THE PAVING OF THE ROAD that runs past the Hotel Iorana at the foot of the runway is nearly finished. A relief to all who have to drive it. This road is now called Policarpo Toro after the naval man who first suggested the annexation by Chile. It formerly was Atamu Tekena. A short while ago, these two street names were switched. So while the hotels and other establishments have not changed locations, they are now on different streets. This may sound a bit confusing to outsiders, but it is very Rapa Nui.

A GRASS FIRE AT THE QUARRY, Rano Raraku, effected the kneeling statue, called Tukuturi, as well as many other statues. Damage was caused to the statues by the fire and heat. Fires are set by islanders who run horses and cattle; they burn off the dead grass to encourage new growth. But the fires often burn out of control. Sadly, those who set the fires seem not to realize that tourists come to see the statues, not horses and cows.

THE MIR SPLASHDOWN. A flurry of activity on Rapa Nui preceded the re-entry of the Mir space station. Hedging their bets, news agencies lined up various individuals on Easter Island for eye-witness accounts of the expected fall-out of space debris. Rapanui resident, Conny Martin, who was interviewed by Reuters, noted that Rapanui islanders had little information about all this, and she added, “It’s business as usual here and we’re just hoping that nothing will land on us. What can we do? We can’t move out of the way.” News agencies in Australia also contacted some English-speaking islanders as they wanted to do a piece on the precautions being taken by the Chilean government in case of any debris fallout near the island. However, no one mentioned the possibility of danger on Chilean TV so the Rapanui were unaware of the situation. But LANChile cancelled some scheduled flights to Tahiti to avoid any possible collision with falling debris. Other Pacific islands, closer to the action, reacted more nervously. In Fiji, ships were kept in port and residents warned to stay in their homes. Things were different in Tahiti as they were involved in local elections that seemed more explosive than debris falling from the sky.

One Rapanui islander said that he hoped a piece of Mir would land in his yard so tourists would come, not just to see the moai, but also would pay to see pieces of Mir.

CONSTRUCTION ON THE NEW AIRPORT control tower has been postponed due to a conflict over the land belonging to the city and the shape of the tower, originally planned in the shape of a moai.

THE GOVERNOR announced that the island’s population is now 4500 although a census has not be done since 1992.

THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI’I Archaeological Field School will have a project this summer, 2001, in Rapa Nui. Field work will be conducted on prehistoric habitations and other sites in a northwestern coastal sector of the island. For further information: Contact Dr. Terry L. Hunt, Department of Anthropology, University of Hawai’i; 2424 Maile Way, Honolulu, HI 96822. Email: thunt@hawaii.edu
Easter Island studies to atone for their sins at last by letting the rest of us know what they have been doing and what they have found. We can never hope to produce a fully rounded or up-to-date picture of what happened on the island if crucial pieces of the puzzle are deliberately withheld.

Exalted Sits the Chief: The Ancient History of Hawai'i Island
by Ross Cordy
Paperback, 6”x9”; 464 pages; 15 tables; 75 figures (including maps and photographs), glossary, references, and index. 19.95.

Review by Dave Tuggle

First Things First
This is a superb volume that is a necessary reference for anyone interested in the history of Polynesia in general or Hawai'i in particular. I make this recommendation with the disclaimer that I reviewed and commented on the book while it was in manuscript form, and that I also provided a promotional blurb for the book’s back cover—but this should indicate that in the intervening year or two I have not changed my mind about the importance of this volume.

Organization
The book has four main parts: Background (with chapters on the environment, Hawaiian culture at the time of Kamehameha, and the nature of the information employed in the book); Mythic Times (with chapters on the settlement of the island and on the early era of adaptation); The Time of Epic Voyages (with a single chapter about the nature of cultural change from about AD 1000-1300); and Dynastic Times (with five chapters: “A.D. 1400s-1500s: The Ascendancy of the Pili Line in Waipi'o and Liloa and ‘Umi’”; “A.D. 1600s: The Reigns of ‘Umi’s Descendants in Kona”; “A.D. 1700s: Keawe, Alapa’inux and Kalani’ōpu’u and the Rise of Hawai’i as a power in the Archipelago”; “Kīwala’ō, Kamehameha, Keawema’uhili, and Keōua. A.D. 1781-1792: The Decade of Strife”; and “The Search for Better Understanding”).

History of the Book
As indicated in the Preface, the first draft of the book was completed in 1991, but Cordy notes that he “continued to update it with recent material.” A review of the discussions and dates of references indicates that important archaeological reports completed through 1999 are considered, particularly those that contain radiocarbon dates. The seed of the book was a portion of the author’s 1978 dissertation, which grew into a chapter about the Big Island’s history in A Study of Prehistoric Social Change: The Development of Complex Societies in the Hawaiian Islands (1981). A section of the book is also a revised version of A Regional Synthesis of the Hāmākua District of the Island of Hawai‘i (1994). But most of the material is new, and clearly reflects the 30 years of work devoted by the author to this field.

Goals
The purpose of the book, in Cordy’s words (pp. vii and 2), “is to summarize Hawai‘i Island’s history, to introduce its rulers and chiefs, and to illustrate certain aspects of the island’s history, such as royal centers and field systems,” and “to blend oral history and archaeology to form an overview of the history