

“Good-bye, Queensland, good-bye, White Australia; Good-bye Christians”: Australia’s South Sea Islander Community and Deportation, 1901-1908

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WHITE AUSTRALIA LEGISLATION, 1901

In 1901 the new Australian federal parliament passed three pieces of racially discriminatory legislation. Best known was the Immigration Restriction Act, aimed at excluding all non-European migrants. The second was Clause 15 of the Post and Telegraph Act, intended to ensure that ships subsidised by the Commonwealth to carry Australian mail, only used white crews.¹ The third was the Pacific Island Labourers Act, the purpose of which was to deport the vast majority of the Pacific Islanders currently working in Queensland and northern New South Wales as soon as possible after the end of 1906. The only exemptions allowed were for Pacific Islanders introduced to Queensland before 1 September 1879, ships crews, or those granted Certificates of Exemption under the Immigration Restriction Act. Debated extensively during October and November, the Bill was passed and assent given on 17 December 1901. This paper looks at the implementation of the Pacific Island Labourers Act and the reaction of Australia’s Pacific Islanders to the deportation order. I argue that they proved themselves to be a well-organised lobby group and mounted a sophisticated political campaign. This both surprised and embarrassed the Federal Government, which preferred to view them as a primitive people from the South Seas, able to be written out of Australian history like indigenous Australians.

The Act allowed Pacific Islanders to continue to enter Australia under licence as indentured servants until 31 March 1904, after which a ban was imposed. The government was aware that there were approximately 10,000 Pacific Islanders living in Queensland and northern New South Wales when the Bill became law, only 700 of them ‘ticket-holders’ exempt from deportation. During 1901 839 returned to their islands and another 1,678 arrived.² While the Act was intended as an instrument of mass deportation, this was to be accomplished partly by progressive limits on immigration and encouraging emigration.³ No agreements were valid after the end of 1906, and any Islander found in Australia who had not worked under an indenture agreement within the previous month was to be deported immediately.

These legislative moves came as no surprise to most Australians. They were in line with the sentiments of Australian nationalism and were related to attempts during the late 1880s and 1890s to restrict all non-European immigration. They were also an integral part of the political bargaining during the 1890s which federated Britain’s Australian colonies as the Commonwealth of Australia.⁴ An end to the importation of Pacific Islanders had been signalled since 1885 when Queensland first attempted to close down the labour trade. The Queensland government had

done its best to phase out the plantation system and restructure the sugar industry. The new structure was based around small farms owned by white Australians using their families as labour, employing white labour, and supplying co-operatively owned central mills financed initially from the colony's Treasury. Pacific Islander labour was no longer cheap (costs were comparable with European labour), and the Islanders were no longer the pliable short-contract servants who were first introduced into the industry in the 1860s.⁵

Reaction to the Pacific Island Labourers Act came from three main sources: the Queensland Government; missionary and other humanitarian groups; and the Islanders themselves. In November 1901 Queensland's Premier Robert Philp wrote to the Senate attempting to have the Governor-General reserve the Bill, claiming it was in direct conflict with the principles of racial equality within the British Empire. The Islanders, Philp said, had arrived in Queensland as legal immigrants and many had spent long periods in the colony. To deport them would cause "great inhumanity and injustice".⁶ The Queensland government also immediately began to assess the damage which the loss of its Pacific Islander labour force would cause to the sugar industry. Dr Walter Maxwell, newly appointed Director of Sugar Experiment Stations, informed Premier Philp that deporting the Islanders would paralyse the industry financially, cause a labour shortage which would take ten years to fill with white labour, and probably cause the sugar industry to die out north of Mackay, causing compensation claims and relocation costs for farmers and mills.⁷ However, as an incentive, the Commonwealth introduced payments of approximately £1-2 per ton of sugar for cane farmers and millers who used only white labour. In 1902 this took the form of an excise and rebate, altered the next year to an excise and bounty, the bounty increased to £3 in 1905. This incentive system continued to subsidise the sugar industry until 1912 after which legislative control reverted to Queensland. Despite the dire predictions of 1901, by 1905 78 per cent, and in 1911 94 per cent, of farmers and the labour used in the sugar industry were white.⁸

THE SOUTH SEA ISLANDER RESPONSE

This paper examines the manner in which the Islanders dealt with the threat of deportation. The argument suggests that they were far more successful than is usually supposed, due primarily to the spread of literacy, the use of Pidgin English, and to other unifying factors which grew out of their colonial experience. Onwards from the 1880s many long-staying Islanders had assumed a position in relation to colonial society, law and government processes which made them less like bonded servants and more like other nineteenth-century workers.

