 1861, *WMN*, Third Series, No. 100, 25 Apr 1862, 77.

195 Calvert to Arthur, 15 Nov 1861. See also Calvert to Rowe, 21 Oct 1861, Personal Papers.

196 Seymour to Adm., 27 Nov 1861.

him, and give him up to the Tongans to do their own pleasure with him".¹⁹⁷ In this display of petulance, the Consul made particular reference to Tupou's claim for £12,000, saying "he would let the Tongans loose upon Bau, to insist upon their ... demand".¹⁹⁸ According to Pita Fangalua, a Tongan residing at Bau, Pritchard further threatened to request Ma`afu and Tu`i Ha`apai "to enforce their claim in Fiji".¹⁹⁹ "Great excitement" followed among the Tongans in Rewa who, in alliance with some Rewan chiefs and under Ma`afu's leadership, were preparing to attack Bau.²⁰⁰ An attack did not eventuate, possibly because, as Fangalua believed, "King George ... would not approve of war against Bau". Nor did Fangalua think that Ma`afu, present on board the *Harrier*, would have been influenced to attack Bau by the Consul's remarks. Ma`afu told Fangalua that he "still felt the humiliation of `having been ordered away from the Fijian chiefs when they assembled at Ovalau to sign the documents'" in December 1859. Twenty months later, he was still "ashamed" to come to Bau.²⁰¹ While Ma`afu's "humiliation" in 1859 is certain, it is impossible to credit him with any sense of shame in 1861, following Pritchard's confrontation with Cakobau. Ma`afu had asked Pritchard's "permission" to attack Bau, which the Consul now felt inclined to grant.²⁰² The acrimonious situation meant that once the *Harrier* had departed, the potential Tongan threat to Bau was greater than it had been since the days before the 1859 agreement.

Ma`afu was supposedly "drawing in his net" by assembling a *folau* in Rewa on the pretext of visiting a "tribe" said to be descendants of shipwrecked Tongans. The Consul, suffering from an injured leg, described a social call from Ma`afu at the Consulate:

`Consul, let your leg be bad for one more moon. I shall be chief at Bau, and Thakobau shall cook for me. Then I shall come to you with the land, and you shall do as you like with it'. – `Ma`afu, there is something that stops the sun from rising any higher when it has gone high enough'. – `Consul, do you apply that to me or to Thakobau? Who is to be turned when he has gone far enough?' – `It only becomes known that the sun is stopped from rising any higher when it is seen going down. You had better return to Rewa'.²⁰³

Ma`afu "chose to think that Cakobau's sun had reached its zenith".²⁰⁴

197 Evidence of James Calvert, *Report of the Commission*.... See also Calvert to Rowe, 19 Nov 1861.

198 Calvert to Arthur, 15 Nov 1861.

199 *ibid.* See also Calvert to Rowe, 21 Oct 1861, Personal Papers.

200 Calvert to Arthur, 15 Nov 1861; WMMS Bau Circuit Report 1862, MOM 7.

201 Evidence of Peter Fangalua, *Report of the Commission*...

202 Calvert to Sir Malcolm MacGregor, Commander HMS *Harrier*, 21 Oct 1861, MOM 98.

203 Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, 283.

204 *ibid.*, 286–287; Evidence of James Calvert, *Report of the Commission*...; Calvert to GS, WMMS, 19 Nov 1861, WMMS ILTF; Calvert to Rowe, 19 Nov 1861.

The first half of November 1861 was the most dangerous period for Fiji since the weeks before the battle of Kaba in 1855. On 4 November, a message reached Bau to the effect that a force of Rewans and their Tongan allies under Ma`afu were ready to wage war against the Vunivalu.²⁰⁵ Four days later Calvert arrived at Bau and with John Fordham succeeded in persuading Cakobau to adopt a conciliatory approach to the Consul. Fordham immediately wrote to Pritchard on Cakobau's behalf, apologising for the Vunivalu's disrespectful behaviour and seeking the Consul's "influence and authority" to prevent the Tongans both from beginning hostilities and from enforcing their monetary claim.²⁰⁶ The letter enclosed the written claim for \$60,000 addressed to Cakobau by Ma`afu. Calvert left in great haste for Ovalau, where Pritchard immediately reassured him that the claim "was referred to King George".²⁰⁷ The Consul had seen Ma`afu the previous day, when the latter agreed that there would be no war. Pritchard wrote to ease Cakobau's mind on the subject, informing him that a *solevu* would be given to Ma`afu, "then he will retire, and bring away his people and canoes". Tui Dreketi was powerless to make war on Bau on his own. In return, Bau was neither to undertake nor threaten war on Rewa, a condition Cakobau was very pleased to meet. This settlement of an extremely volatile situation came about largely through the energy and astute diplomacy of James Calvert.²⁰⁸

