



The new Prime Minister of Fiji, Ratu Sir Kamisese Mara, accepts copies of the Canadian reports on bilingualism and biculturalism from Canada's Minister of Justice, the Honourable John Turner.

off one of the islands. After the mutiny on the *Bounty*, Lieutenant Bligh chartered many of the Fiji islands as he sailed through them in an open boat to the Dutch East Indies. In the nineteenth century the search for sandalwood and later *bêche-de-mer* (edible sea-slugs) brought adventurers, with firearms. In 1830 a small European trading community was established at Levuka and in 1833 missionaries arrived. Fighting between the Fijian tribes kept the islands in a disturbed condition until, on October 10, 1874, the Fijian high chiefs, led by Cakobau, ceded the islands to Queen Victoria in order to ensure peace and the rule of law.

Change in Population

During the 1870s, Indian labourers were introduced into Fiji to work on the sugar plantations. On the expiry of their ten-year contracts many stayed on. By the time the indenture system was abolished in 1917, 63,000 Indians had been brought in, of whom only one-third had sought repatriation. Today, the total population of 520,000 is 50 percent of Indian origin and 42 percent Fijian, the rest being mixed.

Early constitutional development in Fiji featured the maintenance of a balance in the Legislative Council between Fijians, Indians and Europeans.