Several distinct categories of Melanesian labourers emerged as the Queensland government made a series of adjustments to legislation and regulations to try to control its Pacific Islander migrants. The majority were always first-indenture labourers who served out their three-year contracts and returned to their islands, but re-enlistments to Queensland were occurring from the 1860s, and by the 1890s about one-quarter of the new arrivals had already worked in Queensland, Fiji or Samoa. A large proportion of the first-indenture labourers re-engaged without leaving Queensland, accepting further contracts of between three years and six months, becoming quite skilled in choosing employers and negotiating wages. The final category was an elite but ever diminishing group generally called the 'ticket-holders', comprising 835 Islanders in the colony in 1884, all resident for more than five years.⁹ Exempt

from all further legislated restrictions, between 1884 and 1906 they comprised between 11 and 7 per cent of the overall Melanesian population of Queensland. From the mid-1880s onwards ticket-holders and re-engaging labourers made up 40 to 60 per cent of the immigrant Melanesian population, in reality becoming a Melanesian segment of the general working class.

The hundreds of languages spoken in Melanesia made inter-island communication very difficult, particularly when Islanders from far spread islands were brought together by the labour trade. The majority of the Islander recruits in the 1860s and 1870s could not speak Pidgin English, although some of them had a smattering of English-derived trade jargon which would have enabled communication amongst themselves and with other colonists. However, between 1880 and 1900 Kanaka Pidgin English evolved into a substantial language. Long-staying Islanders becoming fluent in Pidgin English and missions used the language as the basis for instruction in Christianity and literacy. Some of the Islander migrants came into contact with Christian missions in the islands, and most had some contact with missions established in Queensland since the 1880s. In the 1900s this common language assisted the Islanders to act as a united group against the threat of deportation.¹⁰

Many Islanders had substantial possessions and bank accounts. Some owned property and married outside of their immediate ethnic and racial groups. While one must also factor in racist sentiments which kept the Islanders largely segregated from Anglo-Celtic Australians, the Islander elite had become colonists and were no longer short-term circular-migrants in servile bondage.¹¹ The ramifications of the 1901 Act would have been beyond the comprehension of many of the Islander immigrants living in Australia, mainly youths and young men whose participation in the three-year circular-migration was a colonial rite of passage little different from that of previous generations. But the literate Christian Islander elite was astute in their understanding of colonial and federal politics, and were quite able to fight for the right to stay in their adopted country.

Even before the legislation was passed, a Pacific Islanders Association was formed in Mackay in November 1901, “with a view to preventing the gross injustice of the deportation of civilised Islanders back to their savage homes”.¹² Its founder, the rather mysterious Tui Tonga, a Fijian of chiefly status, had lived in Queensland since 1876: after working as an overseer and pharmacy assistant at Mackay, he served a term in goal for murdering his wife, then returned to Mackay to run a boarding house. Unfortunately he died one month after founding the Association, Henry Diamuir Tonga (Tongoa) elected as its new chairman in February the following year.¹³ From small Tongoa Island near Epi in the New Hebrides (now Vanuatu), he had arrived in Queensland as a child in 1880, presumably accompanying relatives. Educated at mission schools in the Mackay district, Tongoa — single, in his twenties, proprietor of a boarding house for Islanders, literate and articulate — was an able replacement for Tui Tonga. Although there are no recorded political activities of the Association between 1902 until 1906, it continued to collect membership fees, and in 1906 ably mounted an active political campaign.

With the Pacific Islanders’ Association formed but inactive, the next major protest came in the form of a petition to King Edward VII from some 3,000 Islanders resident in Queensland, received by the Colonial Office in August 1902. Instigated by staff from the Queensland Kanaka Mission (QKM), an undenominational evangelical mission established by Florence Young at Bundaberg, that in the 1890s achieved much influence among Pacific Islanders in Queensland, the petition presented a complex legal and humanitarian argument based on the Queensland Acts which governed Pacific Islanders. It then added two supporting points. Firstly, several hundred

Islanders had long since ceased working as indentured labourers and were engaged in cane farming, market-gardening, fruit-growing, fishing, boat-building, carpentry, net-making and mending, hawking, shop- and boarding-house-keeping. Many had lived in Queensland for upwards of twenty years. As literate Christians with Australian-born children attending State schools they deserved “at least such freedom as is enjoyed by other coloured aliens”. Secondly, colonial partition of the Pacific Islands during the 1870s, 1880s and 1890s meant that some of their islands-of-origin were now German possessions, their tribal lands sold or appropriated. In some cases their families would no longer welcome them. Deportation could lead to the immediate deaths of themselves and their families, particularly where their spouse was from a different island, or was European or Aboriginal. The petition ended by claiming that the clauses of the Act were contrary to the “spirit of British Common Law and of freedom, justice and mercy, and are an invasion of contractual obligations entered into by a powerful nation with the helpless people of the Pacific Islands”.¹³