Although Ma`afu's aggressive intent had been deflected before Calvert's visit, he still aspired to the conquest of Bau. Pritchard, grateful to the missionary for his intervention, referred to the "arrangements" with Ma`afu and Tu`i Ha`apai as "provisional" until he knew the outcome of Calvert's visit to Cakobau.²⁰⁹ He further reassured Cakobau in a second letter, saying he had "attended to" the claim and that he had made it impossible for Ma`afu and Tu`i Ha`apai to move, pending a decision from Tupou. Tu`i Ha`apai had sailed to Tonga to consult the King. "Pay no attention to what people may say", urged the Consul. "The matter stands over, and while this arrangement continues nothing can be done to Bau by the Tonguese".²¹⁰

Whatever the real origins of the Tongan demand for payment, it is likely that Ma`afu pursued the matter for propaganda purposes, hoping to take advantage of the rift between Pritchard and Cakobau. The Vunivalu's closest European advisers, missionaries Fordham and Calvert, harboured no illusions about the threat that Ma`afu and his forces had posed to Bau and to peace in general. Fordham wrote of his long-held conviction "that for years [the] one great

205 Fordham to GS, WMMS, 12 Nov 1861, WMMS ILTF.

206 Fordham to Pritchard, 8 Nov 1861, FO 58/108.

207 Calvert to Rowe, 19 Nov 1861.

208 Evidence of Calvert, *Report of the Commission...*; Calvert to GS, WMMS, 19 Nov 1861; Calvert to Rowe, 19 Nov 1861; Pritchard to Calvert, 9 Nov 1861, FO 58/108.

209 Pritchard to Calvert, n.d. [c. 11 Nov 1861], quoted in Calvert to Rowe, 19 Nov 1861.

210 Pritchard to Cakobau, 11 Nov 1861, FO 58/108.

object of the Tongans [had] been to get possession of Fiji, in whole or in part". The proposal for cession, endorsed by Cakobau and all the principal chiefs, had "interfered with [the Tongans'] prospects and somewhat dampened their hopes". Fordham alleged that when Ma`afu asked Pritchard's advice concerning the Tongan claim, the Consul replied, "that the Vunivalu had property and ought to be made to pay it". Such advice could only have come before the reconciliation between Pritchard and Cakobau. The Consul further "intimated" to the Tongans that Cakobau's unfriendly attitude constituted grounds for war, a view with which Fordham profoundly disagreed. The missionary recalled that Pritchard had "bullied ... bewildered and ... flattered Cakobau", while turning a blind eye to the "excitement" and warlike demonstrations in Rewa. He wrote after Pritchard and Calvert had brought Ma`afu back from the brink but with the Tongan forces still in Rewa. Fordham's eloquence in a letter to his Society articulated the peril that had so recently confronted Bau and which might be renewed at any moment.²¹¹

