USE OF THESES

This copy is supplied for purposes of private study and research only. Passages from the thesis may not be copied or closely paraphrased without the written consent of the author.
NATIVE ADMINISTRATION AND
LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN PAPUA,
1880 - 1960

Dissertation
Presented for the Degree
of
Doctor of Philosophy
The Australian National University

A.M. Healy
The Australian National University
Canberra

March, 1962.

Re-examination of this work has revived the impression it made on me in 1962. As a history ref. work this thesis is valuable, mainly because of Healy's extraordinary diligence. It includes a large amount of material quoted from contemporary official memoranda, including some that would not be normally available to research workers, and some (inter-district memos espec.) that probably no longer exist. Most of the documents and their authors are identified—which I believe was the main reason for Hasluck—'s demand that the thesis was to be kept under wraps.

Healy has a tendency to ignore any facts that do not support his generally accurate contention that the post-Pacific War Aust. Admin of PNG was unimaginative and heavily paternalistic.

One example: it is basic to his argument that in developing native local government the Aust. Govt. and the PNG Admin. both discouraged political development and the display of initiative by local council leaders. This is partly correct. But Healy's own references show that he must have seen some quite startling contrary evidence. Thus at pp. 654-655 in his thesis he quotes from Fienberg's paper of 5.11.57 written for C.R. Lambert, then Sec. for Terr. Dept. Healy omits mentioning that this paper, inter alia, advocated a common roll franchise for PNG as soon as it could be arranged.

The Reifber Council situation Healy describes at pp. 675-676 hardly bears out his repeated contention that Council initiatives were stifled by kiaps.
PREFACE

This thesis attempts to cover a great area of ground previously mapped only in outline. It takes the ideals and preconceptions underlying native administration and relates them to actual practice at the district and village level; only in this way can the shaping and re-shaping of policy be defined and understood. For these purposes, much of the source material is unusually poor; large segments of the pre-war Territory records, notably Divisional correspondence, were lost during the war. Our knowledge of relevant culture change is also slender. Even in Africa, it is only in recent years that anthropologists have devoted concentrated effort to the political problems of segmentary societies; in Papua they have generally sought societies unsmirched by colonial acculturation. For all these reasons, lacunae and 'thin' areas in the thesis will be obvious. Conscious of this, and of the fact that much of what I have adumbrated may serve as a starting point for later and deeper studies, I have used as many examples in substantiation as space allows.

For access to published material, and to the pre-war unpublished material my thanks are due to the staffs of the library of the Institute of Advanced Studies, The Australian National University; of the Mitchell Library, Sydney; and of the National Library, Canberra. I also thank the librarian of A.S.O.P.A. for making reports from the School available to me in Canberra. I owe a heavy debt to Mr. J.H. Gibbney of the National Archives, Canberra, for patient guidance through Papuan official records which he was still classifying.

For enabling me to collect post-war material I thank The Australian National University, which made possible an extensive field-trip (see map) through Papua-New Guinea and the British Solomon Islands in 1960. Many officials of the two Administrations responded generously to my endless questions and requests. In particular I thank Mr. H.T. Plant, Executive Officer (Local Government) in the Papua-New Guinea Administration, and Mr. T. Russell, acting Secretary for Protectorate Affairs in the B.S.I.P. Administration.

Every effort has been made to use the information gathered on this field-trip accurately and fairly. I have enough personal experience of colonial problems to be aware of their complexity. Where a critical spirit is evident, this in no way impugns the dedication or ability of officials. The fact is that colonial administration is a peculiarly taxing and delicate endeavour, in which even the most able
and best intentioned of men can hope for only limited success. Any colonial study with pretensions to objectivity must reflect this and, with a just sense of contemporary realities, must point to past deficiencies. Otherwise historical perspective means nothing.

For help while the thesis was being planned and written I owe special thanks to Dr. F.J. West and Prof. J.W. Davidson of the Department of Pacific History, the Australian National University, for what must have seemed tedious and often unprofitable advice and encouragement, freely given to someone who, in 1959, knew nothing of Melanesia.

Some material is relegated to appendices which, without limitations on space, might possibly have been included in the thesis proper. However, although this is germane and is often referred to, it represents additional evidence or is peripheral to the main theme. Because of access undertakings it is all unpublishable, but may prove useful to future scholars when they come to analyse the history of Papua more intensively.

Allowing for the acknowledged quotation or re-interpretation of research published by others, the thesis is the writer's original work.

A.M. Healy

14th March, 1962.
SUMMARY OF THE ARGUMENT

The term 'Native Administration's is used in the rather restricted sense in which it has been defined by Lord Hailey, having particular reference here to the ways in which natives have participated in 'procedures of local administration'.

The jurisdiction of the Western Pacific High Commission was found inadequate everywhere; this inadequacy was particularly marked in New Guinea before and under the protectorate, because of the lack of chiefs.

Under Sir William MacGregor's administration of the colony the search for chiefs who could be made responsible for co-operation with government continued for a time; initially MacGregor sought to adapt methods and institutions from Fiji. The delegation of responsibility to Government Chiefs proved tedious and unsuccessful. Local control through appointed village constables was accepted as a substitute. MacGregor was so involved with pacification - to some extent involuntarily - that a simple police system was found expedient. With a small European staff of poor quality, it seemed to offer relatively easy and uncomplicated control.

In the period 1898-1908 central control of pacification techniques deteriorated, and the trend to direct police rule accelerated; a corollary was the total eclipse of the Government Chiefs.

1) Hailey, Native Administration in the British African Territories, IV, pp.1, 1.
Sir Hubert Murray had as his first task the close regulation of pacification. In addition, pressures for settler development forced the rapid extension of the frontier. These factors, in relation to insufficient funds and staff, inhibited the evolution of new methods of native administration. Indeed, the hurried appointment of village constables came to be looked on in hope (or desperation) as the talisman of law and order.

After 1918, when systems of native tax and of native plantations were introduced, the deficiencies of the simple village constable system became progressively more patent. This led to experiments with non-statutory village councillors and assessors. A few enlightened officers, and the missions, conscious of social stresses for which native administration did not provide, even initiated approaches to native councils and courts. Murray's administrative preconceptions, essentially assimilationist, precluded any real or substantial delegation to natives.

Murray's death and the war brought a period of re-thinking. Increasing centralization of control in Australia opened the way for a new group not steeped in 'the Murray tradition' to exert influence: methods similar to the British Native Authority system were mooted. Entrenched opposition and the traditional conceptions eventually proved too strong, however, Native local government, as implemented, thus constituted only a segment of the more comprehensive system of native administration
V

originally projected; in particular, the element
of devolution was rejeoted* In part thie derived,
conceptually, from the paradoxical reserve shown
the few traditional authorities by MacGregor and
Murray* Moreover, actual delegation of powers
and functions to councils was slight; they became
Administration instrumentalities, while a policy
of centralizing without a centralizing of policy
strangled local initiative.
Until 1956, when local government extension
became accepted policy, councils were established
in response to local pressures. Opposition within
and outside the Administration, together with the
primary emphasis on executive training (the two
being inter-related) implied that counoils were
established only in carefully surveyed areas* The
Ch. VI s legacy of the long-standing village official
*7^
IS f t * t h e ,
system meant that initially many tiny ’parishes*
0p /O,o<rb
(traditional political units) within a projected
area had to be persuaded to confederate, and that
there were almost no natives capable of assuming
executive responsibility* Ideally councils were
set up only where adequate cohesion and economic
potential existed; but this principle often gave
way in the face of political and other factors#
Centralization and the non-traditional approach
„ „ a t " 7
of the Administration to native local government
■ «to
tended to emasculate local authority which
Chs. VII-IX councils or councillors sought to assume* Thl*
was particularly noticeable in the legislative
sphere. Political tension developed in certain
areas*


Even in the executive sphere, the lack of an integrated approach by central government frustrated co-operation by councils in developmental responsibilities, although they had notable achievements in the erecting of buildings, the sinking of wells, etc. Forms of co-operation were slowly and painfully worked out with the central Education and Health Departments.

Broadly, however, the disorganization and delay to which many councils were subjected, together with the discouragement by central government of political expression through local government, often eroded interest, inhibited the assumption of local responsibility and thereby perpetuated reliance on central government. Paternal welfare was accepted by government as a substitute for (rationale: as a preparation for) administrative devolution. (The analogy with former Belgian policy is striking). This emphasis, inter alia, also frustrated approaches to other forms of local government.²

---

2) For a more complete outline of various aspects of my argument, see my articles listed in the Bibliography, III, b, (i) and (ii), especially Native Local Government in New Guinea: Its Functions and Problems, J.A.A., XIII, 3, 1961, pp.165-74. (This was written in 1950 - a few of the views expressed there are slightly modified in the thesis).
### ABBREVIATIONS

Alternatives depend on context.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrator (or Department of the Administrator).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant District Officer (Local Government).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Armed Native Constabulary.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian (and New Zealand) Association for the Advancement of Science.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian New Guinea Administrative Unit.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Resident Magistrate.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Australian School of Pacific Administration.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baluan.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British New Guinea.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Solomon Islands Protectorate.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Central Division (or District).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonial Development and Welfare.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cambridge History of the British Empire.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Circular (Instruction or Memorandum).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chief Justice.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crown Law Office.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Command Papers.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Court of Native Affairs (New Guinea).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Court for Native Matters (Papua).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.O.</td>
<td>Colonial Office.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.P.O.</td>
<td>Cadet Patrol Officer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.P.P.</td>
<td>Commonwealth Printed Papers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.A.O.</td>
<td>District Agricultural Officer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.A.S.F.</td>
<td>Director (or Department) of Agriculture, Stock and Fisheries.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.C.</td>
<td>District Commissioner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.D.S. (&amp; N.A.)</td>
<td>Director (or Department) of District Services (and Native Affairs).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.E.O.</td>
<td>District Education Officer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.M.O.</td>
<td>District Medical Officer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.N.A.</td>
<td>Director (or Department) of Native Affairs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.O.</td>
<td>District Office(r).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D.P.H.</td>
<td>Director (or Department) of Public Health.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.D.</td>
<td>Eastern Division.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E.O. (L.G.)</td>
<td>Executive Officer (Local Government).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ext. Aff.</td>
<td>External Affairs (Department of).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.D.</td>
<td>Gulf Division (or District).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.S.</td>
<td>Government Secretary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hon.</td>
<td>Honiara.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.A.A.</td>
<td>Journal of African Administration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.P.S.</td>
<td>Journal of the Polynesian Society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Form</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kulu.</td>
<td>Kulumadau.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.G.</td>
<td>Local Government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leg. Co.</td>
<td>Legislative Council.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.M.S.</td>
<td>London Missionary Society.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Min.</td>
<td>Minutes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.L.C.</td>
<td>Member of the Legislative Council.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M.R.</td>
<td>Marching (Masinga) Rule (B.S.I.P.).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.A.</td>
<td>Native Affairs (Departmental records).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.A.O.</td>
<td>Native Authorities Officer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.A.S.</td>
<td>Native Authorities Section.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.D.</td>
<td>Northern Division (or District).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.L.G.</td>
<td>Native Local Government.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N.R.</td>
<td>Native Regulation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.M.</td>
<td>Port Moresby.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.O.</td>
<td>Patrol Officer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pop.</td>
<td>Popondetta.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.R.</td>
<td>Patrol Report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prot.</td>
<td>Protectorate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P.W.D.</td>
<td>Public Works Department.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.C.</td>
<td>Royal Commission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.C.I.</td>
<td>Royal Colonial Institute.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reg.</td>
<td>Regulation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Report</td>
<td>Report on B.N.G. or Papua (Queensland or Commonwealth Govt. Printer).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Res.</td>
<td>Resolution.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.I.P.A.</td>
<td>Royal Institute of Public Administration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.M.</td>
<td>Resident Magistrate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R.M.O.</td>
<td>Regional Medical Officer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sam.</td>
<td>Samarai.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acronym</td>
<td>Description</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.D.A.</td>
<td>Seventh Day Adventists.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sec(t).</td>
<td>Section.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.E.D.</td>
<td>South-Eastern Division.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.M.O.</td>
<td>Senior Medical Officer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.N.A.O.</td>
<td>Senior Native Authorities Officer.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S.S.E.M.</td>
<td>South Seas Evangelical Mission.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stat.</td>
<td>Station (Government).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Terr.</td>
<td>Territory (of Papua) or Department of Territories (records).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T.P.N.G.</td>
<td>Territory of Papua and New Guinea.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.A.C.</td>
<td>Village Agricultural Committee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V.C.</td>
<td>Village Constable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vict.</td>
<td>Victoria(n).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. &amp; P.</td>
<td>Votes and Proceedings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.D.</td>
<td>Western Division (or District).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>W.P.H.C.</td>
<td>Western Pacific High Commission.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ch.I. The Foundations of Native Administration</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>(a) Pre-Protectorate Administration, 1880-1884</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) The Inadequate Extension of British Jurisdiction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) The Search for a Solution</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) The Importance of the Missionaries</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(b) Protectorate Administration, 1884-1888</strong></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) The Powers of the Special Commissioner in Relation to Native Policy</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) An Evolving Native Policy</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) The Policy in Practice, from the Proclamation</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv) Delegation within Government</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(v) Consolidation in a Defined Area</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(vi) Mission Influence</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(vii) Native Police</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(c) British New Guinea under MacGregor, 1888-1898</strong></td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. The Approach to Local Control:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) The Techniques of Pacification</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) The Involuntary Expansion of Control</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) Attitudes to Pacification</td>
<td>53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The Structure of Local Administration:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) The Trend to Direct Rule: the Uses of Traditional Leaders</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) The Beginnings, and the Fijian Analogy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Status and Functions of Chiefs</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Structure of Native Administration</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Failure of Chiefs as Magistrates</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Rise of the Village Constables</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Influence of the Mission Teachers</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(d) Administration during the Inter-regnum - MacGregor to Murray, 1898-1908</strong></td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) The Attitude of the Australian Colonies</td>
<td>83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Le Hunte, 1899-1903</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) Robinson and Barton, 1903-1907</td>
<td>95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Ch.II. Sir Hubert Murray's Native Administration, 1908-1940 | 107 |

| Ch.III. Policy and Practice, 1888-1942 (also see Appendix A) | 123 |

<p>| 1. The Papuan Gulf: The Fear of Combination and the Impulse to Direct Rule | 124 |
| (i) Social Conditions and Traditional Leadership | 124 |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Administrative Influence of the Mission</td>
<td>127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) The Power of Combination: Chiefs and V.C.s</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv) Pacification of the Purari</td>
<td>135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(v) Three Foci of Village Authority</td>
<td>143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(vi) Extension into Kukukuku Country</td>
<td>149</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(vii) The Vailala 'Madness': Causes and Administrative Reactions</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(viii) The Demands of Government, and Direct Administration</td>
<td>160</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ix) Councillors: Their Appointment and Functions</td>
<td>164</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(x) Assessors, Informal Councils and Direct Administration</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Eastern Papua: Mission Pressure Towards Delegation</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Social Background</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Administrative Influence of the Missions</td>
<td>178</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) Pacification, Consolidation and Native Officials</td>
<td>184</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv) Mission Initiative towards Native Local Government</td>
<td>196</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(v) Administration Councils and Councillors</td>
<td>204</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(vi) Councillors' Exercise of Judicial Functions</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(vii) The Need for Consultation</td>
<td>218</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The Trobriand Islands: Chieftainship and Direct Rule</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) The Comparative Setting</td>
<td>220</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) The Social System</td>
<td>222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) Initial Control by Compelling Submission</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv) The Erosion of Chiefly Power</td>
<td>230</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(v) Consequences of Direct Rule and Local Reversal of Policy</td>
<td>240</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(vi) The Need to Reshape Custom</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(vii) Limitations of the Paternal Concept</td>
<td>253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ch.IV. Australian Dominance, and the War, 1940-1946</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Australian Control</td>
<td>256</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) ANGAU and Wartime Administration</td>
<td>258</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) The Post-War Reaction</td>
<td>263</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ch.V. The Approach to Native Local Government</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. The Abandonment of the Native Authority Concept</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) The Anthropological Approach</td>
<td>266</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Administration Reserve</td>
<td>271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) Elaboration of Proposed Native Courts</td>
<td>279</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv) Policy Re-affirmed, 1949: Complementing the Councils</td>
<td>283</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>286</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>291</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>294</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>304</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>309</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>312</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>314</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>318</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>327</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>333</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>337</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>346</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>349</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>351</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>355</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>360</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>367</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>373</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>380</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>385</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>389</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>393</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>393</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>396</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>401</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>404</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>407</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>412</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Legislative Powers and the Practice of Rule-Making</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Provisions and Limitations</td>
<td>442</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) The Failure of Local Flexibility</td>
<td>445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) Legal Surveillance</td>
<td>449</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv) The Regulation of Custom</td>
<td>451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(v) Technical Surveillance</td>
<td>457</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(vi) Councils as Non-Customary Institutions</td>
<td>461</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The Political Functions of Native Local Government</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) The Influence of Australian Ideals</td>
<td>463</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Political Growth without Political Institutions</td>
<td>467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) Councils as Pressure Groups</td>
<td>474</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv) The Implications of Councils' Political Role</td>
<td>480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(v) Separating Local Problems and Central Politics</td>
<td>485</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ch. IX. Social Development through Native Local Government</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. The Constitution of Councils</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) The Western Approach</td>
<td>491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Voting Methods</td>
<td>495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) Implications of the Electoral System:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Divisions and Council Representation</td>
<td>499</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv) The Problems of Confederation, and Council Goals</td>
<td>506</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(v) The Reality of Election</td>
<td>510</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(vi) The Emphasis on Women's Participation</td>
<td>511</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(i) Councils as Central Government Agents</td>
<td>513</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii) Relations with the Missions</td>
<td>516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iii) Antagonism and Separatism</td>
<td>524</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv) Closer Co-ordination with Central Government</td>
<td>526</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. Health
   (i) Relationship with the Health Department 527
   (ii) Council Building Responsibilities 535
   (iii) Council Area Planning 537
   (iv) Payment and Control of Council Medical Staff 541

Ch. XI. The Approach to Local Government
   (i) The Conceptual Division: European Rights 546
   (ii) The Advisory Councils 548
   (iii) The Problems of Association 554
   (iv) The Approach to Statutory Bodies 559

APPENDICES

Appendix A - Further Case Studies

I. Western Papua, 1888-1942: Tension between Advanced Areas and the Extending Frontier
   (i) The Abandonment of the Indirect Method 571
   (ii) Methods in Uncontrolled Areas 573
   (iii) Pacification, V.C.s and the Labour Supply 575
   (iv) Administrative Innovations by the Kiwai 577
   (v) Councillors and Village Plantations 581
   (vi) The Pull of the Frontier 582
   (vii) The Concentration on Ends rather than Means 586
   (viii) Further Kiwai Innovations 588

II. Central Papua, 1888-1942: Three Area Divisions of Policy
   (i) Social Conditions 592
   (ii) Transition to Reliance on Village Constables 593
   (iii) The Place of the Missions 596
   (iv) Over-estimation of the V.C. System: the Paternal Ideal 597
   (v) Problems of Administration among the Mekeo 605
   (vi) Head V.C.s and Consultative Administration at Rigo 607
   (vii) Tensions: Consultation and Direct Administration - Hanuabada 611
   (viii) Mekeo and Rigo Contrasts: The Uses of Councillors 617

III. The Southern Highlands, 1910-1960 - A Modern Example of Initial Administration
   (i) Initial Penetration 623
   (ii) Geographical and Social Conditions 625
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(iii) The Modern 'Oil-Stain' Technique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(iv) The Pattern of Pacification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(v) Fluctuation in Consolidation Techniques</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(vi) Roadwork as an Administrative Technique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(vii) Village Officials - the Direct or Indirect Approach?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(viii) The Transition to a Police System</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Appendix B - Central Government in Relation to Local Government**

I. Departmental Co-ordination: the Milne Bay Example
   (i) General Organization and Deficiencies | 654 |
   (ii) Milne Bay: Integration from Below | 656 |
   (iii) The Expanding Influence of Milne Bay | 662 |

II. Supervision of Councils
   (i) The Native Authorities Section | 667 |
   (ii) The Local Government Section | 672 |
   (iii) The Dual Roles of the Local Government Officer | 673 |
   (iv) The Inhibiting of Council Extension (relate Ch.VI) | 677 |
   (v) The Attitudes of Senior Staff | 678 |

**Appendix C - Comparative Studies**

I. Native Officials, Courts, and Councils in German New Guinea and the Mandated Territory: an Outline, 1885-1942
   (i) German Policy, Generally and Locally | 681 |
   (ii) Traditional Units and Political 'Unions' | 682 |
   (iii) The Status of Native Officials | 683 |
   (iv) Australian Use of Native Officials | 684 |
   (v) Acculturation and Political Stirring | 685 |
   (vi) Native Councils: Judicial Purposes | 686 |
   (vii) The Implications for Local Government | 688 |

II. Native Administration in the British Solomon Islands, 1893-1960
   (i) The Social Situation: Traditional Leadership | 689 |
   (ii) Initial Administration through Headmen | 690 |
   (iii) The Trend to Native Authorities | 692 |
   (iv) Cultist Disruption and Administrative Adaptation | 696 |
   (v) District Councils | 699 |
   (vi) Administrative Recognition of Local Government and Political Incentives | 701 |
(vii) Problems in Councils and Courts 703

Appendix D - Preliminary Surveys for Native Local Government (Circular Instruction No. 304, 1959) 705

Appendix E - Native Regulation No. 155 (1939): Village Constables 709

Appendix F - Federal Ministers in Charge of the Administration of Papua, from 5.7.1905 711

BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. Official Records 712
II. Private Papers 720
III. Books, Periodicals and Newspapers 720

Maps, Diagrams, and Tables facing page

I. Maps -
The Protectorate: Administration 1886-8
Administration Control and District Divisions, 1959 29
The Trobriand Islands 225
Field Trip, Jan. - July 1960, showing Council Areas and Native Peoples 309
Council Areas and Installations, Gazelle Peninsula, Oct. 1954 329
Town of Port Moresby, 1957 563
Southern Highlands District, 1960 630
The British Solomon Islands Protectorate, 1945-
Divisions on Malaita Revealed by Marching Rule 697

II. Diagrams -
Administration Organization affecting Local Government, 1949-55 351
Administration Organization affecting Local Government, 1955- 393
Administrative Structure, Hanuabada N.L.G. Council 662
District Organization according to Cottrell-Dormer, 1959

III. Tables -
A: N.L.G. Councils' Representation and Tax Rates, 1959 421
B: Estimated Revenues, 1952-60, with Per Capita Averages
Ci Per Capita Revenues of Representative Councils, 1952-60

D: Actual Expenditure, Papua N.L.G. Councils, 1959


F: Installations by New Guinea Councils to 1956
CHAPTER I

THE FOUNDATIONS OF NATIVE ADMINISTRATION

I. Pre-Protectorate Administration.

(1) The Inadequate Extension of British Jurisdiction

An understanding of the events leading to the annexation of British New Guinea is essential for an appreciation of later administration. During the 1870s Britain attempted to control relations between British subjects and Pacific natives more closely. One step towards this was the annexation of Fiji in 1874. According to Ward, this was part of the policy of 'minimum intervention'; according to Morrell, there was no such policy, for British statesmen did not think continuously about Pacific problems.

At all events, the British government had to devise remedies for wrongful acts by British subjects, and for outrages perpetrated by natives.

Above all else, it was necessary that British law should follow British subjects into the unannexed islands where native rulers still retained their sovereignty.

In New Guinea and the Solomons this problem was aggravated by the lack of centralised political structures and therefore

1) J.D. Legge, Australia and New Guinea to the Establishment of the British Protectorate, Hist. Studies Aust., IV, 1949, p.34.
of native rulers. In the late 1870s and early 1880s this problem came into prominence as labour traders penetrated more deeply into western Melanesia. Moreover, attention focused on the area as wild commercial hopes were aroused and as the Australian colonies recognized the strategic importance of the area.

The major step taken by the British government was the promulgation of the Pacific Islanders Protection Act, 1875, which provided for a High Commissioner and Deputy Commissioners exercising jurisdiction (Sect. 6) over British subjects in the unannexed islands. The first Order in Council (1877) applied this, specifically, for our purposes, to New Guinea east of 143°, New Britain, New Ireland, and the Louisiade Archipelago. This Act laid the basis for the diffusion of British justice from Fiji; but for its machinery it relied still on the Royal Navy ('commodore justice'). A further Order in Council (1879) broadened control over British subjects, and was designed to secure friendly relations with native authorities; but the whole system was defective in the undefined relations between the Deputy Commissioners and the Navy; the latter in 1881 was given primacy in judging

6) J.D. Legge, Australian Colonial Policy, pp.7-30; Ward, op. cit., Ch. XXVIII, passim.
native 'Acts of War' and thereby in determining punitive retaliation. 10

The resulting jurisdiction was in practice fortuitous, depending on the play of personalities and on the practicability of visiting offending native groups. Its inadequacies can be illustrated from the experiences of H.H. Romilly, appointed Deputy Commissioner to New Guinea and the Solomons in 1881. For two months Romilly had available to him H.M.S. Beagle, for what Sir Arthur Gordon called 'an ambulatory mission of inspection of British Beachcombers'. 11 His principal object, in the New Britain area, was to investigate reported murders of Europeans. He made a distinction between provoked attacks by natives (for example, the Kleinschmidt case, no action taken) and unprovoked attacks (for example, the murder of an English trader on the north coast, where a naval party was put ashore 'to try to capture the actual murderer and to give a lesson to the natives'). 12

Romilly was apparently prepared for the Navy to continue to exercise punitive jurisdiction; but he also had some conception of the need to sheet home individual responsibility

10) Ibid., pp.275-7. The position seems to have been anomalous, for if fully applied the 1875 Act would have destroyed the informal, often arbitrary, jurisdiction of naval officers—see Western Pacific Royal Commission Report (Cmd. 3905, 1884), para. 46. Of course Deputy Commissioners had to rely on the Navy for sanctions.


12) Ibid., pp. 160-., 149 respectively.
amongst natives, and not only to punish those who transgressed but to establish friendly relations in order to forestall transgression. During his second tour in 1883 his role was more clearly that of preventing clashes between whites and natives.\(^{13}\) He made no attempt to intervene in native feuding, and on one occasion witnessed a battle begun by a 'chief' he had befriended, and the subsequent eating of the bodies.\(^{14}\)

(ii) The Search for a Solution

The lack of jurisdiction over natives was the major fault in the powers of the High Commission; but there were divergences of opinion on rectifying this. Sir Arthur Gordon felt that the powers of the High Commissioner could be amplified and simplified;\(^{15}\) and, although he did not rule out measures that might be 'more effective',\(^{16}\) he was appalled at the thought that the natives might be entrusted to the 'unfit' government of Queensland.\(^{17}\)

13) Ibid., p.177. Here he was separated from the Navy, possibly with salutary results. He travelled on a labour vessel, and was dependent on the hospitality of a German trader for accommodation.

14) H.H. Romilly, The Western Pacific and New Guinea, Ch. III; Letters, pp.185–6; G.S. Fort, Chance or Design, pp.44–6. Romilly took six armed Solomon Islanders as 'boat's crew'—a common practice among the traders, and the origin of the 'water police' under the Protectorate.


16) Ibid., para.205.

Attitudes in the Australian colonies were complex. 'Lax measures' to punish natives were criticized, but the 1881 Inter-Colonial Conference had no real answer, beyond transferring the High Commissioner's powers to a Federal Court (obviously dependent on federation) or outright British annexation. 18

In 1883-4 the Queensland Government was in a peculiarly difficult position, for recruiters for the sugar plantations burst into the Louisiades, the d'Entrecasteaux, and the adjoining mainland. 19 The government was continually amending the Pacific Island Labourers' Act, but its shipboard Agents were often inefficient. 20 Romilly warned certain natives about recruiting; but no one warned those in Milne Bay. 21 The notorious cruise of the Hopeful to this area (1884) forced a Queensland Royal Commission which revealed a wide range of recruiting tricks and abuses. 22 The Western Pacific High Commission was well aware that the repercussions of recruiting provoked many of the retaliatory attacks by natives; though

18) Inter-Colonial Conference, Queensland Leg. Council Journals, 1881, II, p.843. As an interim measure it called for increased powers for the H.C., but could not say how such powers were to be exercised.

19) Morrell, op.cit., p.400. They were legally restricted to the Louisiades.

20) Romilly believed that if all the provisions had been enforced, the cost of labour would have been prohibitive - From my Verandah in New Guinea, p.212.


Queensland representatives had long denied recruiting abuses.23 Romilly noted, after returning natives recruited by the Hopeful to their homes, that 'these same returned islanders are now the most hostile natives to whites in New Guinea',24 although at the time of their return in 1885 they had been assured that 'for the future, they would be protected against such outrages'.25 Their experiences left an unfortunate legacy of distrust amongst those natives who had had most intense outside contact.26

It is unnecessary further to elaborate the dilemma in which the British Government was placed. It gradually became clear that only the establishment of an adequate form of administration within New Guinea itself would prevent abuses and native-white clashes; only annexation would satisfy the Australian colonies, and particularly Queensland.27 At the same time the British Government was very chary of Queensland's

25) See Romilly's account of the cruise of the Victoria, Ferguson Island, 1.7.1885; Queensland V. & P. 1885, II, p.1072.
interests in a future Protectorate, possibly with some reason.  

(iii) The Importance of the Missionaries

One of the most important factors in the situation, however, was the attitude of the L.M.S. missionaries, the real pioneers in Papua. According to Romilly, it was a letter by Dr. Lawes to The Times which first awoke British opinion to the illegality of much labour recruiting carried out under Queensland Government surveillance. Chalmers in 1883 had stated that Queensland control would mean the sacrifice of the natives; Lawes had sought no annexation – he wanted the natives 'left alone' – but as this was impossible he felt it 'far better to have an English Government than any other'.

28) At the time of the 1883 'annexation' the Bundaberg Mail, the organ of the sugar interests, was reported to have said: 'That settles the Kanaka labour question for ever' – quoted Brisbane Courier, 17.5.1898. Large elements of public opinion in Queensland continued to feel themselves cheated by the 'pro-native' administration of MacGregor. Note also the instructions issued to H.M. Chester when returning illegally recruited labourers to their homes in 1885: 'As the Government are anxious that the most friendly relations between the natives of New Guinea and Europeans should be maintained, I have to request that you will ... make it clearly known that while every effort will be made to punish irregularities on the part of the whites, reprisals by the natives will be followed by ample punishment.' (Under-Col. Sec., Brisbane, to Chester, 6.6.1885: Q.V. & P. 1885, II, p.1055). My italics.


The London Missionary Society had in fact, established a form of local control at the village level before the Protectorate was proclaimed, and it saw this threatened on all sides: by the extension of the labour trade, by 'commodore justice', and by the intrusion of Government officials which a Protectorate promised.

The mission on the mainland was begun at Manumanu, west of Port Moresby, in 1872, when six Polynesian teachers and their wives were left there by Murray and Gill. Lawes established himself at Port Moresby in 1874, and Chalmers arrived in 1877. They brought large stretches of the coast under mission influence, through 'a system of planting native teachers at various spots ... until they succeeded in establishing a line of communication from the Papuan Gulf to the Louisiade Archipelago'.

Chalmers in particular, possessing many of Livingstone's attributes and using many of his methods, influenced native-white relations deeply in the pre-Protectorate period; and, indeed, his influence was of great importance to local officials under both the Protectorate and the Colony. He has described his own arbitral functions, and his intercession in tribal wars (which contrasts strangely with Romilly's

33) Ibid., p.vii, 148.
inaction in New Ireland); and there were many testimonies to his remarkable influence almost from the time of his first contact with new groups. Romilly as Deputy Commissioner was not slow to pay tribute to the work of the missionaries: 'it is very largely owing to the influence they have over the natives that so many white men have visited the country without accident'. The mission was at that time protecting the lives of British subjects, and averting clashes, in a way which the High Commission was unable to do.

Sir Arthur Gordon also paid an elaborate tribute to their law-and-order functions in his Royal Commission Report. In one case noted by the Commission the natives of Tupuseleia had been induced by Chalmers to submit to the authorities their claim that one of their number had been shot by the master of a trading ship. 'Instead of retaliating, the natives waited for a man-of-war to come and enquire into their wrongs; but none came'.

Thus, the London Missionary Society made the first real attempts to bring peace amongst the native peoples themselves. One influential native is said to have remarked in 1882, after Chalmers arbitrated in a feud between the Kabadi and

Manumanu peoples, that 'but for the missionaries ... we should have taken everything from you, and burned every house in your village'.\textsuperscript{38} And in 1884 Chalmers persuaded the Kabadi and Motumotu (Toaripi) peoples to exchange valuables under his aegis, as a symbol of peacemaking. At the same time he was firm: 'I told the Motumotuans to clear out, as they were a bad lot, and no village was safe whilst they were on the coast; that we should soon visit them to give them teachers, and that I hoped they would then be better.'\textsuperscript{39}

Consolidation of influence by the appointment of native teachers was paralleled by the Administration later, with its village constables. Along the south coast the teachers were generally first established, and spiritual and temporal authority tended to go together; here were the seeds of conflict and bad relations, not only at the village level, but between the Administration and the missions generally.

Although from this viewpoint the missionaries were predisposed to resent tighter official control in New Guinea, their mission teachers were in constant danger, a fact which makes Lawes' reaction to the proclamation of the Protectorate all the more remarkable. Indeed, on occasions in the pre-Protectorate period the missionaries co-operated in facilitating

\textsuperscript{38}) Chalmers, \textit{Pioneering in New Guinea}, p.96.
\textsuperscript{39}) Ibid., p.110. Chalmers himself set up a station at Motumotu in 1887: Lovett, \textit{op.cit.}, pp.295-370; also see C.S. Horne, \textit{The Story of the L.M.S.}, pp.409-10; general rearrangement.
the administration of 'commodore justice'. In 1881 H.M.S. Wolverine 'punished' the natives of Kalo for their massacre of the mission teachers, and Chalmers clearly regarded this as the only course open; he noted that afterwards the natives in the area were 'anxious to have a teacher again stationed with them, and ... promised to treat him well'.

It would appear that, to some degree like governments of the period, 'in this genuine devotion to great ends, they were often careless of unjust means'.

Nevertheless, there can be no doubt that until 1888, when effective jurisdiction began to be established over British New Guinea, the London Missionary Society missionaries played the major part in bringing peace amongst those coastal peoples with whom they came in contact, and between natives and Europeans. This in turn laid a basis, slender but significant, for effective administration under the Colony.

40) Chalmers, Pioneer Life and Work..., p.140.

41) Cambridge History of the British Empire, III, p.347, referring particularly to the Radical Imperialists.
(b) PROTECTORATE ADMINISTRATION, 1884 - 1888

(i) The Powers of the Special Commissioner in Relation to Native Policy

On November 6th, 1884 the British government proclaimed a protectorate over south-eastern New Guinea, bounded to the north roughly by the central cordillera, and to the east by longitude 141°. Australia's interests at this time are said to have amounted to no more than preventing a field for commercial exploitation pass into German hands; while the L.M.S. missionaries had reconciled themselves to 'some assumption of authority' and thought British control the least of the threatening evils.1

In the 1880s the declarations of a protectorate, even over territories possessing rulers of treaty-making status, generally implied wide rights without corresponding obligations.

and responsibilities.\textsuperscript{2} In New Guinea, the implications of the declaration were extremely vague. The adequate regulation of relations between the natives and Europeans was supposedly one aim; but the imbalance between this assumed responsibility and actual powers and capacity was great. In fact, annexation of which the consequences were to be avoided, and undertaken primarily to forestall another power, provided little incentive for the development of sound administration.\textsuperscript{3}

When Sir Peter Scratchley was appointed Special Commissioner in November 1884 his powers were only those of a Deputy Commissioner for the Western Pacific. S.W. Griffith, when asked for a legal opinion on Scratchley's powers, replied that he had no legislative powers, and 'only such administrative or executive powers as may be exercised by a Deputy Commissioner...'\textsuperscript{4} By omission, Scratchley's Commission so limited his powers over natives. Only one section dealt with

\begin{enumerate}
\item 'Protection' at that time had a connotation as diffuse as that of 'sovereignty', on which it depended. Arguments in international law generally revolved around the Austinian theory of the indivisibility of sovereignty, which reduced responsibilities and obligations towards protectorates to the status merely of club rules of morality. See Collected Papers of John Westlake on International Law (ed. Oppenheim) p.186; H. Maine, International Law, pp.58-9; L. Oppenheim, International Law (ed. Lauterpacht), I, p.196 note 1; H. Lauterpacht in C.H.B.E., III, p.681; Birkenhead, International Law, p.37.
\item T. Baty (The Canons of International Law, pp.399-400) stated that 'control and responsibility must go together'; but this was written in 1930. However, African precedents had shown that even at that time the type of internal responsibility and control which could be expected was far from definite.
\end{enumerate}
his duties towards natives; this simply instructed him to promote 'religion and civilization', to protect the persons and lands of the natives, and ‘by all lawful means to prevent and restrain all violence and injustice which may in any manner be practised or attempted against them’. 5

The Colonial Office instructed Scratchley that his major duties were to make himself acquainted with the country, to establish friendly relations with the natives, and to try to 'inspire their confidence and acquire their good-will'. The theme, then, continued to be the protection of whites from natives and to a less extent natives from whites. Any attempts at administration beyond that suffered from the fact that the protectorate was regarded, at best, as an interim arrangement under which the Imperial government could weigh up the problems of administering a country it had eventually acquired precipitately and about which it knew practically nothing. 6

Scratchley had a little more independence than a Deputy Commissioner, in that he was enabled to correspond directly

---

5) Commission, para. II, dated 20.11.1884 — CPI (Prot.), set 7, N.G. Letter Book 1. The remainder of Scratchley's Commission largely repeated the principles of, and the Regulations made under, the Western Pacific Orders in Council: that all land transactions should go through the Administration, that legitimate trade should be encouraged, that all dealings with natives in arms or ammunition, explosives and liquor should be prohibited, and finally that 'every lawful obstacle should be placed in the way of the recruitment of labourers from the protectorate'.

with the Secretary of State about the protectorate, and within the limits of his Commission he was to act on his own discretion, though keeping the High Commissioner informed.\(^7\)

When Douglas succeeded Scratchley as Special Commissioner the Colonial Office once again insisted he could make no laws binding on natives or non-British subjects; a fact which, it said, Scratchley had not fully understood.\(^8\) He was to make regulations even for British subjects only 'if...able to enforce them'.\(^9\)

What the Special Commissioner was empowered to do inevitably determined, to a large degree, both his general policy and what was actually done at the local level. To the extend that 'commodore justice' was continued, however, and the Commission exceeded, there was scope for the working out of a rudimentary approach to the elements of native administration.

(ii) An evolving native policy

The status of the natives under the protectorate was extremely vague; this allowed Scratchley, Romilly and Douglas, as well as their deputies, to adopt individual approaches towards the problems of local control.

The rationale of the protectorate was that the proclamation was essential to guard the lives and property of the natives.

7) Ibid.
9) Ibid. Original italics.
who would otherwise have come under the control of another power which might not have respected their rights in the way which the High Commission intended.¹⁰

Scratchley knew virtually nothing of colonial administration; he was a professional engineer who had made himself popular in Australia as an Imperial defence adviser.¹¹ In considering means of approaching and controlling the natives he had a few precedents and some advice. The principles embodied in his Commission and in his Instructions derived from the aims of the High Commission, for the protectorate amounted to little more than the tightening of High Commission jurisdiction, broadly on the lines Gordon had suggested in the 1884 Royal Commission Report. In addition, Gordon gave Scratchley 'much valuable information and advice' when they met in Colombo in January 1885.¹²

Moreover, Scratchley could hardly depart from what had already been done, for example by Commodore Erskine in recognizing principal chiefs along the coast. Erskine's senior commander, Capt. Cyprian Bridge, went to the trouble of advising Scratchley on the organization of a government, with some notes on native policy. Bridge set out the concept, later repeated by Scratchley, that 'the principle of

¹⁰) Legge, op.cit., p.28; Joyce, op.cit., pp.6-7; C. Lyne, New Guinea, pp.22-4.
¹¹) Hence his appointment: 'something was necessary to please Queensland' - C.O. 422/3, quoted Joyce, op.cit., p.16 note 24.
¹²) Scratchley to Derby, 15.6.1885. CPI (Prot.), Set 4.
administration should be, of the natives; for the benefit of
the natives, as well as of our fellow-countrymen; by the
natives themselves as much as possible.¹³ British naval
officers such as Bridge feared a strong Queensland voice in
the determination of policy, as did Romilly.¹⁴

The structure which Bridge advised was in fact very
similar to that eventually set up: he thought that an official
chief should be chosen for each village or tribe, and that
the succession should be fixed. The chiefs would come under
Government Agents, who would, in addition to the usual agency
functions, advise the chiefs, adjudicate in disputes, and
protect the natives against visitors. He also advised that
efforts should be made to find the real chief, as well as the
customs relating to succession.¹⁵

Under Douglas, the discussion of native policy was left
largely to Hon. Anthony Musgrave, an Assistant Deputy
Commissioner. Musgrave deplored the fact that Scratchley had
not passed on any instructions about native policy; but he
rejected out of hand Scratchley's idea that New Guinea should
be governed for the natives, by the natives. This, he said
'would be a costly and chimerical experiment in colonial

¹³) Bridge to Scratchley, 11.2.1885 - CPI (Prot.), Set 6,
2; cf. Report 1884-5, p.20.

¹⁴) Romilly, Letters..., p.209: probably a principal ground
for the strongly pro-native emphasis.

¹⁵) Bridge, loc.cit.
organization, inevitably resulting in failure'. He claimed that because of the lack of what he described as 'tribal discipline', to govern by the natives was a sheer impossibility. In point of fact, the lack of staff, funds, and transport, quite apart from inadequate powers, dictated that any approach to the consolidation of government influence would have to be made through supposed native chiefs, while the protectorate lasted. One may suppose that statements to the contrary really represented an assertion of the proposition that Queensland rather than Britain should determine policy.

(iii) The policy in practice, from the Proclamation

New Guinea of course lacked the traditional rulers with whom treaties could be made. Commodore Erskine nevertheless felt that the significance of their being placed under British protection should be impressed on the natives at as many points along the coast as he could visit.

In Port Moresby Erskine, with the help of Lawes, Chalmers and the native teachers, gathered together native leaders within a radius of fifty miles, from Redscar Bay in the west to Round Point in the east. On November 5th, 1885 they were all gathered on board the Nelson and Erskine explained to them, through Lawes, the meaning of the proclamation ceremony.

He told them:


Your lands will be secured to you, your wives and children will be protected. Should any injury be done to you, you will immediately inform Her Majesty's officers, who will reside amongst you, and they will hear your complaints, and do you justice. You will look upon all white persons whom the Queen permits to reside amongst you as your friends and Her Majesty's subjects. The Queen will permit nobody to reside here who does you injury. You will under no circumstances inflict punishment upon any white person; but if such person has done you wrong, you will tell Her Majesty's officers of that wrong, that the case may be fairly enquired into... You will all keep peace amongst yourselves, and if you have disputes with each other you will bring them before the Queen's officers, who will settle them for you without bloodshed. If bad men come amongst you, bringing firearms and gunpowder and intoxicating liquors, you are not to buy them, and are to give notice at once to the Queen's officers, so that such men may be punished. 18

Romilly had early appreciated what the difficulties of administration would be, in the absence of 'responsible men', though he saw that such a lack also had advantages in a lack of concerted opposition - an ambivalent attitude which played a notable part in later administration. 19

Erskine also immediately appreciated that the 'multiplicity of native authorities' would make the task of dealing with the natives very difficult. Therefore,

he saw the necessity for selecting from a tribe the chief possessing the highest claim to be regarded as the most important chief in his district, and investing him with such authority as would make him the means of communication with the Commissioner respecting


any matter which any branch or member of the tribe might desire to bring to the Commissioner's knowledge.

Erskine, of course, had no means of recognizing the extreme segmentation of Papuan society, and he tended generally to equate linguistic with political groupings. An apparently influential native of Port Moresby, named Boe Vagi, was selected as Head Chief of the Motu; but his jurisdiction was by implication applied to all the peoples represented, some of whom were not even Motu-speaking.

Erskine presented Boe Vagi with an ebony stick with a florin set in the top, Queen's head up, and encircled by a band of silver. Handing this to him, Erskine said:

I present him with this stick, which is to be an emblem to him of his authority; and all the tribes who are represented by the chiefs here are to look to the holder of this stick, Boe Vagi. This stick represented the Queen's head, the Queen of England; and if, at any time, any of the people of these tribes have any grievance, or anything to say, they are, through this man, the holder of this stick, Boe Vagi, to make it known to the Queen's officer, in order that it may be enquired into.

There was no statutory authority at all for such an injunction; but Erskine felt it necessary to repeat the flag-raising ceremony at as many points along the coast as could conveniently be visited. During this cruise, Lawes and Chalmers played an indispensable part in the selection of

20) Lyne, op.cit., p.12.
21) Ibid., pp.12-13. The implication is quite clear; but it will be noted that authority was not specifically delegated.
pre-eminent leaders. In effect, their nominees were often recognized as representatives of peoples quite beyond traditional precedent. Although Boe Vagi, for example, was generally known as a weakling Chalmers justified his selection on traditional grounds, in that he was said to be the legitimate heir of a chief who had in the past been recognized as the leader of all the Motu people.22

So arbitrary was the selection, in fact, that an old man was recognized as 'principal chief of the Milne Bay district' by Erskine because of his benevolent appearance; though he was not traditionally even the principal leader of his own village (Rabi).23

Lawes thought that the natives grasped the 'central idea and principle' of the ceremony.24 Romilly, not so sanguine, felt that as the natives had no idea of civil authority - knowing only two kinds of white men, traders and sailors - the ceremony was meaningless to them.25

When Scratchley succeeded to the task of administration, actively in August 1885, he acknowledged his indebtedness to the advice he had received, and largely sustained what had been done and adopted what had been suggested.26 Until the

22) Chalmers, Pioneering..., p.207. As already remarked, many of the 'chiefs' present represented non-Motu people to the east. See Appendix A: Central Papua.
12th October he was concerned with buying land at Port Moresby and with visiting coastal villages east to Samarai. During the rest of October he had to investigate the killing of Europeans in the south-east of the protectorate; and in November, lacking a steamer, he went inland to the base of Mt. Owen Stanley to the camp established by the naturalist H.O. Forbes. 27

During his first month of administration Scratchley again formally recognized Boe Vagi, but this time apparently only as chief of Port Moresby, the twenty-five leading men of which were enjoined to refer to Boe Vagi all cases requiring arbitration. 28 Although the elementary pattern of native contact and control had been laid down, Scratchley gave renewed thought to the question during his brief tenure of office. He realised that, for the most part, the recognition of a Government Chief was introducing something new into native life, creating an artificial position. When he did meet a really outstanding leader, such as Koapena of Aroma, with apparently extensive authority, Scratchley concluded that he combined the military, patriarchal and magical attributes in his person. For the most part, however, he felt that there

was a need for what he described as 'a modified form of the Java system, crushing out the minor chiefs, and making the Government elected chief the recipient of a certain annual payment'.

In other words, the recognized 'chief' was to be essentially a government appointee, who could be made responsible for the safety of foreigners and the maintenance of order. Scratchley had no legal authority to do this. Nevertheless under the protectorate individual natives were held responsible for offences, despite the absence of specific jurisdiction. Scratchley also felt that the chiefs could be used for positive development, in introducing new crops and in promoting the raising of living standards.

(iv) Delegation within Government

Delegation of functions to subordinates was undefined. In practice the Special Commissioner undertook most of the investigation of disturbances himself, although Douglas was absent from the protectorate for long periods. Ultimately the sole object of administration at this stage was pacification. Scratchley was uncertain of his jurisdiction in dealing with natives, and with whites offending natives; while Romilly during the whole four years of the protectorate was

29) Report 1884-5, p.10. Suggestions broadly on these lines had been made by Lawes and Chalmers previously - see King, op.cit., pp.209-14.

acutely conscious of the legal inability of issuing regulations and awarding punishment to natives.31

Nevertheless, they felt an obligation to deter the natives from attacks on Europeans; although they both recognized that almost all the incidents arose from 'direct or indirect aggression by whites', and that many of the attackers (including returned labourers from Queensland) had good cause to hate the Europeans they had come in contact with.32

The principles that Scratchley and Douglas themselves acted on inevitably constituted precedents for their subordinates. Scratchley in fact largely perpetuated 'commodore justice', 'burning towns and smashing canoes'.33 He recognized the inherent injustice of this34; he also saw that arbitrary naval bombardment, as was administered in the Captain Webb case, would embitter relations 'for years to come'.35 But he felt that the administration of a deterrent should be paramount.

31) Fort (Private Secretary) described Scratchley as 'a mere Pooh-Bah, possessed of a high-sounding title, but devoid of any executive authority whatever' - Fort, op.cit., p.35. Cf. Romilly, Letters..., pp.212-3, 255, 265, 301, 310-1.

32) Report 1884-5, p.9; Romilly, Letters..., p.269.

33) Romilly, Letters..., p.268: letter dated 17.10.1885 from East Cape. Now that a protectorate had been declared, Chalmers voiced strong disapproval of this kind of retaliation, while noting that everybody detested it. He recognized that it represented a continuation of the 'act of war' philosophy, but he had no solution, beyond bringing the situation to notice in Britain - Chalmers, Pionnering..., p.155.


In addition, however, Scratchley made some attempt to deal with the natives in their own terms. After the murder of Capt. Miller, one of the killers who offered compensation (Diravera, of Milport Harbour) was taken to Samarai and Port Moresby for 'remedial education' - a method later elevated into an administrative technique under MacGregor\(^36\) - while the other, who did not, had his village burned down. According to Port, Scratchley was so uncertain that he had the power to deal with Diravera in this way - clearly the more efficacious - that he placed the matter for decision in the hands of the Secretary of State.\(^37\)

Scratchley saw that the mere punishment of native murderers was inadequate. Pacification demanded constant reminders of government authority. A deterrent to prevent the commission of murders was what was wanted; he favoured constant patrolling by a crew of Samoans or Fijians under an English officer. This would avoid the necessity for later 'commodore justice'.\(^38\)

Under Douglas it clearly became impossible for the Special Commissioner himself to deal with all the matters requiring attention - indeed, Scratchley's brief tenure had

\(^{36}\) Report 1897–8, p. xxviii.
\(^{37}\) Fort, op.cit., pp.69–70; Romilly, Letters..., p.369; Romilly, From My Verandah..., pp.228–37.
\(^{38}\) Report 1884–5, p.27. Capt. Bridge had suggested this: Bridge to Scratchley, 11.2.1885, CPI (Prot.), Set 6.
indicated that - so that more adequate delegation was essential. Staff necessarily had to be selected *ad hoc* from the few relatively educated Europeans available. Romilly noted that everything depended on the personal approach of individual officers; this was particularly true in the years 1886–8 when Douglas was so often absent and Romilly so often ill, and when local officers were inadequately empowered. A. Musgrave, the Assistant Deputy Commissioner, later to be Government Secretary until 1908, was highly regarded by Douglas, but, as MacGregor recognized, was often impractical and best suited to desk-work.

A number of local Europeans were appointed 'Native Agents' under these men. Musgrave relied heavily on the twin Hunter brothers, and on F.E. Lawes, the son of the pioneer missionary. They all had a good knowledge of Motu. Unfortunately, their personal failings were also considerable, and for Douglas it was a question of balancing the advantage of their local knowledge against the disadvantage of their local involvements, particularly with native women. These factors created considerable local difficulties: in February 1888 Robert

39) Romilly, 1.6.1888 - Letters..., p.307: 'If he is possessed of tact he possibly, or rather probably, comes off all right; if not, he comes to grief'.

40) Douglas to G.O., 19.3.1886 (CPI(Prot.)), Set 2: 'His patient and consistent policy is thoroughly recognized, and his position is respected'. Cf. MacGregor's diary, 27.4.1892: MacGregor was prepared to recommend Musgrave 'as President of some West Indian island', a vapid sine-cure.
Hunter was transferred from Port Moresby to Samarai because the Hanuabadans complained of his 'overbearing and irritating' attitude. This meant bringing Lawes back to Port Moresby, where he had already been in 'scrapes with women', according to Douglas.41

The naturalist, H.O. Forbes was employed for a time as Government Agent at Samarai; a Burns Philp agent named Edelfelt was also enlisted as part-time Agent in the Manumanu area. The western area was particularly interesting, in view of the discrepancy between the boundaries of the protectorate (141°E) and of the Special Commissioner's jurisdiction (143°E). This area was overseen by Hugh Milman, the Queensland Government's Deputy Commissioner in the Torres Straits. Douglas eventually divided the protectorate into three convenient divisions: western, to the Aird River; central, from the Aird River to Toulon Island; and eastern, from Toulon to Rossel Island.42

Because of this ad hoc recruitment without training, the lack of sufficient powers and of an effective policy; and

41) The Hunter brothers were 'sons of an English county family' and had originally been employed on the recommendation of Dr. Lawes (Report 1886, p.21). Also see Douglas to R. Hunter, 22.2.1888: 'The maintenance of order among the people themselves must depend chiefly on the moral influence you can exercise'. Douglas to Romilly, 3.2.1888; R. Hunter to Douglas, 8.4.1888; R. Hunter to Musgrave, 8.4.1888; Douglas to F.E. Lawes, 6.4.88, 13.4.88; F.E. Lawes to Douglas, 7.4.88 - CPI (Prot.), Set 5.

the lack of a permanent vessel, each local Agent to a considerable degree determined his own policy. In the Craig case, Forbes had several villages burned on Joannet Island (September 1886). Douglas remonstrated with him, telling him that he had exceeded his instructions, and in typical protectorate fashion adding that he himself 'would not hesitate to take life in order to vindicate justice', but that the 'gratuitous burning of villages' was 'barbarous'.

In the Motumotu affair of June 1887, however, a scratch force of six South Sea islanders was sent under Robert Hunter to investigate the murder of a mission teacher. This developed into a punitive expedition, with a village being attacked and fired on and houses burned. Maka, the chief of Moviari (Moviavi) who had continued to dissociate himself from the killings, assured Hunter and Edelfelt that peace would be kept in future. Here Douglas was quite satisfied with what had been done. Inter-village fighting had been going on for years before this, and Edelfelt had scrupulously abstained from interfering.

43) C.O. (Herbert) to Scratchley, 17.11.1884; claim for a vessel repeated by Douglas to Palmer, 21.4.1886 - CPI (Prot.), Set 5.

44) H.O. Forbes to Douglas, 13.1.1887; Douglas to Forbes, 16.2.1887 - Queensland V. & P. 1888, III, pp.267-9. Douglas to Griffith, 19.9.1887 - CPI (Prot.), Set 5, L.B.1. Douglas conceded, however, that it would have been impossible for Forbes to have captured the actual murderers, and that he had acted under great provocation.

45) Douglas wrote that Hunter acted 'to my satisfaction and to his own credit' - Report 1887, p.7; also Douglas to Griffith, 19.9.1887, cit. sup.
Southern Highland District
Administrative Control

- District Boundaries
- Fully Controlled
- Partially Controlled
- Uncontrolled (penetrative patrols)

Queensland Administration

THE PROTECTORATE
ADMINISTRATION 1866-8

ADMINISTRATION CONTROL
AND DISTRICT DIVISIONS, 1959

- Southern Highlands District
- Gulf District
- Central District
- Milne Bay District
It seems clear that Scratchley and Douglas began with the idea of not interfering with purely inter-tribal fighting; but this policy was found inadequate to safeguard native teachers and non-natives who became involved.  

(v) Consolidation in a Defined Area

In 1886 Douglas, Musgrave and Romilly seem to have come to an unwritten agreement on further policy. Douglas clearly considered his principal danger as attempting too much and doing it badly - that is, over-extending. He and Musgrave therefore used the Hunter brothers to consolidate influence in the area from Manumanu to Hula (already the area of most intensive L.M.S. influence). Meanwhile Douglas and Romilly seem to have come to a 'gentleman's agreement', whereby they did not interfere with each other, and Romilly took 'complete control of the whole south and south-east'.

Within his area Douglas began to intervene more actively in matters involving natives alone. This policy followed three lines: (i) investigating inter-village disputes and

46) Ibid. As far as Douglas was concerned, non-intervention was dictated by inadequate forces at his disposal. Also see Edelfelt's complaint before Motumotu intervention - Report 1887, pp.40-1.


48) Romilly, Letters..., p.301. Romilly felt something of a personal responsibility for the area, for he had returned the kidnapped Queensland labourers there in 1885, and believed them primarily responsible for local murders. Perhaps because of the arrangement with Douglas, Romilly thought him 'a thorough gentleman'.
using a scratch force (usually boat's crew) to punish; (ii) arranging compacts between feuding native groups, as Douglas did between Aroma and Kerepunu;^49 and (iii) going a little more cautiously with the selection of official chiefs. The more careful selection of chiefs is of particular relevance. In order to facilitate this policy within the defined area, Robert Hunter was in 1886 given the title 'Superintendent of Natives'; while his brother, George, set up a government station at Rigo in the same year.50

In the selection of chiefs there seems to have been little attempt to apply traditional criteria. Advising George Hunter in December 1886 about the selection of a chief for Sarowa, Musgrave wrote:

Of course you will satisfy yourself that a majority of the villagers desire his appointment. Advise them to choose a wise man for their chief, and not one because he has most land or friends, or is a great warrior or robber, but because he is one they can trust, and that the young men are willing to listen to when he speaks good words against foolish quarrelling and bloodshed. Also, that their chief ought to be a man of good temper, and never in a hurry to quarrel, like some cross old woman.

Many traditional leadership criteria were thereby eliminated: though at that period an understanding of this is

50) Ibid., p.21. Robert Hunter had previously been styled 'Government Assistant' and 'Government Agent'. This policy might be regarded as limited consolidation according to what MacGregor later defined as the 'oil-stain' technique.
51) A. Musgrave to G. Hunter, 20.12.1886 - CPI (Prot.), Set 6, 2.
perhaps hardly to be expected. Musgrave clearly had no conception of the difficulties that might arise from the use of alien criteria. At the same time, Scratchley had speculated on the nature of leadership, and Dr. Lawes analysed it as a social phenomenon with surprising accuracy, even by modern standards. He showed up the division of leadership functions and made the distinction between influence and authority. He recognized that redress was a private matter (in European terms), and that no chiefs were competent to ensure that undertakings would be met. 52

To produce a government-orientated leadership, George Hunter in 1886 began the technique of 'educational tours'. In December 1886, for example, he brought a number of Maiva leaders to the government bungalow, where 'they received attention and small presents'. 53

Concurrently, Douglas, Musgrave and the Hunters intervened with less reluctance in purely native disputes. In 1886 Boe Vagi reported trouble between the coast village of Kaile and the hill village of Garia. The Hunters induced the chiefs of Garia to visit Kaile, and Musgrave was able to report that 'peace is now considered fairly established'. 54

54) Ibid., p.21.
The extent to which use was made of the chiefs varied. In 1885 George Hunter seems to have made no attempt to work through Boe Vagi in having Hanuabada cleaned up; he simply threatened the villagers with a stoppage of water from the government tanks unless they got to work. On the other hand, when Douglas himself enquired into a 'very deliberate murder case' involving natives only, at Kerepunu, in 1887, he ordered reparation to be made.

I attach some importance to this case, as I constituted three of the principal men of Kerepunu assessors with me in the investigation of it, and it was they who adjudged the amount of the penalty to be paid.

In their separate areas Douglas and Romilly differed on intervention in native disputes; Romilly, as already noted, being very conscious of his lack of jurisdiction. This difference was particularly important in late 1887 and during 1888, when Romilly relieved Douglas in Port Moresby.

In November 1887 George Hunter wrote from Rigo stating that many chiefs from the Kemp Welch river were imploring him to punish the murderers of a native there. He felt bound to honour the promise of protection given the natives, and on the 13th, in agreement with the chiefs, decided to punish the village responsible 'according to native custom'. He refused the chiefs' request that he destroy the betel and coconut trees,

56) Report 1887, p.6. Undoubtedly Douglas' experience with the more advanced system in the Torres Straits strongly influenced him; for later experiments see Ch. I, c; Ch. II; Ch. III, 2; and Ch. V, 1.
but he supplied them with matches with which they burned down the old village. Hunter demurred when the chiefs asked that further punishment be inflicted. 57

Romilly himself was more restrained. In December he resisted importunities from four delegations of natives to punish their attackers. One of these appeals was from Koapena of Aroma, the most powerful leader within the area of consolidation. Romilly wrote:

I have no power, either legal or physical, to punish their aggressors, and so I am in the agreeable position of having to act illegally or break the most solemn promises. Whatever I do, I must be wrong. If my hands were not tied, I could have the whole country quiet in a few months....

He did not say how, but from his actions in the south-east (in the interests of Europeans) it might be deduced that he would have had little compunction about applying mass sanctions. 59 Douglas denied that extensive promises of protection had officially been given the natives, though he admitted that individual officers could have - and the Hunters probably had - given such promises. Nonetheless he thought that Koapena at least should have been helped to vindicate


59) He had Moresby Island bombarded in July 1887 in reprisal for the murder of several Chinese: '... we bombarded villages we could not reach, and burned those we could. We smashed all the war canoes, and fired into all the natives we saw. I myself only took a shotgun, and potted a few domestic fowls'. - Romilly, Letters..., pp.286-7. With the aid of native allies, he had previously tried to come to terms with the murderers.
his authority'.

There was considerable confusion about what had been promised the natives, and about the consequent support which their recognized chiefs could claim. Erskine's much-repeated statement was unspecific and ambiguous. Romilly felt that he had no authority to help Koapena, nor even to take action when dissatisfaction threatened in Port Moresby early in 1888. In a masterpiece of tangled generalisation, typical of the protectorate, Douglas counselled him:

> Do not doubt your authority to maintain order, though sovereignty has not yet been proclaimed. Be cautious and forbearing - but be very firm with the natives of Port Moresby... I must caution you, however, to be careful to avoid any real cause of offence, or of bitterness.

More seriously, this confusion inevitably extended to the Government Agents, and even to the natives, and prejudiced good relations. George Hunter had cause for complaining:

> In all my instructions I had to inform the natives of the different villages, if they murdered again, they would be taken from their villages and punished...; informing natives at one time one thing, and acting different the very next occasion. They come to me and want to know why the Government don't go and punish them.

60) Romilly to Douglas, 13.1.1888; Douglas to Romilly, 3.2.1888 - CPI (Prot.), Set 8.

61) Ibid. Scratchley had early been confronted with a difficult problem: he ordered the deportation of two traders, Guise and Currie, who had been molesting native women, although he was uncertain of his power to do so - Report 1884-5, pp.8, 33. Whites were warned of areas to avoid (e.g. Queensland Gazette of 2.10.1885).

62) G. Hunter (Rigo) to Romilly, 7.1.1888 - CPI (Prot.), Set 6, 2. T.G. Bevan (Toil, Travel and Discovery in E.N.G., p.272) was bitter about the ineffectiveness of the protectorate.
(vi) **Mission influence**

The extensive influence of the mission on the south coast continued to be extremely important. So, too, were the attitudes of Lawes and Chalmers towards administration. Lawes wanted the natives left to themselves (or, rather, to the mission) even under the protectorate; he argued that the natives should be given the chance to develop within a pattern of administration which took account of their rudimentary political institutions, that this would be very slow, and that therefore rapid economic development was out of the question. The implication seemed to be that the mission would gradually educate and promote a native leadership. 63

Here was the genesis of a rift with the government. This came out in 1886 when Lawes objected to further acquisitions of land from Port Moresby natives, as a breach of Erskine's promise. 64 The most serious area of conflict was, however, the position of the mission's native teachers, who had acquired a semi-official status in arbitrating in native disputes. Scratchley recognized the need for one chief, but he also recognized the position of the teacher, 'as exercising a beneficial influence'. 65 Some of these teachers, however, were both temporal and spiritual autocrats; a good example, on

---

63) W.G. Lawes in Report 1886, p.24. Lawes was noted for using the columns of English and Australian newspapers to influence administration.

64) Report 1886, p.42; Douglas to Lawes, Lawes to Douglas, both 7.7.86.

65) Report 1884-5, p.5.
mission testimony, was Piri of Boera, who instructed the headmen and dominated the village from 1873 to 1888. Musgrave realized the dangers of a dual authority, but probably accentuated the dichotomy; he thought that the influence of the mission in maintaining peace had been exaggerated, and that 'firm steps' were needed by the Administration to maintain peace through its chiefs. The issue continued to give trouble throughout MacGregor's administration, and indeed became perennial.

The mission also tried to influence the choice of chiefs; indeed, it was inevitable initially that the government be dependent on mission advice. The most blatant example was Port Moresby. No-one had had any illusions about the lack of authority of Boe Vagi, nor that weak personal authority was typical of the Port Moresby area. But disagreement developed over the appointment of a successor, when Boe Vagi died in 1886. Lawes stated that the office was hereditary, not elective, and put forward a daughter, Kabadi, as successor. This ignored the fact that patrilineally Aoudu, the father's brother's son, was the logical successor. Lawes claimed, however, that the people supported Kabadi's succession, and

69) Musgrave called him 'mild-mannered but wholly useless'; Lawes 'a weak man, but friendly' - Report 1886, p.26; Lawes to Douglas, 7.4.1886, CPI (Prot.) Set 6, 2.
he condemned the suggested succession of Aoudu as 'coming from outside'. Despite his insistence on recognized succession, Lawes simultaneously asserted that it was only government recognition that gave the office any importance, and that apart from that the natives did not care much.

In any case, they will readily acquiesce in any suggestion that may be made to them by you on the subject.

Douglas was prepared to accept this, noting that Kabadi seemed to have ability and had been 'carefully educated by the Missionaries'. But when he approached her, she disclaimed any wish to succeed her father. He then found that the people were quite happy to have Aoudu as chief. Meanwhile Lawes was canvassing the succession of Kabadi in Australian newspapers. Native reaction revealed his manoeuvrings.

Although Douglas fully realized that an appointed chief would lean heavily on government support, he was not, as a consequence, prepared to appoint simply a mission nominee if he could help it. He noted that Aoudu had little influence, but commented hopefully:

... he now always wears a shirt, and appears to be conscious of his responsibilities. I have assured him that I shall support his authority, and that I shall expect him to keep his village clean.

70) Ibid.: Lawes to Douglas, 7.4.1886. Lawes had a good knowledge of regular succession.
71) Ibid.
73) Sydney Morning Herald and Brisbane Courier, both 9.6.1886.
Such men could not legally be employed to maintain order, but they were offered inducements. Aoudu, for example, got 'a small subsidy in the form of a monthly dole of rice'.

(vii) Native Police

As mentioned above, the lack of native authorities, on top of all the administrative deficiencies, inherent in protectorate jurisdiction, directed the attention of the Special Commissioners towards some practicable way of carrying out the basic task of administration; punishing and thereby ultimately preventing murder. Scratchley saw that the navy 'combined the least amount of efficiency with the greatest display of force'; and he felt that the most effective instrument would be the constant patrolling of the coast by Samoans or Fijians under a British officer, all under close surveillance. This force could also stop tribal wars.

Douglas repeated this, envisaging a force almost identical to that eventually recruited by MacGregor. This alone could supply 'a substantial basis of authority'. The need for this was emphasised by the scratch force Robert Hunter had to use in the Motumotu affair of 1887. Douglas saw the South

74) Douglas to C.O., 13.7.1886, cit.sup.
75) Report 1884-5, p.9. This was precisely Bridge's suggestion.
76) Report 1887, p.7: memo. by Douglas, 1.9.1886. Six South Sea islanders (boats' crew, referred to as 'water police') were used. Douglas recruited six islanders from Mackay as regular 'water police' in 1888 - Report 1888, p.3.
Sea islanders as only a nucleus around which a native force could be built up. 78

Resident police at the village level were given little thought, clearly because the Special Commissioner had no legal authority to appoint them. Bridge made the suggestion of village constables (three or four), subordinate to the chief or tribal council. 79 This was taken up by Milman, in the western division, in 1888. He advocated a system similar to that in the Torres Straits, with a chief responsible for administering a particular code of punishments drawn up for each place, at which there would also be a few native policemen. 80 When MacGregor first visited the western Kiwai villages in 1890 he found that the natives were already adopting the Torres Straits institutions, though the idea had not been disseminated elsewhere. 81

78) Report 1887, p.7. But men-of-war continued to visit the Territory during the 1890s (the east end) to 'show the flag'; the artisans they carried were also useful on government and mission outstations - see R. Abel, op.cit., p.65.

79) Memo. Bridge to Scratchley, cit.sup.


81) MacGregor to Norman (Gov. Queensland), No. 57, 25.2.1890, Encl. 2 (Cmd. 6323, 1891).
1. British New Guinea was formally annexed on September 4th 1888, the day Dr. William MacGregor arrived in the colony. Romilly commented: 'I believe they could not have chosen a better man for this place.' His belief was justified during the next ten years; though MacGregor in retrospect compared his task to that of a man thrown into deep water with his hands tied behind his back.

MacGregor was the first official to be adequately empowered to establish an administrative structure; though the perennial lack of funds and staff and the channelling of policy through Queensland imposed limits. Because of the great amount of work which MacGregor took upon himself, the process of delegation at the district and village level is often difficult to define.

In what follows, MacGregor's policy of pacification is analysed to show the pervasive ramifications it had; this leads on to a discussion of native administration as it

1) Legge, op. cit., p.49.
2) Romilly, Letters...., p.339: letter of 3.9.1888 - 'He will have a hard job before him, and I believe that the first year of his reign will be spent in suppressing turbulent tribes.' Cf. note 36 below.
3) Introduction to J.H.P. Murray, Papua or British New Guinea, p.25.
developed from pacification, with particular reference to Administration attitudes towards native leadership and to the ways in which those attitudes determined the structure of native administration.

(i) **The Techniques of Pacification**

Dr. Mair has written of MacGregor: 'He believed in the punitive expedition, and in the display of force as a means of securing respect for authority'. This is true, but like all generalisations inadequate as an explanation of policy, taking account of varying pressures and motives. When MacGregor arrived in the colony there had been a series of outrages from Port Moresby eastwards into the Louisiade Archipelago. He felt a prime responsibility to safeguard the traders and native teachers, whose dispersal into areas declared dangerous had been a major problem under the protectorate. Pacification and research were, in his own words, the twin objects of his decade of administration.


5) Report 1897-8, p. xliii. The exertions of MacGregor and his staff in geographical discovery (preparatory to pacification) and in scientific investigation are attested by the voluminous appendices to the annual reports. See tribute by Chief Sec. to Lamington, 21.12.1898, in Queensland P.P., lxi, 1899, p. 259. In 1895 he received an honorary degree from Cambridge, and was introduced to the Royal Colonial Institute as 'one of the most distinguished men of science of the day' - *R.C.I. Proceedings*, 1894-5, pp. 193-4. Joyce, op.cit., p. 82, note 3 gives a biographical sketch, but omits mention of his German education.
He himself later measured his success by the fact that not one native teacher was murdered during his administration. MacGregor believed it essential to view resistance, or threatened resistance, in native terms; it was therefore necessary to impress the authority of the Government in a manner to which the natives were accustomed. Anything less than enforced submission would be interpreted as weakness. Even in 1898 he vigorously defended this philosophy:

There is only one thing they respect, that is force. They have the most profound respect for that.

Over his ten years of administration he was remarkably consistent in carrying out this policy; within its limits he made every attempt to be just. He insisted that fighting be avoided if possible; on the other hand, where resistance was threatened he believed in 'the strong hand once for all'.

Unfortunately, in dealing with savages punishment on a mild scale, carried out in a way that might by many be called benevolent or merciful, is only pain and suffering inflicted in vain.

His definition of resistance was much more flexible than that later imposed by Murray on his officers; it allowed unfortunate scope to the wilder spirits at the district level.

6) Report 1897-8, p.xxxii. MacGregor thought that this deserved special congratulation, because many missionaries seemed to seek martyrdom; tension between them and natives was inevitable, because they were generally prejudiced against native custom, while the natives tended to be suspicious of mission motives.

7) Conference with Australian Premiers, 24.1.1898 - CPL(Col.), Set 11, typescript, p.18. The date of this conference is misprinted as 1888 in Legge, op.cit., p.70, note 13.

8) MacGregor to Norman, No.45, 28.10.1889 - Cmd. 6323, p.63. Same idea repeated at 1898 Premiers' Conference, cit.sup.
MacGregor normally did not allow natives in a threatening mood to get within effective spear range; injury to any of his party would, he believed, deal a serious blow to government prestige.\(^{10}\)

To some degree MacGregor was forced into this attitude by the lack of trained staff and of a local organisation, and particularly by his conception of his responsibility for his officers.\(^{11}\) Before placing officers in an area he undertook to secure their safety; and this responsibility he maintained. In May 1890 he was already able to report that law and order had been sufficiently established over large areas of the coast for his personal control to be relaxed and delegated to subordinate officers.\(^{12}\) Thus the Resident Magistrates — in practice one man governments in their Divisions — gradually assumed responsibility.\(^{13}\)


10) e.g. a close analysis of his report on the Ancell murder case reveals this — Report 1888-9, p.14. The same in the Merani affair of 1889: MacGregor to Norman, No.42, 7.10.1889 — Cmd. 6323, p.57.

11) Romilly had bitterly complained of the Colonial Office's unconcern about the fate of their officers under the protectorate — Letters..., p.307: 1.6.1888.

12) MacGregor to Norman, No.74, 20.5.1890, Encl. Cmd. 6323, p.142. The Armed Constabulary complemented this delegation. Definite instructions were issued by MacGregor to his officers that they were not to engage in 'serious encounters', but were to leave them to him. Knutsford implored him privately not to take such constant personal risks — see Sir. W. MacGregor, British New Guinea — Administration, R.C.I. Proc., 1894-5, pp.222, 229. Latter page contains statement by Knutsford.

The actual process of pacification had to come first, however. During 1889 MacGregor evolved techniques which paved the way for delegation to both Magistrates and natives. Direct participation showed him which new administrative institutions were essential to sustain and extend law and order.

In November 1888 MacGregor determined to make an example of the murder of Capt. Ancell in Chada Bay. This, he concluded, had been 'a deliberately planned murder' by the natives, involving (he estimated) about 10,000 people in villages between Wagawaga (Milne Bay) and Taupota (north of Chada Bay). Two influential native leaders, Yacobo of Milne Bay and Komodoa of Bentley Bay, were enlisted on the government's side, and MacGregor tried to isolate the village primarily culpable. He insisted that these people demonstrate their friendship towards the government by assisting in the capture of the individuals responsible - he was anxious to impress personal responsibility and to avoid mass sanctions.

A serious handicap at this time was the lack of a disciplined armed force: a party of miners had to be made special constables in Samarai, and almost immediately they exceeded their functions by burning down a large village.

In Milne Bay the people of Abioma (Ahioma) were forced to surrender murderers by the taking of hostages, a tactic MacGregor used on a number of occasions. When all the murderers had been secured, MacGregor ran great personal risks
to re-establish the confidence of the natives in the government; he walked over the range to Chads Bay accompanied by only one other European. Meetings were conducted at all the villages, at which it was announced that the peace must be kept. Influential men were selected from these villages to be taken to Samarai to witness the trial. Eventually four natives were publicly executed, one at Samarai, one at Milne Bay and two at Chads Bay.

MacGregor defended these severe actions on the ground that murders were 'notoriously frequent' in the Eastern Division, and that only 'rigid justice' would prove a deterrent. He was later gratified at the co-operative attitude of the 'Awaiama tribes' which he had punished, reporting them 'well disposed, hospitable to strangers, honest in their dealings with white men, and peaceful towards their neighbours'. This made possible the establishment of the Anglican mission, in an area remote from government control based on Samarai.

Similarly, in the case of the Cloudy Bay murders of


15) Brit. P.P. 1892, lv, Cmd. 6563-21, p.20. MacGregor reported to the 1898 Premiers' Conference, cit.sup., that death sentences were later almost invariably commuted. No native was executed after 1893.

16) Mission established by Rev.A. Maclaren: MacGregor to Norman, No.102, 16.9.1890(Cmd.6323); Intro. to J.H.P. Murray, op. cit. p.27.
September 1889 MacGregor went to great pains to enlist the aid of neighbouring peoples, and especially of influential men (for example, Ino of Domara). Ino was eventually responsible for seizing and handing over the murderers, for whom presents were made. At the same time MacGregor had been forced to open fire on a threatening group of Merani; this provoked his comment criticised, by implication, by Dr. Mair. When he later discovered the number of natives killed, however, MacGregor was overcome with remorse. 'I am perfectly well aware that I could not be relieved of responsibility in respect of it, by pleading honest and virtuous intentions...'

At the same time he had no doubt that he had had no alternative in the circumstances.

This all fitted into the pattern of building up and supporting local authorities, European and native.

The effort had to be concentrated in the east because of the number of miners and traders working there. When the natives on Misima became restive in 1890, as the gold yields declined and the miners thinned out, MacGregor anticipated trouble by sending R.M. Moreton with a strong force to patrol, in order to make the power of the government quite apparent. 'In this way it is believed that Mr. Moreton's

17) MacGregor to Norman, No.42, 7.10.1889, Cmd. 6323, p.58; Mair, op.cit., pp.24-5.
hands will be so strengthened that his position will be
more respected in future'. 19

The basic difficulty that MacGregor faced in these cases
was that of enforcing individual responsibility amongst
people who lacked leaders sufficiently powerful either to be
held responsible themselves, or to be able to assist in many
instances in securing those actually responsible. This led
to tedious investigation and re-visiting. 20 By impressing
government sanctions and deterents on influential natives
MacGregor sought to avoid this, for despite his own pro-
digious energy, he lacked staff, finance and transport to
re-visit areas as his obligations expanded. 21

Where a relatively strong leader existed, however, Mac-
Gregor's attitude, like Romilly's, tended to be ambivalent.
Even in 1889, as a result of pacification, MacGregor was
boosting the status of native leaders beyond traditional
limits: an example is Yacobo of Milne Bay, where the

19) MacGregor to Norman, No.102, 16.9.1889, Cmd. 6323, p.196: the beginning of planned patrolling. The miners them-
selves he liked as 'respectable, honest hard-working men' -
MacGregor to Norman, No.1. 8.7.1889, Cmd. 6323, p.2.

20) Three separate visits were paid to the Orangerie Bay area
in 1891 in order to capture the actual murderers of a
native - Report 1890-1, pp.22-5.

21) The idea of the public trial was continued. In Jan.1891
all the principal men of Mugula were brought to witness
the trial of an Orangerie Bay native for the murder of a
European - ibid. Note his insistence on individual res-
ponsibility, at great personal risk, in the Kiekbusch-
Nielson case, when he persuaded the suspects to accompany
him, alone and unarmed; the leading natives were patiently
re-assured - MacGregor to Norman, No.102, 16.9.1890, Cmd.
pp. 200-1.
traditional residential pattern was the hamlet and where the parish was little bigger. 22

His policy in the Aroma area, however, was different. When there were rumours, in July 1889, of Aroma hostility to the government, MacGregor was troubled, because they comprised about four thousand people apparently forming one community, they were notorious for independence of character, and they were led by Koapena, 'perhaps the most influential chief in British New Guinea'. 23 MacGregor's task was to win Koapena's support without making it appear that the government was dependent on it. He felt a prime responsibility towards the mission station at Kerepunu; Koapena had given the mission some assistance, but 'considerable difficulties' had been encountered. MacGregor attributed this to the size and cohesion of the community:

Wherever a Papuan community is large and powerful it is insolent, and Aroma has, in proportion to its great power in numbers, tried the patience and the courage of those good men and women...

MacGregor's policy was to visit Aroma and land without a large force, to show that he was not intimidated: he lunched with Koapena and his family, and invited Koapena's son to spend six months with him. Although convinced of the value

22) On social conditions in the area, see Ch.III, 1, i. C.G. Seligmann, The Melanesians of British New Guinea, pp.453-4 states 'no chieftainship', even in Wagawaga, probably the most coherent Bay community.
24) Ibid.
of tact and patience, MacGregor showed that he was always on his guard.

It should never be forgotten that Aroma, like every other district here, has a deep respect for power and an excellent contempt for the want of it.

The general trend to power rather than patience increased as the frontiers expanded, as delegation to subordinates increased, and particularly as the government had to demand active co-operation of the chiefs. This last often cut across customary rights or practices; in 1893, for example, Koapena forfeited the support of the government when he refused to give up to the village constables relatives wanted for offences.

(ii) The Involuntary Expansion of Control

Even before the Administration could firmly establish influence over the coastal areas it was being drawn inland by the raids of hill people. Those coastal people who had accepted the authority of the Government looked to it for protection; but as MacGregor remarked as early as 1891, giving protection over such a long line taxed his resources to the utmost. Even on the coast there were still places at which the natives wished 'to try their strength against the Government', before submitting to its orders.

25) Ibid., p.5.
27) Report, 1890-1, p.xxviii. He noted in 1895 (loc.cit., p.223) that being drawn inland was his principal difficulty.
It was not simply natives who appealed for protection. The missions also did so, both for themselves and for friendly native groups. In addition, the European miners in particular tended to blunder into dangerous areas and force the government to follow. The miners often took the law into their own hands; and mission teachers caused difficulty by intimidating natives in the name of the government.

These unsought responsibilities beyond the fringes of control upset orderly extension of administration according to the 'oil-stain' technique, which MacGregor described in 1896. This involved working from established centres in a gradually increasing radius, after he himself had made the centres tenable by compelling native submission.

The Mambare murders of 1895-7 are good examples of the over-extension of government lines. A miner named Clark, who was known to be of good character and kindly towards natives, was murdered on the river in August 1895. His companions then took the law into their own hands and destroyed property, burned houses, and killed pigs. MacGregor himself twice ascended the river to make sure of the facts.

28) Rev. Copland King of the Anglican mission appealed for intervention in a fight between the Murawawa and Kwamana peoples (Goodenough Bay) in 1895. The Constabulary Commandant burned all the weapons, and threatened to cut off the water and food supplies until two murderers were given up. He failed to persuade the chief of Paiwa village to place himself under government protection - Report 1895-6, pp.xv.


30) Ibid., p.xxvii. Murray stated (Intro. to L. Lett, Knights Errant of Papua, p.x) that the method derived from the French.
When the co-operation of the natives could not be secured, he ordered six young men to be taken as hostages; in the struggle, several others were shot. This left an uneasy truce. MacGregor was reluctant to depute; but his duty to the miners crossed his obligations to his officers. Eventually John Green was posted as Government Agent at the junction of the Tamata and Mamba rivers. This led to Green's murder in 1897, a disastrous loss to a small service. MacGregor attributed it to Green's devotion to peaceful means of pacification.

Other exploits by miners, notably their penetration to the western end of the Owen Stanleys in 1897, impelled MacGregor to use violent means in order to rescue and protect them. This was a punitive expedition; it could hardly have been anything else, in that it was impracticable for the government to establish its authority permanently. All MacGregor could hope to do was to defeat opposing groups - in this instance the Goromani - and, as he wrote of the Mambare peoples in the same year, 'to completely humiliate

31) Ibid., pp. xv, xvi, 14-15. Copland King apparently considered government action too tentative: 'strong-handed intervention on the part of the Government was necessary'. MacGregor said that he had not concurred with King as to the need for violent action in previous cases - ibid., pp.6, 11.

them in the eyes of the other tribes'. Such hasty and violent action prejudiced later relations; but MacGregor had little time or opportunity to use 'a more tentative approach' (essentially the 'oil-stain').

Summing up in 1898, however, MacGregor saw the converse side of over-extension:

... we have had up to two years ago a long area near the coast line where our authority was established. Then inside that again along the foot of the main range an area in which the people were in their primitive condition. Those were constantly coming down to attack the coast tribes. We have been cutting in amongst these mountain people and we have now brought a large number of them at several points under our authority... each tribe that we get thoroughly in hand contributes to bringing its neighbour under our influence.

He was sanguine that within 'three or four years' all the natives that would be 'worth meddling with' would be under control.

33) Report 1897-8, p.xiv; Report 1896-7, App.H, p.33. It was remarked in 1897 that miners had extended to the N.E. side of Mt. Scratchley - Report 1896-7, p.xii. MacGregor noted in May 1897 that while he was occupied on the Giri river investigating the murder of Green, an officer provided miners with the government launch to ascend the Mambare - Report 1896-7, p.32. MacGregor was in an impossible position, for in view of Australian attitudes towards finance and development he could hardly forbid prospecting areas to miners; it was his responsibility to protect them, according to the colonies - see Vict.P.P. No. 65/1886, and continuity of attitude in 1898 Premiers' Conference, cit.sup.

34) See Legge, op.cit., pp.70-1.

35) 1898 Premiers' Conference, cit.sup., p.18.

36) Ibid. He did not say how this general process was to be halted; but he was in a position where he was trying to re-assure the guaranteeing colonies that their money would not be spent indefinitely on pacification. There was some talk in 1898-9 of New Guinea's being abandoned - see Sir W. MacGregor, British New Guinea, R.C.I. Proc. 1898-9, pp.258-70.
(iii) **Attitudes to Pacification**

Despite recent criticism of MacGregor, contemporary opinion tended to be weighted the other way, claiming the need for rapid pacification to allow opportunities for trade, mining and missionizing. Mission attitudes are a good index. MacGregor was a firm favourite with the L.M.S. As for the Anglicans, it has already been remarked that Copland King wanted even firmer action in his 'sphere'.

The Catholic mission based on Yule Island had the most difficult task, for its narrow coastline forced it inland, amongst the truculent Mekeo, and it had a much greater European staff to protect than the other missions. In 1891 MacGregor took familiar action against the Mekeo: several of the Inawaia were wounded in a government attack, and a number of the Kibori were taken as hostages until a murderer was given up - the latter 'with great reluctance'. Bishop Verjus called at the station to commend MacGregor's actions which, he said, would facilitate mission work. MacGregor noted that the mission made good use of the circumstances to strengthen its influence, where formerly it had been of little account.

Later in the same year the government and mission co-operated

37) King's letter of 11.6.1895 to R.M., Samarai (Report 1895-6, p.11) is particularly illuminating: 'May I... express the wish that the Government will not proceed to the district until it is ready to take decisive action...'


in the re-settlement of several tribes, which strengthened
the influence of both.\textsuperscript{40}

Only in retrospect, apparently, has MacGregor come under
attack by the Catholics, clearly because of the notion of
mission spheres. Dupeyrat claims that the mission defended
the Inawaia against false accusations of murder;\textsuperscript{41} and that
MacGregor considered the missions primarily as a sort of
auxiliary to the police.\textsuperscript{42} Speaking to the Anglican Bishop,
however, MacGregor had said:

\begin{quote}
I have been compelled to shed blood in New Guinea,
to my great sorrow. I shall not rest content till
I can make such reparation as is possible. I want
to plant a Christian teacher wherever such blood
has been shed under my authority.
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{40) Ibid., p.44.}
\textsuperscript{41) A. Dupeyrat, \textit{Papouasie}, p.272.}
\textsuperscript{42) Ibid., p.257.}
\textsuperscript{43) A.K. Chignell, \textit{Twenty-one Years in Papua}, p.114. In
supporting the Catholic case, Dupeyrat (\textit{Papouasie}, p.257
note 2) misinterprets MacGregor's remark (Intro. to
Murray, op.cit., p.27) that the best institutions he left
in Papua were the constabulary and village police, and
the missions. Later Governors held precisely the same
view of the missions' role, and even drew the analogy -
see G. White, \textit{A Pioneer of Papua}, p.43; Murray, op.cit.,
p.9; A.P. Elkin in \textit{Australian Quarterly}, XII, 3, 1940,
p.34. The L.M.S. appreciated MacGregor's policy; see
Lennox, op.cit., pp.150-1. MacGregor himself made his
attitude to the missions' role in relation to administra-
This role was essentially positive rather than pres-
crptive.
Monckton was quite wrong in the assertion that MacGregor
made a \textit{Regulation defining mission spheres of influence}
(op.cit., p.139); he was aware of the dangers of competing
interests, and hoped that spheres would be preserved -
MacGregor to Norman, No.75, 19.5.1890, Encl. 3, Cmd. 6323,
p.149.
This is more in tune with MacGregor's known character than Dupeyrat's interpretation; though of course, like Murray, he appreciated the value of the missions in consolidating government influence. The two were complementary. In particular, the missions influenced native youth. 44

2. The Structure of Local Administration.

(i) The Trend to Direct Rule: The Uses of Traditional Leaders

The need to pacify and consolidate influence in rapidly expanding areas dominated the evolution of local administration. Douglas warned in 1888 that personal government from the centre would have to prevail - largely repeating Musgrave's views of 1886 - and that central authority would have to be impressed through 'a small armed force'. 45 Yet the influence of Gordon's ideas on native administration was initially strong. 46 MacGregor was not only predisposed to govern through and by the natives, if this proved at all practicable, but to some extent he had this thrust upon him. His lack of staff and funds dictated the utmost use of the native people, if not from principle then from sheer

44) Report 1897–8, p.xxxiii. This influence tended to counteract status-seeking through warfare.

45) Report 1888, p.7. This was a repetition of the constabulary idea, on the Fijian model, given in Report 1886, p.6.

He began by looking for chiefs whose authority he could strengthen sufficiently to serve the needs of government; he ended by administering largely through native police at the central and village level. Thus in 1898, as MacGregor himself indicated, his system amounted to thoroughgoing paternalism; that this was the 'most suitable form' for natives at the Papuan level he then entertained 'no manner of doubt'.

But this was not always so. His conceptions show a progression from the hope of indirect administration to the reality of direct administration. In 1890 MacGregor was talking of strengthening the authority of chiefs to that they could accept responsibility towards the government; in 1898 he spoke of the village police as the best substitute that could be created for the tribal chiefs that did not exist.

His staff difficulties alone were formidable. But, although village police after 1892 had to be supervised, village chiefs had to be both supported and supervised. He noted staff difficulties in strengthening the chiefs' expediency.

47) J.A. Miles, Local Administration in British New Guinea and Papua, South Pacific, X, 3, 1959, p.62. An analogy with Lugard in Nigeria is germane; indeed, the same argument might be said to apply to almost any new colonial administration - see Hailey, An African Survey (ed. 1945), pp.527-8. Cf. Legge, op.cit., p.74, categorising the system of administration as paternalist.


authority in 1890. The range of functions a government officer had to perform has already been noted. The oil-stain principle under expansionist pressures meant the steady creation of new Divisions. At first there were Western and Eastern Divisions, with Government Agents at Mekeo and Rigo. In November 1889 a new Central Division took in these two districts. In 1892 the Louisiades were made into a separate South-Eastern Division. There were officers with limited jurisdiction on the goldfields, and in Cloudy Bay in 1889-90 and 1894-5. The gold rush to the Mambare caused Green's appointment as Government Agent there in 1895; and by 1900 Northern and North-Eastern Divisions had been created.

Altogether MacGregor employed 64 officers during the ten years; of these only 38 had magisterial powers; and of those 38, half died or resigned. As for quality rather than numbers, the Catholic Bishop said that after 1894 the Mekeo district was administered by officers who 'had suddenly sprung up from an admirable diversity of careers, from those of cook and bird-stuffer to that of doctor of medicine'. MacGregor in fact had to take practically anyone he could get. It is probable that a police system demanded less tact and patience from officers than administration through

51) Joyce, op.cit., p.88; Report 1899-1900, p.17 (the N.E. Division was established in April 1900).
52) Joyce, op.cit., p.89.
(ii) **The Beginnings and the Fijian Analogy**

(a) The position and functions of chiefs.

Legge has said that both MacGregor and his successor, Le Hunte, applied in British New Guinea the lessons they learned in Fiji. The case of Le Hunte is difficult to justify; but MacGregor certainly began by trying to do so. His attempt to boost the authority of native leaders was a pallid copy of what was done on the executive side in Fiji; what MacGregor attempted on the legislative side was closer to the model.

The early relations between chiefs and appointed native officials are dealt with later in a little detail, in the district studies. It will be necessary here simply to make a few points about the attempted use of 'Government Chiefs'.

MacGregor recognized that this involved, not working through an established institution, but building the institution itself on an insecure foundation. The man who knew the Motu best, Dr. Lawes, had warned of this. To that extent the recognition of chiefs (the term 'recognition' was continued

---

54) Talking of strengthening the chiefs' authority, he said that 'great patience is required in this matter' - Report 1889-90, p.23.

55) J.D. Legge, *Britain in Fiji, 1858-80*, pp.v-vi; he notes that administration there involved a recognition of the worth of native culture in relation to its environment.

56) Ibid., pp.208-10: outlines the indirect system as applied in Fiji; also see Miles, loc.cit., p.62.

57) Miles, ibid., pp.63-4: a reasonably adequate outline. See. Ch. III.
from the protectorate) and the provision of statutory institutions for them were much more closely inter-dependent than in Fiji. When introducing the Ordinance for the Better Regulation of Native Affairs, MacGregor wrote:

... the Papuan elder has never at any period of his life rendered obedience, never acknowledged an established authority, and there are few or none that have been able to rule save on a narrow and precarious tenure. Hence the difficulty of introducing law and of creating small centres of controlling authority is enormous. Too much caution and patience cannot be exercised in making even a tentative commencement.

Leading men were thus 'recognized' as chiefs, but their authority had to be 'created' for them, except in rare instances (for example, the Trobriands and Aroma). This can be illustrated from MacGregor's attempts to set chiefs over districts rather than villages. The best examples are Yakobo and Komodoa in Milne Bay and Bentley Bay respectively, who demonstrated their co-operation during the Ansell case. These men were referred to by the R.M. as 'agents for the Government'; the R.M. realised clearly that their authority derived from government. Yakobo also leaned heavily on the L.M.S. Mission. The R.M., Hely, wanted a native representative, whom he called a Government Agent, in all 'populous districts'. This could be achieved, he felt, by recognizing the 'principal man', or the 'one with most energy and

58) See Ch. I(b), note 52. Report 1891-2, p.86.
determination as government representative. In areas such as the south side of Milne Bay, where he was not well acquainted with the people, he felt that 'a few days residence' would be sufficient for him to pick out a suitable man. Yet this was the same Division in which a later R.M. believed the 'chiefs' to have little influence. There was little that was traditionally based in Hely's approach. The qualities appropriate to the functions which the government desired were already coming to the fore in selection.

The recognition of chiefs went on constantly as government penetrated new areas; in the older areas certain of them seem to have been picked out for special support, and they were given symbols of office and payments. In 1892, for example, in the eastern part of the Central Division F.E. Lawes presented many chiefs in the Tupuseleia and Kapakapa areas with 'batons of office', similar to those given out by Erskine. This was said to have 'strengthened their influence very considerably in their respective districts'. One man, Kwara Melo, was given a baton and a uniform as well. This uniform, to take the description given of the one presented at Wabbarabba in 1892, comprised 'a suit of clothes of the

61) Ibid.
62) Report 1893–4, p.71. As early as 1890 Hely was himself very disappointed in the 'Native Agents'. Neither of them, he said, appeared to have any influence outside his immediate vicinity. MacGregor counselled patience: 'it will be long before the position of any chief is sufficiently strong to make him an authoritative Government Officer' - Report 1889–90, pp.23, 104.
kind given to chiefs who are recognized and singled out for employment, consisting of a jacket and knickerbockers of dungaree..." Clearly the implication was that those men selected and paid £2 a year were intended eventually to exercise supervision over a wide area. In the newly visited villages of the Central Division in 1892 the chiefs were merely presented with hatchets as symbols of their recognition. MacGregor himself indicated that no significance was to be attached to recognition; 'no native so-called chief understood what he might or should do, or had the power to do it, even if he did understand.' There was thus a distinction between 'employment' and 'recognition'. In the first two or three years the 'educational process' for the chiefs was continued, with tours to government headquarters; they were obliged to report regularly if within reasonable range.

Some chiefs, such as those in the Aroma and Mekeo areas, were evident; elsewhere methods of selection seem to have varied with individual officers, though often a general

64) Report 1892-3, p.2.
65) C.D. Stat. Journal, July 1892. Patrolling officers had a form to fill in which required them to list the chiefs of villages visited; because they were looking for a chief, they always found one.
67) Eastern Division - Report 1888-9, pp.15-16; Report 1892-3, p.2. These visits remained mandatory. At Inawi (Mekeo, 20.6.1899) the chief was reprimanded for being the only one not to report at the government station (generally required monthly) - C.D. Stat. Journal.
assembly of villagers was asked to name someone. MacGregor himself found complications in the Eastern Division in 1891; for where strong native leaders were lacking there was scope for outside influence to determine selection. At the village of Nada a non-native named Tetzlaff had just acquired land in the area. MacGregor believed that it was at Tetzlaff's instigation that a native named Sarras was chosen as chief; for Sarras immediately asked that no mission teacher be sent to Nada.

Vis-a-vis the village police, in the years 1892 onwards, the chiefs were in an unsupportable position. They were supposed to stand above the village constables, but they had no legal status or powers. As Miles expressed it, 'it was their function to persuade the people to observe the law as stated in the Native Regulations while it was the duty of the Village Constables to arrest those who broke the law.' The chiefs were bound eventually to appear dispensable.

Moreover, with the proliferation of Native Regulations prescribing many customary practices such as sorcery and the
burying of dead in villages, the chiefs became subject to serious role conflict. This was generally to the advantage of the V.C. As early as July 1892, when the village police system was only embryonic, the constable of Hanuabada, Toua - the first appointed anywhere - arrested Aoudu, Boe Vagi's successor, for assault.\textsuperscript{71} If a V.C. offended, as an official appointee he could be dismissed and replaced; but as a chief was a supposedly influential man whom the government was supporting this could not be done, otherwise the basis of the institution collapsed.\textsuperscript{72} It is hardly surprising that preference was given administration through V.C.s. An excellent example, already mentioned, was the eclipse of Koapena at Aroma, and his virtual replacement, from the government standpoint, by six village constables.\textsuperscript{73}

Miles states that the office of chief and village constable was first combined in the one person in the Mekeo area in 1894.\textsuperscript{74} But in November 1892 when MacGregor was sending the draft of the village constable Regulation to Queensland for approval, he noted that of those appointed on a trial basis two or three (who were both chiefs and


\textsuperscript{72) e.g. note replacement of the V.C. of Kerepunu, and simultaneous appointment of a successor - C.D. Stat. Journal, 26.5.1899.


\textsuperscript{74) Miles, loc.cit., p.64.}
constables) received £2 p.a., as distinct from the two uniforms and £1 p.a. given to the others. This combining of the two offices was a process which rapidly flourished. On a patrol to Lese from Port Moresby in 1898 R.M. Blayney noted that of the twelve chiefs contacted, seven were also village constables. By this time the chiefs who were not also V.C.s were in a decidedly inferior position, though they were still given 'presents' - such as a shirt, a belt, and six fish-hooks. The villagers appeared to be electing village constables as chiefs, and chiefs were putting their sons forward as village constables. Thus, government favour was apparently already assuming importance, if not predominance, as a leadership determinant. Officers began to insist that both chiefs and village constables have orders attended to and Regulations complied with. To them, distinctions disappeared; but of course only the constables had statutory status and statutory powers. The functional gulf between the official appointee and the traditional leaders was sometimes bridged by consultation.

76) C.D. Journal, Port Moresby, January 1898.
77) Ibid., 8.3.1898 (Ereva), 21.5.1899 (Boru).
78) Ibid., 20.12.1897, Port Moresby area: 'Instructed chief and V.C. that they had to see that in such cases (not throwing bodies in the river during a dysentery epidemic) natives assisted... Ordered chief and V.C. to see that lime was made...'
79) e.g. Toua in Port Moresby, 24.10.1899, when a land dispute arose with the government - C.D. Journal 98/99.
The trend to direct rule by European officials was emphasised by the campaign MacGregor launched in 1893 to have his officers study local custom - almost the same policy, and for the same reasons, which Murray justified in the 1920s. MacGregor wrote, significantly:

It has been felt that no man, or body of men, can rule justly and wisely a people with whose customs, usages and inner life they are unacquainted.

Paradoxically, this would seem to represent a concession to the impracticability of governing through chiefs, conceptually analogous to Murray's later insistence on due provision for custom under his administration. In effect, it represented a substitute for the devolution of powers and functions to traditional leaders.

The breakdown of the projected consultative aspect of administration, and the failure of chiefs given judicial responsibilities, reinforced this trend.

Though the general trend was to replace chiefs by village constables, or to combine the two offices, in one or two places where rank existed the position by 1898 was extremely confused: these included the Kiwai and Kiriwina areas, and the

80) Report 1892–3, p.xxiv. My italics. He reported that some officers were not interested - an index to the service - and that changes in personnel (perpetually a major problem) hindered progress. It is remarkable that although Scratchley and Lawes had tried to analyse leadership, MacGregor's officers paid almost no attention to the matter - ibid., App. P – Y, dealing with aspects of native custom.
Mekeo. Monckton had acted in 1897 amongst the Mekeo with his usual savage vigour, and during an outbreak of enteric fever stripped all the chiefs and village constables of their uniforms and gaol ed them for having disobeyed orders. One V.C., who did not lie, was made 'senior village constable for the district with double pay' and a special badge. 81

The Mekeo area did not easily fit into a system of direct administration. The strength of the lopia chiefs was disconcerting. In 1898, Judge Winter called a meeting of the principal chiefs of the area (undefined except that it excluded Maiva and Kivori) and appointed Maino of Veipa to be **principal chief**. Veipa already had a chief who had been appointed a village constable and was stated to be a good man. Winter also appointed several other young men to succeed their fathers as chiefs, giving official sanction to established patrilineal succession. The number and variety of lopia chiefs seems to have led the Administration into creating a chaos of authorities. 82 A trend developed here, as in several other places, for the office of village constable to become hereditary, to the extent that traditional leadership was hereditary.

This discussion of chieftainship has anticipated the establishment of the administrative structure.

82) Report 1897-8, p.74. See Seligmann, op.cit., pp.342-3: Adoption of boys into chiefly families was also common, however - p.344. See Appendix A, 2, on further administration.
(b) The Structure of Native Administration.

In 1889 MacGregor took two major steps to establish a structure which would have supported local authority and provided scope for chiefs to participate in the consultative and judicial work of government. These steps were the formation of the Armed Native Constabulary and the promulgation of an Ordinance for the Better Regulation of Native Affairs.

The Constabulary represented the 'small mobile force' long suggested, and the chronic need for which had been impressed on MacGregor during the Ancell case. In fact MacGregor had sought an allocation of £1,500 for such a force within days of his arrival in the Possession. A major reason for the force was to support co-operative native leaders against intransigent neighbours: he listed thirty-two tribes at enmity in the Rigo area alone. Delays occurred until June, 1890, for MacGregor had hoped to include boats' crew in the force - an indication of financial stringency. Meanwhile he was acutely conscious of the need of his local officers for small corps of trained men.

In August 1890 Sir John Thurston made available from Fiji

84) MacGregor to Norman, No.3, 12.1.1889, ibid.
85) Norman to Knutsford, No.74, (Encl. 20.5.1890), Cmd. 6323, p.142. He had had to rely on the crew previously; but had no illusions about their capabilities: 'outside of blind asylums it would be difficult to find a team to shoot on even terms with such a squad...' - ibid.
a Sergeant and Corporal of Police on loan, together with ten
time-expired Solomon Island labourers on three-year contracts.
This was the nucleus of the Armed Constabulary. The power
given by Sections 23 and 24 to conscript natives into the
Constabulary caused Knutsford some misgivings; but it was not
needed, for after 1893, there were always more recruits than
required. In the long term probably one of the major functions
of the constabulary was the training of village police.
Service in the constabulary helped to break down 'the usual
village polity'; moreover, it spread the use of the lingua
franca which became known as Police Motu, a knowledge of which
in later years became an important criterion for selection in
the village police. Recruits tended to come mainly from the
west; in the South-Eastern Division for some years the force
was self-contained, being recruited and employed locally.

The Ordinance for the Better Regulation of Native Affairs
was originally thought of as much more important; though
unpretentious in appearance the future management of native
affairs depended on it, said MacGregor. This set up a Native

86) Thurston to Knutsford, No.95, 25.8.1890, Cmd.6323, p.186.
87) Encl. Griffith to Norman, 6.10.1890, in Norman to Knutsford,
8.10.1890, No.105, Cmd.6323, p.232. Griffith was happy to
rely on MacGregor's discretion - Joyce, op.cit., p.96.
See L. Lett, Knights Errant of Papua, pp.18-9.
88) Joyce, op.cit., p.96.
89) M. Aurousseau, The Writing of Native Place-Names, South
Pacific, X, 3, 1959, p.49.
Regulation Board and provided for Native Magistrates' Courts, on the Fijian pattern.  

The Native Regulations Board was to frame laws for Papuans in simple terms, 'relating to and taking account of native custom'. In MacGregor's view the great feature of it was that he could, through it, call upon the advice of any person with a special knowledge of native matters. 'These persons will sometimes be natives; they may sometimes by Polynesians; and occasionally they will be Europeans'. This phrasing is significant; it shows the high hopes MacGregor had of associating natives with the legislative and consultative aspects of administration. Although two non-official Europeans were appointed to the original Board, the hope of appointing natives was never fulfilled. It met very infrequently, and according to its Minutes simply rubber-stamped MacGregor's proposals. Murray had it abolished in 1908.

Section 8 provided for Native Magistrates' Courts (with ultimate appeal to Native District Courts); these courts were intended to have native members. Section 8, by stipulating that the magistrate in the lower court 'need not be a

91) MacGregor had experience of the analogous body in Fiji; but officials in Queensland were cautious. Norman wanted to hold up the whole Ordinance pending its formal approval by the Colonial Office, because of 'the novelty of some of its provisions'; but MacGregor dissuaded him by assuring him of the Fiji precedent and by urging the need for haste - Norman to MacGregor, No.64, 9.9.1889; No.72, 23.9.1889, CPI(Col.), Set 5. MacGregor to Norman, No.71, 31.8.1889, CPI(Col.), Set 6. Also, Native Regulations Board Minute Book - CPI(Col.), Set 19.
native’, emphasised the intention that he should be. This 'somewhat anomalous' phrasing, as MacGregor called it, was inserted to allow him to make better use of officers such as George Hunter at Rigo, who could not be entrusted with full magisterial powers. Although MacGregor's intention of making these courts into native courts, in the full sense, is quite clear, he was not sanguine about the immediate appointment of natives. He thought there were 'a few native chiefs' who could gradually be entrusted with judicial functions, so long as the punishments they could impose were confined to narrow limits. 92

In April 1890 MacGregor indicated that the Europeans initially appointed as Native Magistrates would be instructed to train natives. 93 Concurrently the first Native Regulations proscribing stealing, doing bodily harm, and the burying of dead in villages were submitted, and came into force before the end of 1890.

The first court sittings were made into public spectacles, so that the natives could see how the laws were enforced. In the Mekeo area about 2,000 natives attended. 94 MacGregor came to the conclusion, perhaps hastily, that Papuans quickly acquired a good grasp of the judicial process. 95

92) MacGregor to Norman, ibid.
93) MacGregor to Norman, 18.4.1890, Encl. in Norman to Knutsford, No.80, 15.7.1890, Cmd.6323, pp.168-71.
94) Report 1890-1, p.xi.
(c) The Failure of Chiefs as Magistrates

This feeling, together with two visits to the Kiwai area in the west, decided him to try natives as magistrates there. Hely, the R.M., was also enthusiastic. The Kiwai had given evidence of sophistication. When MacGregor first visited them in 1890 he was surprised to be greeted by the chief of Mawatta, Gamia, 'in the uniform of the metropolitan police'. 'As there was no reason to doubt his claim to his Chieftaincy he was recognized accordingly. 96

When Landtman worked in the area in 1912 he found no rank, a conscious desire for social equality, and no vestige of chieftainship, though he acknowledged that there had been great chiefs 'in former times'. 97 In fact, at the time the government first arrived in the 1880s the coastal Kiwai were in the process of a movement westwards to Mabadauan; this threw up several notable leaders. Gamia was recognized as the leader when Milman administered the area under the protectorate. Milman attempted to depose him for 'brutally ill-treating the women', and gave the official staff of authority to 'the other chief', Gabia, whom henceforth he instructed the natives to recognize. 98

96) MacGregor to Norman, No. 57, 25.2.1890, Encl. 2, Cmd. 6323, p. 118.
97) G. Landtman, The Kiwai Papuans of British New Guinea, pp. 167-70. He called Kiwai society 'a nature-born instance of Rousseau's ideal community'.
98) Report 1888, pp. 16-17: 'They all appeared to understand what I had done, and to be content with it'.
MacGregor saw that Gabia was subservient to Gamia, and therefore again recognized the latter, whom he saw to have 'unusual authority'. Milman had suggested the Torres Straits system for the area, and it was patent that the Kiwai were already borrowing Straits institutions. (For the next fifty years the Kiwai continued to anticipate government innovations).

After a further visit, in March 1891, MacGregor decided that the progress made by the Kiwai since his previous visit - in improving their villages and in suppressing disorder - warranted the appointment of Native Magistrates and 'a commencement of a village police'.

R.M. Cameron, then stationed at Mabaduan, appointed Dubu, chief of Tureture, and Gamia to be Native Magistrates. Two native constables were also appointed to be subordinate to each magistrate to 'enforce their authority'. The appointment of these police confused an already confused situation; for in 1893 R.M. Hely complained of the multiplicity of official positions, which he attributed to the carelessness of his predecessors in office, though Kiwai borrowing from the Straits was also a factor.

99) MacGregor to Norman, 25.2.1890, cit. sup. Gabia was made chief of Kadowa, a village about 1 mile east of Mawatta. The two peoples were one.

100) Report 1890-1, p.xv. Even at that date there were large numbers of male absentees from the villages, mostly employed in the Straits. See adverse comments on the villages, Cmd. 6323, p.119.

101) Report 1890-1, p.78.
(These village police were the first to be tried outside Port Moresby. The idea seems to have grown out of the practice of appointing 'special constables' for a specific task – an unsatisfactory makeshift method. In 1891 MacGregor noted that it was worthy of extension, however, because it established 'a fairly sound idea as to the duty of the Government in repressing crime and maintaining order', while the natives so appointed had shown a 'decided aptitude' for police work.\textsuperscript{102})

The failure of the Native Magistrates was profoundly disillusioning. Hely did not get firm evidence of malpractice until August, 1893, when he found that Gamia had been holding natives to ransom for alleged minor offences; Gamia had been doing this for 'two or three years'. Other natives were surprised that the government knew nothing of it. By March 1894, Hely had come to the conclusion that Gamia was 'the biggest rogue in the district' and was looked down upon by his own community. He privately blamed MacGregor's trust in Gamia for all the trouble. It must be remembered that Hely had a slightly different conception of a 'Government Chief' – he wanted 'the strongest man' picked, while MacGregor still sought a traditional leader. In April 1894 he suspended Gamia

\textsuperscript{102} B. Hely's diary (Mitchell), 6.3.1893. He later concluded that the influence of the Straits had 'spoilt' the coastal Kiwai compared with the estuary Kiwai – diary, 30.10.1893. Also Report 1890–1, p.xix.
and recommended his dismissal; in his stead, but as chief only, he appointed Duani, the former V.C., who was said to be feared and respected by the villagers. 103

In the same year the other Magistrate, Dubu, was said to be weak, and was 'severely reprimanded' for allowing a prisoner to escape. 104 Moreover, he was so frightened of 'purri purri' as to be useless as a magistrate. 105 Such a failing was common amongst the village constables, but difficult to overlook in a magistrate. Significantly, in 1894 the Government Agent in the Mekeo area refused to appoint natives as magistrates because, in his view, they would not be impartial. 106 Clearly, MacGregor's local officers thought that selection by traditional criteria was inadequate, and this was taken as proved by the failure in the west. The trend to direct rule through trained native officials was thereby accentuated; amongst the Mekeo the idea developed to maintain order by having several officials to a village, because they were 'an unruly people'. 107

103) Hely's diary, 6.3.1893, 30.8.1893, 17.3.1894. Western Division Stat. Journal 31.12.1892, 13.1.93, 2.4.94. Joyce, op.cit., p.93 note 24 states that Hely was transferred to the west because he had proved 'ineffective' in the east.


107) Ibid. Among the Kiwai at this time there was an average of one chief and two constables to each village, though Iasa had four chiefs and four constables – p.xxx.
MacGregor himself gradually came to conclusions similar to those of most officers about the relative administrative efficiency of the village constables. In 1891 he had made his famous lament that New Guinea did not seem 'to have ever produced a man capable of uniting the inhabitants of two contiguous glens'. The Kiwai experience eroded any immediate prospect of creating a reliable and self-reliant government chieftainship, which depended on the conception that a chief's authority was 'not to be exerted merely to benefit himself and his own immediate relations'. In view of MacGregor's original hopes, his attitudes towards native leaders are not always easy to explain. It would appear that he regarded the lack of chiefs as due to individual inadequacy, rather than as something integral to the social system, and that he came to regard Papuans as non-leaders.

At the same time the trial system of village police was rapidly expanding, especially in the Western and Central Divisions. By mid-1892 MacGregor thought the experiment sufficiently successful to put it on a legal footing.

108) As early as December 1892 R.M. Hely had written to the Government Secretary that the system of 'rural police', properly conducted, was 'the most efficient system yet devised for maintaining law and order' - W.D. Stat. Journal, 31.12.1892, 69/92.


110) Report 1891-2, pp.xx, xxv, 86.
About a score had already been appointed.\textsuperscript{111}

The village constables were given statutory recognition and powers by Native Regulation No.1 of 1892. It was stated at the time that they were designed as a cheap auxiliary to the Constabulary, but in 1894 their wages began to be drawn from the native officials vote instead of the police vote.\textsuperscript{112}

As has been noted, they rapidly became more than mere police assistants to the chief, and in 1895 MacGregor described them as 'of very great importance'.\textsuperscript{113} While the ground was being taken from traditional leadership by government proscription on warfare and by mission discouragement of feasting, the government was in fact training its own substitute, the leadership aspect of which was subordinate to reliability.

It was difficult to co-ordinate the two, because methods of selecting and training village police were to some degree arbitrary: the two main methods were service in the Constabulary or imprisonment. The chiefs, as recognized officials and middle-aged men, were thus generally excluded. In 1895 MacGregor said that of the 80 V.C.s 'not a few' had graduated from prison, while 'a favourite Government measure' was to

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{111} MacGregor to Norman, No.84, 2.11.1892, CPI(Col.), Set 6.
\item \textsuperscript{112} Report 1892-3, p.vi; Report 1893-4, p.46. He said in 1895 that the village police were necessary because it was impossible for the A.N.C. to stop minor thefts in every village - MacGregor, loc.cit. (1894-5), pp.213-4. The cost of maintaining a member of the A.N.C. was about twenty times that of a V.C.
\item \textsuperscript{113} MacGregor, loc.cit. (1894-5), pp.213-4.
\end{itemize}
take men into the Constabulary from a new or hostile tribe — often originally as hostages — and after a little training to send them back as village constables.\(^{114}\) He professed to be sanguine about the implications for the leadership pattern: ‘... they are accepted on their return from prison as leaders and teachers of society under the new order of things;’\(^{115}\) and he made the important indirect admission that the constables were ‘in most cases, when not men who have been in the Armed Constabulary or in the Government service, men of influence in the villages’.\(^{116}\)

In 1898 Sir Hugh Nelson, Premier of Queensland, was given a different account, however, for he reported that ex-prisoners were not appointed if the chief was considered suitable; on the other hand, where ex-prisoners were appointed, they rapidly acquired ‘remarkable influence’. The implication clearly was that forms of traditional authority were relatively insignificant, to the Administration\(^{117}\).

Many of the village constables, even in the early stages, had to work largely unsupervised.\(^{118}\) This applied particularly

\(^{114}\) Ibid., pp.214, 222, 237. Report 1897-8, pp.xxvii-xxviii. By this date gaol was regarded primarily as a training institution, where the prisoners learned Motu and became potential V.C.s — see Report 1894-5, p.28.

\(^{115}\) MacGregor, loc.cit. (1898-9), p.250.


\(^{118}\) C.D. Stat. Journal 4.1.1898: the V.C. of Lese, close to Port Moresby, had not been visited for two years.
in the south-east, for example, where the R.M. reported that the system would be of little use until adequate supervision could be given. The same difficulty existed in the Gulf country, then administered from Port Moresby; in 1896 the first visit to Orokolo in two years showed that the village constables had been totally inactive.\textsuperscript{119} Where population was more concentrated, however, officers found it very useful to have officials who could be made legally responsible for law and order; some made little distinction between village constables and chiefs, issuing instructions to both, while others set the V.C.s to watch the chiefs.\textsuperscript{120} In 1893 Hely told the constables at Mawatta that they would be held responsible if offences were hushed up – obviously a stratagem to get evidence against Gamia. And at the other end of the Possession it was thought that the appointment of two village constables at Dobu might rouse the chief to his duties; but these duties, which were of course non-statutory, had not been defined beyond the obligation 'to maintain peace and assist the teachers'.\textsuperscript{121}


\textsuperscript{120} Even in 1893 the R.M. Central Division appointed 'village constables or Government chiefs' (my emphasis) at all the principal villages from Bailala to Galoma; they were given similar uniforms and were said to be equally anxious to arrest offenders – Report 1892–3, p.44.

\textsuperscript{121} Ibid., pp.39, 46. MacGregor to Norman, No.50, 5/9/1892, CPI(Col.) Set 6. Here MacGregor recognized that the inhibiting effects of sorcery at Dobu would be serious – see Ch. III, 2.
(d) Influence of the Mission Teachers.

A major complication was the status of the mission teachers in many of the better controlled villages to which constables also were appointed. Struggles for precedence developed, and teachers sometimes used the threat of 'government' to bolster their authority. In the West as early as 1893 the teachers were haranguing the village police for 'breaking the Sabbath; and in the Central Division they regularly interfered with native dancing. Judge Winter ruefully commented that some teachers did not understand the distinction between offences against the law and offences against mission teaching. The Lifu teacher of Mawatta admitted in 1894 that he had threatened Gamia - then still a magistrate - with gaol if he did not do what the mission wanted.

Mission influence in the east was possibly the primary deterrent to the success of the village constable system; in this Division (for example in Milne Bay) mission influence was both early and strong. MacGregor noted that 'less use' was made of the V.C.s here than elsewhere. Hely was very bitter on the subject:

122) Hely's diary, 23.10.1893; Cmd. 3-15, No.292 (1900), p.20. Sabbath-breaking was a persistent source of friction. The official attitude was to encourage natives to observe the Sabbath, but not to compel - Gov.Sec. to R.M. Daru, 30.11.1893, 1735/93 (W.D.).


124) Report 1897-8, p.xxvi. He noted how much depended on individual officers.
I have never known one case where since the in-
stitution of the Government in 1888, Teachers of
the London Missionary Society have not bolstered up
what little power and influence they may have had
by threats of 'Government' — in the East End this,
together with foolish statements and remarks made
to natives by white Missionaries concerning the
relative position of Mission and Government, retarded
the advancement of the District, from our point of view, by six months out of every twelve.

Conclusion.