The King was advised to disallow the petition, however, in other ways it caused the desired effect and considerably embarrassed the new Australian government. Some 1,800 of the 3,000 signatures were collected by Mrs Fanny Nicol, a Bundaberg QKM missionary, who in campaigning on behalf of the ‘Kingless Kanaka’ visited all Islander settlements between Brisbane and Rockhampton. She vouched that they were legitimate signatories (their names had been rewritten in the final document) and that many of the Islanders were living in deprived circumstances.¹⁴ The Aborigines’ Protection Society in London also took up the issue with the Colonial Office, as did Lord Lamington, the immediate past Governor of Queensland (1896-1902).¹⁵ The Earl of Onslow, Secretary of State for the Colonies, while alarmed by Lamington’s assertion — that if returned to their islands their “fellow-countrymen” might “kill them and probably proceed to eat them” — felt it was totally the business of the Australian government.¹⁶ In his judgement, it was unfortunate that the Act did not specify that they should be returned to their home villages, but he also argued that “these men were not British subjects, and... they could hardly expect that the Commonwealth Government should open its shores to people who were in a state of barbarism, or at any rate, semi-barbarism...”.¹⁷ Australia’s Governor-General, Lord Hopetoun, took up Lord Lamington’s question over the actual arrangements for repatriation. The Prime Minister, Alfred Deakin, made enquiries to Queensland’s Premier about the procedure to be followed, and tried to establish how many of the Islanders had actually settled in Queensland with the intention of becoming permanent residents.¹⁸

Although in May 1902 representations had been made to the Prime Minister on behalf of Islanders in the Rockhampton district “said to be practically domiciled, and altogether distinguishable from the main body of islanders”,¹⁹ Deakin still seems to have been taken by surprise by the June 1902 Petition, which had been forwarded direct to London by the Governor of Queensland, not presented through the Governor-General. In his rebuttal Deakin argued that creating a racially pure White Australia was a clearly enunciated primary goal of the Commonwealth government and that the deportation issue had received lengthy debate in the parliament. He then restated a series of long-established arguments calculated to show the despicable nature of the labour trade: kidnapping, force and deception, the unacceptably high death rates amongst labourers in Queensland, and “depopulation and demoralization” in the islands. Although Deakin made no attempt to counter the legal argument presented in the Petition, Clause 24 of his lengthy answer provided strong evidence that the Commonwealth was not exceeding powers already exercised by Queensland. In 1896, worried by the number of

“walkabout” Islanders who chose not to renew their contracts, and by growing disquiet in the colony over violent and increasingly obstreperous Islander behaviour, the Queensland government had passed a Regulation. This stated that “Every time-expired Islander, shall, within one month after the expiration of his Agreement be required either to return to his native land or to enter into a fresh engagement with his last or some other employer.” All that the Commonwealth had done was ensure that no Agreements extended beyond the end of 1906. The consequence — return home for all Islanders other than the pre-1880 ticket-holders — was already part of Queensland law.

Deakin’s rebuttal was weakest on three points: why did so many Islanders want to stay?; how could Australia so callously deport long-term residents?; and would it be safe for them to return home? He attempted to disparage the petitioners as entirely without organisation, scattered in small settlements over a thousand miles of coastal Queensland, from a multitude of islands divided by cultural animosity and with no element of unity. “They are taught”, Deakin continued, “to act at the bidding of their employers, and have no doubt done so in this instance.... [The] large majority of the [signatories] are ignorant savages unable to read and write, while even the small minority possessing those qualifications are not competent to pronounce upon the assertions made.” Deakin interpreted the petition as orchestrated by “a number of interested persons in Queensland” and encouraged by the Queensland government to thwart the wishes of the majority of Queenslanders and Australians.

Queensland’s Immigration Department estimated that there were in excess of 353 Islanders permanently domiciled in the State, not all of whom would qualify for exemption from the Act. Deakin refused to acknowledge that all of these were “permanent settlers”, suggesting they would be better off re-settled in sparsely populated areas of the British New Guinea and the British Solomon Islands Protectorate, or working as labourers for planters in the New Hebrides.²⁰ The final weakness in Deakin’s rebuttal was that the Act contained no provisions as to safe procedures for returning such a large number of men, women and families, when there was clear evidence that deportation could in some cases endanger both life and property. Deakin rather lamely promised that the Act would be administered humanely, with due regard for the lives and sentiments of those affected, but that exact details on its procedures were still to be worked out. However, he argued that as the labour trade had been on-going since the 1860s, this was hardly a new problem.²¹

