



**High Commission of the Republic of the Fiji Islands  
United Kingdom**

**CREDENTIALS CEREMONY. BUCKINGHAM PALACE 12.00 NOON. 4/3/03**

I presented both the Letter of Recall of my predecessor, Mr. F. Jitoko, and my own Letter of Credence to Her Majesty the Queen, at Buckingham Palace on Tuesday, 4<sup>th</sup> March.

At 11.34 am 2 coaches each drawn by 4 horses parked at the Kensington Road near the Hyde Park Gate junction, and the Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps, Sir Anthony Figgis, walked over to the High Commission to meet the High Commissioner, Mrs. Asinate Boladuadua, Mr. Sung Kangwai, Commercial Counsellor, Mr. Solo Mara, First Secretary, and Mr. Jone Vukikomoala, Second Secretary.

The coaches left at 11.42 am, the first carried The Marshal, the High Commissioner and his wife. The second carried the other 3 diplomatic staff. We followed Kensington Road, turned into Kensington Gardens and followed the boundary of Hyde Park, through Hyde Park Corner to Constitutional Hill, around the Victoria Memorial (in front of the Palace) and arrived at Buckingham Palace at 12.02 pm.

There to meet us at the Grand Entrance (Porte cochere) were the Permanent Under-Secretary for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, Sir Michael Jay, the Vice Marshal, Mr. Charles de Chassiron, an Equerry in waiting, and a Lady in waiting. The Marshal made the necessary introductions. We were then conducted through the Grand Hall to the Bow Room.

First to go in to the 1844 room was Sir Michael Jay to brief Her Majesty for about 2-3 minutes.

At 12.06 I walked in and formally handed over the 2 letters mentioned in para. 1. No formal speeches are made on such an occasion. I however had an audience with Her Majesty for about 8 minutes. Among the items discussed were her question, "Things have settled down, haven't they?" to which I answered in the positive, and said that the only pending case is the appeal by the Government which will be heard by the Supreme Court of a full bench of 5 judges (from Australia and New Zealand) on 18 June, and the decision should be handed down within a week from that date.

She also inquired about the latest cyclone and I briefed Her Majesty fully on the subject.

She then invited me to introduce my staff. The door was opened and in came Mr. Kangwai who referred to the amount of sugar being bought by Tate & Lyle, and the current restructuring of the Sugar Industry. After taking his leave, Mr. Solo Mara came in and in answer to a question briefed Her Majesty on the type of work he covers as First Secretary. Mr. J. Vukikomoala then came in and was asked a similar question. After his exit, Mrs. A. Boladuadua walked in and after the usual greetings, she was asked a few

questions about her background and work in the Ministry of Health, and I also joined in where necessary. This audience lasted about 4-5 minutes.

After taking our leave, (time = 12.24) we then signed the Visitors' Book in the Grand Hall and boarded the carriages at 12.29 pm.

We arrived at the High Commission at 12.50 where the Vin d'Honneur (reception) to celebrate the occasion was held.

The Vin d'Honneur was from 12.30 to 2.30 pm. By the time we arrived the majority of the guests were at the High Commission. Apart from the staff and our family members who helped in the catering and the usual service during the party, guests included the Marshal (Chief Guest), the NZ High Commissioner, Hon. Russell Marshall, NZ Deputy High Commissioner, Ms. Susanne Blumhardt, PNG High Commissioner, Ms. Jean Kekedo, Tonga High Commissioner, Col. Fetu'utolu Tupou and Mrs. Tupou, senior officials of the Protocol Division led by the Vice Marshal, senior officials of the F.C.O. (Pacific Desk), Mr. Michael Peart, former British High Commissioner in Fiji (1994-97?), and senior members of the Fijian community in London.

The programme for the day at the two venues was a huge success, thanks to the strong support I received from the staff and their families, and the thorough briefings and detailed arrangements made by the Marshal, the Vice Marshal and their staff members.

E.L.Boladuadua  
High Commissioner