The change in emphasis in local administration is attested
to by MacGregor's last annual report. No mention is made of
Government Chiefs or of Native Magistrates, not even to
explain or analyse their eclipse. Instead, the village
constables — numbering 202 in 1898 — had become substitutes
for the chiefs and, at least from the government standpoint,
the foci of authority in the villages. The concurrent
emphasis on haste in pacification, forced on MacGregor both
by Australian pressures and by the spreading oil-stain, is
perhaps in itself sufficient explanation. 126

At the same time, the initial search for chiefs in
segmentary societies, and the eventual creation of government
substitutes, followed a familiar pattern, long deprecated
by students of traditional authorities. 127 The process was
recognized by Codrington in Melanesia in 1891; but he

127) Cf. L.S.B. Leakey, Mau Mau and the Kikuyu, p.36; L. Gray
approved. In Papua the extreme segmentation influenced the substitution only of minor police officials at the village level; this remained a permanent bar to any real delegation or devolution.

MacGregor had done precisely what Gordon warned against: in certain areas the ignorance or misconduct of natives in authority had led to their replacement, because the policy of supporting them was slow. At the same time, New Guinea was not Fiji, and Gordon himself paid public tributes to MacGregor's achievements which, in Morell's recent words, were 'little short of miraculous'. It was unfortunate that precedents in method had been set which were to persist almost unchanged for sixty years.

128) R.H. Codrington, *The Melanesians, their Anthropology and Folklore*, p.46: 'A trader or other visitor looks for a chief, and finds such a one as he expects; a very insignificant person in this way comes to be called, and to call himself, the king of his island, and his consideration among his own people is of course enormously enhanced by what white people make of him. The practice moreover of the commanders of ships of war by which local chiefs are held responsible for the conduct of their people, and are treated as if they had considerable power, undoubtedly increases their importance, nor can that result be regretted'.


130) MacGregor, loc.cit. (1894-5), pp.233-4; Morrell, op.cit., p.422.
The period following MacGregor's leaving New Guinea showed how much had depended on his personality and judgment; to a very large extent the years 1888-98 were dominated by his individual beliefs about the conduct of native affairs in relation to overall needs. This ended in early 1898, shortly before he left, with the uproar over the application, by the British New Guinea Syndicate, for 250,000 acres of land. The repercussions of this dispute, together with the federation of the Australian colonies and the long drawn-out transfer of British New Guinea to Australian control, threw the whole question of policy into the melting pot.

As West has remarked, Australia had no experience on which to frame a colonial policy, though Australians were convinced that a policy could be framed distinct from that of the Colonial Office. In this period of constitutional and policy confusion, 'a heavy premium was placed on the personality and abilities of the individuals involved in trying to govern Papua in the absence of formal organisation'.

men in high office were found wanting; standards of administration were debased, and factions flourished.

1) **The Attitude of the Australian Colonies**

The complicated methods of framing policy and approving legislation which were imposed on MacGregor worked well. MacGregor himself won over the Queensland government, especially through Griffith and Nelson, both of whom visited the Possession. If difficulties arose MacGregor had the right to consult the Secretary of State direct, but he never used this right.

The Syndicate affair for the first time in ten years focussed the attention of the other guaranteeing colonies and of the Australian public on policy in New Guinea. It was patent that even the other Premiers had no real conception of the policy MacGregor had followed. The impression grew in Australia that British interests in the Administration were concerned only with promoting native welfare, to the exclusion of commercial interests. The Melbourne Age commented:

> For the pleasure of hearing once a year that a few British officials in New Guinea draw their salaries and endeavour to teach the Papuans the advisability of burying their enemies instead of eating them, the

---

3) MacGregor to Lamington, 4.10.1898, No.38, CPI(Col.), Set 6; also printed Report 1897-8, p.56.
Victorian taxpayers pay £5,000 p.a. 5

MacGregor, on the defensive, was driven to give retrospectively an unjust appraisal of his own policy:

The officers of the Possession have not worked there day and night for the past ten years simply to put down intertribal warfare and to reduce the natives to control. They have been trained to treat natives justly and fairly, and to see that they are so dealt with by others; to fit them for a useful place in developing the resources of the Possession; but above all to prepare the country for development by Europeans. There is not, and there has not been, any other policy.

Joyce sees this statement, complementing Australian attitudes revealed in the Syndicate dispute, as sounding the death knell of the original Proclamation, which made the protection of the natives the principal objective of the government. 7 In view of MacGregor’s record, however, it was certainly intended as something approaching the ‘dual mandate’, and very close to the policy later defined by Murray. 8

It is germane to mention here that since 1890 MacGregor had in fact tried to induce landed settlement; but he wanted

---

5) Melbourne Age, 11.5.1898. At least in Queensland there was still a strong element which appeared to view British New Guinea primarily as a potential source of labour, even in 1898. Commercial interest was re-kindled - see Brisbane Courier, 17.5.1898; MacGregor to Gov. Queensland, 4.10.1898, cit. sup.

6) MacGregor to Lamington, ibid. He pointed out the need, as a preliminary, for adequate pacification and control.


8) West, loc.cit., p.49.
people 'of sufficient means'. 9 This was close to the recommendation later made by Atlee Hunt, when enquiring on behalf of the Federal government; 10 but in the Australian colonies, and particularly in Victoria, it was interpreted as a stratagem to exclude Australian pioneers, and in general to exclude Australian influence. MacGregor bitingly replied that if his despatches and reports had been read they would have shown that 'Australian control has pervaded every corner of the administration'. 11 But this was the seed of the Anglo-
Australian factiousness which was to tear the administrative service asunder.

It had taken a strong, ubiquitous force in MacGregor to maintain firm local control. This disintegrated under his weaker successors, Le Hunte (1899-1903), Robinson (1903-4), and Barton (1904-7). These men seemed to lose sight not only of what they were trying to do but of the proper means by which they might do it. The methods and standards which MacGregor had established depended ultimately on the quality of central control. This failed. Methods which MacGregor had used with some discretion and purpose were used with abandon, so that

9) MacGregor to Lamington, 4.10.1898, cit.sup. MacGregor had published a Handbook of Information for Intending Settlers in B.N.G. (Brisbane, 1892); and the land laws were summarised in the English Geog. Journal, I, 1893, p.282; also see MacGregor, loc.cit. (1894-5), pp.238-9.

10) C.P.P. 43/1905, pp.6-7.

11) Turner (Vic.) to Nelson (Q.), 25.7.1898; Report 1897-8, App. l, pp.56-60. MacGregor said (ibid., p.xliii) that agricultural development had been stopped on 'political con-
siderations'.
government influence was, in places like the Cape Nelson area where Monckton was the first R.M., extended and maintained largely by unbridled force.

(ii) Le Hunte, 1899–1903.

The decay of administration began under Sir George Le Hunte who, like MacGregor, had served his apprenticeship under Gordon, but who showed little evidence of this during his term of office in British New Guinea. He was a mild-mannered official who lacked MacGregor's all-embracing drive, physical vigour and psychological command. Monckton, on his own admissions one of the most ruthless officers in the Administration, was cowed by a word of reproof from MacGregor; but he viewed Le Hunte only with a kind of contemptuous affection. Le Hunte was himself acutely conscious of his inadequacy. Venturing inland was physically beyond him. He lamented officially in 1901:

... it makes me feel that it is time someone who can worthily follow Sir William MacGregor on land should undertake this task. To only know something of the waters of the Possession as I do ... is not sufficient. 

Barton wrote later that 'officers who have passed many years in this isolated and unhealthy country seem peculiarly liable to become unreasonable and negligent'; but Le Hunte, who was liked for his own sympathy and integrity, tried to see

12) Monckton, op.cit., pp.99-100, 149, 162.
the same qualities in his subordinates. As Charles Abel concluded, noting Le Hunte's 'boyish enthusiasm' when transferred to South Australia:

... he was too good a man for the country, and never could understand the class of white man there.

Personal weakness, combined with this degree of misjudgement, led to disastrous results. Le Hunte made no attempt personally to undertake pacification (with one or two lamentable exceptions) as MacGregor had done; he delegated this function, but at the same time refused under any circumstances to believe ill of his officers.15

After 1901, moreover, an extraordinary constitutional situation obtained; for the British government transferred the Letters Patent, but the Australian government in effect failed to accept them. The Australian Parliament refused to pass the Papua Act until 1905 - it came into force only in September 1906 - so that nominally New Guinea remained a Crown Colony.

As the celebrated Strachan case emphasised, Australia disclaimed legal responsibility for the Possession's Administration.16

14) Barton to Gov. General, 12.9.1905 (Confidential) - Cpl(Col.), Set 9; Abel to Wardlaw Thompson, 30.5.1903 (L.M.S. Letters).

15) Some of Le Hunte's sag in enthusiasm may be attributable to the fact that he was still hamstrung by the Australian colonies on development matters - see Report 1899-1900, p. xxiv. The 1899 Premiers' Conference took no account of native policy - Le Hunte to Gov. Queensland, No.60, 11.9.1899.

16) West, loc.cit., pp.38-40. In October 1901 Le Hunte returned to New Guinea on his own responsibility, not knowing even which government (if any) would agree to provide the current year's finances: Le Hunte to Gov. Queensland, No.55, 22.10.1901 - CPI(Col.), Set 6. Atlee Hunt gave a good outline of the constitutional position; Goaribari Enquiry (1904), Q. 2116, 2128, 2151–2, pp.90–1. Barton refused to go ahead with important legislation while his constitutional prerogatives remained obscure: Report 1904–5, p.11; Report 1905–6, pp.3–4.
The previous checks, by informed people in Queensland and at the Colonial Office, ceased to exist. Except in extreme cases senior officials acted without review. This forced the missionaries to speak out as administration deteriorated; and it positively encouraged faction fights. Inevitably this deterioration was reflected at all levels of administration.

This declining control can be illustrated, in particular, from two incidents during Le Hunte's tenure of office. It is not accurate to regard these as a mere overzealous application of methods used by MacGregor. MacGregor generally used careful judgment, balancing the advantages and disadvantages of a particular course of action; he kept his officers under strong rein, and in most instances he tried persuasion or bluff, often at great personal risk, to conciliate natives who opposed him and to impress individual responsibility. The contrasting reactions of the missionaries show how different administration later became.17

For example: in Milne Bay in 1899 numbers of miners were panning on the Gibari river. In May an affray took place, in which two miners named Lindon and Gray were involved. The testimony of the natives differed substantially from that of the miners; but it was clear that Lindon had been speared by a native, and that Gray had shot a native. Le Hunte took the native off to trial, while the two Europeans - despite native

testimony of beatings - were not even rebuked. Le Hunte was sanguine:

I have no doubt that the visit to the place and the promptness with which the law was enforced and the case was heard and disposed of, will have had a usefull effect.

The Europeans in the country realized Le Hunte's weakness, and knew that whatever they did would be construed as a reaction to unbearable native provocation. Le Hunte said that all the trouble around the Gibara goldfield had been caused by the thieving propensities of the natives. This attitude encouraged a remarkable follow-up patrol:

Mr. Symons (A.R.M., Samarai) made a trip into the district of the offending natives, accompanied by several of the owners of property that had been stolen. In order the better to arrest culprits, and to try and find stolen goods in the small scattered villages, Mr. Symons divided his party. Some of them who were not under Mr. Symons' eye, were not sufficiently careful about keeping strictly within the law. The result was that exaggerated rumours of natives being wantonly murdered, and so on, were spread abroad. These rumours, when sifted and reduced to distinct charges, and to the evidence that supported them, showed that considering the circumstances, nothing very exceptionnal had taken place.

Le Hunte's unpublished report, however, showed that the intention of the expedition was 'punitive' - the term was used - that four miners in Symons' party had acted quite independently, that houses had been burned and four innocent natives shot. One of those shot was a woman, a second was an

18) Le Hunte to Gov. Queensland, No.32, 23.5.1899 - CP1(Col.), Set 6; Report 1898-9, pp.25-7.
unarmed man who was shot dead on sight, and a third was shot while in leg-irons. 20

Le Hunte first heard of the matter, in Australia, from Charles Abel. Abel had pressed the matter in Samarai, in the face of undiluted hostility from the European community. R.M. Moreton and Winter, the Chief Judicial Officer, rejected his original protests, whereupon Abel accused Moreton and Symons of shielding the guilty miners. Only Abel's threat to reveal everything to The Times brought action from Le Hunte, who held an enquiry. 21

Symons and Moreton were found to have been 'negligent'; but, despite the gravity of what had taken place, both were retained in the service on the same terms. No action was taken against the miners. Le Hunte regarded the affair, from their standpoint, as an insoluble mystery; and with unwitting irony he commented that -

The intricacies of the criminal laws of a civilised Power are probably beyond their (the natives')


21) C.W. Abel to Thompson, 23.11.1901; H.M. Dauncey to Thompson, 27.11.1901 - L.M.S. letters. F. Winter told Le Hunte originally that Abel had been misinformed (telegram encl. in No.51, 3.10.1901 - CPl(Col.), set 6). Le Hunte despatch of 20.12.1901, cit.sup., revealed that shortly before, on the same goldfield, a V.C. named Lalai had been savagely beaten by the miners, then tied up and shot. His clothes had been sent in to A.R.M. Symons, who made no enquiry. Le Hunte seemed disposed to dismiss this matter as insoluble.
It is clear that Le Hunte, dependent on the charity of the Australian government, was in a difficult position in dealing firmly even with his own officers, whose actions were interpreted in Australia as necessary for the protection of Europeans. The L.M.S. in particular became alarmed at the turn events were taking. Lawes advised his English headquarters to use its 'great weight and influence' to bring about a change of attitude. Abel wrote direct to the responsible Minister, Deakin, with 'comments and advice'. In view of the rudimentary structure of administration the personal qualities and attitudes of individual officers were clearly of fundamental importance. The repercussions of deteriorating standards were evident at the village level. The widespread use of savage punitive measures to some degree

22) Le Hunte to Gov. Queensland, 20.12.1901, ibid. Moreton was transferred to the less onerous S.E. Division, on the same salary - it should have been £50 p.a. less - while Symons was transferred for a time to Port Moresby. The L.M.S. had sought more severe action: Lawes to Thompson, 16.4.1902. Lawes preached a sermon against Judge Winter's allowing racial attitudes to affect his judgments: see F.W. Walker to Thompson, 22.1.1902; Abel to Thompson, 5.3.1902 - L.M.S. Letters.

23) The rabidly nationalist Bulletin is said to have taken up the case of one of the officers involved in the Milne Bay affair - see Abel to Thompson, 15.9.1902, L.M.S. letters. The Bulletin was consistent in its objection to English influence in the Administration - see issue of 2.11.1922, reviewing Monckton, op.cit.; cf. review of same book, The Times Literary Supplement, 16.12.1920.

24) Lawes to Thompson, 16.4.1902; Abel to Thompson, 27.4.1902, 15.9.02; Deakin to Abel, 7.7.1902 - all included L.M.S. letters.
eliminated the village constable as an agent of local control. The L.M.S. mission threw all its weight behind its native teachers, in effect vis-à-vis the government. This intensified the problems of working through the village constables when stable control was re-imposed under Murray.

Le Hunte's retaliation after the Goaribari murders of Chalmers and Tomkins is another example of the indiscriminate use of force. The largest armed force ever assembled in Papua embarked on an expedition that was, and was intended to be, frankly punitive. Rifles were freely discharged at natives who had been driven into a corner and forced to fight. More than twenty enormous dubus were burned down. No prisoners were taken, and no attempt to investigate individual responsibility was made.

Le Hunte was not well served by his subordinates; but for this he himself must accept a good deal of blame. His appointment of a totally inexperienced officer as R.M. at Daru, C.G. Murray, was indirectly responsible for the Goaribari retaliation, and ultimately also for the Robinson expedition, as Monckton claimed. But Monckton's own appointment was a good example. He was put in charge of the new N.E. Division in 1900, and was thereafter virtually untrammelled.

---

25) See Ch.III, 2, for later developments in eastern Papua.
26) Report 1900-01, pp.xvi-11, 29-31; also Le Hunte to Gov. Queensland, No.23, 8.5.1901 - CPI(Col.), Set 6.
by the supervision of his superiors. Le Hunte connived at
Monckton's suggested policy of 'shoot and loot' amongst the
Doriri; and Judge Winter, as acting Administrator, approved
of a full scale assault on the Dobodura:

The sooner they are made to realize that they cannot
cope with the Government, the sooner will they cease
to be a source of trouble, and a terror to their
weaker neighbours. With respect to the number of
natives shot, the Magistrate probably had to rely on
statements of the native police, who naturally do not
wish to cast discredit on their skill as marksmen.

To a considerable extent, therefore, under Le Hunte
embryonic methods of native administration were reduced to
those of direct pacification. Curiously, there appears from
reports to have been more consultation with chiefs in
Monckton's Division than elsewhere, at a time when both the
office of government chief and the notion of consultation
were falling into disuse. But this is easily explained by
the exigencies of pacification in a new area. Monckton tried
to fix responsibility for resistance and particularly for
future co-operation on apparently prominent men, several of
whom were made both government chief and village constable

28) Ibid., pp.173, 208; Winter to Gov. General, No.80,
6.12.1902 - CP1(Col.), Set 6. Monckton's friend and
colleague, Griffin, who opened the Gulf Division in
1906, described 'his propensity to shoot natives first
and then talk to the survivors afterwards' - H.L.
Griffin added that he thought Monckton the best R.M.
in the country. Atlee Hunt noted in 1905 (C.P.P. 43/
1905, p.9) that officers had been 'imperatively instructed'
not to use fire-arms 'except in self-defence from an
imminent danger'; but it was left to Murray later to
define and enforce this.
of their tribes. At the same time Monckton had little conception of consultation, and he came increasingly to work through the V.C.s, or through the chiefs as V.C.s; although he found many of them unreliable and inefficient. In 1904 he had to dismiss three V.C.s and to hang one for murder, and he commented that this was due largely to the 'general inefficiency of the village constables, coupled... in many instances with actual criminality'.

In fact the number of poor V.C.s was due also to the bold way in which Monckton used them: he adopted a policy of appointing them in areas which had had only minimal control, in an effort, by this means, to accelerate the spread of the 'oil-stain'. This appeared promising; but he was able to sustain it only by the use of 'strong-arm' methods. In 1903 Le Hunte had to remonstrate with him for encouraging his A.N.C. to use their bayonets on the Paiwa. In 1905 he issued two Kosiraga V.C.s with rifles to ensure that they would be given loyal co-operation in capturing a murderer. This put them in a strong position to 'negotiate' with the Kosiraga chief, who surrendered the man.

29) Monckton, op.cit., pp.192,274. The notable chief Oiogoba Sara was persuaded to enlist one of his sons in the constabulary, and another was subsequently made V.C. — Cape Nelson Journals, Nov.1902, Sept.1905, CPL, Set 35.
31) N.E. Division Report No.99, 11.3.1903 and enclosures (Cape Nelson).
The issuing of arms to village constables was symptomatic of an increasing reliance on them, not as representatives of their peoples but as native agents of an Administration increasingly dedicated to 'direct' methods. MacGregor had insisted that village constables not be armed; and as a further measure of control in his time the keys to handcuffs were withheld. But as early as 1899 at least six village constables were found to have guns, within a short distance of Port Moresby.

(iii) Robinson and Barton, 1903-07.

When Le Hunte was appointed Governor of South Australia in June 1903, he was succeeded as acting Administrator by Judge Robinson, a young man who had been only a short time in the country and knew nothing of native administration. He determined to clean up the Goaribari affair, as Le Hunte had promised, but not done, by securing the murderers and recovering the remains of the bodies. In March 1904 natives were inveigled on board the government steamer at Goaribari, and an attempt was made to detain some of them as hostages. Fighting broke out, in which everyone but the Constabulary Commandant lost his head. Robinson himself fired indiscrimi-

33) MacGregor, loc.cit. (1894-5), p.214; Report 1895-6, p.56. Of course the object of this was to scale down risks of extortion.

34) C.D. Station Journal, Port Moresby, 24.5.1899. At the same time in the same area chiefs were being urged to go out and make arrests, a function statutorily confined to V.C.s
The L.M.S., even before the Goaribari affair, claimed to have discerned a 'very marked' change in the government's attitude towards the natives. Abel said of Robinson, in an uncomplimentary sense: 'He has initiated a new order of things'. He warned Atlee Hunt of it on the very day, 4th February, 1904, when Robinson's expedition to Goaribari was assembling at Daru. Hunt acknowledged that he had had similar reports from other quarters, and that consequently the Prime Minister was determined to appoint a Lieutenant-Governor as soon as possible. On an expedition to the Yoda goldfield in July 1903 Robinson had given the police virtual carte blanche 'to shoot armed scouts when they encountered them', 'with a consequence that a number of natives lost their lives'. He was clearly under the influence of Monckton on this occasion.

When the Goaribari affray became public, Abel, who had been in Australia, raised an outcry which went a good way towards forcing a Royal Commission. Robinson was replaced by Capt. Barton, his subordinate, who had formerly been R.M. of

35) Robinson to Gov. General, No.15, 23.3.1904 - CP1(Col.), Set 6. One of the objects of taking hostages was, ironically, to train V.C.s, on the pattern established by MacGregor.

36) Report 1903-4, p.8; Abel to Atlee Hunt, 4.2.1904, Hunt to Abel, 10.2.1904 - Atlee Hunt Papers. Abel was quite wrong in his claim that this was the first occasion on which the police had been provided with bayonets - see note 31, above.

37) Robinson to Gov. General, No.31, 10.8.1903 - CP1(Col.), Set 6. (The date of this despatch is given as 31.8.1903 in Report 1903-4, p.7).
the Central Division. Robinson's suicide put Barton in an invidious position. In the furore which followed discipline collapsed almost entirely, and to some degree every officer became his own master. This was particularly serious in view of Australia's continuing failure to accept legal responsibility for administration, and in view of the entire lack of a definite policy beyond pacification, as Hunt claimed in 1905.

Atlee Hunt himself maintained an unorthodox form of central control through his extraordinary correspondence with both officials and non-officials; of the latter the L.M.S. missionaries were probably most useful. The L.M.S. attitude was curiously ambivalent: on the one side they stood for a very pro-native policy which would prevent any form of maltreatment; on the other, they were determined to stamp out 'baneful' customs. In the 1890s MacGregor, who shared something of this view, suggested that they proscribe bride-price; Chalmers set out to destroy the Moguru initiation ceremonies in the Gulf, while Lawes attacked 'heathen dancing' in Port Moresby. By the end of the century, however, the idea was growing amongst the missionaries that a more positive native policy was needed by the Administration; this derived from the


40) MacGregor to Thompson, 16.7.1897; Chalmers to Thompson, 31.5.1893; Lawes to Thompson, 1.8.1893 - L.M.S. letters.
'native industries' approach which the mission, led by Abel and Walker, was itself introducing (though to Lawes' disgust).41

Pryce Jones wrote from Iokea (Gulf) in 1901 that the natives were becoming very lazy, because they were not being asked to do anything to better their own social condition:

I personally should hail the more active interference of the government in native affairs as tending to the higher development of the tribes, if left alone as they are at present they will degenerate by the very contact of civilisation, for the sun ever is fatal to moribund organisms.

The L.M.S. therefore welcomed the appointment of Barton as a 'just fair man in all native affairs', who would not tolerate the abuses of the previous years.43 He quickly alienated the mission, however, by approving customs to which the mission had long been opposed.

Barton could ill afford to lose the support of the very group which might have been expected to support him; though he viewed the revival of custom as an opportunity for the Administration to win the confidence of the natives and to gather large numbers of them (including traditional enemies) together.44

41) See Abel's evidence to the 1906 Royal Commission (Report, p.xliv) recommending compulsory labour by natives on government plantations.
42) Jones to Thompson, 6.12.1901 - L.M.S. Letters. The controversy over mission plantations eventually led to the Kwato breakaway - see Ch.III, 2.
43) Lawes to Thompson, 21.5.1904 - L.M.S. Letters.
44) Barton to Gov. General, No.30, 4.7.1904 - CPI(Col.), Set 6.
The policy, however, was too out of touch with general European opinion. The 'direct' officials came to regard him as impractically humane. Because of the policy and constitutional vacuum in Australia the only policy he could have forwarded would have been one that had strong local support. Barton largely ended by marking time. It is not surprising that a missionary, Saville of Millport Barbour, should have described him in 1906 as 'a useless figurehead'.

Barton, then, came to see the major obstacle in the way of a progressive native policy as inefficient or corrupt staff, and he made efforts to remove them, beginning with Musgrave, the Government Secretary. Within six months of taking office he complained that 'there is not a single old man in the Service on whom I can confidently rely'.

Both Atlee Hunt and the Royal Commission of 1906 agreed that the administrative service needed drastic overhaul. The Commission commented that, despite the 'strong leaven of conscientious and capable officers', there was no escaping the

45) Turner to Thompson (L.M.S.), 1.8.1904; Lawes to Atlee Hunt, 11.8.1905. Monckton, op.cit., pp.208-9 - though Monckton generally supported him before the Royal Commission. Barton had some supporters, however - see H.W. Champion in *South Pacific*, VIII, 2, 1955, p.44.


47) Barton to Atlee Hunt, 1.11.1904, 7.2.1905, 7.1.1905 - Hunt Papers. On the Richmond case, which began the active phase of dissension, see C.P.P. 72/1906 (p.4: 'No justification' for Richmond's charges), and West, ibid.
conclusion that in the past Papua had, 'at times, been regarded as a convenient place in which to lose certain men who were not wanted elsewhere'.

The importance of this issue can hardly be exaggerated; for senior officials, particularly after the Richmond case, devoted more attention to bickering than to the proper business of administration. Resulting dissension continued until World War I.

In shaping future policy Barton felt himself hamstrung by the lack of enabling authority; but the Royal Commission hearings and report showed that his ideas were in any case quite out of accord with those held in Australia and forcibly expressed in Papua by Judge Murray. Barton, like MacGregor, feared for the future effects on administration of throwing the possession open to large numbers of wandering miners and of accelerating the acquisition of land from the natives.

Both the Commission and the future Governor, Judge Murray,


49) West, loc.cit. (1957), pp.47-8; see L. Lett, Sir Hubert Murray of Papua, pp.208-10; Bensted, loc.cit., pp.704-6. Exactly half of the Report of the 1906 Royal Commission was devoted to 'Administration - In Relation to Individuals' (pp.lxv-xxxiv), and the other half (pp.vii-lxv) to all other aspects of administration - an indication of the importance attached to sorting out accusations and jealousies. (Objects of the Commission in C.P.P. 61/1906, pp.2-3).

50) See Barton to Hunt, 1.11.1904 - Hunt Papers; Barton to Gov. General, 29.8.1905 (Confidential), CP1(Col.), Set 9; R.C. Report, p.123.

51) Barton to Gov. General, No.66, 5.9.1905 - CP1(Col.), Set 6; R.C. Report, pp.86, 114, 128.
were wholly out of sympathy with this view. Their primary emphasis rested on the need to promote settlement and development by Europeans. It was in tune with the ideas of the day that this was seen as complementary to native administration, and in itself a basic means of consolidating civilized influence; for making the natives work was seen as the only way to save them from debilitating indolence.

With such an emphasis, it is hardly surprising that relatively little attention was paid to an examination and re-definition of methods of native administration. The Royal Commission hearings devoted exactly 12 questions, out of a total of 3,275, to the functions of village constables. Barton was asked nothing on the subject. It is not surprising that the Commission's recommendations on native administration were less than profound; but they largely foreshadow opinion and policy in Papua up to 1918.

The Armed Native Constabulary was commended, but its numbers were said to be inadequate (that is, principally to afford protection to intending settlers). Papua was said to be held more by the personal influence of a few white officials than by the 'totally inadequate force' at their command. The Commission recommended a system of planned patrolling.52

On the village constables, the Commission reported that the system was the best available, in view of the fact that

52) R.C. Report, pp.xl-xli; cf. Ch. II.
the chiefs exercised no real authority. The only constructive proposal made during the hearings on the subject came from Robert Hunter, who suggested that four principal men of each village - in effect, a small council - should be held responsible for its good conduct and cleanliness. In his view, the appointing of village constables had 'demeaned' the men of influence, while appointing an influential man as village constable only promoted jealousy.  

By implication, however, the Commission advocated unrelieved paternalism: the traditionally influential men, per se, had no place in their proposals. To take one example, the Commission proposed a system of native taxation; but a difficulty arose in making natives responsible for its collection. The existing chiefs, it said, were useless. This might be got over by creating new chiefs; but this suggestion was again quashed because of the lurking possibilities of extortion. It was finally recommended that each native be made individually responsible directly to the Resident Magistrate.  

Reports of blackmail and extortion by the village constables also worried the Commission; and clearly it supported the system only for the want of something more 'reliable'. In order to control abuses, it recommended that more care be used in the appointment of village constables, that their

53) Ibid., pp. xli, 11 (Q. 292-7).  
54) Ibid., p.xlv.
orders be more explicit, and that they be supervised more closely. It was pointed out, quite accurately, by a settler named Buchanan, that in the west, for example, already village constables were often not visited for twelve months at a time; and that in view of their low wages their temptation to blackmail and extortion was great. 55

The Commission recognized this, and further recommended that their pay be raised, particularly in view of the extra duties that would devolve on them if settlement went ahead. (The district studies show that this was not done). This acknowledged a trend, already developing, towards making the village constable the executive agent of government; indeed, in that the V.C. was bound to see to the enforcement of Native Regulations which, for example, forced villagers to maintain roads, he was indirectly made responsible for all work demanded by the Regulations. 56

The Commission reflected current opinion. In view of the poor quality of the service and the tact and patience needed in dealing with native leaders, it is not surprising that the tendency to work solely through the village constables accelerated during this period. There were 202 village constables in 1898, 356 in 1905, and 401 in 1907. 57

56) Ibid., p.xlvi. The V.C.s were also unable to take outside employment.
57) Report 1904-5, p.19; Report 1906-7, p.23 (this excludes any increase in the Northern District, not received).
Concomitantly, the number of paid government chiefs declined rapidly. By 1904 there were only 30, all in the Western Division; and in that year the R.M. asked that they be paid off, as they received £2 p.a. and were often, in his view, simply useless encumbrances: 'the expense of their keep can be more profitably used in the payment of village constables.' After 1906 paid chiefs were dispensed with.

The changed status of the village constables was reflected both in changing criteria for their selection and in native attitudes towards the appointment. The trend increased for influential natives to put their sons forward as village constables. At Dalava (eastern Papua) in 1904, for example, the old chief proudly produced the shirt which 'Kovana Mak-la-ga' had given him as government chief many years before, and announced 'Government shirt, Government man'. But he put his son forward as village constable. R.M. Campbell — who, it might be noted, had Polynesian experience — was pleased at this, and accepted him; though he added that the son was a good type and had previously assisted in capturing a deserted carrier. His being the chief's son was not the only or even the most important qualification required.

58) Report 1903-4, p.43.
59) Report 1905-6, p.46.
60) Samarai Station Journal, 9.7.1904.
Criteria other than traditionally influential status or connections became increasingly important; for example, at Upaai in 1903 a village constable was appointed on the recommendation of the Armed Constabulary. Graduation from the Armed Constabulary, and a knowledge of Motu in pidgin form (significantly known as Police Motu) became important criteria for selection. In 1904, at the suggestion of some village constables, a pamphlet was issued containing the Native Regulations in Motu. It was said that one of the objects of this was to make apparent the advantages of education.

That the transition from traditional to administratively useful criteria had its disadvantages can be illustrated from the case of the Wamira (eastern) V.C. in July 1907. The young village constable - for youth also was often a criterion - had failed to arrest an older man on the R.M.'s instructions. The R.M. then sent the smallest member of the Armed Constabulary into the bush to arrest the offender, who subsequently apologised for not going with the V.C., but explained that 'the V.C. was a young man of no standing while he had been a big fighting man in the old days'.

Appointment as village constables by no means always conferred local authority, from the native standpoint, on

61) Ibid., Aug. 1903.
62) Report 1903-4, p.15.
63) Samarai Station Journal, 25.7.1907 (GS.1163/07); N.E. coast.
the appointee. In the more remote areas the village constable might be of no consequence in the village except at the times of government visits; in the more sophisticated areas he might be a front for other interests - for example, the mission - or use his powers for his own ends. Because of the elementary nature of the institution and of the consequent necessity for constant European control, these difficulties persisted as the frontier expanded.

64) Particularly in the east the influence of the mission was very strong. In 1903 at Normanby Is. (Methodist) a mission teacher presented his own nominee to the R.M. for appointment as V.C.; the R.M. commented, 'I prefer to select my own men' (Samarai Stat. Journal, 11.11.1903). At Fyfe Bay (L.M.S. Station) in 1905 the teacher went into business partnership with a murderer whom he had induced the V.C. to release (ibid., Jan. 1905).
CHAPTER II

SIR HUBERT MURRAY'S NATIVE ADMINISTRATION, 1908-40.

Sir Hubert Murray was Lieutenant-Governor of Papua for the remarkable period of thirty-two years. An understanding of his personality and outlook is therefore essential for an appreciation of his administration. A good deal of relevant material has been published in recent years. It is enough to say here that Murray was a humane and scholarly man, deeply versed in the roots of Western, and particularly Classical, civilization. In Papua he spared no effort to bring the natives, as he saw it, closer to his ideals.¹

When Murray arrived in Papua as Chief Judicial Officer in 1904 he knew nothing of native races. This was apparent in his evidence before the 1906 Royal Commission, where he accused Barton of matters which occurred or were promoted during his own administration.² When Murray took office Papua was riding on a crest of commercial hope, and until


World War I Murray largely devoted himself to the encouragement of European enterprise. He believed that the natives would profit from this: indeed, that native progress and development by Europeans were complementary. It has been said that this was close to the 'dual mandate' concept; MacGregor had expressed a very similar idea.

At no stage could Murray's ideas or methods of native administration be described as original. The essentials of his system, the Armed Native Constabulary and the Village Constables, he inherited from MacGregor. His other ideas were common elsewhere. As early as September, 1907 a comprehensive bill providing for native taxation had been framed; but the outcry in Australia was so strong that the federal government could not assent to it; the idea was not forgotten. It accords with Murray's view, expressed at the 1906 Royal Commission:

The natives have been treated extremely well; perhaps too well. I think they have been placed on a pedestal far too long, with absolutely no result.

This was the doctrine of native salvation through enforced labour.


5) R.C. Report, p.85; A.M. Campbell to Atlee Hunt, 15.9.1907; Hunt to Murray, 23.10.08; B.W. Bramell to Hunt, 29.5.1912. Murray also sent a bill providing for compulsory land purchase from natives, but later thought better of it - Murray to Ext. Affairs, No.192, 2.10.1907; No.229, 28.11.07. CP1, Set 6.
A major problem which Murray faced in the period to 1914, which would have made any progressive policy difficult to apply - and which, indeed, hindered pacification - was a critical lack of experienced staff. Senior officers who had been commended by the Royal Commission resigned, and in 1908 only one R.M., Bramell, had more than two years experience of natives. Fortunately, Murray was able to rely on his Government Secretary; but there was dissension and confusion at the head of the Service.  

As settlement expanded, quite serious shortages of labour developed. Murray was committed to supplying adequate labour, and he was subjected to vociferous criticism if it lagged. When the supply was particularly short, in 1911-12, Murray launched a large-scale campaign of pacification, which would open up new recruiting ground; it was initially justified on the ground that plantation labour would rescue

6) H.L. Griffin, An Official in British New Guinea, pp.154-6; Campbell to Hunt, 10.9.1908, 15.9.08, 11.7.08, 13.1.09, 1.4.1911, 7.1.1913. Monckton’s resignation cleared the way for more temperate methods of pacification; but see R.C. Report, p. c1. Campbell had served Thomson well in Tonga - see B. Thomson, Diversions of a Prime Minister, pp. 24,62. The Administrator, S. Smith, in 1912 went so far as to threaten Murray with revelations of alleged administrative brutalities - Smith to Hunt, 3.9.1912.

7) e.g. statements of P. Charpentier (settler), Brisbane Daily Mail, 17.11.1910 - he also criticised the inexperience of R.M.s; public meeting, Port Moresby, Brisbane Daily Mail, 7.7.1911; H. Mahon, M.H.R. (Parliamentary delegation), Sydney Daily Telegraph, 7.7.1911.
the natives from 'racial despair'; and later, on the ground that the prime object of the campaign was really the suppression of barbarous practices, the existence of which was 'a disgrace to an Australian Territory'.

The organization and control of this extension of government influence were possibly Murray's greatest administrative success; for, with one or two notable exceptions, he successfully impressed on his officers that pacification was to be accomplished by patience, and that fire-arms were to be used only as a last resort in self-defence.

MacGregor's original 'bil-stain' technique had developed so far, by 1914, that it was possible to institute a system of linking up the outstations by regular patrolling. This system generally achieved the consolidation of the areas in terms of the suppression of feuding and of attacks on Europeans; but Murray toiled at a furious pace over the Papuan countryside and he expected his officers to do the same. This did not encourage patient follow-up enquiry or consultation; it tended to perpetuate police rule, for it

8) Papua Report, 1911-12, pp.7-8,11; Report, 1912-3, p.7.
9) Handbook, Information for the Guidance of Newly Joined Patrol Officers (Mitchell). These principles, after 1908, were rigorously enforced - see J.H.P. Murray, Papua or British New Guinea, pp.370-1.
was tempting to appoint great numbers of village police
as seldom-visited talismans of control (see 'Western Papua').

It is at least arguable that the effort to pacify and
patrol increasingly large areas of country, after 1912,
was responsible for the failure to introduce more advanced
methods in those coastal areas which were known to be
relatively sophisticated. This emphasis on the expanding
frontier, which waxed in the 1920s and 1930s with the
expeditions of Karius, Champion and Hides, diverted
attention from the need for new administrative methods, and
appears to have been the genesis of the now traditional
attachment to uniform development.

In 1911 MacGregor had suggested, inter alia, a review
of the functions of the Armed Constabulary and of the
Village Constables. Murray himself was not entirely
happy about the system - in 1912 he noted the propensity of
V.C.s to extort from their fellow-villagers - but before
World War I he had no change in mind. The system was
reasonably adequate as a control measure, but it was not
oriented towards development. This became particularly
important after 1918, when legislation was introduced

11) See chs. on Western Papua, Papuan Gulf; note his
comments on the Kiwai's organizing a strike in the

12) Sydney Morning Herald, 17.6.1911; advice for a Federal
Parliamentary delegation.

13) Murray, op. cit. (1912), p.244.
providing for Native Plantations and a Native Tax: compulsion was ultimately always necessary for 'a people at so low a stage of evolution', but Papuan concurrence made progress more rapid.\(^{14}\)

Murray believed that the way to secure this concurrence was to give his officers a better knowledge of anthropology. Paternalism was thus not infringed: there was no suggestion of delegation to natives. Murray believed that his Administration was being 'true to the spirit' of indirect rule by taking cognizance of native customs.\(^{15}\) Murray had long proclaimed his respect for custom; but he did not believe that it would or should stand in the way of Western civilization - in effect, he looked forward to cultural assimilation, leading eventually to administrative integration.


\(^{15}\) Murray, ibid., p.106. He quoted as 'an extreme instance of the indirect method' the Administration's inducing natives to be vaccinated by representing the mark on the arm as a symbol of government sorcery. He never understood indirect rule, and did not recognize that, institutionally, its essentials could be applied in non-chiefly societies - West, Aust. Territories, loc. cit., p.15; Mair, op. cit., pp.44-5. Papua was among the first colonies to appoint a Government Anthropologist (1920, paid out of Native Tax). Murray had thought of employing Malinowski in 1915; but Malinowski proved unamenable to direction ('practical objectives' were required) and completed his research only in the face of Murray's opposition (CP146, 21/866). Murray was prominent in establishing an Anthropology Chair at Sydney Univ. (1925), but withdrew from proposed cadetship recruitment in favour of personal selection in Papua - CPL, V, 7/6/1-6; Murray, Papua of Today, p.227. A.P. Elkin, The Place of Sir Hubert Murray in Native Administration, Aust. Quarterly, XII, 3, 1940. p.30.
For the natives, he believed that the preservation of custom, until they fully accepted Western civilization, was literally vital; for he agreed with Rivers that any severe disturbance of the inter-related elements of native society could cause despair and depopulation. On the other hand, the equal emphasis on European concepts and ideals in the work of administration meant that authority could not be delegated to Papuans until they could use it within the Western context. The result was a policy of extreme gradualism within a framework of extreme paternalism. His Administration, he said, had to be careful not to be led too far and too fast by an excess of devotion to advanced democracy.

16) Murray, op.cit (1925), pp.ix, 244-5; also op.cit. (1912), p.9. Undated letter (1939) to Mrs. Lett - Mitchell A.3142. The policy was generally defined as 'association' (a notion apparently equated with the 'dual mandate') attainable through 'a modified system of direct administration'; but there is no doubt that the ultimate aim was cultural assimilation. Association on the British pattern demanded institutional avenues - see note 43 below; cf. Elkin, loc. cit., pp.25-6; Murray, op.cit. (1912), p.9.


18) H. Murray, Indirect Rule in Papua, (A.A.A.S.), pp.333-5; in Essays presented to Gilbert Murray, pp.165, 171. Cf. his statement in 1920: 'some form of despotism seems to be a necessary stage in human development' - Review of the Aust. Administration, 1907-20, pp.21-2. Murray claimed that the Papuans were content with direct rule (Indirect Rule in Papua, p.333); same sentiment in nationalistic Sydney Bulletin, 5.4.1923.

19) Essays presented to Gilbert Murray, loc. cit.
The real question was, however, how these factors were ever to be resolved if any form of native local government were to appear. It was assumed that indefinite time lay ahead; but Murray doubted whether Papuans were capable of good government or even of industrial advancement. He believed, and publicly stated, that Papuans in general were intellectually inferior to Europeans. In this view he was supported by F.E. Williams, the Government Anthropologist. He therefore dismissed the idea of a Papuan elite: if the natives were to progress at all, they would have to be lifted uniformly to a higher stage of civilization.

Still ... I hope that some day we may be able to hand over petty acts of administration and trivial native cases to Papuans themselves to deal with ... but when that day will come is hard to tell.

Thus, when the simple village police system came under pressure after World War I, Murray's purpose was to persuade the natives that government policy was in their own interests, not to delegate authority to them. A change of policy was indicated by changed conditions in Papua: European and native

20) Report 1919-20, p.104; Report 1937-8, pp.20-1; implied in Papua of Today, p.ix; elaborated in address on native administration, Holland, 1934, typescript pp.36-7, 42: Papuans inferior in 'natural gifts', i.e. sense of justice and responsibility. (Mitchell A.3138, I).

21) F.E. Williams, Native Welfare in Papua, Aust. Rhodes Review, 1934, p.48; Adelaide Advertiser, 14.5.1924 - 'the natives are inferior mentally to whites'.

interests had not proved as compatible as Murray had earlier supposed, and the application of the Navigation Act to the Territory (on which he attacked the Australian government) forced him to look to native agriculture rather than to outside capital. Compulsion remained, but there was a need to enlist native co-operation. There were also external pressures on Murray to modify administrative institutions, from criticism by functionalist anthropologists and from Murray's wide reading in comparative administration. These pressures were generally counter-balanced, however, by the preconceptions described above. Administratively, there was some tentative experimenting but little basic re-thinking.

As for administration elsewhere, Murray was sensitive to comparisons, but he was able to counter them with the argument that the Papuan situation was unique. Specific criticism was different, though it was unfortunate that much of it was informed by an extreme form of functionalism — such as Fortune's violent attack on the sorcery Regulation — which Murray shrugged off as administratively unrealistic.

Yet some of it disputed his claims to be applying the 'spirit

23) Report 1921-2, p.6; Melbourne Age, 14.2.1925.
25) Fortune to Murray, from Dobu, 22.4.1928; Murray to Sec. Terr., 24.5.28. CPI, V, 16/41/3-5. Fortune said that the whole administration was alien; Murray replied that it was the duty of a government to govern. Adequate critical opinion was lacking. Murray's own facility in disarming criticism was a long-term handicap — see Papua of Today, p.266.
of indirect rule' - and in 1925 he felt that his native policy was the 'distinctive part' of his administration so that he was put on the defensive.

The Village Constable system continued. In 1912 Murray acknowledged that service in the Armed Constabulary was the first criterion for selection. In the period 1923-30 Pitt-Rivers attacked the neglect of traditional leaders; V.C.s were forbidden to take extra wives. This, he said, deterred the Administration from appointing real leaders and the leaders from seeking appointment. He also asserted, in effect, that V.C.s, because of the insistence on European concepts and ideals, were bound to be involved in role conflict; and he dismissed the argument that European officers could take account of custom, particularly in the Courts for Native Matters. As will be seen from the district studies, there was a good deal of truth in these

26) Papua of Today, p. viii.
27) Papua or British New Guinea, pp.244-5.
28) G. Pitt-Rivers, Some Problems in Mental Anthropology and the Problem of Civilization, Pres. Address, Sect. F, A.A.A.S., 1923 - Proc., XVI, pp.497-517; Murray to Sec. Terr., 11,7.1924, CPL, V, 16/32/1. Gov. Sec. Instruction of 27.10.1927 (amplifying No. 161) reaped that V.C.s could not take extra wives - a temptation to corruption. There was great confusion among officers on this point - see district studies.
29) Man, XXIX, no.1, 14; XXX, no.11, 152. The Administration continued to be surprised by V.C.s' 'falls from grace', especially in areas on the margin of control - see F.E. Williams, Papuans of the Trans-Fly, pp.272-3. Role Conflict in the long-administered areas was more difficult to discern; though Murray had long recognized that 'a good village constable is of course unpopular' - Papua or B.N.G., p.244.
assertions, intemperate though they were; but Murray denied them.

In 1923 a tentative beginning was made with the appointing of non-statutory councillors in the villages. Murray described the institution as one of 'village councils', but it usually consisted of the appointment of one or two individuals in each village, selected by the people in most instances. The purpose was more effectively to get the co-operation of the natives in their duties under the Regulations. The councillors could assist in mitigating continual compulsion through the courts:

The perpetual round of prosecution and imprisonment is the least attractive feature of our Native Administration. It is probable that this feature may disappear, or at least become very much less prominent, if natives can be brought to realize that the Government is really working in their interests throughout.

Murray never acknowledged that in seeking a form of native local government - in fact, his system amounted to nothing like it - he had been anticipated by the natives themselves (Western Papua) and by the missions (Eastern Papua).

The Government Anthropologist emphasised that the only

30) Papua of Today, p.279.
31) Instruction 124, Circ. 971/A123/25, 4.6.1925.
way in which the councillor system could succeed in winning native support was by incorporating a genuine consultative element:

If you have gained the big man, you have gained the whole village with him.

Williams realized that the prime difficulty lay in the 'direct' administrative tradition which had been built up. Patrols were too rapid and the officers too brusque.

In the very first area in which councillors were appointed, however, (North-Eastern Papua) their principal duty was stated as 'assisting the village constable', and Murray could never erase this conception. He sent out circulars stressing that councillors were not assistant village police but representatives of the people; but in practice he did not consistently rebuke officers who treated councillors as unofficial policemen.

Although officers were instructed to ask for suggestions from councillors, their propagandist function had priority:

Administration will be much easier and will go much more smoothly if we can get the natives in general to see what the most intelligent of them see already, that we are really doing all we can to help them.

33) F.E. Williams to Murray, 27.4.25. CPI, V, 16/42.
34) Ibid.
36) Murray to Gov. Sec., 29.4.1929. CPI, V, 16/42.
37) Ibid.
The natives were probably just as confused about the subtle practical distinctions between the V.C.s and the councillors as were the Administration officers. Traditional status had for long been at a discount; and the natives had learned, at least in coastal areas, to look to appointment as a V.C. as the highest level of favour. The councillors were given no powers, yet they were to be regarded, in theory, as the 'big men' representing their people. It is probable that in some well-patrolled areas government favour and official powers as V.C. had already become the path to recognized leadership.  

Everything depended on the attitudes of Administration officers. In the late 1920s and 1930s there was a strong element which, generally worried at the growing 'indiscipline' in the villages, sought to restore something of traditional authority - the best example is the Trobriands. On the other hand, because of Murray's ideals they found it difficult

38) F.E. Williams, Natives of the Purari Delta, p.110 - but cf. Hanuabada ('Central Papua' below); P. Brown (From Anarchy to Satrapy, unpublished) corroborates this for Chimbu in recent years noting especially the prolongation of leadership under government. Studies are needed like J. Middleton and D. Tait, Tribes Without Rulers (1958) (dealing with African segmentary systems) before an adequate assessment is possible. The natives had to grasp the idea that they were not police and not chiefs. The Orokaiva councillors had to be dissuaded from calling themselves 'chiefs'. R.M. Wurth noted: 'Explained this was not the case, and gave instances of duties, such as trying to find reasons for sickness ...'. Buna P.R. 6/1927-8: 12.11.1927.

39) M. Perham (Native Administration in Nigeria, pp.351-2) pointed out that, as natives under colonial rule had no avenue of protest, the only solution was to raise the standard of officers.
to shape a definite course in this direction; but in the 1930s (in Eastern Papua, for example) there were indications of a groping towards institutions which would allow some measure of local authority. Little real progress was made, but councillors from numbers of parishes came together fairly regularly, and on at least one occasion in Milne Bay a meeting decided, with the Administration's connivance, to back up its resolutions with sanctions. 40

Murray rejected the conception of native courts; before the natives could be given any judicial authority they would have to learn the meanings of law and justice in Western terms. As a form of training, and as a guide to magistrates, the use of councillors as assessors in native cases was begun in 1929. 41 They were originally intended to advise the magistrate, particularly in assessing sentences, on points of custom; but they often added judgments of their own, and in Eastern Papua - apparently with Murray's connivance, for he read every patrol report - official sanction was given to

40) Changes of officers often meant wildly fluctuating policies at district level; but all officers were chary of giving latitude to certain peoples, notably those with embryonic chieftainship and cultist tendencies, such as the Purari and Mekeo. Williams advised Murray in 1931 that in the past the Administration might unfortunately have belittled these 'chiefs'; but he was not greatly concerned, because they had used their authority in their personal interests. He re-assured Murray, diplomatically, that such leaders could be adequately recognized as councillors within the existing system - Williams to Murray, 11.2.1931. CPI, V, 16/36.

41) Report 1929-30, Appendix D.
their sitting independently in customary cases. In this area Murray was toying with the idea of appointing Native Magistrates at the time of his death.\footnote{Wilfred Beaver, a notable pre-1914 R.M., favoured the Torres Straits system, including Native Magistrates – Unexplored New Guinea, p.30.}

With the centralisation of control, however, and the lack of local flexibility, it is doubtful if the appointment of natives as magistrates in the existing Courts would have meant more than replacing white men by brown. There was no conception similar to that of the British Solomons D.O. who, in 1941, welcomed the introduction of native courts on Ysabel.\footnote{See Appendix C, II. Contrary to Murray's belief, his approach (see L.P. Mair, Native Policies in Africa, p.56) was nearly the opposite of the British, rooted in English liberalism and looking to the development of native government sui generis – E. Barker, Ideas and Ideals of the British Empire, pp.155-6. The British Native Authority concept steadily took on a dynamic aspect, though theory often outran paternalist practice (F.D. Lugard, The Dual Mandate, pp.196-7, 217-25; Perham, op.cit. pp.345-60; Hilton Young Commission, Cmd. 5234, 1929, p.78). For practice in comparable social conditions see Hailey, An African Survey (rev. 1956), pp.446-51; J. Mower and S. La Fontaine, Local Government in Kenya, pp.19-24. Cf. Murray, The Machinery of Indirect Rule, p.157 – a static conception.}

Local administration in Papua, therefore, in 1940 was still essentially a village police system. Most of its statutory elements derived from MacGregor and were handed on to the joint Administration after the war. Even more important for the development of native local government, however, was the outlook which was handed on; for current policy is
dominated by the same conceptions: the uniqueness of the Territory's problems; cultural assimilation; education before rather than through institutional delegation; uniform development; the necessity for paternal control from the centre; gradualism.
CHAPTER III

POLICY AND PRACTICE, 1888-1942

The following three sections analyse the techniques of native administration as they were applied in three parts of Papua. Because of social conditions, terrain and local administrative traditions, each district's history has a certain unique unity and continuity. It is therefore best to analyse the application of policy during this period in this way. On the other hand, even to outline the administrative histories and distinct problems of every district would require more space than is available. The districts analysed here represent, therefore, only selected case studies.

Attention is drawn, however, to two further case studies in Appendix A, dealing with this period. Particularly important points from these studies which might be mentioned here include the regular borrowing by the western Kiwai people of more advanced administrative institutions - a fact which shows that needs and aspirations existed which Papuan methods did not fulfil; and the curiously ambivalent attitude of the Administration towards the Mekeo of Central Papua, an attitude which has a good deal in common with that shown in the first of these studies, on the Papuan Gulf.

(i) Social Conditions and Traditional Leadership

Physically, conditions in the coastal parts of the Papuan Gulf, from Cape Blackwood to Cape Possession, are very similar to those in the delta areas further west. Difficulties of communication and means of subsistence are correspondingly similar; sago forms the basis of the native diet, and is the most important item of exchange.¹

The physical conditions, however, have not constituted a barrier to the formation of coherent communities of a size unequalled elsewhere in Papua. From the Purari to Cape Possession these communities were formed around the ravi or eravo (eastern Elema), a kind of sub-clan club-house which was also, in Williams' phrase, 'town-hall, market, cathedral and coffee-palace'.² Amongst the eastern Elema Brown distinguishes three types of socio-political unit: sets of hamlet clusters, each hamlet centred on an eravo; a compact village, consisting of a number of eravos with the family dwellings of each eravo around it; and the dual village settlement, comprising two villages exercising ritual and political collaboration, and immediately


2) F.E. Williams, Natives of the Purari Delta, Papuan Anthropol. Report No.5, p.74.
contiguous to one another - the best example is probably Moveavi, which has a total population of over 2,000.3

Within these communities there existed forms of leadership which were more formalised than in most other parts of Papua. In the Purari, Williams recognised the 'village' as the unit centred around the ravi, with the larger communities being a series of inter-locking villages. Each of these ravi-centred villages had its paidi amua (chief) and two ravi amua (of the right and left sides - secondary chiefs). The term amua denoted an aristocratic class, with patrilineal succession to title. In the old days Williams believed that the paidi amua was implicitly obeyed, and that he settled disputes and exacted penalties or awarded compensation. The functions of the ravi amua were principally ceremonial. There was also a non-hereditary office of iaki amua, or work chief, who was responsible especially for the erection of a ravi. In addition, Williams believed that (traditionally) within the amua class the exercise of influence depended on personality; while the orders that were given usually followed village opinion.4

Amongst the Elema at Orokoalo there appeared to be more flexibility in the system, for although the amua existed, it

---

3) Brown, op.cit., pp.34-5.
4) Williams, op.cit., pp.110-7; cf. J.H. Holmes, In Primitive New Guinea, pp.37-8, a less definite account, where he re-affirms the hereditary principle, but says that all chiefs possessed the qualities of leadership, and that commoners possessing these qualities could establish a chiefly line.
was common for an able man to lead a breakaway group to set up its own eravo. Such authority as the amua possessed depended more on his personality than on his rank. 'Elema society is remarkably democratic.' In one ravi, Avavu, a man named Haio had no hereditary position, i.e. was not an amua, but it was he who roused the people to work. Conversely, several of the leading amua were, in practice, nonentities.  

To the east, Brown emphasises the formerly important role of the informal age-sets and of the more formal age-grades. 'Every man, providing he lived long enough and was not lacking in mental powers, ultimately became a person of standing in the community.' Despite age-grading, there were no clear cut offices in eastern Elema leadership, and a man's personal qualities played a part in determining his status.

Brown also claims that the eastern Elema were conscious of possessing a common culture; for this reason he calls them, from Koaru to Ciapu, one tribe, divided into four sub-tribes. Linking them were ten dispersed clans, which used to come together for the Semese ceremony.

From the point of view of administration, then - and of mission work - these were communities with considerable facility

5) F.E. Williams, Drama of Orokolo, pp. 84-92.
6) Ibid., p.199, footnote 2.
7) Brown, op.cit., p.100.
8) Ibid., pp.115-6.
9) Ibid., pp.24-5, 41-5: Semese was a male spirit.
for relatively large-scale combination; moreover, there was scope within the system for the selection and support of able men as government (or mission) representatives.

(ii) Administrative Influence of the Missions

J.H. Holmes, the pioneer L.M.S. missionary in the Orokolo area, remarked that the Administration of British New Guinea 'wisely left the Gulf and its wild tribes very much to themselves' until some time after he established himself there in 1894. Chalmers had founded the station at Motumotu (Toaripi) in 1887, and from there 'placed South Sea Island teachers and Papuan evangelists in some of the villages along the coast between Cape Possession and Orokolo'.

MacGregor visited the Purari river villages in 1893 and 1894, and had to beat off a serious attack in 1893 by the Koriki, led by Kauri, who impressed MacGregor with his formidable bearing and independence. MacGregor was fully conscious of the difficulties of future control in the area. The dozens of swift-flowing rivers and the difficulties of sailing during the south-east season meant that extension on the oil-stain principle would be prodigal of staff. The physical conditions posed problems for both government and mission. As A.R.M.

10) Holmes, op.cit., p.20. Until the end of the century the L.M.S. had great difficulty in getting missionaries to go to the Gulf - see District Committee Minutes, Abel to Thompson, 12.5.1893 (L.M.S. letters). The lack of control in the Gulf was noted.

11) Holmes, ibid., p.19; Orokolo was reached in 1892 - J. Chalmers, Pioneer Life and Work, p.207.

12) MacGregor to Norman, 3.5.1893, CPI (Col) 6. Chalmers discovered the Purari in 1879.
Keelan remarked in 1920, from his headquarters at Kikori, it was 'almost impossible to go 5 yards in any direction without being waist-deep in water'.

Robinson, after his ill-fated expedition in 1904, paid a tribute to what the missionary Holmes had achieved under these conditions. Lacking government control, Holmes inevitably had to lean on the friendship of the native leaders.

Holmes himself said of the relationship with Kauri, MacGregor's old foe: 'The peculiarity of our friendship was mutual tolerance of one another'. He made use of Kauri's friendship to get in touch with the Evara hill peoples.

Robinson was wrong, however, in thinking that Holmes had been entirely left to his own devices since the time of MacGregor. R.M. Blayney from Port Moresby visited the Purari in 1900 to investigate feuding between Malpua and Koriki; he remarked that it would have been utterly impossible to have secured prisoners without local assistance, but the chief of Malpua proved co-operative and handed over three men.

Control over the whole of the eastern Gulf was nevertheless minimal. Indeed, it was admitted in 1904 that the coast between the mouth of the Purari and Cape Blackwood was still minimal.

13) Report 1920-1, p.27.
15) Report 1901-2, p.xxvii. The Purari were visited from Mekeo in 1902; and the Koriki chiefs met the Central Division R.M. in 1903.
uncontrolled, mainly because of the difficulty of landing there during the south-east season.  

Holmes at that time estimated the population of the Purari to be about 40,000; it was largely on account of this concentrated population that the L.M.S. station had been established at Orokolo. In the same way, Chalmers had previously seen the station at Motumotu as the key to conversion of the Elema (possibly meaning only the eastern Elema) whose numbers he estimated at well over 20,000.

The L.M.S. 'oil-stain', therefore, outdistanced the government, and was a practical and moral embarrassment to it, as well as an embryonic source of contact and control.

(iii) The Power of Combination: Chiefs and V.C.s.

Without a government station in the Gulf, officers from Port Moresby simply had to arrange a compact between chiefs and trust in its being kept. The following is a good example of procedure at the time:

16) Ibid., p.9. Administration was said to be practicable only during the short changeover period between the S.E. and N.W. seasons. The population was described as 'numerous and warlike'. Europeans were said to be interested in the area only as a promising labour recruitment ground in the future. In the map attached to Atlee Hunt's 1905 report (C.P.P. 43/1905), published in August of that year, the uncontrolled area is shown extending west as far as the Bamu.

17) Estimate quoted by Robinson in dispatch No.15, 23.3.04, cit.sup. In 1908 the Administration estimate was down to 20,000 - Report 1908-9, p.18.

18) Chalmers, Life and Work in New Guinea, pp.132-3. The policy of extending instead of consolidating, even in the 1880's, was locally determined: 'The Directors put no limit on extending ...' ibid. p.122.
I spoke to all the natives assembled of His Majesty the King and the Government and of the blessings and security of a peace between Koriki and Iai, which was all eloquently interpreted by Natona in impassioned words and gestures. He spoke with his mouth full of betel-nut but strange to say this did not appear to render him less intelligible to his hearers and possibly it was a source of inspiration ... Finally, after some argument between them as to how the balance stood, I joined the hands of the four chiefs in token of a brotherhood between themselves and the Government and an end of all strife. In the morning in order to make the natives realise that the Government is capable of enforcing its authority when necessary, they were shown an exhibition of rifle fire. 19

At Iai, Robinson chose a village constable on the recommendation of Aklavi, the chief who had accompanied him to the Koriki villages. The appointment of the V.C. was the only feeble insurance the Administration had that peace would be maintained. It was long realized that a further government station was essential in the Gulf, but funds and staff were not available until 1906, when H.L. Griffin arrived at Kerema Bay with fifteen police to establish one. 20 By that time there were five Europeans trading in the new Division for sago and copra, with trading stations manned by native employees dotted along the coast - their protection, and the regulation of their relations with the natives, were added reasons for a government station. 21

One of the first things Griffin had to do was to enquire

20) The date was 12th May. Report 1906-7, pp.14, 50.
21) Ibid., p.51.
into alleged irregularities by L.M.S. native teachers; for, even with Holmes at Urika, Pryce-Jones at Iokea and Bartlett at Orokolo, the L.M.S. had difficulty in maintaining surveillance over its staff. In 1907 the R.M. spoke bluntly of the need for greater control over the teachers, in order to reduce the 'unnecessary friction' between them and the natives.22

In 1907 the principal objects of government in the Gulf were defined as (i) bringing the thickly populated Purari delta under control; and (ii) establishing friendly relations with the Kukukuku, 'a mysterious people inhabiting the country at the back of the eastern side of the Gulf of Papua, who, by their constant raiding, had made themselves the standing terror of the coastal villages'.23

Effective penetration into Kukukuku country in fact had to wait until the years after 1916, when the coast had been controlled. Between 1906 and 1916 the basic demands of pacification, especially in the Purari, as well as the prospects of commercial development and the need for labour, forced the Administration's exiguous resources to be expended

22) H.L. Griffin, An Official in British New Guinea, pp. 119-121; Report 1906-7, pp.50-1; Report 1907-8, p.43. Within months of arriving at Kerema, Griffin was also given the Mekeo area to administer, for the A.R.M. there went on leave - Griffin, op.cit., p.124.

23) Report 1907-8, p.18. The Kukukuku were by no means one people (see Griffin, op.cit., p.126). Murray called the term 'a nickname derisively applied to them by the Motu traders', though he added that the coastal Gulf natives had 'an almost superstitious fear' of the Kukukuku - Papua of Today, p.184.
laterally. Griffin tried to make a beginning inland by appointing a V.C. at Hawai-u, about forty miles up the Vailala; but he was unable to do more.24

Despite the relative influence of the chiefs and the size of the Gulf communities, it is remarkable to what extent, even in the first year of concentrated administration, emphasis was placed on the village constables. Administrative thinking had already driven into a rut. Griffin expected a great deal of the village constables, and he judged them strictly in European terms. Although he was pleased with the number of indictable offences brought before him, he was dissatisfied with the paucity of cases under the Native Regulations, particularly of sorcery. From this he deduced that the V.C.s were in the hands of the sorcerers, and that most of the cases were settled privately in the villages. He came to the conclusion that the Gulf native lacked 'the power of ruling his fellows', and that the village constables showed 'a want of character'.25

The extensive and relatively tight-knit organization amongst the natives, particularly on the Purari, alarmed Murray and the local officials. Murray was worried that the existing 'solidarity' might be extended on the lines of the traditional Koriki confederation in the Purari delta; he felt

that a league of the six big Purari groups, although not probable, was possible. Thus although, like MacGregor, he constantly complained of the lack of chiefs and of the small social units, his attitude was equally ambivalent. Having found natives with at least the potentiality for combination and firm leadership, he reacted defensively. His attitude was that the Purari natives would need to be watched and controlled:

In other parts of Papua the Government has been assisted by diversity of language and by want of combination. In the case of the Purari villages, there is identity of language and considerable power of combination, as shown by the size of the villages ... All require careful handling.

Because of the possibility of this league against the government, said Murray, 'the problem of the Purari is the most difficult one in the administration of native affairs in Papua'.

In view of his distrust of the traditional leaders Murray had no satisfactory answer to conditions in the eastern Gulf. Like MacGregor, he was inclined to insist initially on submission to government and compliance with government law. At this time Murray was increasing penalties for non-compliance with some of the Native Regulations. In the long term, he


27) Ibid.

placed his faith in recruiting for outside labour as a 'civilizing medium'.

To some extent, however, the Administration was forced to rely on the traditional leaders. General opinion in 1907 was that the appointment of V.C.'s had been premature, particularly in the Purari, for many old quarrels lay unresolved, with which a V.C. through his limited official prerogatives was unable to deal. Traditional pressures outweighed government 'loyalties'. R.M. Higginson noted in October 1907 - having dismissed two V.C.'s on the Vailala river, one for lying and one for assault - that it was better to do without a V.C. altogether, than to have a useless one.

One can generally get what one wants through the people themselves, and in many cases the V.C. appears to be the last to hear things.

Some of these people, however, were anxious to have a representative of the government amongst them and in these circumstances a chief, or the son of a chief, was often chosen. Higginson noted that when the old chief of the Kiri villages died, the government brought back his son, who had been working on the Northern goldfields, to succeed him. Higginson appointed him V.C. 'on trial'. Once appointed V.C. however, an influential man was judged solely as a government official.

29) Patrol to Keuru, Lakiki Creek, Oct. 1907. 35/324.
30) Ibid., Kiri villages, Vailala.
(iv) Pacification of the Purari

The Purari presented the most difficult problem with village police. Feuding was still at such a pitch that it was virtually impossible to get a V.C. who would make even a pretence at enforcing the law. It was essential to choose a man with some influence as V.C., but these were the very men who had a vested interest in feuding. Such a man, remarked R.M. Higginson disapprovingly, was principally distinguished by 'fame as a fighting man, a villainous countenance, and the possession of numerous wives'.

Despite the appointment of V.C.s therefore the Purari villages, at the end of 1907, were still not under control. The V.C. of Kaimare had been dismissed for getting old and losing his influence, and his successor, although 'a well-disposed boy', was too frightened to accompany the R.M. to Oikirave. From the Oikirave headmen the R.M. learned that the Kaimare had been stealing sago, a heinous offence under delta conditions. Moreover, feuding was continuing between the Koriki and the Iai, the latter having killed some of the former at a feast to celebrate the conclusion of peace between them. The Iai V.C. admitted this, but claimed that he would be killed himself if he tried to assert his authority.

31) Patrol, Purari, Dec. 1907. 35/324.
32) Ibid. The killing of traditional enemies was the customary rite whereby the young men proceeded to social manhood.
In 1908 violence in the Purari delta reached a peak with the attack by the Oikirave on two Europeans, Charpentier and Buchanan. The attack was led by the V.C., Karara; after dismissing him the R.M. described him as 'a menace and a bar to the settlement' of the delta. 'As the accredited representative of the Government, he took part in all the tribal fighting'. In April the R.M. led a government expedition to Oikirave; it was accompanied, unasked, by 57 Kaimare war canoes, each containing about 18 men. As Murray wrote later of the subduing of the Vaimuru when a supporting party of Oikirave natives fortunately arrived too late:

Fortunately, ... for a party of cannibals on the war-path would prove embarrassing as allies, and yet it would have been difficult to refuse their assistance.

This is precisely what happened in April 1908. Not surprisingly, the Oikirave, concealed on the river banks, fired on the expedition, which was forced to fire back and then to retire. The Kaimare had misinformed the R.M. of the disposition of the Oikirave villages.

On the 25th April, Murray himself arrived on the 'Merrie England', and realized immediately that the apparent flight of a government party would spur the Oikirave to further violence. A return was therefore made with the augmented force; when, by the 30th, the Oikirave had not acceded to demands for the ring-leaders, Murray had their principal ravi.

33) Report 1908-9, p.52.
34) Murray, preface to Williams: Natives of the Purari Delta, p.v.
burned down. At this time Murray had few qualms about such direct action in the delta - he noted that only the 'power' of the government maintained control.

A list of the delta villages and their leaders, prepared in December 1908, shows the names of all the eravo chiefs, and reveals that most of the village constables were chiefs, the remainder being the sons of chiefs. The real method of administration, however, seems to have consisted of the R.M.'s assembling the headmen (presumably the amua) and threatening them with punishment if his injunctions were disregarded. The appointment of a V.C. merely established a tenuous official link with each village, creating a facade of control through native officials.

Meanwhile there were signs that the authority of the head

35) Patrol, R.M. Higginson to Purari, April 1908. 35/235. Higginson noted that the country was so difficult that it was impossible to get captives by pursuit; they had to be induced to submit. On further patrols in August and December 1908, R.M. Bell concentrated on assurances of the peaceful intentions of government; both communal and individual punishment were ignored. A similar account of the April 1908 action is in Murray's diary (Mitchell A3139), 30.4.08; also a substantially similar account appeared in the 'Sydney Morning Herald' of 9.5.1908. The burning of the raví was described in the Annual Report 1907-8, p.33. In February 1909 Murray made a point of personally returning four prisoners to their parents in the ravís; 'Everyone insisted on shaking hands.' Diary, 5.2.1909.


37) Patrol, R.M. Bell to Purari, Dec. 1908. 35/235. Most of the large villages (e.g. Maipua, Iai, each with populations of 1500-2000) had only one V.C.

38) Note the action of Higginson at Iai, July 1908 (35/235); he warned the chief men about stealing, 'and told them any future misbehaviour would be promptly dealt with'. He determined to replace the V.C. because he did not like him.
men - maintained through their control of the eravo and of initiation - might be crumbling. At Orokolo new ways of accumulating wealth made it possible for more men to build eravos (though less imposing ones than of old); while it was noted that the younger men were more inclined to ignore the eravo customs and requests from the elders, and to work off their energies brawling in the village.39

Administration policy at this time was inadequately thought out; action was largely ad hoc and depended on individual officers to a great extent. These generally distrusted the traditional leaders in seeking the rigorous application of the law; but at the same time there was no adequate administrative substitute. The settlement policy complicated matters, for this required the rapid acquisition of pockets of land, and this in turn - for the problems of acquiring land from segmentary societies are notorious - required the assistance particularly of clan and lineage leaders.40 To take an example, R.M. O'Malley bought extensive timber rights from the Akauda people on the upper Vailala in March, 1909, after lengthy discussions with the two chiefs, who paid over trade

39) Two Toaripi eravo leaders complained to the R.M. about the behaviour of the young men. Patrol, R.M. Bell to Orokolo, Oct. 1908, 35/235; also Report 1909-10, p.41.

40) In a dispatch of 28.11.07, 229/07, Murray reviewed the operation of the 1906 Lands Ordinance during 12 months - more than 100,000 acres had been bought from the natives; only in one instance, he claimed, was there any suspicion that land had not been bought from the true owners.
for the rights to all the owners in O'Malley's presence. The principal chief, Haihai, 'appeared to be a man of great authority'. Similar transfers of rights were signed at other villages further up the river; in every case relations were with the chief or chiefs, the V.C.s being referred to only as messengers or minor intermediaries.

A dramatic change in policy came with a new Patrol Officer, H.J. Ryan. This man was one of Murray's particular proteges, prepared to patrol under great hardship with great perseverance, and to enforce the law by invariably 'getting his man'. Unfortunately, men of this stamp were rarely capable also of patient consultation with traditional leaders; there was no policy definition on the matter, and a man of Ryan's autocratic temperament used the most direct methods. On a patrol from Kerema to Cape Possession (eastern Elema) in August 1909, nowhere was a chief consulted. At Moviavi he 'shook the V.C.s up about the state of the village and ordered it to be cleaned', and at Motumotu (Toaripi) he 'called the V.C.s and impressed on them their duty with regard to seeing that the children attended school'.

41) Patrol, R.M. O'Malley to upper Vailala, March 1909; entry of 16.3.09.
42) Ibid., passim. After this acquisition the Akauda quickly made gardens right up to the limit of the timber - clearly to make further encroachment impossible.
43) If Staniforth Smith can be believed, Ryan was a 'roughneck' extraordinary - Smith to Atlee Hunt, 1st Jan. 1914. Hunt letters.
When, in October 1909, Ryan became relieving R.M., he adopted a similar demanding attitude to the west of Kerema, where affairs were even more critical - he was simultaneously, it must be added, acquiring land. In December 1909 he arrested the old crippled chief Bai-i, whom he described as 'the most powerful sorcerer in the Delta'; and at Iai he demanded that five men be brought to him on a charge of 'having used seditious language'.

There is little doubt that the more ambitious V.C.s took advantage of officers like Ryan to boost their status. When Ryan visited the Purari area in 1910, acting on information from V.C. Mama of Kairu he arrested chief Koivi of Oikirave on a charge of wife-murder. This was an excellent way for one village to get rid of a powerful leader in another. One of the persistent faults of the V.C. system generally was the propensity of officials to report only those offences committed in neighbouring villages. The bolder V.C.s also used their position, within the village, to get rid of powerful opponents or rivals. For example, at the same village, Kairu, in September 1910, the same V.C., Mama, and a chief, Kaipa, informed of murders allegedly committed by another villager, Aku, who was the son of the previous chief Kairi, and who was

46) Ibid.
47) Patrol, H.J. Ryan to Purari delta, 2.3.1910.
said to be Mama's brother.\textsuperscript{48}

When R.M. Hennelly went to arrest Aku the men of the village assembled and seemed on the point of offering resistance, while a number of women - Aku had ten wives - set up a wail nearby. It is likely that the accusations against Aku, clearly 'an individual of considerable importance', were primarily a means of removing a rival.\textsuperscript{49}

A major factor in this situation, where the Administration was being used by the natives in quarrels both within and beyond the village, was the chronic lack of experienced staff. There was only one Resident Magistrate of two years standing in the Territory.\textsuperscript{50} Hennelly, the Gulf R.M. in late 1910, had been 'led' by his police while in the North-Eastern Division, according to the Government Secretary.\textsuperscript{51} Nevertheless, Hennelly made some attempt to recognize the authority of the chiefs alongside that of the V.C. and to discuss matters with them. He noted that in Oikirave the V.C. had 'practically the same amount of power and commands the same proportion of respect from the people that the two chiefs obtain'.\textsuperscripts{52}

\textsuperscript{48) Patrol, R.M. Hennelly to Purari, Sept. 1910. 35/235. Quite possibly a classificatory relationship.}
\textsuperscript{49) Report 1911-2, p.68.}
\textsuperscript{50) Gov. Sec. Campbell to Hunt, 13.10.08; Atlee Hunt papers.}
\textsuperscript{51) Campbell to Hunt, 13.10.08.}
\textsuperscript{52) Patrol, R.M. Hennelly to Purari, Sept. 1910.}
tolerant policy, however, did not earn commendation of the kind accorded men like Ryan; the criteria of success were practical results, as the Government Anthropologist Williams ruefully acknowledged in the 1920s. 53

Hennelly's more sympathetic approach was both evident and useful on the land question. He negotiated the sale of L.M.S. land at Urika, from the Maipua and Kairu people, in February 1911, although the natives were becoming increasingly hostile to land alienation because of the crude methods sometimes employed. 54

Beaver, who had briefly succeeded Ryan in the Gulf, emphasised the necessity for tact and patience, and pointedly refuted the conceptions of his predecessor. 55 Another officer, O'Malley, had described the Gulf native as unintelligent, unreliable and lazy; but Beaver stated that he was no worse than all the natives from Samarai to Cape Possession, and he defended the eravo system which taught youths 'to subordinate the individual to the family and the family to the clan'. 56

These were the two extremes in outlook, O'Malley claiming the

53) Report 1909-10, p.14, where Ryan is commended; that is, ends rather than means.

54) The British New Guinea Co. was using the method of 'illegal squatting', sometimes right in the middle of a village without the natives' consent. Patrol, Hennelly to Purari, Jan-Feb. 1911. 35/235.


56) Report 1909-10, pp.51,57; Report 1910-1, p.59. Hennelly also defended Gulf natives as 'more intelligent individuals than they are thought by some employers' and 'men of spirit and independence'. He also tried to analyse the functions of the eravo, and doubted whether its breaking down - then beginning - was desirable. Report 1911-2, p.70-1.
Gulf native to be 'imbued with superstition' and respecting only demonstrations of force, Beaver, more objective, counselling tolerance and a more personal approach. As for the administrative repercussions, the lack of direction or definition from Port Moresby is remarkable; individual officers, as long as they maintained control by humane methods, could follow their own bent. The basic problems of native administration in the area, and notably the use or neglect of traditional authorities and institutions, received scant attention at the policy level.

(v) Three Foci of Village Authority

By mid-1912 the R.M. was able to report that the delta was well under control. It seems to have been taken for granted that there was a direct correlation between the establishment of control and the decline of chieftainship. It was reported that -

The chiefs still rule, but with gradually diminishing powers, and the "Governor", as the Delta folk call every Government officer, has now a comparatively easy task of it on his visits of inspection and patrol.

The extent to which the authority of the chiefs was in fact slipping was obscured by the continued appointment of chiefs' sons as village constables, and by the increasing trend for the larger settlements to break up into smaller units - a process probably facilitated by the eravo system when the

57) Report 1912-3, p.78.
need for large defensive alliances had passed. 58

There were three foci of authority in the coastal villages: the traditional leaders, the village constables, and the L.M.S. teachers. These last seem to have taken advantage of firmer control and protection in order to enhance their temporal authority. On a patrol to the east of Kerema in April 1912 one officer found many complaints against the Samoan teachers. An officer was faced with a dilemma in dealing with L.M.S. teachers, for their influence was generally recognized by government as desirable; if an officer derogated from their status in the village, their influence would suffer correspondingly. On the other hand, if their demands were immoderate or their actions unjust, they had to be restrained or even prosecuted. On the patrol mentioned, P.O. Henry found that at Movlavi the teachers forced children to build fences without pay; at Ma-aru the teacher had failed to pay for a canoe log; and at Silo a teacher had severely beaten a schoolgirl. 59

At the same time the V.C.s were considered unsatisfactory. At Iai in 1912 the V.C. was gaolated for six months, and recommended for dismissal, for a common offence - committing adultery with the wives of absent labourers. The R.M. despaired;

58) Patrol, R.M. Hennelly to Purari, Aug. 1912. 35/326. The sub-clan eravo formed a settlement nucleus.
59) Patrol, P.O. Henry and R.M. Brown, east of Kerema, April 1912. 35/326.
Have come to the conclusion that the only safe way to work the Delta villages is to appoint the V.C.s in each, on the principle of setting a rogue to watch a rogue. The pay allotted to these men is not sufficient in these times to keep them straight and we are continually having to change the personnel of the force. There is no doubt that a great deal of extortion is carried on by the V.C.s, but although complaints are made the parties aggrieved will seldom or ever ... make a definite charge against them for fear of after consequences. I would strongly advocate ... that the appointment of V.C.s be reviewed with the object of improvement of the system.

Hennelly himself suggested a District Police Force, the members of which would be moved around every three to six months. Meanwhile, he began the policy of appointing dual V.C.s at Iai, to replace the man dismissed. The policy met with a brief but crushing comment from the Government Secretary: 'It would take a lot of money'.

Ironically, the pacification of the delta for recruiting, which Murray characterized so confidently as a 'civilizing medium', resulted in a chain reaction which made the consolidation of order difficult. Murray had warned that

60) Ibid., comment on front jacket. There had long been arguments about having local natives in the Constabulary force; this was the policy followed in the S.E. Division. On the one side was the argument that strangers were impartial; on the other, that local natives had indispensable local knowledge. The potentialities of local natives were shown in June 1913, when a European trader complained of a taravatu (taboo) on his trading, at Toaripi. L-Cpl. Jingga, a local native, was sent to investigate, as it was suspected that the V.C. had instigated the taboo - Patrol, R.M. Brown, June 1913. 35/328.

recruiting might succeed differentially - that is, that there might be a rush to the plantations, leaving the miners without labour - without realizing that the same argument might apply to government service.62 This happened: R.M. Hennelly was unable to get recruits.63 Suitable men were generally unavailable as village constables; while the social disruption caused by the departure of the young men opened the way for the adulterer and the opportunist. It was usually agreed that in view of the fact that village constables received only 10/- (senior ones occasionally 30/-) a year, it was 'astonishing' the work some of them did; it was even more remarkable that so many of them did anything at all. Extortion, of course, compensated.64

Facing this tripartite division in village authority it was inevitable that the Administration, despite attempts at consultation by individual officers, should increasingly throw its weight behind its statutory representative, the village constable. This was apparent particularly after 1912, when the Administration began following Murray's announced policy of complete pacification through an intensification of the 'oil-stain' principle. In March 1913 a new Division, called

63) Hennelly patrol, Aug. 1912, cit. sup. He noted specifically that private traders in the same area were offering far better pay.
64) Report 1913-4, p.84. Comments on V.C.s were generally vague, and always reserved: 'they do their work fairly well, everything considered'.
the Delta Division, was created, with its headquarters at Kikori. The Purari became part of the new Division. In the residual Gulf Division this made possible, for example, more active work up the Vailala river and, after 1916, penetration and control of the Kukukuku country.

Until the repercussions of the war halted economic development, however, a good deal of this enhanced activity was directed towards securing land, recruiting labourers, and buying sago for labourers elsewhere. To some degree this operated to prolong negotiation with the chiefs. On a patrol to the Purari area in 1912-3, for example, P.O. Stennett spent much of his time trying to induce chiefs as well as village constables at Maipua, Oikirave and Iai to get recruits and labourers for him.

Thus, despite the general trend to direct methods - which left more time for penetration inland - the Administration remained nonplussed over the surviving influence of the eravo.

65) Report 1913-4, p.7; Gov. Gazette No.5, 11.3.1913. Previously the Lakekamu goldfield had been officially opened on 13.12.09, and a R.M. with 2 A.R.M.s stationed there. The object was primarily to protect the miners and to look after labour conditions. In Jan. 1910 a short patrol was made by A.R.M. Bowden to the so-called Kukukuku of the upper Tiveri river; but this was purely exploratory - Report 1910-1, pp.60-5.

66) Report 1913-4, pp.81-2; Sir H. Murray, Papua of Today, pp. 184-5.

67) Patrol, P.O. Stennett to Purari, Dec. 1912, 2.1.1913; 35/327; also see patrol, R.M. Brown to Orokolo, Dec. 1913, dealing with an unsuccessful attempt to buy land in Orokolo Bay for Papuan Industries Ltd., an industrial offshoot of the L.M.S. 35/329.
chiefs. R.M. Massy-Baker in 1915 announced his philosophy as a judicious mixture of force and persuasion:

It has been my object to inspire a wholesome fear of the Government for evil-doing, and, on the other hand, by kindness and justice, and by an interest in their occupations and village life generally, to show them that the Government has their welfare at heart. It was necessary to use rather severe measures at first.

A few minor examples will show what this amounted to in practice. At Orokolo there had been persistent brawling; the R.M. assembled all the people and addressed them for fifteen minutes, in the hope that it would 'bring these lazy and insolent people to their senses'. To the east, when several European miners complained of the threatening behaviour of the Moviavi people, the R.M. fined 25 natives - on the information of the miners' Head Boys - for using threatening language. In addition, he collected the head men of the 21 Moviavi eravos and addressed them on the need for law and order. Complementing this, the R.M. was also giving 'a few minutes lecture' on the Native Regulations to gatherings of V.C.s as he passed through an area. Massy-Baker realised that the social stage had been reached at which a real effort should be made to retain men who were both more active and more Europeanised, as village constables; but he was not

68) Report 1915-6, p.69.
71) Report 1915-6, p.73.
The removal of some of the very old village constables also requires consideration. Although they have doubtless done valuable work in the past, their influence is on the wane, and this is not to be wondered at, as the conditions now prevailing in their villages are very different to what they were some eight years ago, when they were first appointed. The younger generation are more self-assertive and independent, owing to their contact with Europeans and their wider outlook from having travelled, and they require a somewhat stronger hand and a man who will deal with them without fear or favour. At the same time, it is a matter that will have to be dealt with in a delicate manner, as some of these old men are very proud of their "clothes", and they might easily give their successors a good deal of trouble. A little diplomacy would, however, in most cases lead to a voluntary resignation, I think.

(vi) Extension into Kukukuku Country

In the later years of the war - rather surprisingly in view of the enlistment of one-third of the field-staff - the most significant event was closer contact with the Kukukuku peoples. In March-April 1916 A.R.M. Skelly for the first time visited their villages in the area bounded by the Vailala and Kerema rivers, and the Dohiti river and Nabo range to the north.

As so often in frontier areas, taking a village constable with the patrol proved invaluable. Skelly took V.C. Lohai of

72) Ibid. This situation was still considerably in advance of that in the Delta, where Ryan, patrolling from Kikori, was working on the theory of mass arrests and the imposition of levies to stop feuding - any reliance on V.C.s was minimal - ibid., pp. 84-6.

73) See Murray, op.cit., p.xi.
the upper Vailala, who had accompanied Griffin to the Kukukuku periphery ten years before. Lohai was able to establish friendly relations with a man of influence named Arivi - thus enabling the patrol to surmount peacefully the unpredictable initial contact - and Arivi was induced to promise that he would try to consolidate the scattered Kukukuku settlements into villages.

He was given a shirt and some Turkey red, and also a tomahawk and a knife.

The Kukukuku nevertheless were suspicious; Skelly remarked on their marked proclivity for fainting away at the first sight of a European, and he was unable to persuade any to accompany him to Kerema. One was then taken forcibly, shown the station, given presents and sent back to his people. 74

By 1922 government influence had progressed to the stage at which the Kukukuku had lost their nervousness and tended to be effusive in their welcome of strangers. The R.M. noted that numbers of them were visiting Kerema, and that brisk trading was going on with coastal natives for steel implements. By this time the Administration was coming to the conclusion that the population in the mountains was small and scattered, and its pacification not of such moment as had once been believed. 75

(vii) The Vailala Madness: Causes and Administrative Reactions

At this point the Administration had to contend with one

of its most notable problems - the Vailala Madness, in some respects a model of the 'cargo cult' movements to which Melanesian administrators have by now become inured. In Williams's words, the Madness involved -

on the one hand, a set of preposterous beliefs among its victims - in particular the expectation of an early visit from their deceased relatives - and, on the other hand, collective nervous symptoms of a sometimes grotesque and idiotic nature.

The movement spread from Nomu, at the mouth of the Adele, to Oiapu, and took hold of virtually all the coast villages, together with many of the inland villages, especially up the Vailala river, where it was found 60 miles from the mouth. The ancestors were expected to return - in some places they were expected to be white - and to bring large quantities of cargo in a steamer. Williams recognized 'a strong undercurrent of Christian teachings in the doctrines'. At Maipua the village flag was produced, together with a faded portrait of George V, who was stated to be the younger brother of Jesus. The flagpole and the idea of village flags had apparently been introduced by the L.M.S. mission.

Williams acknowledged that the Madness may have had its genesis some time before 1919, when it first became manifest.

77) Ibid., pp. 3, 14-5, 18-9, 23. Strongly analogous has been the post-1945 Torchbearers' Cult, which also took over an L.M.S. institution. This also infected the eastern Elema and spread to the Manumanu Motu. (Personal research; also information Dr. M. Groves, Mr. H.A. Brown, Miss D. Ryan).
One man believed to have had some of the first psychological disturbances, Evara of Iori on the lower Vailala, claimed to have experienced symptoms (head-he-go-round) after the death of his father many years before. Another imputed originator was Hareha, a V.C. of Vailala East. Although some of the leaders were elderly men, the most remarkable feature of the Madness was the universal contempt for and destruction of the old ceremonies and customs. Williams attributed this aspect of it largely to LM.S. anti-custom influence.79

He also levelled an accusing finger at the demands of plantation and government labour, which took so many of the young men from the villages. Rivers in particular was concurrently propagating the belief that the prime effect of outside contact and government control was to remove traditional interests and emotional outlets, so that the native lost interest in life. It was in this belief that Williams pleaded for the retention of custom.80

In commenting on government attitudes and policy Williams was in an invidious position. He hinted, however, that the Administration might be pushing the natives into work, in the villages, village plantations, and on the roads, which was unwanted and resented.81

80) Williams, ibid., pp. 41-3, 55, 64; W.H.R. Rivers, Essays on the Depopulation of Melanesia.
81) Williams, op.cit., p.43 footnote: he quotes a comment by the Administrator on a patrol report, commending zeal, but cautioning against over-enthusiastic pushing.
It is a common postulate - for the missionary, one presumes, a necessary one - that the native does not know what is good for him. By accepting this postulate we set ourselves the difficult and responsible task of deciding what is good for him.

... it is justifiable to ask whether the Papuan is everywhere given a proper admixture of guidance and liberty, or whether he is not sometimes hustled by the scruff of the neck up the wrong path of righteousness ... what with the zeal and energy of various reformers, the native's soul has sometimes an ill time of it between the upper and nether millstones of Materialism and Christianity.

When he was consulted some years later by Murray, he was more specific on the need for consultation with, rather than direction of, the natives. However, Murray wrote in 1923 almost the antithesis:

To my mind, the most obvious, and possibly the only solution is to encourage, or if necessary to compel, the native to work for his own benefit. This is what we are attempting in Papua.

Murray believed that Christianity provided an adequate substitute for the old rituals, and that the old customs would eventually have to go; but he announced his intention of directing his officers to adopt a more sympathetic attitude towards the maintenance or revival of custom. His only comment on government compulsion was that Williams had not considered that it had had 'any appreciable effect' on causing disturbances to the old cultures. There was, therefore, little mitigation of the issuing of orders as a regular feature of

82) Ibid., p.45. Wartime officers re-interpreted the 'Madness' as 'an outbreak against European rule' rather than just 'a religious mania' - see J.L. Taylor in ANGAU Conference, 1944, II - CP763, Set 4.

83) Report 1923-4, p.16 (Part of his address to the Pan-Pacific Conference, 1923).

84) Forward to Anthrop. Report, No.4.
In 1924 the R.M. of the Delta Division illustrated the repercussions of this philosophy at the divisional level:

\[\ldots\text{there has been a number of breaches against the Native Regulations; these figures appear high as a result of systematic patrolling, and a more rigid enforcement of the Native Regulations - especially in reference to the improvement of villages. It is to be hoped that when these improvements are effected one and all will realise that it is for their well-being. Although they resent the work which this involves and which is foreign to their traditions and old regime I think it is only a matter of time when the offences against the Regulations will be considerably less than they are now.}\]

The only direct administrative result of the enquiry into the Vailala Madness seems to have been Murray's advice to his officers that they should not appoint as village constables any men afflicted by or inclined to the Madness.\(^{86}\)

The conflicting influences and demands on the eastern Gulf natives before 1919 were so heavy - particularly on peoples who had previously had little outside contact, and who had traditionally considerable social cohesion - that in retrospect cultist reactions are not surprising. It was taken for granted that customary leadership was declining with the disintegration of the eravo pattern and the self-assertion of a new type of young man with outside experience. The only features of this culture change to which most officers paid any attention were the difficulties of getting efficient

\[^{85}\text{Report 1924-5, p.19.}\]
\[^{86}\text{Memo. preceding Anthrop. Report No.4.}\]
village constables and of inducing the natives to work.
The deep-seated tensions that must have existed were given
little administrative consideration.

When the V.C. at Orokolo was threatened with pourri-pourri
in 1917, and fled the village for Paramanu, the patrol officer
simply arrested 215 men. All except eight of these,
described as old men of 'the Dubu Oricle (sio) variety' were
eventually released to return to their homes. The old men
were taken away for trial. Though an extreme case, this
ad hoc method was typical; little thought was given to long­
term consequences.

If Williams is right, by the 1920s changes in the leadership
pattern had already gone a long way in the Purari delta.

It may be stated at the outset that the functions of
the paidi amua are more less moribund; they have been usurped by the wielder of vice-regal authority in the
person of the belted policeman (i.e. the village policeman). Sometimes the two personages are one and
the same; in other cases the policeman claims and is acknowledged to be the paidi amua when he is in reality
nothing more than a rank commoner.

Amongst the eastern Elema Brown thought that the village
constables had not been a success because government officers
'did not understand the amorphous nature of Elema gerontocracy.'

The attribution of European values was also common. In
Oct. 1920 the R.M. said that the Orokolo natives were
'cunning', and that the appointment of 'suitable' V.C.s
amongst them was very important - Kerema P.R. 2/1920-1.
89) Brown, op.cit., p.159.
He believed, however, that the reason for the failure of the village constables was their deferring to the elders, a conclusion which it is difficult to reconcile with other evidence and opinions.

Apart from the effects of government office, two other factors were important: the influence of the mission, and of the local planters and traders. Rev. Pryce-Jones of the L.M.S. seems to have been more closely involved, for example, in events leading up to the Madness, than appeared at the time. It is well-known that until the 1930s the L.M.S. had a thorough contempt for native custom. In addition, however, the L.M.S. had before it the object, clear and declared, of a self-governing Native Church; translated to the village, this meant 'self-reliance' or something approaching autonomy. 90

The report of the patrol to the scene of the initial outbreak in September 1919 shows that Pryce Jones was exercising a more direct influence than the published reports indicated, and that this influence was interpreted by everybody except the mission as antithetical to government. 91 V.C. Hareha, whose visions were said to have started the Madness, was when questioned the bearer of a message from Pryce-Jones which

---

90) Report of the work of the L.M.S. in the Port Moresby District - Report 1919-20, p. 99 (App. B). Murray commented (ibid., p. 7) that this was 'intensely interesting to those of us who have been inclined to deny the qualities of self-reliance and initiative to the natives of Papua'.

stated that Hareha was a man of hypersensitive character and needed careful handling. Pryce Jones had written the note to quieten Hareha, who feared arrest because he had cut off his hair and done away with his ancestral charms and urged others to do the same.\textsuperscript{92} It seems clear that Hareha had had very close relations with the mission.

The European traders on the coast were hostile to the mission for taking an active part in transactions to ensure that the natives were not defrauded. The result, on the outbreak of the Madness, was a letter by the Director of the Oil-fields stating his belief that a 'white influence' lay behind it somewhere. Williams thought that a sermon by a white missionary, 'misconstrued by his congregation', may have been one of the origins of the Madness.\textsuperscript{93}

Pryce Jones, it would appear, made a practice of rushing to the side of the natives if he thought that any injustice had been done or was likely to be done, either by local Europeans or by the Government. This led natives to believe that mission and government were opposite forces.\textsuperscript{94}

In 1921 R.M. Liston-Blyth accused Jones of 'ignoring the

\textsuperscript{92} Ibid., letter quoted.
\textsuperscript{93} Letter from A. Wade of 8.9.1919 - included with P.R.4, supra; also see Anthrop. Report No.4, pp. 27-8. The Europeans in the area jumped to the conclusion that there was to be a native rising. Williams admits elements of this early in the Madness - p.15.
\textsuperscript{94} Kerema P.R. 6/1919-20, P.O. Connelly, Vailala. 35/335.
Divisional authority in taking the side of natives versus traders. Jones had also taken a native direct to Port Moresby to assist him in a suit against an employer for assault.

In my experience of other Missions, and I have spent most of my service life in tropical countries (some 17 years now), I have never met one yet that interfered so continually in the material affairs of a district as the one here does. I have several times informed them that I welcome reports from anyone which tend to keep me au fait with what is going on in the villages, and which bring abuses and offences to my notice, but the sort of constitution of the Mission into a kind of Court of Appeal makes our position very difficult and great tact is needed to prevent an open rupture over some matters of native policy.

The planters and traders, by reaction, became adept at suborning the natives through village constables, who were of course susceptible to temptation because of their low pay.

In April 1922 A.R.M. Rentoul noted in Vailala East that a planter named McDonald, who had a property up-river, had 'tremendous influence' in the villages, so much so that the natives tended to ignore other authorities. This was especially significant in an area where the Madness was very strong and where the eravo system had been decaying rapidly. In the same month Rentoul found in Moviavi, to the east, that one of the two V.C.s was absent getting copra for a trader named Curry, while the V.C.'s wife was running a trade store for

95) Kerema P.R. 12/1920-1, Vailala, 6.4.21. 35/335. Several natives bluntly told the R.M. that the mission had said that the export price of copra had not dropped and that they were being swindled by the traders. The R.M. assured them that the price had dropped - 9.4.21.

96) Kerema P.R. 11/1921-2, Western boundary, 1.4.1922.
Curry in the village. Curry, however, was generally detested by the natives because of his bad debts for copra collected. 97 Similar cases involving V.C.s had to be checked to the west. 98

The natives were therefore being pulled in several directions at once. Aggravating this were the deficiencies of the Administration itself. Several of the best officers, such as Beaver, had not returned from the war, and new men had to be recruited and trained. R.M. Liston-Blyth attributed the bad state of the Division, and particularly the lack of control over the village constables, largely to a very poor type of patrol officer. 99

All these factors created a vicious circle, for the further government control disintegrated, the more difficult it became to re-establish. The temptation then was to use very direct methods to achieve quick results. That this was a general problem is shown by Murray's Circular Instruction No. 138, which forbade 'unnecessary harassment' by excessive zeal in looking for offences. 100

Even Rentoul, however — one of the more perceptive officers at the height of the Madness in Vailala East had all the

97) Kerema P.R. 14/1921-2, Movlavi, April 1922.
98) Kerema P.R. 8/1921-2. At least two V.C.s were intending to use village labour to make copra for traders.
99) Kerema P.R. 1/1920-1, Toaripi, Sept. 1920. In practice there were no educational qualifications for entry to the service, and training was acquired by patrolling.
100) Quoted Murray to Canberra, 24.5.28. CPI, V, 16/41/5; also Report 1928-9, p.8, where he states the instruction had been issued 'a few years ago'.
paraphernalia of the ceremonies destroyed, then assembled all the old men and told them that if there were any more complaints of slackness there would be 'plenty of trouble', that carriers had to be supplied when demanded, that all government works had to be carried out and the V.C.s obeyed.\textsuperscript{101}

At Toaripi in February 1923 the acting R.M., on the complaint of a private European that natives were pestering him and ignoring his orders, gave them 'a talking to, and to make it more impressive ... four cuts with a cane each, across the shoulders.'\textsuperscript{102}

(viii) The Demands of Government and Direct Administration

In this complex situation, further burdens were added both to natives and to field staff which accelerated the trend towards direct methods. These resulted from the introduction of the Native Tax and the Native Plantation Ordinances, in accordance with Murray's perennial philosophy of salvation through work.

In the Gulf considerable resistance to this policy developed, especially in those areas most acutely affected by the Madness. At Vailala the Assistant Inspector of Native Plantations appealed for help, as the natives told him that

\textsuperscript{101) Kerema P.R. 11/1921-2, Vailala. 1.4.1922.}

\textsuperscript{102) Kerema P.R. 11/1922-3, a/R.M. Muscutt, Feb. 1923. The Gov. Sec. wrote an angry remonstrance (appended), but excused Muscutt on the ground that he had not had overseas leave for ten years. Standing Instructions laid it down that corporal punishment was never to be inflicted 'except in execution of the sentence of a Court of competent jurisdiction'.}
he was not the 'proper Government' and that they would not obey him. This quickly became total defiance of government, the Vailala natives threatening that if the 'Government' came they would remove his clothes and send him back naked to Kerema. The patrol officer reacted by calling a meeting of villagers, at which he told them that they were thousands of years behind the rest of the world, and that in forcing them to plant coconuts the Administration was only anxious that they should catch up. He then marked out areas for two Native Plantations. The native owners of the land, however, refused to part with it, whereupon the officer, ignoring their protests, ordered work to begin.

Even though the land is not yet purchased, decided to commence work on it, otherwise the people will be scoring a victory over us, and the effects of such a victory will be disastrous among the people of Orokolo.

The Government Secretary commented:

The natives of this Division are proving very difficult to deal with.

A similar situation arose in the Silo area, a few miles east of Kerema. In July 1924 all the small villages under the V.C. of Silo stated that they had no desire to make a plantation; instead, they wanted to continue making copra privately, implying a continuation of tax payments in cash. The patrol officer, however, 'informed them it was not what they desired; it is their business to do as they are told'.

103) Kerema P.R. 9/1922-3, P.O. Lambden, Vailala, Nov. 1922. The Administrator, Judge Herbert, wrote 'Seen' on the report.
He organized village plantation gangs and appointed 'boss-boys' to them.

The Government Secretary appeared suddenly to realize the implications - but his reaction is significant:

In the Gulf Division they seem to be making the natives start plantations whether they want to or not. I am telling the R.M. that the policy is to let them choose between paying tax in money and having a plantation. *We will have no money if the natives are not allowed to choose.*

Thus allowing natives any choice was dictated only by a possible lack of funds or by administrative expediency. The threat of compulsion, which Murray claimed ultimately to be behind every administrative act, was unmistakably prominent. W.R. Humphries concluded in 1944 that only compulsion had kept the plantations scheme going.

104) Kerema P.R.1 and 3/1924-5. Gov.Sec. memo. to Murray, dated 30.8.24, attached. Murray approved, though insisting that if the natives once started a plantation they had to stick to it. Ivan Champion, who accompanied P.O. Lambden to Silo, wrote in 1960 that the idea of the scheme was that 'natives could plant economic crops in lieu of paying tax'. *T.P.N.G. Public Service Journal, II, 1, p.3: Sir Hubert Murray of Papua.*

105) H. Murray, *Review of Australian Administration, 1907-20,* p.33; W.R. Humphries, *A Review of Native Plantations 1944,* quoted J. Legge, *Australian Colonial Policy,* p.174. Compulsion was even more necessary later, when the price of copra fell from £17 to £5 a ton - see R. Firth, *J.R.S.A.,* 1953, p.806. In the Lakekamu area the Administration was trying to compel the planting of rice, but the natives preferred to raise tax from their own coconuts. Many nuts were allowed to rot, and Murray asked the R.M. whether, over and above the tax, he could suggest a way of compelling the natives to use the nuts. Humphries cogently pointed out that the natives earned about £4250 from copra, of which £1000 was paid in tax; yet they had had nothing from the Native Tax Fund since its inception - see Kerema P.R. 6/1924-5: 24.9.24.

(For Humphries' *Review,* see ANGAU Conference, 1944 - CP763, set 4)
The village constables became responsible for keeping the villagers up to the mark on tax payments and plantation work. This imposed a great strain on the village constables, though they generally continued to receive only 10/- p.a. as pay, plus an occasional uniform. Humphries pointed this out in 1923. Moreover, the more intelligent V.C.s pointed out to him that before the days of tax and plantations they had had to deal with only one official, the Magistrate; now they had to deal with several officials. Humphries thought their duties in connection with rice-planting alone, in certain areas, worth more than 10/- p.a.106

The executive responsibilities of the V.C. were advancing beyond the original conception of his functions; theoretically this could perhaps be justified, in that the plantations and tax both lay within his sphere of enforcement but the practical implication was that he became responsible for ensuring that people under his jurisdiction met their obligations. Humphries thought this particularly difficult in the Gulf:

In some Divisions I know the V.C.s have an easy life, but their lot is not cast among a people who fight and quarrel on the slightest provocation and who are spirited or undisciplined enough to defy and oppose anything that does not meet with their approval. 107

106) Ibid.
107) Kerema P.R. 11/1925-6, Vailala East, July 1926. In 1925-6 in the Gulf 190 natives were convicted of 'not wanting to grow rice'. The number convicted the previous year was almost the same - Report 1926-7, p.38.
Councillors: Their Appointment and Functions

In 1926 Murray announced that councillors were being appointed generally throughout the Territory; but it was some time before this was applied in the Gulf. In 1927 the R.M. of the Delta Division stated that the idea had been welcomed, though there had been no official appointments - some villages had selected candidates for appointment. But in the Gulf Division, councillors were not mentioned. In view of the urgent need for consultation in the Gulf, one would have thought the appointment of councillors imperative; but the contemporary administrative mind did not work in this way. Several factors probably inhibited a beginning: (i) the continuing fear of combination in the Gulf villages, with their notoriety for independence; (ii) apprehension about a possible revival of the Madness under cover of councillors; and (iii) the need firmly to impress government authority - a continuation of the traditional 'submission' concept, evident in the early 1920s. Getting councillors was, in a sense, a reward for co-operation.

The Gulf had an unenviable reputation for lawlessness; but in 1927 R.M. Liston-Blyth reported a remarkable decline in all offences, in those districts which had village constables and were regularly patrolled. This brought the prospect of councillors closer. Moreover, at this time the

local officers were promoting a revival of custom to try to regenerate stability, despite Murray's malediction on artificially supporting tradition. The appointment of councillors could again give the older men status.110

In fact, the Gulf natives began requesting councillors before the Administration promoted the idea in the Division. In January 1927 A.R.M. Thompson appointed the heads of the eravos at Moviavi to be councillors, at the request of the two V.C.s, 'and told them that they were to help the Village constables in their work'. This was precisely the wrong attitude towards the functions of councillors which Murray had deprecated; but no comment was expressed at Port Moresby.111

The first official statement on the appointment of councillors in the Gulf gave the impression that the Administration had initially promoted the idea at Toaripi in

110) Kerema P.R. 9/1925-6, R.M. Humphries, Orokolo, April 1926. He told the assembled natives that their fathers' customs should be preserved, and awarded a prize of 6/- for the best headdress. The R.M. Gulf reported the re-erection of some eravos - Report 1927-8, p.36. The major difficulty was still the attitude of the L.M.S., because the rebuilding of the eravos implied the revival of initiation ceremonies. Finally in May 1927 A.R.M. Thompson won over Moir-Smith to the idea - Kerema P.R. 8/1926-7, 21.5.27. The traders, however, were also opposed, because they feared a revival of traditional articles of wealth, to the detriment of that regard for cash which they had sedulously encouraged - Kerema P.R. 3/1927-8, Nov. 1927.

111) Kerema P.R. 4/1926-7, 19.1.27. Another reason for a lack of interest in councillors here may have been that government attention was strongly oriented towards the frontier. Humphries' patrol in Dec. 1926 to the headwaters of the Vailala drew a great deal of comment - Kerema P.R. 3/1926-7.
1927-8, there being no admission that the neighbouring  
Moviavi had asked for councillors twelve months before.  

The failure to promote the system in the Gulf was  
important, because it was known to many returning labourers  
that much more progress had been made in other areas of the  
Territory which were more severely segmented and whose peoples  
had shown less economic activity.  

Attempts to work with  
or through councillors were more half-hearted and short-lived  
than almost anywhere else in the Territory. Up to about the  
middle of 1931 the appointment of councillors and occasional  
consultation with them seems to have gone ahead; but after  
that time there would appear to have been an almost total  
relapse, in the Gulf, to direct administration.  

The first councillors were officially appointed at  
Tavafuru, east of Kerema, in November 1928.  
No system of  
appointment had been defined, and little is discernible from  
the descriptions given. Councillors were generally elderly  
men nominated by the villagers at a mass meeting, and were  
usually taken by officers to be ravi amua. At most villages  
(e.g. Iokea, Biaru) each councillor represented about 100  
people; but at Moviavi there were twice as many councillors.

---

112) Report 1928-9, p.24. The idea was brought before the  
Toaripi first, the report claimed, because they were  
further advanced than the natives west of Kerema (who  
were said to be indifferent towards everything), and  
more anxious to improve their conditions.

113) The energy and initiative of the Moviavi-Toaripi peoples  
had been officially noted in 1922 - see Report 1922-3,  
p.46.
There is little indication that the A.R.M. had any clear intention of consulting with them, though he thought that they might be useful in land disputes, and he instructed the Lese councillors to meet those of Motumotu to determine their boundaries on the Lakekamu sago lands.\textsuperscript{114}

West of Kerema some councillors were appointed in March 1929, but the R.M. noted that their appointment was not being rushed, only those actually requested being appointed (seven villages made such a request). In other words, the local Administration was not actively promoting the system. At Arihava, with an estimated population of 1500, thirteen councillors were appointed; Murray objected that this seemed excessive, but made no attempt to define selection methods. The local officer noted vaguely that 'they appear to be the right type of man'.\textsuperscript{115} Wherever councillors were appointed, they were given a talk on their duties, with the emphasis on encouraging their people to tend their coconuts and make copra.\textsuperscript{116}

Meanwhile, on their own initiative the Moviavi people, having more than twenty councillors and dual village cohesion,

\textsuperscript{114) Kerema P.R. 4/1928-9, A.R.M. Lambden, Nov. 1928; entries especially of 17.11.28, 26.11.28. At Moviavi both ravi amua may have been appointed, with only one amua elsewhere.}

\textsuperscript{115) Kerema P.R. 8/1928-9, March 1929, Murray's comment attached. The R.M. urged the councillors to get their people to make copra, but noted that they seemed interested only in sago - clearly for the Hiri exchange - and sold their nuts to European traders for a little tobacco.}

\textsuperscript{116) e.g. Kerema P.R. 10/1928-9, Koaru, May 1929.}
were organizing 'council' meetings; for in June 1929 they asked the R.M. to appoint a native literate in the local vernacular as clerk to the council. The R.M. complied, impressing on the man that he was not a councillor but was only to record proceedings and to write letters on behalf of the council to the government station. This was an exceptional development, and seems to have been confined to Moviavi.

There seems little doubt from the evidence that, from the local Administration standpoint, the appointment of councillors had the sole object of propaganda, and particularly of increasing copra production. This was the theme of every coastal patrol in the period 1929–31; by 1931 the price of copra had fallen so low that it was hardly an inducement to higher production. This insistence on copra production and tax collection may have been a factor in the breaking up of villages into sub-clan sections (each now with its councillor) which took to the bush or the swamps to live.

Murray was undoubtedly sincere in his original desire to promote consultation with the councillors; but, at the divisional level, linking their appointment with demands for tax and with other forms of compulsion was a major blunder. As the struggle for money increased in 1930, the injunction not to harass the natives seems to have been forgotten.

Acting R.M. Lambden noted that the Kerema Bay villages could not hope to raise more than £400 altogether, in copra production, labourers' wages, sales of sago and Family Bonuses. Of this they were expected to pay £348 in tax. Despite Lambden's protests, he was forced into the position of threatening to sentence 234 defaulters, sending them in batches to gaols throughout the Territory. The V.C.s and councillors were to be used as levers, reporting to him those natives who were not making a determined effort to raise their tax.119

Inevitably, under these circumstances, and as the prices of crops continued to slump, native resistance hardened. This rebounded on the village constables and councillors, who were held partly responsible. R.M. Dick noted in March 1931 that he was not favourably impressed by the councillors, who appeared to him to lack 'influence' because the people ignored their injunctions. The natives themselves were

119) Kerema P.R. 6/1930-1, Dec. 1930. The Family Bonuses were already paid out of the Native Tax Fund. The Government Secretary justified these actions by the remarkable argument (with which Murray agreed) that the money the natives raised could not be called 'income', as without the tax they would not bother to produce any copra at all. For this reason Murray specifically commended compulsion. Comments attached P.R. P.O. Hides noted, as Humphries had earlier, that the natives west of Kerema, who paid about £1400 p.a., seemed to get nothing from the N.T. Fund - Kerema P.R. 5/1930-1, Vailala.
categorised as 'unwilling'.

(x) **Assessors, Informal Councils and Direct Administration**

In this atmosphere, the further step of using councillors as assessors was not greeted enthusiastically by divisional staff, though Murray noted that everything depended on the attitudes of the Resident Magistrates. The simultaneous policy of compulsion threatened this experiment from the beginning; the Gulf natives, like the Mekeo, were notoriously unamenable to 'direct' treatment. Nevertheless, in April 1931, east of Kerema, the R.M. had councillors present at all sittings of the Court for Native Matters, but stated that he found the language barrier insurmountable. Moreover, with all his other burdens he had to 'rush through cases as quickly as possible', so that no time was available for educating assessors in their functions.

Further spasmodic attempts were made to use assessors, particularly by A.R.M. Lambden, who showed more interest in trying to make the system work than most of the other officers.

120) **Kerema P.R. 9/1930-1, west of Kerema, March 1931.** By this time both natives and officers were becoming antagonistic to the Copra scheme, though for different reasons. The natives stated bluntly that they did not wish to make copra; in order to promote it officers were forced to supply bags and to arrange shipment and remission of profit to the producers - they complained that this left no time for administration.

121) **Report 1931-2, p.20.**

122) **Kerema P.R. 11/1930-1.** Between 17 March and 13 April, 14 sittings of the C.N.M. were held and 114 cases dealt with, in addition to census-taking and work connected with the copra scheme.

123) **Kerema P.R. 13/1930-1, June 1931.** At Motumotu the Uritai 'senior' councillors sat as assessors, and the V.C.s presented the cases - no other details given.
A.R.M. Horan used councillors as assessors in numerous instances west of Kerema, but he found them 'of little use, excepting in giving information regarding native custom'.

The institution of the councillor itself seems gradually to have suffered a similar fate, though Lambden organized large and ambitious meetings in the first half of 1931. At Karama 39 councillors representing 21 villages with a population of 3350 assembled; and at Moviavi 59 councillors representing 13 villages with a population of 4448 attended. After thirty years of police rule, however, Lambden expected too much of them. He explained to the assembled councillors that the meetings were held to allow them to place before government any matter which might be troubling them, but every councillor assured him that he had nothing to say. 'This rather squashed the whole proceedings'.

For more than two hours the meeting then turned into a propaganda lecture, with Lambden explaining the Native Tax Fund, the Native Regulations, better gardening and copra production. He had only two questions, asking when the government was going to pay councillors and to issue them with uniforms.

Lambden had a similar lack of response at group meetings of councillors elsewhere along the coast. The councillors

125) Kerema P.R. 11/1930-1, east of Kerema, Mar–Apr. 1931.
126) Ibid.
raised or discussed nothing, simply agreeing solemnly with whatever the A.R.M. said. Clearly they had become inured to other methods, a difficulty which Murray also found in Port Moresby and which he interpreted as an attachment, by the natives, to the principle of direct rule. 127

Councillors had in fact already been used as agents of compulsion in the promotion of government policy. Murray found it hard to appreciate the reasons why government propaganda in the early 1930s was apparently falling on deaf ears, and why the natives did not react to the argument that tax, copra production, and so on, were being enforced for their benefit. 128

A vicious circle was created, for when officers found councillors unresponsive they reverted quickly to direct rule. 129 After Lambden's abortive but short-lived attempts to promote discussion, the whole concept of consultation with councillors seems to have lapsed, and in practice they became subordinate but unpaid village officials. To take one example, in the same area, in September 1933, R.M. Zimmer

128) Report 1933–4, pp. 23–4. This promoted Murray to speculate whether perhaps the natives were unintelligent.
129) Murray wrote to the Gov. Sec., 29.4.1929 (CPI. V. 16/42) again insisting that councillors were not to be treated as assistant V.C.s
instructed the V.C. and councillors of Popo village to see that their people followed a number of injunctions.130

This appears to have been the pattern of administration until the war.

---

130) Kerema P.R. 2/1933-4, Sept. 1933. Similar instructions were issued to V.C.s and councillors the following year. Kerema P.R. 10/1933-4, May 1934.
II. Eastern Papua: Mission Pressure towards Delegation.

(i) Social Background

By 'Eastern Papua' is meant the coast from Cape Rodney to Cape Nelson, together with such inland areas behind the coast as were administered before World War II (the Eastern Division), together with all the eastern islands which constituted the South-Eastern Division.

By the time systematic ethnography began in eastern Papua, considerable culture change was already under way. Chalmers and the L.M.S. had been busy appointing native or South Sea teachers on the mainland coast, and in the early 1880s labour recruiters were active in the Louisiade Archipelago and in Milne Bay: a native teacher of the L.M.S. in Milne Bay testified and interpreted at the Royal Commission provoked by the notorious cruise of the 'Hopeful' in 1884.1

The Mailu, notable as the subjects of Malinowski's first fieldwork, occupy the coastal areas from Cape Rodney in the west to the middle of Orangerie Bay in the east. Saville states that on Mailu island there were four patrilineal, patrilocal clans, each of which had as leader one man possessing more authority than his fellows, recognizable by

1) Queensland V. & P. 1885, II, pp. 797-988.
his bearing and ornaments. In the old days the Mailu said that they had had chiefs (vere), who had been hereditary; but these had died out. It would appear from the initiation carried out on some of the elders living in Saville's time that these chiefs had died out only a generation or two before.

As far as any authority was exercised in an institutionalised way, it was done through clan councils consisting of the clan head and the sub-clan headmen, usually the oldest male member. This council dealt with all important clan affairs, especially the main focus of social activity, the feast. Such joint authority of the elders was quite limited, however. In the 1920s they could not even induce the younger people to moderate their noise in the villages at night.

Little information is available on the authority systems of the inland peoples; but the Dimuga had a clan dubu system, and the headmen appear to have been readily distinguishable.

Further east, grouped around Milne Bay and its enclosing

---

2) W.J.V. Saville, *In Unknown New Guinea*, p.34. The Mailu, as distinct from the Southern Massim further east, lived in villages which were the real socio-political units - see B. Malinowski, *The Natives of Mailu*, *Trans. Royal Soc. South Aust.*, XXXIX, 1915, p.516.

3) Ibid., pp. 104-10.

4) Ibid., pp. 35-7.

5) Ibid., p.77. Malinowski said that the clan headman commanded a certain amount of respect; but his position was far from clear or well-defined - probably only the most influential amongst the headmen of the sub-clans - loc.cit., p.519.

6) Ibid., pp. 299-302.
capes, are the peoples classified by Seligmann as the Southern Massim. One of their distinguishing features is their matrilineal descent and matrilocal marriage. Traditionally, and indeed, in the 1890s, they lived in small scattered hamlets rather than villages; these were tenuously linked by dispersed clans and by local, sometimes temporary, alliances. Neither in Milne Bay nor in Tubetube were there any big chiefs, or even clan chiefs in any executive sense. Certain men were recognized as important because of four factors: their wealth or leadership in feasts; their age; their knowledge of magic; their special skills.

In Bartle Bay, however, near the headquarters of the Anglican mission, Seligmann recognized headmen or chiefs who possessed 'a considerable amount of influence and authority'. Besides these chiefs (gulau), there were experts, particularly in garden magic, called taniwaga. The two offices of gulau and taniwaga were often united in the one person, the offices passing to a brother or to a sister's son. Age plus wealth were thought to be two main factors in deciding a gulau's position of authority. At Yauyau, an inland community, Seligmann noted that the gulau was set apart and deferred to

7) Saville, ibid., p.28; Seligmann, op.cit., pp.453-6; C.W. Abel to Wardlaw Thompson, 29.10.1891. L.M.S. letter No. 5979: 'The country here is thickly populated but the natives live almost like settlers. Villages with from two to twelve houses are the general rule'. Also see C.S. Belshaw, In Search of Wealth, A.A.A. Memoirs, No.80, p.14; South Pacific, Aug. 1951, p.104.