Preparations began in the islands for the return of the Queensland Islanders. In 1902 the Anglican Melanesian Mission in the Solomon Islands began plans to expand its land holdings on Guadalcanal and Malaita, establishing new coastal villages to house returning Queensland labourers. The QKM shifted its operations to the Solomon Islands in 1904, later becoming the South Sea Evangelical Mission, which operated in tandem with the Malayta Company, a plantation concern owned by the family of the mission’s founder.²² The New Hebrides had been governed very loosely by a joint British-French Naval Commission since 1888. This was upgraded to a unique French-British Condominium in 1906, partly to enable policing of the return of the Islanders. In 1903 Captain Ernest Rason, the British Resident Commissioner in the New Hebrides warned that unless the returning labourers wished to engage for work on plantations within the group, to ensure their safety Australia would have to supervise their return directly to their villages, or purchase land in the islands to create new villages.²³

Clearly Britain was not going to interfere in the domestic politics of newly federated Australia. The Islanders could negotiate directly only with the Commonwealth and Queensland

governments, allowing the Australian governments to liaise with the British Western Pacific High Commission officials in the Solomon Islands, the New Hebrides, and the British colonial government of Fiji.

The next moves came from the New Hebridean community living around Rockhampton, some 200 of whom had signed the 1902 petition to the King. In March and April 1903 they enlisted the support of their local members of Queensland's Legislative Assembly, William Kidston (Premier 1906-07, 1908-11) and K.M. Grant, to write on their behalf to the Prime Minister, arguing for exemption from deportation for long settled Islanders and their families.²⁴ At the same time, aided by Francis Hopkins, a Quaker bookseller, and Canon A.H. Julius, the Church of England clergyman in whose parish many of the local Islanders resided, the Islanders took advantage of a routine visit by the Governor, Sir Herbert Chermiside, to present him with two petitions. One was from forty-one Queensland-born Islanders, asking that their parents be allowed to remain in Australia, and the second from twenty-two adult Islanders, some of whom had lived in Queensland for more than twenty years.²⁵ They also sent a deputation to the Governor-General, Lord Northcote, when he visited Rockhampton in 1904. In May the next year, led by Islander William Peterson, Rockhampton Islanders presented a petition to a fact-finding group from federal parliament, which included John Watson, leader of the ALP (and Prime Minister in 1904). After presenting the petition to Watson, Paterson invited the parliamentarians to visit Kanaka Town in North Rockhampton, which they did the next day.²⁶ Far from the Earl of Onslow's image of ignorant people living in "semi-barbarism", or Deakin's disparaging of them as "ignorant savages" who were puppets of European manipulators, the Rockhampton Islanders showed they were astute negotiators, using formal political processes and focussing their arguments on the settled nature of their community.

Deakin was quite correct that there was little unity amongst the various Islander communities, nor amongst the different island-of-origin groups in each community. This was their major political weakness. Clearly, the Rockhampton Islanders saw themselves as different, even superior, to most other groups, including the Mackay-based Pacific Islanders' Association, although its membership was, like the Rockhampton community, predominantly from the New Hebrides. Also, Solomon Islanders were regarded with contempt by the better-established New Hebrideans. Malaitans, the largest group of labour recruits from the Solomons, were feared for their often obstreperous and violent behaviour. There are indications that the New Hebrideans deliberately excluded most Malaitans from their activities.²⁷

Northcote also visited Mackay in 1904, receiving two petitions: one from seventy-one migrants; and the other from twenty-six Australian-born Islanders. Joseph Barramulla, a lay preacher at the Selwyn Church of England Mission, accompanied by five members from that Mission and the Presbyterian Mission at nearby Walkerston, presented the immigrants' petition. Lucy Fatnowna, daughter of Kwailiu and Orrani from Malaita Island, accompanied by two of her sisters and four other girls, presented the children's petition.²⁸

Between 1901 and 1905, although the Western Pacific High Commission, along with the Australian and Queensland governments, formulated plans to deal with the mass deportation, and the Islanders constantly attempted to petition authorities, the situation was not yet critical for the Islanders or the governments. At the end of 1904, with all further recruiting ended, there were still 7,879 Islanders in Queensland. The largest concentrations were at Bundaberg, Mackay and Ingham, but overall there had been a decrease of 991 from the previous year.²⁹ Around two-thirds of them were from the Solomon Islands, the remainder from the New Hebrides, indicating

the concentration on Solomons recruiting at the end of the Queensland labour trade.³⁰ The Queensland government kept statistics on the expiry of agreements, and the rate at which the Islanders could be expected to depart during 1905 and 1906.³¹ In May 1905 a party of federal politicians (mentioned above) toured coastal Queensland enquiring into the future of the sugar industry. During April-June 1906 a Queensland Royal Commission collected evidence concerning the problems of deportation, together with the effect this would have on the labour supply for the sugar industry.³² The Royal Commission established that some 4,000 to 4,500 Islanders were liable for deportation, the final number depending on any extension of exemption categories.³³

