

2360

CONFIDENTIAL

10 DOWNING STREET

THIS FILE MUST NOT GO OUTSIDE 10 DOWNING ST

FILE TITLE: <i>RELATIONS</i>		SERIES
		<i>VANUATU</i>
		PART: <i>1</i>
PART BEGINS: <i>1 APRIL 98</i>	PART ENDS:	CAB ONE:
<i>2 MAY 97</i>	<i>7 JUNE 2001</i>	

LABOUR ADMINISTRATION

Part done

PREM 49/2360

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PART

CLOSED

DATE CLOSED	7 JUNE 2001
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Series : VANUATU

File Title : RELATIONS

Part : 1

Date	From	To	Subject	Class	Secret
01/04/1998	FCO	FA/APS	Vanuatu : Congratulatory message to the Hon Donald Kalpokas MP	U	0
23/02/1999	FCO	FA/APS	Vanuatu: Message of Condolence from the PM - death of Father Wal	U	0
06/12/1999	FCO	FA/APS	Message of sympathy from Prime Minister to Former Prime Minister	U	0
17/04/2001	FCO	FA/APS	Congratulatory message from the Prime minister to the new Vanuatu	C	0

17 April 2001

1. fax (tpo) to Patrick
Davies

thank - message is fine

2. file

Amey
18/4

cc: JS
press

Dear Anna,


Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

London SW1A 2AH

Congratulatory Message from the Prime Minister to the
New Vanuatu Prime Minister

Following a vote of no confidence in the government of Barak Sope on Friday 13 April, Edward Nipake Natapei has taken over as Prime Minister of Vanuatu and formed a new government. Natapei is known to our post in Port Vila and visited the UK as a Category I sponsored visitor in 1996 when Speaker of the Vanuatu Parliament. I enclose a copy of his LPR.

Natapei's appointment is good news. Sope was widely thought to be corrupt and, in the dying days of his government, had been trying to stretch the constitution to the limits in an effort to retain power. The changeover was constitutional, despite a series of aborted Parliamentary sittings and court hearings.

Our bilateral relations with Vanuatu are reasonably good. We have an aid programme which is focused on good governance and education. But we have been concerned about corruption in the governing classes, including the Sope government's involvement in questionable dealings with foreign investors. We also recently revoked the Exequator (Letter of Appointment) of the Vanuatu Honorary Consul in London when we learned that he had an undisclosed criminal record.

I recommend that the Prime Minister sends a brief congratulatory message to Natapei (draft telegram enclosed). The Prime Minister sent a similar message to Mr Sope when he became Prime Minister in December 1999. A message would demonstrate our commitment to strengthening bilateral relations with Vanuatu under this more promising new government.

Yours ever,
Patrick

(Patrick Davies)
Private Secretary

Ms Anna Wechsberg
10 Downing Street

EDWARD NIPAKE NATAPEI, PRESIDENT OF VP AND LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

President of the Vanua'aku Party since September 1999 and MP for Vila town since November 1995

Born 7 July 1954 on Futuna. Presbyterian.

Educated on Tanna and at Malapoa College. Diploma in Business Studies from Fiji Institute of Technology.

Was merchandising manager of the Vanuatu Cooperatives Federation before becoming First Secretary in the Ministry of Finance. In 1983 was elected to Parliament as a Vanua'aku Party MP for the Outer Islands.

After a short spell as Minister of Health he was re-elected to Parliament in the 1987 general election and was appointed Minister of Trade, Commerce, Industry and Co-operatives. Took up the portfolio of Minister of Transport, Public Works and Tourism in 1989 in a reshuffle following the election of the President Timakata.

Elected to the Executive Council of the Vanua'aku Party as Treasurer in 1991.