8) Seligmann, ibid. .
markedly, even by the taniwaga. 9

The natives of the northern d'Entrecasteaux had a pattern of habitation even more fragmented than that of the Southern Massim. The basis of social organization was the family, consisting of a man and his wife and descendants; each hamlet then comprised a number of closely related families. These hamlets, in 1911, had little permanence because of migration. Local interests brought hamlets of a district together. There was no central authority. Each hamlet had a kauvea, or headman, who in pre-European times used to have a knowledge of incantations and led in war; but in 1911 his authority was negligible. The usual sanctions of Melanesia had been imposed on wrongdoers according to the consensus of opinion; social ostracism, direct retaliation, and magic. When in 1911 a man of one hamlet raped a woman of another, at Mud Bay, where the Methodist mission had established itself in 1898, the men of the woman's hamlet debated whether to retaliate directly or to wait for the magistrate; eventually they waited, though realizing that he might not come for six or twelve months. Meanwhile the offender escaped to the hills. 10

Some islands of the Louisiade Archipelago appear to have

9) Ibid., pp. 456-8. It is notable that the Milne Bay people now claim to have had guyau and taniwaga. In pre-European times these men are said to have played a prominent part in warfare, the taniwaga being the local clan head.

10) D. Jenness and A. Ballantyne, The Northern d'Entrecasteaux, pp. 37-9, 42, 63, 76-80, 131-2. This was the only mission station in the northern d'Entrecasteaux.
had leaders with considerable authority. As late as 1908 the natives on Rossel were said to regard their principal chief as 'a person of unlimited power'.  

The natives of Sudest told the R.M. in 1911 that before a chief built a new house someone used to be killed and buried under it. On these outlying islands which were difficult to patrol the old 'fighting chiefs' retained some of their authority into the early years of the century.

(ii) Administrative Influence of the Missions

The missions have played a particularly important part in the administrative development of eastern Papua. The L.M.S. by the 1890s was already active along the coast as far as East Cape. In 1891 the Anglican mission began work on the north-east coast; and in 1890 the Rev. George Brown of the Methodist mission visited the islands. The Methodists began work at Dobu in 1891.

The most influential of these missions, both directly and indirectly, was that branch of the L.M.S. which became the Kwato Extension Association after the first World War. This

---

11) Kulumadau P.R., 18.9.08; 27.11.11 (527/1911); Papua Report, 1908-9, p.104. W.E. Armstrong (Rossel Island, pp.185-8) was uncertain on chieftainship, believing status to depend on the clan, on qualified succession within the clan, on locality and other factors. Murray believed that there was one head chief for the island (Report 1907-8, pp.14-16; Diary, 2.4.1908 - Mitchell A. 3139, Vol. 2).

12) Kulumadau P.R. 527/1911; 27.11.11.

13) See the case of Bobamai (Muruia) who killed natives of another village in retaliation for the death of his daughter. Nivani Station J., 1-2 July, 1901.

was founded by Charles Abel and F.W. Walker on a small island near Samarai, in 1891. From the beginning it had an apocalyptic fervour. Abel and Walker developed the idea of training native leaders, both men and women, in Christian surroundings at the mission station, at the same time teaching them trades and crafts. From this developed the idea of mission-sponsored industries, such as copra making and boat building, which was put to the District Committee meeting of 1903. Although the idea generally won the field in Papua, the London directors of the L.M.S. remained unenthusiastic, and in 1916 they began to clamp down on the mission plantations. Abel in 1919 then formed the separate Kwato Extension Association, which relied on American subscriptions and on its own industrial efforts.

In effect, by keeping boys and girls at the mission station for periods of ten or fifteen years, Kwato produced a village elite, which gave the mission deep and pervasive influence. This influence increased after 1927, when Cecil Abel brought back the teachings of the Oxford Group movement from England.

15) Abel to Wardlaw Thompson, 30.8.1891. No. 5964, L.M.S. letters: 'Walker and I are together and are simply going to set this end on fire'.
There followed crusades of personal surrender to God, particularly by native leaders. 'In 1931 revival that was more akin to revolution swept the Kwato district'. By 1937 Kwato had built up a field of concentrated influence from Cape Rodney to N.W. Milne Bay, extending inland as far as Mts. Brown and Suckling.

When Abel and Walker first arrived in the east end in 1891, however, the hold of the mission had been tenuous - as, indeed, was that of the government. Abel blamed the fact that teachers had been left too much to themselves. The faults of the system at that time paralleled those which the Administration faced with the village constables.

The case of Iakobo at Teste Is. was a conspicuous instance. This man was left for long intervals and then the 'Harrier' would go and stay perhaps twelve or twenty-four hours and leave again, not returning probably for five or six months. The result was he was thrown into the hands of the traders and completely lost his character as a missionary.

Nevertheless, despite its unevenness, mission influence was generally in advance of the government in eastern Papua. In 1903 R.M. Campbell complained of the 'excessive influence' which the teachers had exerted up to that time; and this had indeed occasionally had undesirable consequences - for example,


20) Ibid., June 1937, attached map; also account by R. Abel of work amongst natives behind Duramu, 13.7.36. CPI V. 16/14/45; for an account of inland methods and influence see P.E. Williams, Mission Influence Among the Keveri of S.E. Papua, Oceania, XV, 2, 1944, pp. 111-42.

21) C.W. Abel to Wardlaw Thompson, 29.10.1891. L.M.S. letters No. 5979.
the cult movement in Milne Bay in 1893, when a 'prophet' named Tokerua stated that he was the new government, and ordered the Gabagabuna natives to kill their pigs and move inland. 22

Campbell had continually to remonstrate with the village constables for confusing offences against the moral code with those against the law:

One can always be sure that a case of adultery will be reported before a case of murder or robbery.

He noted that with only one exception had a village constable been appointed to an area where there was not already a mission teacher, no matter how large the populations not served by the missions.

It seems to have been the rule that the V.C. follows the native teacher, not as it should be, the teacher following the constable and law and order. I am about to appoint a number of constables to new districts. 24

A contest thus developed at the village level between the mission and the government. Because of Kwato's 'settlement principle', its teachers were not isolated in the villages.

22) 'One or two other cases were reported at Samarai, but the accused were gaol'. Report 1894-5, p.71; also E.W.P. Chinnery and A.C. Haddon, Five New Religious Cults in British New Guinea, Hibbert Journal, XV, 1917, pp.458-60. There was a similar cult on Fergusson Is. in 1905 - see Samarai Stat. J., 9.12.05, Bergusii.

23) Samarai Stat. J., Jan.1903. In 1899 there were only 34 V.C.s in the whole Eastern Division, which at that time extended to the German border. Report 1899-1900, p.83. Le Hunte had commented on the inadequacy of staff, concluding that settled natives would have to be allowed to settle others - Report 1898-9, p. xxii.

but formed part of a small, partly dissociated, elite. Their influence was therefore particularly strong. This led to frequent friction with government. In 1903 the A.R.M. accused the Milne Bay teachers of Kwato of 'trying to hold the natives aloof from the government'. Later the Kwato representative in Milne Bay was accused by the Administration of attempting to create native resistance to the alienation of land, at a time when there were excellent prospects of establishing a European plantation industry in the Bay. In 1911, when Abel was beginning his mission plantations, a Kwato teacher in the Bay was circulating letters advising the natives not to part with land to the government.

Then in 1919 the A.R.M. accused Kwato teachers in Milne Bay of having deliberately obstructed census-taking, although the Anglican teachers on the N.E. coast had been helpful.

In the 1930s, as Kwato's person conversion campaign got under way, there were alarming signs of tension in the societies under its influence: a minor cargo cult developed in Milne

26) Again, there were cult elements here. The teacher told the natives to kill all their pigs, as Europeans were going to take all their land - Samarai Stat. J., Oct. 1907.
27) P.R., E.D. file 38, 24.8.1911, R.M. Henderson; R. Abel, op.cit., p.134. The mission's plantations were co-operative, each man contributing a piece of land. It is clear (Samarai P.R.18/1921-2, May 1922, A.R.M. Vivian) that alienation was excessive in Milne Bay. It left an unfortunate legacy of suspicion.
28) Samarai P.R. 13/1918-9, March 1919.
Bay\textsuperscript{29}, natives told the government officers that they were forbidden by Kwato to pay tax, make feasts, or sell pigs, and in the inland areas behind Abau natives sought to join the Constabulary in order to escape what they interpreted as outright mission proscriptions on custom.\textsuperscript{30}

Although Sir Hubert Murray generally approved of Kwato's industrial and educational policies\textsuperscript{31}, local officers appear to have relied less on this mission than on the others. There were cases on the N.E. coast of officers seeking the advice of Anglican missionaries on the appointment of village constables\textsuperscript{32}; and the sons of the L.M.S. missionary at Fife Bay, Rev. C.F. Rich, became patrol officers in the Administration.\textsuperscript{33} The influence of Kwato continued however, to be an important, not to say a predominant, feature of administration in the district.

\begin{enumerate}
\item[29)] Samarai P.R. 7/1931-2, 24.2.1932.
\item[30)] Samarai P.R. 10/1931-2, 3/1932-3. The trouble behind Abau may have been caused, as Abel claimed, by the intrusion of the Seventh Day Adventist mission, which began work in the Marshall Lagoon area in November 1928 (Abau P.R. 7/1928-9). See Abau P.R. 3/1936-7. R. Abel denied Kwato proscriptions on custom (to Gov.Sec. 4.10.37, 11.1.37. CPI V. 16/14/51); but the Seventh Day Adventists had sought government action against custom, unsuccessfully (see Sir H. Murray to S.D.A., 9.2.1933, 16/14/41). Abel said that 'when an individual has experienced conversion he then may do away with things he finds incompatible with his new outlook'. There is a graphic description of 'conversion', by Phyllis Abel, in R. Abel, op.cit., pp.244-5.
\item[31)] R. Abel, op.cit., pp.181-2. Also see Ch. V, 2. Williams (loc.cit., p.128) regretted Kwato's 'resolute blotting out of the past'.
\item[32)] Samarai P.R. Nov.1912/1341: Kuga; P.R. 14/1920-1: Wedau.
\item[33)] Both Rich and Saville (Mailu) long worked closely with the Administration; Samarai P.R. 2/1926-7, Sept.1926. P.O.Rich: Meeting of 80 leading village men, convened by Rev. Rich.
\end{enumerate}
(iii) **Pacification, Consolidation and Native Officials**

In many respects the extension and consolidation of government influence followed a pattern similar to that in other districts. John Green noted in Cloudy Bay in 1894 that the Domara (Mailu), who had already obeyed the government injunction to stop fighting, were in a difficult position when attacked by inland peoples who cared nothing for the government.\(^34\) The R.M. wrote of the country behind Table Bay in 1908:

> The maintenance of order on the extreme limit of Government influence is always a difficult problem. To adequately protect the partly civilized and peaceful native against the incursions of his savage neighbours on the other side of the border would require a permanent garrison of many thousands of police; he is unwilling and often unable to protect himself, for he has been told that if he fights "the Government" (which he seems to look upon as some ferocious creature of supernatural strength and cunning) "will be wild"...\(^35\)

In these areas the Administration inevitably had to try to use the influence of the native leaders. Thus, we find the chiefs being instructed to stop 'pay-back' murders and inter-tribal quarrels in the country behind Abau, even in areas where villages had a V.C.\(^36\) The repercussions of the period of resistance to government could be difficult both for the native leaders—leaders in war traditionally—and for the government. At the village of Bam, inland of Cloudy Bay, an

---

36) Abau P.R. 407/12, 5.11.1912.
Influential native named Alva had been head of a faction which resisted the government; he was personally responsible for the murder of an A.C. In January 1914 he was captured and sentenced.\(^37\) By 1918, however, he had returned to his village, where his influence appeared undiminished, and was unofficially exercising the powers of a village constable. The A.R.M. unsuccessfully recommended his official appointment.\(^38\) He was again recommended in 1921 when the A.R.M., who knew his record, stated that he seemed energetic and that there had been nothing against him since his return from gaol.\(^39\)

Although Murray had written that chiefs, where they were existed, were given priority for appointment as village constables, in a case such as this he felt that appointing Alva would be going a little too far.\(^40\)

The problem then was to find a man who could serve as V.C. In 1922 a native named Dom was appointed. He served the government excellently, but was quickly at loggerheads with his own villagers and with neighbouring peoples, whom he reported to the government. Dom had in fact been away from the area too long and become too 'civilized'. A V.C. who served the government too assiduously could not hope to keep the co-operation of his own people. Dom had spent six years in government service at Samarai, so that it was said on his appointment:

\(^{37}\) Abau P.R. 24/14, 11.2.1914.
\(^{38}\) Abau P.R. 5/1919, 30.8.1918.
\(^{39}\) Abau P.R. 10/1920-1.
\(^{40}\) Ibid. also J.H.P.Murray, *Papua or British New Guinea*, p.245. A marked difference from the 1890s.
He has improved and benefited to a remarkable extent by his stay there, so much so that he seems to be out of place with his own people. It is noticeable in many ways: his thoughts, manners, and speech alike are quite different.

This proved his downfall. Clearly, Aiva's influence proved too powerful; by 1923 he was again running the village, and maintaining it to the government's satisfaction, without official responsibility.

Conversely, influential men were sometimes found who could not be induced to become village constables. Like the African headman, but at the village level, the V.C. was at the crossroads of two cultures and was therefore subject to role conflict. Sir Hubert Murray recognized clearly that this was so. There was a notable example of this at Dahuni (Mullins Harbour): in 1911 the R.M. noted that the V.C. was 'a most useless individual' but said that it was impossible to get anyone better. By 1923 the situation was still the same. Similarly, at Teste Island an ex-A.C. who had been unofficially acting as V.C. refused official appointment because 'it would interfere with his sailing about the islands.'

41) Abau P.R. 2/1922-3, Nov. 1922.
44) J.H.P. Murray, op. cit., p.244.
46) Samarai P.R. 8/1922-3, 2.1.1923.
47) Samarai P.R. 22/1926-7, 16.6.27.
As these men were paid only 10/- per annum and given an occasional uniform, and as their duties steadily increased—especially with added labour and plantation responsibilities in this Division in the 1920s—men who wanted to accumulate wealth, popularity, and influence in the traditional manner naturally eschewed appointment. 48

Where a chief or headman was prepared to become a V.C., he needed exceptional intelligence or considerable ingenuity to strike a balance between the demands of government and of his own people. The qualities needed in such a situation were often beyond or differed from those needed in a traditional leader. Amongst the Dimuga, for example, the son of notable chief was described as intelligent and energetic, with a good deal of influence, and he was recommended as a village constable. 49 But in 1920 another officer described this man, Aubi'a, as 'a hopeless sort of person, but probably the best available being the son of the chief'. 50 In an effort to get the Dimuga to consolidate their scattered settlements, the patrol officer consulted directly with the old chief. Humphries later agreed with this assessment of Aubi'a, remarking that although the old chief's authority was un-

48) The plantations were officially begun in 1921-2 in this Division. R.M. Lyons, who had first experimented in the West, had been transferred to the East—see Abau P.R. 5/1921-2, March 1922; Dwagoia P.R. 3/1921-2, Oct. 1921.

49) Abau P.R. 5/1917.

50) Abau P.R. 8/1920-1.
questioned in the village, his son was 'a characterless dwarf, who will lack influence among the people after his father has gone'. It was then necessary for the Administration to look for a man with more satisfactory qualifications. This generally meant evaluation by administrative criteria, even in areas such as Dimuga relatively untouched by alien ways.

A number of other factors predisposed the Administration against the appointment of traditional leaders. The two most prominent of these, were polygamy and sorcery. Confusion on the question of polygamy was just as great in Eastern Papua as in other parts of the Territory. In 1905 R.M. Campbell stated bluntly that 'I have always made it a rule that no V.C. is to have more than one wife'. In fact, the practice on this point continued to be quite arbitrary and to vary with individual officers. In 1920 a patrol officer ordered a V.C.

51) Abau P.R. 4/1921-2. The difficulties of appointed officials had early not been appreciated, especially in the South-East Division where, in 1899, the R.M. saw the problem as simply one of enhancing the authority of men who already had a little authority (Report 1899-1900, p.86). Some V.C.s relied heavily on government support; e.g. the V.C. of Madara village, Murua, in 1913 attributed the dirty state of his village to the people's disinclination to listen to his orders. On his information 11 natives were gaolled (Kulumadau 108/1913, 1.11.1913). What happened to such men between government visits can only be conjectured. Visits particularly in the S.E. were notoriously infrequent and hurried. A.R.M. Symons found a V.C. on Misima in 1913 who had not seen an officer since 1907 (Kulu. 108/1913, 6.5.13). Calculations show that in 1907 the R.M. travelled an average of 22 miles and visited 7.4 villages per patrol day (Report 1907-8, p.46). As late as 1930 the V.C.s on Misima were said to have no authority because of the lack of government backing (Bwagoia P.R. 1/1930-1, 19.7.30).

52) Samarai Stat. J., 31.3.05.
on Fergusson island, who had six wives (clearly a man of substance and influence), to 'get rid of all but one'. On the other hand, Topio of south Goodenough, who was said to be the most influential and efficient V.C. in the d'Entrecasteaux, had five wives at the time of his death.

The question of polygamy really came to the fore in the 1920s, when it was debated by Murray and Pitt-Rivers. Although at this time there was a swing to a quasi-traditional bias in the Administration, policy on the point was not definite. Pitt-Rivers was clearly right in most instances in the contention that the proscription on more than one wife inhibited influential or ambitious men from becoming village constables. The natives were confused on the point: a dismissed V.C. pointed in 1926 to several other V.C.s on Normanby Island who had not less than three wives each. Yet in 1929 on the N.E. coast, and in 1930 on the south coast - to take only two instances - other village constables were dismissed for having more than one wife. In that the rule was designed to protect the natives, the ban on polygamy represented a curious form of misguided paternalism.

In certain parts of eastern Papua the question of sorcery

53) Samarai P.R. 5/1920-1.
55) Correspondence on CPI V. 16/32 – See Ch. II.
56) Samarai P.R. 10/1927-8.
57) Samarai P.R. 7/1928-9; 4/1930-1. The latter concerned the village of Dahuni (supra) where it had proved impossible for so long to get a satisfactory V.C.
also raised unusual administrative difficulties in its bearing on village officials. In 1903 the R.M. had welcomed the raising of the penalty for sorcery to 1 years imprisonment with hard labour, at a time when gaol as a training institution was considered to solve most problems. Sorcery was particularly rife at Dobu, where the Methodist mission had its first station, and where two of the earliest 'rural constables' had been appointed to 'rouse the chief to his work'. Fortune's research in 1927-8, however, showed that sorcery was one of the foundations of the social system: great prestige attached to stealing and adultery, and the man who could get away with these activities was the one with a knowledge of the most potent forms of sorcery. 'It is assumed throughout that social success is necessarily gained at the expense of others'. Fortune was particularly worried, in accordance with the tenets of his time, about destroying customary sanctions; though Murray replied that the government had to govern, and he ridiculed suggestions that it intended to lock up all the sorcerers on Dobu.

Nevertheless, it was clear that, as the bases of Dobuan social life ran counter to those promoted by the Administration,

58) Report 1903-4, p.24. Section 432 of the Criminal Code, promulgated on 1.7.1903. The maximum had previously been 3 months.

59) Report 1893-4, p.46.

60) R. Fortune, Sorcerers of Dobu, pp.84,135; R. Benedict, Patterns of Culture, pp. 94-6.

61) Murray to Sec. Canberra, 24.5.28, CPI V. 16/41/5; 29.6.28, CPI V. 16/41/12.
had any native officials been conscientious they would have
been in an impossible position. They used their powers
according to social norms. Hence the confusion of the R.M.
in 1907 in dealing with a manslaughter case, when the V.C.
of Dobu was found to have intimidated witnesses in order to
secure a conviction, and the Crown witnesses to have lied
consistently - 'a regular plot to have an innocent man
punished'. He commented, utterly mystified, that 'the lying
proclivities of the community surrounding Dobu are beyond
description'. In practice, the cultural conceptions of the
Dobuans and of the Administration were so dissimilar that
only administrative inaction prevented frequent clashes.
Sorcery often reduced V.C.s to impotence as government agents
administering unpalatable laws.

The uncertain attitude by the Administration towards
sorcerers, and towards village constables menaced by them,
inter alia gave considerable scope for what was interpreted
as extortion. Some officers took a sanguine view of
extortion: for example in 1905 the V.C. of Boianai (north­
east Coast) was simply refused his allowance of tobacco for
attempting to 'blackmail' a married woman - coercion to

63) e.g. Abau P.R. 12/1920-1. V.C. Lo'o of Magori was
extremely frightened, unable to control natives under
the sway of a sorcerer named Mama. Similarly Mapamoiwa
2/1927-8, Busalewa, Goodenough; and Samarai 13/1923-4,
where the V.C. of Wagipa Is. had deserted to Goodenough.
adultery was a particularly common failing of V.C.s on the other hand, where the community seemed united in opposition, a village constable attempting to extort was dismissed. Occasionally cases were reported of village constables 'holding court': one case of a trial for murder at Gameta, Ferguson island, was revealed, but ten years after it had taken place. The V.C., since dead, had fined the offender 1 armshell, 1 bagi, and 1 pig, in return for which the murder was hushed up.

Apart from the practice of extortion and the straightforward exercise of unofficial judicial functions, the V.C. often tried to extend his powers into the sphere of custom. This also offended the Administration, however. V.C.s suffered official rebuke for such matters as punishing an alleged sorceress on the advice of the rest of the community, and for intervening in marriage disputes, even at the request of one party. The lack of officially recognized customary jurisdiction remained a troublesome lacuna in Papua's administration.

64) Samarai Stat. J., 3.4.05. Where a V.C. had considerable authority, the Administration sometimes connived e.g. Rabi, Milne Bay, 1929, where the V.C. was gaolled for 2 months for adultery, but retained his position because the councillors requested it and because he 'kept his people up to the mark' (Samarai P.R. 2/1929-30).

65) e.g. Giligili, Milne Bay. Samarai Stat. J., 2.9.05.


There were other problems also with the village constables which were aggravated in eastern Papua. Strong matrilineal influence and occasional uxorilocal marriage amongst the Southern Massim meant that village constables sometimes went to live elsewhere, a fact discovered months or even years later by the Administration. Other peoples formed communities that were constantly breaking up and re-forming, which made the task of a village constable, individually accountable to the government for the whole community, extremely difficult. Many of the Dobuans, for example, officially resided on Dobu, gardened at Normanby, and maintained a food depot at Udulai.

Another problem was the pattern of habitation in scattered hamlets instead of villages; particularly in the mountainous d'Entrecasteaux this made supervision of the work of the V.C. which in the absence of any form of council or superior appointments was practicable only by official visits to each hamlet - virtually impossible. Policy was undefined; attempts had spasmodically been made to compel or induce natives to consolidate their settlements, and even to move

69) e.g. Milne Bay, Samarai P.R. 1913, 5.7.13; South Coast Samarai P.R. 11/1922-3. One V.C. on Normanby married and went to live at Dobu, returning to his own community only when a patrol was imminent (Samarai P.R. 4/1922-3).

70) Samarai P.R. 2/1924-5.

71) Samarai P.R. 3/1924-5. Normanby. The hill villages had not been visited for three years. Only the coast peoples were paid the 'Baby Bonus' from the Native Tax Fund. In effect, the Administration wanted to avoid this, by some form of uniform administration, but without adequate institutional delegation.
close to roads. Some officers supported this, others rejected it.\(^\text{72}\)

Village constables were sometimes appointed solely for the purpose of consolidating settlements; but, once consolidated, the settlements were open to recruiters and to tax collectors, both disintegrating influences.\(^\text{73}\)

The pressures of recruiting, which many officers regarded as excessive in eastern Papua\(^\text{74}\), imposed added strains on the intra-clan and village authority patterns, and aggravated the V.C.'s problems further. In the 1920s and 1930s both the missions and the more perceptive officers became conscious of the serious rift between the sophisticated younger generation and the older men.\(^\text{75}\) But the impulse to compel, for the natives' own benefit, remained predominant in the Administration.\(^\text{76}\) The selection of village constables, even

---

72) A.R.M. Vivian, Goodenough (Samarai P.R. 3/1924-5, 18.12.24) rejected previous consolidating policy. A.R.M. Atkinson felt the policy should have been persisted with, as it assisted the work of the officer and native officials (8/1931-2); but about the same time in the S.E. Division R.M. Rentoul said that he would not persist with consolidation (Bwagoa P.R. 3/1931-2) to the disgust of P.O. Champion, who complained of the impracticability of contacting Rossel and Sudest natives (Bwagoa P.R. 15/1931-2); also see Report 1913-4, p.112: Murua.

73) Oiamamania (Farm Bay), South Coast, March 1925. Samarai P.R. 6/1924-5. A.R.M. Vivian.

74) Ibid. The young men not only became subject to outside influences, but at least for a time on their return, they were able to be economically independent and were often scornful of normal pressures and sanctions.

75) See Bishop H.Newton, Twenty-two Years After, (1930), typescript, CPI V. 16/44, p.8.

after the introduction of councillors, therefore had to be made primarily dependent on their outside experience and on their ability to understand government instructions, rather than on any traditional standing or influence.

An analysis of V.C. records of service — the only ones which have survived in reasonable order — from the South-Eastern Division for the 1920s and 1930s shows that of 32 V.C.s the major criteria for selection were 'general personality' (11), 'intelligent or energetic' (13), and 'speaks English' (11). Only on three recommendations was it stated that the appointee was related to a chief; and on only another three was it stated that the appointee had the confidence of the people.

Seven of the men were stated to have previously had good records in government or private service. Ten out of the thirty-two were eventually dismissed for offences such as murder (4), or for laziness, incompetence, or corruption — that is, 31%. Six of the remaining twenty-two had had unfavourable reports, and only four of them had had definitely

77) It would appear that until 1919 no systematic, consolidated record of V.C.s was kept at each outstation. In that year the R.M., S.E.D. was asked for comments on a projected Station Roll Book to be printed, to include details of all V.C.s in each Division, so that a new officer could make himself acquainted with them (G.S. to R.M. 1.10.1919. S.E.D. correspondence, file 16). During 1916 'Registers' had been issued to V.C.s showing personal details, so that officers on patrol could record comments and instructions (Kulumadau P.R. 6/1915-6). The idea of the Registers had been originated by P.O. Jackson at Kokoda — see Murray's diary (Mitchell A3139), 2.1.1915. In Jan. 1922 A.R.M. Vivian was still complaining of the lack of V.C. records in the Samarai office: 'Mahomet must go to the mountain', Samarai 11/1921-2: 11.1.1922.
favourable reports on their service, the remainder being inconclusive.\textsuperscript{78} The deficiencies of the V.C. system in the culture-contact situation were, therefore, many and obvious.

(iv) \textbf{Mission Initiative towards Native Local Government}

Direct administration on this elementary pattern through patrol officers and village constables was patently unsatisfactory from both the Administration and the native viewpoints: in practice it amounted to wild fluctuations between complete independence of central control and complete subjection to the local officials. Lugard had noted this undesirable dichotomy in Africa, and had regarded his Native Authorities as a means of reaching a flexible administrative compromise.\textsuperscript{79}

In eastern Papua the Anglican and L.M.S. missions came to a similar conclusion in the church context. In 1905 the Anglican mission conference considered the question of the establishment of 'village councils'; as a result, the Bishop issued a pastoral letter to native congregations recommending the establishment of such councils in localities containing fifty or more Christians. These councils were to consist of three representatives, two chosen by the 'electoral body' and one nominated by the priest. Their function was to give

\textsuperscript{78} R.M. S.E.D. to Gov. Sec. File 36. V.C. Records of Service. On dismissals, cf. 16\% in one year, 1905-6, Eastern Division - 'but it is to be remembered how great are the temptations for an almost raw savage to abuse the powers conferred upon him, and how strictly he is dealt with when his misconduct inevitably comes to light' - Report 1906-7, p.10. There was no apparent correlation with traditional leadership.

\textsuperscript{79} F.D. Lugard, \textit{The Dual Mandate}, pp. 196-7.
advice', and in 1906 they were said already to have proved of service. An embryonic element of self-government already existed in the Anglican mission, evidenced by the annual Anniversary meetings of non-European staff and 'native representatives'.

These councils then lapsed, for unspecified reasons, but were revived in 1912, when the non-European Anniversary meeting adopted a suggestion of the annual conference. In 1913 the Bishop devoted part of his annual address to the question of 'Native Self-Government', looking forward to reports on the progress of the councils. It was this address which first attracted Murray's attention; he wrote to the Bishop expressing interest and asking for further information.

At the annual conference of 1914 the results of the councils were described as 'more than encouraging'. The constitution of the councils had changed from the original proposal of 1905 - this perhaps explains the success of their revival. Now the numbers of elected and nominated members were equal, and meetings were presided over by the priest. Nevertheless, the object of the councils was stated to be 'to

81) Ibid. These were held in August, the conference of senior (European) staff in May.
82) Address delivered Daguna, 28.5.1913, p.3. (Copy made available by Mission headquarters, Daguna).
83) Judge Murray to Bishop of New Guinea, 12.9.1913 (172/15), CPI (Terr.), 3, Set 15.
foster in natives a sense of responsibility, which they greatly need. Their functions were supposed to be confined to church matters: the building of churches and schools, and counselling with regard to the fitness of candidates for baptism and confirmation. In 1914 the councils at Wamira and Wedau had overcome some village opposition in the voluntary building of churches; but the councils had gone further at Boianai and Vurawara, conducting open-air services every evening in the villages to reach the non-Christians. At Boianai, under the influence of Rev. S.R.M. Gill, the council built 'a very fine hall' in the village and was 'energetic in attending to the cleaning up of the village and the making of roads'. These councils met once a month, and discussed with the priest the work needing to be done, and new areas requiring to be opened up by the mission.  

The Boianai council was first noticed by a patrol officer, K. Bushell, in July 1914. He reported enthusiastically:

An admirable institution, which has recently been installed in the Boianai district, is the native village council, which undoubtedly imparts a valuable influence among the people. Boianai is a very populous and compact district comprising some six big villages. Each village is represented on the Council by two members who are elected by the people of the village, and the term of office is twelve months. Any reforms considered necessary are discussed and decided upon. Such features are untidy roads, old houses and dirty villages; these are brought to the Council's notice and a resolution is passed asking the Village Constables to have the

85) Ibid., 1912-3, p.12.
86) Ibid., 1913-4, pp. 11-2.
trouble remedied. The members of the particular village in question, or "in trouble", use their influence with the result that I found no feature that the most fastidious Government Officer could find fault with. Houses, villages, roads, were in first-class order and the value of this new innovation was noticeable through the villages.

Murray made no official comment, but drew the attention of the Commissioner for Native Affairs to the report. When he visited Boianai himself, however, in September 1915, he discounted native responsibility and gave all the credit to the missionary, Gill:

A wonderful place - Gill the missionary a genius. It is generations ahead of any other village. Scrupulously clean, houses better built, no crime, no absentees from school. Gill runs the whole show but so that the Village Council think they run it themselves. They are lavish in their donations of food - his difficulty is to get them to accept payment.

By 1917 the village councils seem to have become an accepted part of Anglican policy, for their constitution and

87) Samarai P.R. A129/1914, 11.7.14. He gives an extended account in K. Bushell, Papuan Epic, pp.300-3, where he states that it was the first institution of its kind in Papua. He estimated the Boianai population at 'about 6000' and said that the council met weekly, and also dealt with such matters as sickness and crime in the district, offenders being taken to the V.C.s and difficulties being taken to Rev. Gill. In retrospect it is difficult to grasp the administrative attitude of an officer such as Bushell, for at about this time he was alleged to have 'used a stick pretty freely' on some Ferguson Is. natives (comment, A.R.M. McAlpine, Samarai P.R. 11/1915). Presumably he did not realize the consultative significance of the Boianai council.

88) Ibid., jacket direction, manu.

89) Murray's diary (Mitchell A3139), 4.9.1915.
functions were formalized. At this period Gill and the Boianai council were still very active; the councillors asked Gill to start a boarding school for girls, and they were said to realize that it was their own responsibility to keep the villages clean — an obligation in law policed by the V.C."s.

The Administration, however, appears to have paid no more attention to the councils. A.R.M. Borrows in January, 1915 dealt exclusively with village constables. Relations particularly with the Wedau natives steadily worsened. In 1916 several men were fined for having been 'deliberately neglectful' of Administration orders. By 1924 even those Wedau natives living close to the mission station were said to have dirty villages. A.R.M. Vivian re-asserted paternalism:

... the remedy lies in more frequent patrols instilling into the people the necessity of living in a befitting manner, on the pain of being punished.

The L.M.S. at this time was following a policy similar to that of the Anglican mission. The mission had become worried about the divisions within the church caused by

90) Gerald, Bishop of N.G., Diocese of New Guinea: Its Rules and Methods, (1917), pp. 27-8. The constitution and functions were similar to those at Boianai, except that it was specified that mission teachers were not members ex officio: 'Often it is best to have purely "village men"'.


92) Samarai P.R. 12/1916.

93) Samarai P.R. 14/1923-4, March 1924. Vivian seems to have had a personal preference for the L.M.S. — he notes (ibid.) 'sound training, by the L.M.S. at all events, in the direction of social betterment'.
traditional segmentation; in 1915 the District Committee decided 'to form church councils wherever the church life of the district is sufficiently developed'. This was then carried out in most districts, although the councils are said to have been for fellowship and discussion rather than for decision making. In 1919 the L.M.S. officially announced the policy of a self-supporting and self-governing Native Papuan Church; financial committees were already being conducted by the natives themselves. Meanwhile, Kwato had been moving in this direction, even before the rift with the L.M.S. Logea had been the site of large-scale experiments with mission plantations, run co-operatively, in 1911. By about the end of World War I Logea natives also had a council functioning:

At Logea, the community nearest to Kwato, the Christians organized their own council of members, elected from each village, to look after the order in the villages, and to deal with the matters that affect the common welfare of the people. The council was an exact reproduction of the Kwato council, a body that met at stated intervals, and was responsible for making, altering and maintaining the laws on Kwato, as well as for administering discipline. Abel was never forgetful of the ultimate goal of independence, for his people. More and more they were entering into the work, and were beginning to bear the burden of it themselves. The council at Logea, quite an august body, was a great success. They were recognized by the Government, to whom they were responsible, and who co-operated with them in their first efforts at self-determination. Many public improvements to houses and roads were the out-

94) N. Goodall, op.cit., pp.441-2.
—come of the council’s work. With the aid of Government a communal plantation was formed, though they needed to be assured that the venture was really theirs and that outside agencies were entirely disinterested. The Logea council was the forerunner of similar councils in other communities that have been of great value in awakening a sense of responsibility and in helping the people to realize that the Government is a power working in their best interests. These elementary first steps in racial self-consciousness were greatly welcomed by those who had the welfare of these people at heart, and who know the intense individualism and lack of corporate feeling in the Papuan.

This was a development peculiarly suited to Kwato’s methods of evangelizing; for in each village there tended to be a small Kwato-trained elite, literate and at least superficially Europeanised, to which the villagers looked for leadership. Because of the great influence of this elite, Kwato was not so concerned with the delimitation of functions of councillors later laid down by the government; for it was able independently to manipulate pressures against ‘back-siders’.

The Anglican mission, however, remained concerned about the failing influence of the older men and social disintegration which resulted in the villages. The Bishop in 1930 sent Murray an advance copy of a suggestion, later published, that the councillor system be further developed.

Newton wrote:

96) R. Abel, op. cit., pp.170-1. The references to the making of laws and administering of discipline are particularly significant. Even at Keveri, Williams (loc. cit., p.114) had noted that the village leaders were ‘all men with Kwato at heart’.
The Government has a system of village councillors who are supposed to advise and help the magistrates in their work in the villages. Perhaps some development of this system might be devised to help the transition stage. If some real authority, and perhaps some right to punish young men for neglect of work in gardens, in the villages, or other minor things could be given to councillors who are old men, the transition would be easier.

What was construed as the serious decline in social discipline also preoccupied the Rev. Saville (L.M.S.) at Mailu. He was particularly interested in the introduction of the assessor system. In 1931 he wrote that the mission was independently encouraging each congregation to settle its own affairs: it is clear that these functions overlapped those of the Administration and of the native officials. Every month the misconduct of any members was discussed in the presence of the offender; those guilty of sorcery, for example, were awarded 'Church punishment'. 'All kinds of things arise at these gatherings', said Saville; and the natives were encouraged to ventilate them.

This discussion has anticipated the appointment of government councillors; but the special interests and emphases of the missions are obviously extremely important. Clearly the Administration was strongly influenced by the mission councils, for in eastern Papua from the beginning of the scheme in 1925 councillors were regarded as members of a council rather than as individuals, which was the case.

97) M.J. Stone-Wigg (revised H.Newton), The Papuans: A People of the South Pacific, pp.62-5; also CPI, V, 16/44.
elsewhere. Other factors which favoured this approach were the reaction to the scattered nature of native settlement (which was wrongly believed to be due to fissiparous tendencies brought about by law and order), and the extent of Native Plantations at the time councillors were appointed (the plantations providing a focus for joint effort, and indeed in some places a raison d'être for councillors' appointments).

(v) Administration Councils and Councillors

R.M. Lyons began defining council 'districts' in Milne Bay in May, 1925. The bases of definition were not at the time laid down, though from later comments it can be deduced that traditional co-operation was the main criterion. The cohesive influence if Kwato was also clearly important. The concept of 'councils' - note, not 'councillors' - was explained to gatherings within these districts and, unsupervised, they were asked to select three councillors for each district within a week. In some instances this entailed some alterations to the areas of jurisdiction of the village constables, for it was stated that these were not to extend beyond the council districts. The concept was outlined to four districts within three days, in Milne Bay. 99

Lyons was not sanguine that the natives of the Eastern Division would take up the council concept as had those in the Western Division. He listed two major obstacles, as he

saw them: firstly, the 'matriarchal' social organisation (the nature and potential effects of this were not defined); and secondly, the tendency to decentralise, or to break up into smaller groups, which he wrongly believed had been made possible by law and order; as I have shown, scattered hamlets were traditionally typical of the Southern Massim. Nevertheless the fact that the R.M. had this reserve about promoting councils must be taken into account in assessing their implementation.

The demarcation of council districts was completed in Milne Bay in March, 1926, with ten districts. On current population figures - there has probably been no increase - this would give an average of about 500 natives in each 'district'. A.R.M. Leonard, like Lyons, was again careful to group together those people who had 'cordial relations' with one another. There can be little doubt, from the reports, that at this stage the councillors were looked upon primarily as executive assistants.

Leonard looked forward to improvements in village housing, which some weak village constables had proved incapable of securing; he urged (and Murray agreed) that the councillors should be issued with a badge by government, to

100) Report 1925-6, p.36. Lyons repeated the inhibiting influence of the 'matriarchy' in a private letter to the writer dated 17.7.1959; but he clearly had no understanding of the meaning of the term, nor could he explain how the relatively high status of women was a deterrent.
raise their prestige and hence their efficiency. 101

Meanwhile, Lyons had extended the council concept to the south coast. His caution in grouping the natives was warmly commended by Murray. The L.M.S. missionaries, Saville at Mailu and Rich at Fife Bay, were consulted on projected groupings; of Saville, Lyons said that -

he had the knowledge of the early relationship between the village groups, and this will assist me to avoid grouping people in villages not over-cordial in their past relations to each other. 102

Along the south coast there were six council districts as far west as Mayri Bay. Some councillors had districts of considerable size to look after: for example, three councillors shared all the villages in Tauwaliha Bay and Baxter Bay. It was unfortunate that the object of the Administration in working through the councillors was so transparent; this applied particularly to the Native Plantations, for which the councillors were given special responsibility. Resistance was resented. A.R.M. Leonard noted that most 'men of influence' in Baxter Bay were opposed to the idea of having a plantation there. These men, he said, were mostly in their middle twenties and had 'retired' with sufficient cash to pay tax for the rest of their lives after working in 'sheltered occupations' as houseboys and hotel waiters, occupations which gave a veneer of sophistication

101) Samarai P.R. 9/1925–6. Appended comments by Murray. The badge became, and remains, the mark of a councillor.

102) Samarai P.R. 1/1925–6, July 1925. Rich was asked to put on paper his ideas of the best groupings of villages further east.
as well as money. Their agricultural efforts produced enough for them to subsist on, therefore they were violently opposed to the idea of labour on plantations. 103

The connection between the appointment of councillors and the supervision of Native Plantations was even more marked in the islands which at that time formed the separate South-Eastern Division. On Panaeati Is. (Panaete) the forming of 'village councils' and the establishment of the Torlesse Native Plantation were raised simultaneously with the headmen. 104 In these islands where supervision was even more infrequent than on the mainland, the fear seems to have been that the councillors would have nothing specific to do: on Panaeati, as elsewhere, there were frequent complaints that councillors had only a vague idea of their duties. Plantation responsibilities overcame this, as well as returning half the proceeds to the government. 105 In 1927 the R.M. urged the V.C. and councillors to 'use their influence' to see that people worked on the plantation. 106

In 1932 a new 'boss-boy' of the plantation at Torlesse

103) Samarai P.R. 14/1925-6, May 1926. Note Murray, Papua of Today, p.125: 'our natives ... are usually under no strong economic compulsion to go to work, for they can, as a rule, live fairly well in their villages'.


105) Ibid., 1/1927-8, 10.8.27. In the Loughlan Is. the R.M. urged the councillors to 'buck their people up' in copra-making (ibid., 10/1925-6).

106) Bwagoia P.R. 7/1927-8. Elsewhere also the councillors were clearly held responsible for the state of the plantations - see Abau P.R. 10/1926-7.
complained of 'interference' by two councillors, supporters of his dismissed predecessor, with the result that they were dismissed also, and two other 'aged men' were chosen as councillors.¹⁰⁷ On R.M. Rentoul's patrols in 1931 the principal function of the councillors seems to have been to inspect the Native Plantations with the village constables.¹⁰⁸

This motive was even more bluntly stated in the area of Woodlark, patrolled from Kulumadau. In 1926 when 'councils' were in process of formation, the R.M. told the Government Secretary that one was to be set up at the Muniweo Plantation group of villages; this, he said, would help the smooth running of plantation operations.¹⁰⁹ When appointing councillors in the eastern part of the island in 1928, A.R.M. Rogerson remarked: 'Having a councillor at these places will help considerably in getting instructions carried out'.¹¹⁰

In June 1926 the council scheme was extended to the north-east coast and to Goodenough. There are indications that the appointment of councillors went ahead too quickly; inevitably the appointees were uncertain of their functions.

¹⁰⁷) Bwagoia P.R. 1/1932-3.
¹¹⁰) Kulumadau P.R. 2/1928-9, 10.10.1928. Waiavat village. It was felt that the councillors could overcome difficulties with a trading population, for when the V.C. was absent instructions could be left with the councillors.
as were many Administration officers. More seriously in 1928 in the Wedau area it was found that all three councillors belonged to the smallest of the four clans; the A.R.M. himself, therefore, chose one councillor from the three major clans, with the V.C. belonging to the fourth. \footnote{111}

This was the equitable pattern of appointment also adopted by A.R.M. Grist at Mailu in 1926. \footnote{112} In the area patrolled from Abau a similar pattern was adopted to that in the other parts of the Eastern and South-Eastern Divisions: that is, villages or hamlets were grouped into districts, each of which was generally represented by three councillors. Grist, however, was very conscious of the divisions within the authority systems of the Mailu people produced by culture change, and he therefore chose the councillors himself. He tried to reconcile government needs and village preferences in selection: at Boru, east of Abau he -

Went into the question of a councillor and decided eventually on one Tavili, a married man with a family and some influence in the village. It is better, I think, to choose the elders in the villages for the position, especially among the Magi people (Mailu) where they have a great deal of influence as a rule. \footnote{113}

Similarly, at Mailu the appointees were the old men 'who are regarded as the head of the clan, and although I am not at all certain that they are the best men for the work.

\footnote{111}{Samarai P.R. 16/1925-6, 15/1926-7, 2/1928-9.}
\footnote{112}{Abau P.R. 1/1926-7.}
\footnote{113}{Ibid.}
it is worth a trial to see if they really have the power they are alleged to wield'.

Grist was determined that they should wield this power as the Administration decided; if they did not do so he was quite prepared to forego traditional leadership. For this reason he was convinced that there would have to be many changes of personnel - 'a judicious weeding-out process' - before groups of councillors could be got who would 'materially assist in ordering the life of the village'.

Because of this emphasis on their executive responsibility it was a logical step, once the traditional leaders had been abandoned, to regard appointment as a councillor as one step on the way to becoming village constable. Selecting a V.C. from amongst the councillors became quite common. It was a corollary that, in selecting councillors, an officer should have his eye out for potential V.C.s, an attitude which inevitably altered the criteria for selection.

114) Ibid. He intended to restrict the councillors to the coastal villages, 30.7.26.

115) Ibid.

116) Grist was watching this when making his initial appointments - ibid.; also Abau P.R. 2/1926-7; Samarai P.R. 6/1928-9, 8/1932-3. However, when A.R.M. Flint extended councillors to the mountain Dimuqa people, he went to the other extreme and allowed them to select not only their own councillors but their own V.C.s (Abau P.R. 8/1927-8). At this period it was found particularly difficult in Milne Bay to get natives to exercise authority on behalf of government - the A.R.M. expressed dissatisfaction with the younger appointees possessing 'pushful ways' and a knowledge of English. This may well have influenced the Administration here to proceed to extensive councils, rather than relying on individuals (see Samarai P.R. 11/1927-8; 2/30-1).
Councillors' Exercise of Judicial Functions

The missionaries had seen the councillors as an institution which might help to restore 'discipline' and tame the wild younger men in the villages; hence their argument for rudimentary judicial functions. As early as 1927 A.R.M. Leonard, assessing the first twelve months of working with councillors, stated that one of the major successes had been in the suppression of crime. He doubted whether 28 V.C.s and 21 councillors along the south coast, for example, could have entered into a conspiracy to conceal offences, though there had been no occasion for a single sitting of the Court for Native Matters. One of the reasons, he felt, was that the settlement of civil disputes out of court, through the councillors, achieved a more binding settlement than a mere court order, for 'it takes a brave man to defy public opinion in a small community'. Significantly, the Milne Bay councillors consulted him on points of law, particularly concerning depredations by pigs in gardens.

There was, therefore, already a tendency for councillors to assume that they could act in a semi-official capacity in settling disputes. Under mission influence they occasionally went further; on Goodenough the Methodist

---

117) Samarai P.R. 21/1926-7; General Remarks. In Feb. 1928 A.R.M. Crildland echoed the same sentiments, though he clearly recognized that the V.C.s and councillors were settling cases themselves - Samarai P.R. 16/1927-8.

118) Samarai P.R. 5/1927-8, 11.9.27.
missionary, impatient of dilatory government appointments, appointed his own councillors, and authorised them to impose fines, in coconuts, on those who refused to obey him. This necessitated a public enquiry attended by about 2,000 natives at which the A.R.M. insisted that only a magistrate had the power to inflict fines and punishments. 119

The assessor system was introduced into eastern Papua in 1930. 120 A.R.M. Atkinson made use of the councillors and 'some of the men of the village' in Milne Bay, 'just as a Jury is used in other places'. 121 Indeed, from the beginning the councillors and occasional elders who sat as assessors exercised functions far beyond what is generally understood by the term: they adjudged guilt or innocence as well as assessing punishment, and settled disputes brought to Court, sometimes quite independently of the magistrate. 122

When, in 1931 and following years, the Administration promoted larger area councils in Milne Bay and on the north-east and south coasts, informal Native Authorities had in effect been established. They lacked only their own executive.

119) Rev. A. Waters. Samarai P.R. 16/1925-6. In 1926 the Rabe councillors in Milne Bay were found to be enforcing Sunday observance as a law - Samarai P.R. 3/1926-7, Sept. 1926.

120) Abau P.R. 1/1930-1, July 1930.

121) Samarai P.R. 6/1930-1: 'Assessors'.

122) Samarai P.R. 3/1932-3. In a land dispute in Milne Bay, the magistrate decided that an expression of opinion by the 'assessors' would be more binding than any judgment he could make.
The first of these meetings, in September 1931, brought together all the V.C.s and councillors on the north side of Milne Bay, from Bou to Rabi. One of the objects of these meetings was to disseminate government propaganda, though Murray was of course also conscious of the need to break down traditional suspicions and antipathies. At the same time Murray had become increasingly aware of the need to preserve custom; from this standpoint he was therefore more sympathetic to mission arguments, noted above, for officially recognizing native jurisdiction. It is notable that the only active function of this first meeting was to adjudicate in a matrimonial dispute, which officials were forbidden to deal with. This case was heard publicly; in effect, the councillors sat as a court administering customary law.

It proved extremely difficult to get the councillors at these large meetings to discuss village affairs; but they were ready to give their opinions on punishments that should be awarded for breaches of the Native Regulations.

A meeting of 15 councillors on the north-east coast, in January 1932, raised the question of declining village authority more directly. The elders complained that in the

123) Samarai P.R. 3/1931-2; see H. Murray, *Papua of Today*, p.x.
124) Ibid.
125) Samarai P.R. 4/1931-2. This was a similar meeting for councillors on the south side. They considered penalties for adultery and sorcery too lenient, and recommended public beatings to 'shame' the offender.
old days their word had been law; but now when they gave an order the young men simply went off to a plantation for a few months. They felt the need for some local mechanism for re-asserting their authority. Murray felt that their complaint was 'especially justified during a transition period - as at present in Papua'.

By 1932 the meetings in all areas in the Eastern Division were being held at three-monthly intervals. The October meeting on the north side of Milne Bay was categorised by the A.R.M. as 'very successful'; Murray thought so much of it that he sent details to Canberra and commented on it in the annual report. The influence of Kwato is clearly discernable in the tone and trend of the resolutions. The meeting was left entirely to the councillors. They resolved that gardens and houses should be made for widows and their children; that people who disobeyed orders to clean roads and the village should be punished by forcing them to do other useful work; that villages be built according to a regular plan; that food be made available at government rest-houses; that the old and the sick be assisted; that natives eligible for tax be warned to get it ready, and those not


127) Ibid., Murray's handwritten comment on jacket.
What is notable about this meeting, is that the councils were in fact legislating, and that they were threatening to back up their orders with sanctions, with the approval or at least connivance of Murray and the local officials.

Moreover, at the same meeting the council administered customary law by awarding compensation for the death of a child. This Murray especially commended, noting that it was no doubt bad law, but that it was good in Milne Bay, for no one dreamed of disputing it. Murray was proud of the 'high level' of capacity shown by the natives at this meeting; he hoped for similar competence particularly in Port Moresby, and in the North-Eastern and Western Divisions, where the councillors seemed to be well entrenched. Murray generally looked forward to the councillors' adjudicating in customary disputes.

Thus, the functions being performed by councillors, acting in concert in the Eastern Division, turned out to be very similar to what the missions had urged. Mission influence continued to be noticeable in the resolutions.


129) Report 1933-4, p.25.

130) Murray to Sec. Canberra, 7.12.32, CP 141. AQ.O. 140/1/5. This also contains Atkinson's minutes.

131) Report 1932-3, p.17. He remarked, like the local officials, on the willingness of the natives to accept councillors' decisions.
carried by the councils, representing an effort to reshape village life, with the Administration's semi-official backing, according to mission values. For example, in March 1933 a meeting of councillors to the east of Mullins Harbour carried resolutions (over the protests of the A.R.M.) imposing a 9 p.m. curfew in the villages and asking the government to pass a law preventing the association of men and women after that hour.\footnote{132}

Indeed, the missions continued to arrange periodical meetings of village leaders over wide areas. In the 1930s Kwato in particular was concentrating on evangelisation through its elite, some of whom were councillors. One Papuan Leaders' Conference, held in Milne Bay, brought together 180 men 'from most parts of the district', including the primitive Mt. Thompson area.\footnote{133} On occasions village opinion on government proposals was canvassed through the missionaries.\footnote{134}

The most remarkable aspect of the use of councillors in eastern Papua at this time is undoubtedly the development of their judicial functions; for during this same period Murray was specifically rejecting the precedents of African native courts as being applicable to Papua, and gloomily

\footnote{132) Samarai P.R. 10/1932-3, A.R.M. Atkinson.}
\footnote{133) R. Abel, op.cit., p.249. Rich of the L.M.S. also held meetings on the south coast.}
\footnote{134) Samarai P.R. 14/1927-8, 9.2.28. R.M. Lyons asked Rev. Saville to consult Mailu elders on the proposal for a new mainland village. 'He will advise me in due course'.}
anticipating lengthy preparation before natives could develop a 'judicial mind'. Although he continued to reflect that their judgments were 'coloured with personal feeling, fear of sorcery, and other external considerations', nevertheless the 'assessors' continued to give judgments as well as to assess penalties, and in fact to adjudicate on what were assumed to be purely customary matters quite independently. As Murray remarked, sending details of 77 Abau cases to Canberra, it was a waste of the time of skilled officers adjudicating on offences involving a bunch of bananas or a few coconuts. Conceptually therefore he went more than half way towards a native courts system; but his inhibitions about native conceptions of justice prevented him from going further. Neither he nor his officers had the slightest check on what was done in these informal courts; this does not appear to have troubled him. However, he was encouraged by the work of the assessors, so much so that in 1939 he asked the R.M. of the South-Eastern Division whether he knew of any natives who could act as Magistrates for

136) Murray to Sec. Canberra, 9.7.1937. CPI V. 16/48. The 77 cases heard dealt with matters as diverse as assault, adultery, civil claims, careless use of fire, wife and child maintenance, stealing, spreading lying reports, and threatening behaviour. Up to 9 assessors sat together, and gave judgments as well as penalties. This was seen partly as training. Murray generally commended councillors' settlement of cases 'out of court', 'although of course their advice or decision or whatever you like to call it has no binding force whatever' - draft autobiog., Murray Papers Mitchell A.3138, p.196.
Native Matters 'or in any other magisterial or judicial capacity'. The R.M. suggested two men and recommended one, a telephone mechanic possessing an extensive knowledge of court routine and 'an extraordinary lack of bias'.

There were, indeed, generally hopeful signs that, had the war not supervened, changes in outlook within the Administration might have forced changes in methods that were extensive and permanent rather than local and experimental. The impression was growing within the Administration that the natives had, and perhaps were entitled to have, methods, morals, and aspirations of their own, and that these could not be submerged simply by legislating. As the R.M. wrote to the Government Secretary in 1941 on the question of gambling: 'One cannot control morals by Statutory Rules'.

Even in the more backward parts of the district, ill-prepared for consultative institutions, there were some indications of different emphases, if not a change, in administrative attitudes. There was little opportunity for consultation in the d'Entrecasteaux, largely because of terrain and the dispersal of population. In May 1933 the V.C.s and councillors from Dobu and Ewaio were brought together by the


138) R.M. S.E.D. to Gov. Sec., 6.10.41. This was a change from 1933, when the R.M. endorsed the restrictions on the wearing of clothing by natives 'on account of its effects on both the morals and health of the natives, who have to be protected against themselves by this very wise regulation.' (ibid. 11/23/33).
Administration to discuss the violation of traditional kula practices; but such opportunities for convention were limited. In 1941 P.O. Timperley remarked that Dauwada (Normanby Is.) was 'one of the few areas where councillors are helpful'. Timperley's conception of 'helpful', however, consisted primarily of a willingness on the part of the councillors to have instructions obeyed. His patrols were conducted at breakneck speed and left little time for question, discussion, or argument. He conceived it as his function to 'shake up' the village constables, and he set a premium on unquestioning obedience:

These Meudana people seem to be the pick of Normanby Island ... Meudana folk are a very obedient crowd and their roads and villages for the most part are the finest I have seen since I arrived at Mapamoiwa.

Both the R.M. of the Division and the Administrator commended Timperley for 'fine work'; but it was perhaps again a sign of better things that his predecessor at Mapamoiwa, A.R.M. F.A. Champion, raised some doubts about Timperley's methods:

I have learnt from my experiences in the Gollala country that if the natives are continually harassed and bullied they break up into small family groups and live in the bush and treat the Government as an enemy instead of a friend. I think that an appeal to their finer instincts will do far more good than filling up the country's gaols.

139) Mapamoiwa P.R. 5/1932-3. This patrol post was set up in 1927.
140) Mapamoiwa P.R. 11/1940-1.
141) Ibid., 2.4.41. Timperley had previously been in uncontrolled frontier areas - see Appendix C, II.
CHAPTER III
POLICY AND PRACTICE

3. The Trobriand Islands: Chieftainship and Direct Rule.

(i) The Comparative Setting.

The British system of indirect rule was branded as long ago as 1936, by a former Nigerian official, as 'a formula' and 'an occult science'. Since the war many of the younger African nationalists have seen the system as 'a sort of quasi-apartheid policy'. These criticisms stem largely from what is believed to be the failure to develop the system, so that it has held native peoples back from achieving advanced standards, particularly politically. What is overlooked is the socially dynamic aspect which indirect rule took on in the 1920s and 1930s; as Mair defined it, 'the system devised by Lord Lugard and Sir Donald Cameron consists in the progressive adaptation of native institutions to modern conditions'. Lord Stanmore, who had applied the principle in Fiji, certainly saw the dynamic aspect in Lugard's policy, involving 'the power to make them (native

1) W.R. Crocker, Nigeria, p. 215.
2) N.U. Akpan, Epitaph to Indirect Rule, p. 29.
3) L.P. Mair, Native Policies in Africa, p. 56.
races) act in their own way ... in the direction in which he wishes them to go'. Cameron spoke of Nigerians 'developing in a constitutional manner from their own past'; at the same time where genuine tribal authorities could not be revived or created he admitted direct administration.

While it is undeniable that certain of the repercussions of indirect rule have been embarrassing from the administrative and political standpoints, it is equally undeniable that indirect rule, during stressful transition stages, has enabled development with cohesion; indeed, tribal socio-political cohesion has sometimes strengthened. Where the difficulty arises at present in Africa is in the balance between the educated unranked natives and the traditional rulers; Lugard tended to treat the administrative rather than the basic political aspect of this problem.

In view of the history of indirect rule in Africa and in parts of the Pacific, and in view of Sir Hubert Murray's

4) Quoted M. Perham, Lugard, I, p.371. The Fijian version of indirect rule was rather more 'direct' than Lugard's, however. My italics.
5) D. Cameron, The Principles of Native Administration and their Application, p.1; p.7: Cameron also waxed strong on the dangers of reactionary native authorities.
8) F.D. Lugard, The Dual Mandate, pp. 84-5.
9) The Spate Report on Fiji (1959) is highly critical of the stagnation, relative to the Indians, brought about by the adherence to the principle.
interest in the system, the policy that was followed in the Trobriands, the only part of Papua possessing powerful chiefs and a system of rank, is particularly interesting. Moreover, the problems that have arisen in Africa are only just emerging in the Trobriands, for an educated elite hardly exists, while native local government is still to be introduced.\(^\text{10}\) Despite a tradition of most direct rule in the Papuan administration, and a fluctuating policy which often took little account of traditional leadership, the culture of the islands and the power of the chiefs seem today little altered from what they were in Malinowski's time.\(^\text{11}\)

(ii) The Social System.

The intensive research and brilliant analytic writing of Malinowski reveal in retrospect however, the stresses to which Trobriands chieftainship has been subjected. Malinowski showed that chieftainship in the Trobriands is a combination of two institutions: headmanship, implying authority over a village community; and totemic clanship, whereby the islands are divided into castes, each with a more

\(^{10}\) During 1959 Mr. C. Julius, Government Anthropologist, spent six months in the islands with a view to recommending how local government could best be implemented. His report was not available. The population of the islands is about 10,000.

There are four matrilineal totemic clans, each divided into a number of sub-clans, which to some extent are localised in village-clusters. The pre-eminence of the Tabalu sub-clan of the Malasi totem clan is recognized everywhere; although the relative position of the lower ranks is debated, residents in various village-clusters tending to regard their own guyau sub-clan as next to the Tabalu.  

The most important features of chieftainship to the Administration and the mission have been its support by polygamy and sorcery. These fitted within the framework of competition, for rank and heredity did not of themselves confer authority, the right to which had to be earned; this process was governed by a complex pattern of reciprocity. Within any particular village-cluster belonging to a sub-clan, competition for leadership depended largely on energy in making presentations to senior members of the sub-clan (pokala) and, partly as a result, being allocated larger responsibilities in meeting the sub-clan's urigubu obligations towards the husbands of women in the sub-clan.  

12) B. Malinowski, Argonauts of the Western Pacific, p.62.  
13) Powell, loc. cit., p.129; M. Groves, Man 1956, 190; Julius (loc. cit., p.59) feels that the main Toliwaga chief may have lived in Toboada, not Kabwaku, as assumed by earlier officials and by Malinowski.  
Special conditions, however, applied to the guyau sub-clans, which had added rights and powers and privileges. The Tabalu possess special magic controlling the weather, capable of influencing the fortunes of all Kiriwina. Every member of the Tabalu, including women, enjoyed the personal privileges accorded those of highest rank. A wide range of taboos and ceremonial applied to rank, which the chiefs vigorously protected by employing powerful sorcery or by having paid henchmen put transgressors to death. A really ambitious guyau leader, however, built up and maintained his power by an extensive pattern of marriages, usually facilitated by his predecessor's marriages into other sub-clans. This gave him a number of tributary alliances, from which he drew a yearly income in yams, services, and tokens of respect, and participation by his allies, on his behalf, in wars, festivals and expeditions. Malinowski remarked that polygamy was thus 'the foundation of a chief's or Headman's power', because of its tributary aspect, adding that 'Power in the Trobriands is essentially plutocratic'.

15) Ibid., p.128; B. Malinowski, The Sexual Life of Savages, p.133.
17) Ibid., pp.31-2; B. Malinowski, Crime and Custom in Savage Society, p.92.
18) Powell, loc. cit., p.131.
20) Ibid., pp.34, 130.
THE TROBRIAND ISLANDS

- Government Station
- Methodist Mission Headquarters

(Note: 'Kiriwina' is sometimes applied to the whole group, sometimes to the main island, and sometimes to the N.E. of the main island.)
the Tabalu guyau of Omarakana.\textsuperscript{23} In 1885, however, Enamakala had laid waste most of the villages of Tilataula, apparently because the Toliwaga of Kabwaku had refused his demands for a wife.\textsuperscript{24} At this point the government arrived. (iii) Initial Control by Submission.

In 1892 MacGregor called the Trobriands 'the last really unknown important group of islands in the Possession' but their contact with traders, generally of a poor type, had been extensive.\textsuperscript{25} MacGregor immediately recognized that the social system was unique in British New Guinea:

Of course the chief in every instance received special consideration at my hands, but there was no difficulty in putting them in the position of inferior chiefs towards the Administrator. Good opportunities occurred several times for doing this publicly ...\textsuperscript{26}

During the early years MacGregor and Enamakala were on friendly terms. Enamakala offered gifts, which MacGregor interpreted as a sign of submission - for overt submission he demanded everywhere\textsuperscript{27}. Enamakala was informally enlisted

\textsuperscript{23} Ibid., p.142.
\textsuperscript{24} Ibid., also Seligmann, op.cit., pp.664-8.
\textsuperscript{26} Report 1891-2, p.4. At Kavataria (p.6) he turned a number of men off the central platform in the village, and sat there himself.
\textsuperscript{27} Report 1892-3, p.10. It is quite possible that chiefs such as Enamakala did not have the authority which MacGregor, or even Malinowski, attributed to them. In a forthcoming book, Politics of the Kula Ring, J. Singh argues that the relative authority of these chiefs (cf. the Sinaketans for example) was exaggerated.
in government staff by giving him presents in return.\(^{28}\) They spent some time together discussing the relative authority of the Queen, MacGregor, the Methodist missionary Bromilow, and Enamakala himself.\(^{29}\) As MacGregor became better acquainted with the true state of affairs in the islands, however, he became more uneasy; he disapproved of widespread polygamy and suspected hostility amongst the natives and towards the traders. The Methodist mission established itself at Kavataria (Kulumata native district) in 1895, and provided a channel of communication to the Administration.\(^{30}\)

In 1895 the natives began to behave in a threatening manner towards the mission, and particularly towards the pearl-traders; MacGregor admitted provocation by the latter, whom he described as 'so reprehensible as to be in a high degree discreditable to themselves and to the colony'; in addition, their influence in many directions were quite opposed to that of the mission, so that the natives were patently confused.\(^{31}\) Nevertheless, MacGregor acted against the natives, ordering a government party to cross the island

\(^{28}\) Report 1893-4, p.19.

\(^{29}\) Ibid., pp.19-20.

\(^{30}\) Rev. George Brown had visited the island with MacGregor in 1890 (Autobiography, p.483); Report 1893-4, p.xxvi, Report 1895-6, p.xxiii.

\(^{31}\) Report 1895-6, p.32; L. Austen, Cultural Changes in Kiriwina, Oceania, XVI, 1, Sept. 1945, p.57.
and break every spear they saw, 'to put down on the spot once for all any show of resistance, and to punish promptly any defiant or provocative conduct on the part of the natives ...'.

Moreover, acting on mission-filtered information, MacGregor launched a campaign to 'reduce Enamakala to a condition of respectability'. He visited Omarakana, made Enamakala sit on the ground in front of him, told him that the domestic life he led was 'a discredit to a chief', and forbade him to take any further wives from Kavataria, where the mission was established. He was forced to grant land in Omarakana for a mission station (in 1893 he had promised it). MacGregor explained, however, that it was not desired to diminish his authority as a great chief, but rather to maintain it and enforce it, provided that his own conduct is such as to merit support.

Enamakala is reported to have perspired profusely with alarm. MacGregor was not to know that both the Regulations and the alien code of ethics to which Enamakala was being subjected cut at the very foundations of his authority; though in 1894 he had almost stumbled on the purpose of polygamy.

---

32) Ibid. The party was greeted in a friendly manner everywhere.


34) R. 1893-4, pp.19-20. In 1897 the Magistrate was also enforcing the Burial Regulations, a bone of contention between Murray and Malinowski 30 years later. MacGregor specifically warned Enamakala that he would not support a chief who kept aloof from the mission in his district – R. 1896-7, p.38.
There is little evidence that, on their hasty visits during the 1890s, officials made any real attempt to work through the chiefs, even through Enamakala. In 1896 R.M. Moreton pursued a number of murderers through Kiriwina, and eventually captured them at Kaipupu, after a struggle. No mention is made of any attempt to secure the co-operation of the chiefs. 35 MacGregor had used Enamakala's influence to stop local thieving 36; but Monckton regarded Enamakala as responsible, in some fashion, for all thieving, and marched him down to the coast under deliberately humiliating circumstances in order to force him to hand over offenders. 37

This must have seemed an admirable time for the Toliwaga to retaliate for the defeat of 1885. The attack by the Toliwaga chief, Moliasi, in 1899, hardly seems to fit Powell's analysis, however, for if warfare was undertaken to preserve a balance of power, there was no cause for the Toliwaga to act at a time when the bases of Enamakala's authority were under pressure from outside. 38 One explanation could be the tendency for some officials, Monckton for example, to exaggerate Enamakala's traditional power.

36) R. 1893-4, p.20.
38) Powell, loc.cit., p.142.
In October 1899, Rev. Fellowes of the Methodist mission reported that Moliasi of Kabwaku had driven out Enamakala and destroyed Omarakana and, further, that he was threatening 'to kill Enamakala, then the missionaries, then the Government'. At that time the Trobriands constituted part of the Eastern Division (being transferred to the South-Eastern Division in 1901) so that it took a government party almost six weeks to arrive and subdue the aggressors. Moliasi asserted, and Moreton was inclined to agree, that the root cause of the trouble was Enamakala's grasping nature. 39

(iv) The Erosion of Chiefly Power.

Nevertheless, the Administration determined to restore Enamakala to the place he had previously occupied. According to Fellowes (quoted with reservations by Seligmann) the peace-making (kabilula) fitted into the traditional pattern: it involved an exchange of gifts and the rebuilding of Omarakana by the Toliwaga and, in effect, a complete public re-submission to the Tabalu. Moreton, however, ascribed the restoration largely to government compulsion; he himself enforced the payment of 60 baskets of yams by the Toliwaga to Enamakala. This was plainly done on principle, for personally he preferred Moliasi to

both Enamakala and his heir, To'uluwa. He had thought of making Moliasi a Government Chief, but rejected the idea because he was not of 'Royal blood'; at the same time he hoped to 'get a definite charge' against To'uluwa, whom he regarded as a 'bad man' so that he could take him to Samarai for twelve months 'corrective training'; but To'uluwa's sudden accession as guyau chief forestalled him.  

Despite this personal dislike, Moreton made every effort to reestablish the Tabalu chief of Omarakana; this does not accord with Powell's conclusion that, because of the play of tradition, To'uluwa was able to rebuild his following, despite the opposition of Government personnel. The attack on the status, functions, and authority of the chiefs and especially of To'uluwa, was generally indirect, and barely realized; it resulted from the belief that the acceptance of certain standards and values must be paramount. The lack of any flexibility in the Administration's approach. Until the late 1920s the same methods were adopted and the same demands made in the Trobriands as elsewhere in the Territory, the attitude being that the chiefs would have to conform or suffer. Their traditional prerogatives were considered

41) Powell, loc.cit., p.142.
obstacles. Their authority was supported by sorcery, but sorcery had to be suppressed; they had a monopoly of the produce of the coconut and betel-nut trees, but coconut planting by all males according to Regulation 84 had to be adhered to. The tracks and villages had to be kept clean at all costs, and this was most easily done simply by gaoling slackers, not by appealing to the chiefs, although the chiefs traditionally had calls on the labour of commoners. There was none of that 'tolerance of the chief's misrule', which Lugard advocated, nor of adjusting immediate requirements to the customs and wishes of the people, which Perham described as the British ideal.

Under these conditions it is not surprising that the village constables had an exceptionally difficult task and proved unsatisfactory. As early as March 1899 Moreton reported the simultaneous gaoling of three village constables; by 1903 the group had only ten V.C.s, who were said to require constant supervision. In 1904 R.M. Campbell was appalled at the state into which the villages had fallen, and said that a government officer should be

42) Lugard, op.cit., p.220.
43) M. Perham, Native Administration in Nigeria, p.349. It is mentioned elsewhere that in Kenya the traditional leaders (e.g. Masai or Nandi laibon) were originally exempted from the proscription on sorcery.
stationed permanently there. A.R.M. Bellamy opened the government station at Losuia on 6th October 1905. Bellamy was a Cambridge graduate with an interest in anthropology; nevertheless, he looked forward to the liberation of the commoners from the fear of the chiefs' displeasure, which he regarded as baneful, and Murray concurred.

It was made quite clear that the chiefs' prerogatives were not to stand in the way of the Administration's purposes. Admittedly, Bellamy's task was difficult for his prime responsibility was to treat the rampant venereal disease in the islands, and this left him little time for other administration. In one period of seven months he examined 6395 natives for the disease. But as soon as he began he was at loggerheads with some of the chiefs: on his first patrol, in Sinaketa, he found that the chief, who was also a village constable, was 'unco-operative and apathetic', so much so that he had to be restrained from obstructionism by the Constabulary. Up to this time chiefs had

46) R. 1905-6, p.35. Austen says the station was opened in 1907 (loc.cit., p.19); this must refer only to confirmation of permanence.
47) R. 1906-7, pp.65-6, 14.
48) J.H.P. Murray, Papua or B.N.G., pp.126-7. The system of chiefs was not 'an unmixed benefit'. Bellamy thought that the new generation of enlightened chiefs would abandon authority based on fear.
50) R. 1905-6, p.35.
generally been selected as village constables; but Bellamy concluded that they were 'worse than useless', for they had rights to the labour of commoners and were therefore reluctant to have them sent to gaol for breaches of the law. The selection of chiefs as village constables was therefore discontinued. This policy was publicly endorsed by Murray in 1912, and again as late as 1924. It does not seem to have occurred to anyone that a more flexible application of the laws might have saved the chiefs, or that alternative sanctions might have been found.

About 1907 Bellamy also began systematically enforcing the Regulation providing for the compulsory planting of coconuts. This was again opposed by the chiefs, for it made nuts available to commoners whereas they had a traditional monopoly of all nuts in the islands; being able to make gifts of coconuts was one of the privileges of high rank. The effects of compulsory planting were not felt for seven or eight years, when the trees came into bearing; but it was a constant source of friction between the Administration and the chiefs. It was common for chiefs to be made culpable.

51) R. 1906-7, p. 14; Murray, op. cit., pp. 244-5; Murray to Sec. Canberra (answering Pitt-Rivers' criticisms on the destruction of traditional authorities) 11.7.1924. CPI.V.16/32/1.

one occasion Bellamy mentions having 'made himself unpleasant' to a particularly prominent man to secure 'co-operation'.

The destruction of the chiefs' monopolies was not entirely of the Administration's doing. Austen had pointed out that the introduction of steel tools gave the commoners added independence, for it made their cultivation of the chiefs' gardens less onerous and time-consuming; moreover, the pearl-traders often paid commoners in pigs and betel-nut, also formerly restricted to the chiefs. In retrospect Austen regretted that these facts were not realized, and that nothing was done to bolster the chiefs' authority.

In point of fact, the Administration before the first world war made it policy to destroy these monopolies. Bellamy described an instance from N.E. Kiriwina, where the chief of Kaibola tried to retain his privileges; he was told that the government no longer permitted them.

He replied, "Government gaga", which means bad. No doubt it is from his view-point.

The Trobrianders were put in the position of having to

54) Losuia P.R. ref.181/14. June 1914. Chief Vanoi Kiriwina, said to be the second chief in the Trobriands.
56) Losuia P.R. 2/1916: 15.3.1916. Murray of course believed it useless artificially to bolster customs (H. Murray, Papua of Today, p.244).
choose between customary loyalties and government law.
There was a very direct instance of this at Obulaku, where
the chief was wanted for an offence, but hid in the bush.
Bellamy secured the 'moral assistance' of his villagers in
capturing him by making them cut tracks and plant coconuts
until he was given up: 'after some days enthusiastic
planting their one wish was to get him in and for me to get
away.'

The chiefs quickly ceased to play any active part in
administration. Bellamy generally maintained social
relations with them while on patrol, and those within reach
regularly visited the government station to report on the
weather or the state of the gardens; but there was little
beyond this. Yet Malinowski, writing of the period 1915-8,
remarked of the Trobriand Chief:

... the remnants of his power are still surprisingly
large, even now, when white authorities, very
foolishly and with fatal results, do their utmost to
undermine his prestige and influence.

The Trobriands, as distinct from every other part of
Papua, at least had the mixed blessing of continuity of
staff. Bellamy was the A.R.M. until 1916 when he was

57) Losuia P.R. 1/1913-4: 7.8.1913.
58) Losuia Station Journals, 10.8.1912, 1.5.1915. On
occasions chiefs were warned to assist in the capture
of offenders, e.g. Sinakata, Oct. 1911, ibid.
59) B. Malinowski, Argonauts of the Western Pacific, p.63.
succeeded by a former Medical Assistant named Whitehouse, who remained until 1928. Whitehouse had no academic leanings and believed in administration strictly by regulation; soon after his arrival he wrote wonderingly of the strange social system on Kiriwina, but for him it was largely an anachronistic curiosity. He regarded 'superstition and custom' as the enemies of good government, and listed the important duties of a patrol as (i) the medical examination of the natives; (ii) the sanitary arrangements of the village; (iii) the improvement of housing; and (iv) the supervision of tracks and planting of coconuts. He had little time for the chiefs' exclusive claims to land ownership, which held up coconut planting. When dealing with the claims of the chief at Lobua, in N.W. Kiriwina, he wrote:

I instilled into his head the fact that a new order of things existed and that he was to bring his troubles to Losuia when every effort would be exercised to bring about a satisfactory and agreeable settlement to such troubles.

The chief of course realized that a 'satisfactory and agreeable settlement' would mean the abrogation of his traditional rights.

In many respects Whitehouse found conditions more

60) See Losuia P.R. 7/1916-7, April 1917.
61) Losuia P.R. 1/1921-2, May 1922.
62) Losuia P.R. 4/1920-1, August 1920. The chief is described as 'the Claimant'.
congenial in southern Kiriwina, where the status of the chiefs was relatively low. He reported that the village constables exercised all the authority vested in them, and that 'the villagers realise that the Government is a living force and regard it as such'.\(^{63}\) So far had the appointment of native officials departed from the concepts of indirect rule, however, that in 1921 the V.C. of Vakuta Is. was not a Trobriander but a Suau native.\(^{64}\)

About 1923-4, however, Whitehouse began to take a rather kinder view of the chiefs, particularly those who seemed sympathetic to the government's objects and affected attitudes of dignified gentility. There were probably two reasons for this change: firstly, the anxiety that began to agitate Murray and some of his officials, that the fashionable doctrines of indirect rule were not in fact being applied in Papua, and that this had or might have undesirable social consequences; and secondly, the growing conviction that the willing co-operation of the chiefs, particularly in making land available for the new Native Plantations, might be very useful. On the social aspect, the chiefs were reported to be just as worried as the

\(^{63}\) Losuia P.R. 36/1919-20. Also southern V.C.s commended in P.R. 3/1916.

\(^{64}\) Losuia P.R. 3/1921-2. The natives resented him as an 'outsider', and he was replaced on this patrol by an ex-A.C. Some of these V.C.s had extensive districts to supervise - the V.C. of Kaileuna Is. had ten villages, 303 huts, 843 people to look after (P.R. 1/1921-2).
Administration at the decline in population in the Trobriands; and it had already become apparent that unless the chiefs willingly made land available, there was no hope of inducing the people to prepare plantations, a task which had proved sufficiently difficult elsewhere.

In October 1923 Whitehouse spoke of the chief of Kapwapu as a capable man whose sole ambition was to work with the government. 'The general tone of the villages is superior to other villages whose chiefs are lax or who have only a commoner as headman.' Again, writing of Kaduwaga village, Whitehouse wrote:

The natives of this village are superior to the general run of Kaileunians, and are under the control of a "chief" who is living up to his station in life, with that quiet dignity and person adornments which denote his rank. He professes an actual interest in the welfare of his subjects and the demands of the government and to this end he is willing to hand over a section of good coconut land for cultivation as a native reserve...


66) e.g. see Losuia P.R. 9/1924-5; Journal 8/25/45: 14.11.24. The difficulty with Native Plantations in the Trobriands was that money was available from pearling and beche-de-mer; nevertheless the Administration, with scant concern for local conditions, persisted in attempts to set up plantations. The first copra in the group was made in 1925 - see Murray's comment, Losuia P.R. 6/1925-6. Dec. 1925. To some extent the neglect of the chiefs was attributed to the chiefs themselves; in Report 1926-7, p.46, they were said to be realizing the importance of 'taking an interest in the agricultural activities and social organization of their people.'


However, where a chief insisted on his traditional prerogatives, to the frustration of government plans, Whitehouse's irritation knew no bounds. Having unsuccessfully tried to persuade To'uluwa to make land available for a Native Plantation, he wrote: 'Thus progress is again retarded by the lies of this powerful old fool.'

(v) Consequences of Direct Rule and a Reversal of Policy.

Perpetually lying just below the surface was the determination to 'get things done', even at the expense of the agencies whereby this was to be accomplished. This was, and remained, a fundamental tension in the Administration; but after 1923 some attempt at least began to strike more of a balance. Sudden and intense concern appears in the patrol reports at the decline of custom and particularly in the eroding of the marks and privileges of rank. The Administration for example had been trying to promote the building of long, rectangular houses in place of the traditional ones; but it was found that the chiefs began to build the same houses as commoners. This policy was reversed, and the A.R.M. went around the island telling the chiefs, in the hearing of their villagers, that Murray wanted them to build again on the traditional pattern.

69) Losuia P.R. 7/1925-6; 30.1.1926.
70) Losuia P.R. 1/1923-4; Sept. 1923.
71) Losuia P.R. 9-10/25/26; 22.3.27.
Murray, again, warmly welcomed the revival of traditional canoe-building. 72

As a corollary, an awareness becomes apparent, in the reports, that the old policy of direct administration had failed, because the people were declining in numbers and becoming more discontented and disorderly. The young men were said to have become sceptical towards the traditional beliefs; at the same time it was remarked that the qualities of dignity and reserve had been lost, and that disrespectful attitudes had developed. The Administration clearly was worried that these attitudes applied to it as well as to the chiefs. 73 The village of Tokwaukwa was cited as one of the few villages left in the Trobriands where real contentment still reigned, and this was attributed to the fact that there had been relatively little disturbance caused by European contact, and that native law was still administered by the chief. 74

Institutional openings for the chiefs were provided with the introduction of the village councillor and assessor systems. Moreover, Murray was able to report to Canberra in 1928 that the insuperable obstacles to the appointment

of chiefs as village constables, which he had confirmed in 1924, had suddenly been overcome and that of the 14 V.C.s in the Trobriands 9 had hereditary powers, 5 being Toliwaga chiefs.75

The factor which most influenced a local change in administrative methods, however, was the replacement, in 1928, of Whitehouse by A.C. Rentoul as A.R.M. The new officer, Rentoul, immediately toured the island, urging the villagers to give due honour and restore the old privileges to their chiefs. He concluded that men of rank had a better chance of success as village constables: at Gumilababa he dismissed the commoner who was the V.C., describing his position as 'an unenviable one', and appointed in his stead a member of the Malasi totem clan.76 At Kavataria he suggested to chief Tugalai and the villagers that Tugalai should become the village constable, and the suggestion was welcomed.

No better way, said Rentoul, can be found of governing the people than by taking advantage

76) Losuia P.R. 2/1929-30: 25.7.1929.
of their already established system of feudal administration.

It was a question of restoring it rather than of simply using it, however. The status in particular of To'uluwa of Omarakana had declined sadly. To what extent this was due to his age and personal unpopularity, or to the processes of culture change, or to his neglect by the Administration, it is impossible to assess. But certainly the Administration's neglect was important, as Rentoul was able to demonstrate. Whitehouse had tried to induce To'uluwa's nominal subjects to rebuild his food houses in 1927, but had not persisted. Rentoul was more determined. He brought together the old To'uluwa and Uwoilasi, Toliwaga chief of Toboada and successor to Moliasi in authority, and gave official recognition to To'uluwa as Paramount Chief. He cast shame on the assembled natives for letting To'uluwa's food-houses rot, and persuaded them to agree

77) Losuia P.H.1/1928-9: 9.11.1928. The chiefs had themselves already realized the advantage of being V.C. in some areas. At Vakuta, where admittedly chieftainship was comparatively weak, chief Debudebu was made a councillor in May 1927, but in December he asked to be made V.C., for 'without a Government uniform the people ignored his commands.' - Losuia P.R.12/25/27: 18.5.27; 4/25/28: 6.12.27. Thereafter, even where the chief was not himself appointed V.C., he was consulted in the appointment: in 1932 before appointing a V.C. at Kabwaku the A.R.M. discussed the matter with the powerful Toliwaga chief of Toboada, who controlled the villages. Losuia P.R.4/1932-3: 17.10.1932.

that if houses of half the existing capacity were built, they would fill them with the first fruits of the garden. He also recommended that the Administration pay To'uluwa a 'small grant' of 1 lb. of tobacco per month. Yet Rentoul was not hopeful about redeeming the situation, which he bluntly attributed to the Administration's undiscriminating proscription on sorcery.

Toulu has made a great fight to retain his failing authority, but it is too late now, for as soon as the Government set its face against the practice of sorcery, from that date the power of the chiefs began to wane, as was inevitable. Now there is beneficent as well as malignant sorcery, and it seems a pity that more discrimination was not used during the first impact between the Government and this intricated system of chieftainship founded not altogether, but to a certain extent on the power of the sorcerer.

The fame of this Chief reaches throughout a great area in the Western Pacific, he is an old man, and compared with his former greatness has little left to subsist on.

On the question of the practical preservation of custom, Murray at this time, through correspondence with Fortune on Dobuan sorcery, with Malinowski on Trobriand burial rites, and with Pitt-Rivers on the undermining of traditional authority, was being pushed on to the defensive. In the correspondence with Fortune there is an insistence

80) Ibid.
on the Administration's reserve in acting against sorcerers. 81

A complication in changing policy in the Trobriands, however, was the militant anti-custom attitude of the Methodist mission, which Rentoul had to overcome. The mission, to Murray's mystification, had even withdrawn its approval from the kula, in addition, of course, to forbidding its adherents to practise polygamy and sorcery. The new policy of the Administration, therefore, involved a repudiation not only of what it had done in the past, but of what the mission was still doing. 82 The importance of the mission's attitude could hardly be exaggerated, for as early as 1907 it claimed to have converted half the total population, and by the late 1920s Mitakata, To'uluwa's heir, had been persuaded to adopt monogamy, while the mission's Fijian teacher dominated Omarakana. 83 According to Rentoul, the mission was not interested in showing sympathy or support for Trobriands chieftainship 84; it seems more probable that, like the Administration a few years earlier, it simply held inflexibly to its principles and

81) See Ch. II. CPI.V. 16/14/10; 16/41/4; 16/19/11.
82) Losuia P.R.11/25/28, May 1928 - Murray's comments appended. Actually there had been an increase in kula transactions, 1918-28.
trusted that God would smooth out the social repercussions. Scrivin, the resident missionary, tried to persuade Murray that the new approach promoted by the anthropologists was unbalanced, and in particular that Malinowski was wrong in saying that the practice of sorcery was indispensable to the chiefs' power. 85

Both the Administration and the chiefs themselves, therefore, had to tread warily if attempts to restore the status and the desirable functions of chieftainship were not to arouse the active opposition of the mission. It did not prove difficult, for example, to persuade the natives to bring food for To'uluwa again: in 1929, despite a bad harvest, his food houses were filled for the first time in three years 86; and after Mitakata's accession a few months later enormous supplies of food were provided. 87

But the other props of his authority presented greater problems. Mitakata assured A.R.M. Austen that he had no wish to practise sorcery, for To'uluwa had lost the support of 'his more enlightened people' - clearly the mission-educated element - through its use. 88 Despite the mission

85) Scrivin to Murray, 29.8.1929. CPI.V. 16/14/20.
attitude, however, he found it expedient to take up polygamy, though he abandoned the custom of keeping his predecessors' wives. MacGregor had written of Enamakala's wives, that 'if the best features of all of them were united in one person, she would not make an attractive woman'. Mitakata adapted custom to allow him to marry eight young girls. For this he was expelled from the mission. At the same time, he tried to stay on good terms with the mission so that he could retain the support of its converts. In 1937 he told a mass meeting of councillors and constables that he was glad that his people had accepted mission teachings, for 'Church and Government both taught the same good laws of life'.

(vi) The Need to Reshape Custom.

The Administration, as its policy developed, showed that it was concerned with the re-shaping of custom rather than simply with its restoration; but to achieve this the incorporation of chieftainship into the administrative structure was the prime desideratum. Murray wrote of Austen, A.R.M. during most of the 1930s, that 'his policy ... is to make what use he can of the power of the chiefs in forwarding the general welfare of the community; but he fully realizes the impossibility of keeping the commoners

89) R. 1893-4, p.20; Losuia P.R.11/1933-4: 1.3.34.
90) R. 1936-7, p.28.
in their former position of dependence. Adaptation of the bases and functions of chieftainship was therefore, Austen saw, essential. Austen claimed that this policy in itself was a major factor in the revival of chieftainship: that is, that it survived at all only through deliberate adaptation -

Little by little the commoners began to realize that their chiefs were being treated as people in authority, and the Government was deferring to them in small matters, and allowing them with the help of the Councillors to advise in minor matters affecting them as a whole. The native missionaries, too, who had at first no desire to see the authority of the chiefs reinstated, began to see that the Government was not working against them, and where they were chiefs with authority, they themselves might gain more ground in their work with such chiefs on their side.

This rapprochement between the Administration and the chiefs was largely achieved through the institution of village councillors. Initially these were appointed on Vakuta island, where it was found, after five months without a village constable, that the headmen of the villages were capable of keeping order; the A.R.M. thought that they could be constituted into an informal council, with the chief as an appointed councillor - an added incentive was the Administration's anxiety to promote a native Plantation. In the north it was found, for example,

91) R. 1933-4, p.25.
92) Austen, Oceania, loc.cit., p.22.
that when Chief Tobewaga of Kaduwaga had government policy explained to him, he could 'readily formulate a plan of action satisfactory to all concerned'. He was made a councillor\textsuperscript{94}; and during 1928 most of the chiefs in north Kiriwina were also appointed councillors.\textsuperscript{95} The special position of Mitakata posed a problem, for he objected that his appointment as councillor put him on the same level as other councillors who were his subjects. Murray and Austen agreed that he should be issued with a special badge inscribed with a simple crown; they believed that the granting of the badge would 'represent a real liaison between the Paramount Chief and the Government'.\textsuperscript{96}

Within each native district the District Chief acted as the chairman of an informal council, consisting of himself and other councillors from the villages under his control. Ivan Champion conceived the idea of a permanent Council House in each district, and Austen agreed, primarily because it would help to fix council districts more or less permanently; he felt that the chiefs' authority could thus be contained within the district and channelled through the councillors, and that this might overcome 'the difficulties of chieftainship based on polygamy'.\textsuperscript{97}

\textsuperscript{94)} Losuia P.R.10/25/28: 23.2.28.
\textsuperscript{95)} A.R.M. Losuia to Gov. Sec. 13.11.28. S.E.D.224/36/28.
\textsuperscript{96)} Bwagoia S.E.D. to Gov.Sec. 295/25/32; Losuia 7.12.1932.
\textsuperscript{97)} R.M. S.E.D. to Gov.Sec. 71/20/34. Then gradually, he hoped, the traditional method of extending authority would lapse.
Austen also discussed with the district chiefs and councillors a compromise plan over betel-nut trees, the individual ownership of which by commoners militated against the traditional prestige of the chiefs. He thought that he could restore this, as well as increase the betel-nut supply. 98

The chiefs as councillors were thus made responsible for adapting and redefining custom, including their own prerogatives. Indeed, this became their major function and virtually their only active one; to the extent that it reduced direct intervention by the Administration in customary matters, government by regulation was mitigated. For example, the Administration appealed to a councillors' conference to stop the unhealthy burial customs which it had previously tried to stop through the courts. 99

Unfortunately in this case official patience was short; the A.R.M. quickly by-passed the chiefs and reverted to the practice of instructing the village constables to stop it. 100 Despite the intention to work by consultation with the chiefs, councillors, and other influential natives, ingrained methods and habits of mind tended to prevail.

even with a man like Austen. Thus on one occasion we find him improving the gardens in Sinaketa by laboriously persuading the towosi (garden magician) to get the natives working longer; but on another occasion he is regretting that the concept of incest embodied in the relevant Native Regulation does not cover forms of incest common in the Trobriands. 101

It was in the judicial or arbitral sphere that the chiefs and councillors were able most effectively to assume responsibility from the Administration. Austen considered the council meetings, first and foremost, as informal court sittings dealing with customary disputes. As general policy, in 1929 Murray had sanctioned the experimental use of native assessors in the Courts for Native Matters; but the system quickly developed beyond that, as Murray himself later conceded. In the Trobriands, at an early stage it was envisaged that the councillors would act as 'a kind of jury'. 102 By 1932 councillors were sitting as independent courts hearing civil disputes. 103 Austen looked forward to the day when they could 'try cases other than civil cases', but he stated that he was not prepared to

102) S.E.D. Correspondence, Losuia 489/24/29.
103) Ibid., Losuia 77/36/32. Officially, of course, they had no legal powers.
recommend that until he was sure the power of the chiefs had recovered. He was quite definite that judicial functions should be restricted to the chiefs, although he believed that the average education of the commoners was a little better.

The chiefs were first used, and were most useful, in deciding the ownership of land. Austen summed up their officially sanctioned functions as being to discuss and determine all civil claims, including such matters as ownership of land and trees, matters relating to kula, payments due to a man on the remarriage of his divorced wife, and any other minor disputes which could be settled outside of a government court.

The chiefs continued, in addition, to act as assessors in the Courts for Native Matters, but by 1937 the Administration was coming to the conclusion that there they were less successful. The A.R.M. complained that in cases of assault and adultery their suggested sentences were coloured by their personal involvement - the almost universal failure to develop what Murray called the 'judicial mind' - and that in cases of sorcery they usually

104) Ibid., Losuia 90/36/34. Dec. 1934; Murray to Sec. Canberra, 28.1.35. CPI.V. 16/42.
105) Ibid.
106) e.g. Case at M'taua left to 8 'assessors'. On the same patrol a chief was appointed 'arbitrator' in a land dispute between two villages - Losuia P.R.1/1933-4: 20.7.1933. 'We got them together to settle matters in their own way' - Austen, Oceania, loc.cit., p.49.
refused to name a sentence at all. 108

(vii) Limitations of the Paternal Conception.

In summary, there is no doubt that the prestige of the chiefs improved during the 1920s and 1930s under the Administration's umbrella; but, apart from the maintenance and application of custom, there was little scope for them in the Administration's scheme of things. Even the judicial functions which they assumed had no legal basis and were largely unofficial, in that they depended on the inclinations and discretion of an individual official. It is true that quarterly meetings of councillors took place at Losuia, but the object was fundamentally propagandist; they were opportunities to explain government policy. The councillors on occasion were able to get the Administration to intercede to stop outside interference with custom, especially with the Kula; but even here the Administration appeared to regard the meetings as media whereby it could 'eradicate bad customs' by discussion rather than compulsion. Austen said that he avoided forcing his views on these meetings 'unless absolutely necessary' - a significant qualification. 109

All legislative and executive functions remained with

109) S.E.D. Losuia 76/36/32; Circular 355/32 of 9.4.1932.
central government; the judicial and consultative functions exercised by the chiefs, although an advance, were still slight. By supporting the chiefs and a revival of custom the Administration had in fact prepared the ground for something on the lines of the British Native Authorities; but administrative preconceptions prevented any such devolution. The chiefs themselves complained that, as councillors, they had no authority.110 Because the chiefs were never delegated authority, they felt little responsibility for its preservation; it is no surprise that when the islands were evacuated in 1942 the traditional political concepts reasserted themselves, and Mitakata and the Toliwaga chief, Wailassi, entered into a compact whereby the former demanded wives and tribute from the villages to the south and west, while the latter plundered European property and those villages which had grown prosperous on European trade.111

In 1945 Austen was still insistent that 'the Murray tradition' be continued in the Trobriands: the watchword he said, was 'Go slow'. The native desired no radical

110) S.E.D. Losuia 41/23/37 (Journals).
111) Powell, op.cit., p.142.
change, and wished only to return to 'a normal native life'. Over a long period of time native society would absorb democratic ideas. The white official would again be looked to respectfully for native welfare and just administration. 112

112) Austen, Oceania, loc.cit., pp.58-60. He repeats the fallacy popularised in the 1920s that sudden change would cause a collapse of native society and depopulation. In the period 1945-60 there was no attempt at gradual adaptation; so that fitting the Chiefs into local government will probably present greater problems than in Tanganyika. The lack of educated men and minimal functions of N.L.G. may offset, however.
CHAPTER IV

AUSTRALIAN DOMINANCE. AND THE WAR. 1940-6.

(i) Australian Control

In 1938 Sir Hubert Murray told Basil Hall that Papua was due for a complete re-orientation of ideas, after he left the scene. But as Sir Hubert had trained his nephew and successor, Mr. Leonard Murray, over a period of more than thirty years, it is impossible to say how he envisaged such a re-orientation occurring.

Sir Hubert had effectively kept the shaping of policy, as well as the direction of government, largely within his own hands. His prestige was immense: in the 1920s he had been secure enough publicly to challenge the application of the Navigation Act to the Territory. It would almost appear, however, that the Federal government had been waiting for Murray's death to strengthen its control. In 1940 a number of amendments was made to the Papua Act (1905-34), which signified this trend. The title of the Lieut.-Governor was changed to Administrator; the appointment and suspension of officers of the Territory's Service were specifically transferred to the Governor-General (in practice, the Minister) (Sections 17-18); and Section 33A was amended to provide that...

Minutes of Legislative Council meetings were to be sent as soon as practicable to the Minister. Lewis Lett has remarked that Leonard Murray was made 'subject in all things to the dictates of Canberra'.

Enquiring into the state of affairs in Port Moresby in January-February 1942, Mr. Justice Barry complained that 'reference to Canberra was regarded as essential before any decision of real gravity was taken'; matters of 'real gravity' seem to have encompassed all but the most routine decisions. Paradoxically, however, the Commonwealth continued in practice to be apathetic towards its responsibilities. The Department of External Territories was not created until June 1941; and even then it was administered by the Secretary of the Prime Minister's Department:

It is no over-statement to say that until the geographical existence of New Guinea was forced upon Australians by the grim possibility of imminent invasion, the Territories were considered as areas so remote from Australian life that they rarely entered into political consideration.

2) R. 1941; p.5; Commonwealth Acts, (No.47 of 1940), XXXVIII, 1940, p.82.

3) L. Lett in J.R.A.H.S., XXXIV, 1949, p.144. Lett at this time employed in the Gov. Sec's office; he may therefore be regarded as reliable here.


5) Barry Report, ibid. At the time Barry reported (1945), Mr. E.J. Ward was both Minister for Transport and Minister for External Territories - the former was always listed first.
In Barry's view this led the Papuan Administration to a re-assertion of autonomy, particularly in native affairs. This resulted in a disastrous break with the military authorities in the critical days of February 1942. Had Leonard Murray decided to co-operate, he could have - and in Barry's view, should have - continued to control native affairs; but he put his experience at the service of the Commandant only on 14th February, eight days after the Commonwealth decided to suspend civil administration. Conflict between instructions issued by the War Cabinet and by the Department of External Territories added to the confusion. By that time a condition bordering on anarchy had developed amongst the natives, as government authority broke down.

(ii) ANGAU and Wartime Administration

The war seemed to have a revolutionary effect, not only on the local native populations, but also on the attitudes of Australians towards the Territory. In the long view, however, it can now be seen that revisions of attitudes in New Guinea and in Australia were not as profound as they seemed shortly after the war. Nevertheless, the natives

6) Ibid., paras. 179, 181-2. Comments of 'Sydney Morning Herald', 2.6.1945, reporting the presentation of the Report to Parliament. The War Cabinet decided on a 'call-up' in the Territory; but the Dept. stated that 'essential services' and 'civic activities' should continue.

7) D. McCarthy: Pacific War, First Year, p.43.
were brought into contact with Europeans and Asians at war with one another, and they were shown the massive power of modern technology. Administratively, ANGAU, the civil branch of the wartime Administration, brought men with fresh minds into touch with problems of native welfare and administration.

Because of Leonard Murray's attitude, and the chaos in Port Moresby in February 1942, all civil as well as military affairs were brought under the control of Brig.-Gen. Morris, the military Commandant. Early in March he created the Papuan Administrative Unit, under Elliott-Smith, the former R.M. at Samarai, and a similar New Guinea Unit. These were merged on 21st March to become ANGAU. Initially, ANGAU had to maintain law and order, provide requirements for the fighting services, and try to keep up the production of war materials, notably copra and rubber. It also had to look to the welfare of the native population, and to maintain medical services; eventually medical services were better than those provided pre-war, though offset to some extent by the results of bad labour conditions and over-recruitment.

8) Malinowski has recorded the bewilderment of the Trobrianders during World War I, as they tried to reconcile accounts of the war with government proscriptions on fighting amongst themselves, and with the mission advocacy of brotherhood - Crime and Custom, p.83, note 1.

9) McCarthy, op.cit., p.43 - Mair says ANGAU was created in April: Australia in New Guinea, p.185; also on pp.186-91, 197. J.K. Murray, The Provisional Administration, p.23.
Thus, instead of making provision only for those matters over and above normal administration, Morris had to create an entirely new organization which could cope with all these functions. ANGAU was divided into three sections: Field Services (later called District Services); Production Services; and a Native Labour Service. District Services, however, became responsible for recruiting — indeed, a study of such reports as are accessible indicates that this became its major task.  

An unavoidable result of the inadequacy of the two Administrations before the war was the recruitment into District Services of a considerable proportion of men who had had no previous experience in New Guinea; on the figures quoted by Mair, 32%. This involved some minor administrative mistakes, but it was salutary in cutting across the in-breeding and parochialism of the Papuan service in particular.

An example of native administration during the war is given by the Western Division, which had always had a high rate of labour recruitment and was most remote from the fighting areas. Reports reveal that much the same pattern

11) Mair, ibid., p.194. It is regrettable that no history of ANGAU is planned by the war historians. In the official histories the Native Labour Section is prominent, because the making of roads by natives figured largely in the campaigns — e.g. McCarthy, op. cit., p.561: the Edie Creek-Bulldog road. But the areas only indirectly affected by war are of no interest to the chroniclers of campaigns.
of patrolling was continued, but that the officers were instructed to concentrate on serious crime and on the prevention of unrest, while one of the major functions of every patrol was the recruiting of labour.

Warrant Officer Hicks, on a patrol to the Morehead River area in July 1943, had to pay all the V.C.s, make enquiries about the incidence of V.D., distribute seed corn, and obtain twelve natives for work at Daru. His report is as comprehensive as those of the pre-war period. His superior found time to reprimand him for wrongly applying the law against adultery (N. Reg. 82); extensive tutoring in the field had been common before the war - as a system of cadetship and training was lacking it could hardly have been otherwise.12 A further interesting aspect of this report is the revelation of the sensitive feelings of the pre-war officers, a major post-war factor. Major Leo Austen, one of Murray's R.M.s, reacted strongly to a comment that this area had 'evidently been neglected in the past'.13

A further patrol to the Suki Creek area in October 1943 had as its objects the arrest of a murderer and the warning of the native population about serious crime - there had

12) Daru PR 3/1943-4: 3.8.43-3.9.43. D.O. Capt. Faithorn to ANGAU H.Q. 27.9.43, attached P.R. From the viewpoint of native relation it was unfortunate that, because of the discontinuance of the Civil Administration, all officers should have become military officers.

been reports of unrest. The instructions on recruiting are illuminating:

On the return journey recruit natives from the villages of Pisarami, Asarami, Sapara and Aduru on the Fly River. You will, probably, find these natives difficult to contact. On the up journey the V.C.s of these villages are to be told in no uncertain manner that all able-bodied natives are to be paraded before you on the return journey. A reliable A.C. may be dropped for that purpose.

It was unfortunate for the new, young officers, and for the post-war service, that necessarily they had to work in an atmosphere of coercion and conscription. Through the search for labour however, the administrative repercussions of the war, on the natives, were profound and far-reaching. As is remarked elsewhere (Appendix C, II), ANGAU even penetrated the remote Tari basin in the search for recruits. Dr. Mair has commented on the sympathetic attitudes towards the natives of the troops with whom these natives served — quite different from those of the pre-war officials and settlers.

There were even ANGAU officers who came to appreciate the native attitude to the war, rather than proclaiming 'treachery' whenever a native treated Australians and Japanese alike. Capt. G.R. Whittaker, M.B.E., felt sufficiently strongly to write direct to the Minister on the subject, explaining that many natives tried to be neutral, and gave

information impartially to both sides; the native, he said, is 'a gentleman and during times of war is too truthful'.

Nevertheless, most natives unquestioningly served the allies when called upon. The native labourers earned the affection of the troops by their prodigious efforts on low rations; and it was reported that the village constables had been 'loyal' without exception.

(iii) The Post-War Reaction

It was inevitable that, after the war, tensions would develop. The Administration naturally conceived its functions largely in pre-war terms; while many of the natives had new ideas and conceptions, and looked forward to something better. Unfortunately, amongst the Administration there was some bitterness over wartime 'native misdeeds': several Binandere were hanged for betraying a party of fleeing missionaries (a fact still not forgotten) but in addition there would appear to have been numbers of local 'investigations' of suspected collaboration. In 1946 the Department of District Services felt it necessary to bring out an instruction proscribing further post-mortems and urging officers to forget the past and to

16) G.R. Whittaker to E.J. Ward, 7.1.45. CP 141. N.615/1/15
17) Hall, loc. cit., p.71. Hall felt that the V.C.s had earned the right to greater trust and responsibility.
* Such liberal sentiments were far from general; see ANGAU Conference, 1944 - CP763, set 4.
encourage the natives to do so; but natives who actively assisted the enemy were still to be refused war compensation, so that 'preliminary investigations' of alleged collaborators were still sanctioned.\textsuperscript{18}

Positively, there was still a curious obliqueness in the administrative approach to expressed native aspirations. The more sophisticated natives felt that, although they might get compensation to rebuild their houses and remake their gardens, ultimately they were simply going back to the pre-war stagnation. These people had desires, sometimes far-fetched, for economic and social development; but the Administration's appreciation of these aspirations was inadequate. Cultist reactions must be attributed at least partly to this Administration failure.\textsuperscript{18a}

The Manus natives, led by Paliau, wanted the Americans to take over their administration because they felt that they were simply going to revert to being work-boys, whereas they wanted education and a positive role and lead in development. The Administrator called for a special effort there, but his emissary, the Director of District Services, showed a failure to appreciate the justice of much that the natives claimed. When they pointed out the failure to give them education, he replied that natives had become successful artisans and clerks without education, and that such a man drawing £8 per month was really as well off as a European.

\textsuperscript{18a} Post-war policy was foreseen merely in terms of 'Native Welfare' – see ANGAU Conference, 1944, II; CP763, set 4.
on six times as much.  

At a conference of village councillors in Port Moresby in 1948, Mr. J.R. Halligan, Secretary of the Department of External Territories, similarly fobbed off native complaints that changes they had been led to expect during the war had not materialised. The Porebada councillor said that when the Minister visited his village in 1944 he had promised that after the war they would be like the white man, enjoying the same benefits. Why had this not come about?

Mr. Halligan said that he had accompanied Mr. Ward on that trip in 1944 and he was very glad to know that the native people had remembered the visit. He said he would tell Mr. Ward that the people had remembered the previous time he was in the Territory and he hoped that when he came up to the Territory again the people would see him again.

Granted that the natives may have been led or deluded into expecting a good deal during the war that was impossible of fulfilment, yet with Administration understanding, more adequate compromises might have been possible in the post-war period. The repercussions of pre-war attitudes are described in the following chapters.

19) J.K. Murray to Gov.Sec. 25.2.1947; D.D.S.&N.A. J.H. Jones to J.K. Murray, 9.4.1947. CP.141. Y 840/1/1. Also of. the Tommy Kabu Movement in the Papuan Gulf - R.F. Maher: Tommy Kabu Movement of the Purari Delta, *Oceania*, xxix, 2, Dec.1958, pp. 75-90. The fact that they were simply going to revert to pre-war stagnation was precisely the argument the natives used with the Americans, when asking to be placed under the U.S. - Conference between Cmdr. Baker and Luluais, 22.8.1946.

20) Minutes of meeting, 24.9.48, CP 141. AR. 840/1/1. Numbers of practical points were raised by councillors: e.g. the delay in cooperatives legislation; pleas for water supplies; complaints about delays in works; and low wages for wharf labourers.
CHAPTER V

THE APPROACH TO NATIVE LOCAL GOVERNMENT

1. The Abandonment of the Native Authority Concept.

Dr. Lucy Mair has remarked that in 1946 it was proposed that 'institutions on the lines of the African Native Authority system, in so far as this is applicable to very small political units, should be introduced generally.'\(^1\)

In September, 1945 the anthropologist H.I. Hogbin, whose studies in the British Solomon Islands had partly been responsible for the decision to set up councils and courts there, expressed the hope that 'the newly established Australian Administration in Papua and New Guinea will be as fully alive to its responsibilities and follow the example of its enlightened neighbour.'\(^2\)


Hogbin was one of the group which came together under ANGAU and was later associated with the Australian School of Pacific Administration. It was well known that this group had the ear of the Minister, Mr. E.J. Ward, in the shaping of policy to a greater extent than his own

2) *Oceania*, XVI, Sept. 1945, p.61.
Department. This was a situation viewed with extreme disfavour in the Territory, where senior officials felt that they were being dictated to by a dedicated visionary advised by impractical idealists. 2A

It was probably inevitable that Hogbin should have been responsible for the suggestion that the essentials of the Native Authority system be applied in New Guinea; though his continued and active promotion of the suggestion was certainly a tactical blunder. Hogbin had seen British African precedents adapted and applied in the British Solomons, in social conditions closely resembling those in New Guinea. In 1944 he spent about six months in the village of Busama in the Huon Gulf, with the object of studying the nature of village leadership and the manner in which the appointed native officials used their powers. He found that the paramount luluai in Busama, Bumbu, had tyrannised over the village for more than twenty years, under the cloak of government office, and that he had been supported uncritically by a succession of government officers. 3

2A) The policy struggle between the 'Murray tradition' group (settlers and old officials) and the Army Research Section (later A.S.O.P.A.) is too well known to need elaboration. See Sydney Morning Herald, 28.3.1946 (Dr. Mair), 10.12.1946 (attacking 'ologist' influence); Pacific Islands Monthly, Nov. 1946, pp.72-3 (policy supported by missions), May 1947, p.8 (opposed by business interests); also attack on Army Research Section by T.W. White, H. of R., 1.5.1947, Hansard, Vol.191, p.2816.

3) H.I. Hogbin: Local Government for New Guinea, Oceania, XVII, 1, Sept. 1946, p.44.
The traditional pattern of individual leadership had collapsed, for reasons familiar throughout the Territory: raiding had been forbidden by the government, the worship of the old gods had been given up under mission influence, and the opportunities for displays of wealth had disappeared when a cash economy replaced the former extensive trading expeditions. The only form of resistance to Bumbu had come from three or four elders, most of whom had been mission teachers, and who, through the mission, kept up the tradition of village assemblies. The mission had become a rallying point, for Bumbu had been suspended from membership for immoral conduct. Meetings at the mission were therefore free. The elders discussed matters concerning the mission, and also the modification of custom; in addition, they exercised some of the judicial functions which had traditionally been those of the village assemblies, though extending their jurisdiction to cover the Commandments and the Native Regulations, as well as customary law.  

In brief, Hogbin was at pains to show that even in New Guinea there were some traditional precedents for the essentials of the Native Authority system, that it could act as a bulwark between overzealous or corrupt officials and the villagers, and that it would more effectively preserve law and order, administer justice and promote welfare by

4) Ibid., p.51.
harnessing village opinion.

Hogbin found that after Bumbu's removal the people spontaneously reorganized their traditional council (wolokulai). Under one of the elders - not always a lulai - this also re-assumed judicial functions, not only over offences recognized only by themselves, such as laziness and seduction, but also over offences recognized by government, such as adultery and theft. Hogbin emphasised the importance of the informality of their procedure: initially complaints were taken to an elder, or to one of the two luluais, or to the mission teacher. A meeting of the wolokulai was then held before the assembled villagers. Great showmanship and oratory were used in presenting the cases; the crowd demonstrated emotionally as facts were brought out and discussed by the elders, who eventually gave judgment.5

Hogbin thus argued for the Native Authority system, and particularly for the judicial part of it, as something which the natives understood, in contrast to the alien procedures to which they had been subjected by the administration in the past. If this argument was framed to convert men in the Administration it could hardly have been more ill-designed, for it cut across the arguments on the subject put forward by Murray and others before the war, the premises of which

5) Ibid., pp. 52-64.
remained part of Australian policy. These insist on a lengthy period of education in the principles and procedures of British justice before courts are instituted. The courts described by Hogbin, whether the natives favoured them or not, were seen as agencies of partiality, in which the protection of the individual's liberties was abandoned. Moreover, Hogbin's insistence on traditional institutional precedents was unfortunate, in that it was easy for opponents of the system to deny that these generally existed.  

Unfortunately, he made little of the flexibility of the system in accordance with culture change (perhaps in retrospect in Africa its major feature); though he did say that the Busama, in his view, had a better chance of making a success of their own courts than the Malaitans of the Solomon Islands, for they were more familiar with European ways and would therefore grasp the elements of procedure more easily. Moreover, the powers of the luluai and the jurisdiction of the court would need, he said, to be carefully delimited. Too little attention was paid to this aspect of the proposals.


7) Hailey: An African Survey (1956), pp.623, 630-4. Flexibility is the keynote: 'It is its records (of the Native Court) that supply the most reliable authority for recording the modifications produced by the changing conditions of African society'.

8) Hogbin, loc.cit., p.64.
Hogbin’s plea for a statutory system of native councils and courts appeared in September 1946, while he was in the Territory consulting the Administration and the natives on the subject, on the Minister’s behalf. It was a curious form of consultation, in that the Administration and the natives were told that the policy decision, to introduce both councils and courts, had already been taken, and that Hogbin, as ‘an emissary of the Minister’ (in Chief Justice Phillips’ phrase) was asking for advice merely on the best method of implementing the policy.

In that month Hogbin, accompanied by D.O. Watkins, attended a meeting called by the Hanuabada council to discuss the introduction of councils and courts. This council, though non-statutory, had been in existence since 1927, and its members represented the most sophisticated group of natives in the Territory. They had thoughtfully been issued in advance with a booklet on the system in the Solomon Islands, and had a prepared statement of what they wanted, put forward by Gavera Arua. According to Gavera and to Meia-Aru, the idea of councils and courts had been discussed amongst them for some years, and they had outlined

proposals to Leonard Murray, the Administrator from 1940-2, on the subject. It was clear, however, that their 1946 proposals were deeply influenced by the information they had from the Solomons. Gavera and his son Willie thought a beginning could be made by introducing a system of headmen and assistants (self-interest on the part of the Gavera family was undoubtedly involved here). It is notable that Meia-Aru put forward a view in the Murray tradition, seeking better education before Hanuabadans were appointed magistrates.

Gavera, however, summed up what was probably the majority feeling:

We, representing the people of Papua, do not want to be altogether free, but we want some part in the government of ourselves and our country. We want to run our own race ... We, the councillors, want some work to do ... actually we have very little to do at the moment ... we want the power to hold courts, have authority in respect of the affairs of the village of Hanuabada, be taught hygiene and sanitation and etc. \(^{11}\) (sic).

Gavera bluntly asked the D.O. whether the government was sympathetic towards their efforts for self-government. The D.O. gave a guarded reply:

You can rest assured that His Honour and the Australian Government want you people to have local administration, and if you are ready for it, native courts presided over by a native magistrate. Sir Hubert Murray often said that it was the aim of his Administration that you would one day be masters of your own destiny, and attain full self-government. His Honour thinks that the time has come for the beginning of the implementation of that policy of his \(^ {12}\) predecessor.

\(^{11}\) Minutes of meeting (undated), D.O. Port Moresby 14/2.

\(^{12}\) Ibid.
This meeting was probably the first occasion on which self-government was seriously discussed by the natives with the Administration.

Hogbin had throughout been careful to insist that, even in Melanesia, there was an inherent need for something on the lines of the Native Authority system. He told the meeting that in the Solomons the plan had come from the people, not from the Administration. 13

Amongst Administration officers the proposals for native councils were not received unfavourably. As the Chief Justice saw it, the councils could be regarded as a natural development; the legislation would give recognition to institutions which native communities are ready for and which they have been familiar with (in various less defined forms) for a very long time. 14

He did not admit that precisely the same argument could be applied to the courts, various semi-official forms of which had functioned for some years, particularly in the Mandated Territory. Administrative reaction to the native courts proposal could have been predicted. W.R. Humphries, at that time the Director of Native Labour and formerly one of Sir Hubert Murray's Resident Magistrates, regarded the proposal for native courts as an attack on the basic objects

13) Ibid.

14) C.J. Phillips to Administrator, 10.11.46, D.S. 14/3/15 Port Moresby.
of the Administration; indeed, on 'the Murray tradition'. Humphries tried to bring the argument to the fundamental question of assimilation. He was, he said, concerned to learn that the Administration's objectives were not 'one law, one language, one people'. This was an argument typical of Murray's officers, who regarded native custom and English law as two absolutes which could be bridged - and would be ultimately - only by education. There was little conception of transitional stages, nor, despite the lip-service paid to the blending of cultures, of the gradual evolution of a socially adapted form of common law.15

Are we still to have two legal systems, one for the white man and one for natives of this country in fifty or one hundred years time?

(This confused the legal system with systems of law).

Humphries went further, claiming that the existing Courts for Native Matters were extremely popular, 'for both men and women resort to them on the slightest provocation'. He believed, following Murray, that the more advanced natives had largely abandoned their own culture, and that what was left was of little value and was doomed to complete extinction. He denied that there was any traditional justification for native courts, and asserted that the


16) Ibid.
government courts 'were designed to meet the needs and fill a void in the lives of the people', and that they had done so. As an alternative, he wanted natives to be trained as magistrates to sit in the existing courts where, free of the ties of 'clanship interests and prejudice' they could administer true British justice.\(^{17}\)

It was clear that the principle of councils was widely accepted - though later considerable resistance developed in practice; therefore, objections to the native courts were the prime obstacle in the way of the Native Authority system. In view of the great importance attached to these courts as an integral - often the initial - part of the system in British colonies, this obstacle was extremely serious. In September Hogbin, in association with the Territory's Crown Law Office, was hurriedly preparing Ordinances for consideration whereby, said the Administrator,

> the establishment of a few (perhaps six in all) Courts in a tentative and initial way might be\(^{18}\) done.

The Native Courts Bill was destined never to become law. On the 30th September the Administrator sent the two draft bills, for native councils and native courts, to the Chief Justice for comment. Phillips felt himself to have been placed in an invidious position, because, although he thought

\(^{17}\) Ibid.

\(^{18}\) J.K. Murray to Canberra, 12.9.46. CP 141. AQ.840/1/3.
the decision to establish native courts 'ill conceived, ill considered, and premature', he was not supposed to say so. Nevertheless, in two lengthy memoranda to the Administrator, dated the 11th October and 2nd December, he expressed the view that if the native courts proposal were implemented at once it would result in disaster. He considered that the 'Kivungs' in the Mandated Territory before the war had functioned well in their 'municipal' role, but that they had failed lamentably as judicial bodies, because of extortion and corruption. He believed that there was only one form of justice, and that native courts would not observe it. (It is for this reason that, in their early stages, native courts in British territories have been kept under administrative surveillance and out of the hands of professional lawyers). Phillips, like Humphries, wanted natives trained as magistrates for the existing courts; he quoted the American sociologist Reed to the effect that the natives accepted the courts.

Though no-one seems to have taken up the point, Phillips quoted Reed out of context. Reed had said that the system of courts was 'readily understood when explained to the natives in simple terms'; but he was puzzled by the apparent acceptance by the natives, almost without question, of the

19) Chief Justice to Administrator, 24.9.55, cit.sup.
20) Chief Justice to Administrator, 11.10.46 and 2.12.46. DS 14/3/15.
European authority to make and enforce laws. He came to the conclusion that this derived from fear. Moreover, Reed pointed out the difficulties of officials dealing with complex native disputes, the customary background to which was a closed book to them.21

It is this feeling on the part of the natives that they are being arbitrarily subjected to alien laws which a native courts system is designed to overcome; and indeed, it was in these terms that the system had been welcomed in the British Solomons in 1940. This point was not taken up adequately in New Guinea in 1946.

