

new indigenous self-help organizations have sprung up; and commercial agriculture and mining are creating vast new wealth. Furthermore, and fortunately, as the publications issued by the Department of Political and Social Change of the Australian National University attest, a core of well-trained indigenous academic commentators is emerging to help shape public and government understanding of what is happening in Papua New Guinea. The works under review represent social science at its best: sound scholarship directed to matters of pressing immediate concern — and inexpensively produced. They deserve a wide readership.

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Protest and Dissent in the Colonial Pacific. By Peter Hempenstall and Noel Rutherford. Institute of Pacific Studies, University of the South Pacific, Suva, 1984. viii, 200pp. Index, illus. Price: \$F8.00 paperback.

THIS BOOK presents case studies of protest in five locations in the colonial Pacific. Each has been selected to exemplify a particular form of protest, ranging from the political by the Mau in Samoa to the millenarian among the Huon Peninsular peoples of New Guinea. Micronesia, so often omitted in such surveys, rates a chapter detailing the violent protest against the Spanish in Ponape.

Hempenstall and Rutherford set out to redress the empirical, 'microcosmic' bias of the majority of Pacific Islands historical studies, quoting Greg Denning's criticism of Pacific history's lack of theory. By concentrating on a single issue or theme, the authors hope to provide, at least, a basis for comparison and generalization across Pacific societies. In their introduction they distinguish resistance from protest — the former being simply non-co-operation and the latter being positive action to bring about changes in the system which dominates the colonized. This is helpful, but a more precise definition of protest and dissent is needed if the focus is to be on these concepts as bases for generalization, as the authors appear to have intended. However, in seeking to establish these bases, Hempenstall and Rutherford do not betray the historian's commitment to the unique. They recognize the tension between the particular and the general, avoiding the trap of over-simplifying the past for the political and ideological ends and trends of the present.

Both the introduction and the closing chapter are particularly useful for students, not only of protest, but also of the colonial period. Hempenstall and Rutherford stitch together the studies of Samoa, Tonga, Fiji, New Guinea, and Ponape with linking themes and comparisons. Their guidelines for future research point to the complexity of issues relating to protest and dissent, as well as providing a caveat to anyone tempted to perceive such protest in, literally, simple black and white terms.

Events that have occurred since the book's publication highlight the value of the chapter on the 1959 industrial protest in Fiji. In many respects, the coalition of proletarian interests from the Fijian and Indian communities which Rabuka, with the chiefly establishment's acquiescence, overthrew in May 1987, had clearly emerged in the urban setting almost 30 years before, and was broken then by not dissimilar élites. Anyone seeking a better understanding of the current Fijian situation would do well to read this chapter, and savour the ironies, finding, for example, Apisai Tora, then Mohammed and trade union leader of Fijians and Indians, now an avid, if not rabid, supporter of the Taukei movement, the right-wing pro-native Fijian group.

For its size and price, this little book is both a boon and a bargain for teachers and students of the colonial era and, as the Fijian example shows, the post-colonial period.

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