Ma`afu, no longer intent on fighting Bau, quit Rewa and arrived at Levuka with seven canoes on 15 November.²¹² The following day, a Sunday, Fordham observed in Bau that "the storm of war which threatened us is likely to pass away", for which mercy he gave deep praise to Calvert as well as to God.²¹³ In Levuka on the same day, Ma`afu and his entourage attended the two services Calvert conducted. "The wild Tongans", the missionary enthused, "who had been running about Fiji eating food they did not work for, looked tamed down ... and appeared to resolve to lead a new life". Ma`afu, as of old, resolved to meet in class and "to try to rule in the fear of God". Calvert struck a more reasoned note when he observed of the Tongans: "They fear nobody, and all Fijians fear them".²¹⁴ Ma`afu and about 300 followers, including women and children, soon returned to Lau, leaving behind them in Rewa a rumour that he "had gone for soldiers and ammunition" which would "tend to augment and perpetuate the bad feeling already great". On leaving, Ma`afu even sent "a friendly message" to Cakobau. His departure left Fiji "still in a disorganized and distracted state", not least because of Pritchard's anomalous position. He had, Fordham noted, "the name without the power of governor".²¹⁵ Although he had returned to his lair, Ma`afu might re-emerge, while in the meantime everyone waited for the long-delayed decision from London.

Calvert, for all his peacemaking, felt that if war did ensue, Pritchard would be entirely to blame. His view appears to have at least partly prompted Pritchard to dissuade Ma`afu from his plans to attack Bau. Calvert also believed that

211 Fordham to GS, WMMS, 12 Nov 1861.

212 Calvert, Journal, 15 Nov 1861.

213 Fordham to GS, WMMS, 16 Nov 1861, WMMS ILTF.

214 Calvert to Rowe, 19 Nov 1861. See also Calvert, Journal, 16 Nov 1861.

215 Fordham to GS, 16 Nov 1861.

the Tongan claim for £12,000, to be paid in oil, would be “a very awkward affair, if King George should think more of dollars than religion”.²¹⁶ Like many missionaries, he strongly favoured cession, while expressing anxiety lest it should be refused.²¹⁷ Aside from a probable revival of the Tongan menace to Bau, the ever-present American debt would again raise its head. The Americans, Calvert believed, would much rather be paid off by Great Britain than attempt to enforce a debt they knew could never be collected. The missionary believed the Tongan claim to be “an after consideration”, made in an attempt to extort as much as possible from Fiji before the expected cession. Pritchard “discard[ed] the idea of paying”, despite his petulance during his dispute with Cakobau. Calvert’s view was that “King George does not give up easily”; after all, the King had sent Tu`i Ha`apai to join Ma`afu on board HMS *Harrier* to enquire into the claim.²¹⁸ The future course of conduct for both Tupou and Ma`afu seemed to depend on the eventual British decision.

The rapid succession of events in November 1861, culminating in Ma`afu’s return to Lomaloma, caused others besides Fordham, Calvert and Pritchard to take stock of the situation. Joseph Waterhouse wrote of his “anxiety” over the behaviour of Cakobau, whose “ill-faith and dishonour” caused him “to banish his best friends and allies the Tonguese from Bau”. For Waterhouse, the Tonguese were Cakobau’s “best friends” because they, like Cakobau, were professedly Christian. The missionary’s political acumen seems to have deserted him, since the banishment had all to do with politics and nothing to do with religion. He believed that Cakobau had “made use of the ... Consul”, who no longer viewed the Tongans as an unmixed evil. Waterhouse was more perceptive in his view that the Tongans would easily prevail in any war.²¹⁹ Meanwhile, Ma`afu’s reputation had reached as far as London. “The desire of power in excess caused the angels to fall, but not Ma`afu”, the Colonial Office informed the Foreign Office. “Not even this signal discomfiture could make him forsake the land of his adoption ... he has forsaken his own ways [and] is liked and respected in [Lau], notwithstanding the constant efforts to get rid of him made by the Fijian chiefs, who are yet jealous of his position and influence”.²²⁰ At the end of 1861, the dilemmas posed by Ma`afu’s power and ambition were as far from resolution as ever.

Ma`afu’s departure from Rewa did nothing to diminish Calvert’s “anxiety”, already expressed in relation to Cakobau. In January the missionary noted that Tupou was about to purchase 1,000 muskets, “but whether he has hostile feelings towards ... Fiji, to get £12,000 for fighting, we do not know ... Fiji is not safe