Once the Chief Justice had been consulted, his opposition was a serious deterrent to the introduction of the system. Phillips interpreted a further submission by Hogbin (dated 26th October) in which Hailey, Lugard and Cameron were quoted, as an indication that policy was not in fact fixed. He argued that the proposed Ordinance would have imposed native courts on native society. The latest memorandum led him to believe, he said, that the government was now considering the development of a native courts system from within. Though opposed to both systems, he indicated that he preferred the latter, for he conceded that the natives had their own tribunals for settling

disputes; but, using delaying tactics and 'the diplomatic language of suggestion' (as he described it to a sympathetic Administrator in 1955) he urged caution, arguing that it would be better on so important a matter to spend time formulating policy rather than rueing an unsuitable system later. 22

Two meetings of the Interdepartmental Committee on Native Development and Welfare were held in January 1947, attended by the directors of the principal departments, and by Dr. Hogbin. The meetings were held to consider the proposed Native Authority system, but the results were inconclusive. Hogbin emphasised that the proposal was based on what had been done in Tanganyika, Kenya and the British Solomons, and was therefore thrice tested. He now proposed that the native courts initially would deal purely with customary law

22) Phillips memo. of 2.12.1946, cit. sup. Hogbin mentioned that in the Huon Gulf the Lutheran Mission for many years had run courts 'which functioned excellently', and which imposed the penalty of suspension from church membership. Phillips remembered them in 1927-8 and said that according to the Lutheran missionaries a German district official had permitted the courts, and had allowed them to mete out severe penalties to transgressors. A statement for the Permanent Mandates Commission (5.4.1932) mentions the Morobe councils and courts, which were 'dominated by the Lutheran mission'. As for the courts, it regarded this as an advantage. Where there were two or more missions, personnel would have to be selected 'with the gravest care'. CP 141. AQ 840/1/3.
in selected villages, and that their jurisdiction would be concurrent with that of the Administration's courts for native matters. He stressed the fact that the first courts would be experimental, and that their powers would be gradually extended on the D.O.'s recommendation, only if they functioned well. He had some support from W.C. Groves, the Director of Education, who said that in his experience primitive courts definitely existed in New Guinea; and from J.R. Black, the Assistant Director of District Services, one of the few men in New Guinea who had had colonial experience elsewhere.  

(iii) Elaboration of the Proposed Courts.

Against this unsatisfactory background, the Administrator went ahead with the proposal for native courts. 'Notes to courts' on the lines of those long in use in British colonies were prepared. These explained the constitution, functions and duties of the courts in elementary terms. Generally, the courts were intended to settle all cases concerning native custom, property, native marriage and divorce, and inheritance.

23) Meeting of 7.1.1947. D.S. 14/3/15. It is doubtful if J.K. Murray himself appreciated the grounds for the system - his reference in Admin. memo. of 8.9.47. GH.2-1-1. In the Buka area, the luluais had regularly imposed fines - B. Blackwood, Both Sides of Buka Passage, pp. 48-9.
The Government knows that some villages now have their own courts where the big men of the village settle cases without going to the Government courts. If these are good courts and the people like them, the Government will make them proper village courts under the new law.

The natives knew that they were to get their own courts. This was also the assumption in the Administration, evidenced by the issue of a Circular Memorandum on 21.3.1947 dealing with their establishment:

The edifice of effective local government and small courts for village communities will be gradually built up on the indigenous authority where it has survived and, in its absence, on a committee of the dominant people who regulate village life.

The system initially was to be tied to the village, and the proposal for instituting headmen was specifically rejected as savouring of direct rule. The sentiments, like the legislation, were borrowed directly from Cameron's Tanganyika.

During 1947 various amendments to the draft were made, to satisfy departmental critics and the Crown Law Office. Eventually the Interdepartmental Committee accepted all the technical and terminological amendments, and a final draft

24) 'Notes for Native Courts', DS. 14/3/15.
25) 'Proposed Village Courts and Village Councils Ordinance'.
26) D.D.S.&N.A. to Sec. Canberra, 25.10.48 (Terr. A 846/5/27) said the Ordinance principally used as a model was the Native Authority Ordinance of Tanganyika, as reprinted in Cameron's Principles of Native Administration and their Application (1930).
was submitted to the Administrator, for transmission to Canberra, in November 1947. By this time the draft of the Native Courts Ordinance had grown to sixteen foolscap pages and 46 sections, compared with the 25 sections of the corresponding British Solomons Regulation (Cap. 30/1942). The attempt to compromise with all the objections had produced a draft which had been framed to accord with legal rather than with administrative requirements. Legislative direction had replaced the administrative discretion of the British models. Opponents of the principle of native courts had achieved a bill so cumbersome that protagonists of the principle would have found it unworkable. Efforts to avoid this impasse marked the later stages of the dispute.

Little need be said about the draft bill, except that one or two aspects indicate the trend of administrative thinking. Appellate jurisdiction was to be conferred on the Administration courts, with ultimate appeal to the Supreme Court. The jurisdiction of the native courts was to be parallel with that of the Administration's courts for natives, so that either the litigants or the Administration could choose one system or the other. The jurisdiction of the proposed native courts was to be particularly carefully delimited on land questions; Mr. Justice Gore objected even

27) a/Crown Law Officer to Administrator, 31.5.47. CLO 4/25; Minutes of Committee 18.8.47 (DS 14/3/15); marginal note, draft, by E.B. Bignold, 10.11.47.
to this, on the remarkable ground that native land questions would be too complicated for natives to deal with.\textsuperscript{28} This comment in itself is indicative of the problems which those favouring the Native Authority concept had to face.

When the draft bill reached the Department of External Territories a further stream of amendments followed, notably those seeking to make the provisions even more specific, particularly on the matter of procedure. This was another reflection of the influence of metropolitan precedents, which at about the same time had made the Co-operatives legislation farcical.\textsuperscript{29} Despite this, the Director of District Services still viewed the proposal for Native Courts as an integral and accepted part of the advance in native administration. In April, 1949 when proposing a special Native Authorities Section to supervise the setting up of native councils and courts he described it as 'one of the most important steps, if not the most important step, we have taken in connection with Native Administration',

\textsuperscript{28} R.T. Gore to Administrator, 16.8.48. Law R.21/145/48. On appeal the Supreme Court was not to have the power of overrule 'provided that substantial justice has been done by such court' (i.e. a native court). But who was to decide 'substantial justice'?

\textsuperscript{29} Sec.Terr. to Admin. 21.6.48. Terr. A 846/5/27; C.L.O. to Gov.Sec. 13.11.48. CLO 4/25; a/Admin. to Sec.Terr. 20.1.49. CA 6/66; D.D.S.&N.A. to Sec.Terr. 4.4.49. DS 14/3/15. The initial co-operatives Ordinance was drawn from N.S.W. legislation and was designed for both native and non-native organizations; for natives it was unworkable. Sec. statement by Minister Ward, \textit{South Pacific}, III, 4, p.82.
and as 'a positive step in the process whereby the native people will advance towards the ultimate goal of self-government'.


The native people were similarly assured that the complete system would be introduced. The Director's representative told a village councils' conference in Port Moresby in April, 1949:

Now we think the time has come when some groups can help to govern themselves, and two Ordinances - the Village Courts Ordinance and the Village Councils Ordinance - have been prepared. These are awaiting approval by the Government in Australia. When they are approved, the Administrator will be able to say what villages can have councils and courts in accordance with the new system. You have already been told that Hanuabada will be one of the first places where these council and courts will be tried.

The natives were promised that native custom would be borne in mind when the native courts were constituted:

It should not be long now before the two Ordinances are approved by the Government in Australia. Councils and Courts like these have been tried out in Africa and in other British countries, and they are the first step in training the people so that they can take a bigger share in the government of their countries.

When the Papua and New Guinea Bill was enacted by the Australian Parliament in July 1949, it provided for native courts (section 63) as well as for village councils, as they

30) a/D.D.S.&N.A. to Admin. 5.4.49. DS 14/3/15.
31) Address by W.R. Dishon, 27.4.49. DS 14/3/15.
were then called (sections 25-7). In 1950, after the change of government, the Parliamentary Draftsman asked for, and apparently got, a policy clearance on the draft native courts Ordinance, for it continued to grow. In 1951 the rules of evidence were transferred from the Native Regulations of New Guinea to the draft.

Meanwhile, the 1950 visiting U.N. Mission had also been assured that native courts were to be introduced, though the precise steps to be taken were left vague. It was suggested that the councils would act as courts. The Mission hoped that, whatever form they took, they would be set up 'with speed and success'.

In 1952 the Director of District Services was still confident that the Native Courts Ordinance would become law. D.M. Fienberg, the Senior Native Authorities Officer who had visited Tanganyika, emphasised the inter-relationship of native courts and councils:

A Native Court is a necessary adjunct to the Local Government policy. Councils have wide police powers but no judicial powers.

32) Principal Assistant Draftsman to Sec.Terr. 2.5.50. Attorney General 49/1191.
33) C.L.O. to Gov.Sec. 6.11.51. CLO 4/25; D.D.S.&N.A. to Gov.Sec. 15.11.51. DS 14/3/15; Admin. to Sec.Terr. 23.11.51. CA 35/1/6.
He noted that in all controlled areas the practice had grown up of village officials and other influential men hearing and settling disputes.

When first establishing councils in this area (i.e. the Gazelle Peninsula) two years ago it became necessary for us to firmly reassert the existing legal position.

The kivung had become in part unofficial courts, as the Director noted in 1949. Fienberg repeated that there was constant pressure on councils to perform judicial functions, and that the gradual extension of such undefined and uncontrolled functions was dangerous.

We cannot adequately test the system until all its component parts are operating. We do not know yet what effects the introduction of Native Courts may have on the popular status of councils, or on the maintenance of law and order in council areas, including the policing of council rules ... Until we commence this task there must remain large gaps in the Local Government pattern, with a constant tendency for these to be filled in irregular ways.

Local government in the Gazelle Peninsula was being used as a testing ground. The failure to introduce the Native Courts Ordinance, in Fienberg's view, made an adequate test impossible, for the two Ordinances had been designed as complementary parts of the one system of native administration. This delay ultimately held up the extension of local

37) Ibid.
38) Ibid.
Pienberg realized that the draft Courts Ordinance had become too complicated to be used as a basis for jurisdiction by natives. It was intended that Ministerial approval be obtained to the principle of redrafting. In this redrafting Pienberg found an enthusiastic ally in C.J. Lynch, a senior draftsman in the Crown Law Office. Lynch did a redraft from scratch, and eventually produced a proposed Ordinance on simple lines similar to the original British legislation from which a beginning had been made more than seven years before.


By June 1954, however, no decision on the principle of redrafting had been received from Canberra. At that time the Administrator was visiting Canberra. When he made enquiries about the proposed Ordinance he was told, to his astonishment, 'that the initial draft ... had just been overlooked and the file put away'. Cleland advised the Department and the Minister that a new draft was being prepared and would be sent down for the Minister's consideration. When the new draft was eventually submitted.

41) Lynch to Pienberg (semi-official), 29.12.53 and 5.1.54. DS 14/3/15. Lynch later accused the Administration of being too legalistic over native land tenure - See Ch. VIII, 2.
42) Quoted by a/Gov.Sec. to D.D.S.&N.A. 3.6.54. CA 35/1/6.
in January 1955 the acting Administrator remarked that since November 1951, when the previous draft had last been considered, no further correspondence on the matter had been received either from the Department in Canberra or from the Minister. 43

In view of Cleland's approach of June 1954, and of the time given and importance attached to native courts by those promoting local government in the Territory, this was surprising; but the Minister's reaction to the new draft can be described only as astounding. He angrily complained that for some reason which he could not discover the very principle of having native courts had never before been brought to his notice, although requests for a ministerial decision had come from the Territory. (Clearly, he regarded his own department as culpable):

Although no policy decision appears to have been made by any Minister on the subject, an Ordinance has been drafted and adopted by the Executive Council of the Territory for presentation to the Legislative Council.

The Minister made it clear that in his view a native courts system was neither necessary nor wise. This view, he said, derived from research which he had done; but there is no indication in his memorandum that he was familiar with the reasons which have led British colonial administrations

to adopt native courts. Even were he to accept the principle, he said - and it was obvious that the possibility of this was remote - he would not accept the submitted Ordinance. He favoured one similar to that rejected by Fienberg in 1952, which would 'lay down precisely the main provisions in regard to the constitution of the courts, their jurisdiction, their powers and their procedures ... Officers should be aware now that I hold very narrow views on the question of law-making by regulations'.

He suggested that the whole proposal was 'an elaborate sham'.

Is this in reality a proposal to add some lower courts to the existing judicial tribunals or is it only proposing something that looks judicial but is in fact designed to meet the convenience and to serve the purposes of administration of native affairs?

He developed his views on the question at considerable length. They are the views of someone wholeheartedly dedicated to one, and only one, system of legal administration, in a monocultural setting. It is a view that depends ultimately on the vision of total cultural assimilation and that is the way in which the Minister applied it. The natives would simply have to be educated to accept English law and English courts.

45) Ibid.
46) Ibid.
47) Ibid. 'I think that in Papua and New Guinea we have to be careful about what we may do to create an impression among any group of natives regarding the sources of justice. It is, in historical fact, a gift that we have brought to them. In the interests of good administration and the advancement of the natives...I believe there is a great deal to be said for presenting the idea that the Queen (someone above government) is the fount of justice and the courts are the Queen's courts.'
As far as native custom was concerned, the Minister thought that existing arrangements were adequate and that, if necessary, extra protection for native interests could be written into the Ordinances.

The entire question of native courts was therefore taken back to first principles. Fienberg and Lynch argued cogently and warmly; but in view of the Minister's preconceptions it was obvious that they had no hope of having their views accepted. Fienberg, however, pointed out some of the disadvantages of not accepting a native courts system: the legislation had been designed to complement the Native Local Government Ordinance, and to regularise existing native tribunals - making them conform to statutory requirements would allow their activities to be controlled. These illegal tribunals, he claimed, and specifically amongst the Tolai, dealt with 'anything from marriage, land, and native business partnership disputes, to theft, assault, adultery, non-attendance at church, grievous bodily harm, and even manslaughter or murder'. The very existence of these tribunals, in his view, showed that they filled a need in native society.

Lynch also based his argument on the fact that the existing situation was quite unsatisfactory from the native viewpoint, and potentially dangerous. He pointed out that

lawyers had criticised aspects of the administration of native courts elsewhere (for example, Dr. A. Phillips' analysis of the African courts in Kenya) but that they had not advocated the abolition of the courts. As a lawyer, Lynch stated that the Minister's stand was fundamentally wrong:

First of all, he appears to consider the Common Law of England as the fount of all justice and, secondly, he ignores the fact that the term "justice" has a meaning only in relation to a specific social and cultural environment.

These arguments possibly gave a misleading interpretation of the actual functions of native court systems elsewhere, and particularly of their harmonising functions in a period of severe social change. In any case, the proposals were doomed. The Chief Justice was again formally asked for his views, but only to reinforce the Administration's stand. Chief Justice Phillips detailed the steps that had been taken to introduce a native courts system over his head and against his advice in 1946, and he repeated the arguments that he had used then. He was agreeable to having natives trained as magistrates for the existing courts. The matter of customary offences was glossed over: he said that he was happy for the unofficial tribunals to offer 'advice, arbitrement or determination' of civil disputes. Serious offences, he said, always leaked out to

49) C.J. Lynch to S.N.A.O., 17.8.55. DS 14/3/15
the Administration eventually, no matter how the natives tried to conceal them.\(^{50}\) (The administrative implications of these statements were clearly not realized).

The Administrator administered the coup de grace to the native authority concept in January 1956:

I am in full agreement with the views of the Chief Justice and do not propose to take any further action at all in regard to the proposed Ordinance\(^{51}\) or the establishment of Native Courts.

(vi) Substitutes within the Existing Judicial System.

It had taken ten years for a firm decision to be reached on the matter. During the whole of that time the New Guinea Administration, particularly those concerned with local government, had been making plans based on the assumption that the policy to have native courts was settled.

The Administrator, as an alternative, stated his agreement with the principle of training natives as assessors and eventually as native magistrates within the existing judicial structure.\(^{52}\)

It will be remembered that native magistrates had actually been appointed, though with unsatisfactory results, in the Western Division of Papua in the 1890s. Twenty

\(^{50}\) Chief Justice to Admin., 24.11.55. Law R.41/451/55. It is notable that Phillips applied exclusively English concepts to the native situation. In practice, 'civil disputes' might cover almost anything. -v. Malinowski: 'Crime and Custom in Savage Society'.

\(^{51}\) Admin. to Sec. Terr. 17.1.56. Admin. L.71.

\(^{52}\) Ibid.
years later Wilfred Beaver suggested that the experiment should be repeated. W.R. Humphries began training three native magistrates at Cape Nelson in 1932, but he was transferred and the plan lapsed. In his 1946 memorandum Humphries claimed that natives with elementary schooling could be trained as magistrates within two years.53

A system of non-statutory assessors had been introduced in Papua in 1929, but it had been applied in different ways by different officers; unofficial assessors have continued to be widely though spasmodically used. In December 1957 — now almost two years after the Administrator had stated what was, presumably, policy — the acting Administrator repeated that the principle of assessors had been approved, that the people in local government areas were ready for this development, but that it was 'necessary to move slowly in order to inculcate the proper judicial outlook.'54

An ad hoc Interdepartmental Committee was set up — in the absence of an adequate secretariat organization the only device for ensuring consultation — and it eventually reported on 13th April 1959, that is, more than four years after the Minister rejected native courts. The Committee recommended quite briefly that 'the assessor system should be regularised and legalised.'55 The Public Service Commissioner reported

53) See Humphries' memo. of 9.12.46, cit.sup.; W. Beaver, Unexplored New Guinea, p.30. Also see Appendix A, I.
that graduates from the Auxiliary Division of the Public Service - created in 1955 for natives with low educational qualifications - could be made available for training as assistants to magistrates. 56

At this point a further difficulty arose. Chief Justice Phillips had died and been replaced by Chief Justice Mann, whose views on the subject proved even less flexible than those of his predecessor. Mann rejected the Committee's proposals, claiming that 'the specific question of Assessors sitting with Magistrates ... is quite inconsistent with our own legal practice.' 57

The Secretary for Law, who had led the Committee, was justifiably annoyed. He pointed out that Mann was rejecting proposals which, from a legal viewpoint, had been accepted by Sir Hubert Murray and Sir Beaumont Phillips. He went to considerable pains to counter the legal opinions of the Chief Justice, quoting precedents from all parts of the British Commonwealth and Empire. He recommended that the decisions of the Committee be implemented at once, pointing out that the commitment to the Trusteeship Council made speed essential. 58 By July 1960, however, stalemate appeared to have been reached.

57) C.J. to Sec. Law, 4.5.59. CJ 1/59, J 1/59; C.J. to a/Admin., 19.11.59. LR 2.
58) Sec. Law to Asst. Admin., 27.11.59. S. 36/5/102;
(vii) The Perpetuation of Unofficial Tribunals.

It will have been noted that, with the exception of the representations of Fienberg, the actual native situation figured little in these discussions. Judgments had been made in terms of what was desirable according to English legal concepts. Meanwhile, a variety of unofficial judicial palliatives had functioned in various parts of the Territory for many years; many of these in the more sophisticated areas have been designed to placate native dissatisfaction with the existing judicial system, which in recent years they have not been slow to express.

The question of native courts was raised with every visiting U.N. Mission to the Trust Territory, particularly by the Tolai and Manus peoples, who came under local government in the period 1950-1. The 1953 Mission was given an account of unofficial courts by a District Magistrate: these, he said, 'consisted of the elders of the village who met, and were encouraged to do so, when minor disputes arose. If their opinion satisfied the individuals concerned, then it was accepted by the Administration. When an individual was dissatisfied with the decision of the elders, however, the dispute was handled through official judicial channels.' The Mission recommended that the system be made statutory.\(^{59}\)

In 1956 the Tolai complained that when they had the luluai system unofficial courts had been permitted. Now that they had local government unofficial courts were forbidden, though many matters affecting native law and custom were not understood by Administration officials.

The 1956 visiting Mission, led by a distinguished British colonial official, stated bluntly that the case for native courts was incontrovertible, and that the attitude of the Administration was 'excessively cautious' and even 'timid':

The Mission feels strongly, moreover, that the present situation, in which unofficial tribunals act with official knowledge but without official recognition or authority, is neither defensible nor sound.

In Papua, as in New Guinea, tentative approaches to native courts were made between the two World Wars. Except for the war years, the Hanuabada Disputes Committee has carried on its functions continuously since the 1920s. In its officially recognized form it represents a method of bringing the consensus of village opinion to bear on offenders against custom and morality, matters outside government law. It averages about four cases a week. The

Administration has a strong suspicion that the Committee in fact enforces its decisions and awards penalties. On advice from Dr. Murray Groves, Fienberg wrote in 1955 that the Hanuabada Council conducted secret court sessions and that the standard of justice was comparable to that in the Administration's courts. And, as Fienberg picturesquely described it, this happened within rifle-shot of the main government offices. Realizing the value of the Disputes Committee, the local Administration had tried to preserve a delicate balance between the demands of the law and the maximum latitude allowable to the Committee.

The fine distinctions to which this leads vary with individual officers and are generally incomprehensible to the natives. In 1956 there was a long correspondence on the subject, revolving around section 6(2) of the Native Local Government Ordinance which states that a council shall have such powers and authority as are conferred upon it by native custom, insofar as that custom does not conflict with the laws in force in the Territory and is not repugnant to the general principles of humanity.

In A.D.O. Foster's interpretation this left the council with no power to impose sanctions, as the customary sanctions of sorcery and violence were illegal; and under custom the elders had not imposed fines or ordered

imprisonment. It followed that the decisions of the Committee were not enforceable. As a result, he said, the Committee should not make orders. This led to a distinction between a recommendation by the Committee, and an order.

It was allowable to decide that

The Committee has decided that A's dog killed one of B's fowls and **considers** that A should pay ten shillings to B. \[62\]

He added that the Committee must tell the parties that if they disagreed they could take the dispute to the Court for Native Matters. At a meeting in January 1960 this was not done; although in two cases the Chairman threatened that the cases would be taken to a government officer unless the Committee's decisions were heeded. \[63\] (Clearly the Committee has some grasp of subtle distinctions).

The Administration's dismissal of sorcery as a sanction in Hanuabada is a good example of wishful theorising. Belief in sorcery, to some degree, is still virtually universal. In 1959 the most influential figure in Hanuabada, Toua Kapena, charged a mixed-race man before the Disputes Committee with having made sorcery against him following a land dispute. Toua is a senior clerk in the central Education Department, and one of the Territory's elite. \[64\]


\[63\] See details, Appendix D. I attended this meeting.

\[64\] Oral information; also Hanuabada 7th Local Disputes Meeting, 10.3.59; see M.Groves, *Report on Papua and New Guinea*, *The Observer*, Sydney, 14.11.60. According to Toua, the mixed-race had hired Koiai sorcerers.
So long as the councillors have no other sanctions, sorcery will undoubtedly continue to thrive.

The Hanuabadans were provided with a further buffer between themselves and the Administration's courts when, in 1958, John Guise, a prominent member of the mixed-race community and now an elected member of the Legislative Council, took up a semi-official position as an 'arbitrator' in the sub-district office. Guise is a dedicated man who felt that he had a mission, to persuade the natives to settle their own disputes and prevent them reaching government officers, for whose approach and judgment he has little respect. He regarded the Administration courts as ineffective in dealing not only with civil disputes but also with such statutory offences as adultery and the spreading of malicious rumours, both common in a community such as Hanuabada. The implications of his attitude are obvious.

In a similar way, and for similar reasons, unofficial courts operate, connived at by some officers, deprecated and discouraged by others, all over the Territory. Because they are outside the surveillance of the Administration they generally have no guidance on what they may do. As a

65) Personal information. In 1959 in the Central District Advisory Council John Guise urged the wider use of assessors - South Pacific Post, 17.3.59.
result, few instances of their exceeding their functions seep back to the Administration, because the natives, acting unsupervised, have little conception of the confines of those functions, except where major crimes are involved. One case occurred in the Higaturu council area in May 1956. 66

The natives tend to view changes in personal terms, while the administration views them in legal, institutional terms. The natives in local government areas feel that, at least nominally, their local executive responsibilities have been increased but that their authority has not been — indeed, at the village level there is a regression. It is significant that demands for native courts have come particularly from the most sophisticated and politically conscious areas, where rapid social change is under way, notably Manus and the Tolai areas of New Britain. 67

The Reimber councillors in 1958 fined natives who failed to make exhibits for the Kokopo show, as instructed. When the D.O., against the advice of his colleagues, insisted that the money be returned, the councillors protested that the people did not want the money back, and that if they were forced to return it they would lose face completely.

66) See Ch. VII, note 26. Less than two years later in the same area councillors were being officially advised that they would soon be able to play a part in settling village disputes — Popondetta P.R. 8/1957-8. NA 23-5-10D.

When the Reimber natives were invited to attend a meeting to discuss the matter none did so. 68

It is a measure of the confusion within the Administration itself that the D.O. felt compelled to get a policy ruling from Port Moresby, for the Assistant Administrator (he said) had made a public announcement recognizing the fact that illegal courts were held and fines inflicted, and indicating Administration tolerance of these practices. 69

In this instance, there was more to the D.O.'s objections than the imposition of fines. He made no secret of his belief that the Reimber councillors, who were strongly under the influence of the Catholic mission and constantly complained of their lack of authority, were untrustworthy and opposed to certain aspects of government policy, including the local government system itself. He saw the Kokopo show incident as an opportunity to dismiss all the councillors and elect a new council.

The councillors, he said, are continually requesting for court powers to be placed in their hands and display a desire to exercise dictatorial control over the lives of the people in the council area. 70

The E.O. (L.G.), agreed that the money would have to be returned, and subsequently most of it was; but he rejected

68) a/D.O. Reitano to D.M.A. 19.3.59. Rabaul 14/12.
69) Quoted ibid., para. 8.
70) Ibid., para. 12.
the suggestion that the councillors be removed:

It is true that the Reimber Councillors are generally of a poor standard but the people have elected them. Almost any action that we take on this will discredit them, to some extent, in the eyes of the people.

This is one example of the results that can follow from an undefined policy that depends on the discretion of individual officers who are constantly being moved around; the policy is therefore quite arbitrary. Both Chief Justices, Phillips and Mann, have been remarkably lenient in their attitudes towards the unofficial arbitral functions of councillors and village officials; but they have rejected statutory forms for these practices. It seems clear that the judiciary have not been concerned with the administrative ramifications of unofficial tribunals as long as these are kept outside the ambit of the Territory's judicial system. This is one more reflection of the departmentalisation of policy within the New Guinea Administration.

71) Minute, H.T. Plant to W.R. Dishon, 20.4.59, Rabaul 14/12.
72) Memos. by Phillips, 24.11.55 and Mann, 19.11.59, cit. sup. Mann specifically commended the activities of John Guise.
73) There are still, of course, fundamental objections to a native courts system in any form, which their advocates regard as overriding. W.A. Lalor of the Crown Law Office, although 'a devoted, almost militant advocate for native workers' (Trade Unions Active in New Guinea', Sydney Morning Herald, 10.7.61), is violently opposed to native courts on the ground that the recognition of various systems of customary law poses impossible judicial problems, and would be manipulated by cunning, sophisticated natives - personal information. He believes that the sphere of operation of customary law cannot be properly delimited. Cf. A.N. Allott in J.A.A. XI, 2, April 1959, pp. 72-83: systems of customary law are becoming more alike.
It is hardly necessary to dilate on the fact that arbitration is only the beginning of the functions of unofficial tribunals; where there is no official provision for customary law the unofficial application of sanctions is inevitable. In Wagawaga, Milne Bay, probably the most sophisticated community in eastern Papua, the councillors and other village leaders freely state that sorcery is used against those who persistently offend against custom. The coastal Kiwai take to the Administration only those offences which they consider serious, uba, generally matters which would eventually leak out. Most offences or disputes will not hang fire until the visit of a government officer. In each village the councillor, with the advice of the clan leaders, sentences offenders to short periods of village work or awards compensation. Thirty years ago F.E. Williams considered that compensation would be more appropriate, according to native conceptions, in many cases which are still treated as crimes by the Administration. 74

One other example is worth quoting, because it concerns the Roro-Mekeo area where unofficial courts functioned in the 1930s. The Mekeo have a reputation for intransigence with the Administration; but in 1948 A.D.O. McLeod, disgusted with the system of direct administration, personally

74) Personal research: Williams to Murray, 10.2.1931. CPI, V, 16/36/13.
authorised councillors to conduct courts in their villages. According to McLeod, these courts were at first greeted with great suspicion by the Catholic missionaries, who know the natives intimately; but the mission was quickly won over as the system appeared to work excellently, removing constant social irritations. McLeod allowed the councillors to inflict fines or award compensation, details of the cases being recorded in a book for the officers' inspection, on the lines of the system then in use in the British Solomons. McLeod left the district, and in 1950 the system was supposed to have failed and the councillors to have been restricted to advising and arbitrating.

In March 1959, however, A.D.O. Brown found that the courts were still functioning; in one case a man was ordered to pay £20 as compensation for damage done by his pigs to gardens. In another case, a man and woman found guilty of adultery were ordered to compensate in cash the owner of the house in which the offence took place. (Had the offence been tried in an Administration court under the Native Regulations the only sanction would have been gaol). These cases came to the A.D.O.'s notice only after the offenders refused, or were unable, to pay the sums named.

---

75) Personal information, A.D.O. J.S. McLeod. For his views on the luluais and V.C.'s, see South Pacific, 1952.
77) Ibid.
The Director of Native Affairs refused to believe that the Administration had had anything to do with native courts in the area, and asserted that the natives had usurped court powers after being asked to settle customary matters out of court. The Administration thus made the natives culpable for continuing an institution which they had been promised in 1946 and which had in fact been promoted by an Administration officer. The councillors were severely reprimanded. There is little doubt that this confirmed the Administration's assessment of the Mekeo as untrustworthy; it is partly because of their reputation that they have been denied local government.

(viii) The Continuing Pressure for Reform.

The examples quoted should be sufficient to show that existing judicial provisions are unsatisfactory. This has remained a major issue amongst the natives, most particularly in the Gazelle Peninsula. Demands for reform have come, not from dissident groups or from young malcontents but from the older respected native leaders. At the combined meeting of the five Tolai councils on 18th March, 1959, Tovin ToBaining, whom the Administration had been anxious to recognize as the Tolai leader, 'became emotional' on the issue, and demanded that court powers be given to councillors.

Acting D.O. Reitano explained that the government did not consider the time ripe as the exercise of magisterial powers 'required a high standard of education and special legal training'. (It must be said that the government had shown no inclination to make either the education or the training available; the Tolai of course realized this). Tovin replied, again with emotion, that he considered that the establishment of native courts was a reasonable demand to make.

The local Administration immediately urged Port Moresby to step up propaganda in the Gazelle Peninsula, in order to persuade the Tolai that the government knows best.

The Port Moresby reaction to these Tolai demands was the same as that amongst the Administration: to promote assessors, in the first instance, as a substitute. The Reimber council wanted the question of judicial powers for councillors put on the agenda for the Madang conference of New Guinea councils in June, 1959. But the eventual agenda, worked out with Administration officers, provided only for discussion of court assessors (Item 9). The conference

80) Ibid., 'General'.
81) Ibid., marginal comment.
adopted the proposal, and resolved that all proposed assessors should be nominated by councils, that there should be three for each sitting, two being old men versed in custom, the third a councillor with some education and understanding of modern conditions. 82

This was a moderate and sensible resolution, and accorded with the general principle already endorsed by the Indepartmental Committee. The Administration represented the assessors to the 1959 U.N. Visiting Mission as a step towards Native Courts, 'within the present judicial system when the time was opportune'; and as there seemed real prospects of getting assessors functioning the Mission appears to have accepted the idea. 83 Nevertheless, discussion with the natives, as on previous occasions, had revolved around native courts, not assessors.

The Baluan Council voted unanimously for the establishment of native courts when consulted by the Mission; and the Presidents of the Tolai councils made a similar request. They 'complained that statutory law did not cover certain customs and that a man could not be punished for an offence unless it was codified in the legal system.' 84 This was

84) Ibid., para. 97.
the cardinal problem which the appointment of assessors would do nothing to resolve. Patently, the Mission was uneasy on this point:

... in essence the question seems to be one of judgements understood by and acceptable to the majority, who wish to see justice done in accordance with their own customs rather than in accordance with European legal judgements and procedures, which the indigenous people do not readily understand.

Even the introduction of statutory assessors was not proceeded with, however, undoubtedly partly because of the Chief Justice's preconceptions, and partly because of the notoriously dilatory procedures for converting proposals into policy and policy into action. The Native Authority concept was abandoned before alternative judicial arrangements had been adopted or prepared for. The machinery for the administration of justice has remained unchanged for more than sixty years. Since the war the Administration has without question heeded the Chief Justice's injunction of 1946 to spend time formulating policy, but the natives still play no part in the Territory's judicial system.

85) Ibid., para. 100.
except as offenders. And in maintaining their own customs and conceptions they are left largely to their own unofficial and often illegal devices.

Postscript

On 24th October, 1961 the Minister for Territories announced in the Federal Parliament that, following an investigation by the Professor of Jurisprudence at Melbourne University, the Territory's judicial system was to be overhauled. The professor (the Derham Report) endorsed the Minister's 1955 rejection of native courts, and recommended the separation of the courts from the executive. Councils and Councillors were to be specifically excluded from any part in the judicial system. Courts for natives presided over by patrol officers were to be abolished, and both natives and whites would be subject to the same courts. Provision was to be made for the application of customary law, but the manner in which this was to be done was left undefined in the Minister's statement. Natives were to be trained as magistrates: how this was to be done, and how long it would take, were again not defined.
FIELD TRIP JANUARY-JULY 1960

- DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS
- SUB DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS

COUNCILS:
1. HANUABADA, 1950
2. HIGATURU, 1956
3. MILNE BAY, 1957; EALEBA 1951; TAVARA 1954
4. MOVEAVE-TOARIP, MORIP, 1958
5. KIWI, 1958; KIWI, 1957; DARU, 1957
6. LEI-WOMPA, 1957
7. VUNAMAMI, REIMER, 1950; RABAL, 1951; VUNADADIR, 1952; LIVUAN, 1953
8. BALUAN, 1950
9. MALAITA, 1952

DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS
- CHIMBU
- NATIVE PEOPLES

SUB DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS
- HANUABA, 1950
- DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS
- HIGATURU, 1956
- MILNE BAY, 1957; EALEBA 1951; TAVARA 1954
- MOVEAVE-TOARIP, MORIP, 1958
- KIWI, 1958; KIWI, 1957; DARU, 1957
- LEI-WOMPA, 1957
- VUNAMAMI, REIMER, 1950; RABAL, 1951; VUNADADIR, 1952; LIVUAN, 1953
- BALUAN, 1950
- MALAITA, 1952
CHAPTER V

THE APPROACH TO NATIVE LOCAL GOVERNMENT

2. Initial Policy and Practice.

(i) Area Organizations under a Unified Administration

In the period 1946-9 native councils and native courts were projected as complementary institutions. During 1949 the influence of the Department of External Territories in Canberra was very marked in elaborating the draft Councils Ordinance; though the Director of District Services was insistent that limitations, supervision and controls should be essentially local and flexible rather than legislatively delimited.\(^1\) As C.S. Belshaw pointed out in 1951, however, the eventual legislation implied a crippling lack of flexibility, enforcing continual reference to Headquarters on every minor issue.\(^2\)

From the Administration's viewpoint a fundamental matter was the decision whether councils were to be initially village or area organizations. Discussion on this point took place during 1949-51; many traditional administrative preconceptions were again brought out. A prominent D.O., I.P. Downs, argued that councils should begin with the basic political

---

1) D.D.S.& N.A. to Sec. Canberra 25.10.48, 4.4.49; to Administrator 5.4.49, DS.14/3/15; Sec. Canberra to D.D.S.& N.A. 20.1.49. CA 6/64.

units, and gradually work up to area organizations; to do otherwise, he said, would open the way for unscrupulous manipulation by opportunists with abnormal ambition, who would promote premature nationalism. Larger councils, he felt, would represent merely spectacular window-dressing. 3

On the other hand, an anthropologist, K.E. Read, doubted whether 'the village is the necessary or essential starting point', emphasising that although the village was usually the basic political unit, cultural and linguistic unity generally extended beyond this and involved a range of common contacts and activities. 4 He pointed out that under culture contact a blurring of traditional boundaries had been occurring: 'social, economic and political progress demand the establishment of wider systems of relationships, of broader spheres of interdependence than those which characterise the indigenous cultural pattern'. 5

The latter argument was adopted - a pyramidal system of local government had already been projected in Canberra 6 - for councils from the beginning have embraced several villages, though traditional alliances and linguistic and cultural

3) Letter in South Pacific, July 1950, IV, 8, p.145. This aversion to political experiment has been a continuing factor.

4) K.E. Read, Notes on Some Problems of Political Confederation, South Pacific, III, 12, Oct. 1949, pp.229-34; IV, 1, Nov. 1949, pp.5-10.

5) Ibid., Nov. 1949, p.9.


P. Hasluck, Australia's Task in Papua and New Guinea, (Roy Lecture, 1956).
factors have been powerful determinants. There were three main pressures towards the adoption of area organizations: firstly, the influence of Mr. D.M. Fienberg - appointed Senior Native Authorities Officer in December 1949 - who had been sent by ANGAU to study local government in Tanganyika; secondly, the realization that the natives and the local Administration could be won over to local government only by setting up councils which could provide significant works and services; and thirdly, the fact that the impulse to local government was most marked in those areas which had politically, already progressed beyond the parish.  

This last point is most important. The pre-war experiments with non-statutory native councils, at Hanuabada and in Milne Bay, will be remembered; but the major testing grounds for statutory councils post-war lay in the Gazelle Peninsula and Manus, in the Trust Territory. As the administration of the two territories was united in 1945-6 it is essential to treat the history of native local government as it affects the whole Territory. The unified Administration of the two territories was made permanent by the Papua and New Guinea Act of 1949, although each Territory retained its own identity and laws, particularly its distinct Native Regulations, and correspondingly its own system of direct village administration. Fitting a system of native local government to the two

7) Parish: the largest traditional political unit - see H.I. Hogbin and C. Wedgwood, Local Grouping in Melanesia, Oceania, XXIII, 4, 1953, pp.241-76.
administrative traditions was in itself inhibiting; the background in the Gazelle Peninsula affected the policy that was applied in Papua.

(An outline of the institutions of native administration in the present Trust Territory, to the beginning of World War II, is given in Appendix C, I).

(ii) Initial Establishment: Political Incentives

The Administrator, Colonel Murray, wrote to the Director of District Services in January, 1950:

I wish to see a village council established at Hanuabada and elsewhere as you may think fit, as soon as possible. We have obvious areas in the Territory where councils should be in existence at the earliest possible moment, and we should not get bogged down in trying to make out perfect sets of regulations and warrants. Let us get a move on and subsequently amend regulations, warrants, etc. as experience indicates it necessary.

This determination was also expressed to the 1950 U.N. Visiting Mission, which was told that councils would be established in most districts by the end of 1951. Murray clearly underestimated opposition to the very principle of local government both within the Administration and, in the event, amongst certain native groups; and his conception of the preparations for local government differed radically from that of the Senior Native Authorities Officer, D.M. Fienberg.

Six councils were established in 1950-1; in every instance circumstances made their establishment imperative. Hanuabada, though economically peri-urban and socially atypical, exemplifies the response to necessity which the setting up of its council reflected. Both councils and courts had been promised the Hanuabadans since 1946, and complaints at the dilatoriness of the Administration had been voiced at a District Councillors' conference in 1948. To arrest dissatisfaction, the council was gazetted on 14.9.50. Nevertheless, Fienberg noted that reaction in Hanuabada had been unsatisfactory, for the natives had been accustomed to getting free, from Port Moresby, services which their council was now being asked to provide and pay for.10

Indeed, the general native tax which had been applied before the war was not re-introduced until 1958, so that those natives who elected to have native local government thereby elected to be taxed. This was a major administrative blunder. A further problem at Hanuabada was the lack of a permanent supervising officer, for the Native Authorities Section was based in Rabaul and was itself in the early stages of organization. The D.C. in Port Moresby in 1950 was antipathetic to the local government policy, and obstructed rather than assisted the council's establishment.11

(iii) The Manus Example: Control of the Paliau Movement

In the Manus area the establishment of a council was dictated by a necessity of a different kind, for in 1946 the natives had petitioned the Commander of the United States forces to take over the islands' government, arguing that the Australians, like the Germans, had withheld education from them in order to use them as cheap wage-labour. Out of the rejection of their petition developed the cult led by Paliau; in some respects this was similar in its objects and methods to the Marching Rule movement in the British Solomons.

A government station had been established in the Admiralties in 1912, and by 1930 Margaret Mead was able to state that Manus contact with the white man had been 'fairly fortunate'. By 1953 there had been a change as radical as that in Mead's own views on the desirability of culture change. As Schwartz remarks, the Paliau cult represented an attempt to frame a new culture more at home with itself and the world than the cultures of the early contact period.

The first active cult phase began in January 1947, though

12) C.P.141. Y.840/1/1: Conference, luluais with U.S. Commander, 22.8.1946.
13) M. Mead, Growing Up in New Guinea, (Penguin ed.), pp.226,
in the 1930s undirected attempts to raise living levels had been made, as in the Rabaul area, by the collecting of subscriptions.\(^ {16}\) Paliau himself came from Baluan, a former centre of ceremonial exchange, and claimed descent from a renowned leader. He had been put on trial by the Australians for alleged collaboration, in May 1945; and although the trial was abandoned, Paliau was made a martyr in the eyes of his fellow Manus.\(^ {17}\) The movement was unusually well organized by Paliau, although it possessed most of the typical cargo cult features of the post-war period. The Administration respected his remarkable achievement in welding together the traditionally hostile seafaring and land-dwelling Manus peoples.\(^ {18}\)

Despite this, he alienated the Catholic mission as the cult spread rapidly to Peri, their headquarters. The Administration also became steadily more suspicious as Paliau's organization expanded. In fact, Paliau as the formulator of a new culture was struggling to preserve the movement based on organization against the pressure of the cult based on revelation. At the time this was not realized. By December 1947, Paliau was suspected of being ambitious and unscrupulous, and it was thought that he might have taken

\(^{16}\) Ibid., pp.47, 99-101.

\(^{17}\) Ibid., pp.107-8; also H.T. Plant, Cargo Cult (typescript L.S.14-7-2, p.4 - most of this incorporated in N.G. Report 1959-1, pp.24-30.

\(^{18}\) Plant, ibid., p.7. There are 3 main peoples (called 'ecological types') on Manus: the Manus, numbering 1200; Usiai (6500); and Matankor (4000).
advantage of his visit to Port Moresby to set himself up as a leader. 19

During 1948 Paliau was setting up village councils; the Administration attempted to guide him, and in May 1949 he was appointed luluai of Mok/Baluan. 20 At a critical time in April 1950, however, Paliau was gaoloed for six months for pretending that he had powers to delegate court functions. Shortly afterwards the luluais and other officials protested to the U.N. Visiting Mission. The acting Director of District Services replied by promising that statutory village councils would be set up as soon as possible. 21

Despite the fact that the Baluan district possessed almost none of the criteria which the Senior Native Authorities Officer considered desirable for a local government council, a council was hastily set up for Baluan and Rambutjon. This took in many non-Paliau natives on Baluan, but excluded many Paliau supporters, particularly those on the south coast of the main island. 22 Broadly, however, the creation of the council represented a recognition of the political unity which Paliau had forged. The Administration

20) Plant, ibid. p.11. The Administration conceded that the movement had achieved practical results; and as late as Nov. 1949 the loyalty of the population to Government was remarked on.
21) Plant, ibid., p.12.
22) Schwartz, op.cit., p.538.
tried to indoctrinate Paliau during his imprisonment; but his thinking had always been organizational rather than cultist.23

The haste with which the council was set up, in the long term, had unfortunate consequences. Initially it embraced only about 1,200 natives. Paliau's followers were divided by the council boundaries roughly on cult/movement lines, so that those who were outside the council were also beyond Paliau's restraining hand. Moreover, as the principle of voluntary participation was applied, the former followers outside the council came to regard those within it as traitors who had been corrupted. Bringing them together again thus clearly presented formidable problems which could probably have been avoided by a bolder or more perceptive establishment policy.24

From the viewpoint of the Native Authorities Section, the Baluan council was a misfortune born of necessity; for it was too small to provide significant works and services, and was widely regarded merely as an instrument of control over

24) This division and delay caused a Ghost Cult outbreak in 1953-4. Ibid., pp.552-5; Manus PR 9/1953-4, 10.6.1954. Cult attitudes in the south coast villages were not entirely dissipated by their inclusion in the council; in 1957 two councillors refused to provide workers for the Lovengau-Patusi road, apparently believing that machines would or should be provided - A.D.O. to D.C. 10.10.1957; D.C. to D.N.A. 9.11.1957. Baluan 14/1. Paliau's followers in 1953 numbered 4487 - Mead, op.cit., p.411.
the Paliau movement. The council was, therefore, hardly designed to convince opponents of native local government that councils had a positive and progressive function in native administration.

(iv) The Gazelle Peninsula: Testing Ground for Policy

It was the situation in the Gazelle Peninsula, however, which contributed most to determining the basic principles of council organization. D.M. Fienberg, the Senior Native Authorities Officer based in Rabaul, recognized the Tolai areas as the testing ground for native local government in the Territory; but the very pressures and precedents in Tolai society (see Appendix C), which necessitated local government also complicated and in places frustrated its establishment.

There was also a strong antithesis to native local government within the Administration. As Rowley has mentioned, the assumption by the European officials that they stood in loco parentis to the natives was an important factor; another was the Ordinance, which represented only "a cautious move away from the authoritarian pattern of local administration". 25

The policy assumption, emanating from Canberra, that ample time remained for controlling the direction of social change, for preliminary education, and for the gradual extension of local government as an antecedent to political development,

also had an important bearing on the orientation of local administrative institutions.

The S.N.A.O. realized the reserve towards local government in 1949, not only amongst some officials and within some native groups, but also amongst the Catholic missionaries and some local European residents.

During 1950-1, however, preliminary arrangements for generally establishing local government in the Gazelle Peninsula went ahead without serious difficulty. The Tolai seemed to welcome the idea, and a meeting of 200 leaders at Reimber in August, 1951 agreed on six projected council areas, roughly based on the Paramountcies (those areas under the Paramount Luluais). The fact that native courts were not introduced concurrently with the councils, as the S.N.A.O. had urged, probably was partly responsible for a change of native attitudes. In order to retain native confidence the S.N.A.O. had been insistent that the judicial aspects of local administration be separated from the central executive represented by the D.O.

The introduction of councils without any immediate prospect of courts in fact marked a retrogression, for the kivungs had, to a large extent, been judicial bodies. Now

28) Ibid. Fienberg hoped that the two natives generations could thus cooperate, the elders largely being responsible for judicial functions, the younger educated men for the council.
that the councils were made statutory, this informal jurisdiction lapsed.

Some native leaders were probably repelled by the obvious fact that the councils were to function in accordance with Administration tenets. The S.N.A.O. did not simply accept council areas based on native agreements: the councils had to be economically viable, and therefore detailed preparatory surveys and censuses were necessary. Direct opposition to the local government policy first became marked during the course of these censuses. The S.N.A.O. reported in 1951 that the natives in charge of the unofficial Raluana Section Committee (comprising six villages within the Nanga Nanga Paramountcy - the other eight villages led by Paramount Luluai Nason co-operated) had refused to line for census. 29

In order to disarm possible suspicion the S.N.A.O. had told the Tolai, and the Raluana in particular, that the census was not a preliminary to their forcible incorporation into councils, and that their right of choice was in no way being infringed. It is clear, however, that at this late stage no policy decision had been taken on this fundamental matter. The S.N.A.O. wrote to the Director of District Services:

I have told them, inter alia, that ... it was not my own policy (nor I assume yours) to drag any crowd into a council if they were unwilling. 30

30) Ibid., my italics.
Within twelve months the S.N.A.O. himself was to conclude that this approach was a mistake; but by that time events had moved too far and the precedent had been set. This was to have far-reaching consequences for local government throughout the Territory.

In order to ensure that local government councils would be economically viable the S.N.A.O. considered that the principle of the preliminary census was vital. He therefore charged one of the Raluana group with failing to appear for a census. The man charged was a luluai who, the S.N.A.O. later discovered, was completely subordinate to the nuclear kivung in the Committee, led by a Sergeant-Major clerk in the Rabaul police station and by two ex-Administration schoolteachers. The Raluana Committee hired a European lawyer, Mr. Dudley Jones, to appear for the luluai, who was acquitted on the ground that the census was not one concerned with vital statistics.

The case showed the S.N.A.O. the strength of the opposition to native local government, not only amongst the natives. He stated categorically that the policeman, Tongatia, had been prompted some months before by the Police Commissioner to resist the establishment of a council over Raluana. Moreover, the A.D.O. at Kokopo had clearly indicated his support for the Raluana Section by advising the defence in the case, although the S.N.A.O. was prosecuting...
as an Administration official. 31

This officer appeared to be opposed to native local government altogether, for the S.N.A.O. could get him to take no interest at all in the Vanamami council, already established, which represented 4,000 natives within his sub-district and which held meetings only ten minutes drive from his office. 'To avoid futile rows', said the S.N.A.O., 'I keep away from him'. 32

The S.N.A.O. had foreseen that the attitudes of direct administration were so deeply imprinted on the 'old guard' that some resistance or inertia towards native local government would be shown. With this in mind, in 1950 he had urged a propaganda campaign to convince this element that councils were 'official bodies forming part of the administrative framework'. 33 In March 1951 a meeting of representatives of the Administration, missions, commerce and the planters was arranged at Rabaul to discuss native local government; and in October 1951 'Notes on Native Local Government' were sent to the editor of the South Pacific Post. 34

31) Ibid. Pienberg later (to D.D.S.&N.A., 13.12.51, Rabaul 14/11/6) further accused the A.D.O. of having coached the Raluana leaders to boycott the census, and of having arranged legal aid, before any charges had been laid.

32) Ibid.


34) Meeting, Rabaul 7.3.1951; 'Notes' dated 26.10.51. NA 39/1/0.
Such remarkable steps testified to the strength of the opposition. The S.N.A.O.'s proposal to appeal against the census verdict revealed the misconceptions about local government within the Administration. After he had initiated the appeal, the Crown Law Office refused to conduct it, saying that it was ill-advised. The S.N.A.O. then set out the principle involved:

I am now most interested in the official attitude to this case. Is it considered that I should not have initiated an appeal against a ruling given by two C.N.A. members which I (and at least one other C.N.A. member) believe to be in error; a ruling which put an immediate stop to work that is an essential preliminary to the task I have been authorised ... to carry out?

The S.N.A.O. had sought a definitive policy statement on the implementation of native local government as early as November, 1950, in order to avoid an impasse of this kind, so that embryonic opposition could be immediately disarmed. It would appear, however, that even the Department of District Services had only a very limited appreciation of the preliminary work which he considered essential to make councils financially viable and executively active. He had patiently to explain to his superiors that in order to ensure this, and thereby to ensure that the initial councils were

35) Authorisation in D.S. memo. of 12.6.1951, Rabaul 14/3/23; C.N.A. Court of Native Matters. The decision in this case appeared to remove the obligation on a native to appear at any census if he thought non-vital statistics might be required. No native, probably, had any idea of the legal connotation of 'vital statistics'.

36) D.S. memo. of 22.1.1952. DS 14/3/35.
advertisements for rather than deterrents to the extension of local government, much more information was necessary than was available from the existing Village Books. 37

The principle at stake, in the Department's view, was the voluntary participation by natives in local government. If the natives refused to 'line' for a census which they knew to be part of a local government survey, they must ipso facto be opposed to local government. Therefore, their refusal to be censused was merely an extension of their right to abstain from local government; natives who were willing to accept local government would not need to be compelled to provide census information. 38

The S.N.A.O. admitted the core of validity in this view, and conceded that twelve months before he would have fully agreed with it; but by early 1952 he had come to realize that the principle of voluntary participation implied previously unrecognized complications:

... whilst still believing that any attempt to foist a local government organization onto an unwilling population would be foolish, I have also learnt that it is all not quite so simple as I had imagined.

He enunciated four complications:

(a) Opposition to native local government was being prompted by non-natives, particularly missionaries, who regarded councils as a threat to their influence, and who had been taken unawares by the establishment of the first

38) D.S. memo. of 22.1.1952, cit. sup.
39) Fienberg to D.D.S., 5.2.1952, cit. sup.
three Tolai councils;

(b) as a result, the distinction had to be made between 'genuine' and 'spurious' native opposition;

(c) policy needed to be defined relating to those areas in which the majority of natives was in favour of having local government, but where there was also a 'small vociferous minority' opposed to it. Could the Administration continue to adhere to the idea of 100% agreement; and if not, what percentage agreement was to be regarded as determinate?

(d) a method would have to be devised (e.g. a referendum) for assessing percentage agreement in areas where councils did not already exist, for it was only in such areas that the Administration had any ready machinery for demonstrating public opinion. And if the natives could not compulsorily be censused, could they be forced or induced to vote? 40

Thus, more than two years after the Ordinance had been proclaimed, the administrative implications of the voluntarily participation approach were for the first time defined. The question had become critical, for dissidence towards native local government was spreading: a section of the Navuneream people, led by a native entrepreneur named Manoa and probably influenced by the Raluana Section, changed their minds about entering the Reimber council; the only one of the

40) Ibid.
Napapar villages which is Seventh Day Adventist decided to stay out of the Vunadadir council (predominantly Catholic); while some Birar and Toma groups rejected their leaders' decision to enter Vunamami council.41

As the S.N.A.O. saw it, the Administration now had to steer a course between the Scylla of undefined voluntary participation and the Charybdis of financially impotent councils. The following three years in effect represented a period of Territory-wide stagnation, as policy was hammered out by the Native Authorities Section and central government. The S.N.A.O. feared an emerging patchwork of council and non-council areas, already developing in the Gazelle Peninsula. He was reluctant to recommend that isolated villages or hamlet-clusters should be forced into councils, or be left to languish under direct administration. Vacillation on this issue gave enormous encouragement to those opposing native local government altogether.

There were three local complicating factors among the Tolai at this time: (i) the traditional residential pattern is hamlets rather than villages, so that the definition of council areas to exclude those groups not unanimously in favour of local government presented peculiar problems; (ii) the Tolai lacked an overriding leadership, such as Paliau provided at Manus; this was lacking even within the Paramounties; (iii) most importantly, the lack of general native

41) Ibid.
taxation had a certain inhibiting effect even on those natives otherwise disposed to accept local government; for by doing so they thereby elected to be taxed. It was easy for opposition elements to represent the introduction of councils as an indirect method of inveigling natives into paying tax for services which it was the responsibility of the government to provide. Ultimately this attitude extended, so that resistance to local government became a resistance to the paying of tax. When general taxation was re-introduced in 1958 ugly incidents occurred in the anti-council areas, culminating with the riot at Navuneram in which two natives were shot by police.\textsuperscript{42}

(v) Voluntary Participation

The problems of voluntary participation in local government were not faced by the central Administration. The matter was due for discussion at the 1952 D.C.'s Conference;\textsuperscript{43} but the inclusion of dissident groups was left to the discretion of individual D.C.s. The S.N.A.O. pointed out that the question of 'Pseudo-local government organizations operating outside the law' was not discussed.\textsuperscript{44}

\textsuperscript{42} See the findings of Mann, C.J., Navuneram Enquiry Report, Vol.VIII, pp.1434-8. He concluded that natives in the 'dissident' areas had developed an attitude of mind which nullified reasoned argument on the tax question, as on native local government. The issues had fused.


\textsuperscript{44} Fienberg to D.D.S., 8.2.1953. Rabaul 14/11/6.
Meanwhile two further Tolai councils had had to be proclaimed, necessarily excluding the anti-council groups, Raluana and Nanuneram-Taviliu. The S.N.A.O. was acutely conscious that precedents were being set which could jeopardise the whole future of the native local government. Patently, however the Native Authorities Section was regarded by many officers as an excrescence which interfered with straightforward native administration. Its problems were generally discounted, even by those officers relatively sympathetic to its objects. In the Gazelle Peninsula, however, the local staff began to reconsider the voluntary participation approach, late in 1952.45

The view was expressed that it would be disastrous to extend local government if this approach were maintained. It was recommended that top-level policy decisions be taken on areas where local government was necessary, and that the policy then be applied without native option.46 The Director, however, suggested that dissidents could be induced to join by withholding social services from them.47 Fortunately, this was not done. When the Raluana Committee petitioned the Prime Minister, in December 1955, complaining of this kind

45) Ibid., para. 6.
46) Ibid.
47) D.D.S. to D.C. Rabaul, 6.11.1952. DS 14/3/19. He said that the lack of general native taxation made this ethically acceptable.
COUNCIL AREAS AND INSTALLATIONS
GAZELLE PENINSULA, OCT. 1954

CH Council House
CS Council School
AP Aid Post
W Well or Underground Tank
GS Government School, constructed of bush materials, dirt floor, bush furniture.

constructed sawn timber, iron roof, cement floor, furnished with sawn timber tables, desks, chairs.
of coercion, the Administration was able to deny the charge.\textsuperscript{48} (Inevitably, however, the gap between social services in council and non-council areas has widened, roughly proportionately to the tax rates, since 1958, of £4 in council areas and £2 elsewhere).\textsuperscript{49}

The S.N.A.O. warned, in 1953, that the anti-council groups were out of Administration control altogether;\textsuperscript{50} and the D.C. agreed that \textit{kivung} activities in these areas came close to 'organised subversive activity'.\textsuperscript{51} The active aspect of resistance to local government had before not been fully appreciated. Appeals to reason were vitiated by a strong emotionalism running through the dissident groups; the young men had the \textit{luluais} thoroughly cowed. Pro-council elements were usually frightened to speak;\textsuperscript{52} though in one or two settlements (e.g. Tinginagalip) brave men were prepared to nominate candidates for contiguous councils.\textsuperscript{53}

\textsuperscript{48} Petition (undated) received Prime Minister's Dept. 8.12.1955. PM 194/12; Administrator to Sec. Territories, 20.1.1956. NA 14/7/9. The Administrator claimed that such a step had never been contemplated - this was obviously inaccurate. Also personal information from Manoa, the Navuneram leader.

\textsuperscript{49} The non-Council groups (e.g. Navuneram) have countered by collecting their own levies, professedly to provide schools, etc. - Information, Manoa.

\textsuperscript{50} Fienberg to D.D.S., 8.2.53, Rabaul 14/11/6.

\textsuperscript{51} D.C. to D.D.S., 23.2.53. Ibid.

\textsuperscript{52} Ibid. An ex-Seventh Day Adventist teacher from Napapar No.1 village was, and has remained, staunchly pro-council and has regularly attended meetings of the Vunadadir Council.

\textsuperscript{53} Ibid. The D.C. asked for the right to nominate councillors for those villages which refused to elect their own - a right which the Administrator could include in an amended proclamation under powers conferred on him by Section 5(1)(b) of the Ordinance.
Purely because of the bad administrative situation which had arisen, in 1953 the D.C. asked permission to incorporate all the dissident areas into councils. The S.N.A.O. hoped that this would destroy the precedent, and thereby voluntary participation altogether. 54

The dissident elements timed and executed active opposition superbly, however. In May, 1953, the D.C. was assaulted at Raluana. The official Inquiry showed that field staff could not count on central government backing to abandon voluntary participation. The Enquiry's Conclusions were vague; it blamed 'inherent characteristics' in the dissident groups, and an incorrect relationship between the D.C. and the S.N.A.O. 55

In December, 1953 the Administrator personally conferred with Raluana leaders, to re-assure them; and in February, 1954 the acting Administrator actually proclaimed all the dissident groups within the councils their leaders had originally agreed to join in 1951. 56 Three weeks later however, after public protests by the kivung's leaders, the acting Administrator revoked the proclamations. 57 This Administration vacillation

54) Ibid.

55) Statement by the Administrator, D.M. Cleland, Legislative Council 30.7.1953. T.P.N.G. Debates, 2nd session, 4th meeting, pp.24-6. Cleland stated that the Native Authorities Section interfered with 'pure and simple' administration. See Appendix B, II.

56) Govt. Gazette, 4.2.1954 (3000 people = ca. 8% Tolai population).

emboldened the dissidents and, it was said, those missionaries who opposed the local government system. The Navuneram group began to influence the Rakunai group, which had voluntarily joined the Reimber council in 1952, to withdraw. This group then refused to pay tax, and used tactics similar to those of the dissidents. The D.C. commented:

I fear that this attitude will continue in the Gazelle Peninsula whilst some communities are permitted to remain outside the Local Government Organisations. I am convinced that any such scheme must embrace a complete geographic or ethnic group, and not merely a part thereof, as is the case here in the Gazelle Peninsula.

Local conclusions did not make central policy, which still remained undefined. Certain Catholic missionaries in the Gazelle Peninsula had long been known to be opposed to local government. A mission publication, Talaigu, of September, 1951, had attacked the principle of council taxation.

From being largely individual and private, however, Catholic opposition became general and public. The Church's spokesman on the Legislative Council suggested in 1954 that

58) Ibid. Ties between Navuneram and Rakunai are strong - the Govt. Anthropologist believes that much of the land now worked by Manoa is customarily owned by Rakunai natives. They may originally have entered the Council because of personal antipathy for Manoa, who is claiming this land for his sons in defiance of matrilineal inheritance; because of his continued possession of the land and his success in staying out of the Council they may have been influenced to withdraw, having found no aid to repossession through local government.

59) A.D.O. (N.A.A.) to D.O. 23.7.55, Rabaul 14/11/6/10; a/ D.N.A. to Asst. Admin. 7.9.55, NA 14/7/9.

60) D.C. to D.N.A., 30.6.55, Rabaul 14/2/4.

non-natives be appointed to the councils, in order to 'curb the Administration in their sponsorship of the system'. The mission had the misconception that the councils were a form of 'self-government' – a belief it seemed to share with the Minister for Territories; and it felt that councils' functions should be similar to those of Australian municipal authorities – that is, in the native context, minimal.

The former New Britain D.C. charged, however, that the mission opposed native local government fundamentally because it gave the natives some say in their own affairs:

They are no longer feudal subjects to boss around (sic) by some other organisation. I rather think that is the true answer.

The S.N.A.O. claimed that the missions generally were opposed to local government, and that this constituted a major problem. In his view, only the inter-denominational character of the established councils had saved them from complete mission control; though some 'emancipated' natives within the councils were beginning to doubt the value and wisdom of mission influence. He accused the missions of having waged 'a constant little cold war' against local

63) Ibid; also letter by Minister Hasluck, Sydney Morning Herald, 20.4.1956, stated: 'devoted public servants ... have extended native local self-government'.
64) T.P.N.G. Leg. Council Debates, 1.6.1956, p.87. In particular, said Fr. Dwyer, the councils should play no direct role in economic and educational development.
government, by a variety of means: disparaging references during services; articles in vernacular publications; smear campaigns against councillors; interference with council elections (Kuraip village, Reimber, was alleged to have been threatened with excommunication); pressures against council schools and schooling; belittling councils' legislative and policing functions ('the councils' laws are not the Government's laws'); influencing council natives not to complain and non-council natives not to accept local government. The S.N.A.O. anticipated similar mission opposition everywhere. 67

This conviction, perhaps distorted or exaggerated, was nonetheless an important deterrent to local government extension. (The D.O. New Britain agreed with the local assessment, however; 68 there were reports that natives organised on 'Catholic Action' lines had taken over councils (Vunadadir, 1955) 69, and that independent Catholic kivungu were being organised (e.g. Vuvu, 10.8.1955). 70

(vi) The Implications of Voluntary Participation

When the S.N.A.O. was acting Assistant Director of Native

67) Ibid. Some missionaries clearly tried to remain neutral, particularly on the question of council/non-council splits. The Methodist mission apparently attempted to adopt such a position; in 1961, when the first natives were to be elected to the Legislative Council, Rev. Wesley Lutton of Rabaul protested against the exclusion of the disidents from the elections - C.J. Lynch, A New Constitution for Papua and New Guinea, J.P.S., June 1961, Vol. 70, p.246.


69) a/D.N.A. (written by Fienberg) to Asst. Administrator, 7.9.1955. NA 14/7/9.

70) Catholic newsletter, translated from Gunantuna, NA 40/1/10.
Affairs in 1955 he attempted once again to have voluntary participation abandoned. It was important that the small numbers of natives already within councils should retain confidence in the Administration and be shielded from intimidation; this was impossible as long as contiguous groups were able to choose their system of administration. More important was the hiatus in council extension:

In other districts we cannot even make a start on progressive Native Administration until the Gazelle Peninsula situation is resolved ... until this Gazelle Peninsula situation is resolved I cannot see my way clear to formulate and submit concrete proposals for several other areas where more intensive native administration is urgently needed - portions of the Sepik, New Ireland, Bougainville, Manus, Northern, Gulf and Central Districts all involve issues whose handling is dependent on what we do in the Gazelle Peninsula.

A further submission to the Administrator for forcible incorporation was met, however - by a remarkable coincidence - by a Raluana petition, alleging coercion and the destruction of their traditional allegiances. The Administrator branded

71) a/D.N.A. to Asst. Administrator, 7.9.1955. NA 14/7/9.
This was given added significance when the Rakunai group renewed its efforts to leave the Reimber Council: on 1.11.1955 sixty-seven defaulters appeared before the Rabaul magistrate for failing to pay council tax. (N.A. memo. to Asst. Admin. 16.7.1956. NA 14/7/34/1). On 30.6.1956 the Rakunai group petitioned the Administrator to withdraw from the council (ibid.).

72) a/D.N.A. (written by Pienberg) to Asst. Admin. 7.9.1955. NA 14/7/9.

73) Petition received P.M. Dept., Canberra, 8.12.1955. cit. sup. It was undoubtedly framed and phrased with European assistance, in view of the level of education of the Raluana leaders. It was sent while the Administrator was still considering the request from the D.N.A. in Port Moresby.
these Raluana arguments as 'spurious'; yet he claimed that everything possible had been done - 'the situation remains difficult'. Voluntary participation was re-affirmed. Complications of this policy needed examination and definition, however. It was not known what percentage agreement was necessary for a group's inclusion, nor how it could validly be assessed. This became important as splits developed within the anti-council groups: for example, Sergeant-Major Tongatia defected from the Raluana Committee in mid-1957; and about 100 natives broke with the Navunera Ram leadership. The pro-council section of Raluana village steadily grew, reaching 56% in 1959; but the D.N.A. considered this insufficient to justify a firm recommendation for inclusion to the Administrator.

75) Again the hope was that the widening gap between works and services in council and non-council areas would overcome resistance to local government in the latter. But Fienberg had continually emphasised that this approach might lead to councils incapable of adequate works and services. However, as early as 1954 the D.C. Rabaul claimed that the different rates of progress in council and non-council areas were already apparent (D.C. to D.N.A., 6.10.1954, Rabaul 14/11/6). This widening gap, it later became clear, only strengthened the determination of the leadership in the non-council areas - hence one basis for the remarkable emotionalism.
76) A.D.O. to D.N.A., 10.7.1957. NA 23/18/22; D.N.A. to Administrator, 26.11.1957. NA 42/2/1, with handwritten comments by Administrator and Asst. Admin., dated 27.11. 1957; A.D.O. Rabaul to D.O. 26.7.1957, Rabaul 14/11/6. The school-teacher Tuvi joined Tongatia in favouring entry to a council.
Correspondingly, however, emotionalism increased within these groups, creating a difficult administrative situation and further emphasising the disadvantages of voluntary participation. The introduction of general native taxation in 1958 brought matters to a head; as mentioned above, the Navuneram group led by Manoa refused to pay and resisted arrest; two natives were shot dead by police. The official report by Chief Justice Mann was, however, anything but favourable to a firm approach. It claimed that Native Affairs officers had ignored genuine anxieties, because local government had caused them to lose touch with the natives.

This was resented by local officers and, more...

78) Administrator to Sec. Territories, Deaths, Navuneram Village, 5.8.1958. AD 85/4/7. Resistance to tax spread to Buka Passage and to the Duke of York Islands. This refusal had been preceded by the refusal of the people of Tinginalip village, in 1957, to pay council tax. In May 1956 they had been included in the Vunadadir Council after a plebiscite appeared to show 65.4% agreement to enter a council. This tax refusal was attributed to dissident influence. Cf. L. Gray Cowan, Local Government in West Africa, p.vii: '... the reluctance of many Africans to accept the local representation organs is often a reflection of their desire to retain some element of stability based on tribal authority, in a world which in other ways is disintegrating before their eyes'.


80) A.D.O. Emmanuel, the officer primarily responsible at Navuneram, suggested to the Administrator in a private memorandum (18.12.1958) the abandonment of voluntary participation, a system of native courts, compulsory and secondary education, the elucidation of land tenure policy, the removal of police duties from administrative staff, better training of field staff, regular conferences of D.O.s, the appointment of a full-time welfare officer, and annual meetings of representatives of the Territory's councils. The final two of these steps have since been taken.
significantly, by the majority of the Tolai within councils: a combined councils' meeting rejected Mann's conclusions and John Vuia, M.L.C., described the Report as 'all rubbish'.

In view of the maintenance of voluntary participation, and of its known repercussions among the Tolai, it is not surprising that the extension of local government did not really begin until 1956, and that it remained hesitant, insisting on unanimous agreement. The existing councils recognized this. The combined New Guinea councils, at Madang in June, 1959, expressed 'very strong feelings' on the subject, and resolved that the Administration should abandon voluntary participation now that the advantages of local government as a progressive form of administration had been amply demonstrated. The Administration rejected the resolution.


Viewed in perspective, it may seem ludicrous that the resistance offered to local government by 2-3,000 natives should have held up extension of the system for five years; but the S.N.A.O. realized that fundamental principles of extension were involved, and he was determined not to set up

81) a/D.O. to D.N.A., 20.3.59 (reporting combined meeting of 18.3.59), Rabaul 14/12; Item 2. The Dec. 1957 census showed the total mainland Tolai population to be 39,279; of this, the Raluana group numbered 1790, and the Navuneram/Taviliu group 1341.

councils on a chance basis which would court failure. Because he had to convince all sections of the community of the soundness of native local government as a progressive administrative technique, the success of the early councils was vital.

This could hardly have been known to the 1956 U.N. Visiting Mission, led by a distinguished British administrator, which severely criticised the tardiness of the New Guinea Administration in not living up to its promise of 1950. The Mission accused the Administration of adopting 'a conservative and even timid approach' and said that its insistence on 'considerable preparation' and 'extremely favourable conditions' was delaying the establishment of local government in areas which were ripe for it. 83

The Mission strongly urged a speeding up of the programme, even if it meant taking some risks ... 84

In the period to 1956, in fact, the Administration was not looking for 'extremely favourable conditions' in which to set up councils; all the councils which were set up were virtually forced on the Administration, as has been pointed out, by past promises or local conditions. The only councils, other than those already mentioned, to have been set up, were those in Milne Bay. The Ealeba council on the south side of the Bay was established on the express instructions

83) 1956 Report, U.N. T/1260, pp.77-9; also T/899, Report 1950, p.4. The former mission was led by Sir John Macpherson, the latter by Sir Alan Burns.

of the Administrator, Col. J.K. Murray, and without the knowledge of the Senior Native Authorities Officer. The reasons for this decision extended a long way into the area’s history, and were pressing. Among them were factors which are discussed elsewhere. They included the cultist background in the area; the extensive alienation of land for European plantations; the influence in the villages of a partly dissociated elite, produced by the Kwato Mission; the strong impact of the Oxford Group (M.R.A.) movement before the war; the prolonged contact with American troops during the war; and the fact that large sums of money were paid out without any practical lead being given after the war. The Administration feared that the area was on the knife edge of a cultist reaction. Until 1949 there was no permanent Administration representation in the area, and the way was open for some form of charismatic leadership. Kwato had been opposed to much that was traditional; but until 1949 the Milne Bay natives had had no effective lead in their ambition to adopt a European way and standard of living. This produced

86) See Ch. III, 2.
87) For the military aspects see D. McCarthy, Australia in the War. 1939-45 - South-West Pacific Area. First Year: Kokoda to Wau, (1959), Ch. 5 passim.
88) Lengthy summary of events by H.T. Plant, N.A.O., to D.C. Samarai, 3.1.53, (Gehua). Plant pointed out that in the period 1946-52 there had been at least 11 different D.C.s in Samarai and at least 11 different officers dealing in the field with the Milne Bay peoples.
a malaise, a sense of failure and frustration. 89

This developmental/leadership vacuum was eventually filled by Mr. Cecil Abel of the Kwato mission, who promoted two main activities of the village industry type: a factory at Wagawaga and a farm at Wamakikiwana. At least in the period 1949-51 these drew extensive support from villages around the Bay, and created a new sense of purpose. 90

The Administration by 1951 was regarding these developments with some alarm, partly because of the poor business organization behind them, but primarily because it regarded the Milne Bay Development Co. and its attempts to provide welfare services, as a triumph for the Kwato mission over the Administration. The Patrol Officer stationed at Wagawaga in 1951 wrote:

At Wagawaga ... the lead has passed from the Administration to Kwato Mission in the person of Mr. Cecil Abel.

The real leaders in the area were mission leaders. The unofficial council which functioned at Wagawaga had only once referred a query to the Administration, and this was a request for the acceleration of War Damage payments; otherwise, it looked to the mission.

89) Ibid.


91) P.O. Plant to D.D.S., 1.2.51, DS 14/3/30.
It would appear that the Government does not count for very much in the life of these people—the Mission is dominant...

The Administration knew that the extension of its functions by the Milne Bay Development Co. was ill-advised and badly organized, and it had legitimate fears of the local repercussions when these ventures should fail. It felt the need to channel the enthusiasm into properly administered projects for 'economic and political development'; but because of the established mission hold it regarded Abel and the Company as rivals for the natives' allegiance in planning for these objects.

In October 1950 the D.C. recommended that statutory councils be established for each of the Milne Bay villages, for Rogea island, Wari island, Suau and Wedau. This was done quite independently of the Native Authorities Section, and it would appear that the D.C. regarded the councils rather in the light of the powerless, non-statutory councils which existed in the area before the war. 94

The S.N.A.O. was violently opposed to this concept. It was central to his promoting of native local government that the councils should be area organizations embracing substantial populations in relation to the traditional parishes. Fortunately the Patrol Officer in Milne Bay at the time was

92) Ibid.
93) Plant memo. of 3.1.53, cit. sup.
94) D.C. to D.D.S., 31.10.50, Samarai 14/2/3/428.
H.T. Plant (to become Executive Officer, Local Government in Port Moresby in 1956). He realized that if the councils were effectively to carry out even minimal works and services, units larger than the village were essential. He realized, too, the implications of the financial restrictions which had been written in to the Ordinance: See Chapter VII. Plant independently estimated that, in view of these factors, a viable council unit should embrace a minimum population of about 2,000, of whom fewer than 600 would be likely to be eligible for tax. Initially, however, he recommended for the south side of Milne Bay a council comprising the villages of Wagawaga, Daio, Gwawili, Gamadoudou and Gibara, with a population of only about 1,100 people. This took account of language factors, social cohesion and transport difficulties; it also brought in a Catholic element, and natives not directly involved in the Kwato enterprises. Plant envisaged that, once established and accepted, the council would expand and eventually amalgamate with a council for the north side of the Bay. 95

Belshaw, who was working in Milne Bay at this time, thought that three councils should be set up, one for each of the major language groups. He was anxious that the severe form of direct administration which was patently unsuitable for the area, should be mitigated; but he had serious reservations about the type of local government which the

95) Plant, memo. of 1.2.51, cit. sup.
Ordinance permitted. It was admittedly designed for the more advanced areas; but the desirable flexibility to take in local variations was absent. He favoured legislation on established British lines which made broad provisions, modifiable by individual instruments. The demands of the New Guinea legislation, he felt, were much too involved and back-breaking supervision would be required.

The councils are thus clearly recognized as a step in the existing structure of administration.  

In a sense, Belshaw's emphasis on language groupings as council units was a peg on which to hang his belief that, in view of the legislative demands, the technical difficulties of organizing and running a council made it imperative to have the initial units small. Plant felt that in the beginning some socio-linguistic homogeneity was necessary.

Thus the Ealeba council was proclaimed over the five villages suggested by Plant; though it was advocated that the other Bay councils be set up and amalgamated with the Ealeba


97) Ibid., a/N.A.O. Plant to D.C. Samarai, 20.10.51 (Wagawaga). The linguistic argument was perhaps overemphasised in Milne Bay as, with the exception of the Methodist villages near East Cape (educated in the d'Entrecasteaux), Suau is widely understood. Suau is now the council language for Milne Bay. Three languages were already represented in the council.
council as quickly as possible.98

The Kwato mission and the Milne Bay Development Co. in no way opposed the establishment of the council. Rather, Abel welcomed the idea and suggested that the Maivara and Buhutu (Sagarai valley) peoples should be included because of traditional ties. According to Abel, the prospect of 'training in self-government' had boosted morale in the Bay.99 The Company even lent the money to establish the council.100

This in no way mitigated the attitude of the Administration towards the Company, which was described in 1952 as the major obstacle to systematic native administration; in particular its attempts to provide services such as water supplies and electric light were seen as cutting across the functions of local government.101 Plant's submission for a council, however, had partly been based on the economic development being promoted by the Company.102 The S.N.A.O. had perhaps an unduly rigid attitude towards the functions of the council, which took little account of the activities of non-council organizations. He blamed Abel

98) Ibid.
99) C. Abel to H.T. Plant, private letter 18.5.1951; also personal information C. Abel to H.T. Plant.
100) Fienberg to D.C. Samarai, 22.12.52, Rabaul 14/11/6/26.
101) Ibid.
102) Plant memo. of 20.10.51.
and the Company largely for the antipathetic attitude of the Milne Bay people, as he interpreted it, towards the Administration. He recommended that unless the local Native Authorities Officer, Plant, could be given 'strong support', he should be withdrawn and the council abolished.103

The issue was complicated by the lack of any planning or co-ordination within the Administration which would have permitted economic development to take the place of the Company. Co-operatives in the area were instituted at the same time as the council, but they concentrated almost exclusively on the running of trade stores in order to absorb as much as possible of the War Damage compensation. It was remarked in 1954 that 'there is little indication that they have attempted or intend to attempt to foster a developmental programme'.104 The Administration, in fact, (Fienberg personally excluded), lacked community development concepts equivalent to those which Abel was attempting to apply privately through the Company. The role of councils in economic development - for which, in Fienberg's view, they were primarily created - was undefined.

103) Memo., Affairs of the M.B. D.Co., 22.12.52. NA 39/1/2. Plant (memo. of 2.1.53, cit.sup.) denied that the Company's social services interfered with those of the council. Plant suggested supervisory control over the Co., but doubted the Administration's legal right to insist on this.

104) A.D.O. Gehua to D.C. Samarai 6.8.54. 14/30 Gehua. Fienberg, like Camilla Wedgwood (Monthly Notes, I, 7, pp.1-5), had suggested as far back as 1947 that compensation be paid into trust funds, with native consent, to finance development inter alia through local government. This had not been done; the money was squandered. Fienberg to D.N.A., 27.1.53, NA 39/1/0.
The Ealeba council produced few tangible results during its years of existence; its absorption of the poor Buhutu people, numbering about 770, in 1953, added a burden to it. In the same year some assistance was given to the Gwawili school. The councillors themselves were conscious of the need to expand their economic base, and in the same year suggested crops other than copra be tried. But the basic trouble was lack of funds to do much more than keep the council in existence. Moreover, the council itself suffered internal dissension. Henry Lekl of the Company had been the first Chairman; but after 1951 he was under attack for alleged adultery. In addition, the existence and decline of the Company had serious effects on the council, for it dominated the attention of most councillors. Plant believed that the Oxford Group philosophy, noticeable in the Company, sapped the councillors of any power to make decisions.105

(viii) Problems in Milne Bay.

Nevertheless, the problems which this council posed - as happened in the Gazelle Peninsula - impelled the Native Authorities Section to raise basic points of policy for the extension of the system. The problem in Milne Bay was that a unique combination of pressures had compelled the

105) Plant memo. of 2.1.53, cit. sup. The Ealeba councillors themselves suggested the incorporation of the Buhutu (Minutes, 7.8.52) and Plant supported the proposal as one step on the road to a single council for the whole Bay. (To D.C. Samarai 11.2.53, Sam. 14/17/2).
establishment of the Ealeba council, which was patently non-viable as a developmental agency providing additional social services. It could become viable only by extension to take in the rest of Milne Bay; this implied the prior creation of more non-viable units, per se unacceptable.

The S.N.A.O. believed that one step towards the amalgamation would be the setting up of joint treasuries under Section 8 of the Ordinance (already in operation between Reimber and Livuan councils in the Gazelle Peninsula), which he believed might be the solution elsewhere also. He noted, however, that such an arrangement, while administratively and psychologically preparing for amalgamation, financially made relatively little difference to council overheads. This presented an added difficulty in Milne Bay, for distances were so great and communications so poor that there was little immediate prospect of amalgamation. Even the total population of the Bay, 5-6,000, barely amounted to a council unit of workable size, in Fienberg's view.

A second council (Tavara) taking in the north side of the Bay, was eventually set up on 11th September, 1954. The delay had been caused largely by the dispersal of the population which necessitated a ratio of 31 councillors for

106) Fienberg to D.D.S., 2.3.53, Rabaul 14/11/6/26.
107) Ibid. He described the joint treasury approach as 'a compromise between long range aims and the immediate hard facts of geography and native situation'. S.N.A.O. to D.C. Samarai, 20.5.53, Rabaul 14/11/6/1.
3,337 population. The practicability of amalgamation with the Ealeba council was, as Fienberg had said, limited by poor communications, but essentially poor communications within the context of the Ordinance: for Regulation 17 fixed meetings at monthly intervals. This Regulation was amended only in 1957, to permit meetings at two-monthly intervals at the Director's discretion. The two councils unanimously resolved for amalgamation, although even within their own areas councillors living at the extremities took five days over a meeting. The Administration claimed that the two councils had realised their non-viability, and that this had broken down traditional antagonisms between the north and south sides, to make unanimous agreement possible.

During the period to 1956 native local government was still in the experimental stage. Nine councils were set up, but five of these in the Gazelle Peninsula were being used as 'a testing ground for policy', while the other four

108) Native income was very low here, so that the two councils originally projected were joined. The implication was that a certain balance between income and population dispersal was essential for a council.

109) A.D.O. to D.C. Samarai 9.5.57. Gehua 14/5; Amending Reg. 3 of 1957; Minutes, joint meeting, 17.7.57, Sinaeada; A.D.O. to D.C. 14.9.57, Gehua 14/41.

110) a/D.N.A. to Asst. Admin. 14.10.57, NA 42/4. This was the first amalgamation. Amalgamation was one of the few contingencies for which the Ordinance did not provide. Under Section 4 separate proclamations had to abolish the existing councils, and a third proclamation set up the new Milne Bay Council - all to be synchronised on 31.12.57. Regulations in the British Solomons insist on meetings only at 6-monthly intervals; this has made pan-island councils practicable - B.S.I.P., N.A.R. 10/1953. Section 16. See Appendix C, II.
represented responses to urgent local pressures. In 1956 expansion of local government began, in accordance with a new general policy of changing over from village to area organization. This was emphasised by the disbandment of the specialist Native Authorities Section, and the incorporation of local government officers into general field staff.111 The officers attending the first Local Government Training Course affirmed that the policy had proved itself in the Gazelle Peninsula, and that it should be applied in all areas where the acknowledged preconditions existed.112

Postscript: Supervision.

This chapter has incidentally drawn attention to problems of local government deriving from central government organization and supervision. These problems had wide ramifications, but are peripheral to the main theme and are analysed in Appendix B.

It is enough to say here that until 1956 councils were supervised by the specialist Native Authorities Section; however, this tended to confuse district organization and to perpetuate the idea amongst general field staff that local government was an exotic growth and its cultivation an esoteric activity. To remove this idea, in 1955 (operative 1956) Native Authorities Officers were incorporated in Native

Affairs staff - this synchronised with the final abandonment of the Native Authority concept.

It was hoped that supervision of councils could then devolve on field staff generally, but this was slow in happening because of (i) the continuation of 'direct' administrative attitudes, and (ii) the complex nature of council accounting. The former was by far the more important; in 1960 the non-cooperation of many Native Affairs staff was described as being still the major obstacle to the proper functioning and extension of local government. 113

113) See C.R. Lambert (Sec.Terr.) in South Pacific, IX, 1, 1956, p.470: 'The Relationship of Native Local Government Councils to the D.O. is a matter of the utmost importance'. 
The Raluana Enquiry, 1953, pointed out undefined relationship here (S.N.A.O. based in Rabaul).
CHAPTER VI

PRINCIPLES FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT AND EXTENSION OF
NATIVE LOCAL GOVERNMENT

(1) Policy 1950-55.

During the period 1950-56 Fienberg, the S.N.A.O., was re-defining policy in relation to the establishment of councils, and to their proposed functions - the two being interdependent. Although he favoured the concomitant establishment of native courts, to give a system analogous to British Native Authorities, in no sense did he regard the councils as quasi-traditional institutions which natives everywhere in the Territory, and under all conditions, were entitled to have. In the emphasis on specific pre-conditions, on carefully delimited functions, and on close supervision, his views reflected a continuing paternalism.

In February 1952 he wrote the first policy memorandum on local government. This emphasised that councils were integral parts of the administrative structure, and that their establishment did not imply a sudden leap into local autonomy. Councils were not to be forced on natives, but the idea was to be mooted. (As has been shown, he later tried to reject

---

1) This formed the core of the argument with Belshaw: see D.M. Fienberg, Native Village Councils, South Pacific, V, 9, 1951, pp.184-6; letter C.S. Belshaw, South Pacific, V, 10, 1951, pp.220-1.

* A blurring distortion: also inconsistent with 00.
the principle of voluntary participation). As the provision of works and services, linked with economic development, was the object of the councils, the policy could not work effectively below a minimum population. A figure under 4,000 was to be avoided; but he saw no upper limit, and thought the bigger councils were the better they would function. (This clearly would depend on the density of population, the state of communications, and a willingness to co-operate).

In January 1953 the practicability of instituting local government in the relatively backward and desolate areas of the Sepik raised further policy issues. Fienberg rejected the idea that any degree of literacy should be a precondition; nor was it necessary that the people already be on a cash economy; though as central government had made no reply to his submissions for initial finance for councils this clearly had to be locally obtainable. The major preconditions he defined as an adequate population density and an economic potential.

The implication here is that, although the natives would have some (carefully controlled) voice in their own affaire

2) It is interesting to see that the first officers' training course also did so - Report, N.L.G. Training Course, Vunadadir, 1956, pp. 28-30.

3) N.L.G. Memo. No. 1. Ciro. Instruction 141, 4.2.1952. NA 39/1/0. He emphasised that supervising officers held it in their hands to encourage local initiative; they had to find a 'golden mean' between complete direction and the achievement of the councils' objects.

4) Fienberg to D.N.A., 27.1.53, Native Local Government in the Sepik District, NA 39/1/0. These conditions, he said, existed in large areas of the Sepik.
after the establishment of a council, prior political pressure to set up councils should be resisted. In May 1953 he wrote that the councils must not become international window-dressing, not be set up as sops to 'a few politically conscious native individuals'. The whole object of the policy was to face the native with the hard facts of life: 'if he wants to advance in a discreetly western direction, we can show him how, but he must learn to pay his way as he goes'.

At the same time, he conceded that where a native leader, such as Paliau, might rally support outside a legally regulated framework, it seemed 'highly desirable to attempt to forestall these developments'. Native local government was the only means of doing so, and might be applicable as a control mechanism in areas where the pre-conditions were not present.

In fact, as will be shown below, the Administration's approach to politically conscious groups has been erratic. This has resulted from the emphasis, promoted by Pienberg, on councils as media for economic and social development, with political functions subordinated to the inculcation of

5) S.N.A.O. to D.C. Samarai, 20.5.53. Rabaul 14/11/6/1.
6) Sepik memo., NA 39/1/0, cit.sup. The question had arisen because of the aspirations of the Sepik leader, Simogun Peta, a man with a notable war record and extensive local influence.
7) This refers particularly to the Kerema area, economically unpromising but politically effervescent.
Fienberg recognized that the criteria he laid down excluded many groups in mountain, swamp or island areas; but he hoped that a system of partial amalgamation through joint treasuries (as in the Reimber-Livuan example in the Gazelle Peninsula) could be worked out for contiguous small councils. He saw this in 1952-3 as the probable mode of expansion of native local government. Later, however, a number of complications arose through deficiencies in the Ordinance; there was no specific statutory provision for amalgamations; joint committees of councils, such as those at Reimber-Livuan and Baleba-Tavera, were not corporate bodies in their own right, and thus could not borrow money as could a council; joint committees could not exercise rule-making powers (Regulations 30-4), and councils could not therefore surrender the annual declaration of tax rates by rule to a joint committee. Apart from the legal obstacles, however, the policy for council establishment precluded gradual federation as a mode of council expansion, for the initial criteria prevented the setting up of small non-viable councils and their subsequent amalgamation, or incorporation. 

8) Reiterated, Fienberg to D.C. Manus, 3.11.52. NA 42-3-5.
9) Sepik memo., NA 39/1/O, cit.sup.
10) D.M. Fienberg, Notes re Paper on Native Local Government, 5.11.57, pp. 2-3. He felt that the inability of a joint committee of the Tolai councils to borrow money had impaired the flexibility of allocation of bank loan funds in the cocoa scheme.
by larger councils on their periphery. A number of examples will illustrate how the principles of local government extension have been applied and have developed since 1953.

(11) Applications of Policy.

As has been remarked, in Milne Bay and at Manus, small councils had been set up for political reasons on the direct instructions of the Administrator. The problem of the Native Authorities Section was to make them viable. In Milne Bay the Ealeba councillors themselves requested extension to the Sagarai valley, and to the western and eastern extremities of the southern shore. 11 Fienberg supported this, for the Sagarai valley, population 778, had considerable economic potential; but the inhabitants had no means of marketing their produce, and by 1960, because of the lack of a road, they still represented a neglected pocket. Their membership of the council, however, had enabled their predicament to be brought forcibly to the notice of the Administration. 12 As Fienberg saw it, these small extensions represented only the first step towards one council for the whole Bay (population 5,000) which alone would be financially capable of supporting overheads and promoting development. 13

11) Minutes, Ealeba council, 7.8.52.
12) Their tax rate is still the lowest in the council area; see my comments on their predicament in Journal of African Administration, XIII, 3, July 1961, p.171; N.A.O. Plant to D.C. Samarai, 11.2.53, Samarai 14/17/2.
13) Fienberg to D.D.S., 2.3.53, Rabaul 14/11/6/26.
It has already been noted that this came about in 1957.  

At this point the extension of the council appears to have reached its practicable limit in relation to communications and two-monthly meetings. The people of the north-east coast, beyond East Cape, who are socially compatible and linguistically allied, had for some years been anxious to join the Milne Bay peoples; and in 1957 they pleaded to be allowed to join the new council. The Port Moresby leader, Mr. John Guise, who visited the area with the Executive Officer (Local Government), supported them. The Executive Officer, however, pointed out the difficulties of communication, and noted that it was impossible to make the mandatory detailed preliminary survey because of a shortage of staff.

In 1959 the same pleas were being made and the same difficulties raised. It will be remembered that these people include some of the most institutionally advanced natives in Papua; only a little to the west the Anglican mission had councils functioning in the early 1900s. The Administration proposed (not, be it noted, the natives) that the north-east coast peoples, numbering about 4,000, have their own separate council; but the Milne Bay council, contrary to expectations, required the full-time supervision of a local government officer (in fact, as Belshaw had

14) Amending Reg. 8/1957, allowed meetings every two months. See Ch. V, 2, supra.

15) A.D.O. Gehua to D.C., 14.9.57. Gehua 14/41.
predicted in 1951, he spent most of his time in routine administration and agency functions), so that by May 1960 a survey had not been made. The north-east coast peoples were still excluded from local government.16 (The rapid extension of the Village Agricultural Committees provided the real incentive, about this time, for the Native Affairs Department to reconsider accelerated extension of local government in the District - see Appendix B, I).

Similar local difficulties, and a similar rigidity of policy, caused serious delays in setting up local government in the eastern Gulf. This was peculiarly frustrating to the Elema peoples east of Kerema, who have a high literacy rate (estimated in 1953 at 60% for the Morip group), a capacity for skilled work and reservoir of skilled workers, and a demonstrated ability to organize and combine: in 1946 a notable leader, Posa Semesevita, campaigned amongst the eastern Elema, urging them to forget their sub-tribal divisions and to combine in economic endeavour - this led to the formation of the Toaripi Association and ultimately to the success

16) D.O. to D.N.A., 2.12.59, Samarai 14/17/1; Impatient comment by E.O.L.G., 14.12.59, NA 42/4. The A.D.O. (L.G.) stationed in Milne Bay doubted whether, if local government were extended to this area, the Administration could provide trained native staff for council installations (a stand-still had already been ordered on council schools). This was seen as a serious deterrent to extension.
of the co-operative movement. These very capacities, however, as in Sir Hubert Murray's time, may have produced a certain reserve within the Administration.

In May, 1953 the D.C. on a visit to the Moripi-Toaripi areas found that the natives wanted councils (the Moripi already came under one L.M.S. mission council) and promised to ask Headquarters to establish local government in the area. Twelve months later the Moripi submitted a formal petition to the Administrator, requesting local government. In 1955 nothing further had been done; a rough survey had been made in 1954, but the S.N.A.O. insisted on an adequate survey because of the implications of the voluntary participation approach. This was not completed until 1957, when P.O. Ross noted that the natives had been rather disillusioned by the delay and doubted the Administration's intent. Indeed, the Moripi felt that the promise given them had been broken.

17) H.A. Brown, *The Eastern Elema*, p.197. He is now regarded with posthumous respect both by the Administration and by the natives - speech by D.C. Jackson to Toaripi-Moripi councils, Lalapipi, 22.6.1960. The Co-operatives Association has run successfully with uniquely little European assistance: annual turnover 1959 about £50,000 - information from E.O. Graham, a/Registrar of Co-operatives, Co-operatives officer McSherry. P.O. Kukipi to D.C. Kerema, 10.5.57, Kerema PR 4/1952-3; literacy 62.1% Oiapu to Lese, population 4473. Also see Ch. IX, 2 on their Port Moresby influence.


19) *Bolio 3*, NA 23/2/2.

20) Fienberg (a/D.N.A.) to D.C., 23.7.55, DS 14/7/8.

21) P.O. Ross to D.C. Kikori, 10.5.57, Kukipi.
The Executive Officer (Local Government), however, still had serious reservations about implementing local government in the area. Politically he saw no alternative, but he felt that it would involve risks because of doubtful economic potential:

They will be in a position of having a statutory body with defined powers and functions, but incapable of serving them as it should because it lacks the necessary finance. Nothing could be more dangerous than political development proceeding without comparable advancement in the social and economic fields.

The real fear was that if the councils proved incapable of carrying out adequate economic and social tasks, the resulting frustration would turn them into primarily political bodies. One approach, but it was a tedious one, was the indoctrination of the population, so that they would be prepared in advance for a relatively low scale of works and services.

This kind of propaganda has, since 1957, become a regular part of extension; the Director of Native Affairs wrote -

I am convinced that skilled propaganda work by officers can do much to overcome some of the difficulties of the voluntary participation approach.

For eight further months the establishment of councils was delayed. A later difficulty was ensuring competent and regular supervision. If the D.C. could not guarantee this,

22) D.N.A. to D.C. Kikori, 6.8.57, NA 23-2-2.
23) Ibid. But the Elema were anxious to participate, so that the argument here appears to savour of rationalism.
said Headquarters, - implying the full time services of an officer for the two councils - 'it would not be in the best interests of the people or the native situation in general to attempt to institute local government'.

The general inference to be drawn from this case is that the desire by natives for local government was a relatively minor factor in the Administration's decision. The Administrator finally approved the establishment of the Moveave-Toaripi and Moripi councils on 18.4.1958, five years after the original submission had been made.

It is debatable whether expressed doubts about economic potential were not subconscious rationalisations of political fears, for the initial recommended tax rate was £4 for adult males, which was twice the Administration Personal tax and about three times the tax rate of the Highland councils instituted in the same year.

(iii) Acceleration. 1956-60.

As has been remarked previously, it was only during 1956 that the extension of local government went beyond the

24) a/D.N.A. to D.C. Kikori, 5.3.58, NA 23-2-2. D.N.A. to Administrator, 28.9.1956, (NA 42-7) said that where a community was able to make a co-ordinated demand for economic development this should be an indication that it was sufficiently cohesive for local government - but this clearly did not imply that it would get local government: other factors supervened.

25) a/D.N.A. to Sec. Law, 23.4.58, ibid.
commitments of 1950-1. During 1955 no new councils were established; but the establishment of seven councils during 1956 marked the beginning of a campaign of acceleration. It was announced that the change to area administration was to become general policy, rather than simply an eclectic experiment. This change was linked with the departmental reorganization which removed the impression that local government establishment was a specialist activity.  

Correspondingly, as is mentioned elsewhere, meetings of senior officers and of local government trainees considered the problems in implementing native local government, its desirable prerequisites, powers and functions. The resulting reports broadly endorsed what had previously been laid down. Councils were to remain Administration instrumentalities facilitating the carrying out of central policy for social and economic development.  

26) Summarised in L.G. Bulletin No.2, March 1957, p.2, see Appendix B, II.  

27) Senior Officers' Course, A.S.O.P.A., 1957, and the Local Government Training Course, Nov-Dec. 1956 (L.G. Section 14-7-18) generally agreed with the established principles, except that of voluntary participation; the Senior Officers' Course specifically rejected a more flexible policy, especially for areas of dispersed population and low economic potential, which would have permitted smaller councils of which less could be expected executively. D.O. John J. Murphy (significantly, from the Western District, where the population density is only 1 per eq. mile), submitted a minority dissent on this point. This is roughly the same point made by the 1956 U.N. Mission (led by Sir John Macpherson) that 'district commissioners should be given wide powers to set up councils, not necessarily on a rigid pattern' - G.A.O.R., 11th Session, June-July 1956, A/3170, supp.4, p.297.
effect, not only impressed on general field staff that area administration was the desideratum, but also obtained their sanction of the principles on which area administration was already being applied.

Central endorsement, however, brought about some abrupt changes of policy at the district level. For example, relations between Administration and natives had been poor in the Northern District ever since the war; the Administration never forgot wartime 'treachery'; while the natives clung to tradition and when they needed advice, even on economic development, looked to the Anglican mission rather than to officials. 28

Little effort was made by the Administration to improve relations; the methods and outlook of paternal administration were hardly conducive to an improvement. A meeting of native officials held at Higaturu in July, 1950, illustrates this and contrasts with the active policy of co-operation after the introduction of native local government. 317 officials attended this meeting; 115 of these called themselves 'hygiene' or 'co-operatives' officials, to D.Q. Cowley's disgust - he was unable to see what functions they performed which could not be equally well carried out by the native village constables and unofficial councillors. He had been trained by Murray, and preferred administration 'pure and simple'.

The purpose of the meeting is obscure. Cowley exhorted the councillors to hold their villages together (villages were an Administration innovation; the normal habitation pattern was hamlets); he told them not to be alarmed about reports of the Korean war; he invited the medical officer to talk to them, and also the Anglican Bishop, who chanced to be passing while the meeting was in progress. The meeting broke up with the issue of tobacco to the councillors. 29

Many senior officers believed that occasional gatherings of this type, in which the native officials received paternal injunctions, and issues of tobacco, constituted progressive administration.

The accident of the Mt. Lamington eruption in 1951 gave the natives a better impression of the Administration, which poured in assistance in money and personnel on a previously unknown scale. According to Belshaw, the Orokaiva came to regard the calamity as a punishment for their previous attitude of withdrawal and non-cooperation. They now willingly accepted the village pattern, and showed 'a general desire for new things'. 30 Unfortunately, another of Murray's officers was

29) D.O. C.F. Cowley, Meeting of Native Officials, Higaturu, Northern Division, 17.7.50. The only discussion by the natives arose out of a complaint by one councillor that a native recently operated on in hospital had died. The D.O. reassured him by remarking that his sergeant-major of police usually missed about 5 pigs in 100 when out hunting: 'The gathering saw fit to accept this as logical'.

30) Belshaw, loc.cit., p.245.
posted to the area, so that Administration attitudes towards
the natives reverted to the old stereotypes. In 1954 D.C.
Bramell described the Orokaiva as 'truculent, arrogant and
uncooperative', again citing their war record. He had
become alarmed to discover that a native named Timaeus,
possessing some education, had been organising councils in the
district. The D.C. told the natives that they were not ready
for councils, but acceded to their request that the
Administration give them theoretical instruction in law and
government.

Port Moresby interpreted the movement amongst the natives
as 'rational and potentially formidable incipient nationalism'.
Fienberg urged the D.C. to begin organizing statutory councils
before 'the movement' reached the stage at which the natives
would regard local government only as a form of administrative
control.

D.C. Bramell, however, had some experience of councils in
the Gazelle Peninsula, and he reacted antipathetically to the
suggestion that he promote them amongst the Orokaiva. He
attributed the desire for a council merely to 'a chosen few
with a smattering of education', and he used the already

31) D.C. to D.D.S., 5.7.54, Popondetta 14/1/1/15.
32) Ibid. Timaeus had been sent to Cairns to gain experience
during the Queen's visit in 1954.
33) Ibid., manu. comments, dated 8.7.54, DS 14/7/8 copy:
D.D.S. to D.C. Northern, 14.7.54, DS 14-7-8.
established principle of voluntary participation as an excuse for avoiding local government:

It is not intended that native local government should be brought into operation (let alone forced upon the people in the area under consideration) at this date or in the near future. This point cannot be over-emphasised.

He denied that their request for instruction in law and government meant that they wished to play an active part in administration (which he envisaged as local 'self-government'), and he asserted that it was merely an indication of their wish to demonstrate the change from their former attitude of truculence. 35

At this period, when the natives were themselves unfamiliar with local government, personalities amongst government officers played a large part in its extension. Early in 1956 local hesitations amongst the Orokaiva were overcome by the energy of an enlightened Patrol Officer, C.J. Normoyle, who saw that by all objective criteria the Higaturu area is ideally suited to development through local government: it has excellent well-watered soil, a concentrated population speaking a common language, and a good system of communications. Some economic development had already taken place: in 1956 20 tons of coffee beans and some rubber were produced by

34) D.C. to D.D.S., 23.7.54, Pop. 14/1/1/135.
35) Ibid. The concepts of the Murray period are unmistakable here: the complete retention of control in the hands of government officers, with the expectation that 'ultimately' the natives would be sufficiently well versed to carry out minor administrative functions.
natives. The council was seen as an Administration medium for promoting economic development in the first instance, rather than as a body providing services. As originally proclaimed, it embraced 9,554 people, for some years the largest council in the Territory.

Although native local government, by and large, was vigorously promoted from Port Moresby after 1956, it did not extend very quickly in the Northern District. The only valid explanation can again be that of personalities, for the station had a local government officer continuously, except for a period in 1957. Two minor extensions of the council were made, but little else was done. A.D.O. (L.G.) Norton reported in February 1960 that preliminary investigations with an eye to local government extension had been carried out in the Aiga, Buna, Oro Bay, Gona and Collingwood Bay census divisions, but that there was no area in which councils were 'urgently required', or even where the need for them had been established. Norton clearly was looking for two preconditions; firstly, significant economic development, and secondly, social cohesion sufficient to define a potential council area. In these areas he felt that three years of economic development might make it 'desirable to introduce councils', and that, with the exception of Collingwood Bay, 'political

36) D.N.A. to Asst. Admin., 5.4.56, 1.5.56, NA 41/3/1. Council proclaimed Gazette 22, 10.5.56.
cohesion' might be adequate also in three years. He felt that the rapid extension of coffee-growing in the Binandere area might produce similar essential preconditions for local government; and that the Managalase area might achieve a degree of 'cohesion' with the establishment of an airstrip and a patrol post, but 'not in the foreseeable future'.

(iv) Local Interpretation of Establishment Criteria.

These two matters of economic potential and social cohesion, which are dependent on the estimation of local officers and are therefore peculiarly subject to personal interpretation, presented major difficulties in the extension of local government. The concept of aggressive propaganda to produce 'social cohesion' adequate for a council (in view of voluntary participation) developed only gradually in the period 1956-60, as younger officers of post-1949 training joined the Local Government Section. To define the type of cohesion required is not easy: in 1957 the Senior Officers substituted 'community of interest' for 'social homogeneity', but both terms are vague and offer little guidance. Headquarters proved reluctant to give detailed directions on the point, in order not to discourage extension, beyond expressing opposition

38) A.D.O. (L.G.) to D.O., 9.2.60, Popondetta 14/8. Norton was unusually conservative.

39) The Training Course, 1956, recognized that for a time junior officers engaged in local government extension might find themselves subordinate to senior officers opposed to the system or uninterested in it - Report, p.18.

to the idea of making councils 'artificial' creations by pushing together antagonistic native groups. 41

Because of the small traditional political and linguistic groups in Papua-New Guinea, councils inevitably have to embrace numbers of parishes and languages; though within the council areas there has generally been long contact and often economic co-operation, giving a perception of certain common goals and problems. The Milne Bay council ultimately comprised at least three separate language groups; but traditionally there had been long contact (e.g. between Divinai on the north and Gwawili on the south) which cut across the linguistic groups. At the same time, as was stressed above, the Administration insisted that it was only the perception of common ends through the actual operation of the councils which brought the entire north and south sides of the Bay together.

In the Gulf district, the Moveave-Toaripi and Moripi councils originally represented separate sub-tribes of the eastern Elema. These were not traditional political units, which were represented by the village settlements: indeed, Toaripi and Moveave had been strongly separatist. But at both the sub-tribal and tribal levels there existed concepts of common origins and a common culture. Economic co-operation, self-sponsored and later taken up by the Administration, welded the sub-tribes into functional units.

---

41) E.O. (L.G.) memo., 14.12.59, NA 14-2-4. The danger now is that traditional antagonisms are liable to be instituted and perpetuated.
which later became the councils; and in 1960 the sub-tribes themselves were preparing to unite through local government.  

Thus, given a lead, native groups do combine beyond the boundaries within which social and political activities normally function in traditional life; but it might be objected that the Administration lead is not vigorous enough, that it is still beset by too many doubts on the score of confederation, 43 that there is too little consciousness of the widening circles of co-operation between native communities, and that Administration policy is therefore too timid and cautious. 44

When all these reservations are transferred to an administrative service lacking a tradition of delegation, the results are likely to be restrictive. The 1956 U.N. Mission, led by Sir John Macpherson, was too sanguine about delegating the task of extension to general field staff; 45 with rare exceptions it has in practice remained a specialist activity. In 1958 it was regarded as 'somewhat unusual' when a non-specialist officer stationed at Misima proposed the establishment of a council there; although the people number 6167,

43) See Ch. V, 2.
45) Ibid., p.79.
they speak a common language, they are relatively wealthy from shell-fishing, and they are served by adequate communications. Without the personal interest of this officer their being given local government might have been long delayed.46

(Elsewhere is detailed an example from Manus, where obstruction or ignorance by local officers seems to have prevented council extension: see Appendix B, II).

Attitudes of this kind amongst field staff would appear to have been particularly marked in those areas where the natives, rightly or wrongly, acquired a reputation for truculence. The Mekeo area, which is dealt with below, is a notable example. Elsewhere, the fear that cults might appear or that other native organizations might assume political functions impelled both Headquarters and the local field staff to hasten local government.

The Highlands afford a notable example. For a considerable time the Administration has been apprehensive about the belief which has taken root amongst the concentrated Highland populations that it is possible for them to achieve a dramatic rise in living levels in a matter of years (whereas in fact their economic prospects are poor compared to the progressive coastal areas whence Highland natives derive their ideas). The enthusiasm which this belief arouses

clearly needs channelling and controlling; otherwise, it is feared, large cultist movements will result. In 1956 it was suggested that councils not be restricted to areas which had had long contact: even rudimentary councils could bring native leaders together and both prevent feuding and allow progressive administration.47

Early in 1957 it was announced that 'the earlier approach, that local government is necessarily applicable to the most advanced sections of the native population is being somewhat modified'.48

This revised policy was rapidly taken up in the Eastern Highlands, where two councils were proclaimed in December, 1958. Indeed, from the point of view of socio-political criteria, many of the Highland areas are more suited to native local government than most of the coast; Highland clans tend to occupy consolidated areas, and several clans are allied into tribes of 1,000–4,000 people, which were formerly military units.

Moreover, direct administration had already brought about changes in the leadership system favourable to local government; the natives had learned to look outside the traditional criteria for progressive leadership. A notable Chimbu named

47) N.A. memo., The Extension of Native Local Government, 27.1.56, NA 39-1-2. The idea of a more rudimentary type of council was, however, rejected by the Senior Officers.
Administration, had extended his authority a long way beyond his tribal boundaries. The Chimbu, therefore, had learned to look for a new leadership focus, particularly to promote economic development, and it was this which local government was designed to provide. Thus it was not difficult for the council to bring together four tribes, comprising about 9,800 people. That cultist attitudes might show through the council is still feared, particularly if its developmental functions flag; but it is felt, after the experience at Baluan, that the council at least affords a measure of control through rational pursuits. 49

In the Milne Bay and Gulf Districts local government was urged as an alternative to the assumption of political functions by other bodies: in Milne Bay the Agricultural Associations, and in the Gulf the Co-operatives. 50 Despite the apprehension that the Gulf natives were ready for local government and were not getting it (the area has long been subject to sporadic cargo cult outbreaks), a lack of staff and the need for detailed surveys were blamed for dilatory extension. The Kerema Bay survey was completed only in February, 1960, and the D.O. noted a number of limiting

49) P. Brown, From Anarchy to Satrapy (to be published). The Highland councils have been constituted under the N.L.G. Ordinance, but their male tax rates are only 30/- p.a. Kondam had been a member of the District Advisory Council, an observer at the Legislative Council and a delegate to the South Pacific Conference. The unbridled enthusiasm for communal work is the most remarkable feature of these council's activities.

50) N.A. memo. of 27.1.56, cit.sup.
factors: a lack of traditional homogeneity (it was proposed to include some inland Kukukukus, a unique step); little 'civic spirit'; a poor economy; and a paucity of skills (skilled natives emigrated to the towns). At the same time it was felt that the introduction of the council could not wisely be postponed. 51

In such areas native attitudes forced local government to be set up. In other areas, native attitudes inhibited the establishment of local government; though as these attitudes are filtered through local field staff, it is often difficult to determine whether it is native antagonism to local government which is responsible, or the interpretation by officers of native attitudes which they deem would make the institution of local government unwise.

(v) The Mekeo - An Example of Administration Ambivalence.

The area of Papua-New Guinea from which local government has been most conspicuously withheld is that inhabited by the Mekeo peoples inland from Kairuku. The pre-war history of these people has been adumbrated elsewhere; it resulted in a lack of trust and confidence between the Administration and the natives. 52 At the same time the Mekeo occupy a potentially

51) D.O. Kerema to D.N.A., 17.2.60, Kerema 40-1-1. The E.O. (L.G.) held the view that in the unpromising Gulf and Western Districts the establishment of councils would draw back a proportion of skilled workers (to D.N.A., 11.6.55, DS 14-7-5).

52) See J. McAuley, Economic Development among the Mekeo, South Pacific, VIII, 10, Jan-Feb. 1956, pp.217-8. The pre-war forced cultivation of rice was particularly unfortunate in the long term. For pre-war see Appendix A, II.
productive area in considerable concentration; these factors continued after the war to tempt the Administration to economic experiment, which required local co-operation.

It is important to look at the trend of Administration experiment, and at current social conditions, in order to realize the reluctance of officers to institute local government.

A history of cargo cult in the period 1941-5 signalised, inter alia, economic frustration. The Co-operatives Ordinance which the Administration introduced in 1948 was ludicrously inappropriate for native societies. In the same year, therefore, Mr. W. Cottrell-Dormer resigned as Director of Agriculture in order to devote himself to economic development in the Mekeo area through the Rural Progress Societies which he created for the purpose.53 One of the objects of these societies was to change the attitudes of the Mekeo towards the Administration. The Mekeo had no wish to persevere with agriculture using the digging stick and the mortar and pestle, as they put it.54 Cottrell-Dormer saw the Rural Progress Societies as agencies for promoting socio-political change:


54) M.J. White, Rural Progress Societies as an Extension Tool, D.A.S.F., 1959, p.1.
... the Society must encourage them towards self-reliance in a changing world in which their native concepts are gradually being replaced, to a greater or less extent, by those of the West ... It must provide them with opportunity for the useful employment of the increased leisure which improved techniques may be expected to give them... Above all it must help and encourage the people on the road to self-government.

It might be stated bluntly in retrospect that the approach amongst the Mekeo failed largely because, in the absence of other institutional guides and with policy still rigidly departmentalised, the Rural Progress Societies were too amorphous to cope with this broad and idealistic conception of agricultural extension. The actual failure of the rice-growing scheme was due to a number of factors, among them management factors, bad seasons, and social conflicts: for example, many of the lopia, who control and allocate the communally owned land, sat in the background and took no active part in the scheme, while the younger men found that the scheme's demands cut across their traditional activities and obligations.

Many of the inadequacies of the Rural Progress Societies

55) Cottrell-Dormer, cit.sup.

56) White, op.cit., 'Although recognized as undesirable, practical difficulties led the organisers into arranging for payment to growers for produce at a later date to that of consignment'. Communal gardens with proceeds earmarked for capital accumulation were also not adapted to Mekeo society. These important mistakes were eliminated in the later scheme - see McAuley, loc.cit.

57) Belshaw, loc.cit., p.15; cf. Cottrell-Dormer's later approach in Milne Bay; involve all departments, liaise with local government; also a/A.D.O. Tomasetti to S.N.A.O., 18.12.52, NA 40-2-1.
among the Mekeo were realized at the time; and the Administration over several years has not been insensitive to the need for local government. But the social factors which obstructed the Societies, and perhaps were enhanced by their failures, were seen as obstacles to local government. It is extremely difficult to decide, however, the extent to which these attitudes are those of the Administration rather than those of the Mekeo. The Mekeo have long had a reputation for truculence—a disinclination to take heed of any constituted authority, particularly government. In 1952 the A.D.O. at Kairuku characterised them as 'quick-tempered, parochial, independent, and proud'. He expressed surprise at the negligible decay in the traditional culture, despite the close contact with the Catholic mission over three generations; the leadership structure seemed to have remained relatively intact, magical and religious beliefs remained strong, polygamy was still openly practised. There appeared to be few incentives to change, even economic change, resulting from contact; paradoxically, their area was so productive that they could satisfy their needs and even raise money without damaging their time-honoured social and agricultural round.58

58) Tomasetti, ibid., repeated by McAuley, loc.cit., p.217. In 1956 McAuley believed that an 'economic ferment' was beginning to produce adequate motivation to change. See also J. McAuley, The Distance between the Government and the Governed, South Pacific, VII, 1, p.818.
Another major difficulty with the Mekeo, agreed on by a number of observers, is their intense intra-group morality and loyalty, which in a reflex way leads them to regard other groups – in widening circles beyond the family, clan, and village – as 'fair game'. Ikupu (clan) groups are likely to be unpredictably hostile to one another, but these feelings fluctuate and die down; however, with foreigners they have an extremely bad reputation for stealing, extortion, and profiteering. These offences are rare amongst themselves, and therefore locally would seem to present little difficulty in the way of local government; but they make the Administration reluctant to relax the reins of direct control. Yet these very difficulties reduce the effectiveness of direct administration; in 1952 three of the 14 V.C.s held lopia rank; but even they regarded their first loyalty as belonging to their people, not to the government. Most V.C.s were suspected of concealing offences, and it was stated that only 'constant and rigid supervision' could make the V.C. system work at all.

A type of local government involving a recognition of traditional concepts and authority might have been germane:

60) Tomasetti, loc.cit. The meeting of the Hanuabada Council, 20.1.60, sought to control the Mekeo betel-nut sellers within Hanuabada, because they 'took down' the local natives; the Mekeo corner the market to maintain inflated prices. Both D.A.O. Kleokham and a/Co-operatives Registrar Graham (a former Kairuku P.O.) confirmed the conviction that the Mekeo have scant respect individually for government officers, and collectively for government exhortation and advice.
61) Tomasetti, ibid.
but the Administration was promoting councils as government agencies, so that the same problems were involved as under the direct system. A.D.O. Tomasetti summed up the difficulties in the way of native government in 1952 (and they have since been raised a number of times) as (i) a lack of the concept of self-help towards economic change; (ii) internal disunity and rivalries; and (iii) the status of the lopia, whose office still tended to be hereditary, although they exercised authority by consent. The A.D.O. believed that representation on any council would have to have regard to their dominant position, otherwise they would intrigue against the council. Nevertheless, he concluded that the formation of a council amongst the Mekso was both 'feasible and desirable'; implying that the difficulties which he had outlined could be overcome if local government were set up.

The failure of Cottrell-Dormer's experiment shortly afterwards made the time unpropitious to attempt to set up local government; moreover, experience in the Gazelle Peninsula had made the Administration extremely reluctant to go ahead except at the unanimous behest of a group in close accord. Prior consent was thus a prime difficulty. In June, 1959 the D.O., Central District, held a meeting at Kairuku of '1200 Village Constables, Councillors, group chiefs and other important

62) Ibid. Under the stimulus of cargo cult, they have shown the capacity to combine — more than 2,000 assembled at Inawaia in 1941, and worked in concert with the cult leaders — see Appendix A, II.
people' from the sub-district. The local government system was explained to them, and eventually they expressed support for its introduction and, according to D.O. Marsh, on their own initiative 'achieved a series of very logical combinations', which happened to be roughly the prescribed size for local government units. One of these 'combinations' was East and West Mekeo, plus two bush Mekeo villages (4,900 people). Marsh believed that agreement on these combinations would make council establishment and administration 'comparatively simple'.

Officers of the Local Government Section, however, were not so sanguine; they regarded the arrangement to which the Mekeo had agreed under Marsh's aegis as temporary. They felt that an officer steeped in the tradition of direct administration often believed that he could talk natives out of local hostilities; these groups at a large gathering might close ranks, but their agreement would mean little once they were again on home ground. Thus, the very willingness of some non-specialist officers to promote local government raises obstacles to their doing so, as the 1956 U.N. Mission urged; for Local Government officers are trained to be much more circumspect in their approach.

Amongst the Mekeo the Administration is therefore waiting

63) D.O. Marsh to D.N.A., 8.7.59, NA 40-2-1.
64) Discussion of the issues with B.O. (L.G.) Plant and A.D.O. Collins, 8.2.60.
for a fundamental change of attitude to be brought about by competitive pressure from their advancing neighbours: they must come to realize that they will become a backward group unless they work, through local government, to remain on level terms, instead of relying on what they regard as innate superiority: at present their contempt for neighbouring peoples is notorious. In this sense voluntary participation applied to the Mekeo is interpreted as a willingness to make a council function effectively, rather than - as Marsh possibly assumed - a mere acceptance of the machinery of local government. In view of the past history of compulsion and of abortive co-operation in this area, the Administration feels that it must assess that willingness carefully, before attempting to set up a council. 65

(vi) Social Obstacles to Extension

Despite the difficulties that arose in the Gazelle Peninsula, it has thus on occasions been the Administration perception of social difficulties in native societies, rather than direct native opposition, which has inhibited the extension of local government. An exception might be the New Ireland/Bougainville areas, where the entrepreneurial class is said to be opposed to local government; but this may have had its origins in the period before general native taxation was

65) Ibid. There is an interesting comparison with the situation of the Masai in East Africa - though District Councils were not withheld from the Masai, but have been used to change their attitudes, through an educated elite.
was introduced, when the acceptance of councils meant the acceptance of council tax. On Bougainville, by the end of 1959, only one council, embracing 3,300 natives, had been established. Here the elders felt that there was no place for them within the current pattern of local government (and in view of the non-traditional, centralizing approach there is some justification for this). Rifts were so serious in the Teop-Tinputz council area that the matter was discussed at the Madang Conference.