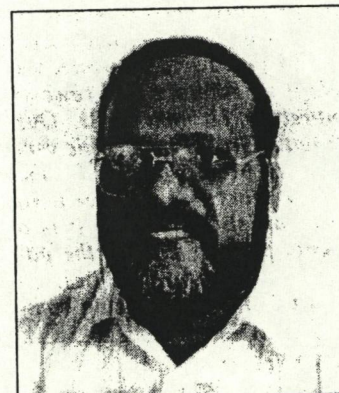
He was elected Speaker on 23 February 1996 following the vote of no confidence in the NUP/UMP coalition government and continued in this role until November 1999. He conducted his duties as Speaker impartially and did his best to improve parliamentary procedures. Became Leader of the Opposition when the Kalpokas government lost power in November 1999.

A pleasant and intelligent individual who is respected across the political spectrum. Has a solid reputation but is not afraid to fight his corner. He is future Prime Minister material. Visited Britain as a Cat 1 sponsored visitor in 1990 when he attended a CPA conference on the Isle of Man.

Accepted an invitation to visit Britain in his capacity as Speaker in July 1996 and returned with renewed determination to nurture the UK/Vanuatu relationship.

Married. Speaks good English. Senior member of the Presbyterian Church.

November 2000



Nipake Edward NATAPEI

D R A F T

UNCLASSIFIED

FM FCO

TO PRIORITY PORT VILA

TELNO

OF 171619Z APRIL 01

INFO ROUTINE CANBERRA, HONIARA, PORT MORESBY, SUVA

INFO ROUTINE WELLINGTON

YOUR TELNO 23

SUBJECT: VANUATU: CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO
THE NEW VANUATU PRIME MINISTER

1. Please arrange for the following message from the Prime Minister to be sent to the new Vanuatu Prime Minister, Mr Edward Natapei, as soon as possible:

Begins

Please accept my congratulations on your appointment as Prime Minister. I look forward to strengthening the relationship between our two countries during your term in office. I wish you, and your colleagues, every success.

Ends

2. There will be no/no signed original.

COOK

YYYY

file - told FLO to issue first
message, not second.



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

London SW1A 2AH

6 December 1999

peg
7/12

CE:JS
J/0
MT
AC

Dear Philip

Message of Sympathy from Prime Minister to Former Prime
Minister of Vanuatu, Donald Kalpokas

... On 25 November Prime Minister Donald Kalpokas
resigned before a vote of no confidence could be heard (he
did not expect to win). Barak Sope MP, Leader of the
Melanesian Progress Party (MPP) was then elected as the
new Prime Minister. I enclose a telegraphic message of
congratulations.

... I believe the Prime Minister met Kalpokas recently in
Durban. In case you wish to send him a message of
commiseration, I enclose a draft.

Kalpokas held power for eighteen months and presided
over a period of economic and public reform (with the
backing of the Asian Development Bank) restoring stability
and economic competence to Vanuatu. Kalpokas visited the
UK twice as PM and valued highly the bilateral
relationship. We are about to fund (at his request) a
Senior Judge on a two-year secondment to strengthen the
Vanuatu judiciary. Sope has confirmed this will proceed.

Yours ever

Andrew Patrick

(Andrew Patrick)
Private Secretary

Philip Barton Esq OBE
10 Downing Street

D R A F T

UNCLASSIFIED

FM FCO

TO ROUTINE VILA

TELNO

OF 261038Z NOVEMBER 99

SUBJECT: CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO THE PRIME
MINISTER OF VANUATU

1. Please arrange for the following message from the Prime Minister
to the new Prime Minister of Vanuatu, The Hon Barak Tame Sope MP.

Begins.

Please accept my congratulations on your election as Prime Minister.
I look forward to strengthening the relationship between our two
countries during your term in office. I wish you, and your
colleagues, every success in Government.

Ends.

2. There will be no signed original.

COOK

D R A F T

UNCLASSIFIED

FM FCO

TO PRIORITY VILA

TELNO

OF 011058Z DECEMBER 99

SUBJECT: VANUATU: MESSAGE OF SYMPATHY FROM PRIME MINISTER TO
FORMER PRIME MINISTER, DONALD KALPOKAS MP

1. The Prime Minister would be grateful if you could convey the
following message to former Vanuatu Prime Minister, Donald Kalpokas.

Begins.

I was sorry that things did not work out for you and your
colleagues. After such a constructive eighteen months at the helm,
it must have been a real disappointment.