216 Calvert to GS, WMMS, 19 Nov 1861, WMMS ILTF.

217 See, for example, Binner to Eggleston, 19 Nov 1861, MOM 165.

218 Calvert to Rowe, 19 Nov 1861.

219 Joseph Waterhouse to GS, WMMS, 16 Dec 1861, WMMS ILTF.

220 James Murray to Sir Frederick Rogers, FO, 31 Dec 1861, quoted in de Ricci, 233.

from the Tongan grasp".²²¹ Then in May, Seymour wrote to the Admiralty from Sydney concerning "information" he had received about the expected arrival in Fiji of Tupou with "a large force" to exact the indemnity.²²² In the middle of these various alarms, Cakobau sought to send a message, through Pritchard, to Tupou, saying he desired peace and inviting the King to visit him as a friend. Because the matters of immediate concern were otherwise settled, the message was never delivered.²²³ Much was feared of Tupou at this time, but very little known of his intentions.

The Tongan demand for reparations remained the focal point of fears shared by the Consul, missionaries and commodore. Ma`afu was supposed to have instigated the claim since, having been thwarted by the 1859 agreement, he now sought a fresh excuse to pursue his "projects of aggrandizement".²²⁴ His earlier appeal to the Consul to let him become "chief at Bau" demonstrates the extent to which he acted independently of Tupou, his nominal master.²²⁵ The King appeared resolved to enforce the claim, having been assured of its justice both by Pritchard and Brower. Calvert wrote to the King "expostulating with him" on the claim's injustice and suggesting that, as a compromise, Tupou should accept from Cakobau a more modest "payment" which was within the power of the Vunivalu to make. He was not sanguine, however, expressing to Pritchard his view that Tupou "[in] his heart appears to covet these valuable islands, and their productions". He strongly urged Pritchard to visit Tonga as the only means of averting the expected calamity.²²⁶

The Consul required little persuading, consulting Consul Brower and Père Bréheret, who both urged him to make the voyage. Before his departure, he assured the Foreign Office that the Tongan indemnity was manifestly unjust, while the threat to the peace of Fiji and to British commerce posed by the number of refugees from justice in Tonga could not be overlooked.²²⁷ Pritchard considered the claim in the light of the "custom" prevailing in western Polynesia "as to the mode of payment for services rendered in war". His reasoned conclusion was that Tupou had not "substantiated a case" against Cakobau so as "to authorise

221 Calvert to Rowe, 13 Jan 1862, WMMS ILTF. Three months later, LMS missionary Martin Dyson, stationed in Samoa, expressed fears of an imminent Tongan invasion. See Martin Dyson to Eggleston, 17 Apr 1862, MOM 166; Dyson to Eggleston, 30 Jun 1862, MOM 166.

222 Seymour to Adm., 16 May 1862, CO 83/1.

223 Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, 289. See also Roth Papers.

224 Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, 285.

225 See above, n. 203.

226 Calvert to Pritchard, 4 Apr 1862, FO 58/98.

227 Pritchard to FO, 8 Apr 1862, with encs, Brower to Pritchard, 8 Apr 1862 and Bréheret to Pritchard, 8 Apr 1862, FO 58/96.

a departure from the settlement contained in the declaration signed on the 14th of December, 1859, by Ma`afu, as King George's representative, in which are the words, (Article III, `All Tonguese claims in or to Fiji are hereby renounced')".²²⁸

Shortly before his departure for Tonga, where he hoped to thwart Tongan hopes of acquiring further property in Fiji, Pritchard made sure that British interests were safeguarded. On 2 April Cakobau, probably following pressure exerted by the British and American Consuls, confirmed in writing "the lands of the foreigners in Fiji – the lands that are confirmed in the office of the British Consul". The requisite declaration was signed with Cakobau's mark and witnessed by both Pritchard and Brower.²²⁹ In acting against the perceived Tongan threat, Pritchard was securing European interests in Fiji above those of the Fijians themselves. He duly reached Nuku`alofa on 23 April, and over the next 13 days the matters of the indemnity and Tupou's intentions towards Fiji were discussed, always with a Wesleyan missionary present.²³⁰ Pritchard claimed to have "wormed out an admission [from the King] of his designs upon Fiji", designs to be matured when the Tongan Parliament met on 23 May.²³¹ Ma`afu, to the Consul's surprise, had preceded him to Tonga, having come to attend Parliament. According to Pritchard, Tupou later acknowledged that Ma`afu's purpose was to mature plans for war, although evidence for such an admission is lacking.²³² Pritchard had always considered that Ma`afu posed the greatest danger to Fiji, a belief based not only on the events of the previous four years but also on "the real skill in Ma`afu's military dispositions", a skill expounded to the Consul by Ma`afu himself. Such was Ma`afu's success, Pritchard asserted, that he was "as much dreaded by his own king and countrymen in Tonga ... as ever he was ... by the Fijians".²³³ Any agreement achieved between Pritchard and Tupou, if it were to prove effective, would have to ensure that Ma`afu were contained. The renunciation of all Tongan claims in Fiji, which the Consul had forced on Ma`afu in 1859, was not enough.