In one or two areas, as in the Gazelle Peninsula, it would appear that the fundamental resistance by natives to the extension of local government has derived from the knowledge that councils are Administration instrumentalities. In such a situation, increased Administration propaganda only hardens native resistance. This seems to have been so in the Port Moresby sub-district. Hanuabada council, because of its executive/financial incapacity, represented a challenge to extension, in view of the criterion that councils should be capable of providing significant works and services. In 1955 the suggestion was made that, as the Hanuabadans are urban

66) Information, L.G. section, Port Moresby; D.N.A. memo., 27.1.56, NA 39-1-2.
67) L.G. Bulletin No. 6, Jan. 1960, p.3.
68) Minutes, Item 25, NA 44-4-1. The Conference felt that it was a difficulty peculiar to the area, and that careful election propaganda could overcome it. Nevertheless, it is a complaint that has some general application: the abrupt removal of the old officials is partly responsible. There is a potential source of resistance to council extension here.
in outlook and mode of life, their council should be extended to take in the settlements of 'foreign' immigrants. About 25% of Hanuabada's taxpayers were said to be already 'foreigners', and the so-called Toaripi settlement behind Konedobu was already within the Hanuabada council area. 69

Complications which might arise from voluntary participation were discounted in a remarkable argument:

The voluntary participation approach which has hampered the extension of local government in tribal areas is not a major factor in the Port Moresby situation, i.e. most of the people who will be affected are migrants who can return home if they wish.

Subsequently, discussion arising out of the Winders Report clouded this extension prospect. 71 In 1957 the Administration, therefore, changed its approach to that of a Greater Area Council which would associate the (generally Motuan) west coast villages to Lealea (the border of Kairuku sub-district) with Hanuabada. P.O. Kennedy went further, and saw the council as an amalgamation of Motu, Koita and Koiari groups; through the council they could resolve their differences, instead of surreptitiously bickering. Each of the three groups was by itself too small to form a viable council. At

69) a/D.N.A. to D.O. Port Moresby, 1.8.55, NA 14-7-8; Hanuabada Minutes, 27.7.55; Survey of Port Moresby 1959, M.C. Groves.

70) a/D.N.A. to D.O. Port Moresby, loc.cit. The a/D.N.A. was J.K. McCarthy, who had been D.C. in Rabaul and was anxious to circumvent voluntary participation; but this argument is quite unrealistic.

71) See Ch. on 'The Approach to Local Government.'
the same time he was not blind to the disadvantages of the proposal: such a council could be dominated (or so the other groups might believe) by the Motuans; differential tax rates according to locality would be needed; current land disputes might disrupt council meetings; and monthly meetings would involve transport problems. According to established criteria, these are all familiar problems; but he felt that the concept of an expanded council should be persevered with. This represented a plea for a more flexible policy; councils otherwise constituted merely perpetuated differences and reduced executive effectiveness.

A semi-official report by the influential mixed-blood, John Guise, revealed, however, that the people were suspicious of councils that were intended to be Administration instrumentalities. The natives in this area had been in close contact with Europeans since 1872, but their attitude towards the Administration seemed to be primarily distrust. This, he felt, would take a long time to break down. The Administration would have to learn to regard the natives

... as men and women having dignity, respect and feelings as people, however simple and perhaps primitive they might prove to be.

Moreover, internal suspicions were strong. The Porebadaans

72) P.O. to D.O., 26.3.57, P.M. 14-25-1.
73) Report J. Guise to A.D.O. Lang, Feb. 1957. Guise was elected by the eastern Papuan natives to the Legislative Council, March 1961.
had fallen out with the neighbouring Hanuabadans in 1954-5, when the Hanuabada council asked numbers of Porebadans living in its area during the working week to pay tax. When the council issue was raised, the Porebadans suspected that the Hanuabadans were anxious to bring in other groups simply to shore up their finances. This attitude spread to other villages.\(^7^4\)

There were also other obstacles, rather similar to those in the Gazelle Peninsula. Porebada, for example, had an unofficial village council (analogous to the kivunge); it was suspected that the activities of this council were already well integrated with those of the L.M.S. through the influence of Reatau-Mea, President of the Papuan Church Assembly. The council thus was not anxious to be absorbed by Hanuabada.\(^7^5\)

Over the following three years initiative for a Greater Area Council continued to come from the Hanuabadans; though the Administration wavered in the fact of native coolness. The Hanuabadans eventually could get a favourable response from only one of the 14 villages they wished to incorporate. In May 1960 the Hanuabada council invited the Administrator to discuss the matter with representatives from the council, Tatana, Baruni and Rouki; but the Administrator continued to place the onus on the villages themselves to reach

\(^7^4\) Chairman, Porebada village council to D.C., 20.5.55; D.C. to Chairman, P.M. 14-25-3.

\(^7^5\) Guise memo, cit.sup.; Discussion with Hanuabadans, A.D.O. Lang.
agreement. Meanwhile, one group has ineffective local government, the others, none.

(vii) The Standardisation of Establishment Procedure.

The implications of voluntary participation therefore continue to provide problems in council extension, beyond those created by personal interpretations of local situations and establishment criteria. These factors together have impelled the Administration to devise a standardised procedure for preliminary propaganda and for surveys of projected council areas. This appears further to reduce local flexibility; on the other hand, in the light of staffing difficulties, such a procedure enables experienced Headquarters officers to assess local situations more accurately and to insist on progressive administration unless there are grave and insuperable obstacles.

Originally surveys were concerned essentially with taxability and economic potential; then they had to concern themselves with the attitude of the natives towards one another and towards local government. Out of this developed combined

76) South Pacific Post, 20.5.60. According to the Hanuabadans, had the Administration not been associated with the idea originally, they could have reached agreement. Indeed, despite differences, it was discussed with the Porebadans in 1955, and they seemed agreeable. On the other hand, the Porebadans and others know that the Hanuabadans have been frustrated in local government by limited powers and government overrule - see my New Guinea - Fast or Slow?, J.P.S., Vol. 70, 4, Dec. 1961, p.486.

77) The system is defective only in the inability of many officers to conduct surveys together with council supervision and an increasing load of routine administration. More elaborate surveys are more time-consuming.
campaigns to acquaint natives with the purpose and responsibilities of local government (with particular regard to taxation), and to evaluate proposed council areas. This more aggressive policy was necessary particularly in the period 1956-8, when few natives knew anything of local government. In 1959 a formal schedule was drawn up, so that surveys were conducted and analysed according to a fixed pattern. 78

Officers were particularly warned that they had to tread the razor's edge between assessing the practicability of a council and proselytizing on behalf of local government, and at the same time not committing central government to setting up a council in an area which might be pronounced unsuitable. 79

The information demanded by this schedule is lengthy and detailed, and is given in the Appendix; but it might be mentioned that the 'degree of social cohesion' has to be listed, together with itemised accounts of economic production and potential, all existing social and political institutions, and the attitude of the people towards local government (with this last, the methods and statistics whereby this was ascertained). Such surveys usually entail at least two trips to the area, and several months of investigation.

It can be argued that, although this procedure was designed to allow greater control, in the period since 1958 when local government has, in effect, begun to be self-

78) Circ. Instruction 304, 18.9.59.
79) Ibid.
propagating, it has been restrictive; for many groups seeking councils have to wait long periods to be surveyed in the detail required. The process of establishment, in fact, may be coming full circle from 1950 - for delays are so frustrating that in certain areas there are signs that local government will be instituted in response to political and potentially cultist pressures.  

Before the end of 1960 requests for local government were coming in from native groups far more quickly than surveys could be conducted.

To this extent the practical achievements of the earlier councils would appear, as was intended, to have been the best propaganda for local government. On the other hand, the Administration is still highly selective about the areas in which councils should be set up, and as late as December, 1961, the Administration was still recommending to field staff explanations and propaganda for natives based on short courses in English constitutional government, beginning with the Anglo-Saxon moot. Almost invariably this has to be done through semi-literate native interpreters. This is in accord with the overall approach, that natives must grasp concepts before being given the institutions which embody them.

(80) This seems to be the case on the north-east coast, eastern Papua. It was stated that an extra officer for surveys would not be stationed at Baniara before 1963 'unless the political situation forces earlier action' - Memo. E.O. (L.G.), 14.12.1959 (attached instruction by D.N.A., 22.1.60), NA 40-2-4.

A better system is that endorsed by the 1955 Cambridge Conference, whereby natives from projected council areas visit established councils for training. By that date it was recommended to field staff in 1959. By that date it was growing in popularity; indeed, because of the difficulties of moving parties of natives in New Guinea with reasonable expense, it was a method which had to wait on the establishment of a sprinkling of councils in readily accessible areas. For example, in February, 1960 a party of a dozen natives from the Milne Bay district was able to visit the Higaturu council area, where more progressive agricultural development was under way.

By the beginning of 1956 there were 9 councils in Papua-New Guinea, with a total population of about 50,000; by the end of 1958 this had grown to 28 councils with a total population of 160,000; and by June 1960 to 40 councils embracing 288,000 people. (A further 12 councils were set up in the following 18 months, to December 1961). There has therefore been a period of rapidly accelerating extension, tapering off since 1958 on the high plateau of 8 new councils a year, comprising perhaps 50,000 people. Within the demands of the local government system, with its emphasis on financial viability and close supervision, this is an impressive record. At the same time, less than one-fifth of

83) Circ. memo. No.238, 6.10.59.
Territory's population was under local government after twelve years of endeavour. The natives themselves have shown every indication that they want even more rapid extension (the Madang Conference of June, 1959 recommended compulsory incorporation in councils\(^\text{84}\)); but the Administration interprets pressure towards an accelerated programme as a dilution of the concept of councils as government agencies training natives in local responsibility. This concept of councils has been regularly re-affirmed, and the existing methods and criteria of council extension are taken to be integral to it.\(^\text{85}\)

(viii) The Liberalising of Establishment.

Despite the restrictions on extension which still result from this concept of local government, and on the variations caused by the attitudes of individual officers, there are indications of a growing liberalism in extending councils to backward areas with dispersed populations, and in using councils as outlets for ambitious natives. The Western District affords an example. Local government was not extended to the Kiwai people until 1957 - officers were unaware of the previous history of organizational and economic endeavour, whereby the Kiwai had consistently anticipated administrative innovations. After the war one observer reported that the people of Mabaduan still retained a keen commercial sense and

\(^{84}\) Madang Minutes, Items 26-7. NA 44-4-1.

\(^{85}\) Circ. memo 5/59, Asst. Admin.
had purchased a lugger. But Administration neglect continued: the natives tried to operate unofficial co-operatives, which failed. By 1956 large numbers of Kiwai natives were again absent at work in other parts of the Territory; in the largest village, Parama, only 10 effective adult males were left out of 145. Not until 1956 was it at last realized that because of this situation, and because the Kiwai had for long compared their condition with that of the Torres Straits islanders under Queensland administration, local government was urgently needed. There was a perception that the Kiwai could have usefully had local government thirty years before; and this was taken as a prime incentive to setting up a council, in the face of the abysmally poor living conditions and economic prospects.

Social cohesion was important in establishing the council. Initially the statutory insistence on monthly meetings forced the Administration to divide the Kiwai into separate coastal and estuary councils sharing a joint treasury; but this involved duplication of staff and wasteful overheads, and


87) E.O. (L.G.) to D.N.A., 11.6.56, DS 14-7-5. By 1960 there were still no official co-operatives in the area. See Ch. on Western Papua. C.I.3(1949-50) supposedly limited recruitment to 1/3 of adult males.

88) Ibid.

89) Ibid. '... there has been little encouragement from the Administration to help them develop and ... they recognise this.' The E.O. noted that Torres Straits luggers had collected £30,000 of pearl-shell near Daru; but since the Kiwai have been forbidden to enter the Torres Straits the art of diving has been lost.
neither council was financially viable. In 1958 they were united at their own insistence. Other groups then requested to join in; the Kiwai on the north bank of the Fly joined the council based on Daru although they are much closer to Balimo, headquarters of the Gogodala council. Conversely, Gogodala natives on the south bank of the Fly, beyond Madiri plantation, requested to join the Gogodala council. Social sentiment in this way was eroding the criteria of economic potential and of communications imposed by central government; and this was welcomed by local field-staff.

Field-staff during 1959 were actively canvassing the extension of local government even further afield in the District, to the Trans Fly and Morehead Patrol Post areas. It was acknowledged that cash crops were essential in these areas to provide an economic base for council operation; but, said A.D.O. McCabe,

The writer feels that if the people are enthusiastic and willing to work to an economic plan, the introduction of councils should not be postponed to such areas. The D.N.A. officers posted in these parts can carry out administration of the area through their councils, and will get the active support and cooperation of the people. They will find their work more rewarding and the formulation of a developmental plan in collaboration with the group will put advancement on a firm basis, ensuring that staff changes will not upset work in the area.

90) D.N.A. to Admin., 29.1.57, NA 23-3-2; Joint meeting Daru, 10.6.58. In 1957 the statutory limit on meetings was relaxed to bi-monthly.


92) Ibid. His italics.
Thus, the concept of area administration, per se, as a progressive technique, was gaining roots, in the face of the required or desirable preconditions. There are indications that the same might be happening with the channelling of the energies of ambitious men. There was at one time a fear that such men were seeking to use local government only to further their own ends and to dominate their fellows (violating the Administration's idealistically democratic conceptions).\(^{93}\) In the Orokolo area, in 1959, however, the Administration welcomed pressure led by an ambitious young man for local government, and looked forward to his leadership of the projected council. Experience had shown that the earlier fears of natives' promoting councils for primarily political ends in areas without adequate social cohesion or economic potential were unfounded.\(^ {94}\)

In brief, the natives themselves now have a much stronger voice in local government extension than central government has admitted or perhaps even realized.

\(^{93}\) For example, there were fears on this ground, later overcome, of admitting Sigabadu to the Kiwai Council, because it was felt that a man named Done was merely seeking a 'political outlet' for his energies – Rouku P.R.2/1957-9; D.N.A. memo., Aug. 1958, NA 23-3-10.

\(^{94}\) Survey, Nov. 1959, Orokolo; Recommendations, A.D.O. Collins, 17.12.59, NA 40-2-2. This area, however, had promising economic potential and was linguistically and socially homogeneous. Cf. attitude towards Toaripi, 1957 (note 22 supra).
Administrative Structure, Hanuabada N.L.G. Council
(Chairman, Vice-Chairman, 15 members; population 3,000)
CHAPTER VII

THE ADMINISTRATIVE ASPECT

The Law and Order Functions of Native Local Government.

(1) Legal and Historical Limitations.

One of the prime functions of councils under the Ordinance (Section 10, b) is to maintain 'peace, order and good government amongst the natives residing in or being in the area in and for which the Council is established'. Councils were given the responsibility of preventing the commission of offences in their areas (Section 10, c). To assist in maintaining order, councils are empowered to employ council constables; but Council constables are specifically council employees, although appointed by the D.O., and derive all their powers from assisting in 'the enforcement of the rules and authority of the Council'. Their police powers are in fact extremely circumscribed: under Section 15(4) and Regulation 45(a) they can make arrests without warrant only under those rules, powers, and functions of the council which so provide. Even here, the

* See Appendix B.

1) The Administration lists this function first - see Local Government in New Guinea, South Pacific, VIII, 5, p.92.
2) Section 21 of the N.L.G. Ordinance.
Ordinance provides for arrest either by a member of the Police Force or by a Council Constable. These provisions appear in theory to be inadequate, and in practice they have proved restrictive and confusing. The former S.N.A.O. remarked in 1957 that

No aspects of local government functions are currently more obscure than the administrative organisation required to give effect to the responsibilities for maintaining law and order imposed on councils by the Ordinance.

In practice, the council constables are primarily messengers for the council and for individual councillors; moreover, it would appear that the reporting of offences to administrative officers falls on the councillors, although the council constables have the actual power of arrest. At the village level, therefore, the executive and law-and-order functions of the former luluais are both reduced and shared. Because of these provisions of the Ordinance it is - or has been considered - essential that the luluais or village constables are replaced as soon as a council is instituted; it is a significant comment on the supposed standing of these officials under direct administration that this should be so.


There is no doubt that the anomalies and inadequacies embodied in the Ordinance and revealed in practice result from the unthought-out borrowing of African legislation, and its application in a situation where there had been no development of the structure of direct administration such as can be found in the British Solomons or in Kenya. In these dependencies the law-and-order responsibilities of local authorities have been dovetailed with those of the existing agents of central government. In some dependencies, for example parts of Tanganyika, this happens in a customary way through the traditional functions of the Native Authorities (defined and supervised). In Kenya the appointed Government Chief (non-traditional, the executive agent of central government in the locations), the central police, and the tribal police (generally the executive arm of the provincial administration, especially the Native Authority), work in conjunction. In the British Solomons the powers

5) *Kenya Handbook: The Work of an African Chief* (Nairobi, 1959), pp. 21-31, especially p.37 on the functions of the tribal police vis-a-vis the Kenya police. Thus the District Council is not, either in theory or practice, solely responsible for the maintenance of law and order in its area - see *Kenya African District Councils Ordinance*, 1960, Section 63. In view of its experience during the Emergency, the Kenya Government has resisted nationalist demands to do away with appointed chiefs; though even the more rabid nationalists have asked for reform, (usually by election of chiefs - in practice already informally done in many areas) rather than for abolition - see *Kenya Leg.Co. Debates, 1958, 2nd Session, LXXV, 20.2.1958*, pp. 285-294 (Minister for African Affairs, Johnstone, Messrs. Mboya and Muliro).
of the Headmen are not so extensive, but in the sphere of law-and-order and law enforcement, linked with the native courts, they are extremely important. There they are gradually becoming subordinate to the councils. 6

In these dependencies central government to some degree created substitutes on an area basis for the tribal authorities which did not exist. In Papua-New Guinea, however, the transition to local government means a leap from village to area administration, while the councils must simultaneously assume all the functions which elsewhere are shared by councils and the agents of central government.

The law-and-order functions of native local government can thus be considered under three main heads: (i) the immediate replacement of the appointed village officials by councils; (ii) the relatively inadequate powers and functions of councils and council constables with respect to the Native Regulations; and (iii) the relations of councils with the central constabulary.

(ii) Initial Problems.

When the Ordinance came into force in September 1950, 6

6) B.S.I.P. Native Admin. Ordinance No. 10/1953, Sections 5-10. Initially appointed Headman formed a large element of the membership of both councils and courts; this proportion is gradually being reduced, with the acknowledged purpose that eventually the Councils will employ officers exercising the powers of the present headmen in law enforcement. See Appendix C.
Part III(e) dealing with the appointment and powers of council constables was specifically excluded. The Senior Native Authorities Officer had no idea why this had been done — this was a matter of immediate concern, as three councils were immediately proclaimed, that at Hanuabada and the Vunamami and Reimber councils in the Gazelle Peninsula. The D.C., New Britain felt that the Crown Law Office might have delayed the operation of this Part until a Native Courts Ordinance had been proclaimed — then still considered certain. It seems more probable that the relevant departments in Port Moresby were simply concerned about the administrative implications of the unresolved problems cited above.

In the Gazelle Peninsula it was considered most important that the changeover to local government be emphasised by the immediate removal of the village officials; but this left a lacuna in law enforcement, more particularly as the councils were entirely inexperienced, and neither they nor the supervising officer were sure of their law-and-order prerogatives. The S.N.A.O. concentrated on educating them in their general law-and-order responsibilities.

7) Gazette No. 31, 7.9.1950.
9) D.C. New Britain to D.D.S., 23.1.51, Rabaul 21/2. There was no legal necessity for the prior proclamation of native courts. Regs. 43-51 of the N.L.G. Ordinance refer only to a 'court', connoting any lower court (Reg. 46).
I have repeatedly impressed on both the Reimber and Vunamami Councils that all administrative acts have a basis of law and that one of their prime duties under the Council Ordinance is the maintenance of law and order within their areas. I have also warned them that unless they prove themselves capable of handling this task, even though it may mean temporarily jeopardising their popularity, the Councils must fail.

The Reimber councillors in particular responded enthusiastically to this, closing gambling schools, seizing liquor, launching prosecutions, and reporting disturbances. This was hopeful, though it was (and is) doubtful how long councillors can continue to court unpopularity in this fashion and still stay in office. The real vacuum in the policing functions of councils was shown up, however, when in December 1950 the Rabaul police invaded the Reimber area looking for stolen property; they searched houses in Kuraip, and seized a number of articles, including some from the house of the council's vice-president. This aroused considerable antagonism; the relatives of a native accused of stealing made history by briefing a European lawyer to defend him.

The antagonism turned, not so much on the charges or on the seizure of property, as on the police invasion of a council area - though in law the police were within their rights. From the following council meeting it was clear that the very emphasis which the supervising officer had

10) Fienberg to D.D.S., 22.12.50, cit.sup.
11) Ibid.
placed on councillors' law-and-order responsibilities heightened their indignation at the 'intrusion' of the police. Councillor Touraiu stated that 'if the town police did this sort of thing the council must collapse'. Councillor Topue said that the police in future should first come to the Council House:

We (the councillors) are not wild men who would run away. We too understand the law.

The council wished to send a message to the Administrator protesting against the action of the police. The Tolai were particularly incensed because in the pre-local government period they had largely excluded the police by being allowed to exercise their own informal jurisdiction. But the S.N.A.O. stressed that such relics of the direct approach were anomalous in local government areas; he pointed out that provisions of the Police Offences Ordinance and the Native Regulations had been designed for uncontrolled or semi-controlled areas, and that these should be modified for more advanced areas:


13) Ibid. The Council wanted form a rule compelling the police to call first at the Council House, but the supervising officer stated that this was both ultra vires and contravened existing law.

14) Rowley, loc.cit. This was the complaint made by the Vunadadir councillors to Rowley.
Unfortunately there still seems to exist a type of official outlook which regards all natives as remaining permanently at the lowest primitive denominator in all things legal.

The S.N.A.O., who had experience of Tanganyika, contrasted the system there, where the D.O. intervened with Territorial police only under exceptional circumstances. He asked for an arrangement at headquarters level between the central constabulary and District Services, which would allow the police to carry out their duties in liaison with local government councils; and he asked that Part III(e) of the Regulations be implemented.

The Administrator, however, instructed the New Britain D.C. and the Rabaul Senior Police Inspector to come to a local agreement, which was notified in January 1951. Under this, members of the police force would not enter villages outside the Rabaul police district boundary without the prior approval of the D.C.; they would not search houses without getting warrants issued by officers of the District

15) Memo. of 22.12.1950, cit.sup. At the Reimber meeting (19.12.1950) councillors expressed the view that the police invaded their areas simply to lay charges and get cheap domestic labour. Mutual attitudes were obviously poor.

16) Ibid. The position was complicated in New Guinea (as distinct from Papua) in that the police constituted a separate branch of the service, and were not regularly subordinate to administrative field staff - Sec. L. Mair, Australia in New Guinea, pp. 40-1.

Services Department; and the D.C. also asked that Part III(e) be made operative. 18

Part III(e) providing for the appointment of council constables (until 1952 given the confusing title of 'village constables') came into operation on 21st June, 1951. The only council area in Papua, that at Hanuabada, had continued to be served by the village constables of direct administration; this arrangement went on until 25th August, 1951, when they were replaced by council constables. 19

(iii) Inadequacies of Council Constables.

From the inception of the council constable system, however, councils have expressed dissatisfaction with it. This is clearly linked with the scrupulous restriction of councillors to their statutory functions by most supervising officers, and the failure to introduce a native courts system. The Vunamami and Vunadadir councillors complained to Rowley that before local government, when the luluai was considered to have some standing, offenders whom he brought to the Patrol Officer were punished; but under local government the powers of the council constables were

18) D.C. to D.D.S., 23.1.51, Rabaul 21/2-35. Because this was a local argument it had no general application; it was clearly intended by the Administration as an experiment.

19) Exec.Co. Minute Paper No.4/17/51, dated 18.6.51. This confusion in titles (rectified only by amending reg. No.37/1952, v.6) was a blunder.
inadequate and the Officer did not necessarily punish on the report of the councillors.  

Councillors have continued to press for what they regard as the return of authority which was exercised under the *luluai* or V.C. system; but those officers who would like to restrict councils to Australian-type municipal functions, or who favour strong central control rather than a real decentralisation of authority, see merits in the present system and regard the problem as one of liaison with the constabulary.

The Hanuabada council found the problem baffling; it complained that the 'smart bodgie type' disregarded the council constables' orders because they realized that he was only an employee and a man of little authority - a fact of which the council constables themselves appear to be painfully conscious. They are statutorily subordinate to the councillors, but at the same time the councillors themselves are not invested with police powers, nor has the Administration been anxious that they should be invested

---


22) By and large, on this issue this is Fienberg's view - memo. of 5.11.57, cit.sup. This view seems to ignore the fact that councillors will never invite the intrusion of the constabulary, if they can avoid it.

---

*Healy's extension of the Telael area south to the whole of PNG was not* valid. In the early 1960's a "junior partnership" relation between Council and Territory police was theoretically feasible in most districts.
Moreover, a council constable who is disposed to be conscientious is subject to similar pressures (e.g. sorcery) as was the village constable; but because of the higher wages he is tempted to stay on and temporise when things become difficult, where before he might have resigned or been forced out. For precisely this reason the senior constable at Hanuabada has stayed on, though since 1954 the fear of sorcery has reduced him to a state of inactivity as far as police action is concerned.

In most instances it is plain that the lacuna which exists in the village with the removal of the old officials must be filled somehow in irregular ways, usually through unofficial courts conducted by councillors. As the supervising officer of the Kiwai council remarked in 1959, 'it is obvious that the majority of court proceedings are conducted by the Villagers themselves'. Whereas the village constable or luluai had an executive responsibility, in practice, for seeing that the Regulations were carried out, he could almost always sustain a charge before the Patrol


24) Personal information. For comparison, in the Higaturu council area the more prominent V.C.s were paid a maximum of £3 p.a.; now the Council Constables get £30 p.a. plus rations. Hanuabada is atypical; but the 1960 Estimates provided £460 as wages for the two constables.
Officer; but the councillor has no such function or responsibility, and is therefore tempted to conduct the whole process unofficially. When the Higaturu council was first set up, councillor Lucian of Hamdarituru was charged in court and dismissed from office for having ordered village women to clean the roads. Village constables regularly did this under the old system, for they were held responsible for seeing that the Native Regulations were adhered to.  

(iv) Pressures for Reform.

It is hardly surprising that councillors have continued to press reform, according to their concepts, on the Administration. The Madang Conference representing New Guinea councils considered that the Native Regulations should be amended to provide that councils and council constables take over the powers and functions of village officials. Field staff were also continually made aware of the anomalies in law enforcement in local government areas. In October 1959 the D.O., Gulf District, pointed out

26) C.N.M. Case No. 341/1955-6, Popondetta; D.C. to D.N.A., 29.6.1956, Pop. 14-7-4/1159. At this time the Council had been in operation only a week or two; the V.C.s ceased to hold office from 30.6.56. The councillor clearly saw a vacuum in authority looming. In most Orokaiva areas this problem would hardly arise, as the elders retain considerable authority. No one would dare complain to the Government.

to the Director of Native Affairs that council constables could police council rules, but that councils could not pass rules on matters already covered by the Native Regulations; the lack of V.C.s however, made many of the Regulations unenforceable in council areas. The Director conceded that this was so, and suggested that until the Ordinance was amended councils could do no more than pass rules for which pro forma had been published, and which were so phrased that they did not out across the Regulations. 28

Late in 1959 the Ordinance was finally amended 29; but the inadequacy of the amending Regulations was shown by complaints in the Milne Bay area as late as August 1961, that council constables had no authority under the Native Regulations Ordinance similar to that of the village constables. 30

These have been the law-and-order difficulties primarily from the native viewpoint. The Administration has concerned itself more with the question of liaison with the central constabulary operating in council areas. There has been fairly general agreement that in the more advanced areas —


29) New Guinea Reg. No. 47/1959; Papua No. 48/1959. This was at the District Development Conference, consisting of both natives and departmental officers. This Conference also resolved that recruits be sent to the Police Training School in Port Moresby before coming back as Council Constables.

that is, by and large, council or potential council areas - Native Affairs officers should be divested of police responsibilities. Fienberg urged this in 1957. It was advocated by the A.D.O. Rabaul after the Navuneram incident, in which he was the responsible administrative officer. It was also a proposal endorsed by the Madang Conference. That nothing has been done along these lines is due to the failure to find an adequate substitute. The natives have asked for a substitute in terms of their own courts and adequately empowered council constables; but at the same time they have recognized the rights of the regular police to enter council areas, provided they observed formalities such as informing the council and its supervising officer. But the police have not been so ready to compromise.

Between 1955 and 1959 the Police Superintendent, Rabaul, took the view that there should be only one police force eligible to operate in council areas, that the council constables were hopelessly inadequate and inefficient, and that their functions should be taken over by regular police.

31) Memo. of 5.11.57, cit.sup.
33) Item 6(c), cit.sup.
34) Item 6(a,b), Ibid.
35) Superintendent to Commissioner of Police, 22.3.55. Police 8229, 20/1/55, NA 39-3-1; Council Constables by A.G. Rackemann, South Pacific Post, 28.4.1959.
The Director of Native Affairs pointed out that many of his criticisms applied equally to luluais or to village constables; he regarded the very employment of council constables by councils as a safeguard which the old system did not possess:

The Council Constable is required to report his activities to the Council. This alone is sufficient to show that the system is an improved method of native administration and should not be regarded solely as a police organisational problem.

The Director claimed further that some council constables were former members of the regular police, that they had a 'reasonable education' in relation to the communities they served, and that the restraint of their own communities was the best safeguard against corruption.

(v) Liaison with Central Government.

The Superintendent in Rabaul was probably moved to complain by the restrictions on general police movements in the Tolai area under the 1951 district agreement. The problem of liaison with the central constabulary was, of

36) D.N.A. to Police Commissioner, 29.3.1955, NA 39-8-1.

37) Ibid. This may have been so in the Rabaul area; but it is probably not so in the less advanced areas. In 1960, for example, the Higaturu Council had six constables, none of whom had more than a smattering of English, and none of whom had served in the Constabulary. Their only formal instruction in police duties came from one morning's instruction at Popondetta District Office. As they are council employees they are not subject to the personal attention some of the village constables used to get from government officers.
course, a general one; and in the period 1951-2 it received some attention on that ground. Sub-committees of District Commissioners and of departmental representatives had considered the matter, but without any definite arrangements having been made. 38 Negotiations at the district level between the D.C. Rabaul and the Police Superintendent continued. In November 1952 the D.C. drew up a more comprehensive agreement, in which the Superintendent agreed not to take police action until councillors had been notified, except in the most urgent situations. In return, the D.C. undertook to insist that councillors fulfilled their law-and-order responsibilities, and that if they failed to do so action would be taken 'to displace members of proved ineptitude'. He urged on the Director of District Services that, in view of the projected extension of councils, a general policy statement be framed along the lines of the Rabaul agreement. 39

The Director of District Services showed proper concern that central government was being presented with a fait accompli which was likely to determine general policy; he recommended

38) D.D.S. to Gov. Sec. 22.11.1952, DS 14-3-32.
39) D.C. New Britain to Superintendent of Police, 10.11.52, Rabaul 14/11/6; Copy to D.D.S. (para. 6). D.C. McCarthy said that the Gazelle Peninsula situation was good, but only because his personal relations with the police were good - another example of administration, in lieu of policy, depending on personalities.
to the Government Secretary that arrangements at the
district level cease, and that the Administrator be asked
for a policy definition, in the light of the Territory's
overall policing requirements. In particular, he wanted
the constabulary excluded from council areas 'except where
special recommendations have defined that necessity'.

It is clear that no such policy definition was given.
After Superintendent Rackemann took the remarkable step of
airing his complaints in the press, in 1959, the Administrator
was asked for an explanation by the Department of
Territories. He repeated to the Department, in explanation,
the deficiencies in legislation, liaison and policy, which
Fienberg had pointed out in 1957:

The idea (of council constable) is good and it is
only on the side of administrative organisation
that it falls down. Full use of Council Constables
as a law-enforcement body had probably never been
made in any council area because of this adminis­
trative obscurity, and until an administrative
arrangement is reached with the Territorial Police
Force, Councils will be unable to fully carry out
these functions.

Again following Fienberg, he suggested a solution through
a linkage between the council and Territorial police, on
the lines of the relationships with councils already defined

40) D.D.S. to Gov. Sec. 22.11.52, DS 14-3-32.
41) Sec. Territories to Administrator 26.6.59, Terr. 57/95;
Administrator to Sec. Territories, 7.7.59, NA 39-8-1.
by the Health and Education departments. Under this, council constables would be trained by the Territorial police, paid rates decided by the Commissioner, and become a branch of the police although paid by the councils. The advantages would be those outlined by Fienberg: that relations with the police would be improved, standards of council law enforcement would rise, and Native Affairs officers would be freed from police duties in the more advanced areas, notably in the vicinity of towns where the problem was most pressing— for example, Rabaul council area, Lei-Wompa (Lae) and Hanuabada (within the Port Moresby town boundaries).

The linkage could quite simply be done by amending legislation and administrative instruction.

It would appear that, presumably because of the need to amend the Ordinance, the Administrator had to seek approval from Canberra. Whatever the reason, twelve months later no further action had been taken; and as late as August 1961 it was left to a District conference again to urge on central government reforms similar to those which the Administrator had suggested to Canberra more than two years before.  

42) Ibid.
Clearly the law and order complications in council areas derive from the refusal of the Administration to regard councils as bodies analogous to the British Native Authorities, as the natives themselves have asked. But if central control is insisted on, the councils (and district field staff) have a right to expect that local problems deriving from such an approach be ironed out by a clear central policy. The failure to produce such a policy perpetuated the problems and therefore agitation by the natives for the solution they had already suggested.44

44) There was one minor element of decentralisation when, in 1954, the appointment of council constables was transferred from the Director of District Services to the D.O., as the D.C. New Britain had recommended (23.1.51, Rabaul 14/11/6). Between 1951-4 this had led to absurdly complicated procedure - D.C. Central District to D.D.S., 25.7.52 NA. 41-1-5.
THE ECONOMIC ASPECT

I. Receipts and Expenditure.

(1) Revenue: Taxes and Fees.

Essentially the sources of a council's revenue are few, simple and sure. Under the general supervision of the District Officer (Reg. 101), councils may levy taxes and rates, and impose fees. The tax is a capitation tax on all resident males over the age of seventeen, and on those females over seventeen who voluntarily enter their names on the Tax Register. The tax rate is defined by council rule for each financial year, January to December, - usually in the preceding September - and may be fixed in up to three grades. The tax rate is fixed in consultation with the supervising officer, who sometimes uses as a model the ratio of tax to the Australian basic wage: this is about 10%. But the ultimate decision rests with the council: the Kiwai council, for example, set a rate of £3.10.0 which has been maintained, although on available figures of local income this seems to represent about 25%.  


The system of grading initially allowed the Hanuabada council to accommodate semi-employed immigrants and young men just beginning work; the older men paid £3. The Milne Bay council through this device was able to incorporate the relatively backward Buhutu area (paying £2 as against the standard £4); but there is a natural antagonism to group concessions of this kind, for the backward areas share similar services and usually make greater demands on development expenses and works.\(^3\)

Taxes are collected according to a fixed schedule (enforced from Port Moresby) by council appointees, in the company of at least one councillor and a council constable. Council tax tickets are issued, and the Regulations specify that a different colour must be used each year for five years.\(^4\) Defaulters are fined by European magistrates for a breach of council rules. Exemptions from tax are granted on the grounds of 'impecunious old age, infirmity or unavoidable hardship'; cases for exemption are heard by a council Tax Tribunal, which generally has a rotating membership of three or four councillors to ensure that none hears cases from his own village. The Administration has consistently...

---

3) NA 41-1-3, 42-2-3. In Papua in 1960 adult male rates ranged from £4 (Milne Bay) to 30/- (Higaturu and Ilimo). It was felt that, without a system of instalment payments, native improvidence made it difficult to raise rates further.

4) Reg. 98.
insisted that no pre-Tribunal exemptions be granted by central government officers, even, for example, to alien native mission pastors and teachers. 5

It will be seen from the Tables that as local government, since 1956, has extended into the less favoured areas, tax rates - and generally therefore, revenue per head - have steadily fallen. On the other hand, two main mitigating circumstances might be postulated in these areas:

(1) free labour is generally more readily available. The enthusiasm of the Highlanders to work for nothing to forward the councils’ programme is evident everywhere; while the urban Hanuabadans, on the other hand, expect to pay or be paid - the Elevala sea-wall took only a few days to complete in 1959, but organizing the free labour took six years. In 1952 the Native Authorities Section stated that, for public installations, a council should always employ paid skilled workers to do the actual building; but it believed that sensible propaganda could convince even the sophisticated groups that communal labour saved money: that is, amounted to an invisible contribution to council funds, and

5) Case pleaded by A.D.O., Daru, Election P.R. June 1956; refused by E.O. (L.G.) - marginal comment. NA 41-4-2.
hence to works and services. Social conditions have often frustrated this hope, however.  

(ii) the backward areas often have greater undeveloped potential, and therefore can look forward to more rapidly increasing revenues. This hope, to 1960, had not been demonstrably realized: in the rich Higaturu area, for example, in four years the tax rate rose only from 30/- to 35/-, and then only for some villages.

Indeed, because of the 50% depreciation in money values in the period 1950-60, the real per capita revenues of the older councils actually declined. This will be apparent from the Tables.

In view of the large shifts of labour in Papua, one of the most intractable financial problems that councils have faced is collecting tax from absentees. Unless natives reside in their council areas for at least four months of the year they are not liable to council tax; but this is most unsatisfactory for councils such as that at Daru, where recruitment from some villages in 1956 reached 80%.

6) S.N.A.O. to D.D.S., 23.1.1952, NA 42-3-5. Reimber (rural) used to have excellent communal co-operation, but socio-political factors reduced this to the stage where the councillors pleaded for powers of compulsion - A.D.O. memo., 20.3.1959. Rabaul 14/12.

7) A.D.O. to D.O., 9.7.1959, Pop. 14-8-22/8; but in 1956 the D.N.A. had pointed out (7.5.1956, ibid.) that coffee plantings would take 3-5 years to bear. Delays in the coffee scheme (see below) pushed this back further.

8) Daru P.R. 2/1956-7: Oriomo.
result was a more rigorous attempt to restrict recruiting to one-third of adult males: the largest employer of Kiwai natives, the Australian Petroleum Company, agreed to send natives back to Daru for paying off—thereby giving an opportunity for tax collection; and it was also agreeable to collecting council tax from absentee labourers. Moreover, community spirit was still sufficiently strong amongst the Kiwai for many of them voluntarily to offer their tax.

Elsewhere—for example in Milne Bay—most absentees remitted no tax. By 1960 no adequate solution to this problem, which rouses strong feeling in council areas, had been proposed; though it was hoped that as local government spread, reciprocal arrangements between councils would become more practicable.

Other sources of revenue are generally of minor importance. Some councils charge fees, for example, for market or dog licences; but the Administration has felt that 'the revenue gained does not compensate for the ill-will that is promoted'. The hiring of transport or tractors is rarely profitable; many natives resent having to pay fees

9) D.O. to D.N.A., 10.9.1959, Daru 23-3-1. In 1960 the absentee tax was reduced from £3.10.0 to £2 (the same as the general personal tax) in order to induce payment to the council rather than to the Administration—Daru 23-5-4.

10) a/D.O. to D.N.A., 6.3.1959, Daru 23-5-6/1. These men are best able to pay tax; waiting on their return upsets tax collecting and thereby works programmes.


12) Pienberg memo., 5.11.1957, cit. sup., p.20.
for the use of their council's vehicles. The carrying of cash crops to markets or processing centres is often undertaken by councils on a public utility basis, to stimulate economic development; but the immediate results are a drain on revenues. The Hanuabada council alone levies rates (£2 p.a.), for the extension of Port Moresby's services.

Until the Native Loans Fund was established in 1955 there was no regular means for the initial financing of councils. Nevertheless immediate finance was necessary, for both propaganda and statutory requirements: Regulation 11 states that a council must have a council house of a design approved by the D.O. A clerk must be paid, equipment bought, and the councillors granted expenses. The Ealeba council in Milne Bay obtained its initial finance by a loan from the Milne Bay Development Co.; while the Tavara council in 1954 borrowed money from Tolai councils. The expansion of local government in following years would have been impossible without the Native Loans Fund, if existing statutory reserves had been enforced. Under the Fund,


councils as corporations may borrow up to £5,000.15

(ii) The Pressure for Central Assistance.

The pressure for Administration loans or grants-in-aid originated largely from the need for initial finance. In 1954, when the Tavara council was being established, the D.C. pointed out that there was a strong case not simply for an Administration loan, but for a grant-in-aid:

The value of the Council to the Administration as an administrative technique as well as the benefit it offers in terms of hard cash, certainly warrant16 this assistance.

The argument thus was that councils, as Administration instrumentalities, were entitled to Administration assistance; but the Treasury, it was said, refused to accept councils as part of the administrative structure.17 There was, moreover, a certain reluctance on the part of local government officers to associate the Treasury with council finance, for they felt that councils should learn to stand on their own feet, and the independent financing of councils made available to a D.C. 'money which he can utilise freely without the delays and frustrations associated with Treasury

15) Until 1956 no initial finance loans were made; though the Hanuabada council had borrowed £150 from the Administration (J. McAuley, Local Government Among the Tolai, South Pacific, VII, 11, 1954, p.882 n.4) and four Tolai councils had borrowed altogether £6,310 (K. W. Williamson, The Tolai Cocoa Project, South Pacific, IX, 13, 1958, p.595).


17) Fienberg memo., 5.11.1957, cit.sup., p.21.
The result to a large degree has been that the Treasury, and occasionally technical departments, have regarded the setting up of a council as freeing them from financial responsibilities, at the very time when developmental demands are being channelled through the council. In May, 1958, for the first time a department other than Native Affairs suggested a grant-in-aid to a council: the Public Works Department, after a detailed survey, proposed that £750 be granted the Milne Bay council to maintain roads and bridges around the bay. The Executive Officer (Local Government) pointed out that this could be made the opportunity for a general policy decision on grants-in-aid. This was supported by the Director of Native Affairs, who emphasised that without such basic developmental expenditure incomes and therefore revenues could not be raised in council areas; but the Assistant Administrator saw drawbacks, particularly in a demand by the Administrator's Department to approve council estimates:

18) D.N.A. to D.C., Central, 19.1.1955, D.O. Port Moresby 14-26-7. Initially the Administration seemed not to grasp the concept of grants-in-aid; when in 1953 the D.C. Central applied for a grant-in-aid for Hanuabada to tide it over a period of high overheads, the D.D.S. replied that the council itself should make a grant-in-aid for the purpose - D.D.S. to D.C., 16.6.53, NA 41-1-5. Again the educational argument was raised: 'The Hanuabadans must be made to realize that the choice lies between keeping overhead down ... or being satisfied with a Council whose slender income is eaten up by its own internal administration' - S.N.A.O. to D.D.S., 26.6.1953, ibid.
Commonwealth Treasury's dictation to us is, in germaine (sic).

This was the end of the proposal. 20

The Native Loans Board was set up specifically to provide finance to native corporations and to selected individuals on little or no security; but many councils have sought loans only for realisable assets: for example, a boat in Milne Bay, and a Land-Rover at Higaturu. 21 These have certain developmental functions; but communications are basic. Moreover, because of the statutory and policy controls on councils' reserve funds - under Regulation 58 one-tenth of the estimated recurrent revenue must be set aside - supervising officers have been reluctant to borrow from this source. The Kiwai council borrowed £400 from its reserves in 1960 to buy a film projector; but it promised

19) Dir. of Works to D.N.A., 5.5.1958 (comments E.O. (L.G.) attached); D.N.A. to Asst. Admin., 19.5.1958 (attached comments Asst. Admin. 23.5.1958), NA 23-4-10. The council also pressed for a grant to build a road to the Sagarai valley, without which development is impossible. D.N.A. pointed out that the Health and Educ. Depts. already gave 'hidden' assistance in salaries, drugs, etc. Other forms of 'hidden' assistance have been suggested, particularly making councils' purchases free of duty, in view of their being Administration instrumentalities. This was rejected as impracticable. But in the B.S.I.P., 1954-60, councils obtained stores through government at government rates - Honiara F.101/29/14.

20) By 1961 agreement had virtually been reached by the D.P.H. and Treasury on aid on a £-for-£ basis to councils (information E.O. (L.G.)) - the needed precedent. This matter is, of course, quite separate from the often vociferous demands (e.g. combined Tolai meeting, 18.3.1959, Rabaul 14/12) made by councils for financial assistance to natives individually.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Name of Council</th>
<th>No. of Villages</th>
<th>Approx. Pop.</th>
<th>No. of Members</th>
<th>Date Proclaimed</th>
<th>M 17-18</th>
<th>M 17-21</th>
<th>M 21 yrs.</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Special Rates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Central</td>
<td>Tasiuabada</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2900</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1. 9.50</td>
<td>60/-</td>
<td>60/-</td>
<td>20/-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Rigo</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>10256</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>4. 8.59</td>
<td>40/-</td>
<td>40/-</td>
<td>10/-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Marshall</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lagoon</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>9340</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>4. 8.59</td>
<td>60/-</td>
<td>60/-</td>
<td>10/-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
<td>Nigturu</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>11443</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>30. 4.56</td>
<td>30/-</td>
<td>30/-</td>
<td>10/-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ilimo</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>3357</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>10. 7.58</td>
<td>30/-</td>
<td>30/-</td>
<td>10/-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milne Bay</td>
<td>Milne Bay</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5500</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2.12.57</td>
<td>40/-</td>
<td>80/-</td>
<td>20/-</td>
<td></td>
<td>Lower rates Bubutu, Ahoma.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Misima</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>6167</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>20. 5.58</td>
<td>20/-</td>
<td>40/-</td>
<td>10/-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gulf</td>
<td>Moveaave-</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7174</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>1. 5.58</td>
<td>40/-</td>
<td>40/-</td>
<td>20/-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Toaripi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moripi</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>5047</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1. 5.58</td>
<td>40/-</td>
<td>40/-</td>
<td>20/-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Western</td>
<td>Kiwai</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>6485</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>9.10.58</td>
<td>40/-</td>
<td>40/-</td>
<td>20/-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gogodala</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>6725</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>26. 3.59</td>
<td>To be fixed.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTALS:** 329 74,394 382

Average representation: 1 : 195

(Councillor : Electorate Pop.)
### Table A (Contd.)

#### (11) NEW GUINEA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Name of Council</th>
<th>No. of Villages</th>
<th>Approx. Pop.</th>
<th>No. of Members</th>
<th>Date Proclaimed</th>
<th>M 17-18</th>
<th>M 17-21</th>
<th>M 21 yrs.</th>
<th>F Special Rates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Bougainville</td>
<td>Teop-Tinputs</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>3356</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1.5.58</td>
<td>40/-</td>
<td>40/-</td>
<td>10/-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Ireland</td>
<td>Tikana</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>6210</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>30.10.56</td>
<td>60/-</td>
<td>60/-</td>
<td>20/-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Britain</td>
<td>Vanamami</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>6512</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>7.9.50</td>
<td>20/-</td>
<td>80/-</td>
<td>20/-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reimber</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>5031</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7.9.50</td>
<td>20/-</td>
<td>80/-</td>
<td>20/-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabeul</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>8147</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>24.5.51</td>
<td>20/-</td>
<td>80/-</td>
<td>20/-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vunadadir-Toma</td>
<td></td>
<td>33</td>
<td>8884</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>28.11.52</td>
<td>20/-</td>
<td>80/-</td>
<td>20/-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nanga Nanga</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Livuan</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3850</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21.1.53</td>
<td>20/-</td>
<td>80/-</td>
<td>20/-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bola</td>
<td></td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2000</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>16.12.58</td>
<td>20/-</td>
<td>80/-</td>
<td>20/-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Madang</td>
<td>Ambenob</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>9410</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>13.9.56</td>
<td>20/-</td>
<td>60/-</td>
<td>10/-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Waskia</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>5250</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>20.9.57</td>
<td>40/-</td>
<td>40/-</td>
<td>10/-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Takia</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>6140</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>20.9.57</td>
<td>40/-</td>
<td>40/-</td>
<td>20/-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sepik</td>
<td>But-Boiken</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>5514</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>13.9.56</td>
<td>40/-</td>
<td>40/-</td>
<td>10/-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maprik</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>9976</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>18.4.58</td>
<td>30/-</td>
<td>30/-</td>
<td>5/-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morobe</td>
<td>Lai-Wompa</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>4455</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>11.12.57</td>
<td>40/-</td>
<td>40/-</td>
<td>10/-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Yabim-Kotte</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>9472</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>6.12.57</td>
<td>40/-</td>
<td>50/-</td>
<td>50/-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern</td>
<td>Agulizakivik-Nal</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>9800</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>3.12.58</td>
<td>30/-</td>
<td>10/-</td>
<td>10/-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highlands</td>
<td>Gwivahani</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Waiye</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>9809</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>19.12.58</td>
<td>30/-</td>
<td>30/-</td>
<td>2/-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mamis</td>
<td>Baluan</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>5716</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>14.9.50</td>
<td>80/-</td>
<td>80/-</td>
<td>20/-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTALS**                        | 697            | 119,532       | 470          |

Average representation: 1 : 254

(Councillor : Electorate Pop.)
TABLE B

ESTIMATED REVENUES, 1952-60

(i) PAPUA

(Note per cap. decline as local Government extends into less developed areas)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Councils</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Estimated Total Revenue</th>
<th>Carried forward from previous year (including Reserves)</th>
<th>Average Revenue per head of total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3,600</td>
<td>3,220</td>
<td>790</td>
<td>.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4,640</td>
<td>4,110</td>
<td>2,260</td>
<td>.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1954</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>4,660</td>
<td>3,990</td>
<td>1,620</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8,130</td>
<td>4,350*</td>
<td>3,120*</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>18,300</td>
<td>14,590</td>
<td>5,180</td>
<td>.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24,090</td>
<td>24,900</td>
<td>6,260</td>
<td>1.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>55,270</td>
<td>23,970+</td>
<td>15,560 +</td>
<td>.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>67,890</td>
<td>43,750+</td>
<td>20,060 +</td>
<td>.71</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>97,450</td>
<td>49,500 X</td>
<td>24,800 X</td>
<td>.64</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Pop. 4,660: Tavara estimates not given.
+ Pop. 31,010: Estimates 3 Councils not given.
++ Pop. 61,660: Gogodala estimates not given.
X Pop. 76,640: Estimates 5 Councils not given.
TABLE B (Contd.)

(11) NEW GUINEA

(Affords a better base-line)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Number of Councils</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Estimated Total Revenue</th>
<th>Carried forward from previous year (including Reserves)</th>
<th>Average Revenue per head of total population</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15,400</td>
<td>18,500</td>
<td>7,600</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1953</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>24,800</td>
<td>31,300</td>
<td>10,800</td>
<td>1.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30,000</td>
<td>39,500</td>
<td>19,100</td>
<td>1.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>30,100</td>
<td>40,100</td>
<td>21,000</td>
<td>1.33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1957</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>52,600</td>
<td>57,000</td>
<td>20,200</td>
<td>1.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1958</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>91,100</td>
<td>84,200</td>
<td>28,100</td>
<td>0.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1959</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>112,700</td>
<td>85,800</td>
<td>40,500</td>
<td>0.76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE C

**PER CAPITA REVENUES OF REPRESENTATIVE COUNCILS, 1952-60.**

**REVENUES OF RABAUL COUNCIL** *(established 24.5.1951)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Estimated Total Revenue</th>
<th>Estimated Tax Revenue</th>
<th>Estimated Tax Revenue per head of total population.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>6000</td>
<td>4585 + balance 2515</td>
<td>4500</td>
<td>.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>7940</td>
<td>8250 + balance 5740</td>
<td>7300</td>
<td>.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**REVENUES OF MILNE BAY COUNCIL** *(established 2.12.1957, incorporating Ealeba Council, established 1951)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>Estimated Total Revenue</th>
<th>Estimated Tax Revenue</th>
<th>Estimated Tax Revenue per head of total population.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1952</td>
<td>1100</td>
<td>1275 + balance nil</td>
<td>1260</td>
<td>1.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960</td>
<td>5500</td>
<td>4580 + balance 2420</td>
<td>4200</td>
<td>.76</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Differences:** Rabaul Council embraces relatively stable numbers of peri-urban population - but small opportunities for basic economic development. Milne Bay has rapidly absorbed relatively backward rural populations - figures to 1960 show time-lag in agricultural development.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Council Administration</th>
<th>Medical and Sanitation</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Agriculture</th>
<th>Roads, Bridges, Harbours</th>
<th>Water Supply</th>
<th>Law and Order</th>
<th>Transport</th>
<th>Maintenance of Buildings</th>
<th>Social Activities</th>
<th>Miscellaneous</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hanuabada</td>
<td>1233</td>
<td>1129</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>520</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>257</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>3763</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rigo</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>367</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marshall Lagoon</td>
<td>2416</td>
<td>1120</td>
<td>1595</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>796</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>539</td>
<td>256</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>329</td>
<td>7137</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milne Bay</td>
<td>1027</td>
<td>482</td>
<td>663</td>
<td>238</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>193</td>
<td>1211</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>4041</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Misima</td>
<td>1353</td>
<td>875</td>
<td>458</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>464</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moveave-Toaripi</td>
<td>1733</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1143</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>531</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3433</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moripi</td>
<td>1504</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>125</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>599</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kiwi</td>
<td>2658</td>
<td>3316</td>
<td>492</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>240</td>
<td>229</td>
<td>689</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>2334</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gogodala</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>434</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higaturu</td>
<td>1179</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>1994</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>4085</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ilimo</td>
<td>551</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>1836</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>2553</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL:</strong></td>
<td><strong>14217</strong></td>
<td><strong>7084</strong></td>
<td><strong>3431</strong></td>
<td><strong>852</strong></td>
<td><strong>1704</strong></td>
<td><strong>2609</strong></td>
<td><strong>1973</strong></td>
<td><strong>6606</strong></td>
<td><strong>400</strong></td>
<td><strong>380</strong></td>
<td><strong>512</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Per capita abs.</strong></td>
<td><strong>4/3.6</strong></td>
<td><strong>2/1.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>1/0.5</strong></td>
<td><strong>-/3.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>-/6.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>-/9.6</strong></td>
<td><strong>-/7.2</strong></td>
<td><strong>2/-</strong></td>
<td><strong>-/1.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>-/1.4</strong></td>
<td><strong>12/0.7</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Percentage overall expenditure</strong></td>
<td><strong>35.7</strong></td>
<td><strong>17.8</strong></td>
<td><strong>8.6</strong></td>
<td><strong>2.1</strong></td>
<td><strong>4.3</strong></td>
<td><strong>6.6</strong></td>
<td><strong>5.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>16.6</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.0</strong></td>
<td><strong>1.3</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE D**

**ACTUAL EXPENDITURE**

**PAPUA NATIVE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COUNCILS 1959**

Cf. Estimates, Papua Report 1958-9, pp. 31-2. Principal discrepancy:

- Actual Balance c/f £24,802

(Council Administration includes establishment expenses, Council House).

*Expenditure for all Councils in 1958 was estimated at 22/-. New Guinea Councils are wealthier.
### TABLE E

**COUNCIL EXPENDITURES, PAPUA-NEW GUINEA**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Actual, 1957</th>
<th>Estimated, 1958</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Per Cent of Total Expenditure</td>
<td>Per Cent of Total Expenditure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council Administration*</td>
<td>37.2</td>
<td>27.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medical</td>
<td>15.2</td>
<td>16.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>13.5</td>
<td>12.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roads and Bridges</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>6.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law and Order</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maintenance</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Transport</td>
<td>19.0</td>
<td>22.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Activities</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* This head includes the Construction of buildings not otherwise provided for, and establishment expenses.

† An average of one School and two Aid Posts for each Council. Percentage of total expenditure by Central Government on education, 1957-58, was 6%.
**TABLE F**

**INSTALLATIONS BY NEW GUINEA COUNCILS TO 1956 (6 Councils)**

(Buildings generally of European materials)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Council chambers</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Village higher schools</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aid posts</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff quarters</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cacao fermentaries and driers</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshops and stores</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garages</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Water tanks and wells</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural projects</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School dormitories</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rice machine sheds and hullers</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sawmills</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council office</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Navigation markers</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
to repay it **in toto** in 1961.  

It can be argued that the concept of council reserves has become a fetish; the uncertainty of capital requirements in relation to revenues for any particular year has led the Administration into a state of perpetual financial anxiety. The accumulating of reserves begins in the first year, and ceases (theoretically) when the fund reaches half of the council's average revenue, calculated over a five year period. Thus, when a council most needs money, it is busy saving. A glance at the table showing expenditures for 1959 reveals that the level of reserves plus unexpended balances sometimes reached inordinate proportions.

(iii) Expenditure: Substantial Works.

Analyses of council expenditure show the results of close supervision, and of the direct and enforced responsibility of D.O.s. A strict schedule is laid down by Port Moresby for revenue collection, expenditure and accounting. This, together with elaborate accounting procedures - the Regulations alone give seventeen pro forma, and a draft Handbook of Council Finance runs to several hundred pages - undoubtedly tend to throw the whole burden on district staff, but from the practical viewpoint of works and services

---

22) A.D.O. to D.O., 16.2.1960, Daru 23-6-1.
23) Reg. 59. The fund must be maintained; the consent of the D.N.A. is required to use it.
24) Regs. 54-7, 63, 104-8; Circ. Memo. 235, 1.10.1959.
councils usually achieve impressive results. Councils are forbidden to spend more than half of their estimated recurrent revenue on emoluments, so that the bulk of expenditure is devoted to capital works. In 1958 the Daru council provided for an expenditure of 86.1% on works; it was realized that recurrent expenditure would rise as council services extended, but it was felt most important that in the early years a council provide tangible evidence of its activities.

In 1958 the sixteen councils then functioning provided for the payment of councillors, clerks, drivers, boat crews, works supervisors, constables, Aid Post orderlies, agricultural and forestry assistants, nurses, labourers, and sawmill employees; also for allowances for rations, insurance stationery, lighting, fuel, school prizes, magazine subscriptions, radio maintenance, uniforms and sports materials. In addition, they estimated for the construction of 18 school buildings, 33 aid posts, 4 council houses, 1 market building, 5 underground tanks, 3 wells, 3 motor vehicles, 1 work boat, 4 copra driers, 3 insect fogging machines, 10 staff quarters, 4 stores, 4 power

---

25) This contrasts with the record of some West African Authorities.

26) Reg. 35. Councillors receive expense reimbursements rather than salaries.

27) D.N.A. to D.C. Western, 10.2.1958, NA 23-3-10. Hanuabada has always been regarded as weak because it spends to the statutory limit on emoluments; because the natives are reluctant to part with land, it finds the siting of buildings difficult, with consequent heavy annual carry-overs - D.O. Port Moresby 14-26-7.
mowers, 1 film projector, 7 staff bicycles, 1 windmill, 1 motor-cycle, and 2 shotguns. 28

II. Economic Development.

Although councils were set up in areas with economic potential, largely in order to provide the Administration with an instrument for co-ordinated area development, the ways in which the Administration was to do this remained undefined and confused. It was stated in 1949 that the concomitant setting up of co-operatives would make it unnecessary for councils to engage in 'business'. 29 The Ordinance, however, included the provision that councils could organize, finance or engage in any business or enterprise and carry out any works for the benefit of their communities. 30 The S.N.A.O. quickly realized that the promotion of economic development could not be left simply to co-operatives or to other Departments, for this would leave the major factors making for social change 'to evolve in a completely uncontrolled and haphazard way'. This applied particularly to the regulation of native land usage and to the initial organization of production, where a council could act as the 'economic mouthpiece' of the community.

In these functions he envisaged local government as playing

30) Sect. 11 (a,b).
a key role: activity would have to co-ordinate with that of other Departments, especially Agriculture, and the co-operatives would take over once production had begun. 31

In practice this key role for councils has been only partially accepted. Those opposing the channelling of economic development primarily through councils have taken exception to 'a monopoly of local power by a local political body', subjecting natives to a 'monolithic pressure'. 32 Local government officers favouring the primary role of councils in economic development have pointed out, in effect, that this argument assumes a social analogy which does not exist between native and Western societies, and hence between their systems of local government. The S.N.A.O. pointed out the fallacy of assuming a non-existent individualism 33; the E.O. (L.G.), while conceding that it was policy ultimately to merge the natives in a common political, economic and judicial system with Australians, argued that it was unrealistic to assume such a situation

31) S.N.A.O. to D.C. Manus, 3.11.1952, NA 42-3-5.
32) J. McAuley, Economic and Financial Aspects of Local Government, South Pacific, IX, 13, July 1958, p. 601. This argument assumed a functional analogy with Australian local government. This was precisely the view of the Catholic mission, which supported private, not council, operation of economic ventures (Rev. J. Dwyer, Leg.Co. Debates, 1.6.1956, p. 87). In 1957 the Ramalmal Advancement Society (Catholic Division) began a cocoa fermentery in opposition to the Pelegir (council) one. The mission disclaimed any connection; though Fr. Dwyer commended the 'vision of the people' at the official opening (Rabaul Times, 13.2.1959); the combined Tolai councils, 26.6.1957, protested against mission 'intrusion'. Rabaul 14/11/6/38.
33) S.N.A.O., Manus memo. cit.sup.
in advance. Councils as both Administration agencies and native representative institutions would have to concern themselves with the regulation of customary usages and with the promotion of dependent area development. The opposing view recognized that, although economic development should be promoted through a plurality of local agencies, councils might be the only suitable or active ones, and that then by default they would have to be made principally responsible. In fact, the co-operatives limited themselves largely to collecting and marketing produce, so that a promotional lacuna existed in many council areas. In 1958, the Director of Native Affairs noted, in effect, that this had led to a policy hiatus; the role of councils in economic development had never been defined, 'but generally a Council enters this field only when there is a need which cannot be adequately satisfied by any other agency.' So far, he said, we have no better agency for organizing land development or re-settlement schemes.

Policy allowing for this needed to be laid down; but

35) Ibid.
37) a/D.N.A. to 0.1.C. Kukipi, 12.8.1958, NA 23-16-1.
38) Ibid.
the very fact that this function of councils came about by default had led to procrastination on the policy issues. The S.N.A.O. complained at length about the undefined role of councils in land tenure regulation, and particularly about inadequate co-ordination with other Departments (which did not accept the promotional function of councils): 'the frustrating task of endeavouring to push basic policy issues up from the bottom consumed an inordinate amount of Field Officers' time, hampered the organisation of area activities, and tended to promote inconsistencies in emphasis.'

By 1960 basic policy decisions on matters such as rural credit, councils' regulation of land tenure, and the precise developmental functions of councils were still caught between these two conceptions. The following examples will illustrate.

(i) The Vudal Scheme

This is a re-settlement scheme initiated by the Rabaul council in 1953, after title investigation work in the Matupi area had shown land to be short. The council leased 1,000 acres of land some 35 miles from Rabaul; half was

39) Senior Officers Course, 1957, cit. sup., para. 40: re-affirmed 'the danger that Councils may become too deeply involved in economic ventures'.

40) D.M. Fienberg, Land Tenure in Relation to Native Economic Development, 20.8.1956, In effect, there was a policy of centralizing without a centralizing of policy.
made available for communal subsistence gardens, while the other 500 acres were divided into blocks of 4.9 acres each, on individual sublease.\textsuperscript{41}

There was a number of complications in the early stages of this scheme, which is of particular importance because it was regarded throughout the Territory as an experiment: the council itself did not seem sure that the object was re-settlement, rather than simply individual cultivation by lessees going out from the council area periodically; communal labour organized by the council for initial clearing fluctuated (non-participants had little inducement); control to a very real extent was left to the council, but there was no road to the site, and the Forestry Department therefore failed to remove felled trees; some of the cleared blocks were found to belong to a European company (the result of a poor survey).\textsuperscript{42}

Administration interest in the scheme was really aroused only when it had become apparent that it was collapsing. It was publicly branded by a settler as a failure in 1957; and investigations by the Agriculture and Native Affairs Departments followed.\textsuperscript{43} The A.D.O. made the remarkable assessment that—

\textsuperscript{41} McAuley, 1954, loc.cit., p.885; a/Admin. to Sec. Terr., 20.7.56, NA 34-8-10A.

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid. Senior Ag. O. to D.A.S.F., 17.5.1957, DASF L/12-1-32. N.A. Reg. 77 made it impossible for natives to make a will respecting land — a major difficulty in council plans; but here the council had the right to re-allott the land on a tenant's death, being guided by his nomination of a successor.

\textsuperscript{43} D. Barrett, M.L.C., in Rabaul Times, 5.4.1957.
... as an experiment, the project has been successful, in that it has revealed pitfalls of which we were not hitherto aware.

It was quite clear that the scheme was beyond the council unaided. Policy decisions were sought from Port Moresby, particularly on finance: settlers needed to be tided over for 3-5 years, until cocoa came into bearing; it was estimated that the council would eventually be indebted to the tune of £25,000 if it remained unassisted.  

Pleas for policy directives, particularly on financial assistance, went unanswered in Port Moresby. In desperation, in 1959 the Rabaul council threw the area open to settlers from other Tolai council areas - many of the original lessees lost their rights - but the response was very poor. The Land Development Board seemed to stand out against the rest of the Administration in refusing loans to settlers under the scheme; admittedly, lessees could offer no security. Because of the division of opinion in Port Moresby, local field staff, and the council, suffered extraordinary delays in their applications.

45) Chief Field Officer, Lands Dept., memo. 25.3.1958, NA 45-4. By 1956 the council had spent £2,209 on the scheme; this was deprecated by the Administration, for the scheme benefited only a few natives in the council area.
47) D.O. to D.N.A., 17.11.1959, appended comments by E.O. (L.G.), NA 45-4.
In 1960 the Assistant Administrator publicly stated that the scheme was 'a failure'.

(ii) Laloki

There was a strong feeling amongst some officers that the failure of the Vudal scheme could not be ascribed entirely to the council's ineptitude or to the Administration's dissociation. They believed that it involved a group of peri-urban natives who were socially not adapted to resettlement. This is even more true of the Hanuabada council area. Yet for thirty years attempts have been made to induce Hanuabadans to revert to agriculture on reserve land near the Laloki river.

In 1953 the Hanuabada council obtained a lease of Laloki land, to be divided into 5 acre blocks on individual sub-lease. The object was to provide employment and also cheap vegetables in the council area. The re-settlement aspect was never clear, as at Vudal: many participants, who paid subscriptions for buildings and clearing, had no intention

49) South Pacific Post, 12.1.1960. The only successes among the original lessees were those who had other resources - E.O. (L.G.), 8.10.1957, NA 45-4. The Vunamami council profited in the later Warangoi scheme: 15 acre blocks were leased to individuals. This ensured (a) competition; (b) only responsible men were allocated blocks; (c) lessees had to be resident; (d) credit was essential (no communal labour).

of living permanently at the site. 51

The Administration initially gave advice on the project; but it refused to make old building materials available to the council, it sent the council a bill for £168 for ploughing, it made no surveyor available for delimiting the blocks, and it refused to sanction a loan to the council (because the scheme concerned only a small minority of villagers). 52

The basic difficulties were therefore (i) social - the Hanuabadans had in fact almost abandoned gardening; (ii) financial - subscription capital for initiating the scheme was inadequate, and the negligible prospects of getting assistance caused many subscribers to cut their losses; and (iii) administrative - the Administration left the council to its own devices at a time when active co-operation was needed. 53


52) Ibid. Council allocated £100 in 1956; the D.O. refused to sanction payment of half development cost out of council's Agric, Development Fund - memo. 9.8.1956, H.C. 15-3-.

53) The early backers of the scheme were most influential men: e.g. Toua Kapena, who withdrew from the council in 1957. The Ambenob council (Madang) sought a compromise in resettlement. Subsistence continued traditionally; but land in large blocks was sold to the Administration for lease to the council, and sub-lease in 3 acre blocks for cash cropping alone. Serious divisions appeared within the Administration on the principles of this scheme - D.A.S.F. favoured consolidated subsistence + cash cropping, hence objected. Delays on a decision continued for three years: on 8.10.1959 the council president radioed the Administrator to expedite a decision and warned of waning native enthusiasm. Agreement had to be reached by D.N.A., D.A.S.F. and Lands Dept. The D.C. appeared to regard the scheme as only an experimental pilot project - unsatisfactory to the council. NA 42-7.
The faults of these schemes held out no high prospects for the encouragement of other re-settlement schemes through councils; but schemes of other types were tried.

(iii) The Tolai Cocoa Project

The Tolai project is the best known and most successful of the economic development schemes in which councils have been engaged, and it is widely looked to, in theory, as a possible precedent for other council areas. In fact, its operation has revealed a number of continuing policy and administrative difficulties, which could well be deterrents elsewhere.

The central object of the scheme has been the control of cocoa production and processing to ensure uniform high quality, and thus maintain markets and confidence. Initially relatively small loans were made to Tolai councils for the building of fermentaries. In 1955 it became apparent that a great deal of independent finance was needed. The Native Loans Fund set a limit of £5,000; organization through the co-operatives was not favoured because the Administration lacked adequate control. Therefore Administration-guaranteed bank loans were made to the councils; by March 1960 the amount guaranteed was £227,000.

An ad hoc committee representing the Departments of Native Affairs and Agriculture was set up in Port Moresby to exercise overall control. At the district level the scheme was initially well-directed entirely because of good personal relations between Native Affairs and Agriculture. But in the period 1957–8 the unresolved conflict over the control of native agricultural projects broke out at Rabaul, with the result that a Management Board was set up in 1958, representing the two Departments, the councils, and the growers. A European Field Manager and a European Accountant were appointed. Trained native clerks look after fermentary payments and accounts and liaise with fermentary committees, under the immediate supervision of Native Affairs officers. Council cocoa committees handle the disbursement of loan funds, under the guidance of supervising officers and, indirectly, of the Management Board. The S.N.A.O. and local officers long pressed for a native 'managerial cadre' for native economic projects, using the Tolai example as a lever; but nothing was done. The result was that the project remained, in effect, entirely Administration controlled and managed. This accorded with the concept of councils as

56) Fienberg memo., 20.8.1956, cit. sup.
57) a/D.O. New Britain to D.N.A., 15.7.1957; Chief of Agric. Extension to Asst. Admin., 18.7.1957, NA 45-1-1; first meeting of Board, 23.4.1958.
Administration instrumentalities; but this very concept raised further policy issues. For, if the project was regarded as a public utility, did it have to maintain substantial independent depreciation reserves, and should it be permitted by law to enforce a monopoly of processing?\(^{59}\)

A tendency developed for the ad hoc committee in Port Moresby to arrogate more detailed control; but here these policy divisions intruded, with resulting long delays in the approval of new loan applications from the district.\(^{61}\) This ad hoc arrangement was cumbersome, and highlighted the lack of clear and definite general policy and co-ordination.

From the local government viewpoint, the Tolai project was an exceptional venture by councils into a public utility-cum-business enterprise. As the only native corporations to which bank loans could be made, the councils became involved, in a sense, accidentally. Policy frowned on such ventures by councils as general practice, so that the project could hardly be taken as a precedent. (This was reflected in


\(^{60}\) Chief, Govt. & Research, to D.N.A., 15.6.1960, NA 45-1-5. In 1956-7 the councils had rules compelling growers to take beans to approved fermenteries; these rules were abandoned in favour of central government legislation. But Chinese and others running private fermenteries brought them up to standard, with a consequent sharp drift of beans to them instead of to the project ones - E.O. (Admin.) memo., 31.5.1960, cit. sup. Chief of Govt. and Research insisted on no legislative protection, partly to produce native commercial leaders; Asst. Admin. also supported this view (comments, 7.6.1960, Admin 66-6-1).

the Higaturu scheme, see below).

Some officers believed that the principal failure of the Administration, and of local government, in the Gazelle Peninsula lay in not dealing with indigenous land tenure. The S.N.A.O. continually insisted that councils were ideal media for the reform of tenure to cope with cash-cropping; and 'land usage control' through councils was stated to be one of the objects of the project. On the other hand, central government has been equally insistent in reserving the control of native land tenure to itself; under the Native Lands Registration Ordinance, 1961, only the Native Lands Commissioners - all Europeans - may survey and register existing native holdings; but this tends to fossilize holdings at a time when cash-cropping is creating irresistible pressures towards change. Moreover, it is painfully slow. Nevertheless the Administration has stood firm on the anachronistic principle of protection, which in the Gazelle Peninsula is rapidly rebounding on the local staff.

62) e.g. memo. of 20.8.1956, cit. sup., paras. 32-5. He stated that this was the basic problem facing the cocoa project; administrative failure could lead to native disillusionment - South Pacific Post, 30.4.1958.


Among the Tolai the problem has added complexity, for inheritance is gradually changing from the traditional matrilineal to patrilineal form. As the population and cash-cropping both increase, it is realized that the problem will become more intractable, with declining individual incomes and resultant resentment. The Administration rejected the potential role of the councils in land regulation, without really finding a workable substitute.

(iv) The Higaturu Coffee Scheme

Enthusiasm for cash-cropping was spread in the Higaturu area, economically one of the most favoured parts of Papua-New Guinea, by trainees returning from the Local Government Training Centre at Vunadadir. Among the Orokaiva the land tenure question had been complicated by the consequences of the Mt. Lamington explosion. This made it essential to regularise tenure for cash crops. Moreover, excessive European alienation in the Sangara area, and recent acquisitions for further European settlement, had made natives in some areas extremely land-conscious.

The area had great economic potential but little native development. At the time cash-cropping gained in favour the Higaturu council had just been established; its

---

65) P.O. to D.C., 23.5.1956, NA 14-7-17; C.S. Belshaw, Social Consequences of the Mt. Lamington Eruption, Oceania, XXI, 1951, pp. 241-52.

66) Report P.O. McGrath, 2.4.1959, Pop. 34-1-2; note Information Pamphlet for prospective settlers, issued by Agric. Assn. of Northern Papua, 1959.
enlightened supervising officer realized that the regulation of tenure and of coffee planting could best be done through the council.

As long before as 1928 F.E. Williams had looked forward to a transition from temporary individual usufruct to permanent private ownership; this, he believed, was an essential pre-condition to social advances. Traditionally the land-holding unit is the patrilineal clan, usually localised and often coincident with the single village; within this area the elementary family gardens on the wasteful bush-fallow system, and has considerable freedom in choosing its sites for the season. 67

In 1956 neither the Higaturu councillors nor their supervising officer believed that this system presented any serious difficulties to individualisation for cash crops. Accordingly the officer went ahead with a scheme whereby natives requiring individual cash crop land applied to him; he made a survey in the presence of the clan heads concerned, the councillor, the interpreter and any others involved. They then witnessed a declaration allocating the applicant the land, and agreeing that he had the right to transfer it and name inheritors. 68

67) F.E. Williams, Orokaiva Magic, pp. 150-60; Orokaiva Society, pp.116, 328.

68) P.O. to D.O., 13.11.1956, Pop. 14-7-42/2; the minimum block was set at 2 acres.
Such a title cut across existing statutory controls by central government, and had no legal validity; but, in that the Orokaiva accepted it, it had considerable social validity. This argument was initially accepted in Port Moresby. But in July, 1957 the acting D.C. stopped the scheme on the ground that field staff had inadequate knowledge of the bases of customary tenure. After an inspection in November, 1958, however, the acting Secretary for Law expressed the opinion that the Administration's whole approach to native land tenure might have been 'far too legalistic'.

In addition, between May and July, 1957 the surveying of land had been turned over to a Cadet, who registered blocks as small as 0.7 acre; the survey plans he issued were mere geometrical figures with no distances, features, or orientation points marked. During the three years that the scheme was subsequently under review in Port Moresby the Orokaiva allocated individual blocks amongst themselves on this uneconomic scale; the delay thus led to fragmentation and frustrated one of the objects of the scheme. Meanwhile,

69) See Papua Report, 1951-2, p.32.
70) D.N.A. to D.O., 8.3.1957, NA 23-5-10E.
71) Quoted A/Sec. Law to Asst. Admin., Land Tenure - Higaturu Council Scheme, Nov. 1958, L25/2-11-16; D.C. to P.O., 30.7.1957, Pop. 14-8-22/2. H.T. Plant, Re-Establishment of Isivita Villages, 24.3.1951 (Pop. 34-1-2) has an appendix on land ownership.
72) Ibid.
the natives continued to lodge applications for registration at the District Office.

Discussion in Port Moresby revealed the policy vacuum that existed on the issue; worse, it revealed that some senior officers had little appreciation of the need for regulating tenure. In order to circumvent administrative obstructions the council attempted to pass a rule requiring natives under its jurisdiction to plant cash crops on no land other than that formally recognized by representatives of all the clans concerned. The Chief Lands Commissioner, however, rejected the right of councils to change native custom:

I cannot see any reason for your proposal. Surely natives in the Council area have land by native customary rights on which they can plant cash crops.

The acting Secretary for Law remained sympathetic to the council's proposal; and in 1959 he proposed a new tenure conversion rule which overcame the legal difficulties. But it was not until early in 1960 that the local officers were able to re-commence registration. The Department of Native

---

75) This became Rule 2/1959 of the council; it omitted provisions for transfer and inheritance.
Affairs realized the deficiencies of this approach, but promoted it because it could be applied in most areas, and was better than no regulation at all.\textsuperscript{77}

The Higaturu council faced a further problem in organizing the processing of coffee. This derived from the continuing conflict between the Native Affairs and Agriculture Departments over the control of native agricultural production. The Tolai arrangement was considered as a specific solution, not as a precedent. It was originally suggested that the council build a factory for machinery which had already been purchased out of a trust fund, and that after an initial period of council control the factory be handed over to a growers' co-operative.\textsuperscript{78} Without reference to Native Affairs officers, however, the Department of Agriculture in 1958-9 sponsored proposals in Port Moresby that processing should be done (a) by a commercial firm, and (b), when this was objected to, by the Department itself controlling the council's factory.\textsuperscript{79} The council's mood changed from enthusiasm, in 1956, to anger and resentment, in 1959.\textsuperscript{80}

In June, 1959, anxious about native reaction, the Chief of Agricultural Extension conferred at Popondetta with local officers.

\textsuperscript{77} Draft Rule included Digest of Local Govt. Bulletins, Dec. 1961, p.43.
\textsuperscript{78} D.N.A. to D.O. Pop., 11.5.1956, 21.6.1956, NA 45-2.
\textsuperscript{79} D.O. to D.N.A., 6.3.1959, Pop. 14-8-22/6; 'This secret attitude of D.A.S.F. ... is rather deplorable'.
\textsuperscript{80} Minutes, Higaturu council, March-April, 1959.
officers; but in the same month his Department actually began operating the coffee factory, 'somewhat arbitrarily' in the D.O.'s view.  

A further conference produced a scheme for a Factory Committee on lines almost identical with the Tolai Cocoa Management Board; but functionally an important difference was that the technical operation of the factory was to be controlled by the Department of Agriculture. A later statement showed that the basic dissension had only been glossed over, for the Department of Agriculture treated the Committee purely as a medium for disseminating information, rather than as a medium through which the council could participate in the affairs of its own factory.

In general, it might be said that the object of using local government to harness native leadership to central government policy objectives had largely been defeated, in the sphere of economic development, by the lack of any clearly defined policy. As the acting Secretary for Law


wrote of the Higaturu scheme, it was 'yet another temporary and interim measure of a type which is becoming notorious.'

83) H.T. Plant, Goroka address, cit. sup.; a/Sec. Law memo. of Nov. 1958, cit. sup.

Programmes of economic development will have political side-effects, still largely unrecognized within the Administration; cf. V.B. Zimmerman, Philippine Clues to the Future of Local Government in S.E. Asia, J.A.A., XII, 1, 1960, p.41: 'As the ordinary individual in rural areas ... becomes more productive and independent economically, he is better able to assert his political and legal rights, and to demand additional ones.'
CHAPTER IX

THE POLITICAL ASPECT

1. Legislative Powers and the Practice of Rule-making.

(1) Provisions and Limitations

Under Section 12 of the Ordinance a council may make rules for the 'peace, order and welfare' of the natives within the council area, and in particular for a range of matters from prohibiting games in which natives are likely to be defrauded, to prohibiting or regulating any matter which the council could by native custom prohibit or regulate. As was pointed out by Belshaw in 1951, these provisions are more closely defined than in the comparable British Solomons legislation, and at the same time sixteen out of the seventeen provisions concern matters which are already covered in some respects by the Native Regulations, with which council rules must not conflict.¹ The failure to go ahead with a native courts system, and the inadequate powers of the council constables, have imposed added strains on councils in their rule-making capacity.

The limitations on rule-making increased after 1955, when local government began to expand rapidly, and when the Law Department and other specialist departments realized the wide implications of council rule-making in their own

spheres. Even in August 1954, however, McAuley wrote of the Tolai councils that the rules they had passed had been 'uniform in content and few in number', and that, although the councils wanted to pass rules aimed at, 'social regulation', the Native Authorities Officers had been too cautious to sanction them.\(^2\)

This is not surprising in view of the fact that it was the original intention of the Ordinance that the sanctioning of council rules be left to the District Officer (Section 12,2). This was designed to allow local flexibility; but in the absence of native courts the field staff were responsible for adjudicating in cases arising from the breach of council rules, the implications of which in customary matters clearly they could not know. This was a restriction at the local level. It was after 1955 that restrictions at the central government level became most important, with the result that the approval of council rules in fact passed out of the hands of local officers altogether.

In view of the non-traditional approach of the Administration to native local government, and of the necessity to make everything that councils did conform to uniform standards and concepts, it became difficult at an early stage for local officers to sanction council rules.

---

2) J. McAuley, Local Government Amongst the Tolai, South Pacific, VII, 11, p.882. He mentioned specifically rules aimed at vagrancy, the limitation of bride-price, intra-moiety marriage and fornication.
In 1951, for example, the Hanuabada council put forward a rule compelling natives with disputes to attend before the Council's Disputes Committee, a unique institution of long standing in the village. The D.O. felt that he could not approve the rule because of the Administration's anomalous attitude to native adjudication:

The Council has no statutory authority for settling disputes but it is part of its normal functions to act in an advisory capacity and attempt to settle minor disputes out of Court.

Again, the Ordinance itself sometimes forced reference to central government even on routine matters, despite the willingness of local officers to encourage initiative in the councils. Hanuabada tax rules offer an example. Under Regulations 79-87, ancillary to the Ordinance, councils must fix a tax rate annually; this has to be framed in close consultation with the supervising officer (acting for the D.O.), who has to bear in mind three factors: (i) that the rate should represent a reasonable contribution from the average native income (allowing for the concept of tax as an economic incentive); (ii) the purposes for which the tax is to be levied; and (iii) that the tax is revisable annually.


4) D.C. to Clerk, 22.1.52. P.M.D. Off. 14-26-5.
In 1951 the N.A.O. in Port Moresby stated that ‘at this stage I do not think that approval of a Tax Rule should be withheld because an officer does not agree with its every detail’. In 1952, however, this was put to the test. Regulation 79 specifies that a council may lay down not more than three grades of tax; but the Finance Committee of the council felt that four grades were desirable. The N.A.O. believed that this would be a good opportunity for the Administration to express its confidence in the ability of the council to reason out a tax system for itself: the four grades had rational bases. The Director of District Services proposed to approve this, but the S.N.A.O., based in Rabaul, wired a blunt ‘No’ when asked for his concurrence - in his view socio-economic conditions in Hanuabada did not warrant an extra grade of tax. The Director disagreed with the S.N.A.O.’s assessment, but, because of his opposition he

5) N.A.O. to D.C., 3.5.51. NA 41-1-3.
6) N.A.O. to D.N.A., 31.10.52, ibid.
7) S.N.A.O. to D.N.A., 7.11.52. Rabaul 14/11/6. His argument was based on the fact that the Council proposed a special rate for unemployed natives; the S.N.A.O. objected that the tax was to serve as an economic incentive (i.e. to force natives to work, a view which had been held by Murray) and that there was no cause for any native to be out of work in Port Moresby. A special tax rate would encourage the immigration into Hanuabada of ‘every young hoodlum from the South Papuan coast’. This was patently fallacious, as at that time only council areas imposed any tax at all - the rest of the town was tax-free.
turned down the council's proposal. Thus, by implication the council was told that it was not competent to assess its own tax rates.

At this time, however, there was little legal surveillance over council rules. In 1952 the Hanuabada council passed a rule entitled Canoes or anything on the Beach which, as approved, bore obvious marks of having been drafted by the councillors themselves. Its imprecise phrasing, which in the post-1955 period would never have been approved by the Law officers, on occasions proved extremely useful.

By 1955 the supervising officer of the Hanuabada council was referring to his Director and to the Law Department, through the D.C., any rules which he felt might infringe Administration policy or Territory law – that is, every rule other than those on purely routine matters for which clear precedents already existed. Rules were therefore subject to scrutiny on the basis of their reconcilability with European legal and social concepts. In January 1955 the Hanuabada council proposed a rule (no.12) which sought to restrict the attendance of children at night sessions of

8) D.N.A. to S.N.A.O., 18.11.52. NA.41-1-3.
10) At the meeting of Hanuabada Council, 20.1.1960, the Council used this rule to insist that firewood not be stacked on the beach. The supervising officer pointed out that legal difficulties in interpretation might arise if a charge was laid before a Magistrate. This inevitably imposes a pressure on councillors to deal with offenders outside the Administration's courts.
the Hanuabada Picture Theatre. The council was unanimous on the need for such a rule. The D.C. sought the opinion of his Director only because he felt that the proposed penalty was too harsh; the latter sent it to the Crown Law Office, which pronounced it ultra vires because it infringed the liberty of the subject.\textsuperscript{11} The Director advised the D.C. that the subject matter of the rule really fell within the province of parental discipline, and that the council could not take over the role of the parents in family life.\textsuperscript{12} That the concepts of 'liberty of the subject' and 'parental discipline' have different social connotations in Papuan society was given no consideration. This is in accord with the principle of a unified legal system administering essentially uniform laws.

By 1956 it had become very clear that the rule-making provisions embodied in the Ordinance were only nominal, and that on virtually every matter there were liable to be legal, technical or administrative objections. In the first Local Government Bulletin, issued in that year, it was admitted that the powers of councils in relation to rule-making were not clear. Until these powers could be clarified, all D.O.s, before approving any rules except tax rules - for which a model had already been drawn up - had to submit them to Head-

\textsuperscript{11} D.N.A. to C.L.O., 25.1.55. NA. 41-1-3; C.L.O. to D.N.A., 14.2.55, ibid.
\textsuperscript{12} D.N.A. to D.C., 15.2.55, ibid.
quarters so that they could be approved by the Secretary for Law and by the technical departments.

It is intended to have a set of draft rules, dealing with various subjects, drawn up so that they may serve as a guide to officers responsible for framing rules. The first of these has been done and this is a Tax Rule.

In practice this was interpreted by all but the boldest supervising officers as advice to wait on the models framed by central government before accepting council rules. The Port Moresby D.O. was agitated because several of the Hanuabada rules, framed during the period of fewer restrictions, would not stand up to legal scrutiny. He suggested that a Law officer, in consultation with the N.A.O., should survey them and if possible frame substitute rules 'which could be expected to stand up in the Supreme Court'.

The overall result with new councils has been extremely restrictive: most have framed few rules beyond those appearing in model form in the Local Government Bulletins. In effect, therefore, the initiative in the framing of rules has, in the main, passed to central government. Even routine matters such as the framing of the annual tax rule are subject to detailed consideration in advance by the Local Government

---

13) Local Govt. Bulletin No. 1, Oct. 1956, p.9. The Tax Rule had been drawn up by the Secretary for Law. On technical grounds it withdrew the right of women who had previously registered to pay tax - and to vote - to remove their names from the Register. This had been incorporated in some previous tax rules. This decision was entirely based on law; its administrative repercussions were not considered.

Section in the Department of Native Affairs.

(iii) **Legal Surveillance**

The fact that council rules - inevitably, as Belshaw pointed out - often overlap existing legislation, together with the fact that legal scrutiny is so thorough, has made it extremely difficult for councils to pass rules on matters over which they appear to have legislative authority. In December 1956, for example, the Hanuabada council tried to pass a rule (No. 16) forcing householders to keep their premises clean. This was pronounced *ultra vires* because points of the rule were provided for under the Health Ordinance; though under this Ordinance charges must be laid in Courts for Petty Sessions, not in the Courts for Native Matters. 15

By 1958 the Crown Law Office was dealing in detail with council rules, to see that they did not conflict in spirit or substance with Territory law. The fact that local government replaced the old system of administration through luluais and village constables proved to some extent to be an advantage, for the enforcement of many of the Native Regulations depended upon the Luluais, who were specifically given the responsibility. The Law Office therefore took the view that the councils could duplicate those Regulations which were unenforceable, so long as there was no conflict in

15) D.N.A. to D.O., 18.1.57, NA.41-1-3. This in effect withdrew the authority from the Council to enforce cleanliness. Prosecutions are generally laid by the Administration's Health Inspector.
substance or intent. On this ground the Tikana council was able to pass a rule for village sanitation which overlapped Regulations 112A-D (New Guinea). Further modifications to the model draft had to be made for its adoption by Papuan councils, for the Papuan Regulations (101-8) have slightly different provisions. 16

The extent of supervision by central government may be gauged from these comments on a proposed agricultural rule by a Papuan council:

With regard to the second proposed rule, it is agreed that paragraph (b) is unnecessarily onerous and should be omitted. The Plant Disease and Control Ordinance, 1953, Plant Disease Regulations 1956 and Native Regulations 1939 (Papua) also deal with the clearing of cultivated land and the prevention of disease, whilst the Copra Ordinance 1952 provides a severe penalty for the drying of immature nuts. The remainder of the rule does not appear to conflict with those provisions mentioned except the reference to germinated nuts. The Copra Inspection Regulations 1953 provide that export grades of copra should be free from an unreasonable admixture of copra from germinated nuts. It would seem unreasonable, therefore, that local standards should be higher than export standards and I would recommend that that portion of the rule be omitted.

Although in specific instances such as those quoted above it had been possible for councils to duplicate provisions of the Native Regulations, yet in general the existence of the Regulations has proved a deterrent. In 1959 the D.C., Gulf

17) Ibid. Opinions by Sec. for Law. The rule attempted to regulate the cultivation of coconuts and the drying of copra.
District, pointed out that councils and council constables could not police the Native Regulations, covering most aspects of native administration; and that at the same time councils could not legislate on matters already covered by the Regulations (or because of technical involvements felt that they could not). The Administration admitted the anomalies, and could offer no suggestion except that the council overcome the inoperability of some of the Native Regulations by passing those rules for which models had appeared in the Local Government Bulletins.

(iv) The Regulation of Custom

The whole principle of Administration surveillance over council rules, beyond matters of legal and policy conflict, was raised by the A.D.O. supervising the Baluan council in 1958. The Baluan council wished to include in a rule on copra driers provision for arrest without warrant and for a maximum penalty less than that prescribed in the Ordinance for council rules generally. The Administration rejected both provisions; although the A.D.O. pointed out that there was a number of precedents in previous Baluan rules, that in fact the Administration in 1955 had asked the council to include a

18) D.C. Kerema to D.N.A., 30.9.59, Kerema 14-3/151. The D.C. wanted all Council Constables also appointed V.C.s under Native Reg.155; but this would have made them both Administration and Council employees.
19) D.N.A. to D.C. Kerema, 7.10.59, NA 39-8-1.
21) D.N.A. to D.O., 27.6.58. NA 23-12-10B.
constables appear to have powers to police only those rules providing for arrest without warrant - and that because of difficulties of communication, arrest without warrant was essential. He objected, however, even more strongly to the general than to the particular restrictions imposed by the Administration:

Subject to legality and general policy, the final decision on the provisions incorporated in or excluded from a rule should rest with the Council, the lawmaking body.

Section 15,4(a) of the Native Local Government Ordinance, he said, inferentially conferred upon a council the right to provide for arrest without warrant, and on this it was not subject to direction.

In commenting, the Director of Native Affairs thought it 'worthwhile and desirable to clarify in general terms the usual relationship between central government and local government'. His statement, then, is most important because of its generality. He said that 'except in a sense so narrow as to be negligible, local authorities are not legislative bodies. They are executive bodies ...' He went on that '...

22) A.D.O. (L.G.) to D.O. Lorengau, 24.7.58, Lorengau 14/4/3-Lc10. By memo. D.N.A. to D.C. Manus, 7.5.55, DS 14-7-25, all Baluan rules at that time had been redrafted to provide for arrest without warrant. Eleven Council rules of the period 1951-5 provided maximum penalties less than those in the Ordinance. Essentially, the A.D.O.'s argument was based on the need for local flexibility.

23) Ibid.
it can be expected that with the expansion of local government in the Territory by area and activity central government control and direction will increase rather than lessen. He claimed, further, that the restraints imposed by central government 'encouraged an active local authority working for the general good', and, clearly making native councils analogous to municipal bodies in Australia, he spoke of the impossibility of changing 'the whole concept of central government/local government relationships developed over hundreds of years.'

It was thereby affirmed that the supposed customary constitution and powers of councils - as had long been believed within the Administration were of negligible consequence in relation to the duties imposed on councils by central government.

In view of this conception of the powers of local government, it is hardly surprising that there have been few attempts to modify custom by rules. According to Dudley Jones, native institutions or customs are part of the Territory's legal system unless inconsistent with Ordinances or repugnant to the principles of humanity. In the British

24) D.N.A. to D.O. Lorengau, 13.8.58, NA 23-12-10B. My italics.
25) See memo. by D.M. Fienberg, 5.11.57: Sections 5, 2; 6, 2; 10,a of the N.L.G.C. Ordinance.
Solomon Islands, a blanket Regulation gives native courts jurisdiction over custom. But as no native courts system exists in New Guinea, there has been little scope for the application of custom or for its modification by case-law.

Therefore, the institution of local government gives the one opportunity for the legal adaptation and enforcement of custom according to local culture change. But overall administrative conceptions have largely prevented this.

McAuley noted this in 1958; but at the same time he favoured the current conception of councils as bodies whose responsibilities were tied to works and services. He felt - and it is now Administration policy - that changes in land-tenure should be uniform throughout the Territory, and that therefore the modification of land-holding customs should be a central rather than a local government responsibility. 27

27) J. McAuley, Problems Affecting the N.L.G. Policy, South Pacific, May-June 1958, IX, 12, pp. 575, 587. Fienberg on the other hand, favoured local government participation in the regulation of land tenure - see his Land Tenure in Relation to Economic Development, Aug. 1956, NA 39-6. Native opinion is also tending in this direction see V.A.C. (Milne Bay), Aug. 1961, p.3, Res. 5. The Government appears to have been deterred by the confusion within its ranks over the land tenure scheme adapted by the Higaturu Council (see Ch. on 'Economic Development'). The Madang Conference of New Guinea Councils paid particular attention to the registration of cash-crop holdings (Minutes, items 1-3; D.N.A. memo. of 20.6.60, NA.44-4-1). Largely owing to the influence of C.J. Lynch of the Law Office a rule providing for individual registration of tenure by natives was published in July 1959 (L.G. Bull. No.5, pp.14-16); this derived from the Higaturu rule. But in commenting on the Madang Conference (D.N.A. memo. of 20.6.60, cit. sup), the Administration broadly reserved the subject to central government. The question of the capacity of natives to make wills - a key question - was still under discussion at that date. See Ch. VII, II.
Other reasons have been put forward for a reluctance on the part of central government to allow councils to modify other aspects of custom. In the Tolai areas the Administration refused to allow councils to legislate for a change from matri- to patri-lineal inheritance, on the ground that there was no assurance that 'a large majority' of Tolai supported it.  

Bride-price has presented notable difficulties, for with a change-over to a money economy it tends to become exorbitant - at least one instance has been reported from Hanuabada of a bride-price of almost £1,000. Similar conditions prevailed in the eastern Gulf, which supplied a good deal of the better-paid labour in other districts. In 1959 the Moveave-Toaripi council proposed to make a rule restricting bride-price to a maximum of £50. A difference of opinion on the matter developed between the Local Government Officers and the Crown Law Officer assigned to it. This revolved around the competence of a council to legislate on bride-price at all.

In the legal view, the only section which could validate the rule was 12(1), making general provision for the 'peace,'

28) Ibid; Personal Information.

29) Personal information, Rima Gavera, Gavera Baru. 'Bride-price' is a terminological mistake, but is generally used in the Territory. 'Bride-wealth' is better.

30) Before the spread of local government, the natives were forced to look to central government for the control of bride-price - see Minutes of the 1954 meeting, Central District Councillors (i.e. Village Councillors), convened by Willie Gavera, who later raised the matter in the District Advisory Council.
It was felt that the D.C.'s covering argument that high bride-price prevented marriage, caused social distress and damaged the social structure put it within this section:

I am assuming the reality of these evils and that it is demonstrable in a Court that they are caused, or aggravated and markedly encouraged, by the high level of bride-price.

This placed it within the definition of 'welfare'.

The next problem (and one to which at this stage no definitive answer can be given) is whether there is an implied limitation on the powers of Councils which would prevent the enactment of a rule.

In other words, was the nature of a council such that it had the right to legislate on what, in European terms, was essentially a private matter.

In Australia, of course, no Municipal Council could ever enact such a provision under a general power, and the question is whether the fundamental character of a Native Local Government Council is akin to that of a southern Municipal or Shire Council.

It seems curious that, although the Ordinance had been in force for almost ten years, this matter had still not been resolved. The Law officer thought that the title 'Native Local Government' in the Ordinance lent some weight to the view that the councils were akin to Australian local government bodies; on the other hand, he had doubts whether the change in nomenclature in 1954 from 'Native Village Councils'...
had fundamentally altered the intent that councils should be replacements for presumed 'tribal' authorities. Ultimately he put forward the tentative conclusion that Native Local Government Councils are not analogous to Australian municipal authorities.

While the picture is not clear, therefore, I cannot advise that the proposed Rule is *ultra vires*.

The council was fortunate that in this instance the Law officer was C.J. Lynch, the only member of his Department favouring a native courts system and a critic of the Administration's legalistic attitude to administrative problems.

(v) Technical Surveillance

In the years since 1956 council rules have also been

34) Ibid. It should be noted that the Administration assumes that Section 12, 1(p) gives the council theoretically the right to regulate custom; see Fienberg memo. cit. sup., p.8. But the wording does not say so: it gives the council the right to regulate matters which by native custom it would have the right to regulate; but it is not a customary body.

35) There is a notable contrast with a case quoted by Mayer from Kenya (P. Mayer, Two Studies in Applied Anthropology in Kenya, H.M.S.O. 1951, Col. Research Studies No. 3, pp. 19-31). The limitation of bride-wealth was seen as the main remedy for a number of social evils; but Gusii society lacked traditional central authorities, or even clan authorities. In the past limitation had been applied through public barazas called by the Government Chiefs and the Local Native Council. But with social change the question of enforcement became paramount. Therefore a Law Panel consisting half of official Gusii appointees and half of elders with no official position made recommendations to the Council, which passed a by-law. This was arranged by the D.C. and the Government Sociologist. Social needs were the governing factor; the whole matter was arranged at the local level. Similarly in the British Solomons the Malaita Council without difficulty fixed the value of tafuli'ae (strings of shell-money).
subjected to stringent scrutiny at headquarters level from Officers of technical departments, as foreshadowed in the Instruction of October, 1956, cited above. In 1952 Fienberg as Senior Native Authorities Officer had believed co-ordination to be practicable at district level:

... as a matter of working practice, no rule affecting technical Department activities or policy should be debated by a Council without consultation with the relevant technical Department representative. This surely is common sense.

But a great deal depended on the co-operation of personalities, and on the practicability of consultation with overworked officers who were often on patrol. These officers, again, have often been either uncertain of policy involving local government matters, or involved in clashes of outlook or policy devolving from headquarters (an example is the Higaturu coffee scheme). The lack of an adequate secretariat organization to secure policy and planning co-ordination has been a prime difficulty, and this has carried over to councils' rule-making.

The mundane but important matter of the penning of pigs in council areas provides a notable example. Cash crops and pigs do not mix. The Tolai have rapidly reduced the number of their pigs to save their cocoa, but, in view of the socio-economic value of pigs, this is a drastic solution. Councils have been set up in areas where cash-cropping is being

36) a/S.N.A.O. to Director, D.P.H. 20.2.52. Rabaul 14/11/6/7-34.
37) See Ch. VIII, 2.
promoted; but most native societies seek to keep their pigs as well. Before the advent of cash crops, depredation by pigs was cause for the seeking of compensation through the Courts for Native Matters or for Native Affairs. The problem was more serious in Papua, where the Native Regulations, as distinct from those in the Trust Territory, place the onus on the owner of a garden, who cannot claim compensation unless his garden is fenced. Nevertheless, it is a sufficient problem in New Guinea for it to have been the subject of a resolution at the Madang Conference of New Guinea councils in June 1959. In effect, the councils asked the Administration to authorise the penning of pigs, with the Department of Agriculture advising on technical problems. In Papua the social repercussions had by 1958 become serious; in the Higaturu area, for example, almost half the cases coming before Courts for Native Matters were said to concern damage by pigs. In the Milne Bay area draft rules authorising garden owners to kill trespassing pigs had been rejected because they clashed with the Native Regulations.

The Higaturu councillors, in 1958, submitted a draft rule providing for the compulsory penning of pigs. At headquarters

38) Resolution 8(c).
39) Information by A.D.O. F.V. Esdale, C.N.M. sitting, Higaturu, 20.2.1960. Esdale tried to satisfy both the law and social justice by placing some responsibility on the owners of pigs; if garden-owners killed pigs destroying their gardens, he regarded them as acting under extreme provocation, and tried to reach a compromise settlement.
40) There were complaints about this by the Divinai councillor (Milne Bay) at the Higaturu Council meeting, 25.2.1960.
the rule was admitted to fall within the powers of the council, but it was rejected by the Chief of Division of Animal Industry on the ground that it was not his policy to encourage the penning of pigs because of the probable high incidence of anthrax. The Secretary for Law advised that the Native Regulations and the Animal Trespass Ordinance already dealt with the subject of pig trespass, and, 'as the question of inconsistency may arise in relation thereto', that the rule should be rejected.41

Many supervising officers of councils objected, as they have on similar occasions, that technical departments tended to make decisions on purely technical grounds, without reference to their social, administrative or even economic ramifications. Only after repeated representations and the discussions at the Madang Conference was action taken to bring the departments together in Port Moresby to work out a solution; at this stage the Department of Agriculture (of which the Division of Animal Industry is part) was itself feeling the effects of depredations by pigs on cash crops it was promoting. A conference of departmental heads with the Assistant Administrator on 13th May, 1960 agreed on a draft council rule for the penning of pigs, which was sent to councils as a model. Because of its technical content it was essential that councils adhere to it to the letter; this

41) L.G. Bull. no.4, July 1958, p.6.
was emphasised by the Director of Native Affairs.  

Even here adequate co-ordination was lacking; for in the same month the Milne Bay council, on the advice of the Agriculture officer that his department was prepared to sanction a rule on the penning of pigs, spent most of a two-day sitting framing its own rule, which differed substantially from that framed in Port Moresby.

The rule eventually framed provided for penning, as the natives had continually requested; but it had taken more than three years to achieve a satisfactory policy decision in Port Moresby. The Madang Conference had considerable cause for complaint at the delays in approving council rules. The Conference asked for a special legal officer, within the Department of Native Affairs, to deal full-time with council rules. The Administration rejected this request on the grounds that the quantity of work was not voluminous (the restrictions on council rule-making account for this) and that all legal matters must be handled by the Department of Law.

(vi) Councils as Non-Customary Institutions

It will be clear from the few examples cited that the

42) D.N.A. to District staff, Council Rules Aimed at Enclosing Pigs, 1.6.60. NA 39-11-3.
43) Meeting of Milne Bay Council, May 1960, which I attended. The D.O. had clearly not been told of the Conference in Port Moresby.
44) Madang Conference, Item 8(a).
45) D.N.A. memo. of 20.6.60, NA 44-4-1, p.4.
instrumentality has had particularly restricting effects in the sphere of rule-making; this conflicts with that conception of councils, as bodies with traditional duties and prerogatives, which would be needed if they were to play an adequate part in the regulation of local affairs according to local needs and the pace of local culture change.  

46) This account agrees with the assessment of the E.O. (Admin.), 31.5.1960, Admin. 66-6-1; he stated that the original aim of flexibility had been frustrated by the centralist bias in administrative thinking, and that councils and their supervising officers had been confused and perplexed by the difficulty of passing rules, which almost invariably overlapped central legislation. 'I do not know of any single factor which has been more detrimental to Council prestige'. In 1958-9 a new Ordinance was under consideration, which was planned to overcome the difficulties by particularizing the rules provisions minutely; how custom was to be fitted within this framework was not clear. NA 23-16-1: Asst. Admin., 17.9.1958.
CHAPTER IX

THE POLITICAL ASPECT

II. The Political Functions of Native Local Government.

(i) The Influence of Australian Ideals.

The political difficulties which have, over the years, beset native local government, derive from the struggle between traditional paternalism and the theoretical recognition of the need to decentralise to promote native initiative and responsibility. The central insistence on a large range of ideals, made practicable by the absence of traditional native authorities, pulls against the decentralist idea. Indeed, the absence of traditional authorities is the justification for the imposition of those ideals necessary to bring about social and institutional integration, first at the local, then at the regional, and ultimately at the central level.

This conflict is apparent in the policy statements of the Minister for Territories.¹ It represents, in effect, a long-term striving towards cultural assimilation and uniformity. In Australian policy, this reflects a lengthy

history of fears over the possession of New Guinea by hostile elements. In 1954-5 both the Minister for Territories and the Secretary of his Department publicly related political policy in the Territory to these fears and hopes. It was recognised that the New Guinea peoples had the right eventually to choose their own relationship with Australia; in order to ensure that this would be a 'close and permanent association with Australia' - the Minister at that time envisaged Papua and New Guinea as a part of the Commonwealth - the New Guinea peoples would have to be taught to share the same ideals, values and conceptions as Australians. 2

The functions of native local government, and particularly its political functions, exist within the framework of these ideals. Councils are one of the 'integrative foci' at the local level (in the term quoted by McAuley3), but in order to ensure 'social control' they must function as media for the impression of central ideals and policies.

---

2) Statement by Minister for Territories to Highland Farmers' and Settlers' Association, South Pacific, Sept- Oct. 1954, p.907. To ensure this close association he said, 'we have to be extremely careful in the present generation to keep a balance between the development of the country and the advancement of the natives'. C.R. Lambert, The Challenge of New Guinea, South Pacific, VIII, 1, Jan-Feb. 1955, p.2. The idea of 'close association' is always the key qualification to the altruistic ideal. Also quoted J. McAuley, Problems Affecting the Native Local Government Policy, South Pacific, IX, 12, 1958, p.569.

3) McAuley, loc.cit., p.572.
In spite of the fact that McAuley, an intelligent and knowledgeable observer, believed that the councils should be local bodies in the Australian tradition, confining themselves to works and services, he yet believed that the keynote of the local government policy should be decentralisation. But this would appear to be only limited executive decentralisation, policies and ideals coming from central government.

In view of the educational backwardness of the New Guinea peoples, this separation though generally aimed at, has proved extremely difficult to observe. Fienberg was publicly emphasizing as early as 1951 that local government councils were 'integral parts of the administrative structure' - in the later phrase, 'Administration instrumentalities' - and at the same time as McAuley was writing (1958) the Director of Native Affairs was predicting that central government control over councils would increase

4) McAuley, ibid., pp.573,587. McAuley believed (p.572) that Australia upheld a liberal view of society, not seeking to impose an ideology - clearly this is an opinion which depends on one's concept of an ideology. McAuley regards a 'totalitarian' one as the control by central government of all social, political and economic institutions; but his whole argument presupposes the creation of these in New Guinea by the government, with the natives ultimately 'doing the job for themselves'. The distinction appears to be one of time, final objects rather than current means.

5) D.M. Fienberg, Native Village Councils, South Pacific, V, 9, 1951, p.185.
rather than lessen as time went on. This principle has been pre- eminent.

The political functions which native local government councils might be expected to assume have taken on a special significance in view of the failure to provide other political avenues. It has been often stated since 1949 that these councils were intended to form the base of an institutional pyramid - the Act of 1949 provided for regional Advisory Councils for Native Matters, to include 'at least a majority' of worthy nominees from the local government councils. The principle, elaborated by the Minister in 1956, is worth repeating:

A ... principle to guide us in government might be described as the representative principle ... that a people should be able to choose those who will serve them in government and that those who are chosen should be answerable for their actions to the people. The representative principle leads eventually to responsible government .... Though we start with local government councils, in time there will be a transition to larger representative bodies, perhaps to federations of local government councils: or to regional councils and then to

6) See Ch. IX, 1, note 24. McAuley was disappointed with the Administration's attitude towards councils' regulation of custom, the one sphere in which they might be regarded as immediately competent. Cf. statement of Cambridge Conference of R.I.P.A. on local authorities (1955): 'To call them into being simply to act as agents would be to pervert their purpose. Still less should they be mere tools or instruments of the central government'. - R.I.P.A., Development of Local Government in the Colonies, p.24.

federations of regional councils.8

(ii) Political Growth without Political Institutions.

By 1960 no steps had been taken in this direction; but at the same time, as Rowley pointed out, the powers even of the local government councils as defined in the Ordinance involved issues of political significance.

Moreover,

apart from the officially blessed objectives of the Council experiment, one might reasonably expect that as the Councillors gain in confidence and articulateness, they will formulate views and policies which reflect the highest common factor in the sum of local village reactions to the Government.

Rowley in fact quoted issues, in 1957, on which the Vunadadir and Vunamami councillors expressed opinions for hours on such topics as the alienation of land, the demand for their own courts, and the need for education.

What was clear enough was that the Councils are providing a forum for the discussion of matters which to New Guineans appear to be of general concern; that views are being formulated which may or may not be in conformity with the policy of the Administration.

In view of the failure to provide condign channels for political expression by natives, this development was

8) P.Hasluck, Australia's Task in Papua and New Guinea, pp.11-13. This ideal would appear to have been much modified by late 1960, when the tier above the local government councils was described as 'mounting degrees of representative government through election of members to the Legislative Council ...' (Papua and New Guinea - Some Recent Statements of Australian Policy on Political Advancement) Dept. Territories, 1960, p.4.

9) Rowley, loc.cit., p.442.

10) Ibid., p.441.
inevitable, despite the Administration emphasis on the
councils, fundamentally, as training institutions, where
ideals and values could be inculcated and where the natives
could be impressed with the lesson that works and services
have to be paid for. Tensions were bound to arise.
Between 1951 and 1960 all native opinion, by and large,
reached the Administrator or the Minister after being
filtered through the Department of Native Affairs. During
that period three natives represented their peoples on the
Legislative Council; but they were appointed, and, on
average, two of the three were semi-literate and spoke little
or no English. After 1956 two or three natives were
appointed to each of the District Advisory Councils, but
these Councils primarily represented European settler,
business or mission interests (the last, it was thought,
standing for the natives).

Within the framework of native local government, no
provision was made for political expression. In the British
Solomons, Resolutions of councils become by-laws when
approved by the High Commissioner; concurrently with the
Resolutions, Recommendations are submitted by councils on

11) In the terms of Local Government Memorandum No.1 of
4.1.1952.

12) By April 1960, 31 natives were serving on District and
Town Advisory Councils in the Territory - South Pacific
Post, 22.4.1960. (Ministerial statement).
matters over which they do not generally have legislative authority. There is no such provision in New Guinea, however. Political expression has necessarily had to be informal. In the past social fragmentation has inhibited political activity. No tribal associations have emerged such as are found at an early stage in some African territories. Economic backwardness has deferred the formation of craft or trade unions. The towns are still very small: Port Moresby, by far the largest, has a native population of only about 20,000. Hence the sheer difficulty of group association has suppressed organized political activity. The Rabaul strike of 1929 was an isolated incident which may be said to have had political repercussions but no political intent; it resulted from ad hoc combination. Social disturbance and economic frustration resulted in cultist rather than rational political reaction, largely because of the lack of institutional channels. It has been noted elsewhere that the initial local government councils, particularly that at Baluan, had what might be described as political motives, in that they were meant to sublimate actual or potential cultist discontent. But once the councils were established, the hope was that native energies would be directed to those local tasks which would induce a sense of responsibility.

In the more advanced areas of the Territory, the inadequacy of this policy has steadily become more and more apparent, though native local government has not thereby become recognized as an inadequate political instrument. At least until 1958 the Administration continued to throw its weight behind the councils as instruments of social control and political education; the Administration clearly made a distinction between laying the foundations of political development, and permitting them the exercise of political functions - through councils natives were to learn the mechanics of government, particularly minor decision-making and the assessment of tasks in relation to taxes.

As Rowley remarked, it was the great bulk of matters outside the province of native local government, which councils as local representative bodies rather than as statutory institutions were bound to discuss, which did not fit within the Administration pattern. The Tolai councils regularly complained to Visiting United Nations Missions about the lack of a native courts system; and the examples already quoted by Rowley show that their discussions covered a wide and significant range. A similar situation developed in Hanuabada, though the council in its early years was riven by an internal struggle for supremacy provoked by Gavera Arua. In 1954 his son, Willie Gavera, equally ambitious, was responsible for the convening of councillors from all parts of the Central Division. This meeting, arranged with the
co-operation of the Administration, brought together 108 delegates from 32 villages, the first gathering of its kind in Papua. The Administration was clearly worried about the political implications: senior officers from various departments outlined government policy to the conference, whilst Willie was warned in advance that the resolutions could be treated by the Administration only as recommendations to be given consideration. Willie's opening address, nevertheless, touched a political note:

 Europeans came to this country around 1877 - it is now 1954. It is time we were helping ourselves more. Papuans stand up - you must help yourselves. We must not depend upon the Government to do everything for us and that is why we are meeting today - we must talk of how we can help ourselves and talk of the things we can ask the Government to do - the laws we can ask the Government to pass.

The resolutions which the conference eventually passed were quite innocuous politically; the Administration was asked to limit bride-price, by law, to certain specified sums in specific areas; there was also a resolution asking the Administration to control the prices of foodstuffs at the native markets; and one asking that the Administration be approached regarding the establishment of a Town Advisory Council for Papuans in Port Moresby.¹⁵


¹⁵) Ibid. Minutes. The bride-price limit was to be £300 in Port Moresby. Nothing seems to have come of these resolutions. The Conference resolved that a further similar conference be convened in 1955; but this did not take place.
Although this conference was convened and led by Hanuabadans, its resolutions represented the consensus of opinion within the Central District. In 1955 the Hanuabadans took advantage of the visit of the Minister for Territories to place before him a number of grievances which did not come within the province of native local government. These covered a wide compass: a request for an increase in native wage scales because of the high cost of living in Hanuabada; the need for Administration assistance in housing; a request to extend the Hanuabada council to take in the other Motu people; complaints of the acquisition of land by Europeans, which the original sellers had had no customary right to make over in perpetuity; a request by the council for a statutory court to enforce decisions of its disputes committee; expressed dissatisfaction with the Papuan representative on the Legislative Council, Merari Dickson, a Kwato man; and complaints about the liquor laws - the chairman was frank and stated that he and nearly all other councillors drank beer and spirits, and that responsible natives should be allowed to drink.16

A direct approach to the Minister was one of the few avenues whereby councillors could bring non-council affairs to the notice of the authorities; but none of this reached

16) D.C. Central to Official Secretary, 14.3.1955.
D.O.P.M. 14/25/1.
the Minister as a spontaneous expression of disagreement, for the D.C. obtained an advance list of the issues which the council intended to raise and he sent this, together with his comments and policy reminders, to the Minister's Official Secretary.17

As Rowley has noted, there are probably other issues which the more advanced native groups are still averse to bringing into the open, in particular, racial discrimination.18 There is little doubt that the limited powers of local government councils, together with the restrictive policy of the Administration, disillusioned many of the more sophisticated Hanuabadans. The Hanuabada council executively and financially has been notoriously weak; but this has not indicated to the Administration that a more flexible approach might be tried and the functions of the council modified or expanded. On the contrary, the Hanuabadans have been accused by the Administration on occasion of being lazy and shiftless. The fact is that the Hanuabadans have the interests and outlook of urban dwellers - which they are - and in their minds these interests take precedence over the largely stereotyped functions which councils perform among rural communities. For this reason prominent Hanuabadans,
such as Toua Kapena, withdrew from the council, while other long-term members paid steadily less attention to council business. 19

In the election of 1957 no fewer than five of the seventeen places on the council went to women candidates - an index to the extent to which interest had sagged amongst the men. 20 It was only in 1960, after Ministerial statements had indicated that native representation was to be increased on the Legislative Council, and that this representation was to be connected with native local government, that Toua Kapena and other prominent Hanuabadans developed a renewed interest in the council. 21

(iii) Councils as Pressure Groups.

If the councils can be regarded in any sense as political pressure groups - and in their rule-making capacity they may corporately so appear - they are still so small numerically, even in relation to District populations, that it has been easy in the past for the Administration to discount the generality of their several opinions. For this reason native

19) See M.C. Groves, Politics in Port Moresby (Senior Officers Course, No.5, ASOPA, 1960), mimeo. Willie Gavera became involved in a trucking business, and in Jan.1960 was considering withdrawal from the Council.

20) At that time there were only four other women councillors in the entire Territory (two on the Higaturu Council, which had a total membership of 60).

21) Ministerial statements of 20.4.1960, 27.6.1960. Toua Kapena was elected Council President. All the women were defeated in 1960.
political development in the years 1958-60, expressed through the quarterly combined meetings of the Tolai councils and through the Madang Conference of New Guinea councils, took the Administration by surprise. It was the natives' growing frustration with the restrictions of local government, rather than their command of local machinery and procedure, which made this political development apparent.

It was sparked within the Tolai councils by the Navuneram incident of 1958, referred to elsewhere. As is remarked there, this incident also jolted the Administration to a new awareness of the tensions within the more advanced native societies. The Administrator gave the Minister a detailed history of the Navuneram group, and of Administration attempts to deal with it; in his view, its leaders were insincere in their arguments and professed beliefs. 22 On the other hand, the official report by Chief Justice Mann indicated that the fault lay with the Administration's being out of touch with native opinion which, without outlet or response, went from unwarranted assumptions to irrational conclusions. 23 This represented a serious difference in evaluation at the highest level in the Territory. Shortly

22) Administrator to Sec. Territories, 5.8.1958, AD 85/4/7; see Ch. V, 2.

afterwards the Administrator initiated the monthly District intelligence reports on 'native thought'. At the same time the Minister began giving serious consideration to the setting up of the Advisory Councils for Native Matters, provided for in the 1949 Act.\textsuperscript{24}

As the Navuneram incident showed the Administration that it would have to keep more closely cognizant of native reaction, it also showed those Tolai within native local government that it was imperative for them to put their views to central government as emphatically as the anti-council groups. This determination was probably strengthened by the attitude of the then A.D.O. (Local Government) in Rabaul, who had shown himself anxious to restrict councils to their statutory functions. The political bias of the combined Tolai meetings increased, reaching a peak with that of March, 1959.