1906 was the key year, both in terms of final protests from the Islanders and government planning for the repatriation. The long-dormant Pacific Islanders' Association began to meet regularly in Mackay onwards from February. The Association engaged a solicitor, held regular meetings, introduced formal by-laws, levied a membership fee, imposed fines for misdemeanours, and formed branches in Proserpine and Bowen.³⁴ In March they wrote directly to London to Winston Churchill, the Under Colonial Secretary. A delegation led by Tongoa presented a petition to Queensland's Sugar Industry Labour Royal Commission in Mackay in April.³⁵ Most dramatically, Tongoa and Alick Mallicoola travelled to Melbourne, to seek an interview with and directly petition the Prime Minister.³⁶

The Royal Commission's report was submitted on 30 June 1906, advising a liberalisation of categories of exemption. On 7 August Deakin accepted most of the recommendations, and had them incorporated into an amendment to the 1901 Act, which received assent on 12 October. The exemption category was extended to include all Islanders who had entered and lived continuously in Australia since 31 December 1886, the aged and infirm, any with children educated in State schools, owners of freehold land, all Islanders married before 9 October 1906 to a partner not from their own island, or any who could provide evidence that their lives would be in danger if they were returned home.³⁷ The Prime Minister also accepted that the primary responsibility for the actual deportation should rest with the Commonwealth, in cooperation with the Queensland and New South Wales governments.³⁸ Presumably the Association was aware of this revision of the 1901 Act. Tongoa and Mallicoola arrived in Melbourne on 13 September, met by Mr W.E. Campbell, with whom they were already acquainted. Campbell arranged interviews with the Prime Minister and the *Age* newspaper. Deakin allowed two interviews, on 17 September and 1 October, also accepting a petition from 427 members of the Association.³⁹ Rather patronizingly, he explained to Tongoa and Mallicoola that the categories of exemption had been extended, and where ever possible arrangements would be made for employment in the Solomon Islands, Fiji and to a lesser extent in the New Hebrides, or for return to mission stations. But, Deakin made clear, there would be no reversal of the deportation provision of the 1901 Act.⁴⁰

Although unsuccessful in their Melbourne quest, Tongoa and Mallicoola travelled back to Mackay via Brisbane and Bundaberg. In the Queensland capital they sought information from Premier and Treasurer William Kidston on the availability of the government's Pacific Islander Fund, which contained employers' contributions towards the cost of transporting Islanders back to their islands. In Bundaberg Tongoa and Mallicoola attempted to form a southern branch of the Association.⁴¹ Back at Mackay there was little more that the Association could do, having fought a valiant but futile battle against the 1901 Act. By the time Tongoa could report to the Association on the trip south, he had been replaced as chairman by Johnny Bomassing

(Boymerrrie). Its members fell to bickering over misused funds, a dispute which ended in the courts in March 1907. The Association then disappeared from sight.⁴²

This in no way depreciates the Islanders' achievement. Even taking into account the help the Association's endeavours and other separate petitions and delegations received from white supporters, the Islanders' initiatives in confronting the bureaucracy were skilful, and certainly far beyond the expectations of the Australian government. The Islanders' leaders in the 1900s — such as Mackay's Tui Tonga and Henry Tongoa, the less visible Malaitan leaders John Kwailiu Fatnowna, Joseph Barramulla, Alex Sayven and Luke Logomier,⁴³ along with New Hebrideans William Peterson in Rockhampton and Mackay, and George and William Yasserie in Proserpine — managed to bridge two worlds, Melanesia and Australia.⁴⁴ Backing them were several hundred long-established Islander immigrants and their families. That they operated successful lobby groups, which had an effect on the political processes of Australia at the time when the racist White Australia Policy was formed, is testament to their abilities.

CONCLUSION

The final attempt to defeat the legislation was a test case arranged by mission supporters. Robtehnes from Vanua Lava Island had arrived in Queensland in 1897. His challenge was that Section 8 of the 1901 Act was *intra vires* the Australian Constitution and exceeded the powers of the Parliament. The High Court of Australia, sitting in Brisbane in October 1906, upheld the validity of the Act.⁴⁵

With all avenues of delay or change exhausted, the deportation began in late 1906 and continued until mid-1908, much more slowly than the government had planned, but eventually the process was completed. The Pacific Island Branch of Queensland's Immigration Department finally closed on 31 July 1908.⁴⁶ The official number of Islanders eventually allowed to remain was 1,654, but Patricia Mercer's research indicates that the actual number remaining was much higher (around 2,500), suggesting that almost 1,000 avoided the mass deportation.⁴⁷ Pathetic letters written by Islanders pleading to be allowed to stay in Australia, remain in the files of the Queensland and Commonwealth governments. Oral testimony collected from Islander families in Queensland since the 1970s contains evidence of traumatic partings of families, as parents and children were separated, some forced to leave, others choosing to stay. An unknown number — several hundred — just disappearing into the bush for a few years until the fuss died down, aided by Islanders legally able to stay, and by friendly white farmers.