Tupou signed an agreement on 5 May providing for the removal of Wainiqolo from Fiji, although one month later that chief remained, still "talking of war". His departure could not come soon enough for Pritchard.²³⁴ The May agreement also sought to forbid Tongan interference in commerce and in the sale of land to

228 Pritchard, "The Claim of Tonga against Fiji", BCFP, Miscellaneous Papers. The statement is also found in S.W. Dutton (compiler), *Historical Records of Fiji*, c1862–1916, Vol. 1, 3–6. For a slightly different version, entitled "The claim of Tonga against the Vunivalu", see WPHC Register of Deeds, 6 May 1862 – 22 May 1866, BCT 1/25.

229 No contemporary copy of the document appears to have survived. The text is reproduced as Appendix A in Frederick J. Moss, *Through Atolls and Islands in the Great South Sea*, London 1889, 283–285.

230 The missionaries who attended were John Whewell, Shirley Baker and Walter Davis.

231 Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, 289–290.

232 *ibid.*, 290 et seq; Pritchard to FO, 15 May 1862, FO 58/96.

233 Pritchard, *Polynesian Reminiscences*, 290–291.

234 Pritchard to Joshua Cocker, HBM Vice Consul, Tonga, 4 Jun 1862, WPHC, BCT 1/9/1 1862.

Europeans and effectively authorised British, in place of Tongan, exploitation of Fiji.²³⁵ In the light of the concerns expressed over several months by Pritchard, Cakobau and the missionaries, the final clause can be considered the most significant. It forbade Tongans from commencing any war in Fiji until the decision concerning cession was known, a provision described by Pritchard as "the main object of my visit [to Tonga]".²³⁶ Implementation of the clause would depend on Ma`afu, whose name does not appear in any of the treaty's provisions. Whatever concessions Tupou was prepared to make, Ma`afu remained what he had always been: the wild card.

One other reason for Pritchard's voyage to Tonga was the official appointment of Joshua Cocker, a resident British trader, as "British Vice Consul for the Friendly Islands". While in Nuku`alofa, Pritchard handed Cocker his official seal of office, accompanying the document with a letter clearly setting out his duties.²³⁷ The letter conveyed to the new Vice Consul punctilious instructions concerning his relations with the Tongan government, British residents and missionaries, and the representatives of other foreign powers. This formal communication, usual for such an appointment, was accompanied by a second letter, wherein Pritchard's instructions were even more rigorous:

With reference to any question respecting Fijian affairs, which may be submitted by King George, you will invariably refer to His Majesty's Consulate at Levuka for instructions, upon each separate point brought before you, previous to giving any statement or making any admission, to His Majesty.²³⁸

The new Vice Consul, inexperienced in diplomacy, would have required precise instructions to assist him in the performance of his duties. Yet Pritchard, always apprehensive of Tongan designs on Fiji, remained determined to retain full control of all British dealings, official and otherwise, with the Tongan King.

Pritchard's accounts of his negotiations with Tupou reveal the King's extreme reluctance to acknowledge the dangers posed to Fiji and to British interests there by the menace, real or imagined, emanating from Tonga. Tupou's mind seems to have been swayed by the realisation that the British government would consider him ultimately responsible for any Tongan aggression against Fiji. Following the treaty, he retained his hope of submitting his indemnity claim

235 For a précis of the treaty, see Appendix B. For the full text, see BCFP, Miscellaneous Papers. See also Pritchard to FO (enc.), 15 May 1862, FO58/96. For missionary opinions of the treaty, see Walter Davis to Eggleston, 10 Jun 1862, MOM 170; Calvert to GS, WMMS, 27 May 1862, WMMS ILTF.