At this meeting the Navuneram Enquiry report was discussed. Other topics covered a wide range. A resolution was passed demanding a Native Bank. The meeting also objected to the Administration's policy of assimilating mixed-bloods with Europeans, whereby many of them live as or with natives but have European privileges (this is a policy which is also hotly debated by the mixed-bloods themselves). The Reimber

\textsuperscript{24} Information from Senior Departmental Officers. The Minister later clearly abandoned the idea of the Advisory Councils in favour of an enlargement of native representation on the Legislative Council by indirect election.
councillors found support when they repeated demands for judicial powers for councillors. The increasing influence of the Chinese aroused heated discussion, and a demand was made that all Chinese be deported to China. 25

In brief, about half the topics discussed did not fall within the province of native local government at all (as conceived by the Administration); the officers attending found themselves defending Administration policy at what was in fact an emotional political meeting. The A.D.O. (Local Government) wrote that it was the liveliest meeting he had ever attended. 26

The D.C. expressed the view that the natives who had been attending the District Advisory Council meetings were learning from the Europeans to 'demand things of the Government':

We are dealing with an ignorant mass of people and in matters involving concepts which are very difficult to explain in Pidgin, and even more difficult for ignorant undeveloped minds to understand. Every opportunity was taken to explain to the best of the individual officers' abilities, every matter that was raised for discussion, but there is obviously a vast gap which as the people's minds enquire into things alien to them, is becoming wider. 27

An administrative attitude which attributed 'ignorant

26) Ibid.
27) Ibid., quoting discussion with D.C. The last three words were underlined in Port Moresby.
undeveloped minds' to the most sophisticated people in the Territory did not promise closer collaboration. The A.D.O. favoured more intensive propaganda to convince the natives that the Administration was adequately looking after their interests. A campaign to eradicate 'confused thinking' about the functions of native local government, particularly in the Reimber area where the natives had long enjoyed a special reputation for independence, was launched in the second half of 1959. At the same time, in accordance with the paternalist assumption that 'premature' political development would prejudice the balance of social and economic development, the Administration remained very chary of natives who had the qualities for political leadership. This was particularly noticeable with the election of Stanis of Toma to the Vunadadir council, which immediately elected him vice-president. This was regarded by local officers as the most important event of the year in the sub-district. It was acknowledged that Stanis's intellect was 'greatly admired and respected' and that he quickly became 'a focus of drive and ambition'. Indeed, so outstanding were Stanis's qualities that he was appointed to the New Britain District Advisory Council. At the same time, all this signified to


the Administration that Stanis required 'careful watching', and he was regarded as being on trial, to see whether he would 'act impartially in the interests of the Council as established'.

The Executive Officer (Local Government) took a more liberal view of the combined Tolai meeting than the local field staff. He regarded as particularly significant the fact that it revealed that

... native thinking is at variance with some aspects of Administration policy.

He believed that it was an inevitable development, and one to be welcomed, that after nine years of local government the Tolai should be beginning to express opinions and to state beliefs.

Area administration machinery can play a very valuable role in gauging public opinion and provide a democratic way for the debate of matters of local concern.

Clearly the debatable phrase here was 'of local concern'. Moreover, there was no indication that the Executive Officer appreciated the administrative implications of this view.

30) A.D.O. Rabaul to D.O. 11.3.1960 (Vunadadir P.R. 1/1959-60), S.D.O. Rabaul 30/1. My italics. It was believed that Stanis was guided by the Catholic mission; but this was not the prime reason for the Administration's apprehension. Cf. Rowley, loc.cit., p.443: 'For it is axiomatic that Commonwealth policy demands a responsible New Guinea leadership ...' The Administration seeks 'responsibility' rather than 'leadership' in councillors at this stage. In a colonial situation what appears to be 'responsible' to government and to the natives may differ widely. It is to avoid this gap that political functions are deprecated.

31) E.O. (L.G.) to D.N.A., 6.4.59, NA 40-1-10.

32) Ibid.
namely, that the councils would expect some attention to be paid their opinions in policy and planning.

In the same liberal spirit however, the Administration planned the meeting of delegates from all the New Guinea councils (excluding Papua) at Madang from 1st - 5th June, 1959. The agenda was drawn up by the councils, though in close consultation with their supervising officers. Altogether thirty-three resolutions were passed, dealing with such matters as the individualization of land tenure, the appointment of native assessors to lower courts, Mission pressures in council areas, and the principle of voluntary participation in native local government.

(iv) The Implications of Councils' Political Role.

Officers attending the conference were surprised at the 'political maturity', as it was described, which the delegates showed in discussion. This was also shown in the moderateness and coherence of the resolutions, many of which voiced opinions or requests which individual councils had long been making. Despite the fact that the conference clearly represented a political landmark, the first reports on it did not reach the Minister until August 13th, more than two months after it was held. He immediately realized its significance and expressed great annoyance at the delay.

33) Minutes, Madang Conference. L.G. Section 14-7-32.
he was particularly irritated to find that the reports of the conference had apparently not received the close attention either of the Administrator or of the Secretary of his Department.

The papers (he said) seem to me to reveal a highly important development ... and should receive attention at the highest level.

After reading the report, he acknowledged that the need for some form of political representation, probably by indirect election from the base of the local government councils, was developing much more quickly than he had anticipated. The reports, he said,

... reveal maturity rather greater than I would have expected to find at the present stage.

Indeed, this maturity was so far ahead of his expectations that he suspected that Administration officers had had a large say in the nature and recording of decisions at the conference; he insisted on precise information on the extent to which this had been done so that he could accurately assess the significance of the resolutions.

He pointed out that the political implications were immediate - a point which, as with the Tolai meetings, had been underestimated within the Administration:

When we promote such activities ... we have to be very careful about two consequences of our actions. One is that if we promote an expression of opinion we have to face the responsibility of paying due


35) Ibid.
regard to that expression of opinion. The other is that when the native people have been encouraged to express their views they will quite properly expect some notice to be taken of those views ... consequential action is an unavoidable result of the promotion of the Local Government Councils Conference, and action has to be taken and the native representatives informed of it.

The Minister was particularly worried that if supervising officers had taken a direct part in the suggestion of an agenda or the framing of resolutions, the councils would be justified in believing that the Administration was seriously considering a change of policy. This applied particularly to the first three resolutions, on the land question:

Have we in these three resolutions permitted or promoted an expression of opinion about lands policy which we are never likely to carry out? ... resolutions of this kind cannot simply be accepted as an interesting indication of native opinion.

(In these resolutions, the councils asked that councils be allowed to register individual land holdings for cash cropping, on the lines of the Higaturu scheme; that native corporate bodies, including councils, be empowered to lease land direct from natives; and that the Administration find the means to consolidate landholdings into single blocks).

A number of the items on the agenda had only a tenuous connection with local government powers and functions, in that they were essentially central government responsibilities, the problems deriving from which tended to occur particularly in local government areas because of their economic potential or relatively sophisticated populations. Examples

36) Ibid.
37) Ibid.
would be the questions of rural credit and of compulsory school attendance, in addition to the land matters cited above.

The Minister insisted that prompt decisions be made on the resolutions of the conference. Decisions were complicated for the Administration, however, by two factors: firstly, many of the resolutions touched on matters which were at the time under policy re-appraisal (rural credit, for example, and the principle of grants-in-aid); and secondly, the Executive Officer (Local Government) admitted that some of the agenda items may have derived indirectly from promptings by supervising officers – resolution 24, asking that the establishment of sub-district and district councils not be considered until local government had further expanded, certainly was not of native origin, for the delegates had little understanding of its meaning. The Administration, therefore, was caught between its own policy responsibilities and an uncertain assessment of what the natives really wanted. As a result, a consolidated statement on Administration action was not given the councils until June, 1960, a year after the conference. (It is worth pointing out at this

38) E.O. (L.G.) to Administrator, 29.9.1959. NA 44-4-1. He felt that, irrespective of the phrasing, the resolutions represented the opinions expressed. All discussion was in Pidgin, but the resolutions are in English – an admitted difficulty. The resolutions were framed by a drafting committee of four natives ('remarkable men and probably show more awareness than most native people') which met with 'at least one officer' at the end of each day to frame resolutions, based on the main points of discussion, for submitting the following day.
point that, although the Madang conference represented only the New Guinea councils, Administration decisions arising from it had Territory-wide application).

In his reply to the conference, the Director of Native Affairs remarked that certain resolutions could not be acted on by central government 'because of policy considerations'; however, he felt that the councils could feel satisfied with the fact that 'quite a number' of decisions had been taken along lines suggested by the conference. In fact, an analysis of Administration actions show that, although 9 1/2 of the 33 requests of the conference were acceded to by the Administration, policy on all the major issues remained unchanged. On the land question the Administration politely re-affirmed policy, which reserved all land dealings and registration to the control of the government. A request for rural credit seemed to founder on the same obstacle, for the councils were told that this was dependent on title to land. The request for universal compulsory education in council areas was also rejected because of central government policy defined by the Education Advisory Board:

Evidence before the Board indicated that the major need was for more schools and not for legislation to enforce attendance at schools.

39) D.N.A. to all D.O.s, A.D.O.s, Councils and Delegates, 20.6.1960, NA 44-4-1. Such conferences have since been held annually.

40) Ibid.

41) Ibid.
Overall government policy, of course, applied both to council and to non-council areas, and the rejection of such requests by the Administration was tantamount to a rejection by the Administration of the concept that the provision of local government enabled such policy to be locally modified, or control of it locally delegated. This is particularly applicable to the matter of land registration, for which the councils, in size and the manner of representation appear to be ideal units.

The Administration also re-affirmed that the policy of voluntary participation in native local government would be continued, against the wishes of the conference. 42

(v) Separating Local Problems and Central Politics.

The Administration agreed to the request that further conferences of native local government councils should be held annually; but by the time the ground had been laid for the next conference, (in December 1960 and embracing all the Territory's councils), the Minister had taken steps to see that the discussion of policy matters outside the strict province of local government could be debated at the central level. He strongly deprecated interpretations of the second conference as political. 43

The expressions of the Tolai, and of the Madang

42) Ibid., items 26-7.

conference, were quite outside the normal functions of local government councils. The great majority of council meetings, the agenda for which are usually drawn up by the councils' executive committees in consultation with supervising officers, are closely confined to matters within the statutory and policy province of the councils. To take the councils of a politically conscious group - for example, the Toaripi and Moripi of the Eastern Gulf: the Toaripi monthly meeting of February 1960 discussed the training of the assistant clerk; additions and improvements to the council chambers; the registration of births, deaths and marriages; the opening of the market; and news of the council boat. The Moripi council discussed the building of a council school at Miaru; the water supply at Oiapu; and the duties and training of council staff (constables and clerk). \(^{44}\)

Meetings elsewhere follow a similar pattern. In fact, the institution of councils, involving as it does the immediate removal from office of the old village officials, tends for a time to put the Administration out of touch with local native opinion. The fact that almost all councils are entirely composed of elected members reinforces this tendency; by contrast, in the British Solomons the councils still include a proportion of District Headmen, who provide a

---

\(^{44}\) Moripi and Toaripi Fari, No.9, 1.3.1960 (one of the better publications produced by the council, in association with the sub-district office - monthly; carried general sub-district news).
There seems little doubt that the events of 1958-9 signified to the Minister that the local government councils were developing political functions beyond those of training in local responsibility which policy approves. Moreover, in Port Moresby there were indications for the first time in 1958 that the natives were ready, organizationally, to go beyond the local government councils in pursuit of economic and political ends. This signified the beginning of the transition to the political phase. The Motu leaders had previously pressed for action on urban wage rates and housing through personal contacts and the Public Service Association. But in late 1958 the so-called Kerema peoples resident in Port Moresby formed a kind of mutual aid society called the Port Moresby Kerema Welfare Society. The stated aims of this society were to provide 'places and opportunities' for a number of functions including 'District Meetings' and 'Special Studies', emergency accommodation for out-of-work members or for visitors, and places where members might 'learn good and useful things in their spare time'. Members were to be drawn from Gulf natives of good standing, who were expected to 'contribute regularly' and to exercise a continuous link with central government.

45) The case of Kenya might also be cited: Local Councils were established as long ago as 1924, but the District Councils still include appointed as distinct from popularly elected members. See Appendix C, II.


'discipline' over the members through a committee. Each village group represented in Port Moresby was to have its own committee member, elected by the group.48

Rural aspirations lacking adequate political outlets have long existed in the eastern Gulf; the cult movements led by Tommy Kabu (Purari) and Torea (Moveave) since the war spring to mind. Torea became a councillor when the Moveave-Toaripi council was established in 1958; but the spread of the Kerema Welfare Society to take in most of the coastal parts of the Gulf and Western districts, during 1960, suggests that wider aspirations do exist in these areas, requiring an institutional outlet.49

Meanwhile, in Port Moresby in May, 1960 the Kerema, Motu and other groups joined together, and with the help of an Administration lawyer, W.A. Lalor, formed the Papua and New Guinea Workers' Association, which negotiated with the employers a minimum urban wage of £3 per week for Port Moresby, Lae and Rabaul. As Groves has remarked, the Minister has begun to show himself more responsive to

48) According to Groves, cit. sup., the Society derived from the ambition of the best educated of the Kerema natives, Albert Maori Kiki (who had had long contact with Toua Kapena of Hanuabada), to unite the Kerema people with other tribal groups. The organizing of his own people was only a beginning.

pressures from the urban elite. This probably fits into the administrative pattern of drawing directly political functions away from native local government. The same might be said of the reform of the Legislative Council in 1960 which, in view of the Minister's generally cautious political views, was surprisingly liberal, providing for the election of six natives through an indirect 'electoral college' procedure largely based on the councils, and for a non-official majority.

Fienberg and other officers had hoped for the abandonment of the indirect plan of representation, and for direct elections to the Legislative Council. This, it was felt, would have brought the electors into more immediate touch with central policy. It would also have gone further towards separating local government from central politics. On the other hand, the system on which the 1961 Legislative Council was constituted is designed to make use of the sense of

50) Groves, Politics in Port Moresby, p.8. The Association created strong interest - 500 at a committee meeting. One of the Hanuabadan leaders, the Secretary Sinaka Goava, emphasised that its aims were solely economic (new labour legislation has since enforced this) and said that the Association 'had no intention of causing any trouble'. South Pacific Post, 17.12.1960.

51) C.J. Lynch, A New Constitution for Papua and New Guinea, Journal of the Polynesian Society, 70, 2, June 1961, pp. 243-7. As Lynch has remarked, the possibility of the defeat of the government on major issues could result in 'political dynamite'. Significantly, in October 1960 the Territory's first political party, the United Progress Party, was formed by two European non-officials, R. Bunting and D. Barnett, and an elected native, Simogun Peta - South Pacific Post, 28.10.60.

52) Memo. of 5.11.57, NA 39-1-0.
responsibility and education in political procedures which local government is intended to inculcate.

An almost certain result, however, will be that native local government councils will become political pressure groups, and that political leaders at the national level will use them as a means of enlisting support. According to Groves this is precisely what happened in Hanuabada in 1960-1, and there is every reason to expect that the movement will extend. A certain anxiety, based on analogies with African examples, has pervaded the Administration in regard to the urban elite; the system of election from local government partially represented an attempt to concentrate politics in the rural areas; but this is also an excellent way to encourage urban political organizations to spread, and the result of the system may well be to involve local government more closely in central politics and the determination of basic policies. 54

53) Groves, Politics in Port Moresby, p.9.

54) Cf. speech of Minister at opening of Legislative Council session, Port Moresby, 17.10.1960 ( Territories booklet, p.8): 'The lesson of Africa is not that we have to gallop madly along a path of political change ... The welfare of the people comes first.'

(i) The Western Approach

The Administration's approach to the constitution of councils, as to their duties, powers and functions, reflects the attempt to overleap the intermediate, traditional - or, in British terms, Native Authority - stage, and pass straight to local government on English lines.

Section 5 of the Ordinance leaves it to the discretion of the Administrator to decide how a council should be constituted; though sub-section (2) states that he should 'have regard to relevant native custom'. This is a borrowing from African legislation which has been taken as having no application in New Guinea: in no sense are councils regarded as customary institutions, and this extends to their constitution. From the beginning it has been policy that councillors should be democratically elected, rather than that the Administration should by nomination or other selection methods try to ensure that natives with some traditional standing are represented. ¹

Indeed, the absence of powerful hereditary leaders and of appointed headmen has facilitated the use of democratic

procedures. The Administration claims that the free election method of appointment tends to be in full accord with customary Melanesian practices, affording natives the chance to choose their own leaders.  

Regulations 4-10 specify the conditions for the constituting of councils. Provision is universally made for election by ballot; those eligible to vote are male natives over the age of seventeen who are liable to council tax, and those females over seventeen who have applied to have their names entered on the Tax Register. (For the initial council election, all adult natives resident in the council area are eligible to vote). The initial elections are for a period of one year; thereafter elections are held biennially, with the exception of Hanuabada, where elections are triennial.

The statutory provision for nomination by the Administration is regarded as a reserve power only, to be used in exceptional circumstances. In Papua the Administration claims it has never been used, though in the Trust Territory the presidents of the But-Boiken and Ambenob councils have not been subjected to the indignity of election, but as outstanding leaders have been nominated by the D.O. 'with the full agreement of the


3) Natives who are exempted from payment of tax by the Council's Tax Tribunal may also vote. Eligible persons must have resided in the council area for at least four months. Persons residing on alienated land are excluded. (Regs. 6, 82-3).
people. The Vunamami council constitution is unique in providing that its president shall be chosen by the incoming council from the residents at large within its area. The reason for this was the great prestige of the Paramount Luluai at the time local government was introduced in 1950. The tradition has continued with his nephew, Tovin ToBaining.

In Papua, the proclamation for the Marshall Legoon council (gazetted 7th November, 1957) provided for the nomination of ten members, about one-third of its total. The reason for this was that serious divisions between the elders and the young men were apparent to the local officers; moreover, the young men were well organized in what were ostensibly sports clubs, and officers felt that there was a danger that they might be able to dominate the elections completely. This fear proved to be unfounded, however, and the power of nomination was not used.

The claim that direct nomination by the Administration has never been used in Papua, however, would seem to be not absolutely accurate. An unusual situation arose in Daru in 1958, when the elections to the Daru (coastal Kiwai) council were held. Previously the semi-permanent residents of Daru village, comprising essentially the families of Administration

5) Details on NA 42–2–1; Information from E.O. (L.G.). Presidents and Vice-Presidents are elected by the councils from their own number.
6) NA 41–5–1.
and trade-store servants, had constituted a separate electorate; but for the 1958 election they voted in their home-villages, so that Daru village electorally ceased to exist. Its representative, however, had been Dau Baera, an outstanding leader who for the previous year had been council president. The Department of Native Affairs approved the suggestion that he be nominated directly to the council. This situation persisted only four months, until the Daru and Kiwai estuary councils were amalgamated.\(^7\)

The very rarity of this occurrence emphasises the extent to which the Administration has been dedicated to the electoral principle. The practicability of it, generally even in parts of New Guinea which have long had appointed Paramount Luluais, is a measure of the fact that almost everywhere there are no natives with any executive experience or administrative standing beyond the exercise of minor police powers at the village level. This may facilitate the introduction of Western electoral procedures, but it also means that councils have little native executive experience to draw on.\(^8\)

---

\(^7\) P.O. Walsh to D.C., 28.5.58, Daru 23-4-2(4); approved D.N.A. 14.6.58. Because of extensive emigration, all tax registers are maintained in villages of origin — hence the electoral arrangement: cf. Statement Papua Report, 1958-9, p.50. Daru village had originally been directly represented at the express request of the residents.

\(^8\) An unfortunate aspect of this is the devolution of responsibility to the supervising officer; in Kenya, for example, particularly qualified natives, e.g. Government Chiefs, are still nominated to District Councils, and this reduces the tendency to turn to the D.O. — a point not considered in Papua. Local native representatives of the electorate and of central government thus automatically join in local planning. Cf. British Solomons — Appendix C, II.
(11) **Voting Methods**

Democratic expectations have been put so high in Papua that the Australian system of preferential voting is generally used in council elections. An exception is Hanuabada where the natives are sufficiently literate to be able to vote by simple secret ballot. Field staff have not been entirely happy about the use of the preferential system; broadly, however, the Administration has tended to insist on the advantages of the democratic ideal embodied in the preferential system as against its practical disadvantages.

The instructions which have been issued on electoral procedures reflect both the insistence on Australian conceptions and the pressure towards uniformity by central government - two all-pervading facets of the local government system which often lead to debatable consequences. A Circular Memorandum of 6th August, 1958, after discussing the advantages of various electoral systems, came down on the side of the preferential system as the prime desideratum, though paradoxically it also stated that 'the system should be simple, bearing in mind that it must be such as to be easily understood and effectively used by illiterates'. Voting by secret ballot was also endorsed as highly desirable; but the difficulty arose in combining this with the preferential system. Symbols would have to be used almost everywhere if secret ballot voting were to be recommended, but for practical purposes this would have to be allied with...
a 'first-past-the-post' system, which came in for heavy criticism:

The crude 'first-past-the-post' system ... has an inherent danger, of a candidate in a three (or more) cornered contest gaining a seat although a majority of the electors are against him, and the further possibility of a party supported by a minority of the electors obtaining a majority in parliament or council. This, combined with an unequal distribution of electors has accentuated the tendency to minority government.

On the other hand, the relative complexity of preferential voting was not regarded as a serious deterrent:

A candidate obtaining an absolute majority of first preferences is elected. If one does so, the candidate with the fewest first preferences is eliminated and the second preferences on the relevant papers distributed as first preferences among the other candidates, and so on until a stage is reached at which some candidate has an absolute majority - one half plus one of the valid votes cast.

It was recognized that if the preferential system was to become standard, the 'whispering ballot' would have to be continued also. Both this and the complex counting of preferential votes had the considerable disadvantage that allegations of partiality could be made against officers supervising council elections (for this reason two European

---

9) D.N.A. to all D.O.s, 6.8.58, NA 39-12. This must be a perfect example of the cross-cultural application of an irrelevant argument. There has never been the slightest suggestion of 'parties' within N.L.G. councils; nor are they likely.

10) Ibid.
officers must be present at all times during the voting).  

In practice, preferential voting, despite its attendant drawbacks, became mandatory. Field-staff were by no means united on the issue, however, the D.O. at Daru, where the natives were certainly better able to understand European institutions than most others, felt that the preferential system was unintelligible to the natives; at the 1960 elections for the Kiwai council the supervising officer noted that the only difficulty occurred when there were more than two candidates:

Some of the people just could not understand why they had to give two names instead of one.

Similarly, in the Higaturu council elections of 1959 the supervising officer refused to use the preferential system, claiming that with the large populations in many villages it was 'complicated and unwieldy', and that anything but the first-past-the-post system with a whispering ballot would have confused the electors. For this he was roundly rebuked by his seniors; the D.O. claimed that where the voting was close the first-past-the-post system was a 'hit-or-miss' affair:

11) Ibid. The Cambridge Conference (R.I.P.A., Local Government in the Colonies, p.57) opposed the 'whispering ballot' because of the involvement of European officers. An additional complication is that natives may feel that they are being asked to choose a councillor acceptable to the Administration - hence the perpetuation of non-native criteria.

12) Marginal comments, D.N.A. memo., Daru 23-6-3.

13) C.P.O. To A.D.O., 13.4.60, Daru 23-6-3.

... only by the allocation of preferences can the backing of the majority of the people for the elected Councillor be assured.

The use of the preferential system in fact represented an attempt by the Administration to assure itself that the candidate most natives prefer had been elected. Counterbalancing this to some extent is the influence exerted by the Administration in pre-election campaigns. Circular Instruction No. 306 told local government staff that this had to be done with discretion to avoid a reversion to direct administration. At the same time it acknowledged that until the natives developed a political sense they would need guidance on 'voting intelligently': that is, looking for certain desirable qualities in candidates. In practice, local staff are anxious to see that natives with some capacity are elected; while they are also anxious to ward off 'undesirable influences'.

On this latter point, in the Gazelle Peninsula something of a contest developed between Catholic missionaries and the Administration. In 1951 missionaries in the Reimber area were believed to have launched a campaign to oppose the election of natives not 'doctrinally reliable'. Before the 1955 Reimber elections the Administration warned the natives of the 'sectarian issue' (while the mission was exhorting

15) D.O. to A.D.O. (L.G.) 24.7.59, ibid; D.N.A. to D.O., 10.8.59. NA 41-3-2.

them to elect 'God-fearing men') with the result, the S.N.A.O. reported, that 'the elections turned out favourably for the Administration'. Later, the election of a majority of Catholics was regarded as a setback.\(^{17}\) Elsewhere, the knowledge that certain candidates would be defeated on preferences has led to a dislike for the system: in the Higaturu election cited above, a woman from Dobodura whose election had been hailed in 1956 would probably have been defeated in 1959 had preferences been taken.\(^{18}\)

(iii) Implications of the Electoral System: Social Divisions and Council Representation

Because of the non-traditional emphasis in the constitution of councils, the Administration has been unduly worried about the many instances of pre-selection - that is, where villagers have already made up their minds on a suitable councillor before nominations are called. It is felt that this is a reflection of their lack of political sense, and it obstructs democratic training. Officers have therefore been advised not to accept this situation without very careful enquiry:

The arbitrary selection of a single nominee should be avoided ... You are probably aware that lack of opposition may be nothing more than a surface

\(^{17}\) Memo. D.M. Fienberg, 9.9.51. NA 39-1-0; marginal comments on memo. a/D.O. Orken to D.N.A., 19.11.55, in NA 39-1-2. Fienberg suggested to the mission that 'controversial matters' not be mentioned from the pulpit.

manifestation ... Even where there is no opposition to a candidate, it is advisable, at this stage of development to conduct an election anyway. It provides an opportunity to educate the people in electoral and democratic procedures and any opportunities to do this should never be neglected.

This can lead to ludicrous results. For example, in the Higaturu area, the village of Koipa eventually nominated three candidates for the 1959 election. In some respects Koipa might be regarded as a village of which a real electoral contest could be expected, for it was formed of an agglomeration of village and clan groups which fled the Mt. Lemington explosion. But an outstanding native named Philemon (Inambu/Kiouei) had established his authority in the village before the council was established, and he was the leading personality amongst the five councillors originally elected. By 1959 many of the immigrants had departed, so that relatively, Philemon's standing, if anything, increased. Thus, although there were three candidates, Philemon polled all the votes cast. The candidature of the other two men had clearly been only an Administration-induced formality.

What the Administration appears to mean by inculcating a political sense in council areas is that if the natives can be taught the most useful qualities (in Administration terms) to look for in councillors and if they can be educated in

19) Digest of L.G. Bulletins, p.7. Cf. Daru, 1960: 'The people were asked to try and nominate more than one candidate'. Daru 23-6-3.
democratic procedures, the result will be a breaking down of traditional barriers which at present tend to nullify the representation of minority groups. As councils and electorates expand the number of parishes represented by each councillor increases. Thus, within the Ealeba council it was possible in 1951-7 for all the clans in Wagawaga village to have their own councillors; but when Ealeba amalgamated with Tavara to form the Milne Bay council, this was impracticable: Wagawaga was restricted to two councillors. In the Higaturu area, as the council expanded and population was re-distributed, it also became necessary to enlarge electorates; but many groups were suspicious of their loss of direct representation. This suspicion carried over into the elections, for voting (for example, in the combined electorate Beuru/Ahora/Kendata/Omba) was entirely on a village basis, 'so that the candidate of the largest village invariably won'. This type of situation is the result, not only of the high degree of traditional segmentation, but also of the failure over a lengthy period of time to achieve any form of confederation within the structure of direct administration. The Administration is acutely conscious of this problem (most serious in those non-Highland areas where there has been little cultural breakdown, as here among the Orokaiva); but a solution is said to lie only in persistent

21) A.D.O. (L.G.) to D.O., 10.4.59, Pop. 14-8/1076.
propaganda to create a wider socio-political awareness.  

(It might be interpolated here that the fear of aggravating this situation has probably deterred the Administration from further extending electorates; this puts an upper limit on the size of a council. In 1956-9 the Higaturu council had 60 members, but this was considered unwieldy; the number was then reduced to 54 by combining elements of old electorates, partially with the above results. In order to keep the number down and at the same time avoid intra-electorate divisions, the supervising officer was unwilling further to extend the council. The average ratio of councillors to their total electorate population was, in 1959, 1:195 in Papua. In the Higaturu council area it was 1:212).

The Administration was sporadically conscious of the fact that its aversion to direct nomination of councillors resulted in a lack of competent men, or in an unfortunate social balance. A notable feature of many councils is the way in which, after the first elections, the older men drop out;

23) D.N.A. memo. of 6.8.58 (No.306) cit.sup. A recommended method of instigating divisions is through electorate committees; but the success of these also is dependent on an awareness of common goals and problems. Participation in them could hasten real combination. In the Kiwai area the councillors' committees seemed to function well - in Tureture, for example, the young leader of the small Kunini immigrant group, who has a negligible chance of becoming councillor, often raises his voice strongly in the committee. The fact that the Administration is anxious for the committees to function effectively gives him a lever over the councillor. The Kiwai area, however, is exceptional because of its history.

24) A.D.O. (L.G.) to D.O., 10.4.59, cit.sup. He regarded 1:200 as the ideal ratio.
the reason, it is said, is that they lack the education to follow the 'complexities' of council business. A further reason is that as the councils' functions are directed almost exclusively to works and services, with negligible reference to customary matters, there is nothing for the elders to do. At the same time the elders are trying to uphold custom in the villages. Councils have even been seen as mechanisms whereby the young men may gain ascendancy over the elders.\(^2^5\) This division is undoubtedly exacerbated by the abrupt removal from office of the village constables (in New Guinea, luluaie) when councils are instituted. The division possibly seldom becomes public for a number of reasons, one being that the former village officials often combined government office successfully with quasi-traditional functions, and that they continue to sit in the background and exercise authority while the younger men, in effect, represent them on the council. This certainly appears to be so amongst the Orokaiva, for the young men regularly defer to the elders in the villages.

In other areas other factors apply: in Milne Bay, for example, the Kwato-trained elite have maintained ascendancy because of their education and wide experience (reinforced particularly by the sprinkling of Kwato-trained women in the villages). On the other hand, this is partially a dissociated elite - many of them have little knowledge of or interest in custom - and in 1960 it could not be discounted that the

\(^2^5\) e.g. in the Reimber area, Fienberg memo. of 9.9.51, cit. sup.
council might become the centre of a power struggle between the Kwato leaders (President Mahuru Mark of Gwawili and Vice-President Rustus of Maivara) and those leaders who had achieved influence partly through government favour and partly through traditional activities (Tilaka of Kilakilana and possibly Dipauli of Wagawaga).

The issue of the suppression of the elders on Bougainville was brought prominently to public notice at the Madang conference in 1959. The Teop-Tinputz council was established in the Buka area in 1958. The village officials in this area may have had exceptional influence, for the kukera (= luluai) even in 1930 was beginning to take the place of the traditional tsunaun (in many instances the offices and functions were combined), and the tsunaun in turn was a man with unusual authority by New Guinea standards, being the hereditary leader of a ranked lineage.26

In 1960 it was noted that the former luluais still seemed to exercise considerable 'behind the scenes' influence, though most of the councillors were comparatively young men; but there was little apparent friction in the villages. The question that immediately came to mind, however, was the reason for their non-representation on the council. The Director of Native Affairs suggested that, as an interim measure, the councillors be advised to enlist the active

26) See B. Blackwood, Both Sides of Buka Passage, pp.45-53.
support of the former *lulua* and *tuitula* through village committees; but for an overall solution he was inclined to place the responsibility on the supervising officer:

If these men still exercise power, it indicates that the situation is a subject for your careful consideration. Why were they not elected? Were they suspicious enough of the innovation to avoid election? Were the older influential conservatives fully aware of the aims and objectives of area administration? If not, all the provisions of Circular Instructions 306 and 141 need to be fully implemented.

In other words, the solution was, as he saw it, to give adequate instruction, advice and propaganda before councils were constituted. There was no suggestion that faults might lie in the non-customary bias of council's functions, or that other methods might be used in constituting councils.

(This case affords a remarkable contrast with one quoted by the 1955 Cambridge Conference from Eastern Nigeria, where tribal rulers were likewise lacking, and where the highest social unit was generally the village. Here after 1928 direct administration through warrant chiefs changed to indirect administration through clan councils of elders. Young literates gradually joined these councils as chosen representatives of the elders, when the latter found themselves unable to cope with the complexity of councils' functions. These councils were then gradually converted into

---

27) Sohano P.R. 18/1959-60; attached comments, 4.4.60. The D.O. replied that it was not possible to elect every man who commanded influence.
elected local authorities, after the normal British colonial pattern. 28

(iv) The Problems of Confederation and Council Goals

The real problem which central government faces in Papua in relation to local government is in creating an adequate local consciousness which will unite all segments and villages in the drive to carry out the council's functions. Ultimately this alone can get over sectional reserve, antagonism, or withdrawal. But this degree of central government involvement can defeat its own ends, for the natives may well interpret native local government as another element in the paternalistic framework. The facts that there is negligible scope for custom, that councils have no direct means of transmitting local political opinion to central government, that they have very limited control over economic development within their areas (in brief, that councils are Administration instrumentalities) tend to reinforce this native interpretation. The very steps which the Administration takes to make a population council-conscious may further accentuate this trend; but constant propaganda is the only real solution which the Administration sees open to it, and its success is held to be justified by the claim that polls can be increased by up to 16% by persistent activity on the part of the

An analysis of leadership in council areas still awaits close anthropological analysis. Brown has written some perceptive comments about the Chimbu, but this is a Highland community and perhaps does not really reflect the situation elsewhere. She states, however, that the people seem to accept the new values, that they are convinced that the council is the true road to progress. Young men who adopt the new values as stepping stones to leadership seem to be accepted, in much the same way as the 'satraps', the lulua and tultul, were accepted. But the implication seems to be that the council is in effect a mechanism for direction from above, rather than local government from below:

In this society, the introduction of administration and native officials has not reduced the authority of the native leaders at all. It has given them powers never before held by one Chimbu over another. ... When the doubtful rewards of military success were removed, the goals of the competition shifted to favouritism from Europeans, and opportunities to gain followers in pursuing peace and progress. The

29) Digest of L.G. Bulletins, Dec. 1961, p.6. A very close watch is kept on all election returns - to ensure efficiency and uniformity in data-collection a standard procedure was laid down in Circular instruction No. 315, 27.6.60.

30) In particular, the stage of direct administration was compressed in time here, so that many of the lulua and tultul are still young and active enough to lead the council. Moreover, these people are still so backward generally that literacy and outside experience are probably less important qualifications than on the coast.
tultuls and luluais are, like satraps, dependent upon the colonial administration for their power. This even holds when an elected council replaces appointed officials. The Chimbu have yet to learn the meaning of representative government, and so far the councils have no real power.

It is going to be difficult for local initiative and responsibility to develop under this mantle. Even the local leader Kondam, largely responsible for bringing four tribes within the council, still leans heavily on government for support. Moreover, there is a fear that, to the extent that such leaders have a following independent of government, it involves a subliminal cult attitude to local government. Such cults temporarily unite large numbers of people under extraordinary leadership in pursuit of novel goals; but in the long term their results are unhealthy, for apathy and withdrawal follow the failure of anticipated massive achievement.

This situation however would explain the apparently harmonious absorption of local government to date, which seems to confound Fallers' thesis – framed after a study of the Uganda Soga – that segmentary societies suffer greater strain than hierarchical ones when alien institutions of local government are introduced.

31) P. Brown, unpublished paper on Chimbu leadership (pre-publication title, From Anarchy to Satrapy).
32) Ibid.
At the same time, all societies embody different values and beliefs, no matter what temporary or surface reconciliations are made; and one must wonder whether latest conflicts do not exist - as they do even under colonial governments most sensitive to traditional prerogatives. It might be noted that the Tolai have long pressed that some independent authority be given councils: a rejection of the satrap conventions. Epstein has predicted that "as present tensions build up a younger generation of spokesmen, no longer content to work within a paternalistic framework, will come into its own." The danger for local government would appear to be that these men will become the real leaders, but at the same time abandon the local arena altogether, or use it merely as a stepping stone. This has already happened in Hanuabada, where the percentage polls fell from 83.5% in 1951, to 66.8% in 1954 ('the election aroused little interest in the village'), to 34.5% in 1957. The real leaders withdrew, and in the 1957 elections this allowed five women to be elected, although in the largest sub-village, Poreporena, the female poll fell to 17.9%. The result was that the council languished, despite the

34) See A. Richards, East African Chiefs, and the perceptive review in The Times British Colonies Review, 2nd Quarter 1960, p.29. This contrasts the criteria valued fundamentally by the lyro - dignity, politeness, gentle strength, generosity and a knowledge of the people, with those valued by the government - efficiency, impartiality, drive and a bright manner.

fact that it has a greater reserve of education and executive experience to draw on than any other council in Papua. 36

(v) The Reality of Election

The acceptance of alien criteria need not mean that, within these and the traditional confines, there cannot be a real electoral contest. An example from the Higaturu area will illustrate: here the parish, clan and electoral boundaries still often coincide. Huiavususu is such a simple socio-political unit: its males belong to one clan (Seho). The councillor in 1960, Uhembu, is also head of the clan; but until 1959 his brother's son and probable successor, Akembo, a much younger man, had been councillor. Akembo is a teacher in a nearby mission school; the villagers felt originally that, as a councillor, he combined high status within the clan with the advantages of education.

After three years, however, many villagers came to the conclusion that Akembo was unable to give adequate attention to both the council and the mission. Uhembu also felt this, and for this reason stood for election against Akembo in 1959. Uhembu was not perhaps as alert as Akembo, and certainly lacked his education, but he was the clan head, he had more leisure, and he was more closely in touch with village activities.

36) Details, NA 41-1-2. A.D.O. Fleay to D.C., 22.9.54; D.O. Marsh to D.N.A., 15.10.57. The Administration could not adequately account for the abysmal 1957 poll; one factor was certainly the 'direct' attitude of D.O. Marsh.
Uhembu was elected; but the poll was close, 30 votes to 24.\textsuperscript{37}

In other electorates, particularly where several clan groups are represented, there may be a number of young men with similar affiliations and qualifications seeking election. (vi) The Emphasis on Women's Participation

One corollary of the non-traditional approach to local government has been the attention that has been paid to participation by women. Specific propaganda is aimed at women, and elections are watched with close concern for female interest. The response varies according to the social conditions: in Milne Bay, where Kwato has produced an elite of women educationally on level terms with the men, one or two women have been councillors from the beginning.\textsuperscript{38} In the Higaturu area four women were elected in 1957 (out of 60), but this fell to one in 1959; the Administration was so concerned that it immediately arranged for the visit of a Welfare Officer to set up Women's Clubs. This kind of organisation, which the men lack, may offset women's social disadvantages. In the Higaturu area, however, the men believed that women had proved unable to devote their time to their electorates and to ensure

\textsuperscript{37) M. Reay, Social Control Amongst the Orokalva, Oceania, XXIV, 1953, pp.110-8: analyses current leadership (indeterminate), states that social control is weak, but that the embo Kiti (Village head) had a weak hereditary lineage status, though lacking sanctions.}

\textsuperscript{38) Sinaeada 14-40-2.}
the observance of rules.\textsuperscript{39}

In the Kiwai area women have long been organized (in Mabadauan, for example) into village committees; and, in Mabadauan, Oli Kewere is recognized as a formidable influence. But, although representatives of the women's committees regularly attend council meetings, Oli still regards council activities as men's work. It is enough yet for women to vote, and for their committees to co-operate with councillors in the villages.\textsuperscript{40}

\textsuperscript{39} D.O. to D.N.A., 18.8.59, Pop. 14-8-22/4. Williams said women had a low status amongst the Orokaiva. Council activities cut across women's unremitting routine duties; in Milne Bay Councillor Rukoi (Wagawaga, ex-Kwato) is unmarried.

\textsuperscript{40} Personal information. The Administration has not been concerned here, because women's co-operation to ensure the success of councils' social programmes is assured. See Appendix A, 1.
II. Education

(i) Councils as Central Government Agents.

As late as October, 1957 the Secretary of the Department of Territories stated that Section II(o) of the N.L.G. Ordinance 'seemed to contemplate' participation by councils, as agents of central government, in education.¹ As Administration instrumentalities, Councils have had little voice in educational policy. Their participation has been governed largely by Section II(b), which authorises the carrying out of works for the benefit of the community in their areas.

Under Section 15 of the Education Ordinance, 1952, councils were authorised to conduct schools, but these were to be subject to the control of the Director of Education.² The maintenance of standards has been the overriding aim. As a result, councils have built and maintained schools which the Administration staffs and controls.

This frees councils from the strain of teachers' salaries; to maintain standards the Administration would not sanction


2) Report Papua, 1958-9, p.78. The prime purpose of this Ordinance was to bring all secular education in the Territory under the supervision of the Education Department.
lower scales for teachers in council schools. Councils were generally happy with this division of responsibilities with the Education Department, with one or two notable exceptions.

The Nganalaka Rural School at Kokopo (Vunamami council) was one of the most notable early experiments. The council bought the land and built the school, while the Administration paid and housed a European teacher. Later, however, the Administration went well beyond the original conception of a primary boarding school with a strong agricultural bias. Using its policy prerogatives, the Administration made it a central school and a teacher training centre. The 1956 U.N. Mission hailed this new conception, combining academic and applied education; but a good deal of resentment was left within the council for Native Affairs officers to mollify. The fault was not entirely the Education Department's, however; by 1957 the educational views of the council were described as 'rather incoherent'. Responding to what could be described as political stimuli, the council's conception of the school's objects was changing: it wanted the agricultural bias maintained, but it also wanted natives to

3) Details in NA. 42-2-5, 39-4-1.
5) Memo. of 5.11.57, commenting on Lambert's address, p.13.
be educated as Administration field staff.\(^6\)

The Education Department responded to further council pressure (Education Committee meeting, January 1959) and enlarged the school's age-range and curriculum; but the D.E.O. then felt there was a danger that the school would create a precedent for other council areas.\(^7\) The Native Affairs staff, however, continued to blame Education for changing the original conception; to them this seemed to fit into the pattern of technical decisions without regard for their administrative repercussions.\(^8\) It was said that the Education Department had also acted unilaterally in another notable example of Administration/council co-operation, the Tavui Girls' School.\(^9\) Here the councils paid about 25\% of the establishment cost\(^10\), while the Administration provided the dormitories.\(^11\) The councils maintained a particular interest in the school, because they also provided the land for it; and land is at a premium in the Gazelle Peninsula.

---

7) D.E.O. Goroka (formerly at Rabaul) to Director of Education, 23.6.59, NA.42-2-5: The Trend towards the Grandiose Primary School. Those doing local government courses at Vunadadir visited the School.
8) Ibid., marginal note D.N.A. copy, undated.
9) Fienberg memo. of 5.11.57, cit. sup.
10) *South Pacific*, VIII, 5, June 1955, p.94.
In 1959 they were still making 'specific grants' to the School.\textsuperscript{12} It is not uncommon for councils to provide extra equipment or prizes even to purely Administration schools - a relationship similar to that of Parents' and Citizens' Associations in Australia.

The Native Affairs Department took these two examples as warnings of the tendency of specialist officers to use councils as convenient media for solving immediate problems, without thought to long-term implications\textsuperscript{13}; though in the Tolai areas Administration monopoly of policy has been mitigated by the deep local knowledge of the D.E.O., F.N. Boisen, who regularly discusses problems with the combined councils. To rely on personalities however, is not regarded as sound general policy.

(ii) Relations with the Missions.

The Administration did not directly enter education in Papua-New Guinea until post-1945; the missions have long had a monopoly, generally untrammelled, of elementary education. Mission reactions to council participation in education have therefore been most important. Broadly, the councils tried to avoid overlap by building Village Higher Schools, to complement the work of the missions in the lower primary schools.

\textsuperscript{13} Memo. of 5.11.57, cit. sup.
Policy in relation to the missions was framed in the Gazelle Peninsula. There the Tolai councils had built 17 Village Higher Schools by 1956, although their proportionate expenditure on education was not as high as that of the later councils. The Catholic spokesman had made the views of his mission clear, in the Territory's Legislative Council: councils should function similarly to Australian municipal organizations, with no active role in education.

In 1955 the Administration decided that councils should not separately subsidise mission schools, but that they could continue to build their own schools. This brought the matter to a head. Bishop Scharmach claimed that this constituted an infringement of the free voting rights of councillors; but his solution was that councils be debarred

14) Report New Guinea, 1955-6, p. Overall actual expenditure by councils on education in 1957 was 13.5%; expenditure by Tolai councils in 1953 represented 9.5% of total expenditure – see McAuley, loc.cit., p.884. In 1957-8 the Administration of Papua-New Guinea spent only 6% of total expenditure on education – Report Papua 1957-8, p.129: Report New Guinea 1957-8, p.164. An interesting African comparison is Kenya, where in the same year the Government was spending 13% of total expenditure on education – Kenya Report 1957-8, p.142. The missions received aid on a per-capita pupil basis after the war (only 4/- each); before the war the Tolai area was exceptional in having a good Administration school at Nodup and a technical school at Malaguna.


16) Administrator to D.N.A., 30.8.1955, NA.14-7-16.
from all participation in education. The mission hinted that natives in council areas might refuse to pay tax, and that they felt an injustice had been done them. The missionaries in the Gazelle Peninsula had told Rowley that council schools were redundant. (In 1957 Section 16 of the N.L.G. Ordinance was amended to provide heavy penalties for persons of any race who tried to prejudice the 'free and effective use' by councils of their powers).

In the so-called Rabaul Agreement of 1955, the Administration sought a compromise with the mission; the strength of the Catholics in the council areas, and the teetering future of local government at that time, made this necessary. The general features of the Agreement were incorporated in the Education (Council Schools) Regulations, 1955; these provided for the setting up of Local Education Committees in council areas, representing the Administration.

18) Ibid.
19) Ibid. The Bishop paraphrased the way in which Tolai Catholics looked at the issue: 'I pay tax. Some of that tax is used by the Council for schools. My conscience does not permit me to use the Council Schools. I get nothing. That is not fair.' The mission schools, of course, continued to receive central government grants, to which no natives at that time contributed anything directly. The Bishop said that 'such grants-in-aid are outside the Council system and not related to the people's own tax contributions.'

20) C.D. Rowley, loc.cit., p.442. Amended by Ord. 20/1957, s.4 - previously penalties had applied only to natives.
councils and missions according to a set formula. Such a Committee could recommend where council schools should be built, and could also recommend the granting of non-monetary assistance to non-council registered Higher Schools.

Under the Rabaul Agreement itself, the Committee could recommend that certain work be done or equipment provided for mission schools, the value of this to be offset against Administration subsidies. Missions could also staff council schools, but such teachers were to come under the direct control of the D.E.O.

The Agreement did not work well in the Gazelle Peninsula; the mission appeared to believe that it represented carte blanche to make financial demands. Its requests for aid to the councils were preposterous. The Local Education Committee gave the mission an ideal medium for exerting pressures; while in relation to the natives the Administration was in an impossible position - it was felt that sectarianism

22) *Reg.47/1955. Gazette No.65, 22.12.55. These committees were distinct from the education committees of the councils, and also from the District Education Committees dealing with both council and non-council areas - see Papua Report 1958-9, p.80.*

23) *NA.23-17-7. These Local Education Committees appear to have been confined to New Britain. Many officers believed the whole substance of the Rabaul Agreement to have general application.*

24) *A.D.O. to D.N.A. 10.10.56, Rabaul 14/11/6: Report, interview between D.O. Orken and W.R.Dishon of D.N.A., 29.11.1956, NA.23-17-7. The D.O. claimed that the mission demands had not been framed in collaboration with councillors or taxpayers at all, but were simply the work of individual missionaries. A.D.O. to D.O. 28.12.1956, Rabaul 14/11/6B. See Ch. VII.*
would increase. Local staff had to be restrained from accepting the mission point and withdrawing councils from all participation in education.

At this stage the Director of Education saw that a firm statement was called for; in 1956 he issued a circular memorandum looking forward to a closer association between his Department and local government. He emphasised that the councils presented a unique opportunity to educate natives in social and economic development. He stated as policy that councils should be encouraged to vote annually part of their revenues to education, and particularly to providing and maintaining Village Higher Schools.

The Catholic mission remained a stumbling block, however; for the Administration was watching developments in the Gazelle Peninsula before involving councils generally in education. To take one example, the D.C. Western District refused to sanction the building of schools by the Kiwai council, saying that the Administrator had intimated that council participation in education was to be discouraged.

26) Ibid.
27) Circular Memorandum No. 31/1956, 26.5.56. Educ. P.M.E/35-4. This offers an interesting comparison with the British Solomons, where the councils control the schools and teachers for which they pay; but this has led to a lowering of standards, as the teachers are paid rates below those of central government.
This was denied in Port Moresby as inconsistent with the Education Circular No. 31; nevertheless, in 1958 this council was still not participating in education, because the D.C. felt that the 'propriety' of its doing so had not been properly resolved.

Meanwhile, in the Gazelle Peninsula the Catholic mission was testing the principle of council aid to the full. 'Trouble' was threatened at any suggestion that aid be withdrawn; while demands for aid continued to be exorbitant.

By protracted negotiation with one mission the Administrator had worked himself into a peculiar difficulty, for only a firm general policy decision could deter the Catholics, while such a decision would have to involve the other three missions represented on his Advisory Board. Here it was felt certain that the Anglicans would support the Catholic principle, and the L.M.S. and Lutherans oppose it, leaving the Administrator with an invidious casting vote.

29) D.N.A. to D.C., 26.11.57, NA.41-4-6.

30) D.O. to D.N.A., 4.11.58. Daru 23-6-1. After the 1955 reorganization the D.C. was, of course, no longer subject to the D.N.A., but directly to the Administrator. Despite the views of the Director of Education and of D.N.A., the D.C. could pursue his own policy until a directive arrived from the Administrator. In Feb.1959 the Administrator officially informed the D.C. that he had misinterpreted his remarks of 1955, which applied only to the Rabaul situation, and that he should follow the proposals of the two directors - Asst. Admin. to D.C., 26.2.59, Admin.23-1-5.


32) Ibid. E.O.'s memo.
In the Peninsula there was further temporising, aid being limited (in 1957) to £150 by any council, 'on the clear understanding that no precedent was being created...'33 There was also a school of thought within the Administration, however, which regarded it as politically vital to avoid any African-type separatism between missions and native bodies in elementary education.34

Rather similar mission pressures had built up in other areas. In Milne Bay in 1953 some dissatisfaction was expressed with the quality of village schooling provided by the Kwato mission. It was suggested that if some of the village schools were council sponsored they would become eligible for direct Administration assistance. To the surprise of the N.A.S., however, at a public meeting the councillors reversed their stand and refused aid 'because their way was along Kwato's road with its accent on religious teaching in schools'.35 It was alleged that this was done under the influence of Mrs. Beavis, for long in charge of Kwato's schools and opposed to direct participation by the Administration in any form.36. There was clearly a division of opinion within the mission, however; for the

33) a/E.O. (Policy and Planning) to Admin. 10.11.58, F.35-1; D.N.A. to D.C. New Britain, 4.12.58, NA.23-17-7.
34) Ibid.
36) Ibid. Kwato was in debt at the time and grants from the Administration were based on student numbers. Kwato education was not free (parents were charged 30/- per month for a boarder if not fed by the parents) and their teachers received a pittance.
head of the mission, R. Abel, later instructed mission teachers, if necessary, to teach in council schools.37

This decision may have been forced by the council's pressing ahead with its own building programme: by 1959 the Milne Bay council had built and was maintaining three schools staffed by Administration teachers.38

In the Higaturu council area of the Northern District the Anglican mission is predominant. According to the council clerk, the Bishop tried to discourage any council participation in education.39 The mission was quite blunt with the Administration about its wishing to keep a monopoly of primary education: the Director of Education was told that it would not oppose a Village Higher School at Poho.40 The council felt that primary education was weak in some areas; this was holding up recruitment of students to a proposed

---

37) Ibid. Mrs. Beavis successfully objected to a council suggestion that a new school at Wagawaga, to be built without Mission assistance by the villagers, be sited next to the Council House. It was eventually built on mission land. (Bisimaka, the mission headquarters in the Bay, adjoins Wagawaga).

38) Report Papua 1958-9, p.86; illustration, facing p.80. A school in permanent materials was being constructed in Wagawaga at the time of my visit - May, 1960. Kwato has a crowded boarding school at Bisimaka. The Catholic mission has also expanded its education activities, with a boarding school for boys and girls at Daio.

39) P.O. Normoyle to D.C., 24.10.56, Popondetta 14-8-7.

40) Letter from Bishop Hand dated 8.3.57, on Popondetta 14-8-7. My italics. The Administration has a curious policy on religion, aimed at the 'voluntary acceptance' of Christianity 'in the absence of any indigenous body of religious faith founded on indigenous teaching or ritual'.
council technical school at Popondetta. But a primary school erected by villagers at the Administration's request is said to have been taken down again at the Bishop's request. Similarly, in the Ilimo area the Bishop was alleged to have threatened to 'fight the people' if the council built a school. In June, 1959, the Director accused the Anglican mission of using 'religious intimidation'. As late as August, 1959, at a conference at Agenehambo, the mission eventually confessed that it could not cope with primary education unaided. But the council's technical school had been held up for three years.

(iii) Antagonism and Separatism.

It is perhaps hardly surprising that the missions should have so vigorously defended an entrenched position, held for sixty or more years; but this defence defeated its own purpose by alienating both the councils and the Administration. The Madang conference strongly criticised the attitude of the missions, and asked the Administration to guarantee

41) Minutes, Higaturu Council, 22.10.1956.
42) D.E.O. to Director of Eduo. 22.10.59, Pop. Educ. Office.
43) Director of Eduo. to Administrator, inspection 18-20th June 1959. The gist of his report was that the standard of mission primary schooling was too low. Pop. 8-1-1.
44) Ibid.
45) A.D.O. (L.G.) to D.O. 20.3.59, Pop. 14-8-12/1. The D.O. (ibid.) doubted whether the Eduo. Dept. could provide a teacher for the technical school; but 12 students began a 2 year course in carpentry in 1960.
parents the right of choice in schooling. Shortly afterwards, in August 1959, the Departments of Education and Native Affairs took advantage of the definitive policy statement in Circular Memorandum 5/59 of the Assistant Administrator - that councils were to be regarded as part of the administrative structure by all departments - to re-open the question of council aid to mission schools. Such aid was finally forbidden by Native Affairs memorandum No. 230 of 1st September, 1959.

Meanwhile, as a glance at the economic development tables will show, the councils had pressed ahead with school building in most areas, especially in 1958-60. The end result would appear to be the kind of local separatism in education which some sections of the Administration had feared. In October, 1959, a general instruction had to be issued to all councils that no new schools could be opened in 1960 because of a chronic shortage of teachers. One mission suggested, and the D.E.O. supported it, that the mission staff

46) Madang Conference Proceedings, 1-5 June 1959, p.40; item 13. Councillor Dau stated that the Catholic mission had told parents in his area not to send children to the council school.


council schools in the area; but the proposal was 'very
definitely not approved' in Port Moresby. 49 Thus
education in council areas suffered from the mutual
suspicion which largely originated in the Tolai situation.

(iv) Closer Relations with Central Government.

The Education Department continued, however, to try
to bring about a better working relationship with local
government: in 1960 a programme of community technical
training was launched in association with the councils on
which, said the Director, 'the final success of the
programme will largely depend'. 50 Had mission difficulties
not held the stage for so long, there is little doubt that
more positive co-ordination with councils would have come
sooner. 51

49) Ibid. The Educ. Dept. launched a "crash" programme to
train as many teachers as possible at 'A' Certificate
level, i.e. the lowest. He admitted he was 'not happy'
about this. The lack of trained staff deterred N.A.
staff from extending local government - note discussion
in Milne Bay District, 1959, Samarai 14-17-1.

D.O.'s, 9.5.60, NA.39-4-0.

51) It might be argued that councils have negligible say in
the development of educational extension in their areas;
but in fact they exert a constant pressure on their
local E.O.'s for more and better schooling, through their
education committees. By mid-1959 the Papuan councils
had built only 5 schools, but most councils were still
in the organizational phase. Councils will have little
control until they can employ their own teachers, and
without a grants-in-aid scheme there is no prospect of
this.
CHAPTER X
SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

3. Health.

Participation by native local government in the promotion of health and hygiene has been one of the most successful features of administration in council areas. This has resulted partly from the fact that a great deal of pressing practical work, particularly the building of aid posts, falls within the financial competence of local government councils; and partly from the co-operative attitude of the Department of Public Health, which from the beginning realized the value of councils in securing a favourable social atmosphere, a prime desideratum for medical extension in primitive areas.¹

The problems of achieving technical co-ordination with local government have only gradually been solved; but the positive approach of D.P.H., an object lesson to other departments in the Territory, generally enabled these problems to be faced rather than avoided.

(i) Relationship with the Health Department.

Early in 1950, before the first village councils - as they were then called - were proclaimed, the Director of

¹ See the quotation by J.J. Saave, The Village Aid Posts, South Pacific, July-Aug. 1954, VII, II, p.394. As he remarks (p.392) the aid posts as village health projects had a long and unattractive history, because their importance in village life had not always been understood.
Public Health put out a circular outlining a plan for making medical assistance permanently available through the establishment of Village Aid Posts in charge of trained Native Medical Assistants (a title later changed to Aid Post Orderly). This policy was seen as the medical analogue of the changeover from village to area administration through native local government, and of the abandonment of government by patrol.  

It was envisaged from the beginning that the Aid Posts and their staffs would progressively become the responsibility of the councils. Accordingly certain principles were laid down:

(a) the Orderly had to be acceptable to the village people;
(b) the village people (councils) were to construct aid posts;
(c) the Orderly was to be given no powers except to report, isolate and treat infectious disease;
(d) the Orderly was to take an active part in village life and by example improve sanitation, personal hygiene and nutrition.

An attempt was made to define the relationship of the N.M.A. with the local government council. The D.P.H. considered that he could best fulfil the above functions by becoming an official of the council, though before appointment he was to be approved by the Health Department, and

he was to be supervised by it in his duties. Directions were to be given the N.M.A. by the Health Department, although the council and its supervising officer would be notified. If a N.M.A. proved unsatisfactory, as a council employee he would have to be dismissed by the council, although it was said that the supervising officer would 'prevail upon the council' to do this in the event of divided views. If a council could not meet the wages of N.M.A.s, then they would be seconded to the council's employ by the Health Department, which would continue to pay them. Emphasis was placed on the fact that liaison should be maintained between the councils and D.P.H. through both Headquarters and district officers.4

It remained for these principles to be worked out in practice. The control and discipline of the N.M.A.s were, in fact, subject to the council, to its supervising officer, and to the District Medical Officer. A dispute at Baluan quickly showed that each of these was applying different criteria. In 1952 the supervising officer of the Baluan council gaol a N.M.A. for failing to take patients to hospital; he was also dismissed by the council. That a council, not the Health Department, should be dissatisfied with the technical rather than the personal aspect of a N.M.A.'s work was something which had not been envisaged in the original instructions; the Director of Public Health

4) Ibid.
protested personally to the Senior Native Authorities Officer about the dismissal. In the opinion of the Health Department, there was no onus on N.M.A.s to take patients to hospital, as the council expected. 5

Fortunately, personal relations between these two departmental officers were excellent. The S.N.A.O. considered that a mistake had been made, and he blamed the supervising officer, who had treated the N.M.A. like a Medical Tultul under direct administration and was 'temperamentally unsuited' to the Baluan situation; this officer was transferred. 6 Essentially, however, the difficulty was that, although the council nominally employed the N.M.A., the Health Department as the supervising authority claimed full and exclusive disciplinary powers. The council could take no legal action under the Native Regulations against a N.M.A.; if it wished to pass a rule defining a N.M.A.'s duties it would have to seek the approval of the Health Department. The council was simply instructed to report such matters to the Department, through the local Medical Officer. 7

In the health sphere this represented an assertion of the policy that councils are, in the full sense,

---

5) D.P.H. to a/S.N.A.O. (personal) 12.2.52, DPH 22/1/G.826. Circular 144 (et sup.) stated however, that N.M.A.s should 'encourage' patients to go to hospital.
6) a/S.N.A.O. to D.P.H., 20.5.52, Rabaul 14/11/6/7-34.
7) Ibid.
'Administration instrumentalities'.

Some councils have chafed against the restraints of this nominal employer relationship with Orderlies, particularly in those areas, generally the initial local government areas, where they not only select candidates for training and put them on the council strength when trained, but where they also meet the full cost of their wages. This has been especially true of the Tolai areas, as of Baluan.

In 1957 the Tolai councils complained that many Orderlies worked extremely short hours. The interchange of views on this showed that the councils and the Public Health Department assessed the work of the Orderlies in different ways. The councils claimed that the Orderlies spent only a few hours a day on their work at the aid posts; on the other hand, the Senior Medical Officer claimed that the councils were harder task-masters than the Administration, that the Orderlies had other work than that at the aid post, and that indeed one of the original instructions had enjoined them to make suitable gardens in the village, as models. The Health Department was clearly throwing greater emphasis on the social aspect of the Orderlies' work; it felt

8) In most areas the candidates are selected by the Councils; Fienberg was able to state as late as Nov.1957 (memo. of 5.11.57, p.11) that Councils paid the wages of Orderlies. This was not true everywhere, at that time.
that within this context they were probably carrying out their duties and that the councils were wrongly assessing their work.\(^9\)

On the other hand, the Director of Native Affairs came out on the side of the councils, asserting that the councillors were better placed to know precisely what the Orderlies did with their time; the councillors were anxious to get value for public expenditure, and this was an excellent argument for the retention of Orderlies in council employ.\(^10\)

Patently, as the Director of Native Affairs pointed out, the complications of divided control were such that Circular 174, which set out the desired relationship between the Health Department and native local government, needed to be redefined.\(^11\)

It will be noted however, that both the Director of Health and the Director of Native Affairs were anxious that the employment of Orderlies by councils should continue, though for somewhat different reasons. But in view of the complications of control there was an element of opinion in

\(^9\) Quoted D.N.A. to S.M.O., 28.11.57, NA 23-17-5.

\(^10\) Ibid.

\(^11\) Ibid. However the argument here revolved around the interpretation of Circular 144, which stated as an integral part of the duty of N.M.A. to set an example by tending to the hygiene of his own family and by making a good garden. The R.M.O. at Rabaul stated that it had become accepted policy that the Orderlies spend only a few hours a day on their job and the rest of the day on their 'private affairs'.
the Native Affairs Department, which, deriving its concepts and arguments essentially from the practical efficiency of direct administration, wanted Aid Post Orderlies to be dissociated from councils and both employed and controlled by the Health Department. Sound arguments could be adduced. In 1955 the issue was raised at Baluan. Circular 174 had stated that if a council were financially unable to meet the wages of Orderlies, the Health Department would continue to pay them. The terms in which this was phrased were too unqualified; for every council, in relation to the needs of its area, can claim extreme poverty. In addition, a patchwork system of payment developed, as in the Baluan council area, where two Orderlies were paid by the council, but at least six others were paid by the Health Department. The proposal, in 1955, that the small Baluan council take over the payment of another five Orderlies (at a cost of £330), in addition to building another six Aid Posts (cost £900) roused the A.D.O. supervising the council to protest. 12

The A.D.O. had suggested that Orderlies paid by the Health Department could be seconded to the service of the council. The D.C., however, protested on the issue of control, rather than payment. He felt that the Health Department should take over entire responsibility for the Orderlies, thereby separating them from local government and

12) A.D.O. Hicks to D.M.O. Manus, 12.1.55. Lorengau 16/2-Bal.9/55.
the risk of 'interference' according to the play of personalities.13

The Director of Health rejected this principle; the councils, he said, would have to learn to manage their staffs: we will retain supervisory control over the Orderly and, if it is our opinion that he is not performing his duties, we would demand that he be dismissed or would withhold all drugs, dressings etc. If, on the other hand, we were of the opinion that the Village Councils were mishandling their servant we would, if the servant so wished, transfer him to another position at an Aid Post where he would be acceptable, or to hospital staff.

It is perhaps fortunate that no occasion arose for the withholding of drugs to council Orderlies as a form of coercion; and that the occasions on which action was taken on the unsuitability of Orderlies were uncommon - for both these measures would have destroyed the good social basis for medical extension, which was the prime object of the Health Department's stand.15

The principal issues from the standpoint of departmental liaison with the councils in the extension of medical services


14) D.P.H. to D.N.A. 10.3.55. DPH 30/176/2/436. The D.P.H. reaffirmed, however, that the Department would continue to pay Orderlies if Councils were unable to do so - the A.D.O.'s point. The difficulty arose in evaluating such a situation, councils and their supervising officers being unlikely to agree with D.P.H.

15) The arrangement has been that the council builds and maintains the Aid Post, while the DPH supplies the equipment - see J. McAuley, Local Government Among the Tolai, South Pacific, VII, 11, p.882. In a few areas where mission influence is strong both spiritually and in the medical field, councils have taken the opportunity of free supplies for their own Aid Posts to offer aid to mission institutions e.g. free linen and transport for K.B. hospital (Kwato) Milne Bay - Milne Bay Estimated 1960, Sinaeda, 14-40-4.
have been then, the desirability and the reality of council control, both in its administrative and in its financial implications. This is plainly the crucial question, for buildings without staff and services are worthless.

11 Council Building Responsibilities.

At the same time, the provision of buildings, particularly Aid Posts, has been one of the most common provinces of council expenditure; indeed, the steady increase in the number of Aid Posts, particularly as local government has extended since 1955, has forced the Health Department to train a steadily increasing number of Orderlies to staff them.16 This emphasis on practical undertakings, as McAuley has pointed out, is one of the main features of native local government; it fits in with the conception of encouraging a real sense of responsibility by tying action to positive tasks.17

The pattern was set by the detailed survey undertaken by the Health Department in the Gazelle Peninsula in the period July 1950 - October 1951. This concluded that 35 aid posts were needed, or roughly 1 for every 1,000 of population.

16) As McAuley indicated (loc.cit., p.880) the use of health facilities contains its own cumulative impetus, for the generally heavy infant mortality rate is dramatically reduced with adequate medical services, and this boosts the population - requiring extended services. On early staff difficulties, see Saave, loc.cit., p.894.

17) McAuley, ibid., p.884.
The construction of these, together with houses for the Orderlies, was to be the sole responsibility of the councils. The cost of an aid post at that time was said to be £180–240, although the Tolai councils were assisted by large-scale purchase of materials through their Bulk Store. The Medical Officer was sanguine that the councils could also take over the wages of the Orderlies and the Hygiene Assistants, so that preventive medicine could be entirely channelled through local government.

The establishment of five Native Village Councils on the Gazelle Peninsula proved to be a valuable factor in the expansion of the health work. Any matters connected with the health projects are discussed with the Native Authorities Section of the Department of District Services and the Native Village Councils at their ordinary meetings. It was encouraging to see the inclusion of N.M.A.s in the Councils' work, which gives them more responsibility in the village social life.

Problems later complicated the staffing aspect; but the building of aid posts and staff houses went ahead. In nine months in 1953–4 the Tolai councils built seven aid posts and three houses for Orderlies, medical expenditures forming 11% of total expenditures. Overall, however, the situation by 1958 was even better; actual expenditure for 1957, for the 20 councils then in existence, showed an expenditure of 15.2% on medical services and buildings.

18) Saave, loc.cit., p.894.
despite the disputes over the payment of Orderlies, the
bulk of this went towards buildings, for, as inflation has
raised prices and local government has extended into the
less accessible areas, the ratio between medical wages and
the capital cost of buildings has become greater. The
Kiwai council in the Western District, for example, in 1959
completed five aid posts; the cost of an aid post was
estimated to average £800. The four Orderlies employed by
the Kiwai council at the same period cost a total of £288 p.a. 21

This point does not appear to have been raised, however,
partly because in the Tolai areas, where agitation on the
payment of Orderlies was most forceful, the situation was
atypical, with a large percentage of medical expenditure
going in wages.

(iii) Council Area Planning.

In 1958 the Department of Native Affairs launched a
campaign to impress on the technical departments that local
government councils were integral parts of the administ­
rative structure, and that therefore they should co-operate
with councils in area planning. But in the health sphere
this implied that the problems of control and finance were
shifted to the district level. The long-standing liaison
between the Health and Native Affairs Departments in the

21) Daru Sub-districts Reports, Daru 23-3-1; Estimates
1960, Daru 23-6-1. All Aid Posts are built of
European materials.
Gazelle Peninsula was suggested as a model for extension to other council areas; but no re-definition of Circular 174 had taken place as the Director of Native Affairs had urged in 1957. 22

The Director suggested to the Health Department that plans be drawn up at the district level by D.M.O.s working in consultation with councils, and that these plans extend over 'at least five years'. One of the major advantages of such plans would be the obviating of difficulties caused by staff transfers. 23 Accordingly, all D.M.O.s were asked to submit to their Department 'realistic and carefully costed' plans for the councils in their areas. 24 The Executive Officer, (Local Government) commented that this was the kind of co-operation that was required. 25

Everything depended, however, on the play of personalities at the district level. In most council areas little action appears to have been taken. The D.M.O. Milne Bay submitted detailed plans, after consultation with the A.D.O. (L.G.) and with the council; these plans aimed within the five years to have the council area fully equipped with aid posts and fully responsible for the payment of its Orderlies. The

22) D.N.A. to D.P.H., 6.5.58, NA 23-17-5.
23) Ibid.
24) Ibid. Minute to a/D.P.H., dated 23.5.58, appended D.N.A. copy.
atmosphere for the preparation of such a plan was peculiarly favourable in Milne Bay, partly because of the integrating influence of Mr. Cottrell-Dormer (see Appendix B) and partly because of the emphasis which the Kwato and Catholic missions had long placed on medical services and improved hygiene. The Milne Bay council was already spending more heavily on health than on any other service - the 1959 estimates provided for an expenditure of £914 on medical services and buildings, out of a total budget of £4,924 (18.5%). There were already 11 aid posts or hospitals in the council area (5,500 people); while three of the seven Orderlies staffing council aid posts were already paid by the council, in addition to a grant made to the Kwato post at Wagawaga.

The D.M.O. was sanguine about the constructional needs of the area. He planned for only another three aid posts, when coverage would be excellent. Hygiene and sanitation, he said, 'do not present much of a problem'. The sting was in the tail - he proposed that from 1961 the council take over payment of Orderlies' wages at the rate of 'not more than two a year'.

Amongst supervising officers of councils there is generally a resistance to the principle of councils' taking over the payment of Orderlies, for it conflicts with the

26) D.M.O. to D.O. Samarai, 23.3.59, NA. Seven of the aid posts belonged to the Council.

27) Ibid. He also envisaged the Councils' assisting with an anti-malarial programme.
emphasis on tangible works and additional services as council responsibilities. The succeeding officer in Milne Bay was highly critical of the transfer to the area of formulae worked out in the Gazelle Peninsula, with inadequate allowance for the dispersed population and the difficulties of communication. 28

The delegation to district staffs of co-ordination in the development of health plans was apparently designed to allow flexibility; but without clearly defined principles there was too much scope for the clash of personalities. In the Higaturu council area the attempt to evolve a plan foundered on the failure by Headquarters to lay down the spheres which such a plan was intended to cover. Here the D.M.O. took as one of his principal functions the improvement of native diet: he suggested to the council that hygiene could be improved and protein intake raised if villagers established communal pig farms. The council was quick to point out, however, that the Department of Agriculture had already forbidden the penning of pigs. The D.O. felt that the D.M.O. was trespassing outside his province; and on his

28) Personal information, A.D.O. Frew, Sinaeada. The European sister at the Kwato hospital, K.B., agreed with these criticisms of the scheme. As the A.D.O. plans the estimates with the council, and as in this area the D.M.O. is rarely able to attend council meetings, it would seem improbable that the plan will be adhered to. Some scheme for long-term adoption of plans by councils is required if they are to be more than departmental suggestions.
advice the Director of Native Affairs suggested that the D.M.O. confine his functions to planning the siting of aid posts and directing the anti-malarial campaign. Shortly afterwards the D.M.O. was transferred to Bougainville; no plan was prepared.

(iv) Payment and Control of Council Medical Staff.

As local government has extended into the poorer and more remote areas, the question of the immediate local payment of medical staff has ceased to be as important as in the Tolai and Baluan areas. The principle embodied in Circular 174 and applied in Baluan in 1955, that councils should pay for Orderlies if they could afford to do so, has given the later councils an avenue of escape.

The Hanuabada council, in this as in most aspects of council activity, has proved atypical; it has regularly been short of funds for even the most urgent capital works (though in recent years it has built a health clinic and maternity centre, its major works achievement) and it has been happy to have its Orderlies both paid and controlled by D.P.H. This has eliminated most of the friction that might have arisen from the propinquity of D.P.H. Headquarters.

Only in the matters of the observance of health regulations

29) D.O. to D.N.A., 26.8.58, Popondetta 14-8-11; Minutes Higaturu Council 23.8.58. D.N.A. to D.P.H., 26.9.58, NA 23-17-5. Personal relations had previously been poor; district staff conferences were rare at Popondetta. In 1959 the D.O. complained that the D.P.H. was not working through the Council.
(it lies within the town boundaries) and the enforcement of its own sanitation rules, has it been criticised by the Health Department - and in these respects it has long been recognized that direct central government action, or grants-in-aid to the council, are necessary to improve facilities.

It was primarily in the Gazelle Peninsula, therefore, that the councils felt that central government had unjustly shifted its health responsibilities to them; the payment of Orderlies had been accepted in the period 1950-3, but the spectacle of later councils using their funds almost exclusively on capital works roused resentment. By 1959-60 large numbers of aid posts had been built - the major works acknowledged by the Health Department as essential before the full responsibility for the payment of medical staff was assumed - but the works projects of the Tolai councils had become more ambitious; they, and the Regional Medical Officer, now looked forward to the establishment of Rural Health Centres staffed by well-qualified Assistant Medical Practitioners.

Therefore, at the Madang Conference the New Guinea

30) Asst.Registrar of Cooperative Societies complained about health services to Council 17.8.56, on behalf of his native employees resident there. The Chairman retorted that the Orderlies were Administration employees and that their control did not lie with the Council (rejecting thereby the secondment responsibility), 21.8.56 (H.C.12-1). The A.D.O. was inclined to agree with the Council (23.8.56, H.C.12-1). In 1957 Hanuabada was severely criticised by a Health Inspector (D.P.H. to D.O. Port Moresby, 8.8.57; D.O.P.M. 14-26-12).
councils resolved that councils should not pay the wages of Orderlies until all capital works in the health sphere had been completed. From the Administration's viewpoint, this was a situation that the councils could prolong indefinitely; but Headquarters was slow in replying, and the issue continued to simmer. In February, 1960 it was brought to a head when the Livuan council wished to stop the wages of an Orderly sent on a three months refresher course by the D.P.H. The D.O. supported the council, and asked that the Administration assume the responsibility for the wages of all Orderlies employed by the Tolai councils.

This was rejected by the Health Department as retrograde; for while complete supervision had to remain with the Department, as laid down in 1957, the only way to put the influence of the councils behind medical extension was to make them financially responsible for the Orderlies. At the same time the Director recognized the problem in the Gazelle Peninsula, where the councils spent 40% of their budgets on wages. The only solutions he could suggest were ad hoc, and went no way towards solving the difficulties in the interpretation of financial capacity and administrative control. He proposed that council budgets be made available for

31) D.N.A. memo. 20.6.60, NA 44-4-1, item 20, p.7.
32) D.O. to D.N.A., 20.3.59, Rabaul 14/12; D.O. to D.N.A., 22.2.60, Rabaul 14/11/6/43.
Director of Native Affairs again referred the matter for settlement at the local level. The long-delayed reply to the Madang Conference resolution simply reaffirmed the principle that 'as Council budgets increase, the responsibility for salary payments must be assumed. This can be assessed annually to ensure whether or not a Council may take over these responsibilities.'

By early 1960 it was realized in Port Moresby that the only practicable solution depended on financial aid from central government. If all council Orderlies were paid by the councils the financial aspect of the problem would be close to solution; though from the supervisory viewpoint friction will probably not be entirely eliminated until councils are sufficiently large and wealthy, like some African councils, to employ their own fully qualified specialist cadre.

The Director of Native Affairs suggested to the Health Department that a grant-in-aid system was needed if councils

33) a/D.P.H. to D.N.A., 6.4.60, D.P.H. 16-16-2/M650. In fact, New Britain was the one area where the R.M.O. had kept in close touch with the Councils, primarily through their quarterly meetings, to a remarkable degree.

34) e.g. a/D.N.A. to D.O. Rabaul, 30.5.60, NA 42-17-6. Here the D.O. was advised to consult with the R.M.O. on the payment of Orderlies by Bola Council (proclaimed 16.12.58, including a population of only 2000).

35) D.N.A. memo., 20.6.60, NA 44-4-1, cit. sup.

36) In practice, except in concentrated areas such as the Gazelle Peninsula, the D.P.H. lacks the staff for adequate supervision; friction generally arises from Council or D.N.A. dissatisfaction.
were to retain the health responsibilities which the D.P.H. desired; but the principle of grants-in-aid had not proved acceptable to the Treasury.\textsuperscript{37} In April, 1960, nevertheless, a submission for such grants was being drawn up by the Native Affairs and Health Departments for presentation to the Administrator.\textsuperscript{38}

\textsuperscript{37) D.N.A. to D.P.H., 20.4.60, NA 39-3-0.}

\textsuperscript{38) Ibid. Late in 1961 this submission was approved, thereby creating a notable precedent in financial arrangements with central government - see Ch. VIII.}
CHAPTER XI

THE APPROACH TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT

(1) The Conceptual Division: European Rights

Councils established under the Native Local Government Councils Ordinance remain the sole statutory local government bodies in Papua–New Guinea. Between local government and native local government a vague conceptual division has developed.¹ To some extent, this has been accidental, but in the context of a multi-racial state - and Australian policy pre-supposes the continued existence of New Guinea as a multi-racial state - it has important implications which have already agitated residents and commentators.

This conceptual dichotomy had its origin in the differing policy emphases of the Labour Party and of the Liberal–Country Party coalition at the time of the 1949 federal elections. Labour policy in the Territory had thrown emphasis on independent native economic development.² The European residents felt neglected and powerless, particularly because the pre-war local European representation on the Legislative councils had not been restored. The policy speech of the post-election Prime Minister, R.G. Menzies, sketched a plan to allow more local initiative in the Territory and to restore

² Memorandum on the Policy of the Administration, Re-issue Fort Moresby, 24.5.1949, pp. 5–6.
a more pro-European balance in economic policy. ³

The meeting of the new Cabinet on 9th March, 1950, which dealt with Territory affairs, was concerned almost exclusively with encouraging private enterprise in economic development; this policy was seen as 'not inconsistent with the requirements of other aspects such as political, international obligations and defences.' ⁴ As a corollary, the enlisting of the active support of the European residents was seen to be essential to the restoration of economic confidence.

The Papua-New Guinea Act made no specific provision for non-native local government, although it did provide for the re-establishment of the Legislative Council; but this was to happen only when the time was considered ripe, and with an official majority. When the incoming Minister for External Territories, P.C. Spender, visited Papua and New Guinea in March-April, 1950, he received addresses and petitions from a number of European organizations, the consensus of which was that the government should establish advisory councils representative of planting and commercial interests, to give the residents an immediate say in local affairs.

The Madang Planters and Traders Association wanted a voice in the framing of a new Labour Ordinance. The Bulolo Returned Serviceman's League suggested that 'local councils of residents' be formed for each local community, to which

⁴) Minute by Sec. Territories, 9.3.1950. Terr. AL 800/1/7.
the Administration would submit for 'constructive comment'
necessary changes in Regulations and Ordinances:

This country has been strangled by the apathy of
its residents, apathy born of frustration.
Formation of local advisory councils will overcome
this, and provide you with the strong support that
residents are capable and desirable (sic) of giving you...

The Bougainville Association advocated —

The establishment of Regional Councils, in separate
Districts, to confer with, and assist, the D.O. in
matters affecting the welfare of the District. This
would give Private Enterprise a better chance, more
interest and more prestige.

Port Moresby already had an amorphous township advisory
body, constituted on local initiative, and members of this
wanted a properly constituted organization. The matter of
elections to local bodies was discussed by its members with
the Minister; but the Minister pointed out the 'great dangers'
if it became an elected body.

(ii) The Advisory Councils

Spender replied to all these representations, in Madang,
that he was considering the setting up of 'Advisory Com-
mittees', advising on matters touching the particular areas

5) Terr. AO 800/1/7. The R.S.L., even more than in Australia,
constitutes notable political pressure groups, despite
continual assertions (e.g. by R.F. Bunting, M.L.C., South
Pacific Post, 16.12.1960) that it is non-political.

6) Ibid.

7) Terr. X 800/1/5. Sec. Territories to Minister, 5.12.1950,
said that the township, 'at the instigation of the
Administrator', set this up early in 1950, as an experiment.
It was not rigidly constituted, but consisted generally of
4 officials and 12 residents. Its function, inter alia was
to advise what its constitution and defined functions
could best be.

8) Terr. AO 800/1/7.
This will at least give some contact on a recognised basis between the white population in different areas, and the Administration.

He promised that the idea would be developed. In June, 1950, in a statement to Parliament, the Minister stated that, pending the establishment of the Legislative Council, District Advisory Councils would be set up to advise the District Officers on local matters; members of the Councils were to be nominated by the Minister from lists of 'suitable' local residents. Within the Department of External Territories consideration was concomitantly being given to the establishment of 'additional bodies to perform functions of a municipal nature' in the larger urban centres, particularly Port Moresby.

The Administration immediately went ahead with the establishment of the District Advisory Councils. By September 1950 the D.O.s had been asked to submit the names of up to six 'suitable persons' who might be nominated. In the same month submissions from all the major town were considered by the Executive Council and recommendations made for the appointment of members to Town Advisory Councils, to advise

9) Ibid. My italics.
10) Statement, H. of R. 2.6.1950; Sec. Territories Minute of 20.5.1950, Terr. AO 800/1/7. At this stage it was briefly considered that natives might be directly represented (undated pencil note) but this was quickly dropped; it was felt the missionaries could adequately represent the native viewpoint. Halligan specifically excluded natives (memo. of 5.12.1950, cit.sup.).
For the first twelve months these councils were to be experimental; they were to advise in June 1951 on their future membership and functions. By November, 1950, nominations to the District Advisory Councils had been received from most D.O.s and were considered by the Executive Council.

The Department of External Territories developed some reservations about the policy at about the time that it was actively being prosecuted. The Secretary, J.R. Halligan, thought that one council might suffice for all areas except the Central District of Papua, where the District and the town were sufficiently large in European population to require separate advisory bodies. Elsewhere populations tended to be dispersed and the towns small; in some districts (e.g. the Gulf) it had proved difficult to nominate even three resident Europeans able and willing to serve, and in Halligan's view this implied that unsuitable people would gain representation because they were the only ones available. The Minister, however, would have none of this, and curtly ordered all the proposed urban as well as district councils to be established promptly.

The Department was also inclined to be cautious about

the **functions** of the District Advisory Councils. The Administrator had submitted that the functions of the councils should be (i) to assist the D.O. in each District; and (ii) to advise the Administrator on matters affecting the Territory. The latter was seen to invite general policy discussion, perhaps with little local relevance: the word 'assist' was objected to as implying executive functions.

The functions of the Councils were ultimately re-phrased thus:

> To advise the D.O. in each District on matters affecting the administration of the District which can be placed before the Council by the D.O. or by any member notifying the D.O. in writing.

By April 1951 the Administrator was able to report that Advisory Councils were functioning in all the principal towns, and in most of the districts; in a few districts, such as the Sepik, where eligible Europeans were few, the departure of nominees held up the establishment of councils.16 Thereafter, minor matters were straightened out from Canberra, such as extending the tenure of office of District Advisory Council members to two years17, and preventing the duplication

---

15) Sec. Terr. to Minister 5.12.1950, cit. sup. Personal letter 9.1.51, Gov. Sec. S.A. Lonergan to Halligan also repeated his conviction that the District Councils should advise generally on policy. In practice, the distinction may appear academic, but it shows a notable liberalism under the Administrator, J.K. Murray. Note Sec. Terr. to Administrator, 24.4.51, reminding him that the functions approved by the Minister were limited to advice on district administration.

16) Administrator to Sec. Territories, 6.7.1951. Terr. A0 800/1/7.

17) Sec. Terr. to Minister, 15.5.51, ibid.
of membership on Town and District Advisory Councils\textsuperscript{18}; but in view of the fact that their functioning was intended to serve as a guide to a statutory system, it is remarkable that Canberra interest in them quickly waned after their establishment. It was only at the prompting of the councils themselves that, for example, a set of rules was drawn up regularising the appointment of members; and the Minister appeared happy to leave consultation with the councils entirely to the Administrator.\textsuperscript{19}

This was unfortunate for the development of the system to the statutory stage, because the experience on which the Department was relying to frame such a system was not transmitted to it in Canberra; although it was known that the residents, particularly in the towns, were anxious to have statutory councils - in 1951, for example, an R.S.L. deputation asked the Minister at Rabaul to have the town Advisory Council assume the duties and responsibilities of a municipal council, and it agreed to pay rates to secure this.\textsuperscript{20}

One reason for the inactivity of the Department in

\textsuperscript{18} Minister to Sec. Terr. 12.3.1952, ibid.

\textsuperscript{19} Administrator to Sec. Terr. 12.2.1953; comments by Minister, 27.2.53, Terr. 57/3722. The rules provided for the creation of wards if the councils so desired (in towns), and for a rotating system of membership whereby half the council retired each year. Particularly with mission representatives, this latter provision proved inapplicable.

\textsuperscript{20} R.S.L. statement, Rabaul 28.7.1951. Terr. AO 800/1/7.
attempting to convert the system into a statutory one may have been a growing perception of the complications, particularly the inter-racial ones in the towns. The D.C. New Britain commented on the above representation by the Rabaul R.S.L. that elections would present difficulties, to avoid which policy would have to be decided in advance by the Administration:

This would require careful forethought as if free elections were held, it is likely that all members of the Council would be Chinese - or natives.

By 1951 it was taken for granted that central representation for the Europeans through the Legislative Council would not be a substitute for local representation; but the question of statutory local government was postponed until the Legislative Council was working smoothly.22

A combination of these factors, together with the concentration of policy initiative in the hands of the new Minister in Canberra (signalised by the removal of J.K. Murray as Administrator) meant that the conversion to a statutory system was indefinitely postponed. In effect, the system of advisory councils was largely 'frozen' in the mould in which it was cast in 1950 as a temporary expedient. The racial division which it embodies, and which is generally regarded as undesirable, has thereby been perpetuated.

21) Ibid. Appended comments.

22) Sec. Terr. to Minister, 22.9.51, ibid.
(iii) The Problems of Association

It must be recognized, however, that this has not been entirely accidental; for different administrative responsibilities are reflected in the two systems. As the Minister stated in June 1950, when submitting the plan for advisory councils, Australians who lived and worked in New Guinea should not lose their democratic privileges; they were therefore entitled to institutional rights of advice and criticism on matters of policy affecting them, as they enjoyed in Australia.\(^ {23}\) (It might be noted that the re-establishment of the Legislative Council, at least in part, vitiated this argument).

On the other hand, the natives had no knowledge or anticipation of such political rights. Their political education was being channelled through native local government, where they were not to criticise policy but to learn responsibility through applying their tax revenues to local tasks. That the natives might participate in 'sterile debate' was considered by the Administration to be not only useless but unwise. Thus the concepts of local government that were being applied were essentially quite different, and were unwittingly assumed to be mutually exclusive: local government (even without powers or responsibility) involved for Europeans the exercise of a political right; but for the natives it represented political training. There was some pressure from

\(^{23}\) Statement of 2.6.1950, cit. sup.
the United Nations for the setting up of area councils in
the more advanced sections of the Territory; but such area
councils were also envisaged by the Australian government in
terms of the separate Advisory Councils for Native Matters
provided for in the Papua-New Guinea Act.

The proposed temporary nature of the Advisory Councils
was an additional deterrent to the appointment of natives to
them; it was this aspect of the system which overrode the
criticism of the 1953 U.N. Visiting Mission, which pointed out
the bi-racial division in local government but was assured
that this was not Australian policy. The Mission felt, as
Rowley later stated, that the bringing together of the races
in 'political institutions' should be begun as early as
possible; and it suggested that the local Europeans involved
in the Advisory Councils were hostile to the idea.

24) Recommendation of the Trusteeship Council, 8th Session,
16.3.51. The Council unfortunately reinforced the
separatist attitude by linking area extension to the
extension of native local government. It might be noted
for comparison that an unfortunate - probably disastrous -
aspect of the Kenya system was the racial division in
local government, although this largely resulted from
the consolidated settlement of Europeans; at the same
time the Kenya government was dilatory in implementing
the proposed multi-racial County Councils, provided for
in 1952 - for a brief sketch see Z. Marsh and G. Kings-
north, An Introduction to the History of East Africa


26) Extracts from Report of 1953 U.N. Mission; South Pacific,
Mission also rejected the common excuse in New Guinea
that it is impossible to find natives competent to sit
on the councils.
By 1956, however, statutory area councils were no closer, and the Administration found it impossible to ignore the criticism of the Visiting Mission led by Sir John Macpherson. The Mission stated bluntly that natives should be appointed to the Advisory Councils, because it was a necessary element of political education to associate them with Europeans. Simogun Peta was appointed to the Sepik District Advisory Council in January, 1957; and the Trusteeship Council in July again urged the Administration to make further appointments both to the District and to the Town Councils. By the end of the year six natives had been appointed members of District Advisory Councils in Papua, and five in the Trust Territory. It was announced as policy in January 1958 that natives were to be appointed to all District Advisory Councils.

Because of the paucity of native representation, however, the Administration reaffirmed the argument that the prime purpose of their appointment was educational:

Although these Councils deal with matters that are at present predominantly of non-indigenous interest, the Administering Authority believes that such appointments provide a useful means of training indigenous people and will facilitate the progressive

28) Admin. to Sec. Terr. 14.2.57, Terr. 57/3139; Resolutions (para.5) 20th Session Trusteeship Council, May-July 1957, ibid.
29) Admin. to Sec. Terr. 7.11.57; Sec. Terr. to Permanent Rep., U.N. 19.11.57, Terr. 57/3139.
expansion of their participation in the political life of the Territory.

The backgrounds of those natives who were appointed, even in the most backward Districts, show that there had been little justification for postponement on the ground of native incapacity. Mr. Leo-Parau, who was appointed in the Central District, had served the Administration since 1924, and had been awarded the Loyal Service Medal in 1956; in the Morobe area the President of the Lei-Wompa Native Local Government Council was appointed, together with a native schoolteacher who had been a delegate to the 1953 conference of the South Pacific Commission in Noumea; in the Western District Mr. Robert Tabua was a mixed-blood, but he had been closely associated with the native peoples as treasurer of the Western Club and an office-holder in mission and school organizations.

The language question was a problem in some areas, but prominent natives and resident Europeans almost always speak Police Motu or Pidgin, inadequate as these languages are; indeed, natives appointed to the Legislative Council sometimes used Pidgin. Moreover, native interpreters were available at government stations. As post-1956 experience showed, this problem was far from insuperable.

31) Special Representative's opening Statement, Trusteeship Council, 1958. Terr. 57/3139; also Papua Annual Report, 1956-7, p.29 - this tacitly conceded that the policy whereby the Administration safeguarded the natives' interests was inadequate.

32) Press Statement No.67, cit.sup.
It was true, of course, that the District Advisory Councils were set up to deal primarily with non-indigenous matters; but it is difficult to see this as a justification for maintaining this orientation indefinitely. Many of the matters discussed, such as the native labour supply, communications and transport, were also of some concern to natives.

A small native representation in relation to Europeans (in the ratio of about 1 to 5 in 1959) meant that predominantly European interests would continue to be discussed. It is extremely doubtful whether mere observing, which was practically all that native participation amounted to, really constituted political training. The powerlessness of native representatives sometimes discredited them with their own people: in Hanuabada, for example, Willie Gavera lost a good deal of popular support over his ineffectiveness on the question of native drinking (as the Hanuabadans interpreted it). 33

Moreover, on a question such as this, the relative strength of mission representation (there were three on the Central District Advisory Council) tended to nullify native representations. Indeed, on this issue both natives and

---

33) Personal information, Poreporena, Hanuabada. It needs to be pointed out that certain of the functions of Native Local Government e.g. building of roads, bridges, wharves etc., are also of significance to the settler community. Planning liaison and financial sharing could be done through an area council - cf. Rowley, loc.cit., p.142-3.
interested Europeans have been met simply with statements of Administration policy, decided in Canberra and not susceptible to district or even to more general pressures in the Territory.34

(iv) The Approach to Statutory Bodies

As has been mentioned elsewhere, critics of Australian administration in the United Nations have suggested that the Advisory Councils should be made statutory, to create real local responsibility on a multi-racial basis and to mitigate government from above. Significantly, the Australian answer has been, not to argue the administrative and political difficulties of dividing and legally defining functions over widely varying local conditions, but to say that a statutory system would have to wait until the concept of district councils was 'meaningful' to the natives.35

Rowley has pointed out the dangers of retaining local bodies divided racially on a representational-functional basis, to be retained (according to the above argument before the United Nations) 'until the New Guinean reaches some undefined level of education and wisdom (automatically assumed by the European)'.36 He points out that because of the racial

34) e.g. the Council of Social Service of Papua recommended by 13 votes to 6, in 1960, that the liquor laws for natives should be reviewed; but the Administration took no action—South Pacific Post, 26.8.1960, 13.9.1960.

35) A.A.P. - Reuter report of statement by Trusteeship Council Representative D.McCarthy (Asst. Sec. in Dept. of Territories), Sydney Morning Herald, 9.6.61.

bifurcation in local government (which small native representation on District Advisory Councils has done little to mitigate), the system represents a 'political hothouse'. This, of course, is particularly inflammatory in the towns, where the more sophisticated natives live alongside concentrations of Europeans with whom they share certain common facilities and services. At the same time, they have either no voice, or are organized separately into Native Local Government Councils with functions designed for rural areas (the Hanuabada council actually covers an area within the Port Moresby town limits). 37

The Administration remained persistently unwilling to appoint natives to the Town Advisory Councils; the fundamental reason was indecision on the question of absorbing natives institutionally into the urban populations, or of trying to separate them through their Native Local Government Councils. 38 This problem was particularly acute in Port Moresby, where more than 20,000 natives live within the town boundaries, about 5,000 of them on land under customary ownership. Two specific competing proposals were that the Hanuabada Council expand to become a Greater Port Moresby Area Council, to be linked with a Town Council in the provision of works and services; or that a unified Town Council be established. Both these proposals

37) Ibid.
38) Administrator to Sec. Terr., 5.1.1959. Terr. 57/3139. The N.L.G. Councils are regarded as giving the ideal form of political training; political apprehension by the Administration should not be overlooked.
The Administration was eventually forced to make some move towards altering the status quo, patently unsatisfactory to all parties, by pressure from the European residents of Port Moresby. The matter of examining the desirability of local government in the towns, and the machinery for it, had been discussed by the Administrator with the Minister in November 1952; but it was local pressure which impelled him in 1955 to ask the Minister for an expert enquiry. He suggested that an expert in local government from Queensland be asked to report, for the coastal towns there, in his view, afforded the nearest comparable conditions to those in New Guinea.40

At the beginning of 1956 Mr. J.R. Winders of Queensland was appointed, on the recommendation of the State’s Director of Local Government, to make a survey which would ‘give the Administration and Territory residents comprehensive information on which to judge the advisability or otherwise of introducing Local Government in the larger centres.’41 Winders, however, spent only two days in Rabaul, three and a half days in Madang

40) Admin. to Minister, 29.7.55. Ibid. This was a numerical analogy; he suggested someone with experience of towns the size of Port Moresby.
41) Administration Press Statement No.5, 16.1.56. At the time Mr. Winders was Secretary of the Queensland Sugar Board, but he had previously been Chief Clerk in the Dept. of Local Government. Referring the matter to Queensland can be questioned, for race attitudes there tend to be still dominated by memories of the Kanakas. The situation of the drifting pockets of aborigines is hardly analogous, on numerical grounds alone.
and in Lae, and two days in Wau. Four weeks were spent in Port Moresby. His total time in the Territory was only about six weeks, and he had no previous knowledge of conditions there or in other comparable territories.\textsuperscript{42}

Winders was given very wide terms of reference; unfortunately on several fundamental points they were lamentably vague.\textsuperscript{43} Winders put his own interpretation on them, and this led to a very narrow conception of his responsibility:

The limitation of the investigation to the larger towns was regarded as an indication that the task should be confined to an examination of the need for the provision of Local Government chiefly for the non-indigenous people who comprise the principal permanent population in town areas.

In effect, he treated the Territory's towns as European enclaves. As the Principal of the School of Pacific Administration pointed out, Winders solved 'the dilemma of the inarticulate New Guinean urban dwellers by rejecting them as electors en bloc'.\textsuperscript{45} He accused Winders of having excluded the natives on educational grounds without adequate analysis or discrimination. What educational test was to be applied? Would this apply to the illiterate European? It was, concluded Rowley, purely a racial exclusion.\textsuperscript{46}

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid.; Admin. Press Statement No.24, 20.3.56.
\textsuperscript{44} Ibid., para. 2.
\textsuperscript{45} C.D. Rowley, South Pacific, IX, 7, 1957, p.446.
\textsuperscript{46} Ibid.
TOWN OF PORT MORESBY 1967
(showing land owned according to native customary right.)
Rowley pointed out further difficulties:

He (Winders) assumes the need for Council revenue to be drawn solely from land rates: therefore, with New Guineans in possession of so much urban land they must be subject to rating: and this gets him into a further dilemma. For if the Administration vetoes the decision to impose rates on particular Native lands, the Council fails to operate effectively. But if it does not interfere, and rates are paid, or the owners influenced to sell the land (which would be contrary to the Administration’s basic land policy) Local Government has failed even more grievously to operate, for it has deprived residents of its area who are not represented. That Mr. Winders, whose expertise in Local Government is not in question, is not in question, is not very happy may be deduced from his own remarks on the matter. If the New Guinean owners do, under pressure of rates, decide to sell land, he says “there is nothing wrong with this … He (or they) is not being forced to sell … If he does sell, he receives a cash consideration. He is no better off, nor no worse off, than any European owner”. The position is, of course, even worse than that which Mr. Winders here denies, because of the significance of clan or village lands in New Guinean society.

The major difficulties arose in Port Moresby, and it was on these difficulties that the plan to introduce urban local government foundered. But Winders also recommended the introduction of local government to Lae and Rabaul, where the problems, particularly those of native land, were not so complex. It would appear that it was partly the Administration’s dedication to a uniform pattern of government which prevented the implementation of local government in the other towns; though doubtless Port Moresby’s size and pre-eminence convinced everyone that it had the first claim to local government. In fact, the smaller towns, particularly Lae which

has a significant urban native population, might have served as testing grounds; but Port Moresby dominated everyone's attention.

The Winders Report ultimately confused rather than clarified; but discussion arising from it raised a number of main issues. An Official Inter-Departmental Committee, set up to consider the Report, wavered between excluding the natives from local government in Port Moresby altogether, or including them but working out a special 'rural rate' to apply to customarily owned land, or placing all natives separately under a Native Local Government Council. The Administrator felt that the town boundaries should be altered to exclude Hanuabada on the west and Koroboseia on the east, and that these areas, together with the coastal villages from Boera to Gaile, should constitute a Greater Area Council under the N.L.G. Ordinance. The difficulty was, that if native local government were to persist in urban and peri-urban areas, the town boundaries for local government purposes would have to exclude native local government areas, for 'it was obvious that jurisdiction could not be exercised over the one area by

48) Committee (established 12.9.56) consisted of the Treasurer, the Director of Lands, and the Accountant from the Civil Affairs Dept. Interim Report 17.10.56, Report 7.1.57, Terr. 57/104. It was one of the functions of this Committee to gather information, e.g. on rateable and customary land holdings, which should have been available to Winders during his investigation.

49) Administrator to Sec. Terr. 9.1.57, ibid.
Some of the local reactions to the Winders Report were interesting. It was generally agreed that the proposals were irrelevant or inadequate, for a variety of reasons. Members of the Rabaul Town Advisory Council recognised that Winders, with no experience of plural societies, had been trying to adapt inapplicable Australian local government concepts. A prominent Port Moresby European, a member of the Town Advisory Council, was most anxious about the inter-racial aspect of local government:

As an established Port Moresby citizen with a business, property, and four children, all of whom give every indication of wishing to remain in the Territory, I am gravely concerned at the possibility of Local Government being established in Port Moresby in an unsatisfactory environment.

On the other hand, John Guise, the prominent member of the mixed-race community and a notable spokesman for the natives, believed that a Municipal Council without a separate Native Councils'.

---

50) Memo. Sec.Terr., Winders Report, 13.2.57, ibid. Too little attention appears to have been given to a suggestion supported by Fienberg (5.11.57) and made by the Minister to the Port Moresby Chamber of Commerce (South Pacific Post, 19.6.57) that Hanuabada could be linked with a municipal council as a ward, or after the manner of a hospital board. The attachment to the N.L.G. principle for Hanuabada was thoughtless, for the powers and functions of N.L.G. had never satisfied the natives there, and the Administration had always regarded it as atypical within the N.L.G. system.

51) Rabaul Times, 5.7.57. Dudley Jokes asked pertinently why Winders had not consulted precedents in Suva, or in British Africa. The same might be asked of the Administration and of the Dept. of Territories - presumably the doctrine of New Guinea's uniqueness precluded reference to other colonial precedents.

52) S.Fox to P.Hasluck, 5.12.1956; also letter in South Pacific Post, same date. He therefore rejected the idea of two councils; but wanted to extend equality into the rating of land, clearly impractical, as Winders had shown.
Local Government Council would create racial antagonism, for it would ignore the native areas except as sources of cheap labour. He pointed out that the two races were culturally 'poles apart'; and he feared, as many Europeans expected, that on a unified council the natives would have minority representation. 53

The mixed race community in itself constituted a further complicating factor; the Minister warned that some officials who advocated a separate council for natives wrongly believed that this would incorporate the mixed bloods —

... whereas policy is to try as far as possible to dissociate the mixed bloods from the indigenous people in all cases where the mixed bloods can incline towards the European side of their parentage. 54

The Minister welcomed this discussion. Ultimately, he stated, the establishment of urban local government would be dependent on the attitudes of those who might serve on statutory councils. The Administrator and many residents wanted specific proposals from Canberra to discuss 55; but the Minister insisted that no such proposals would be framed.

---

53) J. Guise to P. Hasluck, 4.1.57 (from Lalaina village). Guise is anxious to preserve the native identity, and to ally the mixed-bloods with them rather than with the European. He advocated two separate councils, with a Central Committee to coordinate common activities.

54) Minister to Sec. Terr., 10.12.56. Terr. 57/104. In the Port Moresby area the landholdings of many mixed race people are under native customary title. Many mixed race live with natives and follow their customs. Dissociation presents fearful problems.

55) Admin. to Sec. Terr. 9.1.57; Rabaul Times, 5.7.57, Terr. 57/104.
without prior local discussion. All discussions therefore had to revolve around the inadequacies of the Winders Report, so that it is not surprising that eventually a complete deadlock on points of principle was reached. Ultimately everything hinged on the attitude of the Port Moresby Town Advisory Council, which became steadily more insistent that native landholders would have to pay rates along with Europeans, as it became aware of the 'excessive cost' of local government. At the same time it rejected the concept of native and non-native councils in the one area (and indeed from the point of view of common facilities and services they cannot be entirely separated).

On these principles, in fact, the Administration had already decided to the contrary, being anxious to exempt native land from rates and to have a Native Local Government Council in 'junior partnership' with the statutory town council. This had apparently been decided in association with the Department of Territories (and presumably unbeknown to the Minister) primarily for political reasons:

... from the point of view of goodwill between the races, it would be wiser to accept lesser problems now than more serious ones later if later antagonism.

56) Minister to Sec. Terr. 22.2.57, 57/104. Prior discussion in the Territory had been foreshadowed in the terms of reference of Winders' Enquiry.

57) Port Moresby Town Advisory Council: Report on the Winders Report, July 1957; Special meeting, P.M.T.A.C. 1.9.1958, Report to Administrator 11.9.58. To mitigate the burden of local government the Council wanted either (1) all land rents passed to a statutory council; or (2) all leaseholds converted to freeholds; or (3) drastically reduced rents.
is given an excuse to develop. Also by liaison now and gradually integrating functions after the initial problems are solved, the natives will have a much more advanced appreciation of self-government through experience.

These decisions nullified the supposed importance of prior discussion by the residents. The resulting impasse lasted until 1960. The Administrator blamed the intransigence of the Port Moresby Advisory Council; but the Minister insisted on local concurrence and did not seem anxious to hasten matters. In April 1959 he instructed the Administrator to 'make further soundings and report in twelve months time'.

After nine years the Advisory Councils appeared to have become fixtures, despite the universal recognition of their shortcomings. During 1959 a beginning was made with the appointment of natives to the Town Councils, hope having apparently been abandoned that statutory urban government would be soon introduced; two natives were appointed to the Port Moresby council and one to the Kavieng council. Inevitably, the Advisory Councils, and particularly those in the towns, tend to devote themselves to matters of special


59) Admin. to Sec. Terr. 19.3.59. Memo. Minister for Administrator, 2.4.59, Terr. 235/57/104. There is a notable contrast with the British Solomons; when Sir John Gutch arrived as High Commissioner in 1956 he immediately recognized the need for a statutory Town Council in Honiara; such a Council was functioning before the end of 1955. Gutch had served on a Commission investigating local government in British Guiana. New Guinea lacks, and eschews, comparative precedents.

concern to the Europeans. Because of the paternalist tradition in native administration this also tends to be the approach of the D.C.s who act as Chairmen of the councils. At the meeting of the Rabaul Town Advisory Council of 3rd March, 1960, for example, Rev. Wesley Lutton, a Methodist missionary, urged that residents associate themselves with a proposed Council for Social Welfare to deal with native social problems in Rabaul; but D.O. West replied that the Administration already had Welfare Officers dealing with the problem, and that it was itself proposing to set up a Council of Social Services. 61 It is therefore difficult for Europeans, through the Advisory Councils, even in a paternalist way to work with or for the native population. This same meeting of the Rabaul council concerned itself principally with improvements to the main streets of the town and to the Rabaul High School (70 non-native students and 4 natives); and with a proposal for a town swimming-pool. 62

Thus, what was intended as a temporary expedient, in 1950, pending the convening of the Legislative Council and later the constituting of statutory bodies, has taken on

61) Rabaul Town Advisory Council, 3.3.60, personal notes of discussion.

62) Ibid. Only the missionaries showed any notable concern for native problems. This council had 18 members, including 3 Asians and 1 Mixed-Race. Ironically, it meets in the Rabaul Native Local Government Council House.
the aspect of permanence, in the face of warnings, both inside and outside the Administration, that the problems of racial integration in local government increase rather than lessen with the passing of time. 63

63) In the period 1958–9 the Administration was actively considering the framing of a new Ordinance. The intention was that, by including a large range of precisely defined provisions, it would be possible to establish by proclamation both native and multi-racial councils under the one legislative authority. The existing centralist bias is plain in these proposals — the 'complete flexibility' of the existing Ordinance was deprecated; though it was felt that a minute definition of Local Govt. province and functions would eliminate central/local government clashes, and thereby promote the independence of the local bodies. — a/D.N.A., 47.1958; memo. Chief of Div., Development & Welfare, 13.1.1959. Detailed proposals, Asst. Admin. to Sec. Terr., 17.9.1958, NA 23–16–1.
APPENDIX A

FURTHER CASE STUDIES

I. Western Papua, 1888-1942.

In Chapter I(c) reference is made to the attempt in the 1890s to delegate judicial functions to the coastal Kiwai of the Western Division. This had been prompted partly by the influence on the Kiwai of the more advanced Torres Straits institutions.

It is an apparent paradox that this part of the Territory is so physically unprepossessing and economically unpromising: the coastal Kiwai villages are sandwiched between the encroaching sea and the mangrove swamps. These conditions, however, compelled the Kiwai to seek employment and experience elsewhere, in the Torres Straits fisheries and as the most reliable recruits in the Armed Constabulary. This explains their administrative sophistication. From the Administration's viewpoint, however, perhaps the most important feature of this area was the attempt to control sparse populations inhabiting vast deltaic flats.¹

(i) The Abandonment of the Indirect Method

MacGregor, like Murray later, lacked the staff to extend far from the coastal rivers. After pacification he looked to the L.M.S. to consolidate influence and promote permanent peace. After his first expedition up the Fly in November 1889 he wrote that a 'bloodless victory' had made the river ripe for missionary endeavour for a distance of 100 miles from its mouth; but he expressed his disappointment at finding nothing in the area except one teacher abandoned on Kiwai island. He suggested Chalmers for the work and hinted to Lawes that if the L.M.S. did not act he would consider asking the proposed Anglican mission to take over the Fly. (A similar tactic produced action in eastern Papua).²

R.M. Hely and Chalmers worked in harmony in the coastal Kiwai areas; but after Chalmers' departure the quality of

¹ At present the population density averages about 1 per sq. mile.
² MacGregor to Lawes, Fly River, 22.12.1880. MacGregor's despatch of 9.12.89 (Cmd.6323, pp.73-83) was fully reported in The Queenslander, 1.3.1890. Chalmers set out for the Fly on 22.4.90 (letter of this date to Lawes, L.M.S. letters).
L.M.S. work declined and friction developed between the teachers and the native officials (especially in Mawatta, the headquarters of Native Magistrate Gania) and between Hely and F.W. Walker, Chalmers' replacement.3

Relations improved after the return of Chalmers. His murder at Goaribari in 1901, and the burial of himself and his wife at Daru, made a lasting impression on the Kiwai. This waxing mission influence, inter alia, contributed to the social levelling amongst the Kiwai noted by Landtman in 1912.4

It has already been mentioned that amongst the coastal Kiwai in MacGregor's time there was a plethora of native officials.5 To some degree this was due to MacGregor's initial efforts to introduce a hierarchy of native officials (with a separation of functions meaning less in the Papuan context). By 1898 MacGregor had virtually abandoned the indirect principle, and under Le Hunte steps were taken to reduce the number of village officials. The A.R.M. responsible, A.C. English, had none of Hely's scruples or inhibitions about this.6 Le Hunte laid down no clear principle, simply declaring that 'if there are more than is necessary the number should be reduced.'7

There were at least two village constables and one government chief to each controlled village at this stage. The reduction of village constables in the settled areas allowed more appointments in the peripheral areas; the

3 Hely to Gov. Sec., 25.2.1894. Station Journals 20/94.
4 Landtman, The Kiwai Papuans, pp.167-70. Even in 1912 the dorimo (long-house) pattern was breaking down. The building of a dorimo used to be a communal activity attended with a great deal of magic (p.9). The mission violently disapproved of the Horiomu (cult of dead) and Moguru (life-giving) ceremonies - pp.329, 350. He sub-titled his study 'A Nature-Born Instance of Rousseau's Ideal Community"; it was not so in the 1890s.
5 In view of MacGregor's approach to the L.M.S., it is not surprising to find that this included mission teachers as well. The problem of supervising them was similar to the government's in supervising V.C.s. See Ch.I(c).
7 Ibid., Le Hunte's marginal note dated 22.5.1900.
number of officials overall, and consequently the expense, increased only slowly. The paid government chiefs, who survived longest in this Division, were removed by 1906. But in recognition of the pre-administration position of the 'mamoose' in the clan and village (Beaver thought he had 'a little power'), selected men continued to be recognized to the extent that they were given clothes and occasionally consulted, especially in the settlement of disputes. Financial stringency was just as important a factor as the change in policy.

With the decline in traditional leadership which bound separate clan groups together in villages, the village constables faced a difficult problem. Beaver noted that they would promptly arrest offenders in their own clan-houses, but arrests were resented by members of other clans.

(ii) Methods in Uncontrolled Areas

An early problem was the incursions of the Tugeri from across the Dutch border. MacGregor had envisaged the appointment of a Government Agent in the area (Morehead river), as well as two on the Fly and one on the Aird river. This plan was not completed for fifty years. MacGregor had heavily defeated the Tugeri; and in 1893 the boundary with the Dutch was delimited as the Bensbach river, primarily as a step towards control of raids. But in 1900 a Government party, accompanied by a Dutch Resident investigating Tugeri outrages, was attacked by a strong

---

8 Report 1903-4, p.22.
10 Report 1903-4, p.22; Also R.M. to Gov. Sec., 6.2.01, W.D. Journals 25/1901 (Wabuda Is.). In 1902 appointment of new V.C.s seems to have been dependent on their reduction elsewhere. This was given as the reason for the lack of a V.C. at Iasa - 1400 people - where the senility of the old chief Mipi made the appointment of a V.C. imperative. R.M. to Gov. Sec., 14.6.02. Journals 77/02.
11 Beaver, op.cit., p.157.
12 Report 1898-9, p.xxv.
13 Royal Geographical Society Journal, 1893, II, pp.270-1: 'The piratical visits of the Tugeri may now, with the facilities which the new boundary offers for checkmating them, be considered to be drawing to an end.'
force of Tugeri which it beat off only with difficulty. As a result the Dutch set up a station near the boundary to prevent further incursions. This alleviated but did not solve the problem; from the point of view of the Australian authorities the difficulty was that the natives on the Australian side had been scattered, and had themselves acquired a reputation for savagery almost as formidable as the Tugeri's.

Because of lack of staff little could be done. In January 1914 a police camp was set up on the Morehead river, more to bring the local peoples under control than to protect them from the Tugeri. This was manned by members of the Armed Constabulary under a native N.C.O. Murray constantly deprecated allowing natives to work without direct European supervision. The setting up of this camp emphasises the pressures on his administration which he lacked the staff and funds to meet.

The precedent had been set in 1906 under Barton's administration, when a similar camp had been set up on the Bamu river, at that time regarded as 'the crux of the Western Division'. The Royal Commission sitting that year, however, heard evidence from Jiear, R.M. of the Western Division, and from Bruce, the Commandant of the Armed Constabulary, emphasising the need for close control. Jiear admitted the risk in the native police camp, but said that there was no alternative. Murray later agreed with the need for close control, but apparently had to respond to the same pressures in the same way.

14 Report 1901-2, pp.xxxv, 81-2.
15 Murray, Papua or British New Guinea, pp.195-6. Judge Winter, commenting in 1902 on the defeat of some Tugeri by Sananana natives in Australian territory, gave it as his opinion that the Tugeri had always been overrated - 'forced into a prominence not warranted by facts'. Winter to Gov. Queensland, No.69, 30.7.02. CPI (Col.), p.6.
16 Report 1914-5, p.98.
17 Report 1918-9, p.8. In 1917 a detachment of police from this camp, led by N.C.O. Duna with a Tugeri man as guide, astonished both the Australians and the Dutch by making a patrol to Merauke, the Dutch headquarters - ibid.
18 Report 1907-8, p.16.
Murray, by his commitment to a policy of settlement was bound to press ahead with pacification to an extent that might otherwise have been deemed unwise. In his view, consolidation and the labour question were inter-related: the extension of government influence made further areas available for the supply of labour, and going away to work had a 'civilizing' effect on the natives which later further consolidated government influence.

On the Bamu, the village of Bina, 'the last of the fighting villages', was visited in September 1906 and asked for a village constable. In order to facilitate extension to the Gama and Turama rivers, a village constable was appointed at Buniki, on the eastern mouth of the Bamu, the following year. Murray and the R.M. both saw this as a step towards a better labour supply. In furthering this, the V.C. became an agent of consolidation on the fringes of the controlled area. The dangers of the method were amply demonstrated on the Bamu in 1909, when the Maipani were raided and massacred by the Sisiame, at the instigation of Koraria, a V.C. As the R.M. remarked, until they could be visited frequently, their behaviour was not to be relied on.

A great deal depended on the abilities of individual officers. The Western Division was fortunate to have, for much of this period, Wilfred Beaver as R.M. His attitude towards the Bamu was more progressive, in view of the impracticability of close control, than his predecessors; he tried to rely on personal influence, rather than on the mere issuing of orders. In September 1911 when he visited the Sisiame he noted an improved attitude, and described Koraria, the murderer of only two years before, as 'my old friend'. Koraria's son had replaced him as V.C.

Although the majority of natives still rushed for the bush at the approach of a patrol 'with a coy affectation of fright that one might expect from a young ladies school', Beaver, like Murray, placed great faith in the growing influence of the young men who had been away to work. This

---

21 Report 1907-8, p.16; Report 1908-9, pp.16-7.
22 Report 1909-10, p.47.
23 Beaver to Gov. Sec., W.D. Patrol Reports, covering letter of 27.9.1911. 248/11R.
induced him to appoint the most promising of these young men as village constables.\textsuperscript{24}

Beaver, of course, realized that a great deal of attention would have to be paid the area for consolidation to be successful. To assist this a new district office was eventually opened at Kikori, under the R.M. Daru, in February 1912. Even so, control appears to have been ineffective, for a lengthy patrol of the Bamu in April 1915 disclosed administrative anarchy: the V.C. of Oropai had been involved in a bow-and-arrow affray; the V.C. of Bina was arrested on a murder charge; the V.C. of Sisiame (the third in five years) was said to have no influence; at Kuria the V.C. could not be found; at Gaude the V.C. had no uniform and said he had not seen a government officer for two years; while the V.C. of Samari was in gaol.\textsuperscript{25}

The conclusion seems to be inescapable, that government influence had been extended beyond the limits of practicable consolidation, in order primarily to maintain a labour supply for the rapidly growing plantations in the Territory.

In this Division the labour factor was particularly important, for this was traditionally the source of the most reliable workers - a reputation acquired by the Kiwai in the Constabulary.\textsuperscript{26} But at this period pulmonary diseases were seriously affecting the coastal villages, at a time when the search for labour for the Central and Eastern Divisions was acute.\textsuperscript{27} The R.M. pointed out in 1910 that new recruiting grounds would have to be opened up; while in 1911 the Administration announced that it would issue no more work permits for pearlimg in the Torres

\textsuperscript{24} e.g. at Oropai - 'very timid people' - on 10.9.1911, ibid; Report 1909-10, p.48. R.M. Higginson thought the elder men lacked the necessary 'bossing ability'.
\textsuperscript{26} Report 1907-8, pp.16-7.
\textsuperscript{27} See testimony of R.M. Jiear to Royal Commission, Report, p.143. Pulmonary affictions are still rampant, more than fifty years later. The area under plantations increased from 1467 acres in 1907 to 47506 acres in 1916. Of this total in 1916, almost 40,000 acres were in the East and Central Divisions. Report 1916-7, p.29.
Straits. The object of this was patent, and the natives reacted angrily. 28

(iv) Administrative Innovations by the Kiwai

In view of an administrative attitude which viewed the Western natives as potential labourers elsewhere, it is not surprising that the relative sophistication of the coastal Kiwai, and their innovations, were overlooked. R.M. Higginson in the period 1908–10 showed an open dislike of the 'civilized savage' in the coastal villages, as well as of their 'comic-opera burlesque'. 29

The Kiwai, however, consistently sought their own salvation: in 1909 the natives of Mawatta subscribed to buy a boat for pearl-fishing on a co-operative basis – a step much in advance of anything else in the Territory – but the only administration comment was chilly: 'It still remains to be seen if the native can make a success of a venture of this sort.' 30 The idea spread; but even an officer of Beaver's calibre was unconcerned at the fact that the two ketches operated by the Parama natives were being used unprofitably; the Government Secretary's only comment was to ask whether the law had been observed in the building of the boats. 31 Higginson reported in 1910 that the

28 Report 1910–1, p. 56; Report 1911–2, p. 67. They told the R.M. that they were organizing a petition for presentation to the Minister for External Affairs. In 1902 when a Federal Act had temporarily restricted their work in the Torres Straits, some Western District natives had worked in the Northern Division, but deaths amongst them had been heavy; the implication then had been that they were better suited pearl-shelling in the Straits – Report 1902–3, p. 17. In 1909 the death rate for Western District labourers in the Northern Division was more than double that in the Torres Straits (and their wages of course lower) – Report 1909–10, p. 49.