When 205 Islanders departed from Cairns on Burns Philp and Co's ship *Malaita* in November 1906 one of them cried out "Good-bye, Queensland, good-bye White Australia; Good-bye Christians",⁴⁸ a fitting comment on Australia's Pacific Island Labourers Act. Today, there are estimated to be around 15,000 descendants of the original immigrant Islanders living in Australia, far in excess of the Islander population in 1901.⁴⁹ One century and several generations later, in a nation now embarrassed by its once racist immigration policy, Australia's South Sea Islanders can smile wryly, but they have not forgotten the indignity and anguish of it all.

ENDNOTES

1. Clause 67 of the Act exempted crews of ships on shorter Pacific Island routes.
2. *Statistics of Queensland*, 1901, Population, Polynesian Immigration, Tables V and VI.
3. During 1902 Islander immigration was limited to three-quarters of the number who had returned home during 1901. In 1903 only half the number returned during 1902 were admitted.
4. Raymond Evans, Clive Moore, Kay Saunders and Bryan Jamison, *1910: Our Future's Past*, Pan Macmillan, Sydney, 1997, particularly "The Government and the People: Federation and the Constitution", pp. 92-105.
5. Walter Maxwell, "A Report Upon Some Factors Relating to the Cane Sugar Industry of Australia", *Commonwealth Parliamentary Papers*, 1901-02, Vol. 2, pp. 967-82, particularly pp. 969-75; D.H. Dalrymple, Secretary for Agriculture, "Memorandum to the Honourable the Prime Minister on the Queensland Sugar Industry", 15 November 1901, Enclosure in Premier Robert Philp to the President and Members of the Senate", 15 November 1901, tabled in the Queensland Legislative Assembly and ordered printed, 22 November 1901.
6. Premier Robert Philp to Lieutenant-Governor Sir Samuel W. Griffith, 12 December 1901, PRE/89, Queensland State Archives (QSA).
7. Walter Maxwell to Premier Robert Philp, 5 October 1901, In letter 10176 of 1901, PRE/89, QSA.
8. Walter Maxwell, "Report of the Sugar Bonus", *Commonwealth Parliamentary Papers*, 1905, Vol. 2, p. 1363; Harry T. Easterby, *The Queensland Sugar Industry: An Historical Review*, Government Printer, Brisbane, 1932, pp. 28-34.
9. There were 835 ticket-holders in 1884, 716 in 1892, 704 in 1901 and 691 in 1906. Clive Moore, *Kanaka: A History of Melanesian Mackay*, Institute of Papua New Guinea Studies and the University of Papua New Guinea Press, Port Moresby, 1985, p.166.
10. Peter Mühlhäusler, "Melanesian Pidgin English (Kanaka English) in Australia", *Kabar Seberang*, No. 8/9, 1981, pp. 93-105.
11. The major texts on Pacific Island labour in Queensland are: Moore, op. cit.; Kay Saunders, *Workers in Bondage: The Origins and Bases of Unfree Labour in Queensland, 1824-1916*, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, 1982; Peter Corris, *Passage, Port*