236 Pritchard to FO, 15 May 1862.

237 [Copy of] Seal of appointment of Joshua Cocker as British Vice Consul to the Friendly Islands, 5 May 1862, and Pritchard to Cocker, 5 May 1862, WPHC BCT.

238 Pritchard to Cocker, 5 May 1862 [second letter], WPHC BCT.

to the British, should cession be approved.²³⁹ Despite the setback to his plans, whatever their precise nature was, Tupou proceeded to convene Parliament in June. The official list of the 57 chiefs in attendance, including Fijians, Samoans and Uveans as well as Tongans, placed Ma`afu second in order of precedence, following Tungī Halatuitui`a, great-uncle of the King.²⁴⁰ Among the Fijians were several Lakeban chiefs, whose presence appears to have evoked some anxiety on Pritchard's part. The King hastened to assure him that "the chiefs of Lakeba attended the forthcoming Fakataha as His Majesty's friends, and in no other way", after the consul "protested against their appearing in any other capacity".²⁴¹ The importance of this Parliament lies in its provision of an expanded code of laws, which included provisions for the emancipation of the serfs and for the allocation of land for all Tongan males aged 16 and over, provided they paid their rent and taxes. By way of contrast with Fiji, the sale of land to foreigners was expressly forbidden.²⁴² Missionary Shirley Baker, whose influence was paramount in the formulation of the code of laws, would later describe his handiwork as "the Magna Charta [sic] of [the Tongans'] freedom".²⁴³ The code's provision for security of tenure in return for payment of taxes would influence Ma`afu's administration of Lau in years to come.

The placing of Ma`afu as second in order of precedence among the chiefs recalls the question of succession. This chapter began with a consideration of Ma`afu's position early in 1857, when Tupou expressed to the chiefs of Tongatapu such unbounded confidence in his young cousin.²⁴⁴ Since then, a fundamental change had occurred: Vuna, Tupou's only surviving legitimate son, had died on 2 January 1862.²⁴⁵ Although a system of primogeniture was not to be established in Tonga until 1875, Vuna must have been considered as Tupou's heir, in view of missionary prejudice in favour of "legitimate" succession. With Vuna gone, the King's oldest son, Tevita `Unga, came into consideration, but Tupou had never been married to Tevita's mother. In any case, `Unga was placed only fourth among the assembled chiefs in 1862, two places behind Ma`afu. As the son of Aleamotu`a, Ma`afu was probably seen as the most likely successor, in view of established Tongan custom. In Fiji meanwhile, following the treaty wrenched

239 Pritchard to FO, 15 May 1862.

240 For the full list of chiefs in attendance, in order of precedence, see *WMN(A)*, No. 25, Jun 1863, 343.

241 Pritchard, 7 May 1862, Register of Deeds No. 3, WPHC BCT. *Fakataha* is Tongan for assembly.

242 For the full text of the 1862 Code of Laws, see Sione Latukefu, *Church and State in Tonga*, Honolulu 1974, 238–251; WMMS Annual Report, 1863, 204–215. For a description of the ceremonies involving the assembled chiefs, see Thomas West, *Ten Years in South-Central Polynesia*, London 1865, 434–437.

243 Shirley Baker, unsourced press interview [1880s], Shirley Waldemar Baker Papers, UAL.

244 See above, n. 1.

245 Frank Firth to Dr Osborn, 20 Nov 1862, WMMS ILTF; Calvert to Rowe, 4 Feb 1862, Personal Papers. According to Firth, a Wesleyan missionary stationed in Tonga, Vuna died of "strong drink". Another missionary, William Stephenson, described Vuna as "a young scamp" who "died penitent". (William G.R. Stephenson, *Journal*, 27). See also WMMS Vava`u Circuit Report 1862, MOM 7.

from Tupou, all depended on the British government's decision regarding cession. Ma`afu returned to Fiji with his prospects uncertain, but fraught with possibilities, in both groups of islands.

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