29 Report 1910–1, p. 56. '...there is a lot to be said for the raw and uncivilized savage'.


natives had not taken enough shell to keep them in tobacco, 'almost needless to say'.

The aspirations of the Kiwai, both economically and administratively were in advance of the Administration's. The failure by the Administration to capitalise on these aspirations, and on native-promoted innovations, has had lasting repercussions. Beaver was sufficiently perceptive to realize that the Kiwai might be able to support more advanced institutions. He referred to the failure of the Native Magistrates in MacGregor's time; but insisted that it had been a failure only because the Kiwai at that time had not been ready for it. He went on: 'I personally am rather inclined to think that a certain measure of self-government on lines such as exist in the Torres Straits is not undesirable... with careful supervision and very limited powers the experiment might not be so unfortunate at the present day.' Fifty years after Beaver wrote the experiment had still not been revived.

Beaver also remarked, in 1912, on the facility with which the Western natives assimilated European customs and ideas; but he felt that this could be too swift and undesirable. Clearly, the pace of change would have to be controlled by government. The government attitude seems throughout to have been that the natives were only adopting those concepts which suited their purposes, and that these purposes were not to be encouraged, nor their motives trusted.

The best example concerns the introduction of 'councillors'. When in 1913 the coastal Kiwai borrowed the councillor concept from the Torres Straits, the innovation was viewed with frank distaste by the Administration. It

32 Report 1910-1, p.56. Yet at this time the Government was considering an Encouragement of Industry Bill, prepared by the Government Secretary, Campbell, himself. This provided (in draft) inter alia for compulsory labour on government plantations (Campbell to Atlee Hunt, 15.9.07, where the idea was mooted).
33 Beaver, op.cit., p.30. The book was written before the war, in which Beaver was killed.
34 Beaver, ibid., pp.295-6; Report 1912-3, p.66.
35 When R.M. Lyons introduced the village plantation scheme in the Western Division, it was partly as 'a test of their civilization, and at the same time to make them realize its stern side.' Report 1914-5, p.99.
was felt that the natives were getting above themselves. First the Mawatta people had collected money to buy a cutter, then they had begun paying money to bushmen to keep the inland road clean, now they had begun appointing their own councillors. These events were interpreted by the Administration as a facade which the Kiwai were erecting, behind which they could cultivate indolence and evade the kind of work which the Administration thought good for them.

The Mawatta people are developing into a lazy crowd. The sole aim of every man in the village is to become a 'councillor'. These councillors meet in conclave to discuss matters of village import. They assume thoughtful airs, and their deductions perhaps are in many instances sound. But the carrying out of the result of their deliberations is left to those who are not 'councillors', who are hard to find in Mawatta. The consequence is nothing is done. I explained to the men that holding councils was alright enough, so long as they (the councillors) worked and saw to it that the obligations of the village were performed. But it will be hard to convince the wise men of Mawatta of such a home-truth who have such an inflated idea of their own importance.36

Murray read all the patrol reports and presumably approved of this interpretation; it was, after all, an extension of the views which he had expounded to the Royal Commission on the virtues of work for the natives and of 'Australian democratic ideas'. The R.M. claimed that some villages had, through their councillors, extended their jurisdiction to smaller neighbouring groups. This he had stopped. He was prepared to recognize that the councillors possibly had a right to exercise judicial functions; but this, he believed, was premature, 'as the power would be much abused'.37

In submitting his report in 1914 the R.M. ignored the councillors altogether; but he announced the beginning of the village plantation scheme, the first of its kind in the

36 W.D. Patrol Reports, 28.11.1913. Daru R/45/13. The councillors were wearing the Torres Straits councillors uniform - a black jersey with 'councillor' in red letters on the front.
37 Report 1913-4, p.71.
Territory. The two were connected, for the scheme was introduced in those very villages which, the previous year, had boasted councillors. The object of the scheme was stated bluntly as a test of the natives' 'civilization'.

They were told that the Government wished them to see that it was being done for their own good. The idea of compulsion was entirely eliminated. The appeal in every sense was made to the civilization in them.  

In point of fact, natives were convicted the very next year for not keeping the plantations clean. It seems a reasonable inference that the introduction of the scheme was aimed at controlling the activities of the councillors without officially acknowledging them.

The councillors continued to function. At Iasa in 1915 the patrol officer was pleased to find them promoting the village plantation scheme. Simply by reason of their continued existence the councillors came to be accepted, if not welcomed, by the Administration. They were useful only in so far as they assisted the village constables to have government instructions carried out.

In 1917 the R.M. ordered the V.C. of Mawatta 'to convey a message to the councillors to see that the children attend school'. Murray commented:

Is not the R.M. going rather too far in telling the councillors to 'see that their children attend school'? His duty, I think, is to encourage them, but not to compel, unless English is taught.

The last sentence clearly indicated that Murray felt that instructions could be passed on through the councillors; this was not in itself objected to. Murray defined the status of the councillors only later, when the institution was given official sanction.

39 Report 1915-6, p.91.
40 Daru Patrol Reports, 27.10.15. R/90/15.
41 W.D. Station Journal 28.2.17. Murray's comment dated 20.3.17 attached. The Native Regulation compelled attendance only at schools teaching English.
Generally, however, the councillors were ignored altogether; with rare exceptions: in June 1920 when the cutter belonging to the Parama natives ran aground, the 'councillors and elders' were summoned to decide whether it should be abandoned as a total wreck.\textsuperscript{42}

The first official recognition of the councillors occurred in August 1921 - eight years after the Kiwai had introduced them - when the village of Masingara (non-Kiwai, inland of Mawatta) won the £5 prize which had been instituted for the best-kept village. As a reward, and because the Masingara natives wished to emulate Mawatta and Mabadauan, the R.M. decided that one councillor should be appointed for each of the constituent major clans. This was a growing recognition of the fact that the councillors might be useful, as influential clan heads, in encouraging work on the plantation and model village schemes, as well as with tax collection, all of which were statutorily introduced only at the end of the war - though instructions issued through the V.C. still took precedence over persuasion.\textsuperscript{43}

The Kiwai, therefore, themselves introduced the councillor concept into the Territory; though the Administration never later acknowledged this, nor their special fitness to be given more advanced institutions. Indeed, to some degree it cost them Administration favour. Even the L.M.S. missionary at Daru at this period, E. Baxter Riley, judged them guilty of 'an inordinate self-esteem'.\textsuperscript{44} Sir Hubert Murray gave no recognition to the fact that the Kiwai themselves had originated the idea, any more than they were given credit for co-operative organization. In 1925 he wrote that 'councils were tried out in the west' but that it had been found impossible to extend the system.

\textsuperscript{42} W.D. Station Journal 12.6.20; cf. Patrol Report, Daru R.234/20, March 1920, where there is no acknowledgement of councillors.

\textsuperscript{43} Daru Patrol Reports 5/1921-3, 15.8.21; also J/25, dated 29.11.21; Report 1922-3, p.40. Like the plantations, the 'model village' idea was introduced by R.M. Lyons, and later applied elsewhere in the Territory (see Report 1919-20, p.18). Initially Mabadauan was laid out in neat roads and planted with cretons.

\textsuperscript{44} E.B. Riley, \textit{Among Papuan Headhunters}, p.76.
elsewhere - by implication claiming credit for the Administration. 45

The idea quickly spread in the Western Division, ahead of Administration promotion. As early as June 1923 the R.M. noted that a practice had grown up of the V.C.'s bringing along an old man and recommending him as a councillor.

This occurred at many places. It appears that the appointment of a Councillor raises the 'tone' of a village, and when these people hear that Councillors have been created - as at the model villages - they immediately become desirous of having the same honour conferred on themselves. 46

(vi) The Pull of the Frontier

It was perhaps unfortunate for the prospects of the councillor system in the west that, at about the time the Kiwai introduced it, the Administration was once again turning towards the uncontrolled frontier. This was a perennial conflict which inhibited the encouragement of more progressive administrative methods on the coast. It has already been remarked that the major stimulus to the extension of government influence came from the need for an adequate labour supply. In 1912 Murray was far from sanguine about the prospects of keeping up with demand. 47

In 1913 a definite campaign was launched to bring the remainder of the Territory under control: expeditions sought sites for further government stations on the upper Fly. 48 By 1914 these had shown the populations on the Fly and Strickland rivers to be scattered, and insufficient, in Murray's view, to justify a further government station. 49

45 H. Murray, Papua of Today, p.279.
47 Report 1912-3, p.7. The good influence of returned labourers was again emphasised, p.11.
48 Report 1912-3. Murray said that the primary object was to put an end to native practices that were 'a disgrace to an Australian Territory.' 'Incidentally, it will have the effect of extending the area open to recruiting...'.
49 Report 1914-5, p.9. This decision was too early to have been affected by the enlistment of one third of the Territory's officers for the World War - see Papua of Today (Murray), p.xi; Report 1915-6, pp.9-10. The policy of linking stations by regular patrolling was intensified concurrently - see Ch.II.
But government influence was spread by pacificatory and recruiting patrols, while follow-up action almost everywhere was poor.

In 1919 the R.M. complained that government influence had spread beyond the practicability of consolidation. This made a choice necessary between patrolling little-known districts and improving 'civilized districts'. He chose the latter - hence the extension of the village plantation and model village schemes. But withdrawal from the frontier could not be accomplished just by issuing an instruction.

It has already been noted that the appointment of V.C.s on the fringes of control had been used on occasions as a technique for extending government authority. Subsequent recessions of government control left these officials to their own devices - as has already been pointed out on the Bamu - with results prejudicial immediately to law and order, and, in the long term, to the prestige of government. Choosing the point, at any time, at which extension should be stopped was a nice problem; as Murray remarked later of the councillor system, much depended on the individual R.M., and frequent staff changes tended to imply policy changes at district level.

The Gogodala on the north bank of the Fly were easily accessible to patrols. Here the V.C. system seemed to work reasonably well; it was facilitated by the fact that the people seemed to have a sense of extra-village community generally lacking elsewhere. In June 1921 they jointly met a patrol, and, although some of the V.C.s had misinterpreted their duties - they had combined to make arrests in other villages - 'the meeting terminated in general goodwill'. Murderers were voluntarily surrendered.

On the other hand, a patrol to the Pahoturi river in July 1922 found that, although the V.C. of Bunkuklem village, for example, had some conception of his duties, conditions in the village had retrogressed since the previous government visit three years before. It was generally recognized that the frequent visits and courts were necessary to bolster a V.C.'s authority, particularly

50 Report 1919-20, p.18.
51 Report 1936-7, p.29.
for the enforcement of the more onerous or anti-custom Regulations; but this was clearly impossible in areas where the government made patrols at such long intervals.53

Yet, after the transfer of R.M. Lyons, in the early twenties appointments of V.C.s were continued in fringe areas. On a patrol to Lake Murray in February 1923 a whole set of V.C.'s clothes was handed to one of a group of natives who had never been contacted before, because, 'the man who visited us by himself was most anxious to obtain a police uniform'.54 The mere appointment of V.C.s seems to have been looked on as a talisman of control, with little examination of the implications and responsibilities of such an appointment, both from the native and from the Administration viewpoints.

The Administrator found on a visit to the Gama-Turama area in 1923 that little patrolling had been done. Nevertheless a 'suitable man' was picked out as V.C. amongst the Doriomo: 'Such an appointment might do good in this district, as there is not a single V.C. in the Gama or W. side of the Turama.' It was also found that one man on an unknown patrol previously had been appointed V.C. of two 'villages or tribes', Buniki and Pirupiru, which were bitter enemies. It was remarked that this seemed 'strange'; and a note was made for a new V.C. to be appointed amongst the Pirupiru when they could be contacted.55

On a subsequent patrol to the Turama in December 1924 the elusive Pirupiru were at last met; they selected their own man as V.C., and he was taken on an orientation trip to Daru to 'see the government'. On the same patrol the R.M. indulged in an orgy of native appointments, V.C.s being appointed to all the principal 'tribes' on the west bank of the river; while at the same time the R.M. Delta Division was doing the same amongst the equally elusive Morigio on the east bank. On the west bank six new V.C.s were selected in thirteen days. The Government Secretary was doubtful, minuting to Murray: 'Does Your Excellency consider the

53 Daru Patrol Reports, 16.7.22. Daru 15/1921-2. The officer was referring only to material conditions - he described the village as 'filthy'.
54 Daru Report 12/1922-3. The uniform seems to have been treated almost as a form of 'trade', like axes and mirrors - an inexpensive form of conciliation.
55 Daru Patrol Report 17/1922-3.
hurried appointment of V.C.s in these villages right? To which Murray replied unequivocally: 'Yes, it was good work.'

The sequel came in 1928, with a revival of fierce fighting along the Turama; as a result a police camp had to be established on the river, under a European officer, to carry out 'arrests and pacification.'

In 1924 V.C.s were appointed amongst the semi-controlled people to the north of the Aramia river, although a warning was given that supervision would be difficult, particularly in view of the nomadic habits of the Aramia natives. But it was felt that the appointments would give the natives 'confidence'. The Administration at this time seems to have built up a mystique about the inherent value of having V.C.s in remote areas, as constant reminders of government, even if the Administration itself ignored their existence. It was found on the Aramia river in 1929 that the original V.C. appointed to the village of Pisi (population 300) had not been visited by a government officer since 1920, and had succeeded in being paid up to 1925 only by going to Daru himself. Murray commented testily that the country should be regularly patrolled; but as regards staff and outstations the situation had not improved over the previous decade, while the appointment of V.C.s had been steadily used to extend government influence.

On the Wassi-Kussa river - a comparable fringe area - in July 1925 the A.R.M. found a number of V.C.s who had not seen the Administration for four years; they presented themselves for recognition and payment, although his records showed the name of only one of them. One man had appointed himself, in place of another who had resigned.

56 Daru 12/1924-5. Comments hand-written, jacket.
57 Report 1923-9, p.22.
58 Daru Patrol Report, November 1924. Daru 8/1924-5: Dibiasu people, said to be related to the Oogodala. There had already been complaints about supervising V.C.s and enforcing Regulations amongst migratory peoples on the Bamu; and although the traditional and economic barriers to village settlement were recognised, attempts were made to induce them to make villages - Daru 10/1923-4, especially 15.1.1924.
59 Daru 10/1928-9, May 1929; Murray's comment attached.
60 Daru P.R., 12.7.25. Daru 1/1925-6.
Yet in this very area the policy of appointing V.C.s continued, because they were said to represent government. The native leaders complained that they had little contact with government; consequently the 'chiefs' of Setavi and Kiriwo were appointed V.C.s and told 'to extend Government influence, to get in touch and establish friendly relations with the Biram and Suki people.'61 It was even recommended that the native police camp on the Morehead river be withdrawn and more V.C.s appointed in lieu.62

There seems little doubt that natives in the more sophisticated areas, i.e. primarily those which had been recruiting grounds, used the Administration's anxiety to appoint V.C.s as a cover for their own activities. In March 1926 ex-plantation labourers of Bell Point applied for appointment as V.C.s and were recommended. Two years later these seem to have been involved in the massacre of a number of Goaribari natives.63 Similarly, the Bamu peoples made head-hunting raids on the bush peoples about the end of 1926, but nothing was heard of it by government until August 1929. The fact that these people had V.C.s appears to have been taken as a justification for not patrolling the area.64

In the Western Division an essentially direct method of administration was used as an indirect method of extending government influence, with the result that control and consolidation went beyond the physical capacity of the Divisional staff.

(vii) The Concentration on Ends Rather than Means.

Towards the end of 1928, therefore, it might be said that the policy of opening up areas for recruiting and of appointing V.C.s in remote areas had begun to recoil on itself, exerting increasingly greater centrifugal pressure

---

61 Daru P.R., August 1926. Daru 3/1926-7. A further patrol in September, 1928, felt that the number of V.C.s was out of proportion with the population - Daru 2/1928-9.
63 Daru 18/1925-6; Report 1928-9, p.22.
64 Daru P.R., August 1929. Daru 1 and 2/1929-30.
on the administration at Daru. 65 Meanwhile, the 'civilized
districts', to which R.M. Lyons had intended to devote
himself, do not seem to have had intensive attention. A
surprise patrol to the 'model villages' of Tureture,
Masingara, and Mabadauan in October 1923 found that the
villages were filthy, the plantations neglected, and the
V.C.s and other natives had been regularly breaking the
Regulations by drinking gamada. 66

Moreover, despite native initiation of the idea,
Administration officers appear to have had as little idea
of the true status and functions of the councillors here as
elsewhere in the Territory. The R.M., on a patrol to the
Bamu in February 1926, left the choosing of a new V.C. to
the councillors; but in the same month a Patrol Officer
visiting the coastal Kiwai villages spoke of the councillors
as assistants to the V.C. 67 Although the councillors were
supposed to be representatives of the people, they were
often appointed directly by officers on patrol, and issued
with instructions. While patrolling the lower Fly in June
1928 R.M. Oldham found the village of Sapara filthy and all
the houses dilapidated.

Told the V.C. and Councillors if they did not
see that the people kept the village clean and
houses in good repair they would be punished and
dismissed. 68

Although Murray continually insisted that his officers
should not issue orders to councillors, the equal insistence

65 Routine patrols were often disrupted by troubles inland —
good description in G.F.W. Zimmer, Papuan Episodes
(typecript, in my possession) detailing difficulties in
this Division in the 1920's. Also note Report 1930-1, p.5,
where Murray describes Zimmer's trek of 'some hundreds of
miles' after raiders.
66 Daru P.R. 5/1923-4. These are the closest villages to
Daru; even the furthest, Mabadauan, is no more than eight
hours sailing by native moto-moto, even at the height of the
S.E. season. Beaver, op.cit., pp.92-4, describes gamada and
the reasons for its prohibition.
67 Daru P.R., 1.2.1926 (Damirokoromo) 13/1925-6; February
1926 (Katatai, Parama) 14/1925-6.
68 Daru P.R., 4.6.28. Daru 10/1927-8; cf. Daru 12/1926-7
(May 1927, Buniki village): 'Instructed Meani (V.C.) and the
councillors to have the Rest House and family houses
repaired....'
on ends rather than means nullified this. Officers were 
judged on the peace and prosperity of their districts, 
rather than on the methods used to achieve this. 
Councillors were useful principally as propaganda media 
whereby the government could convince the natives that what 
it compelled them to do was in their own interests. When 
Murray instructed an officer to 'influence the Councillors 
to plant more gardens', the officer understood what was 
implicated. 69

(viii) Further Kiwai Innovations

Meanwhile the Western natives continued to introduce 
new institutions in their villages up to the time of the 
war.

On a visit to Kiwai island in 1926 an officer found 
'committees' of elderly men in all the villages. The V.C. 
and councillors asked that the names of these men be 
recorded by government.

On enquiring the reason for this I was informed 
that these elderly men form the 'Committee'. It 
seems that the 'Committee' are appointed by the 
people and to be eligible for appointment men 
must be over taxable age and must have some 
social standing in the village. It is stated 
that the duty of the Committee is to support the 
V.C. and Councillors in keeping law and order in 
the village and they also frame rules governing 
the social life and general routine of the 
village. I think the idea is a good one and well 
worth encouraging. 70

The Kiwai traditionally had a 'council of the 
influential men', in Landtman's phrase. 71 This was clearly 
an extension of the idea, and something which the Adminis-
tration could have encouraged the councillors to form or 
assist elsewhere; but this was not done. The idea spread, 
however, as far as the lower Bamu villages. When the R.M. 
was appointing councillors there, at Buniki and Pirupiru, in 
1927, the old men formed committees to discuss matters with

69 See Daru P.R. 5/1930-1, March 1931 (Kiwai coastline and 
Pahoturi river); Daru 13/1931-2, June 1932 (Kiwai Is. and 
lower Fly).
70 Daru 18/1925-6, April 1926, p.37; also Report 1926-7, 
p.54.
him, but refused appointment as councillors, saying that they had no control over the young men. But, as the R.M. himself stated at the time that the councillors were being appointed 'to assist the village constables', the reluctance of the old men to accept appointment probably went deeper. In fact, the committees represented councillors in the way in which Murray had originally intended.72

On the lower Bamu elderly men were also being appointed 'village witness men', to witness payments to next-of-kin of deceased labourers, to women receiving the Family Bonus, and so on.73

Plainly there was a facility, even an eagerness, for adopting unfamiliar institutions which the Administration could have put to use, but which was never developed.74

After 1929 the Administration did try to use natives as assessors in the Native Courts; but even this seems to have been given only a perfunctory trial in the West. In 1932 two Oromosapu councillors were co-opted as assessors in an adultery case involving an Ipisia councillor; but they disappeared before the hearing was finished. There may have been social reasons for this, but no attempt was made to find them. The result seemed to confirm Murray’s pessimism.75

Nevertheless the Kiwai in particular continued to introduce their own administrative innovations. On a visit to Mabadauan in 1938 an officer was surprised to be greeted with well-organized formality and hospitality. This, he

---

72 Report 1927-8, p.32. Yet in 1934 an officer thought the appointment of councillors on the Bamu had been premature: 'their only apparent function as such seems to be to solicit tobacco from Government officers.' Daru 6/1933-4, February 1934. Bimarami village.
73 Daru P.R. 12/1926-7, May 1927; e.g. Sagera village.
74 Officers liked to have one man in each village, the V.C., who could get things done - see the praise of the V.C. system on the Morehead and Bensbach rivers in 1928, when they were said to be a means of breaking down barriers and promoting co-operation. (Daru P.R. 2/1928-9, August-September 1928). As V.C.s were appointed to individual villages this is difficult to understand.
found, was the work of a women's committee which made
regular visits of inspection to see that houses were kept
clean and in good repair. Murray appreciated the voluntary
aspect of this and refused to assist the committees by
applying government sanctions:

...the most unpleasant feature of native
administration is the continuous procession of
village natives going to gaol to suffer
imprisonment for neglecting some necessary
work which they might easily have carried out. 76

(After the war the women's committees spread right
through the Kiwai villages, without government promotion,
and they have proved an excellent adjunct to the local
government council.)

Again, in 1940-1 the Kiwai people appointed agricul-
tural 'inspectors' in the villages, to report to the
councillors on the condition of gardens and the repair of
fences. The Administration recognized the importance of the
movement, 'for its extension may easily result in valuable
improvement in the extent and variety of native food
supplies.' 77 Perhaps this is an indication that, had the
war not intervened, the attitudes of the Administration
might have changed; if so, it would have been the result of
native persistence in converting officers to the viewpoint
that they could sustain their own administration, rather
than the reverse. In the light of Divisional history, the
government comment in 1941 that 'the native councillors are
beginning to understand their duties, responsibility, and
authority' now appears presumptuous. 78

The government consistently concentrated on the ends
to be achieved: clean villages, better gardens and
plantations, adherence to the law; only just before the war

76 Report 1939-40, p.23. Similar committees were found in
the East Central Division the following year - Report 1941-
2, p.22. Through their own courts, natives could themselves
have applied sanctions - but the idea was anathema to
Murray, who feared all manner of corruption. Landtman noted
that although women were almost the social equals of men,
and owned their own property, they were traditionally
excluded from any part in public affairs - pp.171-3.
77 Report 1941-2, p.22.
78 Ibid. It is difficult to understand what the term
'authority' may imply.
did the Western natives impress on the government that the means to achieve the ends are equally important. Indeed, in the long term, much more important.
(1) Social Conditions

There are similarities in the patterns of leadership between the Elema and the Roro and Mekeo peoples of the west Central Division, and to a less extent with the Motu and Koita of the central coast, even though all these peoples are generally taken as forming a different physical type (Papuo-Melanesian) from the Elema (Papuan).

The Roro-speaking peoples had a number of clans (itsubu) running through each village, and each of these had a clan chief and secondary chiefs (ovia); these offices were heritable patrilineally. There were also specialist 'chiefs' for war and magic, though Seligmann preferred to call these 'hereditary office-bearers' rather than chiefs. The principal chiefs were responsible for the settlement of disputes; while the secondary chiefs policed the village.¹

The faa chiefs amongst the Mekeo corresponded roughly in status and functions to the ovia amongst the Roro. Sometimes the ceremonial and specialist functions (for example, war chief) were combined; and on occasions a woman could be lopia faa, a principal chief. Adoption, and the assumption by children of their mother's pangua (clan) were also not uncommon.

There is no doubt that among the Mekeo clans there was a feeling of affectionate consideration for their lopia faa and a ready recognition of the pre-eminence of the families to which these chiefs belonged...This naturally fostered a sense of dignity, importance and responsibility on the part of the faa chief which is quite uncommon among Papuasians...²

The coastal Motu and Koita also had hereditary officeholders with roughly similar functions, though the system of leadership was not tied to the clubhouse as amongst the Roro. The Koita leaders were the iduhu rohi (clan or clan

¹ C.G. Seligmann, The Melanesians of British New Guinea, pp.216-22. On p.221 is illustrated the special insignium of office which only chiefs could wear.
² Ibid., pp.342-5.
section chief), and the rohi ketaike (village chief). The iduhu rohi acted as peacemaker within the iduhu, and arranged feasts, though he could enforce no decisions against the wishes of the old men. The village chief particularly adjusted land disputes amongst the iduhu constituting the village. In Hanuabada, which represents a conjunction of the Motu and Koita, it is doubtful if a village chief existed in pre-European times. The coming of government reduced the influence of the traditional leaders, but at the same time allowed one man to emerge, with government backing, as village leader. Previously, a man's attaining leadership had depended on his own force of character. 3

Inland from Rigo chieftainship seems to have been much less formalized, though an energetic man was able to acquire and maintain extensive support. 4

Inland from Mekeo, amongst the Mafulu people, there is said to have been an hereditary aristocracy. The people lived in dispersed clans, the village segments of which each had its em' u babe; while the clan itself had a chief, amidi, who presided over the emone (club-house). Williamson regarded the amidi as being the only true chief, because he was treated with respect, and led in all matters affecting the clan; but he had no power of punishment or control over clan members. 5

(ii) Transition to Reliance on Village Constables

In the 1890's the area close to Port Moresby and inland to Sogeri was, broadly, under control; but to the east even the coastal villages were under limited influence only; to the west the extension inland of the Catholic Mission (established at Yule Island in 1885) created continuing administrative difficulties. 6

3 Ibid., pp.53-8; also C.S. Belshaw, The Great Village, pp.20-3. This comment treats Hanuabada as one village; Seligmann treats it as an association of villages.
4 C. Northcott, Guinea Gold, p.65.
6 A good deal of this was pioneer exploration, in advance of the Administration - for example, the 1896-7 expeditions to Kuni and the upper St. Joseph - see A. Dupeyrat, Papuan Conquest, pp.45-58.
In the more settled areas, the trend towards reliance on the village constables has already been mentioned. In Hanuabada, Toua, who was originally village constable, later became government chief as well; to enforce his authority he leaned heavily on government. In Aroma, where Koapena had had enormous influence and apparently real authority, by 1898 government was by the 'eight excellent village policemen'. Those chiefs who co-operated with government had their authority extended and strengthened. In the Mekeo area a man of considerable influence named Maino-Panau proved himself of inestimable service to the Administration. In 1897 the Mekeo people, incensed by the deaths of two carriers, were whipped up to fever pitch by the sorcerers, so that an attack on a government party seemed imminent. The R.M. then arrested all the principal sorcerers; this would have been impossible without Maino's assistance.

Where other chiefs failed through fear, Maino-Panau was informed of such, and in no instance did he fail to hand over any native required.

The sorcerers' charms, together with the arms of the fighting men, were publicly burnt. MacGregor, although he acknowledged the special problem of sorcery amongst the Mekeo, strongly deprecated the wholesale gaoling of the sorcerers 'on a purely constructive offence'. Maino, however, in recognition of his 'zeal and impartial conduct' was appointed 'senior chief and constable' in the Mekeo district, and he held the confidence of the Administration for many years.

The appointing of senior chiefs or senior village constables over areas combining numbers of 'parishes' became not uncommon in the Central Division - an example of a local administrative tradition.

---

7 Port Moresby Station Journals, returns, March 1899; also entry of 9.3.1900, where 8 women were gaolcd for disobeying Toua.
8 Report 1898-9, p.xxiii.
9 Ibid., p.86.
10 Ibid., pp.xxii, 87.
11 He was held in affectionate regard by Administration officers, who supplied him with tobacco and food - P.M. Station J., 19.6.99. How he was regarded by other Mekeo chiefs we do not know.
At a very early date confusion arose as to the official status and functions of the chiefs and village constables, similar to the later confusion between the village constables and councillors. The chiefs became subject to direction, discipline, dismissal and replacement. To some extent this was an inevitable result of the trend towards appointing chiefs as village constables and making them dependent on government support. The most notorious instance was Monckton's action in the Veipa area in 1897 in stripping all the chiefs and village constables but one - Maino - of their uniforms. In 1897 a chief and V.C. in the Kabadi area was dismissed for 'larceny and his propensity for lying'. He lost government support in both capacities. This appears to have been the same man, Naime, who the following year was branded as the major sorcerer of the area, threatening the new V.C. and the native mission teacher.

Instances of officers issuing instructions to both chiefs and village constables are common (for example, in the Tupuseleia-Hula area in December 1897); and often both the chiefs and the village constables were expected to make arrests for contraventions of Regulations. In the Mekeo area, Government Agent Bramell seems to have insisted on the chiefs reporting themselves at regular intervals at the government station. This could have opened the way to genuine consultation; but as many of the lopia were also village constables law enforcement became paramount. The official return for 1897-8 shows that, of fifty village constables in the Mekeo area, thirty were also chiefs.

---

12 C.W. Monckton, Some Experiences of a New Guinea Resident Magistrate, pp.121-2. He gives Maino's action here as the reason for his promotion; but this is wrong.
13 Report 1898-9, p.86.
15 P.M. Stat. J., 20.12.1897, 24.5.1899. Many of these examples concerned the burial Regulation; the chief was clearly involved in role conflict where custom decreed that bodies should be buried within the village.
16 Report 1898-9, p.88. In June 1899 the chief of Inawi was reprimanded for being the only chief who had not reported at the station: Stat. J., 20.6.1899.
17 Report 1898-9, p.93.
As everywhere else, the L.M.S. native teachers gave constant trouble by arrogating temporal authority, or attempting to do so. This was confined mainly to the Port Moresby and Rigo areas; in the Mekeo area the Catholic mission was able to rely on a large staff of Europeans. It was the anti-custom bias of the L.M.S. which provoked a good deal of the trouble with the natives and the Divisional authorities. The European missionaries, because of their continuity of service, were of considerable use to the Administration; conversely, they were sometimes able to influence the selection of village constables to suit their own concepts.

In 1903, for example, the Rev. H.P. Schlenker suggested to the Government Agent at Rigo that a boy, who was clearly a protege of the mission, replace the V.C. (and chief) of Kalikodobu, an inland village. The Government Agent agreed that the V.C. was incapable, and put forward the remarkable compromise that the boy should indeed become V.C., but that the deposed man be allowed to keep his uniform without pay. In September 1912 the Rev. H.M. Dauncey complained of many offences by V.C.s in the west coastal area of the Division: they were, he said, promoting gambling, neglecting to maintain order, and one had even forced a mission schoolboy to work in his garden - this last was an offence to which mission teachers were more usually prone.

The Catholic mission provided an unusual problem because of its rapid penetration inland; but it maintained a staff of more than fifty Europeans from the early 1900's onwards, so that supervision over its native teachers was strict. A priori, the Catholic system might have been expected to lead to the accretion of temporal authority: the method was to evangelise through a troop of 'native auxiliaries' called the kis, catechists who were carefully

18 Report 1897-8, p.xvi; Report 1898-9, p.xxii; Report 1899-1900, pp.xiii, 67 (one teacher had just been convicted of arson, another had interfered with native dancing), Report 1901-2, p.xxivii.
19 Schlenker to A.C. English, 12.1.1903; English to Gov. Sec., 15.1.03, Rigo P.R. 1903, file 6. Schlenker was simultaneously refused a blanket request that all natives be forced to attend school.
drilled 'to repeat indefinitely and persuasively the
questions and answers'. The kis wore a special uniform not
unlike that of a village constable. They were, however,
closely supervised by Europeans, through a system of
secondary stations for each 'tribal group' around the main
station.

Because of the intensive nature of this system it is
difficult to estimate the administrative effects it had.
The Administration Police Camp was established at Kambisi,
in the Ononge area, in 1925; but its prime object was to
pacify the country as far as the border. Meanwhile, in the
same year the mission already had the Fuyuge country 'in a
state of effervescence'. As late as 1929 the Mekeo
A.R.M. interviewed the Bishop about alleged 'courts' which
had been held in inland villages both by the Fathers and
by mission teachers. The Bishop disclaimed all knowledge,
but remarked that the Fathers of course often settled
village disputes to keep the peace - a practice that the
Administration was not in a position to gainsay.

(iv) Over-estimation of the V.C. System: the Paternal Ideal

In the early years of the century, when routine
patrolling was necessarily minimal, there was a tendency to
place altogether too much reliance on the village constable.
In 1901 the R.M. wrote that the V.C.s were accepted by the
natives; as this was the earliest area in the Territory -
outside Port Moresby - to come under government influence,
he felt that the success of the village constables could be
regarded as an index to their success elsewhere.

At this period, however, the village constables were
much more active outside their own spheres than within them;
this seems to have been encouraged, perhaps an unacknowledged
concession to the role conflict in which a village constable
was involved as soon as he accepted appointment. Traditional

---

21 Dupeyrat, op.cit., p.102 (the uniform is illustrated on
p.119). There is an extended description of the
evangelistic method in A. Dupeyrat, Papouasie, pp.434-49.
Kis is a contraction of Kate Kiste.
22 Dupeyrat, Papuan Conquest, p.100.
23 Ibid., p.102; Report 1926-7, pp.12-3.
leaders were often anxious to arrest offenders in neighbouring parishes. In February 1901 the chief of Kubuli and his two sons brought to Rigo two Lebu prisoners, accused of the murder of a Boka native. They were given 20 sticks of tobacco, and the chief was presented with a blue uniform, while one of the sons was made a village constable.26

In addition, the V.C.s were often used to assist the Constabulary on patrol, for their local knowledge was invaluable.27

This method overcame some of the difficulties caused by social segmentation. Indeed, this segmentation was seen to have certain administrative advantages. In 1903 Barton, then R.M. of the Central Division, remarked that offences were 'seldom' reported by the V.C. of the tribe to which the culprit belonged. This characteristic he found particularly strong among the bush tribes.

Although the absence of a spirit of co-operation, amounting often to actual antagonism, between the innumerable tribal communities has in some ways been an obstacle from an administrative point of view, the influence which has been gained over the natives would have been impossible of attainment had the tribes been capable of cooperating; or, at all events, the work of administration could not have been accomplished so economically in the face of it.28

This is in line with both MacGregor's and Murray's suspicion of actual or potential combination amongst native groups.

The belief that, through the V.C.s, the natives could, in effect, control one another, deluded the Administration into over-estimating the adequacy of the V.C. system. In the Rigo area in 1904 they were acting as patrol police on the fringes of government control, bringing refractory

26 Rigo J., February 1901.
27 Port Moresby J., 6.10.1906: 'Sent out V.C.s of Lealea, Boera, Boera-bada, Baruni, Eriama, Umani and Elavala, to search for Marahare.'
groups together. The following year it was claimed that the whole district patrolled from Rigo was under control and that it was intended, therefore, to move the government station further east.29

Correspondingly, control through the village constables, from the Administration's standpoint, was reduced to an unreal level of simplicity. To take examples from the Port Moresby district in 1909: in November the R.M. found Boera very dirty, though the villagers had previously been given warnings. 'After some questions the V.C. very unwillingly gave me the names of those who had committed a breach of Native Reg. No. 1 of 1905. I told him to bring them - seventeen in all - to Port tomorrow.'30 The same happened in other villages. At Tebeala, finding the road and village unclean, the R.M. sent two village constables 'to bring in six natives, whose names they gave to me, for a breach of the Native Regulations'.31

The system of punishment for breaches of the Native Regulations was, in practice, quite arbitrary. When offences were committed, the Administration expected the V.C.s to put forward people who could be made culpable. This was hardly a system likely to promote stability, cooperation, or a sense of responsibility in the villages; and the only things that saved the V.C.'s position from being intolerable were either his own profitable corruption or the infrequency of government patrols.

As has been noted elsewhere, Murray's developmental policy imposed added strains on the village constables, but at the same time increased the opportunities for corruption. Friction sometimes developed between planters and native officials,32 while at the other end of the scale were the cases of two Rigo village constables inducing young men to 'sign on' against their will.33

29 Report 1904-5, p.23; Report 1905-6, p.4. The station remained at Rigo, a further station later being set up at Abau. The alienation of land in the Cloudy Bay area eventually compelled this - Report 1909-10, p.17.
31 Ibid., 5.12.09. All the village people had taken to the bush.
33 Rigo J., 10.4.1907. Maopa villages.
Despite these circumstances, a remarkably sanguine attitude towards the efficacy of the village constables grew up. In August 1911 the A.R.M. at Rigo wrote:

I do not anticipate any more trouble from the natives of the Maipiko District, for now that they are to have a Village Constable there, and the one at Makigolo being smartened up, the place can, I think, be reckoned as under proper control now.34

This optimism was founded in a remarkable theory expressed at length by the Resident Magistrate of the period, J.T. O'Malley. This constitutes a definition, in an exaggerated form, of the paternal ideal. According to O'Malley the natives unquestioningly accepted both the appointed native officials and the European officers as a substitute chieftainship.

There had to be a form of chieftainship and, as the native himself was found wanting in this respect, then the Government gave them chiefs, by dividing the Territory into Divisions and putting in charge of each a Resident Magistrate, and those Caucasian Resident Magistrates are at the present day the paramount chiefs who control, guide, and care for the three or four hundred thousands of Papuan natives. It seems almost incredible to realize how naturally the people have accepted this substitute; how readily they give their obedience and respect to this re-incarnation of chieftainship, and accept the government, control, and leadership of a chief who is not of their own race and colour.35

Why had the natives given this obedience so readily? O'Malley concluded that the reason was that a smouldering spark of obedience to authority had lain dormant, waiting only for the coming of the white man to re-kindle it.

As a father is to a family, so is the Resident Magistrate to the tribes of his Division. They look to him as their final court of appeal... His word to them is law, and is obeyed without

---

34 C.D. Journal, 23.8.1911. It was also hopefully believed that sorcery - one of the major difficulties in the V.C. system - was declining - see Report 1914-5, p.27.
35 Report 1911-2, pp.90-1.
question... In fact, he is the pivot on which their tribal life revolves. He is their strength, their safety, and their refuge, and without him they would be bewildered and lost, and their life chaotic.\(^{36}\)

This remarkable belief had important implications for the extension of the village constable system; for O'Malley conceded that in practice he and his officers could not control, as 'chiefs', the area nominally under their authority - for example, one A.R.M. in the Mekeo area dealt with an estimated population of 26,000. This was the justification for the extension of the V.C. system:

...in districts and villages where the Magistrate cannot personally come in contact with the natives, he (the V.C.) is the mouthpiece of the Magistrate and the medium through which the people approach the Magistrate.\(^ {37}\)

O'Malley, therefore, specifically countenanced the appointment of V.C.s in areas which it was impracticable for government officers to visit.

The major administrative problem in the Central Division centred in the western section, embracing the Mekeo peoples and those inland to Mafulu and Ononge. Rapid penetration inland by the Catholic Mission, which was continually opening up new country, forced the government to follow.\(^ {38}\) Initially Murray, imbued with that comparatively optimistic élan which characterised his attitude

\(^{36}\) Ibid.

\(^{37}\) Ibid. He concluded that the natives seemed naturally to understand 'this Magisterial or Chief system', and that it required implicit obedience to authority. The system, he said, was 'successful in the highest degree'. The V.C., he said (p.93) was 'the acknowledged chief of his village'.

\(^{38}\) See J. McAuley, The Distance between the Government and the Governed, South Pacific, VII, 8, pp.815-6; cf. A.M. Bottrill, South Pacific, VII, 11, p.901, where he points out some commercial interests in the Goilala area. In 1907, Fathers Chabot and Filladeau mapped the course of the St. Joseph and Biaru Rivers (Report 1907-8, p.12 and map); and when Murray again visited the area in 1912 he found that the head waters of the Vetapu were well known to the mission - Report 1913-4, p.8.
to native administration before World War I, was confident that the maintenance of peace and order would be easy. In November 1907 he secured the names of several men amongst the inland Boboi who had murdered the V.C. of Inawauni, one of the Mekeo villages. Murray believed that the punishment of these murderers would 'almost certainly' secure order in the Boboi area and would ensure government influence amongst all the tribes to the north of Mekeo, from Mt. Yule on the one side to Mafulu, the furthest station of the Catholic mission, on the other.39

Sheer ignorance of what was going on in these areas promoted unsupported optimism. The R.M. Central Division complained of the impracticability of patrolling there in 1911; and in 1912 Murray himself confessed that the distance from Kairuku made it almost impossible to enforce the Regulations in the Mafulu area.40 The only solution was an inland government station; in December 1913 Murray set out proposals for a station at Ononge, but no provision had been made in the Estimates, and the war then intervened. The Kambisi Police Camp was eventually not established until 1925.41

Meanwhile, Murray learned on his visit in August 1912 that the Mafulu area had threatened trouble, but that the Catholic Fathers had arranged peace, and that the tribes which had been 'spoiling for a fight' with the government were quiet. The missionaries, he reported, had been careful to point out that the peace they had arranged was the peace of the government, not of the mission.42 In the second half of 1913, however, spasmodic inter-tribal fighting broke out in the Mafulu and Mondo areas. In September the A.R.M., acting on advice from the mission, went to Mafulu from Kairuku (a walking distance of 100 miles) and by consultation with the chiefs arranged compacts amongst the tribes, with compensatory payments.43

---

39 Murray to Ex. Affairs, 21.11.07, No.228/07. CPI, 6.
40 Report 1911-2, p.91; Report 1913-4, p.10.
41 Report 1913-4, p.10; also Minute by Murray, No.1759, Dec. 1913. CPI, 30, file 28; Report 1926-7, p.12.
43 Ibid.
On the recommendation of the field staff and the R.M., most of the chiefs in the area were made village constables—a remarkable step in view of the impracticability of supervising them, and all the more so in view of the fact that they could be trusted so little that they were not even issued with handcuffs, a general prerogative and indeed symbol of V.C.s everywhere. Altogether fifteen V.C.s were appointed. The R.M. was optimistic about them; the most influential was Aida-Sivu of Palibu, who was stated to have previously behaved 'in a passive way' against the government.

It is relevant that on this same patrol village constables were also appointed amongst the earlier contacted Boboi people. When in 1923 the A.R.M. visited the area after reports of Boboi raids on neighbouring peoples, he found that one village responsible had not been visited since 1913, and another not since 1915. Both their V.C.s were dead, and they themselves self-righteously attributed the recrudescence of a 'troublesome spirit' to the lack of government control.

In the Mafulu area likewise, the appointment of V.C.s was based on little other than blind trust. Not a great deal had been expected, but it had been hoped that the V.C.s would allow the Administration more easily to get in touch with the peoples and to stop further disturbances. Eight of them were taken to Kairuku to impress them with government strength.

This philosophy did not allow for the extensive influence of Aida-Sivu. In October 1914 trouble again developed in the area. The Catholic missionary, in effect acting for the government, persuaded all the chiefs except Aida to sign a 'peace paper'; but Aida's 'almost extraordinary power and influence' gave him a formidable following. He was eventually arrested, but not before an A.C. of the patrol had been killed. It was hoped that a

---

Report 1914-5, p.27. In 1908 V.C.s were forbidden to retain the keys of handcuffs, in order to prevent extortion—Report 1908-9, p.65.
45 Report 1914-5, p.27; Kairuku P.R. 6/1922-3, 2.2.23.
lengthy term of imprisonment might destroy his influence and settle the district.\textsuperscript{47}

To a degree the latter hope was realized, as there was no further feuding; but in 1923 Aida was still recognized as the most powerful figure in the area and was even considered for appointment as V.C. again, until Murray personally vetoed the suggestion. His district was in excellent order, and he was co-operating with government; but it was reported that his influence was founded on his reputation as an 'Imotu' or sacred man, inviolable to attack. This excluded him from government office.\textsuperscript{48}

In the early 1920's opinions seem to have been divided on the appointment of V.C.s in the far inland areas. Two were appointed, at Goilala and Kambisi, in 1922; but the A.R.M. hesitated to appoint another one in the Venapa valley, although he considered one badly needed, because of Circular 391 which counselled more careful selection. The realization seems to have come, as in the Western Division, that the V.C. system had been over-extended; the A.R.M. emphasised the need for an inland patrol post; and Leo Austen, an exceptionally able officer, declared that the district was too large for one man's control.\textsuperscript{49}

One method which had been tried, to keep the officer at Kairuku in contact with the village constables - an admission to the lack of regular patrolling - was the payment of them in cash instead of trade, which forced them to visit the government station. Even this was an administrative rationalisation of a suggestion made by a deputation of Mekeo V.C.s in October 1912, and approved by the Treasurer at that time. This arrangement suited the convenience of the coastal V.C.s, but it did not work with the inland men who were so terrified of Mekeo sorcery that nothing would induce them to travel annually to Kairuku for their wages.\textsuperscript{50}

\textsuperscript{47} Summary History, cit. sup.; Report 1916-7, p.5. Aida had been convicted in 1913, but the conviction was quashed by Judge Herbert on the ground of insufficient evidence. Minute by C.E. Herbert, 5.2.1914. CPI, V, 30.

\textsuperscript{48} Report 1923-4, p.20.

\textsuperscript{49} Report 1922, p.56; Kairuku P.R.3/1921-2; P.R.11/1922-3, conclusion.

Despite the palpable lack of control over inland peoples, there were officers who believed the situation to be better there in the 1920s than in the Roro and Mekeo areas. McAuley has pointed out that the rapid extension of the government line inland caused constant pressure for carriers on these peoples, and that this process 'bedevilled the relations between these coastal peoples and the government for decades'. The obligation to provide carriers was not the only factor; others were a general Administration suspicion of the more sophisticated native; the continuing aversion to traditional leadership supported by sorcery amongst the Roro and Mekeo; and the often arbitrary selection of village constables.

In 1925 A.R.M. Rentoul came to the conclusion that the quality of the V.C.s deteriorated as he neared the coast; like Austen he believed that authority was more easily enforced and more genuinely respected in relatively untouched societies. The year before, however, Liston-Blyth had attributed the appalling state of the Mekeo villages to the lack of patrolling, of which even the long-suffering mission was complaining. He agreed, however, that the natives were more educated and lazier, and claimed that the mission gave them a shield behind which to hide; moreover, he said that nobody seemed to have authority, so that constant compulsion was necessary. The missionaries complained of the constant changing of officers as a major factor in poor control.

By the mid-twenties, as administration extended to the border, the compulsory recruitment of carriers was complicating the work of the V.C.s even as far inland as Mafulu, so that this in itself is an inadequate explanation of Mekeo conditions. The pressure to recruit carriers necessitated constant coercion on the natives and support by government of the V.C.s. In order that the flow of carriers be maintained, it was essential that each village have an official responsible; under these circumstances

---

51 McAuley, loc.cit., p.818; Bottrill, loc.cit., points out that pack-animals were not an adequate substitute — but mules were used from Kambisi Police Camp: Report 1927-8, p.39.
the selection of village constables could hardly fail to be arbitrary.\textsuperscript{54}

Also, traditional leaders could not be expected to accept government office willingly. But it fits in with that curiously paradoxical aspect of native administration in Papua that in the Mekeo and Roro areas, where a distinctive and recognisable form of traditional leadership existed, little or no use was made of it, while in the Rigo area there is considerably more reference to so-called chiefs. Seligmann spoke of the intense loyalty of the Mekeo to the *lopis faa*, and of the sense of dignity and responsibility of the *faa* chiefs themselves;\textsuperscript{55} but the Administration put its own needs and ideals ahead of chiefly prerogatives. Even where the *faa* chiefs were opposed to a girl's marriage, the Magistrate stepped in and ordered them to desist.\textsuperscript{56} The chiefs, however, slipped into the background primarily because they were believed to derive their authority from the practice of sorcery, an offence under the Regulations.\textsuperscript{57}

In the face of sorcery, the Administration had no answer but compulsion. The chiefs, correspondingly, were thought of as opponents to be coerced or suppressed, rather than as potential allies. The agents of compulsion, the village constables, were therefore involved in a complex form of role conflict, which earned them little sympathy. To take one example, when A.R.M. Little concluded that village constables were neglecting the cleaning of roads in order not to offend their communities, he accused them

\textsuperscript{54} Report 1925-6, p.34; Kairuku P.R. 6/1925-6: Mafulu, 20.10.25; cf. statement of the Nara villages in 1936, that the only time the V.C. had any authority was at the time of government visits - Kairuku P.R. 8/1935-6. A.R.M. Thompson - information from a native clerk. In the Kambisi area in 1925, A.R.M. Baker complained of the lack of authority of V.C.s. He forced the local chiefs to cooperate by occupying their gardens and villages - Kairuku 5/1924-5.

\textsuperscript{55} Seligmann, op.cit., p.343.

\textsuperscript{56} C.D. Stat. J., Inawi, 16-7 December 1910.

\textsuperscript{57} There is an interesting comparison with the situation in Kenya, where until 1925 an escape clause prevented chiefs from being charged with sorcery - see J. Nottingham in *The Journal of African Administration*, 1959, XI, 1, p.14.
of taking the line of least resistance, and gave them blunt orders to get the roads cleaned. 58

In 1928 the A.R.M. reported that the V.C.s appeared to have very little authority, with the result that he had to send the station Constabulary out in order to get orders obeyed. 59 Despite the introduction of councillors by this date, what the Administration interpreted as a sinister revival of sorcery caused a continuance of government by compulsion. The village constables in the same year were castigated as 'a spineless collection' who constantly invoked the aid of the A.N.C. when crimes were committed, because they were terrified of sorcery. 60 In 1930 the village constables were said to be afraid to keep roads and villages in order; and in 1931 the Catholic mission believed sorcery to be on the increase, one native having explained that 'the sorcerer is stronger than the Government, which can only put us in gaol, where we are well fed and then come back to our village, but the sorcerer can kill'. 61

The Administration lapsed into a form of despair over the continuing influence of the Mekeo sorcerers, a negative attitude which militated against positive action. In 1935 it was remarked that in the Mekeo area there were three known chief sorcerers, but that if they were gauled they would be fed sumptuously 'to appease the great men's wrath' and that they would emerge stronger than before. In any case, it was admitted that it was virtually impossible to get any evidence against sorcerers of standing. 62

(vi) Head V.C.s and Consultative Administration at Rigo

These chronic difficulties do not seem to have arisen in the Rigo district. Here, the practice was adhered to of appointing Head Village Constables in certain areas. Aroma,

58 Report 1919-20, p.31.
59 Report 1928-9, p.27.
61 Kairuku P.R. 16/1929-30, 12/1930-1. Much the same seems to have applied in the Roro-speaking villages, e.g. Waima - see P.R. 2/1926-7. Sorcery was not the only difficulty in getting efficient V.C.s - the A.R.M. was also looking for recruits, preferably ex-A.N.C., who had some knowledge of English - Kairuku P.R. 5/1925-6.
62 Kairuku P.R. 9/1934-5.
which had eight village constables, early had one described as 'Head V.C.' As administration extended into the mountains, 'special V.C.s' were appointed with the particular object of enabling the Administration to get into closer touch with neighbouring peoples. Perhaps the Administration was simply fortunate in the personalities it selected in this district: the most prominent of these was a man named Agevadabia, who in 1918 was spoken of as Head V.C. of the Rigo mountain districts, with no fewer than 27 other V.C.s under his supervision.

There seems little doubt that Agevadabia was a man with extensive traditional influence. Independently in 1918 he made a long trip into the Mt. Brown area - at that time outside government control - and he was said to be principally responsible for bringing these people in touch with the government. The generally progressive and co-operative attitude in this district is in remarkable contrast with that in the Mekeo and Mafulu areas - possibly the early relations and firm action with the Aroma in MacGregor's time made a lasting and pervasive impression. It is interesting to note that Mokela, the Head V.C. of Aroma, was personally experimenting with the growing of rice, at a time when rice-growing was generally experimental.

Better relations were everywhere evident in the Rigo area. The extensive patrolling carried out by Agevadabia, for example, enormously simplified the extension and maintenance of government control. It facilitated continuing the appointment of traditional leaders as village constables, for there was little chance, with native supervision, of their disaffection; and with Agevadabia constantly at the side of patrolling officers, there was less inducement for them to appoint men as village constables simply because they had a knowledge of English or Motu. Moreover, Agevadabia's presence made patrol officers less inclined to issue direct orders, and more inclined to discuss government policy. The A.R.M. noted in October 1921: 'A number of District matters to talk over with the Head V.C. Agevadabia' - an attitude strikingly different from that elsewhere.

---

63 Report 1914-5, p.28.
64 Rigo P.R. 5/1918; Report 1919-20, pp.30-1.
66 Rigo P.R. 2/1921-2, 30.10.1921.
Agevadabia, for his part, seems to have been anxious that the real men of influence be appointed V.C.s, for it made his supervision less onerous. He regularly accompanied Administration patrols through the mountain villages; in 1925 he recommended the chief of O'oiva, said to be the 'big man' of the Mt. Brown area, as V.C.67 The influential men appeared to respond to this, becoming anxious for government appointment, and equally anxious that their sons should succeed them.68

The Administration came to rely on Agevadabia, and, in his old age, possibly also Agevadabia on the Administration. In 1932, annoyed at not being told of the approach of a government patrol, he harangued the assembled V.C.s and councillors at Boku: 'Am I not the Head V.C.? Am I not responsible to Rigo Government for all villages in these hills? Take care that such an oversight does not occur again.'69

The dangers of corruption in working through an individual such as Agevadabia need no elaboration - in the Mandated Territory there was the notorious case of Bumbu, a Paramount Luluai in the Huon Gulf, the extent of whose jurisdiction might be comparable.70 But in that case corruption was connived at over a long period by the local constabulary, who arrogated extraordinary authority under the Mandate Administration. In the case of Agevadabia, the experiment seems to have succeeded; for, one might say, men are bound to respond better to responsibility than to coercive direction. The constant changing of officers remained a handicap; sometimes they failed to revise their attitudes when dealing with men such as Agevadabia in the Rigo area, even after the inauguration of the councillor system.71

---

68 e.g. the chief of Imoagolo went to Rigo in 1927, asking to be a V.C., as he felt his village was being 'left out of the scheme of things' (Rigo P.R. 6/1926-7); while in 1931 the V.C.s of Kemabolou and Kalo asked that their sons replace them (Rigo P.R. 1/1931-2, 24.9.31, 26.9.31).
69 Rigo P.R. 3/1932-3, 19.11.32.
70 See Ch.V, 1.
71 A.R.M. Chance, for example, seemed to ignore Agevadabia when on patrol - Rigo P.R. 4/1930-1.
But in general there seems to have been a mutually effective response. To take one example, in 1926 the A.R.M., remarking on the particularly law-abiding state of the inland villages, also noted with surprise that the village of Durom, through Agevadabia, asked to be allowed to begin rice cultivation, despite difficulties both in growing it and in transporting it to market.

Under Murray's administration the threat or possibility of corruption amongst native officials became almost obsessive — a reflection of the policy of paternal assimilation. One aspect of this was the prohibition of V.C.s taking extra wives after their appointment. The subtleties of this were not understood, or were certainly not followed, by many officers. The unfortunate aspect of the policy was that it tended to restrain influential men from accepting the position, and reinforced all the other selection criteria — a desirable knowledge of Motu, some experience of the government (preferably in the A.N.C.), or an appearance of 'intelligence' — which militated against the appointment of influential men and progressively turned the V.C.s into purely government servants.

The repercussions were both unfortunate and inconsistent. At Keapara in 1919 the A.R.M. reluctantly recommended the dismissal of the V.C. because he had taken a second wife, while conceding that he was the best V.C. in the district. In the Mt. Brown region in 1927 a man concealed his having three wives in order to secure appointment. When the A.R.M. discovered this, he wanted to dismiss him, but Murray reinstated him on the ground that the man had the wives before his appointment. On the other hand, by what seems a complete change of front, in 1930 when an officer wished to appoint a Koiari man with three wives a V.C., Murray commented: 'Has the A.R.M. considered that such a man

72 Report 1926-7, p.42. Coercion had to be applied elsewhere to 'encourage' rice-growing. After the war the Administration knew that natives would never really cooperate on the 'digging stick' principle of pre-war — see O.H.K. Spate, The Rice Problem in New Guinea, South Pacific, VII, 6, pp.731-6.

73 See Ch.II.

74 Port Moresby P.R. 7/1919, 12.11.1919. The man's first wife, to whom he had been married for 12 years, had borne him no children.

75 Rigo P.R. 1/1927-8, 15.7.27.
probably has a number of relations-in-law who may hamper him in the execution of his duty? Many officers, and many natives, were convinced that only monogamists could be appointed V.C.s. The Government Anthropologist, Williams, defended the rule strongly, though admitting that, had it been introduced earlier, Ahuia Ova, the notable V.C. of Hanuabada, could never have been appointed.

(vii) Tensions: Consultation and Direct Administration

Despite the introduction of the councillor system in the 1920's, there were curious anomalies in the administrative approach. Murray allowed no doubt that it was the business of the government to govern, and that 'civilized' institutions would ultimately replace those of the natives. This view seems increasingly to have been shared by his Government Anthropologist. Manifestations of social tensions and culture change were, as a result, sometimes not handled with the greatest of sympathy. When an outbreak similar to the 'Vailala Madness' occurred in the Mekeo-Roro region in 1929, A.R.M. Thompson gaolied the native he believed responsible, describing him as 'an arch imposter with the priceless gift of being able to put himself in a trance' and describing the movement as 'tomfoolery'.

Rigo P.R. 2/1930-1, Murray's comment appended.

Williams shared Murray's view, which inhibited the appointment of men already polygamists, that favouritism in the exercise of his duty would result if an official had many relations.

H. Murray, Papua of Today, p.225.

Williams went over to a form of modified functionalism which left ample scope for direct action by government - see A.P. Elkin, F.E. Williams, Government Anthropologist of Papua, 1922-43. Oceania, XIV, pp.91-103.

A.R.M. Kairuku to Gov. Sec., 2.9.29. CPI V, 16/14/12. He likened the man, Here Ikupu, to Mahatma Ghandi - in retrospect, unconscious irony.

Williams to Gov. Sec., 17.9.29, ibid.; also his Orokaiva Magic, pp.91-2. The report was sent to Canberra, where the Minister commented that the action appeared to have been effective. 19.11.29. A.918/1. CPI V, 16/14/17.
Williams, in point of fact, had no more idea of the implications of this action in the Mekeo area than the A.R.M. - he was arguing purely from principle and by analogy. When, in 1931, Murray raised the question of the possible neglect of traditional leaders, Williams commented that the chiefly system in the Roro-Mekeo areas seemed to have potentialities, but that 'as I have never been in these districts I know nothing of the attitude of the Government towards the "chiefs".'

Into this atmosphere of benevolent autocracy, Murray in the mid-twenties introduced a new institution, the village councillor. By 1927 a council was meeting in Hanuabada, and councillors had been appointed in several of the other coastal villages east and west of Port Moresby. In Hanuabada twelve councillors were selected by the people, who had themselves decided to have one council for the Elevala-Tanobada-Hohodae-Poreporena group. The R.M. made it clear that the prime purpose of the council was to facilitate administration, and it was explained to the councillors that it was their duty to assist the government officers, to bring about better conditions and to maintain law and order. Murray made something of a testing ground of the Hanuabada council, and in 1931 even thought it might be possible later to combine village councils into district councils 'with perhaps some real power of administration' - an admission of the Hanuabada council's lack of any such power.

To the extent that the Hanuabada council was expected to be a consultative institution, however, it was out of accord with the longstanding attempt to create a village chieftainship, to centre authority in one man. This was a conflict which continued into the nineteen-fifties and

---

82 Williams to Gov. Sec., 11.2.1931. An.7/31. CPI V 16/36; cf. Williams' statement in 1932 that it was policy to use what chiefs there were, though they could not at that stage be entrusted with 'local government' - Native Welfare in Papua, p.52.
84 Ibid. The R.M. was W.R. Humphries, who later produced a book of Council Notes with a propagandist intent. These were translated into 15 languages and distributed throughout Papua - see Murray to Canberra, 20.12.32. CPI V, 16/42.
85 Murray to Canberra, 20.1.31. CP.141, AQ.0.840/1/5. This memo. accompanied a report of the Hanuabada meeting of 2.10.30.
disrupted the statutory council. Williams noted that Erskine's creation of Boe Vagi as chief of the whole village (in fact, of much more) was quite artificial, and that it lapsed with Boe Vagi's death. But as Toua later became both V.C. and chief of Hanuabada this is not quite accurate. As Hanuabada has, since 1885, been within rifle-shot of the government offices, the Administration was of course familiar with the fact that it comprises an amalgam of communities, and that traditional socio-political organization centred in the iduhu. But this had made little difference to the administrative approach, except that the V.C. was paid more than elsewhere: Lohia-Kame, who retired in 1924, had been receiving £6 per month in wages.

Enterprising men sought official status in order to use it as a step towards extraordinary authority, to formalize a village chieftainship (lohia bada) and even to find historical precedents for it. The most notable of these men was Ahuia-Ova, whose term of office as V.C. ended in 1918, but who retained powerful government backing for a further thirty years. Williams pointed out in 1940 that he had no real claim to be chief of Hohodae, and that even his claim to be the biggest of the iduhu lhoia was disputable. The traditional lohia iduhu appeared to yield to the man like Ahuia, who manipulated European support to give himself extraordinary authority; but in fact a struggle for power was continuously going on. During the 1920s Ahuia's authority was still dominant; though particularly during the 1930s he met a good deal of opposition. In 1932 Ahuia's customary pretensions, and village reaction, almost led to his being forced out; he was restrained from leaving only by the personal intervention of Murray, 'who almost exercised a personal administration over the village.' In seeking to give his authority customary validation, Ahuia also cut across the aims of the mission, which was

---

87 Report 1924-5, p.20.
89 Williams, loc.cit., pp.12, 40 note 64; also C.S. Belshaw, Man, 1951, LI, 230.
90 Belshaw, op.cit., pp.21-3. The traditional leader in 1950 was represented by Peter Vagi.
91 Belshaw, Man, loc.cit.
strongly anti-custom. He therefore swung from being pro-custom to a Puritanical phase, and then back again, alienating both sides. After the second World War the discontented element in Hanuabada grew, and Ahuia was eventually forced out, despite the backing of the D.O. He was gradually succeeded by Gavera Arua, who also sought personal dominance over the village, but who had more solid traditional pretensions, and who adopted the more flexible policy of manipulating new attitudes and institutions, especially the council.

This is the background against which the introduction of the council in Hanuabada must be set. It is not surprising that in the 1920s the Hanuabadans were at a loss in interpreting the purpose behind the introduction of councillors. Murray assumed that the Hanuabadans were simply satisfied with direct government control and happy to leave everything to government indefinitely. Despite its inability to do anything other than discuss and make recommendations, the Hanuabada council, by 1930, was beginning to function effectively within those limits. Williams seemed to believe, in 1940, that, although custom was still strong, a transfer of orientation in authority was taking place towards the councillors as distinct from the lohia iduhu.

An analysis of a meeting held in October 1930 shows that a considerable range of topics was discussed: the council told the R.M. that water-tanks needed repair, and he promised that the P.W.D. would be advised; the councillors agreed that they would like to assist in the proscription of gambling; they decided unanimously that they would advise villagers to reduce the number of pigs in the village, and they worked out a formula for this; and they also agreed that they should allocate £10 from a forthcoming grant to

---

93 Belshaw, Man, loc.cit.  
94 Belshaw, The Great Village, pp. 22-3, 226-9. Gavera began to flourish during Ahuia's decline in the 1930's. Gavera was leader of the large Botai iduhu of Poreporena.  
95 Murray, Papua of Today, p. 279; cf. Murray's other remarks about the Hanuabadans, that they showed a 'laudable spirit of conservatism' and 'were content to be good Papuans without aspiring to be bad white men' - Report 1924-5, p. 6.  
96 Williams, loc.cit., p. 11.
the Institute, whose hall they used, otherwise they would be 'shamed'; and they decided that the government be asked to import uniforms for councillors, similar to those worn in the Western Division.  

Murray was encouraged by the activities of the Hanuabada council, though he emphasised that it was intended to be purely advisory. He intended it to be experimental, for an indefinite period. In 1931 he tested the council by allocating it a grant of £100 (the council of course had no fund-raising powers): 'It will be interesting to see how the councillors rise to the occasion.' The councillors spent the money after sensible deliberation: for £30 a vessel was chartered to supplement the lakatoi fleet on the Hiri expedition; £60 was spent in building a fence around the village; and the remaining £10 went to the Institute. Murray was pleased at this response; but there is no evidence that the gesture was repeated.

The council proved useful for other administrative experiments. The most notable of these was constituting the council into a conciliation committee to intervene in village disputes and reduce the amount of litigation. This was the council's most positive function; and, with the exception of the war years, it has continued ever since. It is an institution which remains unique in the Territory. It had no power to enforce decisions or inflict penalties; but in marshalling the force of village opinion it played an important part in village life. Conceptually, Murray here advanced half-way to an acceptance of native courts; in Milne Bay he went even further, conniving at the imposing or threat of penalties, and recognizing a distinct native interpretation of the law.

Again, Murray tried to work through the council in developing an attack on sorcery; gaoling for this offence,

---

97 a/R.M. Rentoul to Gov. Sec., meeting of 2.10.1930. CP.VI. AQ.0.840/1/5. Other items of discussion, mainly dealing with agriculture, are given in Report 1933-4, p.24. It is interesting to note that the councillors expressed opposition to the education of girls.

98 Murray to Canberra, 10.10.30. CPI V. 16/42.

99 Murray to Canberra, 5.9.31, ibid.

100 Belshaw, The Great Village, pp.211-6.

he recognized, was quite inadequate — and during the 1930s sorcery seemed to revive in the long-administered areas. Murray consulted the council on the subject. Ex-V.C. Lohia-Kane implied that the council system to some extent was acting as a shield for sorcerers. Ahuia professed complete belief in vada, though he denied that he was a practitioner; and Murray found that Ahuia’s belief was general. Then followed a challenge by Murray to the sorcerers to revive a dead dog, the results of which — as could have been predicted — were inconclusive from the native standpoint. The natives viewed the challenge as an opportunity to convince the government of the reality of sorcery.

The Hanuabada council continued until the war; but Murray did not encourage rapid development in its functions. Despite the lack of training and opportunities which Papuans had, Murray gradually became depressed at their apparent lack of capacity. He undoubtedly agreed with Williams, that although political progress was being made by Papuans, it was ‘a good job perhaps that progress is necessarily slow’. By 1935 the council, however, had dropped into a pattern of triennial elections, councillors being elected by the constituent villages by whatever method they thought fit. Murray still occasionally consulted the council. In 1934 he asked them whether juvenile offenders should be made to do a certain amount of work

102 In 1925 Murray said that sorcery did not cause as many murders as it used to do — Papua of Today, p.66. But in 1935 he told Williams (11.11.35, CPI V.16/17/27) that at least half the murder cases he tried were connected with sorcery.

103 Murray’s meeting with council, 1.7.31; Murray to Canberra, 11.7.31. CPI V.16/17/16. Williams mentions Ahuia’s reputation as a sorcerer, loc.cit., p.42 note 87; and Chatterton, the L.M.S. missionary, accused Ahuia of being one of the principal practitioners in Poreporena — Chatterton to Gov. Sec., 17.6.31. CPI V.16/17/17. Williams was hopeful that some natives’ beliefs might have been shaken (15.9.31, 16/17/20). See Belshaw, op.cit., pp.193–4. At a meeting on 1.7.32, vada was blamed for lakatoi wrecks and garden failures; though Ahuia insisted also on natural calamities — Report 1932–3, p.15.

104 Native Welfare in Papua, p.52. This article was approved by government — Williams to Gov. Sec., 5.7.32. CPI V.16/36.

105 Murray to Prime Minister, 23.5.35. CP.141. 16/42/22.

AQ.0.84/0/1/5.
instead of being gaoled; the councillors, however, were in favour of severe sentences - a phenomenon also noted under the assessor system.  

Again, in 1935 Murray persuaded the council to agree to a modification of unhygienic, customary burial practices. He commented: 'This seems to me to be a good instance of the changes which can be easily effected by the councillors, but which would evoke opposition if an attempt was made to impose them by force.' In previous correspondence with Malinowski he had had to defend the compulsory prescription of traditional burial practices. It was unfortunate that this attitude was not transferred more generally to the councillor's functions.

(viii) Mekeo and Rigo Contrasts: Councillors

In 1927-8 the councillor system was extended to the Mekeo and Rigo districts. Here we find the same dichotomy in administrative attitudes as characterised those towards chiefs and village constables in the two districts. The Mekeo were regarded by officers as truculent, and there was certainly distrust on one side and possibly opportunism on the other. The Mekeo councillors were immediately spoken of as 'unsatisfactory'. The A.R.M. reported 'nepotism' in the district; several younger councillors regarded themselves as being ex officio exempt from taxation. 'Weeding out' was considered necessary.

In the Rigo district, on the other hand, expectations were more hopeful. 237 iduhu chiefs or close relations of chiefs 'claimed the privilege' of the councillor's office. With V.C.s and chiefs working harmoniously together, said

---

106 Murray to Gov. Sec., 19.10.34; R.M. Minute, C.D. to Gov. Sec., 10.11.34, 740/7. CPI V.16/36. This is analogous to the excessive sentences often awarded by inexperienced judges in Western society; though, in a period of culture change, the councillors clearly were interested in using the courts to re-enforce authority - note Belshaw, The Great Village, p.22: 'dependence upon European authority does not pay in Hanuabada.'

107 Murray to Sec. Canberra, 23.5.35. CPI V.16/42; see B. Malinowski, Crime and Custom, p.87. Murray to Malinowski, 30.10.29, 4.10.29; Malinowski to Murray, 19.6.29. CPI V.16/14/10.

108 Report 1928-9, p.27.
the A.R.M., native affairs would surely benefit. It seems to have been conceded at once that appointment as a councillor entitled a man to settle disputes, even on matters that would normally come before a magistrate: 'it was hard to conceive of rank injustice being done.' The councillors summoned the villagers to meetings by blowing a whistle, and then laid down the law to them. The A.R.M. commented cryptically on this that 'on the whole he (the councillor) is heeded, because what the native lacks in tradition, he makes up for in his regard for heredity'. He felt that the 'time was not ripe' for bringing councillors of different villages together. 110

Although the R.M. foresaw the clash with the functions of the V.C.s, little could be done to avert it - Murray admitted that this clash resided in the subtle distinctions between the two institutions, which would be lost in the village context. 111 In the Roro and Mekeo areas the A.R.M. made a determined effort to explain to the councillors the distinctions between their functions and those of the V.C.s; they were particularly warned not to 'make court'. Several courts had, however, already been held. 'Third degree' methods had allegedly been used, men being questioned unremittingly until they confessed, only then being brought to the magistrate for trial. 112

With the inauguration of the practice of using assessors in the Courts for Native Matters in mid-1929, further confusion resulted: for the assessors were almost invariably councillors, and the manner in which they were used was left to the discretion of individual magistrates. In 1930, at Hisiu, all the councillors were dismissed for persistently holding court; but a few months later in the same village councillors were being used as arbitrators in civil disputes. The A.R.M. described them as assessors, but this was patently inaccurate as they were settling disputes before they reached the court. Only if the parties did not agree with the decisions were the disputes taken to the

109 Ibid.
110 Ibid.
111 Ibid., p.25; Report 1937-8, p.29.
Court. This was a function similar to that of the Hanuabada council.113

Similarly, the A.R.M. Kairuku in 1932 reported considerable success with the Chiria 'assessors', but went on to say that they saved the magistrates from hearing many cases of no importance.114 Clearly, the 'assessors' were much more than that. Moreover, these assessors were functioning with jurisdiction over a number of villages. The A.R.M. advised the Waima and Kiveri councillors to send their local disputes over pigs, land, and debts to two Chiria 'assessors'. If the disputing parties could not agree they were to go to the A.R.M. - he reported that none did.115 Patently, the officer was going most of the way towards promoting a native court; but there was no provision for supervision, for recording decisions, or for training in procedure - desiderata of any adequate native courts system.

Under these circumstances it is not surprising that the natives (in the Administration's eyes) should have extended and abused these judicial privileges. Murray complained that the attempt to appoint councillors for a whole district had been premature, and had led to illegal courts.116 In fact, the holding of an unofficial court by a group of councillors was a logical development of what had been promoted - natives could hardly be expected to make the fine distinctions which Murray apparently expected, when his own officers failed to make such distinctions, and, indeed, when Murray himself (in the Milne Bay case) connived at the threat of penalties by a native council.

The real facts of the illegal 'court' to which Murray referred were that a group of councillors from several villages - not councillors appointed for a group of villages - constituted an informal court presided over by Pukari of Inawai, one of the upper Mekeo villages. They convicted a

114 Murray to Canberra, 30.6.32. C.P.141. W 840/1/5. Murray remarked that care would be taken not to make the pace too rapid.
116 Ibid.
man of not having repaired his house, and he was given a severe sentence, including two months in Kairuku gaol, the cutting off of his hair, a caning by the Inawi V.C., and the loss of his armlets. The councillors' excuse for having 'made court' was that they had heard that the Chiria assessors, referred to above, had sent people to gaol, and that they believed that they were at liberty to do the same.\(^{117}\)

The A.R.M. was still anxious that councillors should settle minor disputes out of court; and, though he remarked on previous illegal 'courts' at Pinupaka and Hisiu, he claimed that they were easy to check. He saw the real difficulty in the distinctions, confusing both to natives and to officers, between the V.C.s and councillors, and the fact that the position of councillor gave inadequate scope to the elders:

\[\ldots\text{a position without power or pay does not appeal to these old men, many of them dubu chiefs, who see in their badge of office a priceless opportunity to take over the reins of village government from their V.C.}\]^{118}

Nevertheless he was philosophical and inclined to be persevering, taking the view that any innovation would have its defects, and that only time and education would improve the position.

In the Mekeo-Roro areas the deep-rooted suspicion of the traditional leaders amongst Administration officers, and the officers' predilection for direct action, gave the councillors little opportunity to present the viewpoints of their communities. In 1933, the A.R.M. claimed that the councillors deliberately misunderstood their position in order to cause trouble.\(^{119}\) However, two examples from Waima (Roro) will illustrate the difficulties the councillors faced. In 1932 the A.R.M. rejected the councillors' suggestion that the native tax should be

\(^{117}\) Kairuku P.R. 5/1932-3, Oct. 1932, A.R.M. Thompson; Murray said 3 months in gaol in his account. The fact that the councillors seriously believed that they could sentence a man to Kairuku gaol is an index to their genuine misinterpretation of their functions.

\(^{118}\) Ibid.

\(^{119}\) Kairuku P.R. 2/1933-4.
reduced because of a drought, and suggested instead that
the councillors 'induce the rising generation to take on
sustained toil'. When the councillors replied that this
might cause difficulties, the A.R.M. bluntly issued orders
that every able-bodied man was to plant coconuts or go to
gael. 120 A similar attitude was adopted over burial
customs. In Hanuabada the councillors had been persuaded
to use their influence to stop unhygienic customs; but at
Waima the councillors were given an ultimatum by the A.R.M.
that the custom was bad and must be stopped through their
influence - he remarked that there seemed 'little
enthusiasm'. 121

In retrospect it is not surprising - though the
Administration continued to be surprised - that the
councillors did not function consultatively as had
originally been intended. In the Mekeo area - and perhaps
with some relief - the Administration appeared to become
reconciled to this situation. When the V.C. of Rarai
d village (Mekeo) applied for another councillor as an
assistant in 1935, the A.R.M. commented that in each village
there were in effect a V.C. and two assistant V.C.s. But,
he said, 'it does not work out boo badly in practice, the
V.C.'s satellites help him in his work and in many cases
with a young and inexperienced V.C. they are of great
assistance'. 122 In this atmosphere, occasional 'council'
meetings in the Mekeo area were useless except for the
propagation of government propaganda. At such a meeting
held at Inawi in June 1935 the A.R.M. invited discussion
on gardening, health, and village life generally. One or
two councillors complained of the prevalence of influenza
and of the deleterious effects on gardening of the absence
of the young men; but discussion was so brief and incon­
clusive as to be disregarded. The councillors were said to
have listened 'attentively' to a lecture by the government
M.O. 123

Paradoxically, the laissez-faire attitude which the
Administration began to adopt in the mid-1930s towards the
councillors - a resignation to their being 'assistants' to
(in some instances dominating) the V.C.s - may have promoted
a more active interest by the councillors in government

120 Kairuku P.R. 10/1931-2.
121 Kairuku P.R. 11/1934-5.
122 Kairuku P.R. 9/1934-5.
123 Kairuku P.R. 1/1935-6; Meeting on 21.6.35, Inawi.
programmes. In 1936 the Roro and Mekeo councillors were said to be invaluable in promoting copra and rice production; and this was repeated in 1937, when it was stated that the councillors had learned not to be assistant V.C.s. But there seems little doubt that the formation of 'companies' to plant coconuts and rice gave the traditional leaders an opportunity to organize their peoples with government sanction. This activity probably represented a re-assertion of their authority.124

That severe tensions existed in Mekeo society, of which there is no hint in the optimistic reports of the late 1930's, was demonstrated by a serious outbreak of cargo cult in 1941. This cult united several thousand people, and followed the typical pattern: channelled through a young girl named Philo, the natives were instructed to stop gardening, to kill their pigs, and to pray; they would be provided for by God, who would send food from Heaven. Arms would also be sent with which to expel the mission and the government.

The government took firm action, sending a party of constabulary by lorry. Philo and her major supporters were gaoled for spreading lying reports. Having 'put down' the cult, the A.R.M. concluded that normality had been restored:

Philo's removal settled the stupid business. But with people possessed of such unstable minds as the Mekeos, one must be always on one's guard against the most amazing happenings.125

This suspicion, that there was something inherently wrong and potentially dangerous amongst the Roro-Mekeo peoples, persisted after the war, and played no small part in denying them statutory local government.126

125 A.R.M. Thompson, lengthy account in Report 1941-2, p.21. The cult began in the important village of Inewai'a, which has a Catholic mission station adjoining. 'Direct action' in dealing with cults had replaced detailed investigation by the Government Anthropologist - a radical departure from the original purpose of the Anthropologist.
126 See Ch.VI.
APPENDIX A

III. The Southern Highlands - A Modern Example of Initial Administration.

(i) Initial Penetration

The era of what Murray used to describe as 'peaceful penetration' into the Southern Highlands has now stretched over more than fifty years. The unfortunate expedition led by Staniforth Smith blundered into the southern extremities of the area in 1910, when, apparently seeking to examine the headwaters of the Turama and Bamu rivers, it penetrated the Sambrigi valley (then so-called) to the north-west of Mt. Murray. The relief party headed by Judge Herbert and R.M. Beaver also travelled down this valley. For the natives, a route was opened up to Kikori which they used extensively from the nineteen-twenties onwards. A Government Station was established on the Kikori in the following year.

Flint and Saunders officially renewed the acquaintance with these people in 1922; and in 1929 Faithorn and C. Champion travelled on further to the east, following the Erave river to its confluence with the Purari. Hides and O'Malley went much further north in 1935, travelling from the Strickland to the Purari; they crossed the southern Tari valley, and reported dense populations of natives wearing wigs of human hair. In 1937 a further expedition travelled from the Bamu to Lake Kutubu, then to the north-east along the valley of the Mendi river to the border with the Mandated Territory, returning down the Purari as before. Most of the central area had therefore by that time been roughly explored from the south.

Papua Report 1910-11, pp.5-6; Appendices A, A1, A2, pp.165 ff. Murray caustically blamed the failure on (i) deficient organization (ii) underestimating the magnitude of the task. Still, the results served to prove just how difficult the country was, as was further amply demonstrated when the policy of active penetration was begun in the late 1920s.

Report 1911-12, p.10.


In 1938-39, however, J.L. Taylor pioneered communications from the north, in the course of his fifteen-months long patrol from Hagen to the Sepik. His party entered the Tari basin from the north, stayed for some time in the Hoievii area at the north of the basin in the vicinity of the present Government Station, and constructed an airstrip. Probably more importantly, natives were taken to Wabag and to Hagen. There they were engaged on the construction of airstrips before returning home. At least two of these are said to have been among the most important in the area, so that the experience was particularly valuable. Many natives are later said to have gone to Wabag, particularly when fleeing from attack.

In 1938 Murray announced the intention of setting up a Police Camp on Lake Kutubu (after the practicability of landing a seaplane had been tested); this was done shortly afterwards, and patrols were active in 1939-40, despite the drain on the Territory's slender resources. Since the establishment of the camp, administration in the district has been entirely dependent on air supply, although Taylor had stated that the natural route was from the north-east, when a road could be built. In the period 1937-41 penetration was being stepped up, the Tari area, in particular, being visited every year. In 1939 when I. Champion and Timperley were patrolling from Kutubu, Timperley had to be left in the care of an elderly native named Ivaia when he became seriously ill. Ivaia (now generally written Iva-haia) is still alive, and is certainly one of the most influential men in the district, with a large number of wives and great spread of landholdings. He ranges over the whole of the Basin still, and often appears at

---

7 Comments by A.D.O. Carey when opening the Station at Tari in 1952: Tari patrol reports, May-November 1952, p.37 (typescript).
8 Papua Report 1937-38, p.22.
10 Ibid., pp.29-37; also typescript, Tari patrol reports. Iva-haia had previously looked after supplies for Taylor. On this patrol two young men were persuaded to return to Kutubu to train as policemen: a further step in the pacificatory process.
Administration came on the fringe of consolidation to lend support.\(^{11}\)

Peaceful relations were rather set back during the war, principally by neglect when the Kutubu base was abandoned and patrolling stopped, and also, in the Tari area, by the recruiting patrol of D. Leahy in 1943. Leahy noted on his arrival in the Basin, that large areas of garden were deserted, and that there was a desolate appearance. Despite this, he filled his quota of 100 recruits.\(^ {12}\)

Moreover, further active attempts to extend the ‘oil-stain’ by setting up further Government posts were not made until 1949, when Timperley and Corrigan, patrolling from Hagen, picked out an airstrip site on the Mendi Valley.\(^ {13}\) This was later surveyed by S.S. Smith from Kutubu; and in fact Kutubu was still the major jump off point until after the establishment of the third post at Tari in 1952.\(^ {14}\)

(ii) Geographical and Social Conditions

The topography of the Southern Highlands district largely accounts for the slow and arduous extension of control. The district has always been part of Papua; but the valleys of the main range are separated from the river system of the Western Division by the Great Papuan Plateau. From the Gulf country around Kikori the area is separated by the steep mountains fronting the coast about thirty miles inland.

\(^{11}\) Personal discussion both with Administration officers and with Iva-haia himself. He is mentioned at some length in Colin Simpson: Islands of Men. There is also a coloured illustration of him, p. 204.

\(^{12}\) Tari patrol reports: report from Ramu, dated 22nd October 1943. Only 42 of these recruits from Tari; but even this difficult, as there was a severe food shortage. It was a bad time to recruit, damaging to good relations; nevertheless even enforced conscription must be reckoned a factor in pacification - these men had a knowledge of the outside world which was extremely useful during the period of consolidation of Government influence.

\(^{13}\) Personal information from former P.O. B. Corrigan; also draft typescript Report, Southern Highlands, 1956-57, p.1.

\(^{14}\) Carey report, May-November 1952, cit.sup.
Kutubu lies on the shelf separating the coastal mountains from the central cordilleras, and the country consists of forest and grasslands. As one travels to the Mendi area in the north-east, and more strikingly to the north-west of Kutubu, the country becomes more broken and the mountains close in, with narrow disconnected valleys leading in to the range, and many limestone escarpments. From the administrative viewpoint foot patrols are difficult and relatively unprofitable compared with the situation in the more easterly Highlands, as the terrain has compelled the segmentation and dispersal of the native population.

The great concentrations of population which are immediately apparent in the east, for example in the Chimbu and Wahgi country, hardly exist. The Tari basin which has a relatively flat floor of considerable extent is exceptional, and even there the density has been estimated at only about eighty to the sq. mile, compared with perhaps four times this number in Chimbu.\textsuperscript{15}

Although Tari is perhaps a more obvious site for an administrative headquarters, in 1949 Timperley and Corrigan picked out a possible airstrip in the Mendi valley, while patrolling from Hagen. Although the Tari area had had more contact, a site further east was essential for aerial supply and the comparative shortness of lines of communication. The airstrip at Mendi, however, is not even now entirely suitable, and has limited development; Tari is the only airstrip capable of taking aircraft of DC3 size.

The native settlement and even cultural pattern shows a strong relation to the topography. Until the war only the Kutubu natives were known in any detail. When Williams described them, however, the anthropological terminology and methods of analysis applicable to this type of society were not as refined as they have since become. Nevertheless it is clear that to the administrative officer the pattern in Kutubu presented a relatively simple problem; the devising of suitable administrative expedients becomes progressively more difficult, like the topography, as one moves to the north-east and then westerly towards what is now known as the Koroba area. The lack of clearly defined groupings on the ground becomes steadily more manifest.

Around the Lake there were only five villages with a total population of 400, though these people were closely allied to those in the Mubi River area. Functionally, the local group centred on the village was of prime importance. The village members united to perform a number of common tasks; within the village the men occupied a common long house, with a number of small houses for the women facing it. Williams claimed that the clan structure cut right across village, tribe, and even people. Descent, he found, was patrilineal. The village per se, however, had its own territory although most of the land was said to belong to the foundation local group of the clan, amindoba. The oldest capable male of the amindoba was the village headman.

Williams had considerable difficulty in trying to relate traditional leadership to this structure. The 'chief', he said, was probably the largest land-owner in the community, a position referred to as kabe-ga; this would normally be connected with his right to dispose of the clan land. At the same time the older and more 'important' men were spoken of jointly as eresabu (literally 'home-keepers'). The villagers themselves often seemed to be in considerable doubt when asked to name their 'chief' - though they had borrowed a word for 'chief', apparently from the neighbouring Foi.

Personality and industry were important in pretenders to leadership, but the leader of the foundation clan group had great advantages in the traditional functions he was expected to perform, and in his control of land. Williams summed up by saying that chieftainship conformed to the common Papuan pattern, 'the notion of an office and its functions being rather vague, but some individual being nevertheless recognized, by right of succession, as leader and spokesman.'

All wrongs committed within the community, except sorcery, Williams stated were regarded as individual wrongs.

---

16 F.E. Williams, *Natives of Lake Kutubu*, Oceania Monograph No.6, pp.11-2.
17 Ibid., pp.21, 42-5, 63.
18 Ibid., pp.42-3.
19 Ibid., p.44.
rather than as criminal offences. The wronged party was left to look after himself. Compensation, however, for which they had a word fugubi, was always turning up, from small conciliatory gifts to large payments by way of compounding for murder; violent retaliation often anticipated the payment of fugubi. Only for sorcery, which the Kutubu natives loathed, was their collective revenge, described by Williams as 'judicial murder'.

The social and settlement structure in the Mendi area represents what might now be called a typical Highland pattern. The pivotal unit is the patrilineal clan (shem), which is always clearly defined territorially, usually by boundaries which have a particularly military significance. The dance grounds of the clan, with which particular sub-clans are associated, are permanent, and have clubhouses on them. Within the clan the sub-clans are true patrilineages.

The gardens of each individual, however, are scattered throughout clan territory, and there is a homestead pattern of habitation. Men of authority are again difficult to define: 'The heads of all the sub-clans seem to be the only source of authority in the community, and even they exercise their power indirectly: more by personal prestige than by any formal rank.' Although the localised clan is therefore the central unit in the structure, between the several clans there are degrees of association and almost identity, probably steps on the way to fusion; the Mendi natives have their own terms for these clan linkages.

Among the Huli of the Tari Basin the central unit of the social structure is essentially smaller; this is described as an 'ambilineage', 'the fundamental corporate and politico-jural unit in Huli society.' Each man is

---

20 Ibid., pp.69-70.
21 Ibid., p.87.
22 D'Arcy Ryan, Clan Organization in the Mendi Valley, Oceania, XXVI, 2, pp.83-5; see also his Clan Formation in the Mendi Valley, Oceania, XXIX, 4, pp.257-89.
23 Ryan, Clan Organization, p.86.
24 Ibid.
potentially a member of sixteen ambilineages; many men maintain interests in several parishes at the same time. The more important or ambitious a man is, the more likely is he to spread his interests as widely as possible over the lineages and their territories.

Correspondingly, the settlement pattern is highly dispersed, with nothing recognizable as villages or even hamlets, only small homesteads. When a man marries more than one woman, his co-wives frequently maintain separate households and separate gardens. Within these sixteen ambilineal groups a man can change his affiliations for a number of reasons: to acquire land, to get the support of particular kin, and ultimately to achieve high status.

The Huli believe that they are related to neighbouring peoples further west, such as the Duna, through a remote common ancestor. Peoples such as the Duna have been described only by amateurs, but they seem, in accordance with their more broken country, to maintain an even more dispersed type of habitation than the Huli. Amongst the Huli and their neighbours even the ceremonial grounds are impermanent, shifting location from one pig ceremony to the next. In brief, it is extremely difficult for a hard-pressed administrative officer to locate the important socio-political groups and their leaders.

(iii) The Modern 'Oil-Stain' Technique

The post-war policy which has been followed in the Southern Highlands, as distinct from pre-war policy which was largely dictated by lack of funds and staff, has revolved around the consolidation of influence from fixed posts, on the true 'oil-stain' technique, rather than on extended patrolling. This was clearly defined by the first D.C., J.S. McLeod, in 1953:

The policy of 'radial occupation' by means of strategically placed stations and posts is definitely to be preferred to one of spasmodic extended patrols. Patrolling is very necessary, but rather in the context of defined areas around

27 Ibid., pp. 173, 177, 179.
28 Ibid., p. 184.
29 Especially in P. Gaisseau, Visa to a Prehistoric World.
posts with concentration on repeated visits, as each sector is consolidated and expanded it will influence the areas controlled by adjacent posts.30

In accordance with this policy, since the re-opening of the Kutubu post in 1949 there has been a steady increase in the number of out-stations spread throughout the district in accordance with the topography and population densities. The airstrip and station at Mendi was opened in August of 1950; when the Southern Highlands became a separate entity on the 4th September 1951, Mendi became District Headquarters. In 1952 Tari was established; in 1953 two out-stations were opened at Erave and Ialibu. In August 1955 Koroba Patrol Post was opened from Tari; and the Kagua Post in 1957. The most recent was opened from Mendi, at Nipa, in 1959.

The radius covered by each 'oil-stain' has therefore been steadily contracting; in relation to this, the emphasis has increasingly been on tightening consolidation from these fixed points. Exploratory and pacificatory patrols further afield have been undertaken primarily with a view to the setting up of further Administration posts. In 1957 the D.C. reported that within expanding circles from each post work was swinging towards positive consolidation: the education of the natives in what the Government expected. Amongst these people, he claimed optimistically, 'the age-old sport of the inter-village fight is but a pleasant memory.'31 In 1957 roughly 60% of the total area of the District was restricted territory, compared with 85% a year before; in 1960 this had come down to less than 50%. The D.C. remarked that this policy of consolidation had to be paramount, as if initial control were not followed up, lack of attention was interpreted as a lack of interest and a licence to revert to old ways, to direct retaliation instead of to arbitration by themselves or by Government. In 1956-57, of a total of 29 patrols in the District, only one was specifically to extend Government influence.32

(iv) The Pattern of Pacification

Although the basic policy is thus clear, the methods that have been adopted in consolidation have been left

---

30 Southern Highlands draft Report, 1952-3.
31 Southern Highlands draft Report, 1956-7.
32 Ibid.
undefined and are largely ad hoc. This applied not only to intervention in fighting and the settlement of native disputes, where there must be a great degree of flexibility; but also to the time and manner of appointment of village officials, to the use of indigenous institutions, and to the rate of change in administrative techniques from one patrol post to another.

This makes the task of the historian peculiarly difficult. Within the Administration there has been little conscious co-ordination of activity. Principles and the stages of their application are undefined. The historian is in danger of imposing a pattern on what is apparently chaos. But each officer, aside from his personal predilections in administration, is facing essentially similar problems in the light of an essentially similar administrative tradition; moreover, through the District Office and the Department of Native Affairs a type of subconscious control, if not co-ordination, is exercised, which promotes uniformity and discourages eccentricity. The balance of pressures leads to a rough but recognizable pattern which emerges from administration rather than being created for it.

From the first, two distinct stages have been acknowledged in the pacification process: in the first, the Administration attempts mediation but does not try to enforce the law; in the second, the Administration arbitrates in disputes, but the law is also enforced and natives are arrested and gaoled. The second stage necessarily depends on the setting up of a conveniently placed Government post, and there is some flexibility in its application depending on the number of staff and police available. When firm consolidation is being attempted there can be no room for such flexibility; this might perhaps distinguish a third phase.

As D.C. McLeod emphasised in 1953, the second stage is of course the more difficult, as forceful intervention arouses active native resentment. To take one example, in the Tari area S.S. Smith's party had attempted in 1951 to establish a Government station, but had had to withdraw in October because of lack of funds; during this period they had tried to mediate in native disputes, but their withdrawal damaged Administration prestige. (It must be noted, too, that although land pressures and therefore disputes and fighting were possibly more common than in other parts of

33 Southern Highlands draft Report, 1952-3.
the District, except for Tsamberigi-Kutubu in the far south
Tari had had considerably more outside contact than other
areas, in which consolidation of influence has since been
undertaken).

When A.D.O. Carey returned in May, 1952 he found that
this initial mediation, presumably because of the long
contact with Government, appeared to have been generally
successful. In July, however, fighting again flared up, so
that eventually a population estimated at 10,000 covering
an area of some 100 square miles was involved. This was a
problem which, because of its sheer size and repercussions,
had to be handled tactfully. In August, however, following
the wounding of a labourer the European officers and a
small force of police - so small that some anxiety was
felt - intervened directly and arrested twenty-two natives.

Fighting stopped at once, and compensatory payments
immediately began for those killed on both sides. This
sparked off a whole series of reciprocal moga payments over
the whole of the Tari area. The D.C. commended Carey's
forbearance during the fighting, but remarked to the
Director of Native Affairs that it would not always be
possible to prevent casualties when the stage had been
reached at which fighting had to be definitely prohibited
over a defined area: what he described as 'the radial
occupation strategy'.

Similarly, in July 1954 the D.C. remarked that warfare
was being openly carried on amongst the natives of the Poru
plateau. It was, he said however, not the intention to
interfere until the field-staff position improved to allow
consolidation in the areas already under effective influence.
Extension of controlling administration to the Poru area had
to wait on sufficient field-staff being available, in excess
of consolidation needs in areas already coming under control.
As he put it, 'undoubtedly there is work for many officers
in this and all other newly opened areas, but it would be
foolish to neglect the areas now being influenced and in
need of consolidation to attempt extension.'

A similar pattern has followed, up to the present,
within expanding radii of each newly opened Government post.

34 Tari P.R.: establishment patrol, A.D.O. Carey, May-
November 1952.
35 D.C. McLeod to D.N.A., 6.1.1953. Mendi D.O.
36 Mendi P.R. 14/1953-4; comment D.C. Cole to D.N.A.,
19.7.1954.
The Nipa Patrol Post was opened in August 1959 at the northern end of the Nembi River valley. A few months later, while patrolling the southern end of the valley, the Patrol Officer was a spectator at a fight between several hundred Soa and Injip natives, during which a number of men was seriously wounded. He made no attempt to intervene, but waited until fighting had finished for the day. He then talked with the natives, and showed them the power of firearms by shooting a pig. He tried to explain that the Administration disapproved of warfare between groups, without definitely proscribing it; and urged them voluntarily to bring disputes into settlement. Four young men were persuaded to accompany the patrol back to Nipa, and later to visit Mendi, on an 'educational visit'.

This approach was commended by his superiors. The Director of Native Affairs, however, thought that firm action would have to be taken once (a) the Post was properly established; and (b) all parties to unrest could be readily contacted. The sub-district A.D.O. defined the policy much more precisely:

I do not feel that you are obliged to intervene in every tribal clash in the area. There will be many instances when non-intervention will be impolitic. I am convinced that, at the moment, any attempt to enforce control on the area as a whole is premature and ill-advised. I suggest that you (to the Patrol Officer) delineate an area which is readily accessible and inform the people that administrative (or legal) action will be taken whenever a breach of the peace occurs. This implies a policy of non-intervention in clashes which occur in the more remote areas unless the breach is such that you are forced to take immediate cognisance of it. In the matter of control it is better to hasten slowly than to fail in an attempt to institute any rigid compliance with the law.

And again:

In extending your control of the area ... you should remember that it is particularly desirable that your line of communication from the area to

38 D.N.A. to D.O., 12.2.1960, attached ibid.
Nipa does not pass through hostile groups. This can only be achieved by first establishing firm control over the groups nearer the station.\(^39\)

On the second patrol to the area early in 1960 the natives were warned that action would be taken if the law were broken. This does not seem to have been in accord either with previous action, or with the policy as locally accepted. It appears to have been an attempt to take action in line with what had been suggested from Port Moresby, rather than with what had been agreed on locally. Shortly afterwards the Soa, with Anduwari and Ebil allies, raided the Injip, wounding three of them. This created an extremely difficult situation, for in fact the Administration lacked the staff to arrest those responsible. The only way in which it could save face was by despatching a patrol to move slowly through the area, to impress on the natives that it was not going away and that hostilities were not to be resumed. Fortunately, this proved successful: compensation was arranged, though no attempt could be made to enforce the law by arresting the actual offenders. A number of young Ebil men was induced to accompany the patrol to the Injip area, and later to Nipa, where they were employed for a time as labourers alongside men from traditionally hostile groups. The Patrol Officer nevertheless considered it lucky that trouble had occurred fairly close to the Post, rather than at the further end of the area within which fighting had been proscribed; if the latter had happened administrative action would have been even more difficult.\(^40\)

Generally, as the Nipa example shows, the stages of consolidation have been compressed recently. Although the Tari station was established in 1952, as late as 1955 a Patrol Officer was forbidden to make arrests for fighting in the Haibuga Marsh area of the Tari Basin; instead, he was instructed to continue the policy of mediating and of arranging moga (compensatory payments).\(^41\) Indeed, on the fringes of the Tari Basin this policy continues, though the payments generally concern wrongs in the distant past, before Government proscriptions were known.

Despite this recent compression in time of the stages of control — which undoubtedly derives from the conception in Port Moresby that this is facilitated by the increasing

\(^39\) A.D.O. Mendi to P.O. Nipa, 4.3.1960. Mendi D.O.
\(^40\) Nipa P.R.S 2 and 3/1959-60.
\(^41\) D.O. to P.O. Esdale, 4.2.1955. Tari office.
number of posts - essentially the same pattern emerges at each new patrol post.

After Tari, the Ialibu post was established in 1953. Preparatory to this, a series of lengthy patrols had been undertaken into the area from Mendi. As a result of these patrols the two principal groups in the Ialibu area, which had been fighting, were already arranging compensation. After the establishment of the post all such payments were supervised by the Patrol Officer. The natives were put to work together constructing the base camp, so that while they worked as a group traditional divisions were forgotten. A demonstration of the power of firearms compared with their own bows and arrows was also given.

A further great advantage of Government labour was that it enabled the Patrol Officer roughly to assess the influence or authority of individual men, who could then be officially recognized as headmen. On the more positive as distinct from proscriptive side of administration native intermediaries, even at this stage, are vital. At Ialibu the Patrol Officer conducted 'schools' or 'orientation courses' for headmen, who were kept at the station for two or three weeks, and housed and fed at Government expense. They attended the evening parades of the constabulary, to learn something of discipline, and in particular were given simple instruction in the meaning of law and of courts, and of offences under the Native Regulation Ordinance. In this particular instance, therefore, the promotional as well as the proscriptive side of Government policy was put into effect. Elsewhere the latter has been more often emphasised at this stage of consolidation.  \[42\]

To take a further example, in possibly the most difficult area of the District, both topographically and culturally: eighteen months after the establishment of the Koroba Patrol Post, in Duna country to the west of Tari, the A.D.O. was able to define three main areas of influence. From Koroba eastwards to the Tagari River the people, he thought, had a reasonably good appreciation of the law, so that the appointment of Village Constables seemed feasible; in the Humburu-Muri areas moga payments were being arranged, and three headmen, for the first time, were introduced to the patrol; thirdly, the Mogorofugwa area was the last to come under control - in October 1956 a definite order had

been given that all fighting should cease in this area, but it had not been possible to maintain control, and in February 1957 an Administration party attempting to stop fighting had been showered with arrows. The Government party then demanded compensation, as would a native group itself; but it also succeeded in arresting the man principally responsible, who was later gaol for 'riotous behaviour'. Two headmen were later selected, and spent some time at the Patrol Post.43

The Kagua post owed its establishment immediately to fighting, towards the end of 1956, between the Mirupa and Veimu groups along the Kagua River. This was the only section of the Kagua area where arrests had not previously been made by Government parties from Ialibu. Most of the area was, therefore, at the second stage of pacification. Amongst the Mirupa and Veimu, however, destruction of gardens, which would take at least twelve months to restore, had been so extensive that these peoples presented a potential threat to their neighbours already under Government influence. The D.C. commented that the only long-term solution would be the stationing in their area of a force which they would fear and respect: 'this can only be done by establishing a Patrol Post in their area ... We cannot afford to have any more fight-stopping patrols into the Kagua unless they remain to consolidate, for the Kaguas must now look upon the Administration as being no more than a powerful nuisance, bent on interfering with their age-old customs.'44 A large number of arrests was made after the fighting, and thirty-five prominent warriors sentenced to ten weeks gaol. As in MacGregor's day, gaol was the principal training school for potential native officials. The Patrol Officer was most anxious that the Patrol Post be set up at about the time these men were due for release, so that their instruction and supervision could be continued unbroken.45

The events immediately preceding and following the setting up of patrol posts, though different in detail and in time-scale, tend to follow a common pattern up to the point of the recognition and employment of native headmen. Mediation and the payment of compensation at Government

43 Duna P.R. 5/1956-7.
45 Ibid.
instigation blend into the stopping of warfare, first by persuasion and then, when the Administration has adequate strength, by force. Offenders, if gaoled, are often most useful ambassadors of Government after their release. The establishment of a Government Station involves labour which brings hostile groups together, and enables the selection of men presumed influential. The posts are so sited that they bring the Government to the centre of a troubled, usually densely populated area. (Nipa, for example, may have been badly placed from this aspect; though a further major factor in the selection of a site is the practicability of constructing an airstrip). From this point, with the major trouble in the area directly controlled, the stages of pacification can radiate out, until the limits of physical consolidation are reached, or (and this increasingly applies) until the boundaries of consolidation from neighbouring Patrol Posts are reached. There are still areas, however, which appear to be beyond the present physical limits of consolidation, and where further posts are needed and planned; notably the Poru plateau, Mananda, and Margarima.

(v) Fluctuation in Consolidation Techniques

Beyond the stage of mere pacification, however, policy has varied widely from one out-station to another, and even at different periods of time at the same out-station. This may become clear from a brief analysis of consolidation at Tari.

Administration intervention in the widespread fighting of July 1952 has already been mentioned. Twenty-two natives were arrested, moga payments began, and to the east of the Tebi river areas which had been devastated and abandoned had, within a matter of months, been reoccupied. Moreover, large numbers of natives were calling at the Government station, using it as a clearing house for gossip and a trading post. An increasing number of disputes was being brought in to the station, and to outlying patrol camps, for settlement.  

It does not appear to have been realized until after the sitting of the post that the bulk of the population is at the other end of the Nembi River valley; on the other hand an airstrip site was available at the northern end.

46 Tari P.R., May-November 1952, cit.sup.
By October 1953 it was believed locally that the lower Tari area was sufficiently advanced for Village Constables to be appointed. The Patrol Officer insisted, both in correspondence and in talks with the natives, that the Village Constables would not replace the indigenous leaders. He explained that the V.C. should be a young man, relatively unimportant; by this means the older, influential men would be left free to become Councillors at a later date. With this end in view, at Paua, for example, on 24th October 1953, much of the afternoon was spent in explaining the relative positions in the community of a Village Constable and a Councillor. On the following day the local people were summoned to select a suitable candidate for Village Constable. Eventually Gotoma, a Motu-speaking sub-clan leader, was chosen as V.C. candidate, after the Patrol Officer had once again emphasised the need to choose a relatively unimportant man. 'All agreed that the actual headman should not receive Government pay for his services to the community.'

Fixing on a point in the process of consolidating Government influence at which village officials should be appointed was essentially an ad hoc procedure, depending to a very large extent on the initiative or judgment of the officer on the spot. Although this officer had selected V.C. candidates, in fact it was not until two years later, in October 1955, that definite appointments of Village Constables were made in the Tari area.

A patrol of June 1954 discloses that, with a change of staff, the Administration was still working through the headmen, with the presumptive V.C.s apparently forgotten. The headmen were, of course, most important in the arranging of moga payments, many of which were still outstanding, while the V.C., if an unimportant individual, was useless. This patrol discloses further, however, that the Administration had no real idea who the influential men were, for the Patrol Officer was instructed to record the headmen and to get some idea of social and political grouping within a two mile radius of the Government Station.

From a further patrol of August-October 1954 there seems little doubt that the number of outstanding moga payments, together with the usefulness of the headmen in

---

47 Tari P.R. (unnumbered) P.O. Terrell, October 1953.
arranging them, had caused a deferment of V.C. appointments. At the same time, in organizing labour for Government projects and in upholding law and order the want of men with real authority was being felt. 'In most cases an average headman would be lucky to collect fifty men to hear and obey his instructions.' Possibly for this reason the patrol found few prospective candidates as V.C. A major difficulty was that the Administration wanted by now a man who was a traditional leader: he also had to have a sound knowledge of the Government (implying experience outside the District), and preferably be able to converse with them directly instead of through an interpreter. This was a transfer of coastal criteria to the Highlands, criteria which it was impossible to fulfil once the appointing of village officials began. The only potential V.C. this patrol noted was the son of a Huria River headman, first contacted by Taylor in 1938; this man had since worked at Wabag, Mt. Hagen, Lae and Rabaul.

Disappointment that was expressed at the authority of indigenous leaders emphasises the apparent abandonment of the idea of only twelve months before that V.C.s should be comparative nonentities; for the Administration was now seeking men of authority. The building of the road from Tari to the Haibuga Marsh area gave officers the chance to observe what authority men possessed, with a view to the appointment of village officials.

A major cause of the delay in appointing Village Constables would seem to have been the continuance of outstanding disputes, some extending back thirty years or more, and the need for further moga payments. The attitude seems to have been that the headmen, who were primarily responsible, should not, as officials, be subjected to the possibly corrupting pressures arising from disputes and their settlement.

When eventually the first appointments of V.C.s were made in the Tari Basin in October 1955, all twelve appointees were listed as headmen and influential men in their communities. Because of the lack of proper know-

---

49 P.O. Esdale and C.P.O. Brown, August-October 1954. Tari P.R.
50 Ibid.
52 Village Constable personal files, Tari; all first twelve appointed October 1955.
lege, and in the light of the rapid turnover of staff, it is clear that the term 'headman' was, and is, constantly used in a subjective, liberal, and generally imprecise way. The term was simply applied to those who had given the impression, particularly on Government works projects, of being able to exercise some directing influence. This criterion is as fallible as information on social structure and individual status passed through two or three interpreters - often the only other check an administrative officer has.

Between October 1955 and October 1958 thirty-eight Village Constables, in all, were appointed in the Tari area. Their qualifications for the appointment were all given as traditional, descriptions of them ranging from Headman to Village Headman of the Area, Headman of Group, Headman of Line, Clan Headman, Local Headman, Area Headman, Clan Leader, and Patrician Leader, together, occasionally, with other qualifications, such as 'Conversant with Administration aims' or 'Has assisted all patrols in the area' or 'An active supporter of law and order'. As time went on the care given to the selection of V.C.'s appears to have deteriorated, as the description of their qualifications - theoretically essential for their confirmation by Port Moresby - became briefer and even more stereotyped.53

In September 1958 eight Village Constables were appointed at the one time, in the Tagari River area west of Tari Station. These men were all appointed because they had given assistance in the building of the road towards Koroba. Their only qualification was listed formally as Clan or Patrician leader.

At least one thing is clear: that the idea of reserving the later appointment of Councillor for the really influential men had been completely abandoned. This may have been forced on the Administration in the Tari area, it is at least arguable, because of the enormous social and political segmentation. But it was emphasised on a District basis in November 1958, when the D.C. asked various sub-district officers if, in their opinion, the difficulty of combining the V.C.'s uniform with the traditional dress was deterring the really influential men from becoming Village Constables, the implication being that such a deterrent was undesirable. The A.D.O. Tari replied that before making a recommendation for appointment he always made very careful enquiries

53 Ibid.
(though without stating what form these enquiries took), and that although there were doubtless influential men without appointment in some of the communities, 'those men holding office are all of some influence and significance in their group'.

(vi) Roadwork as an Administrative Technique

In the Southern Highlands roadwork has been elevated into an administrative technique. Although several of the outstations have no roads, they all have airstrips, in the construction of which the same administrative principles apply. In the Tari Basin it is noticeable that control has been achieved earlier, more easily and more surely, as well as more extensively, in the areas to the north and west of the station, through which runs the road to the Tagari River and Koroba. Following from this, there is now also a concentration of village officials in this direction. To the south and east control has extended much more slowly; significant numbers of moga payments are still being made, and the attitude of the natives towards Government is not always to be depended on. This is gradually being rectified by the building of a road in this direction, the rapid extension of which, since mid-1958, has become a matter of priority. By March 1960 the road had reached the Huria River, some ten miles distant from Tari; the construction of a bridge over the river made it essential to set up a semi-permanent base camp. The labour in building the bridge brought in scores of natives regularly to work; while the lengthy residence of Administration officers amongst them established confidence and induced them to bring in disputes for settlement.

In the Tari-Duna area in particular, roadwork has proved particularly valuable as an administrative technique, for the people are prodigiously segmented, socially and politically. Even in the Mendi area at least the ceremonial grounds are fixed; this gives the administrative officer a point of orientation. But in the Tari-Duna area there are no obvious nuclei around which the Administration can build; there appears to be little regular co-operation between or

55 Discussion with Administration officers and with natives (through interpreters), Huria River camp, April 1960. Moga payments were being arranged continually.
among lineages - hence the particular importance of roadwork in bringing the lineages together in a collective task. The completed road constitutes a permanent link between the lineages; as it is built and used by the Administration it tends to become a safe area, a channel of peace through the country.

The D.C. commented in 1957:

Roadwork is most important in our programme of penetration and later consolidation. It certainly does demand constant contact between the officers and the people, and has the added advantage of requiring the people of different groups to mix in a common work and reach an understanding and appreciation of one another which was denied them previously.56

The administrative advantages of road and airstrip construction have, therefore, been explicitly recognized; though this recognition has become much clearer as the roads have reached the more segmented peoples.

In June 1958 the D.C. remarked, after a visit to the Tari station in April, that, following his order that roadwork be intensified, 'the Huri warriors have had their surplus energies diverted from group bickering, to the construction of motor roads, designed initially to enable Native Affairs officers to maintain regular and constant contact with the people.'57 The Director of Native Affairs concurred in this policy.58

The major administrative advantage of road construction is, undoubtedly, that it enforces the slow progress of a Government party through the countryside, in place of the

58 D.N.A. to D.C., 24.6.1958. Mendi D.O. Similarly a road was put into the Mogorofugwa area from Tari after September 1959, principally as a consolidating medium, after the experience of the enormous impact of the Tari-Koroba road: 'Roads and good government have become almost synonymous to the native people'. The Humberu V.C. asked for a road to his area 'so that we will not have such trouble involving my people and disturbing you' - Koroba P.R. 5/1959-60.
breakneck patrolling which has become traditional in New Guinea. Officers stay for weeks or even months in the same area: the Huria River bridge, which was under construction in November 1959 was not finished until April 1960, and during most of this time a European officer was resident at the base camp. The camp became a centre for social life and for the settlement of long-standing disputes. That a Government party has a demonstrable purpose in remaining in an area is immensely re-assuring, by contrast with the essentially penetrative or the purely administrative patrol.

This was again brought out in mid-1958, when the Toma, Hadi, and Nene groups had been fighting in the Huria River area. The building of the road re-assured them; the headmen got the men of the groups in to work, they co-operated willingly, and the women provided food. Having worked together, they arrived at settlements of their disputes and exchanged moga payments. All in all, the building of the road has achieved multiple objects. The most important result in the long view is probably the stabilising of native-Administration relations: limits have been set on both sides. When in November 1959 the Patrol Officer was dissatisfied with the progress of the road and attempted to force the pace by using the police to conscript labour, the natives reacted violently and compelled the temporary abandonment of the base camp. Patience and forbearance are being enforced on both sides. The D.C. commented: 'Officers must spend time with the people ... before they can hope to be of much influence over them.' The effectiveness of roadwork patrols has driven home the fact, difficult to appreciate or apply in the more sparsely populated coastal areas from which the patrolling tradition derives, that consolidation of Government influence depends on mutual knowledge and understanding. As the number of Patrol Posts increases, a new concept of patrolling is emerging in the Highlands.

If more thought had been given to the techniques of leisurely patrolling, this development could have come earlier, independently of the pressures of roadwork. In March, 1955 a Patrol Officer (J.P. Sinclair) in the Yagen-Yaria areas of the lower Mendi Valley was using the

technique of building base camps rather than just the usual resthouses, contiguous to native hamlets. This involved a more permanent type of house for the officer, together with adequate housing for the police and carriers; altogether, the natives were to be impressed with the idea of Administration permanence.62 This was a technique which he had previously used successfully in Kukukuku country.63 The idea, however, aroused little attention or enthusiasm, like several other examples of individually intelligent responses to local conditions.

(vii) Village Officials - the Direct or Indirect Approach?

Progressing from the stage of pacification to the stage of consolidation at which some authority or responsibility is delegated to the native peoples themselves, there has been, in the Southern Highlands, the same vacillation as has applied in many other parts of the Territory during the past fifty years. Because of the historical sequence, it has generally been considered right that Village Constables should be appointed first and, some time afterwards, the Councillors. The Village Constables have often been appointed at the stage when minimal control has been achieved, and the Councillors at a further stage when it is felt that the natives might have wishes of their own to express to the Administration. As the history of the system amply shows, however, because of the accumulation of attitudes on both sides it is extremely difficult to change from administration by direction to administration by advice.

The first D.C. in the Southern Highlands, J.S. McLeod, had strong views on the village official system. In McLeod's view the first step should be to pick out the few most important men and to give them official recognition. The next step would be to select less important for the Armed Constabulary, posting them in sophisticated areas; the object of this would be to give them an adequate conception of discipline and of law and order, so that when they returned to their areas they had the necessary training to be Village policemen.64 McLeod was scathing about the unwarranted arrogation of authority by individual natives under the V.C. and luluai systems; but he was heartily in

63 Mumeng P.R. 1/1951-2.
64 J.S. McLeod, Village Policemen and Village Councillors, South Pacific, August 1952, pp.411-3.
favour of the early delegation of authority to natives collectively, or in such a way that social responsibility balanced authority. 65 He realized the dangers in the traditional sequence of appointment, and he wanted to make the Councillor into an official who really represented his community and was not subordinate to or at rivalry with the policeman. In practice, the impossibility of persuading both administrative officers and the natives to separate the theoretical functions of the policeman and the councillor had bedevilled the Papuan Administration for thirty years.

Promising experiments were carried out, especially in the period 1952-54, in the Lake Kutubu sub-district. There had, of course, been relatively long and intensive contact in this area; numbers of V.C.s and Councillors had been appointed. The social and settlement pattern lent itself to the setting up of unofficial councils, revolving around the traditional eresabu. McLeod’s influence was apparent throughout this period in the delay in appointing further V.C.s elsewhere, and in the serious attempts to work through the natives by delegating responsibility rather than by passing on instructions. In the Kutubu area he had the full support of the A.D.O., E.D. Wren.

In December 1952 the A.D.O. employed a Councillor to undertake an official patrol. He wished to make contact with villages on the western bank of the Kikori River; Councillor Sosoro had relatives living there, and the A.D.O. felt that he would be particularly effective in getting information. He was sent in the company of two Constabulary, who went unarmed; a Native Medical Orderly, literate in police Motu, was also sent, to keep a diary and to record observations, as well as to give medical care. They made a report on their return which was translated by the A.D.O. and submitted to headquarters. The A.D.O. justified the patrol, not only on the ground that a native Councillor was able to get information unavailable to a European, but also because of the scattered nature of the Fasu villages.

'These people are so scattered that I am only in favour of their villages being visited by a full European patrol when it is passing through Fasu country to other areas; in the future contact can be made by native-led patrols such as this.' 66

65 McLeod is one of the few members of general field staff actually to have asked for a native local government council to be instituted: Misima in 1958.

The patrol was frankly experimental, particularly in testing the reaction of Port Moresby. As the A.D.O. expressed it, 'I have felt for some time that District Services has been very slow in employing and training natives as compared with other departments; or even having regard to what is being done by our own Co-operatives or Natives Authorities Sections in this line. This is not my concern, but I do feel, unless you rule otherwise, that I am now in a position to commence patroiling using native staff.'

Councillor Sosoro was able to report bad feeling between certain Fasu villages, and also - a fact which may have been denied a European officer - that the villagers were preoccupied with sorcery, and that this was connected with fears over neglected compensation payments and deaths resulting from a recent pneumonia epidemic. This information allowed the A.D.O. to assess the situation, and to decide that a full European-led patrol to the area was necessary. From the immediate administrative viewpoint, therefore, the patrol was by no means a failure, even though the Councillor was asked to perform functions beyond his normal line of duty; but the Department of Native Affairs is said to have been adamantly opposed to the idea, which was not repeated. The general emphasis on indirect administration, at this time, was however endorsed by the Department.

Later, in 1953, the A.D.O. intensified his efforts to spread some element of indirect administration throughout the sub-district. A patrol to the Bosavi area in March - May 1953 was instructed to make the distinction between councillor and constable clear at the beginning, by appointing a particular man a 'Kasua County Councillor' and his younger brother a Village Constable. This had the object ultimately and specifically of leading on to local government: 'There is hope of avoiding a regime of direct rule which, after all, will retard the development of local government.' That the Councillor was to be appointed on a tribal, rather than on a clan or village, basis, indicates that some appreciation was being shown of preparing for local government through confederations of traditional units, the practicability of which had been suggested by Read.