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- and Plantation: A History of Solomon Islands Labour Migration, 1870-1914*, Australian National University Press, Canberra, 1973; Adrian Graves, *Cane and Labour: The Political Economy of the Queensland Sugar Industry, 1862-1906*, Edinburgh University Press, Edinburgh, 1993; Carol Gistitin, *Quite a Colony: South Sea Islanders in Central Queensland, 1867 to 1993*, Æbis Publishing, Brisbane, 1995; Patricia Mercer, *White Australia Defied: Pacific Islander Settlement in North Queensland*, Department of History and Politics, James Cook University, Townsville, 1995. See also Peter Corris, "'White Australia' in Action": The Repatriation of Pacific Islanders from Queensland", *Historical Studies*, Vol. 15, 1972, pp. 237-50.
12. *Mackay Mercury*, 16 November 1901.
 11. Mercer, op. cit., p. 81.
 13. "Petition Signed by 3,000 Pacific Island Labourers Resident in Queensland", in "Correspondence Relating to the Pacific Island Labourers Act, 1901, of the Commonwealth of Australia, presented to both Houses of Parliament", HMSO, London, September 1902, pp. 3-5.
 14. Fanny Nicol to Prime Minister Alfred Deakin, 9 September 1902, *ibid.*, p. 20.
 15. H.R. Fox Bourne, Secretary, Aborigines' Protection Society to Colonial Office, 18 April 1902; and Lord Lamington and the Earl of Onslow's speeches, House of Lords, 20 February 1902, *ibid.*, pp.1-2, 5-6.
 16. This assertion was repeated the next year by Captain Rason, the British Resident in the New Hebrides. *Daily Mail* (London), 21 March 1903 (press-cutting) PRE/88, QSA.
 17. Earl of Onslow, 20 February 1902, in "Correspondence Relating to the Pacific Island Labourers Act, 1901, of the Commonwealth of Australia", op. cit., pp. 2-3.
 18. Premier Robert Philp to Prime Minister Deakin, 4 August 1902, *ibid.*, p. 18.
 19. Prime Minister Alfred Deakin to Premier Robert Philp, 8 May 1902, *ibid.*
 20. "Summary of Pacific Islanders Apparently Domiciled Permanently in Queensland" in Premier Robert Philp to Prime Minister Alfred Deakin, 4 August 1902, *ibid.*, p. 19.
 21. Prime Minister Alfred Deakin to acting Governor-General Lord Tennyson, 29 September 1902; Tennyson to Prime Minister Neville Chamberlain, 30 September 1902, *ibid.*, pp. 7-12.
 22. Bishop Cecil Wilson to Governor of Queensland Sir Herbert Chermiside, 31 October 1902, PRE/89, QSA; Judith A. Bennett, *Wealth of the Solomons: A history of a Pacific*

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- archipelago, 1800-1978*, University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 1987, pp. 144-5; David Hilliard, "The South Sea Evangelical Mission in the Solomon Islands: The Foundation Years", *Journal of Pacific History*, Vol. 4, 1969, pp. 41-64; David Hilliard, *God's Gentlemen: A History of the Melanesian Mission, 1849-1942*, University of Queensland Press, St Lucia, 1978, pp. 129-31.
23. *Daily Mail* (London), 21 March 1903 (press-cutting), PRE/89, QSA; Ernest Rason to Western Pacific High Commissioner, Suva, 15 December 1905, PRE/84, QSA; Prime Minister Edmund Barton to Premier Robert Philp of Queensland, 21 July 1903, IPI 3/17, QSA.
 24. K.M. Grant MLA, to Prime Minister Alfred Deakin, 2 April 1902, CRSA1 1903/1694, National Archives of Australia (NAA).
 25. Gistitin, op. cit., pp. 37-9; Francis Hopkins to Private Secretary, Governor of Queensland, 15 March 1902, enclosing copies of both petitions, PRE/87, QSA; Premier Robert Philp to Governor Sir Herbert Chermiside, 10 March 1903, pp. 72-7, GOV A39, QSA. The 1902 Department of Immigration survey of permanently domiciled Islanders included 21 from Rockhampton who had lived in Queensland from 15 to 33 years, owned their own houses, leased land and cultivated general produce.
 26. Mercer, op. cit., p. 80; Gistitin, *ibid.*, p. 39; *Mackay Mercury* 23 May 1905.
 27. Only 43 of the 362 signatures from Mackay on the Association's 1906 petition to the Prime Minister are from Malaitans, and none of its leaders were Malaitans, even though they were the most dominant island group in the district. "Petition to the Honourable Alfred Deakin, Prime Minister of the Commonwealth of Australia", 4 September 1906, Department of External Affairs, CRS A1, 06/6324, NAA.
 28. *Mackay Mercury*, 23 July 1904; Mercer, op. cit., p. 80.
 29. Pacific Island Immigration, Immigration Agents Annual Report, 26 July 1905, *Queensland Votes and Proceedings*, 1905, Vol. I, p. 741.
 30. *British Solomon Islands Protectorate Annual Report*, 1903-05, pp. 23-4; Charles Price with Elizabeth Baker, "Origins of Pacific Island Labourers in Queensland, 1863-1904: A Research Note", *Journal of Pacific History*, Vol. 11, No. 1-2, 1976, pp. 106-21.
 31. "Approximate Return of Islanders Whose Agreements Expire in 1904, 1905 & 1906 Respectively", PRE/84, QSA.
 32. *Brisbane Courier*, 25-31 May 1905; *Report of the Sugar Industry Labour Commission*, Government Printer, Brisbane, 1906.
 33. The total number resident in Queensland and the Tweed River district of New South