~~I enjoyed meeting you recently in Durban.~~ I wish you every success
for the future.

Ends.

2. There will be no signed original.

COOK

YYYY

NNNN



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

23 February 1999

London SW1A 2AH

file - told FCO to issue

*PEB
23/2*

TOP - PB

*C: JS
JP*

Pre

Dear Philip,

Vanuatu: Message of Condolence from the Prime Minister

Father Walter Lini, former Prime Minister of Vanuatu and Leader of the Opposition, died early on Sunday 21 February. The precise cause of death is not yet known although in recent years he had suffered from heart problems.

The British High Commission in Vila have recommended that the Prime Minister send a message of condolence to Vanuatu's Prime Minister, Donald Kalpokas, via FCO telegram. I enclose a draft message.

...

Father Lini became Prime Minister of Vanuatu at independence (1980) and held that office until 1991. He was known as "father of the nation" and was one of the Pacific region's statesman.

*John Grant,
PS*

(John Grant)
Principal Private Secretary

Philip Barton Esq OBE
10 Downing Street

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FREEDOM OF INFORMATION
ACT 2000**

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION
CLOSED UNDER THE

ACT 2000 TCA

PREM49/2360

letter
dated
23 feb 1999

MESSAGE OF CONDOLENCE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO THE PRIME
MINISTER OF VANUATU, DONALD KALPOKAS.

I was deeply saddened to hear the news that Father Walter Lini had passed away, and wanted to convey my sincerest condolences to you and the people of Vanuatu at this difficult time.

Father Lini played a leading role both in Vanuatu's transition to independence and during his term as Prime Minister from 1980 to 1991. His service to his country and his contribution to our bilateral relationship has been immense. He will be greatly missed.

Tony Blair

[Alistair Totty, NEAPD - 270 3263]

PR6M49/2360/1

letter
dated 23 Feb
1979



Foreign &
Commonwealth
Office

London SW1A 2AH

1 April 1998

file - old FCO to issue.

Dear Philip

*Philip
1/4*

*TOP-PB
✓ JEH
MC*

Vanuatu: Congratulatory Message to The Hon Donald Kalpokas
MP on his Appointment as Prime Minister

A general election in Vanuatu on 6 March has led to a change of government. The new Prime Minister is the Hon Donald Kalpokas MP appointed on 30 March. He succeeds Serge Vohor.

... We recommend the Prime Minister send a short telegraphic message of congratulations to Mr Kalpokas. A short message would help counter the perception among Pacific Island states that we have lost interest in their region, and would serve to underline the importance we attach to progress on the Comprehensive Reform Programme. Vanuatu (population c. 180,000) is a member of the UN, the Commonwealth, the South Pacific Forum, the Pacific Community and the Melanesian Spearhead Group.

... We also recommend the Prime Minister send simultaneously a short telegraphic goodwill message to outgoing Prime Minister Vohor. The Prime Minister met Mr Vohor at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting held in Edinburgh last October.

Yours ever

Andrew Patrick

(Andrew Patrick)
Private Secretary

Philip Barton Esq OBE
10 Downing Street

**DRAFT CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER TO THE
HON DONALD KALPOKAS MP ON HIS APPOINTMENT AS PRIME MINISTER
OF VANUATU**

TO: THE HONOURABLE DONALD KALPOKAS, PRIME MINISTER OF VANUATU

Congratulations on your appointment as Prime Minister of Vanuatu.

I look forward to working with you to strengthen further the ties of friendship and cooperation between the United Kingdom and Vanuatu. I wish you well in your efforts to drive forward the full implementation of Vanuatu's Comprehensive Reform Programme.

DRAFT GOODWILL MESSAGE TO OUTGOING PRIME MINISTER VOHOR

TO: THE HONOURABLE SERGE VOHOR MP

It was good to meet you last year in Edinburgh at the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting. I wish you well for the future, and hope you will work alongside the new government in Vanuatu in the implementation of the Comprehensive Reform Programme, which was a significant achievement of your Government.