---

67 Ibid.
69 South Pacific, III, 12, October 1949, pp.229-34.
In his instructions to another patrol setting out for Fore, the A.D.O. told the officer that he should 'conduct your native administration within the structure of the existing native social order ... Attempt to establish meetings of elders from the various groups, with the ultimate aim of welding them into officially constituted councils.' He also instructed the officer to see that the functions of the Village Constables were kept strictly within their statutory bounds.\(^\text{70}\)

This policy was continued throughout the sub-district: in 1953, on the lower Tagari River, men from seven clans were recommended for appointment as V.C.s, but 'care was taken to explain that if and when these appointments are made they will in no way supersede indigenous leaders, and that young men were being chosen so that local chiefs will be able to take their places in Village Councils when they are set up.'\(^\text{71}\)

By December 1954 it was claimed that unofficial councils had been set up from Kutubu, in the Nembi and Wage valleys, the upper and lower Mubi, Erave, and Samberigi. The response to this had been unexpectedly good, in the view of the Patrol Officer. Contracts were entered into with the villagers, through these unofficial councils, for the completion of the Kutubu airstrip, as a result of which 140 men immediately set to work. 'The policing of these contracts is left to the natives themselves, and they have demonstrated that unsophisticated natives can and will accept responsibilities if given the necessary leadership.'\(^\text{72}\)

In making the appointments he had taken great care to try to demarcate the functions and spheres of action of the Councillors and V.C.s.

This was the same officer who had advocated a similar approach in the Tari area to the appointment of village officials, the less important men initially being made V.C.s.

With a change of D.C.s at Mendi, however, changes began to appear in the administrative emphases in 1955: the customary doubts and hesitations in delegating responsibility began to reappear. The D.C. commented that the


\(^{71}\) Kutubu P.R. 3/1953-4, October 1953.

\(^{72}\) Kutubu P.R.s, P.O. Terrell, December 1954 (unnumbered, Mendi copy).
appointment of so many councillors and the setting up of unofficial councils posed difficult problems in future supervision: an indication of the return to a paternalistic frame of thought.\(^73\) During the preceding few years the developments outlined above had held out promise of a revolutionary approach to native administration in the Southern Highlands, oriented towards the future delegation of responsibility to the native peoples instead of simply towards the immediate problems of law and order.

Councillors were not forgotten entirely in following years, but their role ceased to be regarded as significant. In 1956 it was stated that there were, altogether, eighty-two councillors in the District; eight of these in the Mendi area were women. The object of this was to raise the status of the women so that better control could be exercised: 'These ladies bring any complaints they hear before a court as quickly as they can. Our control over the ladies has extended considerably and their co-operation is heart-warming.'\(^74\)

The concept of a steady and logical progression to local government has largely been lost. Kutubu itself has declined as an administrative centre, and the promising council experiments appear to have lapsed: in 1956 it was simply stated that occasional meetings were held to discuss infant health, cleanliness, and other village matters.\(^75\) Similarly it was stated that in the Mendi area 'the indigenous society has a council system controlled by the parish elders who decide on the important feasts, construction of long houses and the various ceremonies which are part of the native social structure.'\(^76\) But it was not suggested that this should be given administrative recognition; instead, the D.C. suggested that before the groundwork commenced for the institution of native local government, selected groups of natives be taken on tours to Rabaul. 'This practical suggestion would obviate the initial explanation being vague to these people, and abstract, as from their historical background (sic) they have not the ability to mentally grasp such a function.'\(^77\)

\(^{73}\) Ibid., covering letter D.C. to D.N.A., 23.1.1955.
\(^{74}\) Southern Highlands draft Report, 1955-6.
\(^{75}\) Southern Highlands draft Report, 1957-8.
\(^{76}\) Ibid.
\(^{77}\) Ibid.
That existing administration in fact represents the foundation on which the next stage has to be built has again been overlooked. Moreover, only the concept of uniform development can explain the stagnation, or indeed retrogression, in some areas, such as Kutubu, where control is already satisfactory.

The new tone was set in late 1954 after a patrol to the Upper Mendi Valley, when the officers came to the conclusion that Village Constables were needed. The headmen, they felt, had served their purpose in getting food and firewood for patrols, lining their people and getting them to work. But when it came to maintaining law and order in the way demanded by the Administration, they were attempting to use rather than serve the Administration. They were not bringing in the troubles of their people to the patrols for settlement. The appointment of Village Constables would benefit administration greatly, it was felt.78

McLeod had delayed the appointment of Village Constables in order to inculcate an attitude of relying on persuasion and advice rather than direction; but from 1954 the tendency has been to try to appoint Village Constables at as early a stage as possible after the establishment of new Patrol Posts - they now form the native core of the consolidating process.

Intensive administration on the 'oil-stain' principle carries the implication, hitherto apparently not explicitly realized in the Papuan service, that it encourages direct action at the expense of relying on traditional authorities. By having a high staff to native ratio (much higher than in British dependencies, for example), as well as by incessant patrolling from an increasing number of patrol posts, it is possible to maintain law and order and even to carry out executive functions entirely through police rule. The Patrol Officer is able to compel native concurrence; the educational value of this is frequently stressed, but it involves a loss of flexibility in native relations, mutual understanding is difficult to build up, and the natives eventually cease to exercise any initiative or to accept any responsibility beyond what is imposed on them. In brief, as a foundation for the future the method is not constructive.

The theme of constant training and supervision of the village police becomes monotonously repetitive. As the D.C.

78 Mendi P.R. 1/1954-5, P.O. Ford.
commented in July 1957 after fighting had broken out not far from Tari station: 'The answer to avoiding unrest ... is in more active patrolling and more village officials.' Here, as for many years, the Administration's approach to the problem is essentially quantitative, instead of analytical: the only thing that is wrong is that there are not enough officers and Village Constables.

(viii) The Transition to a Police System

Since the concept of indirect administration has practically been abandoned, it has become increasingly important that the most suitable men (that is, those most able or most willing to wield government authority) should be chosen as Village Constables. The ideas of pre-1955 that the most influential men should become Councillors and those less prominent Constables lapsed. The principal criterion for selecting Village Constables became, first, their presumed traditional authority or influence. In patrolling from Ialibu in December 1954 the Patrol Officer stated that he would try to compile a 'social structure table' for each group, on the basis of which Village Constables should be appointed as soon as possible. Intensive patrolling would be necessary first, he believed, so that he would be able to estimate the 'ability, honesty, and hereditary social position' of each appointee. Without such knowledge, he stated, the appointing of V.C.s, though desirable, would be a rather 'hit or miss Procedure'.

Misconceptions about the functions of village officials, which have dogged native administration in Papua during its history, have been repeated in the Southern Highlands over the last five or six years. To continue with Ialibu, in this area some Constables and Councillors were appointed concurrently; this, stated one Patrol Officer in 1955, had 'more than reinstated the leaders, many of whom saw their power waning when fighting in the area ceased.' Since 1955, however, administrative attitudes have changed, in the light of 'getting things done': the native officials are constantly being judged by the Administration on their practical usefulness. The present village officials are therefore continually in the position of being judged from

79 D.C. to D.O., 10.7.1957, covering Tari patrol to Kangua-Piango tribal areas, February 1957, P.O. Claridge.
81 Ialibu 1/1955-6, discussing natives in the Imi area.
two levels, above and below them, while there is at the same time considerable conflict between their traditional and official roles. Confusion is bound to result, and has. In the Ialibu area the first appointees have not infrequently served terms of imprisonment, subsequently, for 'mistreating other natives'.

Inevitably, too, the familiar pattern has recurred, of Councillors either neglected altogether or treated by administering officers as village policemen, or, worse, as subordinates of the village policemen. Moreover, with the emphasis on the practical usefulness of village officials, (mere theoretical distinctions in their functions having become blurred), criteria for the selection even of Councillors gradually throw less weight on their indigenous authority and more on their supposed, or proven, ability to get the Government's work done. That these criteria may not coincide seems generally to have been discounted.

Under what in effect is a police system the administrative initiative passes completely to the Government. A patrol from Ialibu in July 1958 shows that the councillors were not being used as they were meant to be used - a complaint that could be made about the system ever since its introduction by Murray in 1925: 'Village Constables and Councillors were co-operative in trying to carry out my requests, but it was clear to see that the people for the most part did not have much respect for them. However, if the constables of the R.P. and N.G.C. spoke to the people through an interpreter, a much quicker result was obtained.' When the approach was simply to demand

82 Ialibu P.R. 1/1956-7:
'At best, most of them have a very hazy idea of their duties and obligations.'
'V.C. Waronya of Mondauda appears to be carrying out his duties in a fairly capable manner. He is not a forceful character but he does, at least, appear to recognize his responsibilities.'
It is believed by the Administration that V.C.s and headmen, to appear efficient, use youths as scapegoats for offences - personal information, D.C. Mendi.

83 e.g. the lists of qualifications and reports on abilities in Ialibu P.R. 3/1955-6.

compliance with orders, not unnaturally the Patrol Officers began to get the impression that the recognized leaders were losing their grip, or to find that the influential men were declining appointment as Village Constables. On the latter score, it was believed within the Administration that the influential men were declining to accept appointments because the V.C.'s uniform did not accord with their traditional dress; that a powerful leader might be involved in serious role conflict, or at least be placed in an invidious situation, by accepting appointment as a Village Constable, does not seem to have been discussed.85

The more the Administration tried to clarify the functions of village officials, the worse the confusion became. An increasing number of officials was being appointed, and most officers in practice made little distinction between them. A patrol to the Imbong'gu division of Ialibu in December 1958 was instructed to select a potential V.C. for each group which seemed - to the officer - to constitute a political entity; he was told to emphasise that statutory powers were conferred on the V.C. only, but that this did not make the V.C. a minor autocrat. On important matters affecting the group as a whole the V.C. was to be instructed not to act alone, but to discuss them with the Councillor. The task of implementing such joint decisions was then to devolve on the V.C., assisted as need be by 'his councillors'.86 It was precisely this attitude, that the Councillors were subordinate to the V.C. ('his councillors'), which McLeod had condemned when discussing village officials, and which he had tried to guard against by insisting on the priority of indirect administration.87

Eventually the confusion became so bad, with the functions of the Councillors utterly misunderstood (so that they were being used, it was darkly hinted, by outsiders in their own interests), that in 1959 the Patrol Officer, Ialibu, seriously suggested that 'not until the people are able to understand the full import of the position of Councillor should, I feel, further appointments be made.'88

85 Ibid. Also headmen said to be losing authority in Ialibu P.R. 13/1954-5.
87 McLeod, South Pacific, loc.cit.; notes 35, 60-1 above.
Using Ialibu as a microcosm, developments after 1954 afford a perfect example of the erosion and eventual destruction of the indirect element in administration, once police control becomes practicable. There is a certain beguiling simplicity about a system of native administration in which energetic Patrol Officers, rarely still, move from village to village hearing courts and issuing instructions to village policemen - 'pure and simple administration'. Whether it lays the basis for more progressive administration; whether, in fact, it leads anywhere, does not seem to be an important consideration. A progression to local government is not regarded as a progression at all, but as an abrupt leap which the natives must be spurred on by the Administration to take. That the steady recognition and devolution of authority is the key to this problem does not, even now, seem to have been recognized.

Current policies of uniform development and the preservation of these methods raise the question of the application of Turner's frontier thesis to Papua.
APPENDIX B

CENTRAL GOVERNMENT IN RELATION TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT

I. Departmental Co-ordination: The Milne Bay Example.

(1) General Organization and Deficiencies

Various aspects of this question have been touched on under the main headings of economic development, health and education. The main underlying problem, as it affects local government, has been the unco-ordinated departmentalisation of the Administration in Port Moresby, inevitably reflected at the district level. All Departments are acutely conscious of the frustrations which this causes. An adequate secretariat organization has been urged on Canberra more than once, but there is resistance to the setting up of a body dissimilar from the metropolitan Public Service. This attitude ignores the required degree of district co-ordination which is peculiar to colonial administration.¹

In 1955 some modifications were made in New Guinea: in particular the District Commissioner was made the direct district deputy of the Administrator, while the D.O. became the senior local representative of the Native Affairs Department. Partly because D.C.s were not prepared for this new role, and partly because policy divisions and administrative overlap still occurred, this arrangement did not achieve its objects. Fienberg wrote in 1957:

The departmental separation of District Commissioners from Native Affairs does not seem to me to have cured anything. Native administration cannot be kept divorced from 'general' administration: introduction of the local government system actually increases the degree of overlap. It seems to me a fair observation that where the existing arrangements appear to work best, they have been, in practice largely ignored. In

¹ Information from officers of the Administrator's and Native Affairs Departments. A good example of these ramifications lies in the functions which councils must perform, particularly in relation to agricultural extension. This is the basic problem, evidenced again in Fienberg's continued insistence that N.L.G. councils are not analogous to Australian municipal councils - though essentially this is the type of council with which central Administration is equipped to deal.
districts carrying both a D.O. and a D.C., the
former still acts as a virtual second-in-command,
and the latter still continues to function
principally as a sort of town manager-cum-civic
receptionist. At the Headquarters end, the
division of functions between the Department of
the Administrator and Native Affairs is pretty
confused, and in my opinion will remain so until
the two are merged.2

In brief, the functions of different departments have
proliferated since the war, without the development of any
comparable co-ordinating mechanism in Port Moresby. The
community development outlook which has become so marked in
British territories since the war has been largely lacking
in New Guinea. On certain specific and continuing issues,
for example, the Tolai Cocoa Project and the proposed
judicial functions for natives, a degree of co-ordination,
slow and cumbersome, has been achieved through ad hoc
committees. Where the functions of departments clearly
overlap, however, the confusion at the district level cannot
be blamed on the administrative organization alone; it
results from the perpetuation of separatist attitudes of
mind, particularly in the technical departments, and also
from the failure to make basic policy decisions in the
Department of the Administrator.

This applies particularly to the relationship between
the Native Affairs and Agriculture Departments. The Tolai
Cocoa Project surmounted this obstacle partly because of
good personal relations in the district, and partly because
of enforced district co-ordination through the Management
Board.3 At the same time, as late as 1957 the Native Affairs
and Agricultural officers in the Gazelle Peninsula were
still hotly debating policy on their controlling precedence;

2 Notes re Paper on Local Government by C.R. Lambert,
5.11.57. In 1956 and again in 1959 the U.N. criticised this
administrative arrangement. In 1956 the Trusteeship Council
expressed opposition to a Separate Department of Native
Affairs, which 'conveyed the impression that the adminis-
tration of native affairs was something different from normal
administrative responsibilities' (G.A.O.R., 11th Session,
Visiting Mission described the arrangement as 'a very
strange one' (U.N. T/1260, pp. 72-4). For changes, see
Charts.

3 Memo., 'Organization of Extended Tolai Cocoa Scheme',
11.11.55. NA 45-1-1.
while the Assistant Administrator seemed far from clear on the issues involved.  

Agricultural officers, supported by their Department, have regarded agricultural extension, particularly in the early stages, as a technical activity for which they alone are responsible; while Native Affairs officers, particularly those concerned with local government, view it as part of a pattern of development for which they and the councils under their supervision are primarily responsible.

Fienberg had sounded a warning on the necessity for coordination as early as 1952:

In areas under local government units it (economic development) involves District Commissioners working through councils in conjunction with the Agriculture Department, with the Co-operative Section taking over once production has commenced.

In practice, however, in the period to 1960, neither the District Commissioners nor the Co-operative Section had assumed these roles. This left Native Affairs officers (representing councils) and Agriculture officers to fight out the matter themselves in the districts.

(ii) Milne Bay: Integration from Below

Milne Bay is the outstanding example of an area where an attempt has been made to integrate the work of the council with a wider programme of community development. This was, to a large extent, an accident of personalities;

4 a/D.O. New Britain to D.N.A., 15.7.57; W.L. Conroy (Agric.) to Asst. Admin., 18.7.57; Asst. Admin. to D.C., 29.7.57. NA 45-1-1. Dr. Gunther in general supported Conroy's view; but the D.C. pointed out that the arrangement of 11.11.1955 appeared to put the responsibility squarely on Native Affairs officers (5.8.57).

5 Fienberg to D.C. Manus, 3.11.52. NA 42-3-5.

6 One of the baneful results was the confusion in the Higaturu area - see Ch. on 'Economic Development'. On occasions the remarkable step has been taken of referring the problems of coordination, without a central policy (e.g. cooperatives with councils) from Port Moresby to the local field staff - a/Registrar Cooperatives to A.D.O. Misima, 27.2.59. The A.D.O. never replied. The Cooperatives Section is nominally part of the Native Affairs Department.
but it has set a precedent which in 1960 was being considered as a pattern for extension in council areas. It derives from the work of the Regional Agricultural Officer, Mr. W. Cottrell-Dormer.

In 1953 there was no Agricultural Officer in Milne Bay, and the Ealeba council itself pointed out the need for new crops. At this time Cottrell-Dormer was concerned with the disastrous rice-growing programme in the Mekeo, working through Rural Progress Societies. The Rural Progress Societies are relevant to this discussion, because they were the personal creation of Cottrell-Dormer, who began them in the Mekeo area in 1948 as, significantly, 'an experiment in social and economic development'. Cottrell-Dormer in contrast to his colleagues has never regarded agricultural extension in primitive communities as simply a technical matter; the Rural Progress Societies had 'a strong social development bias - finance control, management and economic potential took a place of lesser import'. This emphasis may have been one of the faults of extension in the Mekeo area; the business aspect was pushed into the background, and not until 1957-8 was any effective liaison, for the purpose of business management, arranged between the Department of Agriculture and the Co-operatives Section.

It was precisely because of this social development bias however that Cottrell-Dormer, and Local Government staff,

7 N.A.O. Plant to D.C. Samarai, 3.1.53; C.S. Belshaw (Economic Development in South Eastern Papua, 1951) looked forward to a coordinated programme of economic development for the whole Bay, linked with the extension of local government. Fienberg asked in 1952 that the work of the Co-operatives Section in the Bay be coordinated with that of local government - S.N.A.O. to D.C. Samarai, 22.12.52. Rabaul 14/11/6/26.

8 Spate said of Cottrell-Dormer: 'It is a measure of his quality that he resigned the post of Director of Agriculture to devote himself to this one project... South Pacific, VII, 6, p.732, note 2. The pre-war promotion of rice growing by compulsion undoubtedly raised Mekeo opposition - probably the worst area in the Territory, socially, to have experimented - see J. Miles, Native Commercial Agriculture in Papua, South Pacific, IX, 2, September-October 1956, p.325.

9 M.J. White, Rural Progress Societies as an Extension Tool, Agric. Dept., pp.1-2. The decision to liaise was taken in 1955. Also W. Cottrell-Dormer: The Native Rural Progress Society (Agric. Conference 17.9.1949): he put the emphasis on organization, self-reliance, better use of leisure, as aids to self-government.
had a common area of interest. From the native viewpoint, in Cottrell-Dormer's approach an individual should strive for agricultural improvement, not simply for economic advantage but as a moral duty to his community. This had met with social obstacles in the Mekeo; but when Cottrell-Dormer moved to Milne Bay in 1954 he found an ideal seeding ground for these ideas, for the Oxford Group influence of Kwato had striven for a similar emphasis. Indeed, the spiritual aspect of Cottrell-Dormer's work meant that it was welcomed by the missions generally.

In the Milne Bay District Cottrell-Dormer set up organizations known as Village Agricultural Committees, with associated Village Women's Committees, to serve as promotional units at the village level. When these became established, all the committees in 'a given linguistic or geographical area' were combined into an Agricultural Association. Committeemen and elders were taken to the Training Centre at Kuiaro (established late 1953) for short courses of training, and in addition, selected young men were given longer courses, up to a year in length, to give them a sound practical knowledge of extension work.

Cottrell-Dormer made no secret of the fact that the agricultural work of these Committees and Associations, although basic, was only a beginning to their more important and more difficult duties:

... units of the organization are encouraged to interest themselves not only in agriculture, but also in their religion, in public health, education, co-operative enterprise, civics and in all matters which may help the community towards a fuller and more satisfying life. Their

---

10 Information from D.A.O. F. Kleckham, Port Moresby. Cottrell-Dormer saw community opposition to individual material progress as an obstacle everywhere – see his The Village Committee Organization, Wewak, September 1959, p.3.

11 Ibid., pp.6-7.

12 Fienberg had (memo., 5.11.57, loc.cit.) branded the attitude of other D.A.S.F. officers to low level agricultural training as 'unrealistic'. But Fienberg wanted the trainees to be employed by the councils, supervised only by D.A.S.F.
motto is: 'Our work is for our people and our villages and our country'.

And again:

... it has always been my view that economic development must go hand in hand with social and political development. Every effort should be made to ensure that the three are intrinsic units of a single overall plan. This thought will be found to take shape in the Village Committee Book. Economic and social advancement join hands in the functions and duties of the Agricultural and Women's Committees. Political advancement finds expression in the election of the Committee Members and in the grouping of both types of Committees in the Agricultural Associations.

This promised administrative overlap with other departments. Members of the Committees were elected on the same basis as members of the councils, in the period 1954-7; that is, by totemic clans or hamlets. Cottrell-Dormer recognized only in passing that they might form a new focus of authority in the village, perhaps in opposition to the established village constables or councillors. The committeemen and committeewomen were enjoined in the Village Committee Book with which they were issued to assist the constables and councillors; nonetheless, Cottrell-Dormer admitted that there was often antagonism, if only temporary, and that on occasions the committeemen usurped the functions of the village officials - in two cases the Women's Committee arrested the constable or councillor because he would not let his wife join in the work. He claimed that 'corrective measures' could be taken by Agriculture or Native Affairs officers to overcome this. At the same time it is clear that in areas of direct administration he regarded the Committees as a means of circumventing the 'old and suspicious' officials, representing a 'static' institution.

15 The Village Committee Book, p.4.
17 Ibid., p.7. The D.C. recognized that the influence of the appointed officials was declining - District Report 1958-9, p.20. Samarai 29-4-1.
Cottrell-Dormer acknowledged that the Native Affairs Department had received the organisation 'with mixed feelings' because of its implications for native administration; but he urged acceptance of it.

It may well be ... that the organisation should be developed not only as a medium of communication and organised action to implement D.A.S.F. policy but as a medium for all Departments for the purpose of economic, political and social development.\(^{18}\)

The Committees and Associations were plainly undertaking functions which it had been the intention councils should undertake; but the councils had been slow in doing so. Moreover, the Committees and Associations spread at a much faster rate than councils, so that many were established in areas which had long needed local government, and for which they provided a substitute. This tended to alarm the Native Affairs Department and to worry Cottrell-Dormer. It is related elsewhere that the natives of the north-east coast had asked for a number of years to be admitted to the Milne Bay council, without success. In April 1957 these people formed their Committees into an Association, entirely on their own initiative. This was, from its inception, collecting money - mainly to provide copra driers, elsewhere a council function.\(^{19}\)

Cottrell-Dormer was most anxious that the north-east coast natives should also have a local government council; this he expressed to the Executive Officer, Local Government:

Personally, as you know, it is my experience that Agr. Ext. work runs most smoothly where Councils are in operation. So I am naturally keen to see your work develop as rapidly as possible.\(^{20}\)

He also urged the natives themselves to press for a council; meanwhile, the Agricultural Association would give them 'an organisation through which they can tell the Government their wishes'.\(^{21}\) The difficulties of organiza-

\(^{18}\) Ibid., p.8.

\(^{19}\) Letter, Reuben Mark to Cottrell-Dormer 22.4.57; Cottrell-Dormer to Reuben Mark, 1.5.57. SR 5-1-21.

\(^{20}\) Cottrell-Dormer to H.T. Plant, private, 28.5.57.

\(^{21}\) Cottrell-Dormer to Reuben Mark, 23.5.57.
tion, supervision, and extension prevented the Native Affairs Department during the next three years from setting up a council in this area, so that the Association remained the natives' sole joint organization. This caused resentment and anxiety amongst Native Affairs staff; and established, from their point of view, an undesirable pattern of uncontrolled bodies which were being urged by Cottrell-Dormer to exercise wide functions.22

Cottrell-Dormer was just as eager however to promote co-operation with existing councils, as he was to see councils extended to areas possessing Associations. In the early years he addressed the Ealeba council on agricultural extension work, and kept in close touch with the Chairman, Mahuru Mark, whom he urged to advise the councillors to assist with the work of the Committees. The council appointed an agricultural inspector, trained at Kuiaro, on Cottrell-Dormer's advice; and he had a project for a council farm, essentially for the experimental introduction of crops, which would be developed by his Department for the council.23 Also, by 1959 six field workers of the Department of Agriculture were attached to the Milne Bay council as full time advisers.24

This indirect liaison covered only one facet of the activities of the Committees and Associations, however. Cottrell-Dormer exercised a forceful influence in impressing a community development approach on the district administration. As the Committees, and particularly those of the Women, were concerned with agriculture only as an aid to

---

22 A.D.O. Martin (Baniara) complained of this Association that 'unsavoury individuals' were running it and that all its meetings should be supervised by both D.N.A. and D.A.S.F. personnel (to D.C., 13.11.57. Samarai 17-1-1); the D.A.O. replied that the Association was unofficial, that Associations did not collect money (quite inaccurate) and that the traditional leaders were rarely elected to Committees (no explanation). (3.12.57, ibid.).

23 In the d'Entrecasteaux they were said to be exercising political functions, making and enforcing rules.

24 Address, Ealeba, 7.10.54, SR 3-3-11, Samarai; Cottrell-Dormer to Mahuru Mark, 18.4.56, 10.5.56, 6.6.56, SR 3-1-16.

25 District Report, 1958-9, p.11. Samarai 29-4-1; Also Report, 1959-60, p.13 (Samarai 29-4-2) whereby the Associations brought to the notice of the Council matters necessary for agricultural extension.
District Organization according to Cottrell-Dormer, 1959

Chief of Division

R.A.O.

Kuiaro Training Centre

D.A.O.

Newsletter Correspondence Interviews

A.O. A.O. A.O. A.O. A.O.

Kuiaro Boys & Village Fldwks.

Patrol Teams

Fldwkrs. (female)

Village Constables and/or Councillors

Village Committees

Village Agricultural Committees

Village Women's Committees

Agricultural Associations

A.O.

D.A.O.

R.A.O.

Chief of Division

(Addendum: The place of other Departments in the diagram is being attended to in Samarai at present. W.C.D. 30.9.59.)
welfare, it was important that Administration training, facilities, and leadership be provided in hygiene, handicrafts, housecraft, and all the other aspects of village life which promoted and reflected a rising standard of living. The high status of women, partly traditional and partly a result of Kwato teaching, had prepared the ground, he felt, for a concentrated programme of welfare. He urged the appointment of a permanent Administration Welfare Officer to liaise with the Women's Committees; he regarded as urgent the training of boys to become village leaders and to assist with the marketing and consumer societies; and in general he urged close liaison with the Department of Native Affairs in a co-ordinated programme.26

(iii) The Expanding Influence of Milne Bay

By 1959 Cottrell-Dormer had won over many officers in both his own and the Native Affairs department to the concept of integrated planning and executive co-ordination. Cottrell-Dormer had been greeted with some scepticism at the Goroka Agricultural Extension Conference of 1956; but the atmosphere was quite different at Wewak in 1959, for by then the problems, particularly of co-ordination with local government councils, had become patent. The Executive Officer (Local Government) said of the Wewak conference:

Anyone attending the Conference, who was not conversant with the organisation of this Administration, might well have been forgiven if he presumed that Agricultural Extension was portion of Native Affairs activity or that the Social Development Section belonged to the Division of Agricultural Extension.27

---

26 He also wanted better malaria control; and he listed villages in the District which needed Village High Schools; also D.A.S.F. and P.H.D. should jointly work out a plan for diet improvement in the villages - Cottrell-Dormer to D.C. Samarai, 5.2.60. DASF 1-1-8. It was Cottrell-Dormer who initiated moves for a women's training centre at Rate; he sought the cooperation of the Council, and himself planned in detail the itinerary of a welfare officer from D.N.A. - D.N.A. to D.O., 4.4.60; Cottrell-Dormer to D.O., 13.1.60. Samarai 14-18-1. 'The matter of establishing this centre ... would appear to have become unilateral based on a structure organised by Mr. Cottrell-Dormer.' D.O. to D.N.A., 21.4.60. Ibid.

27 H.T. Plant to Chief of Div. (Development and Welfare), 29.9.59. NA 39-5-0. Plant had himself read a paper on local government to the 1956 Conference, with apparently little effect.
There were actually complaints by Agricultural officers that they were not getting the co-operation of councils and supervising officers. At the same time, however, the Executive Officer stated that many agricultural officers had no idea of the meaning of local government.

The Conference passed a number of resolutions which expressed the intrusion of the Department of Agriculture into areas which the Native Affairs Department regarded as its own. These included the statement that rural organisations were not objects in themselves, but aimed at 'family welfare'; that these organisations promote social advancement; that the Department limit its activities to those organisations which had among their activities the improvement of agriculture; and that the local government councils be encouraged 'by co-ordinated action between D.N.A. and D.A.S.F. officers' to participate in agricultural development 'by forming committees to liaise with agricultural officers.'

The Executive Officer summed up the basic issues (which had, in fact, been evident ever since the inception of local government): that, because of the sheer lack of a statement defining the relationship between councils and the Department of Agriculture, inter-departmental co-ordination as it affected councils was dominated by the personalities of the officers concerned. He wanted a joint policy statement by the two Departments.

By 1960 this had not been done; but in the Milne Bay District, because of the pace set by Cottrell-Dormer, there had been significant moves towards co-ordination, the pattern for which followed that suggested at Wewak. The Administrator himself devoted his attention to the problem during an inspection of the district, and directed that the Chief of Division, Agricultural Extension (Mr. Conroy), the Executive Officer, Local Government (Mr. Plant), and the Executive Officer, Social Development (Mr. Thompson), 'make an appreciation of the extension work carried out by the Regional Agricultural Officer, Mr. Cottrell-Dormer.'

---

28 Ibid., App.A: Resolutions of Conference. This last (Res.6) was put to the Conference by the E.O. (L.G.) and by D.O. Doolan from Milne Bay.
29 Ibid.
30 D.N.A. to D.O., 16.10.59, NA 39-5-1.
31 Asst. Admin. to D.C. Samarai, 10.11.59. Admin. 80-2-4.
As a result of this visit, the Administrator directed that the D.C. was to give full support to the pattern of rural extension in the area, and that to integrate this with the work of other departments a monthly meeting of senior officers in the district be held, with progress to be reported monthly to the Administrator. The D.C. was told to accelerate the extension of local government, so that it could be co-ordinated with the rural organization. It was emphasised that every departmental representative in the district was to be made responsible for integrating his plans with the overall programme.

His Honour has made it quite clear that the rural organisation in your area is not to be regarded as a passing phase or an activity dependent on the energies and vision of Mr. Cottrell-Dormer.32

In point of fact, although this programme of co-ordination became active only in the first months of 1960, it represented the first attempt at a formal local mechanism of the inter-departmental committee (or district team) type, to try to do this.33 From the point of view both of general administration and of local government, this was the most notable result of Cottrell-Dormer's efforts.

Cottrell-Dormer welcomed the proposals. He suggested that the Milne Bay District be used as a pilot project area in rural organization - that is, in his connotation, community development. He further suggested that the inter-departmental committee under the D.C. should not only harmonise district policy but also deal with the specific problems of individual sub-district and local government areas. He looked forward to the establishment of council agricultural committees at Milne Bay and Misima, as resolved at Wewak, to co-ordinate the work of the councils and of the Agricultural Associations.34

32 Ibid.
33 Obviously comparable (though more advanced) is the machinery for securing district and provincial coordination in East Africa - see Sir A. Cohen, British Policy in Changing Africa, pp.71-2, 79 (Uganda); E. Huxley, A New Earth - An Experiment in Colonialism, p.267 (Kenya). Every British Summer Conference on African Administration after 1947 emphasised the team approach at the district and provincial level.
This type of co-operation was approved by the Agricultural Associations in Milne Bay and was presented to the May 1960 meeting of the Milne Bay council. One young councillor believed that association with the council would strengthen the Committees, because the weight and authority of the council would be thrown behind their work. Eventually it was decided that the council committee consist of two councillors, one man and one woman from each of the two Agricultural Associations, and four agricultural supervisors employed by the council. This arrangement is said to have worked very well.

The A.D.O. (Local Government) at this meeting complained that in the past the council had been ignorant of the work of the Committees; as the D.A.O. pointed out, this was inaccurate, for a further function which the Department of Agriculture had assumed for the Committees was the regular publication of a newsletter. This has elsewhere been undertaken by councils. The newsletter produced for Milne Bay, however, has consistently surpassed the local government publications, again because of its all-embracing coverage. It has reported the activities of all departments, as well as giving detailed reports on the Committees and of the work of the council. During 1960-1 each monthly issue averaged about 13,000 words. The breadth of themes treated may be cited from the issue of October 1960, where discussions were reported of the Associations' promoting democratic government and the advancement of women; of the need to break down inter-tribal feuds and promote Christian unity in the Boianai area (N.E. coast); and of the financial preconditions for local government (related to the same area).

Cottrell-Dormer has forged an administrative outlook and administrative institutions in the Milne Bay District which are unique in the Territory, but which hold great promise of overcoming many of the more serious deficiencies.

---

35 Personal notes of meeting, Rabe, 25.5.60. It should be pointed out that some personal liaison with the council had existed continuously through V.A.C. men and women councillors - e.g. Tilaka of Kilakilana, President of the Baleba Agricultural Association, who had attended agricultural conferences in several parts of the Territory.

36 Personal information 1961, from H.T. Plant (E.O.L.G.).

37 It is called V.A.C. Because of the detail in which events are reported it probably exercises considerable local influence.
resulting from non-coordination in Port Moresby. For this reason his methods are of great importance for native local government.38

In view of the potentialities of his methods, and their inevitable spread, it is perhaps churlish to refer to the lack of co-ordination elsewhere; but the Wewak Conference of 1959 revealed several rifts, particularly in the Kukipi area of the Gulf where the council and the D.A.O. accused one another of a lack of interest and support.39 The serious division at Higaturu is described elsewhere.40

Postscript: Cottrell-Dormer read a paper to the ANZAAS Conference, May 1961, on his methods, stressing greater participation by natives in the planning of programmes, providing more opportunities and heavier responsibilities for native leaders, and a still greater insistence on team spirit amongst Administration departments (Rural Extension in Eastern Papua). These are precisely the areas of weakness of existing local government.

Moreover, in August 14-18th, 1961 a District Development Conference was held, primarily to carry out the above objects. Representatives of all departments and natives from the Associations, Co-operatives, and Local Government considered all aspects of district development and passed 22 resolutions on matters as diverse as the powers of council constables and the posting of infant welfare nurses.41

38 An example was the agreement on pig-penning at the meeting of 25.5.60, an issue which, because of the intransigence of D.A.S.F., had defied a solution for five years in the council - see Ch.IX, 1.
40 See Ch.VIII.
II. Supervision of Councils.

It had been realized during the drafting of the N.L.G. Ordinance that native local government in New Guinea would be, initially, a specialist occupation. The reason for this is clear, in that all the Senior Officers of the Administration had been raised in a tradition of direct administration, and there was considerable scepticism about the necessity for and potential value of native local government. It was not realized at the time, how deep the opposition lay nor how persistent it was to be. Indeed, the Executive Officer (Local Government) has summed up that the major problem in implementing native local government has been to induce the Native Affairs staff rather than the natives to accept it.

(i) The Native Authorities Section

For this reason it was essential to entrust the policy to a specialist group convinced of the worth of native local government; it was equally important that the first councils should be sound and vigorous, otherwise those in favour of direct administration would be given an excellent argument against the extension of local government.

The importance of a specialist section was stressed in 1949 by the Inter-Departmental Committee on Native Development and Welfare. The functions of the section were to supervise the establishment and initial stages of councils; to carry out regular tours of inspection; to maintain records at Headquarters and sift information from overseas; to organize training programmes for natives in local government; and to advise the Director on the progressive enlarging of the powers of individual councils.

The Director explained the reasons for general field staff’s exclusion from these activities in his proposals:

It is desired to stress that this supervision, especially in the preliminary stages, will be of a specialist nature and it would be unfair to

---

1 DDS to Administrator, 5.4.49: DS 14-3-15.
2 Ibid.
expect District Officers and members of District staffs, who are already more than fully occupied with their normal duties, to be the responsible officers.

Again:

By establishing the group, it would not be the intention to exclude District Officers from participation in this sphere of native administration. They will naturally have to be fully in the picture and complete liaison would at all times be maintained with them.

The Government Secretary remained unconvinced. He suspected that this would derogate from the prestige and work of the District Officer who, he feared, would be pushed into the background. He was clearly opposed to the specialist section, and doubtful of the approach to 'indirect administration' altogether. He hinted that the desire for self-government should 'firstly stem from the desire of the people themselves,' thereby indicating his belief that something was being imposed on the natives which they had not asked for. The Director of District Services, in his reply, failed to point out what was often pointed out afterward, that local government was not self-government. He mollified him by pointing out that the establishment of councils, the direct supervision of which would gradually pass to District Services staff under the District Officer, would enhance the District Officer's prestige; and that a member of the Section, whilst in the District, would be attached to the D.O.'s staff.

The view of the Director of District Services prevailed, for a specialist section was established, and the head of the section, known as the Senior Native Authorities Officer, was appointed in December, 1949; shortly before the Village Councils Ordinance was proclaimed.

---

3 Government Secretary to DDS and NA, 2.5.49: A/5/2/9.
4 Ibid.
5 At the time of the Raluana disturbance in 1953, it came out that it was doubtful whether the S.N.A.O. was under the control of the D.C.
6 Personal information from Mr. D.M. Fienberg, former S.N.A.O.
As the situation in the Gazelle Peninsula developed it became clear that the creation of a specialist section had been wise, for certain District Services officers were prepared to carry their opposition to the point of obstruction. Many others were sceptical and uninterested in promoting the policy.

Once he had fully realized the extent of indifference and opposition the S.N.A.O. realized also the way in which the role of the Native Authorities Section was being misinterpreted. In September 1951 he wrote to the DNA:

It is somewhat disquieting to reflect that nearly two years after the proclamation of the Ordinance, and twelve months after the policy has been put into operation, there are very few field staff officers outside of Headquarters and the Native Authorities Section with any but the haziest notions of the most significant step we have yet taken in administering the native population of this country. This despite the fact that native local government affairs must ultimately be handled by District Service officials as an integral part of normal district administration, and the N.V.C. Regulations were formed with exactly that object in view.

This was perfectly true, for the Regulations specifically invest the District Officer with supervisory powers over almost all aspects of local government activity.

The S.N.A.O. went on to complain that:

The original conception of the Native Authorities Officer's role has not materialised, for there has been no gradual assumption of supervisory responsibility for any council's affairs by the ordinary field staff of any of the three districts in which the policy has been applied ... the situation it seemed most necessary to avoid is rapidly developing: the local government policy is coming to be regarded by field staff generally as a fanciful superstructure that is being superimposed on a tried and true system of native

7 Ch.V.
administration by a handful of specialists with little else to do.9

That specialists had been placed in this invidious and contradictory situation was due to the fact that field staff officers were unwilling and incompetent to take on supervisory functions.

Clarification was therefore needed of

(1) future role of the District Service field staff in relation to local government;

(2) the future role of the Native Authorities Section.

Experience gained amongst the Tolais has clearly demonstrated that it is impossible to keep the responsibility for different aspects of the administration of any council area divided between field staff doing local government and field staff quite ignorant of local government work.10

It therefore became a primary task of the Native Authorities Section to educate field staff officers in the objects and principles of Native Local Government. This was begun in 1952 with the issue of District Services Local Government Memorandum No.1, the main object of which was to point out to officers their duties and responsibilities towards councils.11 It was felt necessary to warn officers that any attitudes of hostility or impeding of the policy would not be tolerated; and it was noted that there had been 'one or two instances' where this had happened. The memorandum also foresaw the principal dangers of unskilled or unsympathetic supervision:

Incorrectly handled, administration through local government bodies can still be direct rule in the narrowest sense. There is a golden mean between a unit whose executive work is technically efficient because it is all being done by an impatient officer without reference to the Councillors, and a unit whose members, through lack of official

9 Ibid.
10 Ibid.
guidance, are accomplishing nothing – and learning nothing.12

In theory, then, the emphasis has throughout been thrown on guidance and education rather than on direction.13 A number of factors militated against the former in favour of the latter:

(1) the direct administration tradition;

(2) the fact that the Local Government Section has no control over the appointment of supervising staff;

(3) efficiency is the responsibility of the supervising officer through the D.O.;

(4) the lack of basic education of both Councillors and council staff;

(5) the propaganda role of existing councils;

(6) the fact that councils are regarded primarily as Administration instrumentalities rather than as consultative bodies. This originally had to be emphasised to enlist the support of District Service officers for the policy; this emphasis has been continued both for this reason and in order to persuade Technical Departments to work through local government.14

In the Gazelle Peninsula by 1954 liaison between the Native Authorities Office and the Native Affairs staff was good; but as the S.N.A.O. pointed out, this was due primarily to good personal relations.15 It did not solve the general problems of integrating native local government with general administration. Many Native Affairs officers still regarded local government as the plaything of specialists. To overcome these difficulties, in 1955 the Native Authorities Section (which had been based in Rabaul) was abolished, and the present arrangement substituted.16

12 Ibid.
14 Circular Memorandum 5/59.
15 S.N.A.O. to D.N.A., 22.4.54; on NA.39-1-0.
16 Information from E.O.(L.G.), H.T. Plant; see diagrams.
(11) The Local Government Section

Under the new arrangement one permanent officer - at present with a non-gazetted assistant - constitutes the Headquarters staff in charge of local government, with the title Executive Officer (Local Government). The field staff concerned with local government are titled A.D.O. (L.G.) but, although their duties are intended to be primarily concerned with local government establishment and extension, they form part of the District Officer's staff.

Regular educational courses have also been held for both junior and senior officers, at the Vunadadir Local Government Training Centre, in order to break down opposition or indifference to local government by explaining its functions and objects. By the end of 1959 five senior officers' courses and six field staff courses had been held. The senior officers' courses are attended by staff also of departments other than Native Affairs. The senior officers' course at A.S.O.P.A. in 1957 was devoted to problems of local government, and produced a lengthy report containing suggestions for the improvement of the Ordinance, all of which were endorsed by the E.O. (L.G.) as a member of the course.

Yet the E.O. (L.G.) maintains that indifference or opposition remain major obstacles. It is rare for staff other than local government staff to press for the establishment of councils.

It has been mentioned that since the present arrangement began early in 1956 the E.O. (L.G.) has had no control over the selection of A.D.O.s (L.G.). They are appointed generally at random to local government positions. Results can be measured only where indifference amounts to complete neglect of duties and responsibilities.

The affairs of the two councils in Milne Bay were entirely neglected by the supervising officer and by the D.O. during 1955. This came to light only when the D.N.A. pressed for results of elections and estimates. Elections due to be held in June had not even been mooted in December - so that legally there had not been a properly

18 E.O. (L.G.) to D.N.A., 27.4.58, NA 23-4-2.
constituted council for six months. The first estimates due in September had been ignored.20

The A.D.O. in the Wewak area took two years on a preliminary survey of a few small offshore islands which should have taken two months. The A.D.O. at Lae for two years was so opposed to local government that the system almost lapsed before the E.O. (L.G.) was able to prevail on his superiors to replace him.21

(iii) The Dual Roles of the Local Government Officer

These are blatant examples of neglect. Elsewhere - and this is common - the incorporation of local government staff into general field staff has had the effect of making them available for non-local government duties. In some instances shortage of staff has forced them to divert their attention to normal patrolling and direct administration; in others the D.O. has directed them to what he considers 'more important duties'. The Higaturu area is a good example.

The Higaturu Council was established in March 1956. Until November 1956 it had an energetic supervising officer who launched the coffee scheme.22 He went on leave and did not return until March 1957. On his return he was immediately sent on a patrol to the non-council Managalase area, and did not return to local government supervision until September 1957. During this entire period the coffee scheme was placed in the charge of a cadet, and partly as a consequence was halted. The District Officer made an audit of the Council's accounts - as laid down in the Regulations - and in May 1958 reported many mistakes and omissions.23 £1,400 was carried forward unspent from 1957 to 1958 because, through lack of supervision, the Council's works programme had been allowed to fail.24 The A.D.O. complained that, although he was supposed to give his full attention to council work, only 40% of his time during 1957 was so spent.25 By council work, however, the A.D.O. meant

21 Information from E.O. (L.G.), period 1958-60.
22 A.D.O. to D.O., 29.5.58, on NA.41-3-7.
23 D.O. to D.N.A., 22.5.58: NA.41-3-7.
25 A.D.O. to D.O., 29.5.58: Pop.14-8-22/12.
local government extension, theoretically his primary responsibility; whereas routine supervision of the Higaturu Council's affairs should have devolved on the sub-District A.D.O. The D.O. replied, however, that although the A.D.O. was right in principle he would have to continue to devote himself to the Higaturu Council because of a shortage of other staff.26

At this period the Higaturu Council had the services of a particularly intelligent clerk, who in July 1958 resigned to become Native Local Government Assistant at Popondetta. Despite his services the affairs of the Council lagged, a point which further highlights the difficulties of the supervising officer. All clerks are given nine months training at the Local Government Training Centre, Vunadadir; though because of the lack of trained recruits some councils have had to make do with untrained staff. The result has been that recruits have been taken when barely semi-literate; the instructing officer accordingly spends the bulk of his time teaching the elements of English and Arithmetic in addition to council procedure and accounts.27

The Higaturu Council has been dogged by native staff troubles which have further involved the supervising officer in direct administration of the Council's affairs. In July 1958 a young Orokaiva was appointed clerk: he had been trained at Vunadadir, but he suffered by comparison with his predecessor, and in his official capacity found it difficult to assert himself amongst his own people, who maintain strong cultural cohesion, to the detriment of the personal ambitions of the young educated men. After only a few months he requested a transfer, and the Council was without trained staff.28 The clerk who was working there in February 1960 had only recently completed Vunadadir training, but required constant advice and supervision even for the elements of council business. The onus therefore fell on the supervising officer constantly to oversee all aspects of the Council's business, and in particular the education of the Works Committee.

26 A.D.O. to D.O., 9.5.58: Pop.14-8-22/12.
27 Information from A.D.O. C. Liddle, Vunadadir: the officer in charge of the training centre for clerks. The entrance standard is Grade IX, roughly equivalent to a reasonable primary education.
28 Clerk J.L. Agose, transferred to Ilimo Council. v. NA.41-3-10, for correspondence August-September 1958.
Since 1958 the supervising officer had been continually involved in Council affairs through the disputes between the Council and the Administration, especially the Agriculture Department, over the coffee scheme. In March, 1960 the A.D.O. was due to renew the registration of coffee blocks, a task which could well occupy six to twelve months. He was able to spare little time for occasional visits of inspection to the Ilimo Council based on Kokoda, where the clerk was in 1959 guilty of misappropriation of Council funds.

This problem of close supervision can be duplicated from a number of other Council areas. In Milne Bay the A.D.O. (L.G.) had not promoted the establishment of a single new council. It was necessary to place him in charge of the Patrol Post in Milne Bay, where the bulk of his time was taken up with agency functions, selling stamps, acting as Bank agent, dealing with native labour affairs, and so on. Treasury restrictions make it impossible to delegate these functions to a clerk. Although the wastefulness of this in terms of trained staff has been pointed out for some years — indeed the former S.N.A.O. has pressed for a high-calibre office cadre to staff outstations and relieve field officers of routine duties — the lack of positive direction and of inter-departmental liaison have so far frustrated all attempts at improvement.

The emphasis on council efficiency with concomitant close supervision appears to have set up a vicious circle: the council leans progressively more heavily on the supervising officer who as a consequence finds it progressively more difficult to make the council assume its responsibilities. The Hanuabada Council has from the beginning been considered weak by the Administration.

The Executive Officer (L.G.) however, interprets this as at least partially due to slackness or idleness by the Council's supervising officer. In June 1958 after an inspection he wrote that some of the blame must be ascribed to the fact that in the past Native Affairs staff had acted in a purely advisory capacity.

If strong and effective leadership is lacking then I consider it up to the District Officer and his staff to provide the necessary leader-

29 Fienberg memo. of 5.11.57 - comments on re-shaping the Ordinance.
ship and direction while bringing to the fore what latent leadership does exist. There is a need for stronger supervision as well as advice.30

Following this criticism the Council's activities improved. The 1959 Report showed that the works programme was 'well on the way to completion', and that had the Council been able to acquire land more readily, especially for its projected new Council House, the whole programme would have been completed. It is questionable, however, whether this was the result of a renewed spirit in the Council rather than of direction by the supervising officer determined to salvage his reputation - in view of the continuing difficulty to get a quorum for meetings, probably the latter.

A similar criticism applies to the Tolai Councils. Originally it was planned that after a period of intensive advice and supervision the councils would steadily assume control of their own affairs. In general this has not happened, even in routine matters. In October, 1958 the A.D.O. (L.G.) at Rabaul wrote urgently requesting a replacement full-time supervising officer for the Reimber-Livuan Councils. These Councils had for some months, May-November, been supervised by a Cadet; though until that time continuous supervision had been maintained. The Reimber Council had done nothing to carry out its 1958 works programme - in the opinion of the A.D.O. deliberately - and when chided for its failure to take action, replied that it was the officers' responsibility to initiate action and supervise the various projects until their completion.34

The Executive Committee of the Livuan Council was also inactive. 'The two councils require close and continuing supervision, such as only can be given by an officer residing there.'32 The A.D.O. claimed that because of native local government and the more complex pattern of administration the Gazelle Peninsula should have priority in staffing. This would be arguable if extra staff were involved in an expanding field of administration; but in

31 D.N.A. Report for 1959: NA.41-1-4; Comment 6.1.60.
32 A.D.O.(L.G.) to D.O., 22.10.58: Rabaul 14/11/6/29A.
fact they do much the same sort of work they were doing when the Councils began. (The writer found at the Rabaul Council House, which has an unusually efficient clerk, that the Births Register had not been kept up as is required – one of the simplest of routine tasks.) Between March and September 1959 an officer spent his full-time supervising the affairs of the Reimber-Livuan Councils, with the result that the works programmes were completed, though the Executive Committees were described as 'useless'. When supervision fell below this level, it was stated, the people complained of being neglected. The Director of Native Affairs commented that the 1959 report demonstrated the necessity for adequate guidance by capable officers even in those Councils which have been established many years, an opinion which perhaps exposes a neglect to analyse the type and degree of guidance which long established Councils are getting and should be getting. The whole reflects the influence on both Administration and natives of a longstanding paternalism.

(iv) The Inhibiting of Council Extension

One of the most important effects of this continuing supervisory strain on staff, particularly local government staff, has been its inhibiting of local government extension, both the establishment of new councils and the extension of existing councils.

Yet aside from the attitudes towards supervision, attitudes towards local government generally still present a problem. To take one example: the Baluan Council, Manus, has been extended with painful slowness since its establishment in 1951 to control the Paliau cult movement. The Baluan Council has from the beginning been an economically marginal unit; for this reason alone extension of the existing Council has been an urgent task. Reports from local field staff however, continually emphasised the social divisions obstructing extension, in view of the voluntary participation approach. The D.O. in February 1957 claimed

34 Ibid. A.D.O.(L.G.) to D.N.A., 1.10.59, NA.40-3-10.
36 See Ch.VI.
to be organizing an intensive campaign of instruction and propaganda to smooth out differences and induce a mood of co-operation. The Department later pressed for the inclusion of outstanding villages, especially on the northern side of Manus. A.D.O. Collins of the L.G. Section found, however, on a visit of inspection in May, 1960 that native local government had never been explained to these people, and that their reluctance to accept it could be attributed to their lack of understanding. He visited one village where the people had been said to be 100% against local government, but found them totally ignorant of its meaning. After a period of explanation they were 100% in favour of joining the Buluan Council. This indicates indifference on the part of the local field staff.

(v) The Attitudes of Senior Staff

The E.O.(L.G.) has remained convinced that the root cause of the unsatisfactory progress lies in the failure of Senior Field Staff to recognize Native Local Government as an essential tool in progressive administration. An additional factor of which councillors themselves complain, is the frequent transfer of officers: this was raised at the Madang Conference, where the representatives asked not only for greater continuity of supervising staff, but also 'that only suitable officers are posted to replace officers who have been working in council areas.'

As local government has extended, a lack of understanding and sympathy within the Administration has become correspondingly more obvious. In January 1959 the Administrator's Department issued its largest and most emphatic Memorandum on Native Local Government, the sole object of which was to ensure (a) that officers of all departments understood the elements of the policy; and (b) that they should realize the importance attached to the policy by the Administration. It reiterated that councils

---

37 D.O. to D.N.A., 5.2.57: 14/4/1-298. This dealt specifically with outstanding groups on Pak Island, east of Manus. The E.O.(L.G.) commented that this was the first direct approach to these people after six years - v. NA.42-3-5.
were Administration instrumentalities and not municipal bodies on the Australian pattern; that the primary functions of councils is to raise native living standards; and that through councils all departments should try to integrate development programmes at local area level - something which they have generally failed to do.41

Towards the end of 1959, however, a situation arose in the Marshall Lagoon area which emphasised that it was still imperative for Native Affairs to overcome indifference and improve the quality - as distinct from quantity - of supervision amongst its own officers.

The inaugural elections for the Marshall Lagoon Council had been improperly conducted by the Patrol Officer in charge. This was disclosed several months after the elections took place when the Department requested details. Subsequent investigations showed that no records of voting had been kept, that the elections had largely been conducted, unsupervised, by Station Police, and that at least two villages, Debanda and Mariagolo, had not been visited at all - the V.C. had simply been appointed Councillor by the Patrol Officer. Moreover, the appointment of councillors had never been confirmed by the D.O., as required by Regulations.42

The E.O. (L.G.) commented: 'Every rule seems to have been broken in conducting these elections and I doubt whether I have seen such a case of neglect of duty by any officer concerned with local government.'43

As a direct result of this case he summarised the shortcomings of the present pattern of supervision and suggested improvements, in a memorandum running to 3,500 words - an indication of the concern he felt and of the difficulties even then of making his voice heard.44

He was led to the conclusion that 'District Officers generally, fail to fill their proper role.' He attributed this to ignorance; a failure to adjust to area administration; inability to plan development programmes; a simple lack of interest; sheer inefficiency on the part of some;

41 See Appendix B, I.
43 Ibid., marginal comments.
and a lack of strong direction from the Department of Native Affairs:

Headquarters inspections show that the majority of District Officers are unfamiliar with such basic aspects of local government as estimates, layout and the function annual estimates have in achieving balanced developmental programmes ... \( ^{45} \)

This neglect reacted disastrously on junior officers supervising councils, whose work was either badly evaluated or totally ignored by their seniors; and this in turn made it impossible for Headquarters to assess the situation.

In view of the shortcomings of the D.O.s the E.O.(L.G.) considered that the only solution was to ensure that the best available officers were posted to local government - an allusion to his lack of choice - so that supervision at the Council level itself would be good. \( ^{46} \)

At the same time he maintained that the inefficiency of District Officers extended further than local government; the only solution would be a conference of District Officers at which they could be authoritatively informed of their duties as the delegates of the Director of Native Affairs. \( ^{47} \)

Instruction in local government could be simultaneously introduced. He further suggested that a properly staffed training section be set up to give adequate in-service training particularly to senior and non-specialist officers; and that specialist officers lose their specialist designation - A.D.O.(L.G.). These two last measures are clearly designed to break down the persisting notion 'that local government is a kind of secret society whose secrets are known only to officers who have local government supervision as their special responsibility.' \( ^{48} \)

---

\( ^{45} \) Ibid., p.2.
\( ^{46} \) Ibid., p.7.
\( ^{47} \) Ibid., p.7.
\( ^{48} \) Ibid., p.6.
APPENDIX G

COMPARATIVE STUDIES

I. Native Officials, Courts, and Councils in German New Guinea and the Mandated Territory - an Outline, 1885-1942.

(1) German Policy, Generally and Locally

Germany annexed north-eastern New Guinea in 1884 and its administration was entrusted under an Imperial Charter (Schutzbrief) of May 17th, 1885 to the Neu-Guinea Kompagnie. The Imperial Government took over the administration in 1899. In 1897 Dr. Albert Hahl, the Imperial Judge at Herbertshohe, had introduced a system of administration through native luluais or headmen. Originally they were supposed to be chosen from the more influential elders; they kept 10% of all head taxes they collected in lieu of salary, and carried out minor executive and judicial functions. The judicial functions were important: they could adjudicate in matters of native custom involving values up to 25 marks or 10 fathoms of tambu shell.¹

After the Imperial Government assumed control, the luluai system was extended generally. Broadly, the Germans throughout their Empire paid sympathetic attention to native policy only after Dernberg became the first Colonial Minister in 1907.² Up to that time indigenous institutions had been roughly subordinated to the achievement of economic development through company plantations. Townsend remarks that in the German colonial empire administrative control was not thoroughly established until 1906; and Vincent Harlow sums up the German colonial record as 'twenty years of thoroughly bad administration, followed by seven years of great improvement'.³ But in New Guinea this division does not appear to apply, for Hahl, who had already originated the luluai system, was the Governor from 1902 to 1914.

² H. Brunschwig, L'Expansion Allemande Outre-Mer, pp.166-72.
The German effort was concentrated in the areas of greatest soil fertility, dense native populations, and accessibility, for it was in these areas that plantation activity had been intense. These conditions applied in particular in the Gazelle Peninsula, which in addition had had extensive and varied contact with Europeans: it is estimated, for example, that in 1883 about 900 Tolai natives were taken to work on the Fiji and Queensland plantations. The English Methodist and German Catholic Missions were also established in the Peninsula in the 1880's.

(ii) Traditional Units and Political 'Unions'

Traditionally amongst the Tolai native leaders were only the heads of matrilineage sections; but the availability of guns helped native leaders to strengthen their authority and assisted the extension of political units. This may have had some bearing on German policy, for the luluals had more extensive jurisdiction than was ever officially given natives in Papua. In 1901 some dissatisfaction was expressed with the luluals' administration of justice; but it was stated that they were indispensable in the settled parts of the colony and that their appointment would be continued. Supervision was vested not only in government officials but in company administrators, lay brothers of the Catholic mission, settlers and senior native police. By 1904 the cooperation of the luluals was said to be commendable.

It would appear from later German remarks that the luluals were not, from the beginning, intended to be restricted to their traditional or pre-colonial units. In 1913 the Administrator said that the purpose of appointing them 'was in the nature of an experiment to co-ordinate the low statused natives within a specified district to undertake obligations and to co-operate for the benefit of their racial kindred'. Thus there was at an early stage a

4 T.S. Epstein, A Model of Economic Growth, p.4.
5 Ibid., p.6; also T.S. Epstein, Private Capital Formation amongst the Tolai, p.4.
7 German Report 1912-3 (tr. Thomson) p.170; cf. Rowley's comments (Aust. in German New Guinea, p.213) relating this policy to 'tiny European officialdoms'.
conception of the luluais as consolidators of traditional units.

From this developed the concept of political 'unions' under the luluais, as a conscious attempt to bring villages over a relatively wide area together. This was extended from New Britain to the coastal areas of the mainland in 1905, though not without some misgivings, for it was felt that cultural differences might make the system unsuitable. In 1906-7 the system of unions was extended further, to New Ireland and to Bougainville. From Kieta the whole east coast of Bougainville, comprising 178 villages 'with abundant population', was organized into 10 unions. In some areas, such as the vicinity of Madang, difficulty was experienced in forming even small unions, and luluais were appointed to individual villages. Elsewhere, some of the unions tended to fragment; additional luluais were then appointed for the smaller units.

(iii) The Status of Native Officials

The Germans were under no illusions about the respect accorded the luluais and they made every effort to support them with the threat of force and other sanctions. The traditional leaders were in fact often regarded as being 'the greatest enemies of the Chiefs and of the Europeans'. The luluais were given as assistants officials known as tultuls, who were originally interpreters and messengers, and were generally more Europeanised than the luluais. Both the luluais and tultuls would appear to have been non-statutory appointments; though in the Madang area in 1908, for example, two policemen were appointed as tultuls to each luluai, 'to strengthen his influence in the village'; the object of this was to facilitate road-making. Generally, the only government employee in each village was the medical tultul who, after a brief training in first aid, received

8 German Report 1904-5, p.70.
9 German Report 1906-7, p.4.
10 Rowley, loc.cit., p.775; German Report 1907-8, p.7.
12 German Report 1907-8, p.7; Rowley, loc.cit., p.781.
13 Ibid.
a salary of 20 marks a year; this usually gave him a special status in the village. Therefore, in every village in the controlled areas there were three natives recognized by the Administration as having particular administrative and judicial functions and responsibilities. This impressed a Papuan R.M., G.H. Nicholls, who visited German territory on the Waria river in 1911; he compared it with Papuan administration through a single official, and implicitly favoured the German system (as he put it) of administration through 'a council of three' in every village, who took it in turns to report at the government station monthly. He thought that the triumvirate consisted of a chief constable (luluai) with two sub-constables, one selected by the people (tultul), the other by the government (medical tultul).5

(iv) Australian Use of Native Officials

According to Rowley, when the Australian Military Administration took over in 1914 it ignored, or did not grasp, the concept of political 'unions', and regarded the luluai purely as a village official, perhaps by analogy with the Papuan V.C. Inevitably, the Military 'did not give a great deal of attention to long-term intentions in native administration'.6 After the Territory had become an Australian Mandate, the civil Administration gave statutory recognition to luluais, and to paramount chiefs (luluais) with jurisdiction over larger areas; but the latter were given no powers beyond those of the luluais.7 More importantly, statutory recognition gave them functions, primarily policing the Native Regulations, similar to those of the Papuan V.C., and in particular by default abrogated the judicial functions which had been recognized by the Germans, an omission criticised by Col. Ainsworth in 1924.8 Inevitably, the luluais continued to adjudicate, surreptitiously.9 Under the Australian Administration the central constabulary retained their functions in the administration,
and in some respects determined the attitudes of local officials, for they tended to stay for protracted periods at the one station; their local knowledge often induced officials to rely on them inordinately.

(v) Acculturation and Political Stirring

It must be emphasised that the Mandate administration was quite inexperienced. What it did resulted from preconceptions, prejudices, and pressures, rather than from any carefully thought out plan or philosophy of native administration. Amongst the Tolai of the Gazelle Peninsula acculturation had begun to quicken. Numbers of them had served on ships out of Rabaul, and the Catholic mission in particular had given some of them sufficient education to compare their condition with that of visiting negro seamen, for example.

In January 1929 the entire work force of Rabaul, numbering over 2,000 natives, went on strike without warning. This had been well organized in complete secrecy. The first intimation of it to Europeans was the arrival of large numbers of natives at Catholic and Methodist mission stations. The immediate reaction amongst the European population was alarm and incredulity followed by anger; but alarm was uppermost. The Rabaul Times screamed 'mutiny'. A prime element in European alarm was the discovery that natives from different districts could forget their traditional antipathies and unite in what was interpreted as primarily an anti-European movement. The Rabaul Times wrote that

the white population is in a precarious situation, for we find ourselves mistaken in our belief that the individual native is incapable, either by reason of lack of mental development, or mental indolence, to concentrate sufficiently in any matter which needs careful thought.

20 Private information, A.D.O. J.S. McLeod, who became a Cadet in New Guinea in 1936; while he was at Gasmata in 1946 there were more than 80 constabulary attached to the station. Bumbu in Hogbin's study, Ch.V, 1 supra, maintained his tyranny over Busama with the connivance of the constabulary. Police were in sole charge of patrol camps - N.G. Report 1939-40, p.129.


22 Rabaul Times, 4.1.1929.
The Europeans were so certain that the natives were incapable of such combination that they suspected a mastermind behind the movement. The Administrator, General Wisdom, hinted darkly of 'Bolshevists, Communists, or other firebrands'. Native demands were in fact entirely economic: they claimed that Europeans had taken their land and were taking gold out of the country, and that in view of this they wanted higher wages.

The Commission of Enquiry found that there had been no outside aid, and that the strike had been organized by Suma Suma, the master of a Melanesian Company schooner who was described as having 'extraordinary intelligence and ability', and by Sergeant-Major Rami of the Rabaul Police (the entire force had participated in the strike). Thirty-three natives who were all described as ringleaders were given gaol sentences of 2-3 years.

(vi) Native Councils

The European population sought repression of native aspirations; but the Administration and the missions had already considered the possibility of consultation with the natives — indeed councils and courts functioned in the Morobe area under the influence of the Lutheran mission — and they now sought an institution which would serve as an observable safety valve. This was found in the tene kivungs or informal councils, which were formalized and officially recognized in 1935-6. Like the Hanuabada council in Papua these kivungs had no statutory authority.

23 Meeting of Citizens' Association 4.1.29; statement by Wisdom 5.1.29 - Rabaul Times, 11.1.29.
26 The Rabaul Times hinted that all the Europeans were thrashing their deserters (11.1.1929); and the Citizens' Association persuaded the Administrator not to send natives to Australia for technical education because of the ideas they would pick up from 'the artisan class' (Rabaul Times, 25.1.29, 15.2.29). There had already been an Administration-Mission Conference in 1927 which considered the question of consultation with the natives.
In the Morobe area councils and courts had been operating continuously since German times, though strongly under the influence of the Lutheran mission. (CP 141, AQ.840/1/3).
and no revenue. From the Administration's viewpoint, however, the prime function of the kivung was judicial. The experiment was first tried on Matupi island:

... a council of six influential men of the village, selected by the people, with the luluais and tultuls, adjust matters of a purely domestic nature, such as damage to gardens by pigs, payment of debts of shell-money or money, matrimonial disputes and other minor incidents disturbing to the peace of the community.  

The system extended to Nodup at the natives' request. The Administration was anxious to 'hasten slowly', but the natives' desire for councils outran caution. By 1937 councils were functioning in 14 'groups of villages' in the Rabaul sub-district; and by 1938 the scope of the councils' discussions had expanded. Originally their work was confined almost entirely to the settlement of disputes; the Administration felt it impossible to extend their judicial functions, because they showed personal bias. By the time the war broke out the work of the kivung was beginning to create interest even in Australia; but the Administration was adamant in its determination not to be rushed into decisions which might shatter the harmony of native society:

On the whole the natives are singularly fortunate, for in a world rent by the calamities of war, they enjoy that tranquillity of ignorance and backwardness which is denied to the more civilized peoples of the world. It is the aim of the Administration while the war lasts to preserve this condition as far as possible.

28 Police Commandant W.B. Ball revealed this in 1940: 'After mature consideration ... he gave permission for the election of the councillors.' Rabaul Times, 13.12.1940.
(vii) The Implications for Local Government

During the 1930s, however, rapid social change had already overtaken the Tolai. The young men had traditionally been bound to their lualua (matrilineage section leader) largely through economic ties. But as money became available they conceived the idea of pooling contributions to buy and operate trucks; only the young men understood mechanics, so that 'for the first time in Tolai history young men became important and deciding factors in native enterprise'.

At roughly the same time - about 1934 - the Methodist mission established youth clubs which quickly became foci for economic and social aspirations, and were known as Young Men's Kivungs. The young men wanted to reform their culture in some respects to bring it more into line with the desirable values of European society; they wanted their neighbours to build better houses and to send their children to school. Because of their vigour and their emphasis on Western activities and values the Y.M.K. were generally frowned on by the official kivungs and especially by the paramount lualua, such as Ephraim Tami at Matupi. Without any clear objects the Y.M.K. raised money by digging wild fowls' eggs, putting up houses, and so on. They generally met once or twice a month and discussed a variety of matters, usually concerned with the raising of living levels. By the war most of them had bank accounts - the Matupi Y.M.K. is said to have had about £300 at the beginning of the war.

After the war the young men were no longer quite so young, and the official kivungs and the Y.M.K. appear to have been merged under their influence. They were still functioning at the time native local government was introduced; indeed, the two institutions overlapped, for the Matupi and Nodup kivungs, for example, continued to operate a cafe until 1954. As informal organizations they were largely unshackled by the Administration; the attitude of some of them towards the Administration became very independent, even truculent - in 1949 their judicial functions were suspended. Difficulties were envisaged when local government, implying closer control, was introduced.

34 Ibid., p. 13. Also personal information John Vuia, M.L.C., one of the founders of the Matupi Y.M.K.
35 Oral information, John Vuia and Matupi councillors. Also D.D.S. and N.A. to Administrator, 23.5.1949. DS 14/3/15.

* "UNA MAI" (= you come) CAFE WAS IN fact STARTED by the S.M.O.B. wife after connection with MATUPI, NODUP marriage of the RAKAVAI L.G.C. It was not a French project.
II. Native Administration in the British Solomon Islands.

(i) The Social Situation: Traditional Leadership

Problems for administration posed by physical factors and by highly segmented societies were very similar to those in Papua. The dominant social unit was the exogamous matrilineal clan.1 In the Western Solomons (e.g. the Shortlands, Choiseul) there appear to have been forms of chieftainship; chiefs built up and maintained extensive alliances through marriage.2 More study has been devoted to the eastern islands, where the pattern of leadership approximated closely to that of coastal Papua. Here personal qualities were most important: by displays of energy in the gardens (and traditionally, through bravery in war) a man could build up a following; but this rarely extended beyond an administrative sub-district.3 There was often a division of functions amongst ceremonial, war, and religious leaders.4

In a few places a strong principle of hereditary leadership attached to one clan amongst a number of others - e.g. San Cristoval (Araha clan) and Sa'a (Malaita). On San Cristoval the chief of Arosi village imposed fines, and was

1 C.S. Belshaw, Native Politics in the Solomon Islands, Pacific Affairs, XX, 1947, p.188.
3 The best example is the ngwane'inoto (secular leader) of Malu'u, described by H.I. Hogbin, Experiments in Civilization; see Knibbs, op.cit., p.53.
4 W.G. Ivens, Melanesians of the South-East Solomon Islands: the Lau chiefs, N.E. Malaita. In Fataleka Russell described as 'unique' the balance between hereditary authority and individual ability (generally only within a clan) - T. Russell, The Fataleka of Malaita, Oceania, XXI, 1950, pp.1-13. C.H. Allan claims that this division of authority was not recognized by the Administration - The Marching Rule Movement in the B.S.I.F., (Dip. Anthorp., Cantab.), p.22.
the war leader and often also the priest;\(^5\) on the other hand, the Sa'a chief was primarily ceremonial (although he could impose tabus and exact fines for their contravention), and behaviour was regulated in the main by 'group sentiment' rather than by a native authority.\(^6\)

These areas of limited hereditary authority later assumed administrative importance; for it was believed that they represented survivals of a system which had existed more generally, and which had been destroyed by culture contact and by indiscriminate government appointments.\(^7\)

The Solomons suffered earlier, more intensive, and more prolonged labour recruiting than did Papua: it began about 1860 and did not end (to Fiji) until 1910. This was long believed to have been the major factor in breaking down traditional leadership.\(^8\)

(ii) Initial Administration through Headmen

A British Protectorate was proclaimed over the southern islands in 1893 - under the Western Pacific High Commission - and this was expanded to its current boundaries by 1900. The first Resident Commissioner, C.M. Woodford, took up residence in 1897 (at Tulagi), and district stations were set up on Gizo (1899), the Shortlands (1906), Malaita (1909), Guadalcanal (1914), San Cristoval and Ysabel (1918).\(^9\)

Woodford's administration was extremely rudimentary. He had some station police, sometimes supplemented by local

---

\(^5\) C.E. Fox, The Threshold of the Pacific, pp.296-300; Fox believed the chiefly clan to be immigrants (Elliott Smith's red-haired Sun worshippers).

\(^6\) Ivens, op.cit., pp.114-5; R.H. Codrington, The Melanesians, pp.50-2, earlier described the Sa'a system, as an atypical example.

\(^7\) Moorhouse Report, January 1929, Cmd. 3248, p.19.

\(^8\) Brit. Colonial Reports, 1938, No.1908 (B.S.I.P.), p.3; all kanakas were not repatriated from Queensland until 1907 - C.H.B.E., (1933), VII Pt.1, pp.287, 501. It was amongst Queensland labourers that the South Seas Evangelical Mission began; this functioned largely on the self-contained 'presbytery' principle.

Europeans, together with a small boat in which to visit areas in which murders or feuding were reported. Forceful and rather indiscriminate punitive measures continued in the Solomons long after they had ceased in Papua.

Until about 1920 regular administration at the village level hardly existed. The D.O.s in the districts were largely left to their own devices, with a small force of police. They adopted much the same device as in Papua, appointing apparently prominent men as village policemen. The similarity of the problem has been emphasised by Ivens:

There were no paramount chiefs with whom to confer, no council of elders in the various places, who could be entrusted with the establishment of law and order.

Inevitably, the tendency was to appoint men as village police (in native eyes, generally giving them government support) with whom it was easiest to liaise—that is, those with some outside experience and a knowledge of English. Such men often had no traditional authority. This tendency was accentuated after 1922, when the first Native Administration Regulation, providing for village and district headmen, was introduced. Codrington had noted in 1891 that the process began with traders, who naturally looked for a chief with whom to deal—'his consideration among his own people is of course enormously enhanced by what white people make of him'—and this had been continued by the naval commanders, who sought particular men who could be made responsible for the conduct of their peoples. He believed that there was nothing regrettable

---

10 A.I. Hopkins, In the Isles of King Solomon, pp.234-7.
11 Moorhouse (1929, cit.sup., p.11) reported that such expeditions were 'regretfully common'—even in 1927 naval vessels were called in by the Administration.
12 W.G. Ivens, The Island Builders of the Pacific, p.86. The Native Tax Regulation, applying to males between 16 and 60, was introduced in 1920; measures to collect it prompted a statutory structure of native administration (1922).
13 Allan, op.cit., p.19; Ivens, Island Builders..., p.86.
14 Codrington, op.cit., p.46. Of course this can be repeated from other segmentary societies coming under colonial rule in the same period—see L.S.B. Leakey, Mau Mau and the Kikuyu, p.36; L. Gray Cowan, Local Government in West Africa, pp.18-9.
about this; but Ivens complained that as control shifted to the government, respect for the true chiefs, and thereby internal sanctions, broke down, with consequent disorder—the very thing which the appointment of headmen was designed to prevent.15

(iii) The Trend to Native Authorities

Malaita is by far the most populous island in the Solomons (probably 40-50,000 people during its colonial history). Not until D.O. W.R. Bell arrived in 1915 did effective administration really begin there. Bell was murdered while collecting tax in 1927; the official enquiry (the Moorhouse Report) indicated that the native leaders probably resented any government intrusion; but it also pointed to the maladministration (as it believed) of the 1922 Regulation. Headmen had been appointed precipitately, and in most instances they were not acceptable to the people.16

The basic problem with which Moorhouse grappled was that of introducing an indirect, traditionally-founded element into administration. He acknowledged that social conditions almost drove him to the conclusion that 'the directest of direct rule' was the only solution;17 but as Cameron had shown, and as the contemporaneous Hilton Young Report re-affirmed, this could and should be avoided.18 The presumption of a pre-contact system of hereditary chieftainship provided the rationale for indirect administration. Moorhouse recommended that much greater care be exercised in selecting headmen, and that D.O.s consult with them more regularly and refrain from punitive police action.20

15 Ivens, Island Builders..., pp.86-7.
17 Ibid., p.21.
20 Ibid., p.21. Moorhouse recognized the strong village influence of the mission teachers, especially those of the S.S.E.M.; he regarded it as inevitable that the teachers should try to arrogate temporal authority, but justified this on the ground that co-operation between Administration and missions was essential.
During the 1930s strenuous efforts were made to appoint men who had some following in their communities; but non-traditional criteria (constabulary experience and familiarity with judicial procedure) were still applied in their selection. Though it was still a system of very direct administration, in important respects it was a great advance on that in Papua: the headmen had relatively extensive jurisdiction (on Malaita traditional leaders rarely extended real sway over more than 150 people), and this in effect meant some confederation of parishes; moreover, the headmen were the official executive as well as police agents of government, and had important judicial functions. Although the headmen relied heavily on Administration support, they were men of considerable authority compared with the Papuan V.C.; their pay averaged £12 p.a. Some, like Hogbin’s Maekali, had considerable local influence, and in their official capacity tried to work with the traditional elders. Nevertheless, they were Administration appointees, so that a reserve of resentment was bound to build up ('Maekalism' was loathed on Malaita after the war); and abuses of police powers seem to have continued to some extent.

Thus, during the 1930s native passivity changed; there were demands for higher wages and for a voice in the Advisory Council. The Administration had regarded simple

23 Hogbin, ibid.; also his Native Councils and Courts in the British Solomon Islands, Oceania, XIV, 1943, pp.260, 269. He claimed that traditional leadership had virtually disappeared in the coastal areas.
25 Ibid.
26 D.O. Malu'u to D.C. Malaita, 28.6.1952, Malu'u 68/52. Maekali nevertheless still had a loyal local following.
administration through headmen as only temporary; and in 1940 moves began to introduce institutions on Native Authority lines. The principal object was to unite customary and Administration law, through statutory native bodies having some traditional representative base and gradually working under Administration procedures and surveillance. The anthropologist, Hogbin, had in 1939 come out strongly in favour of native councils and courts as 'a return to the solid foundations of the past'. This carried on the twin ideas that to govern themselves primitive peoples must have opportunities for practice, and that the institutions through which they are governed should not be alien.

The question of alien laws was clearly most important; therefore most attention was paid the embryonic native courts. 1940-2 was a period of experiment. The various D.O.s set up court systems on a trial basis, adapted to their own areas and largely to their own conceptions; reports and suggestions were then called for. All the officers were agreed that an urgent need existed for such courts. In the Shortlands the D.O. stated that the chiefs had always had judicial powers under native custom; he envisaged the official courts as developments from this, revolving around the sub-district chiefs. Close supervision would be necessary, primarily to avoid excessive administrative review and thereby native discouragement. Headquarters rejected any suggestion that D.O.s should be court members. In the New Georgia area ten sub-district courts were functioning, 'composed of elders chosen by the people' and convened by the district headmen. The D.O. Gizo believed it essential that the courts should have jurisdiction over minor statutory offences as well as native

29 B.S.I.P. Report, 1931, cit.sup., p.4: 'There is no form of Municipal or Local Government... at present.' My italics.
30 Belshaw, loc.cit., p.190: 'Local legal and legislative organisations of extraordinary educative value'. Cf. Hilton Young Report, cit.sup. p.78: 'responsibility itself is the most valuable educator'; and Ch.II, supra.
33 a/D.O. Shortlands to Sec. Gov., 10.3.1941, Honiara 49/19 - marginal comments.
custom - 'it is desirable to bind the two together'. In Ysabel the members of each court numbered five, being the district headman, and the heads of the major clans. The D.O. here stressed the basic principle, warmly approved by Headquarters:

It is particularly important that offences against the communal services section of the Native Administration Reg. should be cognizable by the native courts, for it would mean that a dirty village would be punishable as an offence against their own people and not merely as part of the general prejudices of an alien administration.

This frank recognition of the native viewpoint marked the approach off from the ultimately assimilatory one in Papua. The Resident Commissioner applied for a statutory system of native courts, because the natives had reached the stage where an outlet was needed for their 'political aspirations', and the establishment of native courts was 'fundamental to any system of native administration founded on principles generally accepted within the Empire'.

The result was the Native Courts Regulation (Cap.30/1942). Until 1960 the constitution of these courts was little altered, with the sub-district headmen and elders - later councillors - represented (section 3 provides for customary constitution). Courts are individually established by warrant. In 1944 native courts could deal with criminal cases punishable by a fine of up to £5 or imprisonment for one month, and with civil cases involving property worth up to £10. By the 1950s these limits had generally been extended to six months or £20 (criminal) and £50 in civil cases (£100 in land cases).

From about 1940 non-statutory councils also functioned, on a sub-district basis. Like the courts, these were originally built around the district headmen as the agents

---

34 D.O. Gizo to Sec. Gov., 10.5.1941, Hon. 49/19.
35 D.O. Ysabel to Sec. Gov., 7.2.1941, Hon. 49/19.
36 Resident Commissioner to High Commissioner Western Pacific, 30.4.41, Hon. 49/19.
37 Hogbin, Oceania, XIV, loc.cit., p.262.
38 Pro forma Court Warrant, Sect. 4.
of government representing confederations of traditional units. These councils were permitted, unofficially, to levy funds, and to some extent to administer their own medical and other services; the Gela council managed a branch of the Government Trade Store.39 In the Western Solomons the courts and council system went ahead continuously and smoothly; real leadership there was relatively easy to locate.40 The Native Administration Regulation, 1947, made provision for statutory sub-district councils; this was regarded as a transitional stage to larger councils, until social change should break down 'excessive parochialism'.41

(iv) Cultist Disruption and Administrative Adaptation

Over the central and southern Solomons, however, the smooth transition to forms of local government was disrupted by the war and by the cultist Marching Rule (Masinga) movement. This appears to have derived, not only from the usual social and political frustration and imbalance leading to cargo cult, but also from the struggle for allegiance between the traditional or quasi-traditional leaders (often linked with the missions, especially the S.S.E.M.) and those recognized by government. Hogbin had recognized that in the Christian areas the council members were often not accepted as leaders.42 Allan saw this as the basic reason for the failure of the early councils; he found that in To'obaeta (north Malu'u) only 31.25% of council members had any claim to leadership by descent.43 On Malaita the councils appear to have been set up hurriedly, as control mechanisms during wartime stress.44

Before the war unrealistic ideas about self-government had been spread in the Guadalcanal-Florida-Malaita area by disciples of a Melanesian Mission pastor.45 The seed

39 Belshaw, loc.cit., p.190; see Notes and Instructions to Native Administrations in the British Solomon Islands, Oceania, XVI, 1945, pp.61-9.
40 G.S. Belshaw, Island Administration in the S.W. Pacific, pp.118-9; B.S.I.P. Report, 1948, p.28.
42 Hogbin, Oceania, XIV, loc.cit., p.262.
44 Ibid., p.87; Marquand, op.cit., I, p.12.
45 Allan, ibid., pp.29, 76.
DIVISIONS ON MALAITA
REVEALED BY MARCHING RULE

1-9: Areas under Head Chiefs
Koio: Language areas.
therefore probably existed. But the movement really began in the Labour Corps on Guadalcanal; the influence of American troops was marked there. Rumours spread, on usual cargo cult lines, that the Americans were to take over government and to provide vast quantities of free 'cargo'. On the other hand, the leadership aspect was important: a Guadalcanal headman named Vouza, much decorated and favoured by the Administration, sought the paramount chieftainship of the island.\footnote{Belshaw, loc.cit., pp.190-1.} This idea seems to have been taken up by the non-government leadership, beginning in the backward and little patrolled area of Ariari in south Malaita. As it emerged, the striking feature of the movement was the revelation on Malaita of a new leadership and of unrealized political alignments. The movement rejected white over-rule and tried to set up its own pan-island government. Its most remarkable feature was the organizational accomplishment of this within twelve months; for the first time the ten fundamental linguistic-ethnological divisions were revealed to the Administration.\footnote{B.S.I.P. Report, 1949-50, p.47; Malaita Annual Report, 1947, Auki, typescript, pp.3-5.}

The movement set up its own councils and collected funds. The Administration tried to co-operate (meeting of 'Head Chiefs' with Resident Commissioner, 26.12.1946) in order to canalise the positive economic energies into useful directions; but when independent courts were set up and the coercive police and military aspects became obvious, the Administration realized that some suppression was necessary. In September, 1947 the principal Head Chiefs were arrested; but rifts had already appeared between the extremists in the north, and the other Chiefs.\footnote{Malaita report, ibid., p.8; Marquand, op.cit., I, p.14 (Marquand was Malu'u D.O. at this time).}

The ultimate success of the Administration in dealing with Marching Rule lay in its refusal to abandon positive measures, and in its willingness to act on a realization of past mistakes and native grievances. The political impulse to the movement, in other words, was regarded as legitimate.\footnote{Belshaw, loc.cit., pp.192-3; 'welcome ambitions for a higher economic and political status'; also Marquand, ibid., II, p.19; IV, p.28.} In accordance with native leanings, the numbers of appointed village headmen were rapidly reduced.
after the war; moreover, the criteria for the selection of district headmen were changed - instead of being ex-policemen, they were chosen after the war for 'intrinsic merit, education, powers of leadership, and their status in the social system'. After most councils were reconstituted (post-1952), the numbers of district headmen were also quite rapidly reduced, with the ultimate object of their ceasing to be central government agents and becoming employees of the councils.

Particularly on Malaita, the Administration went to great lengths to compromise with the dissidents. Between 1947 and 1950 attempts were made to re-establish the sub-district councils; but the arrest of the nine Head Chiefs had not broken the movement, which had formed a hard core known as the Federal Council. The result was that official local government was boycotted.

This Federal Council consisted of a number of influential men who met occasionally in Kwara'a'e. The Council wanted one 'big man' recognized, a fixed high monthly wage, and its own flag: 'the latent aim was complete independence for the island'.

The Administration had already recognized this centralizing tendency, which had been conspicuously revealed on Malaita, more generally. In 1950 the Resident Commissioner had promised the Advisory Council that native councils for each district would be introduced.

---

51 Headmen's conference, 1952; address by a/Res. Comm. P. Hughes, item 3. Numbers were reduced from 166 in 1950 to 106 in 1957 - Allan, ibid. Headmen's conferences were held annually at this time, concurrently with D.C.'s conferences. They constituted a kind of informal native advisory council - South Pacific, IV, 11, 1950, p.209.
52 D.C. Malaita (Russell) recap. to Chief Sec., W.P.H.C., 22.10.1954, Confidential F.101/9/5. Also councils partly took over from headmen on San Cristoval - district report, 1947, typescript p.4.
53 D.C. Malaita, mem., ibid.
54 High Comm. to Sec. State, No.589/52, 24.10.1952.
(v) District Councils

The intention to set up such a district council in Malaita was announced in September, 1951; but there was a good deal of uneasiness about it. The acting High Commissioner felt that the application of this Kenya precedent might be difficult because of Melanesian parochialism, and he thought that they should concentrate on improving the efficiency of the sub-district councils. But eventually political considerations were seen to be overriding; in 1952 the High Commissioner acknowledged that setting up the district councils first (most smaller councils were still barely functioning) was "putting the cart before the horse"; but political pressures made it essential.

On Malaita the establishment of an island council had to anticipate the statute. The M.R. Head Chiefs were released from prison in 1950, but when they showed moderate inclinations were remorselessly abandoned by their former supporters. It did not pay to be pro-Administration. The Malaita district council was eventually convened on 29th July 1952; but preparations for it roused the extremists to the point where violence was threatened to Malu'u government station. Clearly the district council and the Federal Council could not co-exist. The High Commissioner then proposed to both organisations that they merge: the Administration went to extraordinary lengths to reach a compromise with the Federal Council. It was agreed that a new council of 41 members would include only ten official members, that the new council be known as the Malaita Council and be permitted to have its own flag, and that any 'big man' they nominated would be recognized as President if he took an oath of allegiance, with the possibility of his nomination to the Protectorate Advisory Council.

55 a/High Comm. to Res. Comm., No. 16 (Confidential), 13.9.1951.
57 D.O. Malu'u to D.C. Auki, 28.6.1952, Malu'u 68/52. The one exception was a North Lau chief, who retained considerable authority: probably traditional reasons for this. D.C. to D.O. Malu'u, 13.9.1955, Auki M.50/3.
This was approved by the Secretary for State. The High Commissioner looked forward to 'an increasing measure of autonomy' in native local government; but he insisted that initially it be made quite clear to the Malaita Council that it must accept its law and order, tax, and executive responsibilities. The opening of the first meeting on 29th January 1953 marked the giving of official form to a unity which the Malaitans had achieved for themselves. Within 20 months the council had submitted 66 resolutions and recommendations to the High Commissioner.

The Administration felt that, by retaining some element of nominated members (generally district headmen) it was both enabling liaison between central and local government without the direct intervention of European officers, and also cramping fissiparous tendencies in extremist areas (e.g. Ariari, which tried to form its separate council in 1954). A major difficulty was that of working down to the sub-districts. It was hoped that the steady development of the re-constituted native courts would reduce the tendency

58 Russell memo. of 22.10.1954, cit.sup.
60 Res. Comm. to High Comm., 28.11.1952, F.10/25/6. Notes on discussion between D.C. Malaita, High Comm., Res. Comm., 27.12.1952, Govt. House, Honiara - Confidential. Here it was agreed that the new council should have the full powers conferred by the N.A.R., and that the Govt. Headmen be the executive arms of the council. A recrudescence of M.R., e.g. illegal drilling, was to be discouraged, but prosecution was to be avoided.
Native delegates met on 6-7.11.1952 (Minutes, Auki M.50/2) and agreed to new council, but rejected offer of an Advisory Council seat for their 'big man': continuing separatism. The pseudo-customary bias, basic to the Federal Council, continued: the 'big man' was to be presented with tafuli'ae (shell money, see Hogbin) by all 'lines' on Malaita. The prime object of the council was 'to make good laws about custom' for the people.
61 Russell memo. of 22.10.1954, cit.sup.
to unsupervised judicial activities by councillors. In addition, efforts were made to link the headmen and councillors in sub-district committees.

The district councils generally were given statutory form by Native Administration Regulation 40/1953, which consolidated provisions for the appointment of headmen and the constitution of councils, together with their several powers and duties. The most striking aspect of its implementation, compared with the Papuan system, has continued to be the socio-political emphasis on island integration. This has brought the coast and hill peoples together. Councils may meet only twice a year (Sect. 16) so that the Papuan restrictions do not exist. Councillors often come together for a week at meeting times; councils provide centres with dormitories. This allows informal discussion which is probably more valuable than the formal settings. The approach has been quite different from that in Papua: forms of integration are not a prerequisite for a council, but result from a joint assumption of responsibilities. Correspondingly, executive expectations are not set so high for individual councils as in Papua; this has allowed, for example, for the setting up of a council and court on Sikaiana, which has a resident population of only 250.

(vi) Administrative Recognition of Local Government and Political Incentives

Because field staff take it for granted that councils and courts are a normal part of progressive administration, councils are not executively on trial. This means that

63 D.C. to Res. Comm., 6.2.1953, Auki M.50/3; D.C. to Prot. Sec., 22.10.54, Hon.F.101/9/5, Confidential.

64 Malaita Minutes, Jan. 1954; D.C.'s comments, Auki M.50/3. The operation of the committees has been uneven. In north Lau, where relatively strong traditional leadership survives, the divisions which appeared elsewhere between headmen and councillors were mitigated through the committee. In 1960 this consisted of the headman (also Court President), with 3 councillors, plus 8 men selected by these four (information, Salana Ga'a, Mariano Kelesi). The committees are expected to submit proposals to the council.

65 Warrant, Aug. 1955, Hon.F.101/20/9. The court had previously functioned at Administration discretion, imposing maximum penalty of 5/- fine. 51 cases were heard, 1953-5, fines averaging 5/- to 10/-.
executive responsibility can be gradually built up as socio-political integration develops, in a way which has been impossible in Papua. Guadalcanal posed rather similar problems to Malaita, with severe traditional and M.R. rifts. The Marau-Haumba maintained its own small system, a legacy of M.R. influence, until in 1958 former M.R. leaders from Malaita persuaded it to join the Guadalcanal council. A nativistic politico-economic movement continued in the area, led by a visionary named Moro; but by sympathy and assistance, particularly in the economic sphere, the D.C. was hopeful that all its aspirations and activities could ultimately be guided into the council. He was frankly in agreement with its incentives:

I cannot avoid a sense of wonder at the placidity of the Solomon Islander under conditions that in any other country I have worked in would be cause for grave security concern - racial differentiation in living standards, poor wages and working conditions, lack of welfare services, agricultural and economic frustration, insecurity of land tenure, breakdown of custom, quasi-urbanization in Honiara, the emergence of the educated 'new ones', etc.67

This recognition of the relative backwardness of the Solomons - which also applies to Papua but goes largely unrecognized - creates an atmosphere of understanding and compromise which tends to be lacking in Papua. This does not mean that the councils are allowed to become mere political 'talking shops'. This same D.C. told the Guadalcanal council frankly that the government only helped those who helped themselves (with particular reference to a road in the north-west): 'if Guadalcanal people worked hard to help the island to go ahead...they could be the wealthiest in the Solomons; but they did not work, they only complained'.68 Within nine months the road had been

66 Guadalcanal Report, SF 173 (Secret), April–June 1958. This is the eastern segment of the island, with the S.E. 'weather coast'.


68 Minutes, Guadalcanal council, March 1960 (attended by writer), item 9.
completed. Because of the lack of central pressures and supervision relative to Papua, it is probable that more responsibility is thrown on the councils themselves to produce results; there appears to be a greater awareness amongst natives (probably linked with the political emphasis) that their own initiative means the difference between progress and stagnation.

(vii) Problems in Councils and Courts

In 1959-60, as the councils became more strongly established, central government's surveillance began to increase. This was particularly so with resolutions and recommendations: the councils have more broadly defined powers than in Papua. Sect.18 allows them to legislate 'in respect of any matters affecting purely native administration' within their district. The policy provision for 'recommendations' permits latitude; but in 1959 central government began to examine by-laws for infringements of existing legislation. The Protectorate Secretary said that with increasing sophistication 'bush lawyers' could take advantage of overlap;^70 the Attorney-General suggested that council committees submit drafts of rules in advance.71

The native courts, as in Africa, had also reached a stage where they had begun to arouse thoughts of reform. Fines and fees are paid to council funds (N.A.R. Sect.29), and a tendency had appeared for courts to adjudicate often rather than wisely, and to impose maximum penalties regularly. This posed serious problems for D.O.s of

---

69 B.S.I.P. News Bulletin, January 1961: opening by High Comm. There have been dramatic increases in revenues as councillors become conscious of a lack of services and of councils' financial self-sufficiency. Estimated Malaita revenue rose from £2,210 (1955) to £27,100 (1960) - there was also a prospect of a C.D.&W. grant of £3,900 for buildings (1960). Crops alternative to coconuts (e.g. cocoa, promotion financed by C.D.&W.) were only just beginning in 1960. Hon.F.101/9/3.

70 Prot. Sec. to Chief Sec., 27.11.1959, Hon.F.101/5/1. Native Courts have blanket rights of jurisdiction over custom; only re-definition would be affected.

71 Attorney-General to Chief Sec., 23.11.59, ibid.
apparent interference instead of legitimate review. The Attorney-General wanted the native courts subject in appellate jurisdiction to the High Commissioner’s courts. There was a growing feeling amongst field staff that methods, procedure, and review should be tightened; this derived, however, not from native dereliction but from a conviction that many courts had reached a stage of sufficient competence to warrant reform.

It will be seen that the system of native administration adopted in the Solomons has largely followed the Native Authority concept. Customary and political bases have been assumed, and have influenced the direction the system has taken. Even in constituting councils, only in very recent years have attempts been made to introduce the ballot in a few areas. At the same time, virtually the whole population of the islands by 1960 were running their own councils and courts, and the Administration headmen were increasingly being subjected to the local authorities. It was hoped that this breadth and degree of devolution, giving institutional scope for Western and customary concepts together, would lay the basis for the development of democratic institutions: the lack of hereditary authorities facilitated this, and it appeared that the real leaders, even on Malaita, had been brought within the system.

72 Discussion with a/Prot. Sec., a/Chief Judicial Officer. Analysis of West Kwara‘ae court books showed adultery regularly treated as customary case, maximum penalty. By Oct. 1954, 45 native courts were functioning (generally sub-district), throughout the Protectorate.


74 D.C. Central to Chief Sec., 8.5.1958, Quad. F.3/12. A particular difficulty concerned imprisonment while awaiting D.O.’s review.


76 See C.H. Allan, Local Government and Political Consciousness in the B.S.I.P., J.A.A., XII, 1960, pp.158-63. The 1960 elections marked a critical phase on Malaita, as younger men replaced the Federal Council leaders. A revival of factionalism was feared, but the Administration and the younger men favoured nomination of the older leaders, to obviate this possibility - Minutes, Malaita council, Feb. 1960, item 3; a/Prot. Sec. to Chief Sec., 11.2.1960, Hon.F.202/10/5.
APPENDIX D

PRELIMINARY SURVEYS FOR NATIVE LOCAL GOVERNMENT

CIRCULAR INSTRUCTION No. 304: 18th September, 1959.

1. Some officers have, in the past, approached communities concerning the establishment of native local government councils and virtually committed the Administration to the establishment of a council without giving full consideration to the factors involved. The preliminary survey can be made without making a direct approach to the people or making promises. When it is clear that the possible population grouping, potential or capacity of the people to pay council tax, communications and the staffing position are such as to enable a unit to be set up, the time is ripe to discuss the matter with the people themselves. All officers must ensure that this procedure is followed so that no hopes of having a council are raised where the conditions are not immediately suitable.

2. It is evident from reports being processed at this Headquarters that some uniform method of reporting on Native Local Government surveys is required. It is with this in view that the following information has been compiled and future surveys will be submitted in the form shown hereunder:

A. Introduction:

   (a) Brief geographical description listing terrain, climate, rainfall details.

   (b) Location in relation to District Headquarters and other important District Centres.

   (c) Brief background information listing administration activity; cargo cults and/or nativistic movements.

   (d) Leading men of area with brief details.

B. Total population and population Distribution:

   (a) List Census statistics.

   (b) Population trends.

   (c) Nos. of villages, size of village groups, population distribution.

   (d) Standard of living. Degree of literacy.
C. **Social Grouping:**

(a) No. social groups.

(b) Language pattern.

(c) Relations with adjacent groups.

(d) Degree of cohesion between groups being surveyed.

D. **Social, Economic and Political Organisations:**

(a) List purely native type social groups.

(b) Mission influence and organisation.

(c) Co-operative activity.

(d) Other movements not included above.

E. **Communications:**

(a) **Land**: Type of roads, future improvements, bridges, etc.

(b) **Sea**: Anchorage, shipping, service maintained.

(c) **Air**: Airfields, services maintained.

(d) Summary of communications in relation to attendance at meetings, supplies for council works, etc.

F. **Present Avenues of Economic Production:**

(a) List each cash crop, amount being produced, numbers of bearing trees, numbers of new plantings.

(b) Existing marketing arrangements.

(c) Degree of wage labour.

(d) Co-operative and private activity in consumer field.

G. **Potential for Increased or New Forms of Production:**

(a) Potential for increased plantings of existing cash crops.

(b) Land availability and suitability.
(c) Investigation introduction of new cash crop or activities, e.g. fishing ventures, (after consultation with Department of Agriculture, Stock and Fisheries representatives).

(d) Increased activity in wage labour field.

H. Ability to Pay tax:–

This particular section must be covered fully with a thorough examination of the present economic position of people.

(a) Statistics in the form of balance sheets, annual rebate details from existing co-operative societies.

(b) Trading information from private traders if available.

(c) Figures on copra production if available from Copra Marketing Board.

(d) Turnover of goods at native markets.

(e) Collections made to various charities, etc.

(f) Cash crop tree counts.

(g) Spot checks on various individual incomes, include entrepreneurs and ordinary village persons.

(h) Wages casual labour, etc.

The above information will give the surveying officer an appreciation of the average annual income per head and enable some estimate of the tax to be paid and the amount of revenue to be expected.

I. Availability of Technical Skills:–

List artisans available.

J. Availability of Clerical Skills:–

Bearing in mind that standard IX is generally regarded as the most desirable qualifications, although lesser qualified students or persons may be accepted.
K. **Attitude of the Population to Local Government:**

(a) Outline of methods used by surveying officer in determining attitudes.

(b) Voting statistics and mode of voting, where voting has been necessary to ascertain the peoples' wishes.

(c) Attitude of various factions within the community.

L. **Recommendations:**

(a) Proposed constitution, including size of electorates and representation.

(b) Ability of existing staff to implement the recommendations.

(c) Map: Listing all villages, missions, plantations, roads, etc. and clearly indicating the boundaries of the proposed council area.

3. The District Officer must make firm recommendations on proposals submitted by the surveying officer, adding any comments he may wish to make.

(A.A. Roberts)

**Director.**
155.—(1.) The Village Constables shall be appointed by the Government Secretary and may be dismissed by him for any offence or misconduct.

(2.) The Village Constable shall deal justly and kindly with the people and shall always obey the lawful orders of the Government Secretary and the Magistrates. He shall not oppress the people. Any person or persons having reason to complain of any misconduct or wrongdoing on the part of a Village Constable may report him to the Magistrate, stating the subject-matter of the complaint and it shall not be lawful for the Village Constable to prevent or hinder in any way whatever any person from going to the Magistrate to make a lawful complaint against such Village Constable.

(3.) No Village Constable shall arrest any person unless he truly believes that such person has committed an offence against the law.

(4.) If he arrests a person he must take him without delay to the nearest Magistrate for trial.

(5.) If a Village Constable accepts a present or bribe to release a person he has arrested he shall on conviction be liable to a fine not exceeding Three pounds or in default of payment to imprisonment for any period not exceeding Six months, or to imprisonment in the first instance for any period not exceeding Six months.

(6.) The Lieutenant-Governor will decide from time to time the amount of pay each Village Constable shall receive; each Village Constable will also be supplied with such uniforms and equipment as are necessary.

(7.) If a Village Constable gives away or otherwise disposes of any part of his uniform or other Government property entrusted to his care he shall on conviction be liable to a penalty not exceeding Two pounds or in default of payment to imprisonment for any period not exceeding Four months, or to imprisonment in the first instance for any period not exceeding Four months.

(8.) If any person is found in possession of any part of a Village Constable's uniform or any clothing closely
resembling a Village Constable’s uniform or representing himself to be a Village Constable he shall on conviction be liable to a penalty not exceeding Two pounds or in default of payment to imprisonment for any period not exceeding Four months, or to imprisonment in the first instance for any period not exceeding Four months.

(9.) If a Village Constable arrests any person for any offence he may call upon any other Village Constable or any native to assist him in taking such person before a Magistrate and if necessary for that purpose to supply canoes and act as crew thereof. Remuneration for such assistance shall be subsequently made by the Magistrate at the rate for the time being fixed in the case of carriers under Regulation 127 (6.) (7.). For the use of a canoe payment shall be similarly made at a rate not exceeding a rate fixed by the Lieutenant-Governor. If any Village Constable or any native refuses or neglects without justifiable excuse to comply with the requirements of the arresting Village Constable when so called upon he shall on conviction be liable to a penalty not exceeding Thirty shillings and in default of payment to imprisonment for any period not exceeding Three months, or to imprisonment in the first instance for any period not exceeding Three months.

(10.) Village Constables are empowered to arrest offenders inside or outside the limits of their own districts.

(11.) Any Village Constable wilfully disobeying a lawful order of the Government Secretary or a Magistrate or his superior officer, or wilfully neglecting to carry out any of the duties imposed upon him under these regulations, or under any other regulations hereafter made under the Native Regulation Ordinance, 1908-1930, shall on conviction be liable to a penalty not exceeding One pound or in default of payment to imprisonment for any period not exceeding Two months, or to imprisonment in the first instance for any period not exceeding Two months.

(12.) The powers and authorities conferred upon Village Constables by these or any further regulations made under the Native Regulation Ordinance, 1908-1930, are also conferred upon native members of the Royal Papuan Constabulary.
APPENDIX F

FEDERAL MINISTERS IN CHARGE OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF
PAPUA, FROM 5.7.1905 (AFTER MILES AND DIX)

5. 7.1905 - 14.11.1916 : Minister for External Affairs.
14.11.1916 - 17. 2.1917 : Minister for Home Affairs.
10.12.1928 - 26. 6.1941 : Prime Minister (during this period the P.M. delegated control of territories to a succession of 13 other Ministers).
11. 5.1951 - : Minister for Territories.

Departmental arrangements sometimes differed slightly from what might be indicated by ministerial responsibility.
BIBLIOGRAPHY

I. Official Records

a) Australian P.P.

(i) Queensland:


The Royal Commission Appointed to Inquire into the Circumstances under which Labourers have been Introduced into Queensland from New Guinea and Other Islands etc. Report - Queensland V. & P., 1885, II, pp.797-988.

Correspondence Respecting the Return of the New Guinea Islanders - Queensland V. & P., 1885, II, pp.1053-74.

Further Correspondence respecting the Protectorate of New Guinea - Queensland V. & P., 1886, II, pp.989-1026.


(ii) Victoria:

New Guinea, Further Correspondence - Victorian P.P. 35/1885, III, pp.179-94.

Brit. New Guinea: Correspondence Respecting Future Administration - Victorian P.P. 65/1886, III.

(iii) Commonwealth P.P.:

British New Guinea: Report by Mr. Atlee Hunt, Secretary, Department of External Affairs - C.P.P. 43/1905.

Papua Act - Memorandum re Proclamation, and Draft Letter respecting the Appointment of a Royal Commission etc. - C.P.P. 61/1906.

Case of Mr. Richmond, Reports etc. - C.P.P. 72/1906.


b) British P.P.

Further Correspondence respecting British New Guinea. Cmd. 6323, lvii, 1891.


c) Directly Relating to New Guinea: Handbooks, Acts, etc.

Handbook of Information for Intending Settlers in British New Guinea, Government Printer, Brisbane, 1892.

Papua Act 1940 - Commonwealth Act 47 of 1940, Acts XXXVIII.


d) Comparative


Notes and Instructions to Native Administrations in the British Solomon Islands. Oceania, XVI, 1945, pp. 61-9.


e) Material held in the National Archives, Canberra

CP1 (Prot.), set 2: Copies of Despatches from the Special Commissioners to the Secretary of State, 1.1.1885 - 24.8.1888.

CP1 (Prot.), set 3: Copies of Schedules of Despatches transmitted from Sir Peter Scratchley to the Secretary of State, with various drafts and copies of cypher telegrams, 27.1.1885 - 20.9.1885.

CP1 (Prot.), set 4: Drafts and Copies of Despatches from Sir Peter Scratchley to the Secretary of State, 20.1.1885 - 18.11.1885.

CP1 (Prot.), set 5: Registered Inward Correspondence of the Special Commissioners, 1885 - 1888.

CP1 (Prot.), set 6: Unregistered Correspondence of the Special Commissioners, 1885 - 1888.

CP1 (Prot.), set 7: Copies of Correspondence from the Special Commissioners to the Colonial Govts., 23.1.1885 - 21.8.1888.
CP1 (Prot.), set 8: Copies of Letters, Minute Papers, Memoranda and Telegrams from the Special Commissioners to their Subordinates and the General Public, 17.1.1885 - 21.8.1888.

CP1 (Col.), set 1: Despatches from the Secretary of State, 1880 - 1906.

CP1 (Col.), set 5: Despatches etc. from the Governor of Queensland and the Governor General to the Officer administering the Government of British New Guinea, 1888 - 1906.

CP1 (Col.), set 6: Copies of Despatches etc. from the Officer administering the Government of British New Guinea to the Governor of Queensland and the Governor General, 1888 - 1906.

CP1 (Col.), set 8: Register of Despatches from the Officer administering the Government of British New Guinea to the Governor of Queensland, the Governor General and the Minister for External Affairs, 1888 - 1907.

CP1 (Col.), set 9: Copies of Secret and Confidential Despatches from the Officer administering the Government of British New Guinea to the Governor General, 11.11.1903 - 21.8.1906.

CP1 (Col.), set 10: General Correspondence of the Officer administering the Government of British New Guinea, 1888 - 1907.

CP1 (Col.), set 11: Miscellaneous Correspondence of the Officer administering the Government of British New Guinea, 1888 - 1906.

CP1 (Col.), set 17: Personal Diaries of C.S. Robinson, 1.5.1903 - 6.5.1904.

CP1, set 1: Despatches and Other Correspondence from the Minister for External Affairs and the Minister for Home and Territories to the Officer administering the Government of Papua, 1905 - 1921.
CP1, set 5: Copies of Despatches and Acknowledgments transmitted by the Officer administering the Government of Papua to Australia, with Related Papers, 6.1.1908 - 23.3.1921.

CP1, set 20: General Correspondence of the Lieutenant-Governor and the Official Secretary, 1921 - 1942. (Owing to some re-arrangement of archival material while the thesis was being written, double figure references in footnotes, e.g. 16/48, prefixed by CP1, V, can now be found in set 20).

CP1, set 35: Patrol Reports, Station Journals, and some Divisional Correspondence, according to the following stations -

Abau, Eastern Division to 1913, then East-Central Division to 1920, then Eastern Division again. Cloudy Bay Reports, 1893-4.
Abau Patrol Reports, 1911-33 (including correspondence 1911-12, 1913-14).

Baniara, North Eastern Division.
Baniara Patrol Reports, 1913-41.

Buna, Northern Division to 1909, Kumusi Division to 1920, then Northern Division again.
Buna Patrol Reports, 1908-33 (including correspondence 1913-14).

Bwagoia, see Misima.

Cape Nelson, North-Eastern Division to 1909, Mambare Division to 1920, then North-Eastern again. Cape Nelson Reports, Journals and Correspondence 1900-07.
Cape Nelson Patrol Reports 1908-33.

Daru, Headquarters of Western Division.
Daru Reports and Correspondence, 1892-4. Journals 1898, Correspondence 1898, Patrol Reports 1900, Reports 1900-02.
Daru Reports and Journals 1902-05, 1907-08, Reports 1909-34.
Daru Station Journals 1914-26.
Ioma, Northern Division to 1909, Wambare Division to 1920, then Northern Division again.
Ioma Patrol Reports 1908-33.

Kambisi Police Camp. Central Division.
Kambisi Reports, 1925-33.

Kairuku, Mekeo District of Central Division.
Mekeo Station Journals and Correspondence, 1890-1902.
Kairuku Patrol Reports, 1911-36.

Kerema, Headquarters of Gulf Division.
Kerema Patrol Reports 1907-34.

Kikori, Western Division to 1912, then Headquarters of Delta Division.
Kikori Patrol Reports, 1912-14, 1915-33.

Kokoda, Northern Division to 1909, Kumusi Division to 1920, then Northern Division again.
Kokoda Patrol Reports 1911, 1913-33.

Kulumadau, Headquarters of South-Eastern Division to 1920.
Kulumadau Patrol Reports, 1908-20, 1925-34 (for 1923-5, see Misima).

Losuia, South-Eastern Division.
Losuia Patrol Reports 1913-41 (Correspondence 1913).

Mapamoiwa Police Camp, Eastern Division.
Mapamoiwa Patrol Reports, 1927-41.

Misima (also known as Bwagoia), South-Eastern Division (Headquarters, 1920-41).
Misima Patrol Reports, 1920-2, with Kulumadau Reports, 1923-5, 1925-33.
Misima Station Journals 1920-6.

Nepa, Lakekamu Goldfield.
Nepa Patrol Reports, 1913-20.
Nivani (also known as Bonagai), Headquarters of South-Eastern Division to 1908.
Nivani Reports, Journal, and some Correspondence, 1896-1903.

Port Moresby, Headquarters of Central Division.
Port Moresby Patrol Reports, 1907-33.

Rigo, Central Division.
Rigo Patrol Reports 1900, 1902, 1904, 1908, 1910-33.

Samarai, Headquarters Eastern Division.
Samarai Patrol Reports 1905-6, 1908-33, 1936.
Draft Annual Reports, 1890, 1903-7.
Return of Village Constables 1902.

Tamata, Headquarters, Northern Division.
Tamata Reports, Journals, 1898, 1902-6; Patrol Reports 1901; some correspondence 1901-2.

CP74: Despatches Received from the Administrator of British New Guinea by the Governor of Queensland, 1888-1902.

CP141: General Correspondence of the Department of Territories, ca. 1907-45.

CP146: General Correspondence of the Department of the Interior, 1901-41.

CP153, set 2: Scrapbook containing cuttings of Papuan Laws, Regulations, etc.

CP153, set 8: Press Cuttings relating to Papua, 1910-27.


CP708, set 1: Miscellaneous Patrol Reports transmitted to Canberra, 1927-55.

CP708, set 3: Report by Mr. J.V. Barry on the Suspension of the Civil Administration in Papua in 1942.

CP763, set 4: ANGAU - Conference of Officers of Headquarters and Officers of Districts Staff, Port Moresby, 7 - 12th February, 1944.
f) Current Records

The Department of Territories made available a number of current files, mainly series 57/..., AL/800..., and AO/800..., dealing for the most part with advisory councils and approaches to urban local government. Press releases and similar non-restricted material were freely made available.

In New Guinea and the British Solomon Islands, both at headquarters and at all outstations visited, the Administrations made available many hundreds of files, official papers, sets of minutes, etc., too numerous to list. In every instance the place of origin and reference have been quoted in full in footnotes. (See map of field-trip).

Native local government councils also made records available: again the footnotes contain references in full.

II. Private Papers

London Missionary Society Letters, to 1908 - Microfilm, National Archives, G 309.


Hunt, Atlee A., Papers - National Archives, Restricted, Manuscript Accession No. 52.

MacGregor, Sir W., Diary - Nov. 1890 - Oct. 1892, 4v. National Archives, Manus. Accession No. 38

III. Books, Periodicals, and Newspapers

a) Books and Booklets

(1) Directly Relating to New Guinea:


Epstein, T.S., *Economic Change and Differentiation among Inland Tolai of New Britain*. Typescript.


Epstein, T.S., Personal Capital Formation Among the Tolai of New Britain. 1960 Symposium, Burg Wartenstein, Austria, mimeo.


Newton, H., Twenty-two Years After. Typescript, 1930, National Archives CPI (Terr.) set 20.


Williams, F.E., Natives of the Purari Deltas. Papuan Anthropological Survey No.5. Government Printer, Port Moresby, 1924.


Williams, F.E., Natives of Lake Kutubu. Oceania, Monograph No.6; XI-XII, 1940-1.


(ii) Comparative:


b) Articles

(1) Directly Relating to New Guinea:


Bensted, J.T., **Captain Barton of Papua**. South Pacific, VII, 12, 1954, pp. 926-9, 931.

Bensted, J.T., **Sir Hubert Murray of Papua**. South Pacific, VII, 4 and 5, 1953, pp. 675-82, 701-9.


Champion, H.W., **Captain Barton of Papua** (letter). South Pacific, VIII, 2, 1955, pp. 44, 47.


Elkin, A.P., F.E. Williams, **Government Anthropologist of Papua**, 1922-43. Oceania, XIV, 2, 1943, pp. 91-103.

Elkin, A.P., **Place of Sir Hubert Murray in Native Administration**. Australian Quarterly, XII, 3, 1940, pp. 23-5.


Murray, J.H.P., Native Policy in Papua. Sydney Round Table, XV, 1925, pp.573-82.


Williams, F.E., Mission Influence Amongst the Keveri of S.E. Papua. Oceania, XV, 2, 1944, pp.89-142.


(ii) Comparative:


Hogbin, H.I., Native Councils and Native Courts in the Solomon Islands. Oceania, XIV, 4, 1944, pp.257-83.


c) Newspapers

Adelaide Advertiser.
Brisbane Courier.
Moripi and Moveave-Toaripi Fari.
Drums of Peace (Oxford Group, 1930s).
Melbourne Age.
Pacific Islands Monthly.
The Queenslander.
South Pacific Post.
Sydney Daily Telegraph.
Sydney Morning Herald.
Times British Colonies Review.
V.A.C.
The Bulletin.
Local Government Bulletin (Department of Native Affairs, T.P.N.G.).
Papua and New Guinea Villager 1929-42, 1950-. (Originally Papuan Villager).
Rabaul Times.
SUMMARY OF THE ARGUMENT

The term 'Native Administration's is used in the rather restricted sense in which it has been defined by Lord Hailey, having particular reference here to the ways in which natives have participated in 'procedures of local administration'.

The jurisdiction of the Western Pacific High Commission was found inadequate everywhere; this inadequacy was particularly marked in New Guinea before and under the protectorate, because of the lack of chiefs.

Under Sir William MacGregor's administration of the colony the search for chiefs who could be made responsible for co-operation with government continued for a time; initially MacGregor sought to adapt methods and institutions from Fiji. The delegation of responsibility to Government Chiefs proved tedious and unsuccessful. Local control through appointed village constables was accepted as a substitute. MacGregor was so involved with pacification - to some extent involuntarily - that a simple police system was found expedient. With a small European staff of poor quality, it seemed to offer relatively easy and uncomplicated control.

In the period 1898-1908 central control of pacification techniques deteriorated, and the trend to direct police rule accelerated; a corollary was the total eclipse of the Government Chiefs.

1) Hailey, Native Administration in the British African Territories, IV, pp.1, 1.
Sir Hubert Murray had as his first task the close regulation of pacification. In addition, pressures for settler development forced the rapid extension of the frontier. These factors, in relation to insufficient funds and staff, inhibited the evolution of new methods, in relation to insufficient funds.

After 1918, when systems of native tax and of native plantations were introduced, the deficiencies of the simple village constable system became progressively more patent. This led to experiments with non-statutory village councils and assessors. A few enlightened officers, and the missions, conscious of social stresses for which native administration did not provide, even initiated approaches to native councils and courts. Murray's administrative preconceptions, essentially assimilationist, precluded any real or substantial delegation to natives.

Murray's death and the war brought a period of re-thinking. Increasing centralisation of control in Australia opened the way for a new group not steeped in the Murray tradition. Entrenched opposition and the traditional conceptions eventually proved too strong, however. Native local government, as implemented, thus constituted only a segment of the more comprehensive system of native administration.
originally projected; in particular, the element of devolution was rejected. In part this derived, conceptually, from the paradoxical reserve shown the few traditional authorities by MacGregor and Murray. Moreover, actual delegation of powers and functions to councils was slight; they became Administration instrumentalities, while a policy of centralizing without a centralizing of policy strangled local initiative.

Until 1956, when local government extension became accepted policy, councils were established in response to local pressures. Opposition within and outside the Administration, together with the primary emphasis on executive training (the two being inter-related) implied that councils were established only in carefully surveyed areas. The legacy of the long-standing village official system meant that initially many tiny 'parishes' (traditional political units) within a projected area had to be persuaded to confederate, and that there were almost no natives capable of assuming executive responsibility. Ideally councils were set up only where adequate cohesion and economic potential existed; but this principle often gave way in the fact of political and other factors.

Centralization and the non-traditional approach of the Administration to native local government tended to emasculate local authority which councils or councillors sought to assume. This was particularly noticeable in the legislative sphere. Political tension developed in certain areas.
Even in the executive sphere, the lack of an integrated approach by central government frustrated co-operation by councils in developmental responsibilities, although they had notable achievements in the erecting of buildings, the sinking of wells, etc. Forms of co-operation were slowly and painfully worked out with the central Education and Health Departments. Broadly, however, the disorganization and delay to which many councils were subjected, together with the discouragement by central government of political expression through local government, often eroded interest, inhibited the assumption of local responsibility and thereby perpetuated reliance on central government. Paternal welfare was accepted by government as a substitute for (rationale: as a preparation for) administrative devolution. (The analogy with former Belgian policy is striking). This emphasis, inter alia, also frustrated approaches to other forms of local government.²

²) For a more complete outline of various aspects of my argument, see my articles listed in the Bibliography, III, b, (i) and (ii), especially Native Local Government in New Guinea: Its Functions and Problems, J.A.A., XIII, 3, 1961, pp.165-74. (This was written in 1960 - a few of the views expressed there are slightly modified in the thesis).
Table Mtn
New South Wales

Hollman C
Humboldt B

Bogadjim
Bonwick

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville

Bogadenville
Bogadenville