

08WELLINGTON414

Date: 2008-12-15

McCORMICK date:2008-12-15T04:08:00 source:Embassy Welli  
ngton origin:08WELLINGTON414 destination:VZCZCXRO5891 O  
O RUEHPB DE RUEHWL #0414 3500408 ZNY CCCCC ZZH O 150408  
Z DEC 08 FM AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASH  
DC IMMEDIATE 5580 INFO RUEHSV/AMEMBASSY SUVA IMMEDIATE  
0782 RUEHBY/AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY 5352 RUEHPB/AME  
MBASSY PORT MORESBY PRIORITY 0769 RUEHBN/AMCONSUL MELBO  
URNE PRIORITY 0133 RUEHDN/AMCONSUL SYDNEY PRIORITY 0781  
classification:CONFIDENTIAL reference: C O N F I D E N  
T I A L WELLINGTON 000414 SIPDIS E.O

12958: DECL: 12/15/2025 TAGS: EFIS, ENRG, PREL, NZ, FJ, AS, XV  
SUBJECT: FOREIGN ..

C O N F I D E N T I A L WELLINGTON 000414 SIPDIS E.O

12958: DECL: 12/15/2025 TAGS: EFIS, ENRG, PREL, NZ, FJ, AS  
, XV SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER MCCULLY DISCUSSES FIJI AND  
PACIFIC CONCERNS WITH DEPARTING AMBASSADOR Classified By:  
DCM David J

Keegan for E.O

12958, Reasons 1.4 (b) and (d)

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(SBU) The Ambassador paid his introductory and farewell call on newly appointed Foreign Minister Murray McCully December 15

They agreed that there had been dramatic improvement in our bilateral relationship during Ambassador McCormick,s t enure due to the efforts of many leaders in both governments  
McCully said he had taken the opportunity of the recent APEC meetings in L ima to thank Assistant Secretary Christopher Hill personally

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(C) Early in the conversation, FM McCully said that he anticipated that N ew Zealand,s acting High Commissioner to Suva might be expelled shortly  
He explained that during the recent trip of Pacific Island Forum (PIF) fore ign ministers to Fiji he had been summoned to the office of acting Prime Mi nister Bainimarama

Bainimarama had said that Fiji was still waiting for New Zealand to issue a s tudent visa for the son of the President,s Private Secretary

If the visa were not issued Fiji would expel the High Commissioner

McCully said that the visa applicant had had a student visa to New Zealand before and might well qualify on his own, but he fell under the visa prohib ition against members of the interim government and their families

McCully made it clear that he considered Bainimarama,s threat to be an e

effort to intimidate the New Zealand's new National Government, and the Government would not buckle

In the next day or two he would be drafting a response with the bad news, and he expected the High Commissioner's expulsion to follow soon after. He expressed the hope that the U.S.

would support New Zealand if these events occurred.

The Ambassador made it clear that we understood New Zealand's situation and supported its response.

Embassy Wellington understands that Ambassador McGann in Fiji has informed Washington that he stands ready to express our disapproval if Baini marama moves toward such an action.

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(SBU) The Ambassador said that New Zealand's role in the Pacific is one which the United States highly values.

He highlighted the importance of our working with the Pacific Island Countries to address issues such as sustainable fisheries and renewable energy.

McCully said that the new National Government is looking at what steps it can take to bring a new intensity and focus to these efforts.

Ambassador McCormick urged New Zealand particularly to consider the value of taking the lead with the U.S.

in renewable energy efforts.

He suggested that the installation of even a single wind turbine on each Pacific island would remind governments and peoples of our continuing commitment to them.

McCully said that he fully shared that sentiment.

He said that he had heard Australian Prime Minister Rudd had suggested that Australia and New Zealand were spending one billion dollars between them in the Pacific, and they needed to be sure that they were actually buying something with that expenditure.

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(SBU) McCully concluded the call by saying that he looked forward to visiting Washington at an appropriate time, and he would defer to us on what the best time might be.

McCORMICK