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- Wales was estimated to be 6,389. 168 were exempt under the 1880 Act because they were engaged in the pearl and bêche-de-mer fisheries in Torres Strait, 691 were ticket-holders under the 1884 Act, about 40 from New Caledonia and the Loyalty Islands were French citizens and exempt from the 1901 Act (as early immigrants many would also have been ticket-holders). Approximately 30 were Fijians, and at least 50 were Queensland-born and therefore British citizens. Another 663 were on agreements which were due to expire during 1906. *Report of the Sugar Industry Labour Commission*, *ibid.*, pp. lx-lxi.
34. *Mackay Mercury*, 10, 27 February, 20, 27 March, 18, 28 April, 1, 14, 28 May, 26, 27 June 1906.
 35. Henry D. Tonga to Winston Churchill, Under Colonial Secretary for the Colonies, 26 March 1906, A1/15 06/4761, NAA; *Report of the Sugar Industry Labour Commission*, *op. cit.*, pp. 151-2, 155.
 36. *Mackay Mercury*, 5 September 1906.
 37. The amended Act was to be cited as the Pacific Island Labourers Act 1901-1906.
 38. *Report of the Sugar Industry Labour Commission*, *ibid.*, p. lxvii; Premier William Kidston to Prime Minister Alfred Deakin, 23 July 1906; Deakin to Kidston, 3 August 1906, laid before the Queensland Legislative Assembly, 7 August 1906, POL/J35 and PRE/84, QSA.
 39. *Age* (Melbourne), 15 September 1906 (press-cutting); “Object of Petition” and “Scheme”, 31 August 1906, “Petition to Prime Minister Alfred Deakin from Pacific Islanders’ Association”, 4 September 1906, A1/15 06/6324, NAA.
 40. *Sydney Herald*, 2 October 1906 (press-cutting); Prime Minister Alfred Deakin to Secretary, Pacific Islanders’ Association, 2 October 1906, A1/15, 06/6324, NAA. In 1903 the Colonial Sugar Refining Company failed in an attempt to recruit time-expired labourers from around Bundaberg for its Fiji plantations, but the scheme was revived by Fiji’s government in 1905. Exact details were worked out during 1906, allowing 427 Queensland Islanders to re-recruit for Fiji in 1907, considerably lessening the number to be deported. Moore, *op. cit.*, pp. 288-9; Corris, *Passage, Port and Plantation*, *op. cit.*, pp. 132-3; Governor of Fiji Sir Everard im Thurn to Governor of Queensland Lord Chelmsford, 27 November 1906, PRE/84, QSA; Colonial Sugar Refining Co. Box File U 1-0, Folder 3, Sydney (now held by the Noel Butlin Archives of Business and Labour, Canberra).
 41. *Mackay Mercury*, 6 December 1906; *Truth* (Brisbane), 6 January 1907; H.D. Tonga to Premier William Kidston, 17 November 1906, In Letter 6181, PRE/84, QSA.
 42. *Mackay Mercury*, 5 January, 5, 7 March 1907.

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43. Clive Moore, "Fatnowna, John Kwailiu Abelfai (1866?-1906)", *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol. 8, pp. 473-4; Clive Moore, "Luke Logomier", in Henry Reynolds (ed.), *Race Relations in North Queensland*, History Department, James Cook University, Townsville, 1st edition, 1978, pp. 181-94.
 44. William Peterson to Editor, *Mackay Mercury*, 30 January 1906; Gistitin, op. cit., p. 39; *Mackay Mercury*, 28 May, 26, 27 June 1906.
 45. Robtehines v Brennan, 2 October 1906, CRS A1 07/293, NAA; *Mackay Mercury*, 4, 8 October 1906.
 46. Moore, op. cit., pp. 274-91.
 47. Mercer, op. cit., pp. 98-9.
 48. *Mackay Mercury*, 24 November 1906.
 49. Mercer, op. cit., Gistitin, op. cit., Simon Bliss, A History of Educational Policy Towards and Provisions for South Sea Islander Students in Queensland between 1895 and 1943, BEd Studies Hons thesis, University of Queensland, 1996, and Noel Fatnowna, *Fragments of a Lost Heritage*, (Roger Keesing, ed.), Angus & Robertson, Sydney, 1989, provide the only extensive accounts of the Islanders during the twentieth century. Also refer to Clive Moore and Trish Mercer, "The Forgotten People: Australia's South Sea Islanders, 1906-1993", in Henry Reynolds (ed.), *Race Relations in North Queensland*, Department of History and Politics, James Cook University, Townsville, 2nd edition, 1993, pp. 208-42; Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission, *The Call for Recognition: A Report of the Situation of Australian South Sea Islanders*, Canberra, 1992; Steve Mullins *et al.*, *After Recognition: Access and Equity for Australian South Sea Islanders*, Rural and Economic Research Centre, Central Queensland University, Rockhampton, 1996.